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FROM U K MISSION NEW YORK 192258Z FEB 82

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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 165 OF 19 FEBRUARY

INFO IMMEDIATE SALISBURY ROUTINE WASHINGTON AND CAPE TOWN.

FROM ALLINSON

ZIMBABWE.

1. CROCKER DISCUSSED ZIMBABWE WITH ME THIS MORNING (19 FEBRUARY) IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR PROPOSED VISIT TO SALISBURY NEXT WEEK. HE EMPHASISED THAT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS WERE MAKING IT MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO CONVINCE OTHER DEPARTMENTS IN THE US GOVERNMENT, AS WELL AS CONGRESS AND BUSINESS, OF THE NEED TO SUPPORT ZIMBABWE. MOREOVER, US RELATIONS WITH ZIMBABWE WERE HAMPERED BY MISTRUST ON THE ZIMBABWEAN SIDE. FOR EXAMPLE, AN IMPORTANT AGREEMENT ON INSURANCE FOR US BUSINESS WITH ZIMBABWE UNDER NEGOTIATION FOR TEN MONTHS AND ON THE VERGE OF BEING SIGNED HAD BEEN PUT ASIDE ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE US HAD BEEN SEEKING TO INTERFERE IN ZIMBABWE'S CONDUCT OF ITS AFFAIRS AT THE UN AS A RESULT OF AN INTERVENTION BY MANGWENDE AT A CABINET MEETING.

2. CROCKER SAID THAT IF THE COURSE OF YOUR DISCUSSIONS WITH MUGABE PRESENTED A SUITABLE OPPORTUNITY, THE US WOULD FIND IT VERY HELPFUL IF YOU WERE ABLE TO MAKE TWO POINTS TO MUGABE. FIRST, THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO THOSE AMERICANS WHO WISHED TO SUPPORT ZIMBABWE IF THEY COULD BE GIVEN MORE AMMUNITION TO HELP THEM CONVINCE US PUBLIC OPINION THAT THIS WAS THE RIGHT COURSE, EG SIGNATURE OF THE INSURANCE AGREEMENT, INVESTMENT PROTECTION AND SO ON. SECOND, THE US WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE MUGABE TO BE BROUGHT TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE AMERICANS HAVE COMMUNICATED VERY STRONGLY TO THE SOUTH AFRICANS THEIR SUPPORT FOR MUGABE, THE FACT THAT ZIMBABWE WAS IN A CLASS BY ITSELF IN TERMS OF IMPORTANCE, THAT IT COULD SUCCEED GIVEN THE RIGHT HELP AND IN EFFECT HAD TOLD THE SOUTH AFRICANS NOT TO DO ANYTHING TO DESTABILISE ZIMBABWE. CROCKER ACKNOWLEDGED THAT WE HAD BEEN GIVING THE SOUTH AFRICANS A SIMILAR MESSAGE. THE RESULT HAD BEEN GOOD: THE SOUTH AFRICANS HAD LOANED LOCOMOTIVES, ROLLED OVER A LOAN AND AGREED TO TALK ABOUT RENEWING THE TRADE PREFERENCE ARRANGEMENT. BUT MUGABE DID NOT SEEM TO BELIEVE THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS STRIVING TO ACHIEVE PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE BETWEEN ZIMBABWE AND SOUTH AFRICA. THE AMERICANS WERE NOT LOOKING FOR PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THIS WHICH COULD INDEED BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE AND CAUSE THE SOUTH AFRICANS TO BACK OFF, BUT THEY WOULD LIKE TO FEEL MORE CONFIDENT THAT MUGABE APPRECIATED WHAT THEY WERE DOING.

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3. CROCKER SAID HE COULD ACCEPT THE IDEA THAT A ONE PARTY STATE MIGHT ACTUALLY BE HELPFUL FOR ZIMBABWE'S DEVELOPMENT. THE QUESTION WAS WHETHER IT COULD BE BROUGHT ABOUT BY AGREEMENT AND WITHOUT A BREACH OF PUBLIC COMMITMENTS WHICH WOULD HAVE A VERY BAD EFFECT ON PUBLIC OPINION AND WHICH MIGHT REFLECT ADVERSELY ON THE NAMIBIAN NEGOTIATIONS.

4. THE AMERICANS ARE ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT THE ECONOMIC COURSE BEING ADOPTED BY THE ZIMBABWE GOVERNMENT AND UNSURE WHETHER THE RIGHT PRIORITIES WOULD BE ADOPTED IN TRIMMING EXPENDITURE TO WHAT WAS AVAILABLE. WOULD ENOUGH BE DONE TO KEEP BUSINESS ALIVE OR WOULD TOO MUCH EMPHASIS BE PLACED ON MEETING PARTY DEMANDS?

5. I UNDERTOOK TO REPORT CROCKER'S REQUEST TO YOU, BUT POINTED OUT THAT IN VIEW OF RECENT EVENTS IT WAS HARD TO PREDICT HOW OUR DISCUSSIONS MIGHT GO.

PARSONS

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