

D/B 317630Z

[SOUTHERN AFRICA] [ADVANCE COPIES]

24-X

PS (6)
PS/SIR I GILMOUR (3)
PS/MR LUCE
PS/PUS
MR DAY

MR COLLINS DOT.
MR R L WADE-GERY
CABINET OFFICE
NO 10. DOWNING STREET

~~SIR A AGLAND~~
~~Mr Goodson~~
SIR L ALLINSON

IMMEDIATE

LORD N G LENNOX
MR P H MOBERLY

ED/S AF D
ED/C AF D
ED/UND
ED/DEFENCE D

MR FREELAND LEGAL ADVISER RM K200A
ED/NEWS D

RESIDENT CLERK

CONFIDENTIAL

DESKBY FCO 311630Z AUGUST 1981

DESKBY UKMIS NEW YORK 311700Z AUGUST 1981

FM CAPE TOWN EMBASSY 311600Z AUG 81

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 169 OF 31 AUGUST

INFO IMMEDIATE UKMIS NEW YORK

INFO PRIORITY PARIS, WASHINGTON, BONN, OTTAWA, LUANDA

UKMIS NEW YORK TELNO 781: ANGOLA / SOUTH AFRICA: SECURITY COUNCIL

1. IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CURRENT SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATES IT MAY BE HELPFUL TO HAVE A JUDGEMENT AS SEEN FROM HERE, OF THE RECENT SOUTH AFRICAN ACTION IN ANGOLA, AND AN EVALUATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN MOTIVATION.

2. I DO NOT THINK THE RECENT ACTION CAN POSSIBLY BE DESCRIBED AS HOT PURSUIT. NOR DO I THINK THAT THE OPERATION WAS A PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKE IN THE SENSE THAT THE SOUTH AFRICANS WERE SEEKING TO FRUSTRATE AN IMMINENT SWAPO ATTACK. THE SOUTH AFRICAN ATTACK WAS CLEARLY PLANNED WELL IN ADVANCE, WAS ON A SUBSTANTIAL SCALE, AND INVOLVED A DEEP PENETRATION OF ANGOLAN TERRITORY. THE SOUTH AFRICANS SEEM TO HAVE REASONED THAT A DEEP, HARD BLOW AGAINST SWAPO WOULD WEAKEN SWAPO'S OFFENSIVE CAPABILITY.

I have spoken to FCO accordingly.

fn

Please note the recommendation in para 3. I will read read that para before talking about the SWA

THE SOUTH AFRICANS SEEM TO HAVE REASONED THAT A DEEP, HARD BLOW AGAINST SWAPO WOULD WEAKEN SWAPO'S OFFENSIVE CAPABILITY. AT THE SAME TIME THE BALANCE OF THE EVIDENCE AVAILABLE TO ME SUGGESTS THAT A MAIN SOUTH AFRICAN OBJECTIVE WAS TO KNOCK OUT ADVANCED NEW ANTI-AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS WHICH WOULD HAVE DENIED THE SOUTH AFRICANS THEIR PRESENT ABILITY TO OVERFLY ANGOLA SAFELY AT WILL. A SUBSIDIARY OBJECTIVE MAY HAVE BEEN THE DESTRUCTION OF SWAPO'S LOGISTIC INFRA-STRUCTURE, IN PARTICULAR THEIR SUPPLY OF LANDMINES WHICH WERE SUSPECTED TO BE IN FAPLA STORAGE FACILITIES. IF THE SOUTH AFRICAN MILITARY HAD RECOMMENDED THAT THE OPERATION WAS A MATTER OF MILITARY NECESSITY, NO OTHER CONSIDERATIONS WOULD HAVE STOOD IN ITS WAY. IN SHORT, THE SOUTH AFRICANS LAUNCHED A MAJOR ATTACK ON THEIR OWN INITIATIVE TO SECURE ADVANTAGE FOR THEMSELVES IN WHAT THEY CLAIM WITH SOME JUSTIFICATION TO BE A DEFENSIVE WAR.

3. IF WE DECIDE IN THE END TO ABSTAIN ON (OR EVEN VOTE FOR) A RESOLUTION WHICH THE AMERICANS VETO, I RECOMMEND THAT, QUITE APART FROM OUR PUBLIC EXPLANATION OF VOTE IN NEW YORK, YOU SHOULD CONSIDER A CONFIDENTIAL PERSONAL MESSAGE TO PIK BOTHA DESIGNED TO PRESERVE GOODWILL AND MAINTAIN COMMUNICATION, BEARING IN MIND IN PARTICULAR THE MATIMBA POWER STATION CONTRACT. IF YOU WOULD FIND THIS SUGGESTION HELPFUL, EVEN ON A CONTINGENCY BASIS, I SHOULD BE PLEASED TO TELEGRAPH A DRAFT ON RECEIPT OF A TELEPHONE CALL.

REID

NNNN

126/31

XX DBY