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FROM PRETORIA 141040Z
TO FLASH FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 346 OF 14 SEPTEMBER 1984

INFO ROUTINE JOHANNESBURG

INFO SAVING CAPE TOWN AND DURBAN

FROM HEAD OF CHANCERY IN CHARGE'S ABSENCE IN CAPE TOWN

OUR TELNO 340 AND CONVERSATION ARCHER/THORPE

SUMMARY

1. THE DEMANDS FROM THE SIX MEN IN THE BRITISH CONSULATE IN DURBAN HAVE ESCALATED THIS MORNING FOLLOWING FURTHER CONSULTATION WITH THEIR LEGAL ADVISERS WHO ARE APPARENTLY ADVISING THAT THEY STAY ON FOR REASONS OF WIDER PUBLICITY RATHER THAN IN THE HOPE THAT THEY WILL RECEIVE ANY CONCESSIONS FROM THE SOUTH AFRICAN AUTHORITIES. THERE MAY BE A CASE FOR A FIRMER LINE WITH THE SIX.

DETAIL

2. DR ALLAN BOESAK, PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD ALLIANCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES VISITED THE SIX MEN IN THE CONSULATE WITH OUR AGREEMENT THIS MORNING. AN ADVOCATE (YACOOB) AND ATTORNEY (MAHOMET) WERE ALSO PRESENT. AT THE REQUEST OF THE SIX THE CONSUL AGREED THAT THEY SHOULD HAVE A PRIVATE CONSULTATION. WE BELIEVE THAT BOESAK, HELPFULLY, PRIVATELY SUGGESTED THAT THEIR CONTINUED PRESENCE IN THE CONSULATE WOULD NOT HELP THEIR CASE AND THEY MIGHT LEAVE BUT THEY SEEM TO BE PRINCIPALLY INFLUENCED BY THE ADVOCATE'S ADVICE WHICH IS THAT THEY SHOULD STAY IN THE CONSULATE.

3. WE BELIEVE THAT FOLLOWING DISCUSSION WITH THEIR ADVOCATE THEY ARE PREPARING A LIST OF DEMANDS, INCLUDING ACCESS TO A RADIO, BETTER ARRANGEMENTS FOR FEEDING AND TOILET FACILITIES AND ACCESS TO THEIR FAMILIES WITHIN THE CONSULATE.

4. BOESAK LEFT THE CONSULATE AFTER THE MEETING AND ANSWERED PRESS QUESTIONS OUTSIDE THE CONSULATE. HE WAS ASKED WHAT REPRESENTATIONS WERE BEING MADE ON BEHALF OF THE SIX TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT AND SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THESE CONCERNED THE POSSIBILITY OF THEIR RE-DETENTION AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF SUCH ACTION. HE WAS ASKED ABOUT THEIR ATTITUDE TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. HE SAID THAT THEY WERE TAKING THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AT THEIR WORD. THE GOVERNMENT HAD MADE STATEMENTS ABOUT ITS CONCERN. THEY WERE NOW LOOKING TO THE GOVERNMENT TO DO SOMETHING TO ADDRESS THE ISSUES. HE READ OUT A MESSAGE TO OTHERS IN DETENTION FROM THE SIX EXPRESSING SOLIDARITY AND SUP-

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PORT AND COMMENTED THAT HE HAD ALSO RECEIVED MESSAGES OF SUPPORT FROM ORGANISATIONS ABROAD. THE SIX'S MESSAGE REFERRED TO THE STEPS THAT THEY HAD TAKEN TO HIGHLIGHT THEIR DEMANDS. DR BOESAK WAS ASKED WHETHER THE SIX'S ARRIVAL AT THE CONSULATE ON THE EVE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION WAS A COINCIDENCE. HE SAID THAT HE DID NOT THINK SO. THEIR ACTION WAS TO BE APPLAUDED.

5. YACOOB WHO WAS PRESENT WITH DR BOESAK WAS ASKED WHETHER THERE HAD BEEN ANY RESPONSE FROM THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT TO THE SIX'S DEMANDS. HE SAID THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO RESPONSE TO A TELEX SENT TO MINISTER LE GRANGE'S OFFICE LATE YESTERDAY. (WE THINK THAT THIS MAY HAVE REFERRED SPECIFICALLY TO THE QUESTION OF ASSURANCES THAT THE SIX WOULD NOT BE RE-ARRESTED ON LEAVING THE OFFICE).

6. DR BOESAK WAS ASKED WHAT HE EXPECTED FROM WESTERN GOVERNMENTS. HE COMMENTED THAT THEY HAD MADE STATEMENTS, THE TIME HAD NOW ARRIVED FOR MEANINGFUL PRESSURE 'CLEAR AND UNEQUIVOCAL ACTION'. MRS RAMGOBIN, THE WIFE OF ONE OF THE SIX, THEN READ OUT A LIST OF COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE CONSULATE'S ACTION. SHE SAID THAT A RADIO HAD BEEN TAKEN AWAY FROM THE SIX, THAT THE GROUP HAD NOT BEEN ALLOWED TO SEE NEWSPAPERS, THAT SHE HAD NOT BEEN ALLOWED TO SEE HER HUSBAND THIS MORNING EVEN THOUGH HE HAD BEEN UNWELL, THAT THE GROUP WERE BEING KEPT IN CONDITIONS AS IF THEY WERE PRISONERS.

COMMENT

7. WE HAVE HEARD NO MORE FROM THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT SINCE THE CONTACT WITH PIK BOTHA REPORTED IN TUR. SOUTH AFRICAN MINISTERS ARE CURRENTLY INVOLVED IN THE PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION CEREMONIES IN CAPE TOWN BUT THE INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION WHICH THE SIX HAVE RECEIVED WILL BE UNWELCOME TO THE GOVERNMENT. THEY WILL PROBABLY FACE MOUNTING DEMANDS TO TAKE FIRM ACTION AND MAY WELL SUGGEST TO US THAT WE SHOULD TAKE A FIRMER LINE.

8. THE SITUATION IN DURBAN IS BECOMING MORE DIFFICULT. IN PARTICULAR THERE ARE NOW LARGE GROUPS OF RELATIVES IN THE AREA IMMEDIATELY OUTSIDE THE CONSULATE DEMANDING TO BE ADMITTED. WE ALLOWED A SMALL GROUP OF RELATIVES TO SEE THE SIX BRIEFLY LAST EVENING. THIS MAY HAVE LED OTHERS TO BELIEVE THAT IF THEY PERSIST IN THEIR DEMANDS WE SHALL AGAIN ALLOW CONTACT.

9. THE ONLY REASONABLE COURSE APPEARS TO ME TO BE FIRM IN DENYING GENERAL ACCESS TO THE SIX. THE MORE WE YIELD TO DEMANDS, THE GREATER THE DEMANDS ARE LIKELY TO BE. I ACCEPT THAT THIS WILL LEAD TO CRITICISM SUCH AS THE COMPLAINTS EXPRESSED BY MRS RAMGOBIN, BUT WE FEEL THAT WE SHOULD NOT BE PRESSURED INTO CONCESSIONS. G GSE CONSUL HAS CONFISCATED THE RADIO. THIS IS IN ACCORD WITH NORMAL PROCEDURES WHICH PROHIBIT THE USE OF RADIOS WITHIN THE CONSULATE. THE SIX WERE ALLOWED TO LOOK AT MORNING

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/NEWSPAPERS.

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NEWSPAPERS AND WE SHALL CONTINUE TO ACCEPT FOOD DELIVERED BY FAMILIES WHICH HAS SO FAR SUSTAINED THE SIX.

10. AS SEEN FROM HERE, THERE IS NOW A STRONG CMSE FORGTAKING ACTION TO TRY TO SET SOME SORT OF A DEADLINE TO THE PRESENT SITUATION BEFORE IT BECOMES EVEN MORE DIFFICULT.

11. NWE COULD REASONABLY POINT OUT THAT (A) THE CONSULATE CAN NO LINGER CONTINUE TO FUNCTION. (IT IS CURRENTLY SECHNICALLY OPEN AN BARCLAYS HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY DO NOT INTEND TO CLOSE THEIR BUILDING TO THE PUBLIC). WE HAVE NO FACILITIES TO SUPPORT PEOPLE STAYING IN TON CONSULATE INDEFINITELY. (B) THERE IS NO SIGN THAT BY THEIR PRESENCE IN THE CONSULATE THE SIX HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN WINNING ANY IMPROVEMENT IN THEIR SITUATION. THE SOUTH AFRICANS HAVE NOT AGREED TO THEIR DEMANDS. (C) THE PRINCIPLE OF INDEFINITE BOCCUPATION OF COESULAR PREMISED VSBY PERSONS WHO HAVE BEEN ADKED TO LEAVE IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.

12. IF WE FAIL TO TAKE A FIRM LINE IN THE PRESENT CASE, WE COULD WELL BE ESTABLISHING A VERY DIFFICULT PRECEDENT. THERE ARE MANY OTHER SOUTH AFRICANS WITH CIVIL RIGHTS PROBLEMS WHO MIGHT THEN PE TEMPTED TO TRY TO EMULATE THE SIX.

13. WE CANNOT BE CONFIDENT THAT THE SIX WOULD NOW COMPLY WITH A FIRMER DEMANT THAT THEY IOAPE LEAVE SHHTHEY APPEAR TO BE BUOYED UP TO STAY BUT IF WE COULD PRESENT A CIRMER LONDON LINE OUR STAFF IN DURBAN COULD TRY BY TALKING DIRECT TO THE SIX (RATHER THAN THROUGH THEIR LEGAL ADVISERS) TO GET THEM TO CO-OPERATE BY MEETING ANY NEW REQUIREMENTS.

14. ~~THE ALTERNATIVE APPEARS TO BE THAT THE SIX ARE LIKELY TO REMAIN THROUGHOUT THE WEEKEN D AND POSSIBLY INTO NEXT WEEK.~~

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IN THROUGHOUT THE WEL END AND POSSIBLY INTO NEXT WEEK. WE WOULD THEN FACE PRESSURES FROM THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT. WE COULD POSSIBLY BE INVOLVED IN A PROOOSS OF MOUNTING DEMANDS THAT WOULD MAKE IT VERY DIFFICULT TO END THE PRESENT SITUATION.

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/ 15. MEANWHILE.

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15. MEANWHIL WE ARE LIMITING FURTHER ACCESS TO THE SIX TO THEIR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVES WITH THE REQUIREMENT THAT THEY MUST MEET WITH THE CONSUL TO EXPLAIN WHY THEY ARE VMWING THE VISIT. GIVEN THE ROLE THAT YACCOB IS PLAYING, WE DO NOT THINK WE SHOULD BE TOO FORTHCOMING. NOR DO WE WISH TO ADMIT FAMILIES AS TO DO SO WILL ONLY ESCALATE DEMANDS FOR ACCESS.

TONKIN

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