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FM LUANDA 011020Z DEC 81

TO IMMEDIATE FCC

TELEGRAM NUMBER 563 OF 1 DECEMBER

INFO IMMEDIATE MODUK CAPE TOWN PRETORIA UKMIS NEW YORK LUSAKA  
DAR ES SALAAM MAPUTO GABORONE SALISBURY LAGOS KINSHASA WASHINGTON  
INFO SAVING LISBON

MIPTS NOT TO ALL)

REFINERY

1. A SENIOR EXPATRIATE EXECUTIVE AT THE REFINERY TOLD ME THAT THE ATTACK WAS CAREFULLY PREPARED AND ORGANISED. THE RAIDING PARTY HAD DETAILED KNOWLEDGE OF THE LAY-OUT OF THE REFINERY AND PROBABLY ENTERED WHEN THE NIGHT SHIFT WAS CHANGING AT 2300 HOURS ON SUNDAY.
2. IT IS BELIEVED THAT ROCKETS FIRED FROM BAZOOKA TYPE WEAPONS MAY HAVE BEEN USED AGAINST SOME OF THE TANKS AND THAT IN ONE CASE THE ROCKET PENETRATED THE TANK BUT DID NOT EXPLODE THE CONTENTS. THE FUEL LEAKED FROM THE TANK AND WAS IGNITED AS IT SPREAD OUT. THE RAID IS BELIEVED TO HAVE ABORTED PARTIALLY WHEN ONE OF THE RAIDERS SLIPPED AND DETONATED THE CHARGES HE AND POSSIBLY OTHER COMPANIONS WERE CARRYING. THREE FEET WERE IDENTIFIED AND THEREFORE IT IS BELIEVED THAT AT LEAST TWO OF THE RAIDERS WERE KILLED. BEFORE THIS MISHAP TINED CHARGES HAD ALREADY BEEN PLACED AGAINST A NUMBER OF TANKS AND THESE SUBSEQUENTLY DETONATED. HAD THE ACCIDENT NOT OCCURRED THE REFINERY WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY HAVE BEEN TOTALLY DESTROYED. THIS RESULT WOULD ALSO HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED HAD THE RAIDERS KNOCKED OUT THE WAZER PUMPING STATION.
3. THE ATTACK IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN FOLLOWED BY SOME PANIC AND MANY OF THE ANGOLAN REFINERY STAFF FLED. LAST NIGHT IN SPITE OF DANGER OF A FOLLOW-UP RAID TO FINISH OFF REFINERY AND NEARBY

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/ INSTALLATIONS

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INSTALLATIONS NO ADDITIONAL GUARDS HAD BEEN PLACED ON THE REFINERY OR THE PIPELINE TO THE NEARBY KWANZA FIELD. COMPLAINTS WERE MADE TO FAPLA BY EXPATRIATE MANAGEMENT. (THIS IN SPITE OF VISIT OF PRESIDENT EARLIER IN DAY AND VISITS BY A SUCCESSION OF MOST SENIOR ARMY OFFICERS.)

4. AMONG THE EXPLOSIVES WHICH WERE NOT DETONATED ONE IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN PLACED ON THE MAIN SUPPLY PIPE TO THE TANKER INSTALLATION IN THE HARBOUR. THE DESTRUCTION OF THIS FACILITY WOULD HAVE BROUGHT REFINING OPERATIONS TO A HALT FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD.

5. DURING LAST NIGHT (30 NOVEMBER /1 DECEMBER) SOME OIL CONTINUED TO ENTER THE REFINERY FROM THE KWANZA FIELD BECAUSE VALVES HAD BEEN IMPROPERLY CLOSED. THIS OIL BEGAN TO FEED THE FIRE AND ANOTHER STORAGE TANK EXPLODED IN EARLY HOURS OF THIS MORNING AS A RESULT OF HEAT. ALL IS NOW BELIEVED TO BE UNDER CONTROL.

6. YOU MAY RECALL THAT IN BOOK FIRE POWER BY EX MERCENARY A PLAN FOR ATTACKING LUANDA REFINERY FROM THE HARBOUR WAS DISCUSSED.

7. ALTHOUGH NOT REPORTED IN TODAY'S JORNAL DE ANGOLA LOY ALLEGED THAT QUOTE NORTH AMERICAN IMPERIALISM UNQUOTE SHARED WITH SOUTH AFRICA RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ATTACK.

8. THIS COMMANDO RAID CAME VERY CLOSE TO PLUNGING ANGOLA INTO ECONOMIC CHAOS AND LOY WAS RIGHT IN IMPLYING THAT IF IT HAD SUCCEEDED IT MIGHT WELL HAVE LED TO THE TOTAL DESTABILISATION OF THE COUNTRY.

FCO PLEASE PASS ALL

KENNEDY

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING STREET]  
[REPEATED AS REQUESTED]

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