

Zimbabwe

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FM HARARE 021030Z MAR 83/ CORRECTED VERSION

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 178 OF 2 MARCH

INFO PRIORITY MODU: (DI4 AND DS 11)

ROUTINE GABORONE, CAPE TOWN, PRETORIA, LUSAKA AND WASHINGTON.

MY TELNO 165 (NOT TO ALL) : INTERNAL SITUATION.

1. GOVERNMENT PRESSURE AGAINST NKOMO AND ZAPU - AND VILIFICATION IN THE MEDIA - CONTINUES UNABATED. THE ZIMBABWEAN PRESS HAVE GIVEN PROMINENCE TO REPORTS, ATTRIBUTED TO CAPTURED DISSIDENTS, OF A ZAPU MILITARY WING - 'SUPER ZAPU' - BASED AT PIKWE (SIC) - PRESUMABLY DUKWE IN BOTSWANA AND ALLEGEDLY (ARL TRAINING 'HARD CORE ZAPU ELEMENTS' BENT ON RADICALISING THE DISSIDENTS, AND (B) SENDING MEN TO SOUTH AFRICA FOR MILITARY TRAINING.

MUGABE ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE ALLEGED SOUTH AFRICAN CONNECTION IN A SPEECH LAST WEEKEND. HE SAID THE GOVERNMENT HAD RECENTLY DISCOVERED A POSITIVE LINK AND A DESTABILISATION ALLIANCE BETWEEN ZAPU AND SOUTH AFRICA - THE 'INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL THREATS'. IT WAS TO NKOMO'S UNDYING SHAME THAT HE SHOULD SEEK THE ACTIVE SUPPORT OF SOUTH AFRICA TO CAUSE CHAOS IN ZIMBABWE. WHAT DID HE HOPE TO GAIN? USHEWOKUNZE (MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS) RESTATED ON 28 FEBRUARY THAT NKOMO HAD 'SEVERAL CHARGES TO ANSWER': INTER ALIA THAT HE HAD MADE FALSE STATEMENTS LIKELY TO CAUSE ALARM AND DESPONDENCY, HAD ILLEGALLY DEALT IN EMERALDS, AND HAD FAILED TO DECLARE CURRENCY AT A POINT OF EXIT (REVERBERATIONS OF HIS DETENTION AT BULAWAYO AIRPORT). USHEWOKUNZE DENIED CLAIMS BY NKOMO THAT HE WAS UNDER HOUSE ARREST (ALTHOUGH NKOMO EVIDENTLY HAS TO INFORM THE POLICE WHEN HE LEAVES HIS HOME IN BULAWAYO). BUT THERE IS MUCH SPECULATION AMONGST WESTERN JOURNALISTS THAT THE GOVERNMENT ARE MOVING CLOSER TO DETAINING NKOMO.

2.. DISSIDENT ACTIVITY IN MATABELELAND REMAINS LOW WHERE 5 BRIGADE IS DEPLOYED (DETAILED REPORT BY THE DA BY BAG). BUT ACCORDING TO SOME REPORTS IT SEEMS THAT 5 BRIGADE BRUTALITY TOWARDS THE CIVILIAN POPULATION MAY BE CONTINUING. THE PROVINCIAL HEALTH INSPECTOR TOLD US YESTERDAY THAT ANYONE FOUND WITH A DEMOBILISATION CARD IS SUMMARILY EXECUTED AND THE FAMILIES BEATEN. CHARITIES AND CHURCH ORGANISATIONS ARE COMPILING DOSSIERS AND INTERCEDING

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OR TRYING TO INTERCEDE PRIVATELY WITH THE GOVERNMENT, APPARENTLY TO LITTLE EFFECT AS YET. A GROUP INCLUDING CTIR, UNICEF AND OXFAM ARE SAID TO HAVE BEEN GIVEN AN APPOINTMENT TO SEE THE PRIME MINISTER AND IT IS BELIEVED THAT OXFAM ARE ABOUT TO RELEASE THEIR DOSSIER TO THE BRITISH PRESS.

3. FOR THEIR PART THE GOVERNMENT HAVE MOUNTED A CAMPAIGN TO PUBLICISE THE SUCCESS OF THE ANTI-DISSIDENT OPERATION IN WHICH THEY SEEM GENUINELY TO BELIEVE. AND IN A SENSE THE OPERATIONS ARE PROVING SUCCESSFUL, AT LEAST IN THE SHORT TERM. AT A NUMBER OF RALLIES IN MATABELELAND SOUTH OVER THE WEEKEND ZANU MINISTERS DISPLAYED CAPTURED DISSIDENTS TO THE CROWDS AND PUT OVER A SIMPLE MESSAGE: THE PEOPLE COULD CHOOSE TO COOPERATE WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND ITS AGENCIES AND BENEFIT FROM RECONSTRUCTION, OR GO IT ALONE, ENGAGE IN CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, AND THUS FORFEIT GOVERNMENT HELP. MINISTERS SEEM PLEASED WITH THE PEOPLE'S RESPONSE BUT THEY MAY BE MISTAKEN.

BYATT

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