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TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 199 OF 19 MARCH

INFO IMMEDIATE LUSAKA WASHINGTON

INFO PRIORITY UKMIS NEW YORK LUANDA SALISBURY MAPUTO GABORONE

DAR ES SALAAM AND LAGOS

PRESIDENT KAUNDA'S CALL FOR A MEETING WITH P W BOTHA

1. THE EVENING PAPERS OF THE ARGUS GROUP REPORTED PROMINENTLY YESTERDAY (18 MARCH) THAT PRESIDENT KAUNDA, IN AN INTERVIEW WITH AN ARGUS REPORTER, HAD SAID THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO MEET P W BOTHA TO DISCUSS SOUTH AFRICA'S ATTITUDE TO NAMIBIA AND THE LIKELIHOOD OF ESCALATING VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA. IT SOUNDS FROM THE REPORT AS IF KAUNDA'S REMARKS WERE UNPREMEDITATED, AND MADE IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT THE LOSS OF MOMENTUM IN THE NAMIBIA NEGOTIATIONS. HE ADDED THAT THE MEETING COULD TAKE PLACE ANYWHERE, INCLUDING LUSAKA. ALTERNATIVELY HE WOULD CONSIDER GOING TO SOUTH AFRICA.

2. KAUNDA IS ALSO REPORTED AS SAYING THAT, WHILE THE BLACK NATIONS CONDEMNED APARTHEID, SOUTH AFRICA WAS AN INDEPENDENT STATE RULED BY PEOPLE WHO WERE AFRICANS IN EVERY SENSE OF THE WORD. NEITHER HE NOR THE FRONT LINE STATES NOR NATIONALIST LEADERS WANTED WHITES SWEEPED INTO THE SEA. THE LUSAKA DECLARATION OF 1969 STILL APPLIED. KAUNDA WARNED THAT, UNLESS THERE WAS MEANINGFUL CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA, THERE WOULD BE AN EXPLOSION WHICH WOULD QUOTE MAKE THE FRENCH REVOLUTION LOOK LIKE A CHILDREN'S SUNDAY PICNIC UNQUOTE. KAUNDA WENT ON TO COMMENT ON THE PROSPECTS FOR CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE, IN THE LIGHT OF THE SPLIT IN THE NATIONAL PARTY.

3. P W BOTHA HAS REACTED IMMEDIATELY WITH THE PREDICTABLE COMMENT THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT HAD NOTED KAUNDA'S REMARKS AND WAS ALWAYS WILLING TO DISCUSS MATTERS OF COMMON CONCERN WITH LEADERS OF OTHER COUNTRIES. P W BOTHA ADDED THAT JUDGING FROM KAUNDA'S REMARKS QUOTE HE IS NOT CORRECTLY INFORMED ON SOUTH AFRICAN CONDITIONS UNQUOTE.

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4. THE CAPE TIMES TODAY (19 MARCH) REPORTS THAT LAST NIGHT KAUNDA COMMENTED ON P W BOTHA'S REMARKS BY REITERATING HIS DESIRE FOR TALKS. HE SAID IT WAS UP TO THE SOUTH AFRICANS TO ARRANGE A MEETING. HE WAS, HOWEVER, ONLY WILLING TO DISCUSS THE DEVELOPING CONFLICT IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND APARTHEID, AND NOT SUCH MATTERS AS TRADE.

5. AS SEEN FROM HERE, IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE ANYTHING COMING OF THIS. EVEN IF A MEETING DID TAKE PLACE P W BOTHA WOULD NEVER CHANGE HIS POLICIES IN RESPONSE TO PUBLIC PRESSURE FROM KAUNDA.

FCO PLEASE PASS ALL

REID

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

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