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FM SALISBURY 230720Z MAR 81

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 186 OF 23 MARCH

INFO PRIORITY MAASTRICHT (FOR PS TO SOSFA)

ROUTINE PRETORIA, LUSAKA, MAPUTO, WASHINGTON

SAVING GABORONE, DAR ES SALAAM, NAIROBI, ADDIS ABBA, LAGOS.

ZIMBABWE : LORD SOAMES' FIRST MEETING WITH MUGABE.

1. MR MUGABE WAS CLEARLY IMMENSELY PLEASED TO SEE LORD SOAMES AGAIN IN ZIMBABWE, GREETED HIM DEMONSTRABLY AND WAS IN A WARM AND RELAXED MOOD THROUGHOUT A TWO HOUR MEETING AT HIS RESIDENCE LATE ON 20 MARCH. HIS PARTING WORDS WERE "MR BYATT, THANK YOU FOR BRINGING MY FRIEND".

2. FRANK DISCUSSION WAS SOMEWHAT INHIBITED BY THE PRESENCE OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND NEWLY APPOINTED SECRETARY (UTETE), BUT MUGABE AGREED THAT THERE SHOULD BE A PRIVATE MEETING IN THE COURSE OF THE WEEK.

3. MUGABE SAID THAT HE WAS PLEASED WITH THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE FIRST YEAR. WHAT HAD MOST SURPRISED HIM HAD BEEN THE ATTITUDE OF THE WHITES: HE HAD NOT EXPECTED THEM TO ADAPT SO QUICKLY. MOST WERE WORKING WELL AND HELPFULLY WITH THE GOVERNMENT. HE WAS SAD TO LOSE DAVID SMITH, WHO HAD BEEN A GREAT HELP. SOME OF NKOMO'S PEOPLE, HOWEVER, WERE STILL NOT RECONCILED AND WOULD PREFER ANOTHER PRIME MINISTER. THE LEADERSHIP WAS NOT A PROBLEM. NKOMO HIMSELF HAD NOW ADJUSTED, RELUCTANTLY, TO THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION - "THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO OF US HAS BEEN GOOD THROUGHOUT EVERYTHING".

4. THERE WERE PROBLEMS ON THE MILITARY SIDE. HE AGREED THAT DISARMAMENT WAS CRUCIAL: THERE WERE STILL TOO MANY PEOPLE WALKING ABOUT WITH THEIR WEAPONS. HOWEVER, DESPITE LAST MONTH'S SETBACK, AMALGAMATION HAD MADE REASONABLE PROGRESS. THE BRITISH MILITARY TRAINERS WERE DOING A MARVELLOUS JOB - "WITHOUT THEM WE COULD NEVER HAVE ACHIEVED WHAT WE HAVE DONE". IN AN ATMOSPHERE WHERE EACH ARMY FACTION MISTRUSTED THE OTHERS, BMATT PROVIDED THE ESSENTIAL NEUTRAL ELEMENT AND WAS TRUSTED BY ALL.

5. LORD SOAMES EXTENDED THE INVITATION FOR AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO BRITAIN "AT A MUTUALLY CONVENIENT TIME TO BE WORKED OUT". MUGABE WAS CLEARLY PLEASED AND SAID THAT HE WOULD MUCH ENJOY SUCH A VISIT. HE REMARKED THAT THE BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WAS VERY

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*Zimbabwe*

*Read in full*

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GOOD AND, IN THE COURSE OF LIGHT-HEARTED BANTER, CAREFULLY DISSOCIATED HIMSELF FROM NKALA'S JANUARY ATTACK ON OUR AID - "HE IS LIKE THAT - UNPREDICTABLE".

6. I SHALL TELEGRAPH SEPARATELY ON MUGABE'S REMARKS ABOUT SOUTHERN AFRICA'S PROBLEMS.

FCO PASS SAVING GABORONE, DAR ES SALAAM, NAIROBI, ADDIS ABABA, AND LAGOS.

BYATT

STANDARD  
CAF  
ORIS  
NAD  
EC  
ODA  
CABINET OFFICE

COPIES SENT TO  
No. 10 DOWNING STREET

[PASSED AS REQUESTED]

THIS TELEGRAM  
WAS NOT  
ADVANCED

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