

GRS 666

**CONFIDENTIAL**

CONFIDENTIAL

FM PRETORIA 311320Z JUL 85

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 160 OF 31 JULY

INFO ROUTINE JOHANNESBURG

INFO SAVING CAPE TOWN

*ms*

YOUR TELNO 109 : SOUTH AFRICA : SITUATION ROUND UP.

SUMMARY

1. DETENTIONS CONTINUE AND IT HAS BEEN A QUIETER WEEK. MANY OF THOSE ROUNDED-UP ARE YOUNG PEOPLE SUSPECTED OF INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL VIOLENCE. REPORTS FROM THE EASTERN CAPE SUGGEST THAT THE TOUGHEST POLICE ACTION IS TAKING PLACE THERE. THE GENERAL ASSUMPTION REMAINS THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S MEASURES WILL Dampen Down VIOLENCE. BUT THERE IS GREAT UNCERTAINTY ABOUT WHAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL THEN DO AS THE UNDERLYING PROBLEMS REMAIN.

DETENTIONS

2. 1273 PEOPLE ARE NOW HELD IN DETENTION UNDER EMERGENCY REGULATIONS. 13 PREVIOUSLY HELD HAVE BEEN RELEASED.

OVERALL SITUATION

3. BOTH BLACK AND WHITE CONTACTS TELL US THAT THIS HAS SO FAR BEEN A QUIETER WEEK OVERALL. THE UNREST IS STILL MAINLY IN THE EASTERN CAPE AND EAST RAND AND IS CURRENTLY IN THE FORM OF SPORADIC INCIDENTS EG. STONING OF BUSES AND CARS AND SCHOOL STAY-AWAYS. OTHER AREAS ARE RELATIVELY QUIET. THE SCHOOLS ARE RE-OPENING IN SOWETO AND ELSEWHERE. AN EXCEPTION TO THIS GRADUAL IMPROVEMENT IS THE WESTERN CAPE WHERE COLOURED UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ARE STAGING A BOYCOTT OF CLASSES AND THERE HAVE BEEN SOME INCIDENTS IN THE BLACK TOWNSHIPS OUTSIDE CAPE TOWN.

4. THE POLICE ARE NOT RELEASING INFORMATION ABOUT THE TYPE OF PEOPLE BEING DETAINED BUT OUR ENQUIRIES INDICATE THAT THOSE BEING HELD IN CUSTODY, ALTHOUGH INCLUDING SOME COMMUNITY LEADERS, TRADE UNIONISTS AND A FEW CHURCHMEN, ARE MOSTLY STUDENTS WHO ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN PLAYING A ROLE IN ORGANISING LOCAL VIOLENCE. CONTACTS CLOSE TO THE POLICE TELL US THAT THE POLICE HAVE BEEN USING THEIR INFORMER NETWORK TO ROUND-UP ALL THOSE WHO THEY BELIEVE ARE PROLONGING COMMUNITY VIOLENCE.

5. THE GOVERNMENT MAINTAIN THAT THOSE BEING DETAINED ARE BEING TREATED PROPERLY. THE FACT THAT NAMES ARE BEING RELEASED IS PERHAPS SOME REASSURANCE. ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO RELIABLE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US ABOUT WHAT IS ACTUALLY HAPPENING TO DETAINEES. THERE WILL BE A JUDICIAL REVIEW TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE SUBJECT TO THE SAME ADMINISTRATION AS ORDINARY PRISONERS.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

11

6. BEHAVIOUR OF THE POLICE APPEARS MOSTLY TO HAVE BEEN REASONABLE IN SOWETO AND WE HAVE RECEIVED A NUMBER OF REPORTS SUGGESTING THAT THE POLICE ARE ACTING WITH RESTRAINT IN THE TOWNSHIPS AROUND PRETORIA. HOWEVER WE HAVE HEARD ALLEGATIONS OF TOUGH POLICE TREATMENT OF BLACKS BEING SEARCHED OR DETAINED IN THE EASTERN CAPE. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT MUCH DEPENDS ON THE LOCAL COMMANDERS AND TO SOME EXTENT ON THE TRAINING AND INTELLIGENCE OF LOCAL POLICE UNITS. FLAGGING POLICE MORALE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN BOOSTED BY THE GRANTING OF EMERGENCY POWERS AND THE POLICE ARE NOW HOPING THAT LOCAL STUDENT ACTIVISTS WILL THEMSELVES BE DISCOURAGED FROM PROLONGING CONFRONTATION. THE SADF ARE STILL BEING USED MAINLY IN A BACK-UP ROLE AND IN CORDON-AND-SEARCH OPERATIONS BUT THEY HAVE BEEN USED MORE PROMINENTLY IN A NUMBER OF AREAS AND THERE APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN SOME DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST THE SADF IN THE EASTERN CAPE. THE MORE THE POLICE ARE OVER-STRETCHED, THE MORE CLOSELY INVOLVED ARE THE SADF LIKELY TO BECOME.

7. THE GENERAL EXPECTATION IS THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S MEASURES WILL GRADUALLY HAVE A DAMPENING EFFECT ON THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE. A RETURN TO NORMALITY WILL BE GENERALLY WELCOME NOT ONLY TO THE WHITE COMMUNITY BUT PROBABLY TO THE MAJORITY OF BLACKS. THERE IS WIDE CONCERN NEVERTHELESS ABOUT WHAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL DO NEXT. REPRESENTATIVES OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING AND AFRIKANER TRADE AND INDUSTRY BODIES ARE TO SEE THE PRESIDENT LATER THIS WEEK. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THEY WILL URGE THE GOVERNMENT TO MOVE FORWARD WITH EFFECTIVE REFORMS. THE PROGRESSIVE FEDERAL PARTY ARE ALSO DEMANDING EARLY ACTION TO IMPROVE CONDITIONS FOR BLACKS AND TO DEAL WITH THE UNDERLYING CAUSES OF THE UNREST. WE HAVE AGREED TO SEE A DELEGATION FROM THE UDF AT THE EMBASSY ON 2 AUGUST.

8. LIBERAL-MINDED SOUTH AFRICANS ARE DISAPPOINTED THAT THE STATE PRESIDENT HAS FAILED TO TAKE UP THE OFFER BY BISHOP TUTU TO MEET HIM FOR IMMEDIATE TALKS. IT HAS BEEN NOTED THAT ALTHOUGH THE STATE PRESIDENT IS SEEING THE TRADE AND INDUSTRY DELEGATION THIS WEEK HE WILL NOT BE SEEING A DELEGATION OF CHURCHMEN TO BE LED BY THE ARCHBISHOP OF CAPE TOWN UNTIL 19 AUGUST. SEE ALSO MIFT.

MOBERLY

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING STREET]

SOUTHERN AFRICA

STANDARD(PALACE)

S AF D

OADS

UND

NAD

ECDs  
SOVIET D

MR J R J JOHNSON  
CABINET OFFICE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION  
SOUTHERN AFRICA

-2-  
**CONFIDENTIAL**