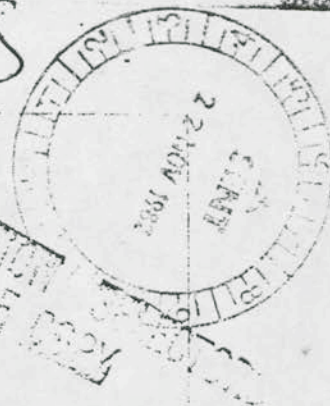


ZIMBABWE

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TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 657 OF 19 NOVEMBER

INFO ROUTINE WASHINGTON, PARIS, BONN, OTTAWA, PRETOPIA.

VICE PRESIDENT BUSH'S VISIT.

1. THE US AMBASSADOR TOLD CONTACT GROUP COLLEAGUES YESTERDAY EVENING THAT THE VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT HAD GONE EXTREMELY WELL. BUSH HAD LEFT WITH POSITIVE IMPRESSION OF THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY, AND THE QUALITY OF THE MINISTERS HE HAD MET, NOTABLY THE PRIME MINISTER (WITH WHOM HE SPENT SEVERAL HOURS IN ALL, COUNTING TWO DINNERS).

2. AT THE CONCLUDING DINNER MUGABE PROPOSED AN EXTEMPORÉ TOAST TO US/ZIMBABWE RELATIONS IN SUCH WARM TERMS THAT EVEN THE HARDEST HEADED OF THE VISITING TEAM FOUND IT MOVING. IN ALL, THE ATMOSPHERICS WERE EXCELLENT (DESPITE THE DISGRACEFUL INEPTITUDE OF THE ZIMBABWEAN CHEF DE PROTOCOL, WHO NEARLY RUINED EVERYTHING). PRESS COVERAGE WAS FULL, FRIENDLY AND WELCOMING, THOUGH REPORTING OF MUGABE'S PUBLIC SPEECHES INEVITABLY HIGH-LIGHTED HIS STATEMENTS ON APARTHEID, SOUTH AFRICAN INTRANSIGENCE ON NAMIBIA AND ATTEMPTS TO DESTABILISE ZIMBABWE.

3. THE VISIT HAD LARGELY BEEN A MATTER OF FAMILIARISATION FOR THE VICE PRESIDENT, AND NOTHING MUCH ZMERGED FROM THE SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS THAT WAS NEW.

DETAILED POINTS:

HOSTAGES.

4. MUGABE WAS AT PAINS TO ASSURE BUSH OF THE ZIMBABWE GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE AND DETERMINATION TO DO EVERYTHING IN THEIR POWER TO FIND THE HOSTAGES AND SECURE THEIR RELEASE.

HUMAN RIGHTS.

5. MUGABE STRESSED HIS GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS AND SAID WITH REGARD TO PRESENT DETAINEES THAT THE JUDICIAL PROCESS WOULD TAKE ITS COURSE AND THAT IF THE COURTS FOUND THAT CONFESSIONS HAD BEEN EXTRACTED BY TORTURE THEY WOULD RULE THEM INADMISSIBLE AS EVIDENCE. THAT WAS THE COURTS' BUSINESS. THE LAWYERS HAD ACTED IMPROPERLY IN MAKING THEIR ACCUSATIONS AT A PRESS CONFERENCE.

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6. MUGABE REGRETTED THE LACK OF RECENT PROGRESS BUT HE MADE NO CRITICISM OF THE CONTACT GROUP AND HIS TONE AND PHRASING WERE POSITIVE. HE SAID US INSISTENCE ON PARALLEL PROGRESS ON CUBAN WITHDRAWAL FROM ANGOLA HAD CREATED AN UNFORTUNATE LINKAGE BETWEEN AN ISSUE WHICH HE FELT COULD NOW BE RESOLVED, NAMIBIAN INDEPENDENCE, AND A MORE DIFFICULT ISSUE THAT WOULD TAKE LONGER AND WHICH THE UNITED STATES SHOULD TAKE UP BILATERALLY WITH THE ANGOLANS. THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE NAMIBIAN PEOPLE WAS A RIGHT OF PRINCIPLE THAT SHOULD NOT BE NEGATED OR DELAYED BECAUSE OF THE ISSUES OF CUBAN TROOP WITHDRAWAL.

7. BUSH SAID A SETTLEMENT REQUIRED AN INCENTIVE FOR EVERY PARTY - PROGRESS ON CUBAN WITHDRAWAL WAS ESSENTIAL FOR SUCCESS. THE UNITED STATES WAS SENSITIVE TO ANGOLAN INTERNAL SECURITY CONCERNS AND HAD NO INTEREST IN PREJUDICING THEM.

SOUTH AFRICA.

8. IN RESPONSE TO MUGABE'S REMARKS ABOUT SOUTH AFRICAN DESTABILISATION AND ZIMBABWE'S NEED FOR AMERICAN HELP WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS, BUSH EMPHASISED THE UNITED STATES' COMMITMENT TO ZIMBABWE'S SUCCESS AND TO STABILITY IN THE REGION, SAYING THAT ONE COUNTRY SHOULD NOT TRY TO DESTABILISE ANOTHER.

I D SMITH.

9. MUGABE CRITICISED REMARKS MADE BY MR IAN SMITH ON HIS RECENT VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES.

ELAM

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THIS TELEGRAM
WAS NOT
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