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FM UKMIS NEW YORK 132345Z JAN 82
TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 44 OF 13 JANUARY.

INFO PRIORITY CAPE TOWN PRETORIA, ROUTINE WASHINGTON PARIS BONN
OTTAWA DAR ES SALAAM LUANDA GABORONE SALISBURY MAPUTO AND LAGOS.

MY TEL NO'S 27, 28, 37 AND 42: SOUTH AFRICAN REACTIONS TO THE NEW
SECRETARY GENERAL.

1. PIK BOTHA HAS EXPLODED AGAIN. THE TEXT OF HIS LATEST MESSAGE TO PEREZ DE CUELLAR IS CONTAINED IN MIFT (NOT TO ALL). IT IS IN RESPONSE TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S STATEMENT TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID (MY TEL NO 37 - NOT TO ALL). APART FROM THE EXTRAVAGANCE OF THE LANGUAGE IT IS FULL OF HEAVY IRONY, EG QUOTE THOSE WHO RESPECT FAIR PLAY UNQUOTE AND QUOTE IF YOUR EXCELLENCY WILL PERMIT ME A WORD OF FRIENDLY CAUTION UNQUOTE.

2. URQUHART ASKED ME TO CALL THIS AFTERNOON (13 JANUARY) TO SHOW ME THIS LATEST MISSIVE AND TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED DRAFT REPLIES FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL TO THIS AND TO THE EARLIER BLAST ON NAMIBIA (PRETORIA TEL NO'S 6 AND 7 AND MY TEL NO'S 27, 28 AND 42). URQUHART SAID IT WAS CLEAR THAT PIK BOTHA, IN HIS USUAL FASHION, WAS SEEKING TO TERRORISE THE NEW SECRETARY GENERAL BUT THAT HE WOULD FIND THAT HE WAS MADE OF STERNER STUFF THAN WALDHEIM. PEREZ DE CUELLAR WOULD HAVE TO REPLY TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN MESSAGES. BUT URQUHART WANTED THE FIVE TO KNOW THAT THE SECRETARIAT WERE STILL COMMITTED TO THE NAMIBIA INITIATIVE AND WOULD DO NOTHING TO UNDERMINE THE FIVE'S NEGOTIATIONS WHICH THEY SUPPORTED. THE REPLY ON NAMIBIA THEREFORE WOULD BE SHORT AND SWEET (DRAFT TEXT WHICH URQUHART HAS SUBMITTED TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL IN MY SECOND IFT) BUT THAT ON APARTHEID WOULD BE LONGER AND STERNER: THERE WAS NO DISAGREEMENT AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE UN ON THE UNACCEPTABILITY OF APARTHEID AS A SYSTEM.

3. URQUHART SAID THAT ORDINARILY HE WOULD HAVE CONSULTED THE FIVE CLOSELY ON THE REPLY ON NAMIBIA AND ASKED FOR THEIR SUGGESTIONS. AS HE HAD REMARKED TO ME EARLIER, HE WAS CONCERNED THAT THE SOUTH AFRICANS WERE PREPARING A LET-OUT FOR THEMSELVES OVER IMPARTIALITY AND TRYING TO MAKE LIFE AS DIFFICULT AS POSSIBLE FOR THE FIVE IN PHASE 2 (THE RECENTLY RETURNED CHIEF NEWSWEEK CORRESPONDENT IN SOUTH AFRICA HAD TOLD HIM THAT AT HIS LAST INTERVIEW WITH PIK BOTHA RECENTLY, BOTHA HAD EMPHASISED THAT SOUTH AFRICA WOULD NEVER (NEVER) ACCEPT SWAPO WINNING THE ELECTIONS). BUT THE SLOW AND UNCERTAIN AMERICAN ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINE MEANT THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE SECRETARIAT TO BE ABLE TO RELY ON QUICK AND CONSIDERED ADVICE FROM THE FIVE. I SAID THAT THE NAMIBIA REPLY LOOKED ALL RIGHT AND UNDER-TOOK TO OBFUSCATE THE REST OF THE FIVE.

PARSONS [REPETITION TO MAPUTO REFERRED FOR DEPARTMENTAL DECISION,
REPEATED AS REQUESTED TO OTHER POSTS]

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