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Pl. file

145157
MDADAN 5892

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FM CAPE TOWN EMBASSY
TO DESKBY 151030Z FCO
TELNO 102
OF 150745Z FEBRUARY 90
INFO IMMEDIATE HARARE, LUSAKA, UKMIS NEW YORK, WASHINGTON

ADVANCE COPY

MANDELA

1. AS REPORTED BY TELEPHONE, PIK BOTHA CALLED ME IN AN AGITATED STATE LAST NIGHT TO SAY THAT REUTER WERE CARRYING A NEWS FLASH BASED ON AN INTERVIEW MANDELA HAD GIVEN TO JAMES ROBBINS OF THE BBC WHICH ALLEGED THAT HE HAD SAID THAT SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT INSTALLATIONS WERE LEGITIMATE TARGETS FOR ANC GUERILLA ATTACKS.

2. I TOLD PIK BOTHA THAT WHAT WAS NEEDED WAS TO OBTAIN IMMEDIATELY THE FULL TEXT OF MANDELA'S REMARKS. HAVING CHECKED WITH REUTER, I TOLD PIK BOTHA THAT THEY WERE CORRECTING THEIR SUMMARY OF MANDELA'S REMARKS AND THAT THEY SHOULD BE SEEN IN THE WHOLE CONTEXT OF WHAT HE HAD SAID. HE HAD CALLED ON THE WHITE COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT AND HAD TALKED OF THE NEED FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AND THE NEED TO MEET THE CONCERNS OF THE WHITES. HE ALSO HAD DESCRIBED DE KLERK AS FLEXIBLE AND A MAN OF INTEGRITY. PIK BOTHA SAID THAT HE WAS STILL CONCERNED ABOUT MANDELA'S USE OF THE PRESENT TENSE: 'WE ARE CONCERNED WITH GOVERNMENT INSTALLATIONS'.

3. ROBBINS OF THE BBC SAID THAT MANDELA'S REMARKS HAD BEEN AMBIGUOUS. HE HAD SEEMED UNWILLING TO INDICATE THAT ANC POLICY HAD CHANGED. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH NBC TELEVISION LAST NIGHT MANDELA WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THE ARMED STUGGLE SHOULD CONTINUE UNTIL THE GOVERNMENT HAD MET THE ANC'S CONDITIONS FOR NEGOTIATIONS.

4. THE GOVERNMENT SO FAR ARE REACTING CALMLY TO THIS. I HAVE POINTED OUT TO THEM THAT THERE HAVE NOT BEEN ANY ANC ATTACKS. VIRTUALLY ALL THE VIOLENCE HERE SINCE MANDELA'S RELEASE HAS BEEN INTRA-BLACK (ANC/UDF VERSUS INKATHA IN NATAL AND CLASHES BETWEEN THE ANC AND PAC IN THE EASTERN CAPE).

5. FCO PLEASE ADVANCE TO NO. 10.

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MIPT: MANDELA

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE RELEVANT PART OF THE EXCHANGE BETWEEN MANDELA AND JAMES ROBBINS:

ROBBINS: WHAT PRESSURE ARE YOU GOING TO BRING TO BEAR ON THE GOVERNMENT. MANY WHITE PEOPLE ARE ALARMED BY YOUR COMMITMENT TO ARMED STRUGGLE AS PART OF THE STRUGGLE. YOU SAID THE STRUGGLE MUST BE INTENSIFIED, DOES THAT MEAN YOU ARE GOING BACK TO PUTTING BOMBS IN SHOPPING CENTRES?

MANDELA: IF THE WHITES WANT US TO MOVE AWAY FROM AN ATMOSPHERE OF CONFRONTATION AND CONFLICT THEN THEY MUST SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT IN ITS EFFORT TO REACH A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT.

ROBBINS: WHAT DOES YOUR STATEMENT INTENSIFYING THE STRUGGLE INCLUDING THE ARMED STRUGGLE, WHAT DOES IT MEAN, DOES IT MEAN BOMBING TARGETS AGAIN IN SOUTH AFRICA.

MANDELA: THE POLICY OF THE ANC IS WELL KNOWN. WE MADE IT PERFECTLY CLEAR FROM THE OUTSET THAT WE ARE CONCERNED WITH GOVERNMENT INSTALLATIONS, AND ER

ROBBINS: BUT DURING YOUR TIME IN PRISON MANY WHITE CIVILIANS WERE KILLED BY BOMBS.

MANDELA: NO, JUST AS MANY WHITES HAVE KILLED MANY BLACKS. YOU CAN'T AVOID PEOPLE BEING CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE WHEN TWO GROUPS ARE SHOOTING AT EACH OTHER. AND PEOPLE MUST NOT BE WORRIED ONLY BY THE CASUALTIES CAUSED BY THE OPPRESSED, THEY MUST ALSO BE WORRIED, YOU SEE, ABOUT THE SERIES OF CASUALTIES WHICH HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY THE GOVERNMENT, YOU SEE, OVER MANY DECADES. WE OURSELVES OUR POLICY IS VERY CLEAR WE ARE CONCERNED WITH GOVERNMENT INSTALLATIONS.

2. FCO PLEASE ADVANCE NO. 10.

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South African Embassy

LONDON WC2N 5DP

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AMB1/P

14 February 1990

Mr Charles Powell
Private Secretary to
the Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AH

Dear Mr Powell

The South African Minister of Foreign Affairs has requested that the attached South African Press Association-Reuter report be brought to your urgent attention.

The South African Government is urgently attempting to verify Mr Mandela's remarks concerning possible terrorist action, but wishes to stress that should they in any way be correct, this would create a situation of extreme seriousness. The South African Government is committed to peaceful change and although aware of the British Government's views on violence, nonetheless requests the unequivocal rejection of Mr Mandela's stance.

Yours sincerely

P R Killen
P R Killen
AMBASSADOR

SAPA-Reuter Report:

"Nelson Mandela said on Wednesday South African Government installations were legitimate targets for the African National Congress (ANC) armed struggle against apartheid.

The freed black nationalist leader, asked if guerrillas would include targets like shopping centres in the ANC campaign against white rule, told the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC): 'We are concerned with government installations ...'

White civilians would not be deliberately attacked but could be caught in crossfire. Mandela had been questioned about his endorsement on release from prison on Sunday of ANC guerrilla warfare.

Mandela, 71, was speaking in one of his first interviews since his release from a 1964 life sentence for plotting to overthrow white rule. He was convicted of planning the sabotage of power lines and government buildings. Asked about the deaths of white civilians in ANC attacks, Mandela countered ... 'just as many whites have killed many blacks'.

'You can't avoid people being caught up in crossfire when two groups are shooting at each other,' he said.

'The people must not be worried only by the casualties which are caused by the oppressed, they must also be worried about the series of casualties which have been caused by the government over many decades'.

Mandela told a news conference in Cape Town on Monday the ANC had no option but to continue its 30-year guerrilla war against white rule while the violence of apartheid continued.

Hundreds of black and white civilians have died in ANC attacks with firearms, bombs and landmines.

In the worst attack, 19 people died in a car bomb blast in Pretoria in 1983. Other attacks have hit shopping centres, an amusement arcade and railway stations.

Mandela said that if whites, outnumbered five-to-one by voteless blacks, wanted the armed struggle to end they should support the white-led government's efforts to negotiate a settlement with black leaders.

He said there was no political organisation in the country with the record of commitment to peace that could match the ANC. If whites want us to move away from the atmosphere

of confrontation and conflict then they must support the government in its effort to reach a peaceful settlement.' - He said. Mandela said White fears of black majority rule were taken very seriously by ANC leaders. 'Their (whites) concept of group (race) rights means they are not ready to accept the principle of one man one vote. But we are determined to negotiate on the basis of this demand,' he said. Mandela added, however, that the ANC would be prepared to address White fears of being swamped."

Sapa-Reuter.

Russel Norton, Chief Sub