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FM HARARE 211225Z MAR 83

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 261 OF 21 MARCH

INFO ROUTINE GABORONE, CAPETOWN, PRETORIA, LUSAKA AND MODUK.

MY TELNO 237: MATABELELAND

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these tels
to No. 10.

② Return to
me.

RB 24/3

1. A WHITE FARMER (STRATFORD), HIS WIFE AND THEIR TWO GRAND-DAUGHTERS AGED 15 AND 12 (NOT YET NAMED PUBLICLY) WERE MURDERED BY DISSIDENTS AT THEIR NYAMANDHLOVU FARM ON 18 MARCH AFTER ONE OR TWO OF THEIR FARM WORKERS HAD TOLD THE DISSIDENTS THAT STRATFORD WAS A BAD EMPLOYER. THE CFU PRESIDENT HAS TOLD US THAT TROOPS OF 1 PARA ARRIVED ON THE SCENE VERY SOON AFTER THE ALARM WAS RAISED. QUESTIONING OF THE WORKFORCE LEADS THE AUTHORITIES TO BELIEVE THERE MAY BE A LINK WITH THE DYER-SMITH KIDNAPPING.
2. THE CFU HAVE EXPRESSED SHOCK AND HORROR AT THE KILLINGS. THEY INTEND TO DISCUSS FURTHER MEASURES TO PROTECT FARMERS WITH THE AUTHORITIES. FARMERS IN MATABELELAND HAD ALREADY BEGUN TO MOVE THEIR FAMILIES TO BULAWAYO. THE LATEST MURDERS WILL DOUBTLESS SPEED THIS PROCESS (AND PERHAPS ACCELERATE EMIGRATION). MORALE IS VERY LOW. A RESUMPTION OF HARRASSMENT OF FARMERS IN MASHONALAND FOR TRIVIAL REASONS (4 CASES IN A WEEK, ALL HAPPILY RELEASED QUITE QUICKLY) IS A FURTHER CAUSE FOR DISCOURAGEMENT. THE CFU HOPED THIS PROBLEM HAD BEEN SOLVED.
3. THE SEARCH FOR THE DYER-SMITH KIDNAPPERS CONTINUES. LARGE PARTS OF BULAWAYO'S WESTERN SUBURBS (NEAR DYER SMITH'S FARM) WERE CORDONED OFF ON 20 MARCH AND A HOUSE-TO-HOUSE SEARCH CARRIED OUT. A GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN HAS SAID ONLY THAT A NUMBER OF PEOPLE HAD BEEN TAKEN IN FOR QUESTIONING.
4. THE GENERAL SECURITY SITUATION IN MATABELELAND SEEMS TO BE GETTING WORSE AGAIN, DESPITE THE OPERATIONS BY 5 AND 1 BRIGADES. INFORMATION ABOUT DISSIDENT ACTIVITY IN MATABELELAND NORTH REMAINS SKETCHY: BUT THE MURDERS AT NYAMANDHLOVU SUGGEST THAT GANGS OF DISSIDENTS REMAIN AT LARGE AND VERY CLOSE TO BULAWAYO. HOWEVER THE CITY ITSELF IS STILL PEACEABLE: MY DEPUTY TOURED THE WESTERN (AFRICAN) SUBURBS ON FRIDAY - BEFORE THE WEEKEND CORDON EXERCISE - AND SAW NO SIGN OF TROUBLE ANYWHERE, NO MILITARY AT ALL AND ONLY TWO POLICE IN UNIFORM. IN MATABELELAND SOUTH REPORTED INCIDENTS HAVE INCREASED, WITH SEVERAL AMBUSHES OF ZNA AND SIGHTINGS OF LARGE BANDS: ALL CONTRADICTING EARLIER GOVERNMENT ASSERTIONS THAT THE DISSIDENT PROBLEM HAS BEEN SOLVED. THERE IS ALSO A TREND TOWARDS DISSIDENTS TAKING ON THE SECURITY FORCES MORE OPENLY, RATHER THAN

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STICKING TO PURE BANDITRY. THE SPATE OF ATTACKS ON WHITES IS AN OMINOUS DEVELOPMENT BEARING OUT WHITE FARMERS FEARS THAT THEY WOULD BE CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE BETWEEN THE DISSIDENTS AND THE ARMY. THE ONLY GOOD NEWS IS THAT REPORTS OF BRUTALITY BY 5 BRIGADE SEEM TO BE DRYING UP.

5. MEANWHILE, A SPEECH YESTERDAY BY THE SHONA-SPEAKING ZAPU MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT MSIPA, CONTAINED FURTHER EVIDENCE OF FLEXIBILITY AND CONCILIATORINESS IN THE ZAPU LEADERSHIP. MSIPA TOLD A RALLY IN HARARE THAT ZIMBABWE WAS GREATER THAN EITHER ZANU OR ZAPU AND THAT UNION OF THE TWO PARTIES SEEMED ESSENTIAL TO REMOVE MUTUAL SUSPICION AND MISTRUST. ZAPU WOULD NOT WORK OUTSIDE THE FRAMEWORK OF GOVERNMENT. MUGABE AND NKOMO WERE AGREED IN PRINCIPLE ON THE NEED FOR UNITY. WHY NOT THEN IMPLEMENT THE PRINCIPLE ?

6. THIS WAS THE FIRST PUBLIC RALLY ZAPU HAVE BEEN PERMITTED TO HOLD FOR SOME TIME. MSIPA'S MODERATE STANCE IS ENCOURAGING, ALTHOUGH MANY IN THE REPORTEDLY LARGE AUDIENCE SEEMED OPPOSED TO TALKS ON UNITY WHEN PEOPLE IN MATABELELAND WERE BEING KILLED BY GOVERNMENT FORCES AND ZAPU LEADERS HARRASSED. THE RELEASE ON BAIL ON 18 MARCH OF THE ZAPU PROVINCIAL CHAIRMAN FOR MATABELELAND NORTH, C Z MOYO, MAY FURTHER EASE TENSION.

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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER DISTRESS 018 OF 21 MARCH

INFO IMMEDIATE GABORONE.

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M. copy*

MY TELNO 253 : TAVERNOR CHILDREN.

to PS/Mr. Dawson

Mr. Aguirre

Sir S. Leahy

1. THE ZIMBABWE AUTHORITIES THIS AFTERNOON CONFIRMED THAT CANDYCE AND TANYA TAVERNOR WERE SHOT DEAD, ALONG WITH THEIR GRANDPARENTS, MR AND MRS ERIC STRATFORD, BY A GROUP OF SIX BANDITS AT SECRET VALLEY FARM ON THE EVENING OF 18 MARCH.

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2. THE ZIMBABWE AUTHORITIES HAVE THE NAMES OF THE BANDITS, WHO WERE APPARENTLY LED BY A BROTHER-IN-LAW OF ONE OF THE LABOURERS ON THE FARM. ONE OF THE BANDITS IS BELIEVED BY THEM TO HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE MURDER OF WILLIAMS AND THE ABDUCTION OF BILANG IN JANUARY.

P.S.

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*L. Stephens -
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