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FM LUANDA 001530Z DEC 81
TO PRIORITY FCC
TELETYPE NUMBER 582 OF 9 DECEMBER
INFO PRIORITY CAPE TOWN WASHINGTON

ANGOLA

1. MY CONVERSATION WITH PAULO JORGE THIS MORNING WAS A SAD, EVEN MOVING, OCCASION.
2. THE FOREIGN MINISTER EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR OUR STATEMENT ON THE REPORT PUT OUT BY THE SOUTH AFRICANS ON THE MILITARY OPERATION CARRIED OUT IN ANGOLA LAST MONTH.
3. THE MINISTER SAID THAT THE ANGOLAN AUTHORITIES KNOW THAT THE ATTACK ON THE LUANDA REFINERY WAS A COMMANDO RAID LAUNCHED BY THE SOUTH AFRICANS. THEY HAD IN THEIR POSSESSION CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE, MUCH OF WHICH THEY HAD NOT PUBLICLY REVEALED.
4. PAULO JORGE WENT ON TO TALK IN A GENERAL AND DISCURSIVE WAY ABOUT THE GRAVITY OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH HE FACED. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD NOT DISGUISE FROM ME THAT ANGOLA WAS NOW IN A VERY SERIOUS ECONOMIC SITUATION. HE BELIEVED THAT THE SOUTH AFRICANS WERE NOW BENT UPON THE COMPLETE DESTRUCTION OF ANGOLA. HE HAD BEEN GIVING THE MATTER MUCH THOUGHT AND WAS DRIVEN TO THE CONCLUSION THAT SOUTH AFRICA COULD NOT PURSUE TO SUCH LENGTHS SO EXTREME A POLICY WITHOUT SUPPORT FROM SOME OTHER SOURCE AND HE WAS NOW CONVINCED THAT WASHINGTON WAS FUNDAMENTALLY HOSTILE TO ANGOLA. HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY BUT THE CONCLUSION WAS INEVITABLE. ANGOLA KNEW THAT THE UNITED STATES SUPPORTED UNITA BUT HAD IT BEEN NECESSARY TO RECEIVE SAVIMBI LAST WEEK BY SO MANY SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE US GOVERNMENT? HE FOUND IT HARD TO UNDERSTAND WHY ANGOLA SHOULD BE THE CENTRE OF SO MUCH EXTERNAL INTERFERENCE AND DID NOT BELIEVE THAT HER MINERAL WEALTH JUSTIFIED THIS INTERVENTION.
5. I LIMITED MY COMMENTS TO A REMINDER THAT YOU HAD REPEATEDLY MADE CLEAR THIS SUMMER BRITAIN'S SYMPATHY FOR ANGOLA IN THE FACE OF EXTERNAL ATTACK AND THAT OUR EUROPEAN PARTNERS HAD MADE SIMILAR EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY. I SAID THAT I HOPED THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD NOT LOSE ALL CONFIDENCE IN THE UNITED STATES WHICH WAS PLAYING A CRUCIAL ROLE IN THE NAMIBIA NEGOTIATIONS. I SUGGESTED THAT THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF THE UNITED STATES BEING MOTIVATED BY INTEREST IN ANGOLA'S MINERAL WEALTH. THE UNITED STATES WAS MORE CONCERNED WITH THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE DOMINANT POLITICAL PRESENCE WHICH THE SOVIET UNION SEEMED SOMETIMES TO BE ACQUIRING. PAULO JORGE COULD NOT SEE WHY IT WAS MORE ACCEPTABLE THAT WESTERN NATIONS SHOULD HAVE A DOMINANT INFLUENCE THAN EASTERN NATIONS. I SAID THAT WHILST WE RESPECTED THE RIGHT OF EVERY COUNTRY TO DEVELOP ITS OWN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY IT WAS PART OF OUR CONVICTION THAT THERE WERE DIFFERENCES IN KIND BETWEEN THE INFLUENCE EXERCISED BY WESTERN COUNTRIES AND THE INFLUENCE WHICH THE SOVIET UNION EXERCISED. THE ONE PERMITTED A DEGREE OF FREEDOM OF CHOICE WHICH WE DID NOT BELIEVE THE SECOND ALLOWED.

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6. PAULO JORGE SAID TO ME THAT HE WAS STILL PONDERING THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE REFINERY RAID AND WHAT HE BELIEVED TO BE THE DIRECTION OF UNITED STATES POLICY AND SOUTH AFRICAN POLICY TOWARDS ANGOLA. HE WARNED ME THAT AT THE CONCLUSION OF HIS ANALYSIS HE MIGHT BE FORCED TO TAKE UP ATTITUDES WHICH I WOULD REGARD AS HARD.

7. PAULO JORGE IS OBVIOUSLY A WORRIED MAN AND THIS GOVERNMENT IS IN SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES. THERE IS A DANGER THAT THE ANGOLANS WILL COMMIT THEMSELVES EVEN MORE FIRMLY TO THE SOVIET UNION. I BELIEVE THAT THESE DEVELOPMENTS ARE PLACING IN JEOPARDY OUR NAMIBIA STRATEGY. AS I READ HIM PAULO JORGE IS COMING ROUND TO THE VIEW THAT SOUTH AFRICA'S AIM IS THE FORCIBLE OVERTHROW OF THE MPLA GOVERNMENT AND THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS SECRETLY SANCTIONED THAT POLICY. FROM THIS HE INFERS THAT WHILST FOUR OF THE MEMBERS OF THE FIVE ARE IN GOOD FAITH THE REAL PURPOSE OF SOUTH AFRICA AND OF THE UNITED STATES IS SIMPLY TO USE THE NEGOTIATIONS TO BUY TIME WHILST THE PROCESS OF DESTABILISATION IS PRESSED TO ITS CONCLUSION.

8. IF THESE DANGERS ARE TO BE MINIMISED SOME SORT OF SIGNAL THAT THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT APPROVE OF VIOLENT ATTACK UPON ANGOLA WOULD BE HELPFUL. THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE THAT AT THEIR LUSAKA MEETING PRESIDENT KAUNDA WILL URGE DOS SANTOS NOT TO LOSE HEART AND WILL RECALL THAT IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE ZIMBABWE SETTLEMENT ZAMBIA WAS SUBJECTED TO EXCEPTIONALLY VIOLENT ATTACK FROM RHODESIA. NEVERTHELESS I BELIEVE THAT THERE IS NOW A DANGER THAT THE ANGOLANS WILL DECIDE THAT THE UNITED STATES IS THEIR IMPLACABLE ENEMY WITH WHOM IT IS POINTLESS TO NEGOTIATE, WITHIN OR OUTSIDE THE FIVE.

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