

MR. COLES

JIC BUSINESS

Top Copy on  
Iraq, Internal  
Situation, Pt 3

cc Mr. Jackling

There was a heavy agenda at today's JIC. The following are subjects of particular interest:-

\* i. Zimbabwe

The paper in front of the JIC was overtaken by the news of Nkomo's flight to Botswana. A fresh paper is being prepared which will be circulated separately from the Red Book on 11 March. It will reveal amongst other things that the 5th Brigade has been more or less out of control in Matabeleland and that civilian casualties have been higher than originally estimated. However, Mugabe is now making efforts to restrain 5th Brigade. The paper will also deal with the probable effect of Nkomo's departure from the country on the internal political situation. The general feeling of the Committee was that it would make things easier for Mugabe; that a number of Nkomo's followers might now try to do a deal with ZANU; and that his departure would probably accelerate Zimbabwe's slide towards being a one party African state on the classical model.

ii. Iraq

I do not suggest that the Prime Minister need read in full the longish and quite useful piece about the internal situation in Iraq. What struck me most forcibly was the Ministry of Defence estimate that the Iraqis have suffered about 200,000 casualties (killed, wounded and taken prisoner) in the war with Iran. This represents about 10% of the adult male population - the equivalent of well over a million casualties in Britain. It is remarkable that this has not already had a greater effect on civilian and military morale in Iraq.

iii. South Africa

The Red Book will contain a brief and watered-down summary of a paper which is being circulated separately about South African destabilisation of neighbouring African countries. This is stark evidence of the divergence

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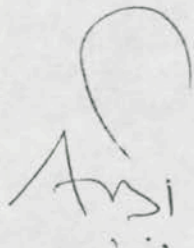
between South African and Western interests. As the South Africans see it, if your neighbours are implacably opposed to your system of government and cannot be won round, it is better to render them economically weak and politically helpless. As I see it, this policy simply leads to opening the door to extremism and eventual Russian/Cuban penetration.

iv. Belize/Guatemala

The JIC have done a useful piece on warning time for Guatemalan incursions or even a Guatemalan invasion of Belize. There is no need to study the paper in detail, but the Prime Minister should be aware that this piece of contingency planning has been done.

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A.D. PARSONS  
10 March 1983