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UNCLASSIFIED
FM CAPE TOWN
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 50
OF 030715Z FEBRUARY 90
INFO IMMEDIATE LUSAKA, HARARE
INFO PRIORITY GABORONE, LUANDA, WINDHOEK, DAR ES SALAAM, NAIROBI
INFO PRIORITY LAGOS, MASERU, MBABANE, UKMIS NEW YORK, WASHINGTON
INFO PRIORITY PARIS, BONN
INFO ROUTINE PRETORIA, JOHANNESBURG, DURBAN

MY TELNO 40: DE KLERK'S SPEECH: REACTIONS

SUMMARY

1. REFORMS GREETED ENTHUSIASTICALLY. BUTHELEZI AND ELEMENTS OF THE PAC PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE SAG FORTHWITH. UDF ARGUING THAT NOT ALL CONDITIONS HAVE YET BEEN MET.

DETAIL

2. THE UDF HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE ON 2 FEBRUARY FOLLOWING DE KLERK'S OPENING OF PARLIAMENT SPEECH. THE MOVES WERE WELCOMED, BUT THERE WAS STILL A LONG WAY TO GO. MAYEKISO CALLED FOR THE STRUGGLE TO BE INTENSIFIED IN THE WORK PLACE AND IN THE TOWNSHOPS. DULLAH OMAR POINTED OUT THAT THE EMERGENCY REGULATIONS AND THE INTERNAL SECURITY ACT WERE STILL IN PLACE: THIS CAST SOME DOUBT AS TO WHETHER EXILED ANC MEMBERS COULD OR SHOULD RETURN HOME. MOLEFE CALLED FOR THE RELEASE OF ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS, INCLUDING THOSE CONVICTED OF VIOLENT CRIME. TO LEAVE THE LATTER IN PRISON WAS TO IMPOSE A FORM OF 'APARTHEID' ON POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS.

3. ON MANDELA, LEKOTA SAID THAT THE UDF DID NOT WANT MANDELA JUST FREED 'TO WALK AIMLESSLY ABOUT THE STREETS', BUT RELEASED INTO A SITUATION IN WHICH HE COULD MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS A SETTLEMENT.

4. THE LEADING PAC LAWYER ERNEST MOSENEKE TOLD US THAT HE AND HIS AFRICANIST FRIENDS WERE AMAZED AND DELIGHTED THAT DE KLERK HAD 'JUMPED OVER THE RUBICON': EXILES COULD HARDLY BELIEVE THAT THEY COULD NOW COME HOME. BLACK ORGANISATIONS WOULD NOW HAVE TO SHOW THEIR TRUE SUPPORT. THE MAIN POLITICAL BATTLE WOULD NOW BE OVER THE MODERATE CENTRE IN SOUTH AFRICA POLITICS - THE DAYS OF LEFT-WING EXTREMISM WERE NUMBERED.

5. THE PAC ITSELF HAS ISSUED A STATEMENT SAYING IT IS PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE 'AS SOON AS TOMORROW' PROVIDED THAT THE AGENDA INCLUDED

OWNERSHIP OF RESOURCES PARTICULARLY LAND. IT WAS 'UNREALISTIC' TO EXPECT THE PAC TO DISSOLVE THEIR MILITARY WING UNTIL THE OBJECTIVES THAT IT HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED TO ACHIEVE HAD BEEN MET. BISHOP STANLEY MOGOPA SAID THAT DE KLERK'S SPEECH WAS A DECISIVE TURNING POINT. EVERYONE NOW WOULD HAVE TO COMPROMISE AND CHANGE - IF THE NATIONALIST PARTY COULD, ONLY SELFISHNESS AND GREED COULD STOP OTHER PARTIES DOING THE SAME.

6. CHIEF MINISTER BUTHELEZI SAID THAT HE WAS NOW PREPARED TO ENTER INTO NEGOTIATIONS WITH DE KLERK. HE URGED OTHER BLACK LEADERS TO EXPRESS THEIR WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE ALSO. IF BLACKS NOW FAILED TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE THROUGH NON-VIOLENT MEANS, THEY HAD ONLY THEMSELVES TO BLAME. DE KLERK'S SPEECH WAS ALL THAT COULD HAVE BEEN HOPED FOR.

7. SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES GENERAL SECRETARY FRANK CHIKANE SAID THAT IT WAS A SIGN OF HOPE THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD FULFILLED AT LEAST SOME OF THE CONDITIONS FOR TALKS. DE KLERK HAD OPENED UP THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER DIALOGUE BETWEEN CHURCH LEADERS AND HIMSELF IN WHICH CHURCHES COULD PLAY A ROLE FACILITATING THE CREATION OF CONDITIONS REQUIRED FOR NEGOTIATIONS.

8. SLABBERT SAID THAT DE KLERK HAD COURAGEOUSLY CREATED A SPACE IN WHICH ALL THE PARTIES COULD OPERATE. THE DANGER ZONE NOW WAS NO LONGER THE GOVERNMENT BUT RADICALISM AND MILITANCY ON THE EXTREME LEFT AND RIGHT.

9. IN CONTRAST TO PW BOTHA'S DISASTROUS 'RUBICON' SPEECH, THE FINANCIAL RAND STRENGTHENED SHARPLY AND SHARE PRICES ROSE ON THE JOHANNESBURG STOCK EXCHANGE. THERE WERE STRONG EXPRESSIONS OF CONGRATULATION AND SUPPORT FROM THE BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT.

RENWICK

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