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DESKBY 231230Z

FM SALISBURY 231105Z FEB 82

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 101 OF 23 FEBRUARY

INFO ROUTINE CAPE TOWN, PRETORIA, LUSAKA AND MAPUTO.

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INTERNAL POLITICS: WHITES

1. MUGABE ADDRESSED A MEETING OF WHITE PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE AND BUSINESSMEN IN THE CHAMBER OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY ON 19 FEBRUARY. HIS MESSAGE WAS THAT THE GOVERNMENT WANTED THE WHITE COMMUNITY TO STAY, AND VALUED THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE COUNTRY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SINCE INDEPENDENCE. HE CALLED FOR MORE CONTACT BETWEEN BLACKS AND WHITES, AND MORE UNITY, A PROCESS IN WHICH INDIVIDUALS, BUSINESSMEN AND INDUSTRIALISTS SHOULD ALSO BE INVOLVED. PEOPLE WERE FREE TO CHOOSE THEIR FRIENDS: BUT INDUSTRY AND PUBLIC SERVICES MUST BE NON-RACIAL. WHITE FEARS ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT'S INTENTIONS ON NATIONALISATIONS WERE UNFOUNDED. THE SOCIALISM PLANNED BY THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT ENTAIL THE DESTRUCTION OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE. "WE CANNOT DESTROY THE INFRASTRUCTURE WE INHERITED AT INDEPENDENCE. THAT WOULD BE TO DESTROY THE BASIS FOR FUTURE PROGRESS..... WE ARE NOT TALKING OF NATIONALISATION .... UNLESS THE FORCE OF CIRCUMSTANCES OBLIGES US TO DO SO". PRIVATE ENTERPRISE WOULD BE A FACT OF LIFE IN ZIMBABWE FOR "AT LEAST THE NEXT TWO DECADES" AND "AFTER THAT YOU MUST CONSULT WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE TIME". ON LAND, MUGABE SAID THE GOVERNMENT WOULD SEEK TO ACQUIRE UNDER USED OR UNDER-UTILISED LAND, BUT STRESSED THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO THE PRINCIPLE OF JUST COMPENSATION.
2. HINTING AT FURTHER CABINET CHANGES, MUGABE SAID HE WAS NOT KEEN TO HAVE AN ALL-BLACK CABINET. BUT WHITE PARTICIPATION WOULD NOT COME THROUGH THE CHANNELS OF THE REPUBLICAN FRONT WHOSE PRESENCE IN PARLIAMENT AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE WHITE COMMUNITY WAS AN IMPEDIMENT, AND HAD BEEN AN EMBARRASSMENT TO DAVID SMITH (FORMER MINISTER OF TRADE AND COMMERCE).
3. THE MEETING (EVIDENTLY THE FIRST IN A SERIES) WAS ORGANISED BY ANDERSEN, A RELATIVELY MODERATE RF MP (AND A LANCASTER HOUSE DELEGATE), WHO HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY CRITICAL IN PRIVATE OF THE RF LEADERSHIP'S INTRACTABILITY. HE AND A NUMBER OF LIKE-MINDED 'LIBERALS' ARE SAID TO BE CONTEMPLATING LEAVING THE PARTY AND SITTING IN PARLIAMENT AS INDEPENDENTS. MUGABE'S SPEECH SEEMS DESIGNED IN PART TO ENCOURAGE THEM AND THUS POSSIBLY HASTEN THE DISSOLUTION OF THE RF (IAN SMITH HIMSELF IS SAID TO WANT TO RETIRE).

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4. THIS INITIATIVE BY ANDERSEN IS APPARENTLY DISTINCT FROM MUGABE'S APPROACH TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE (MY TELNO 069). THEY UNDERSTAND THAT HE STILL WANTS A MEETING UNDER THEIR AUSPICES ALSO, THOUGH NO DATE HAS YET BEEN FIXED.
5. THE MEETING SEEMS TO HAVE RAISED WHITE SPIRITS SOMEWHAT AND OFFERS WELCOME EVIDENCE THAT MUGABE NOW FEELS ABLE TO DO SOMETHING TO BOLSTER THE CONFIDENCE OF THE PREDOMINATELY WHITE PRIVATE BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

BYATT

Repetition to MAPUTO  
referred for departmental decision,  
repeated as requested to other posts.

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