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FM PRETORIA

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELNO 502

OF 160810Z NOVEMBER 85

INFO ROUTINE JOHANNESBURG, HARARE, LUSAKA

INFO SAVING CAPE TOWN CONSULATE, DURBAN

BLACK PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

SUMMARY

1. THE PRESIDENT HAS INVITED SUGGESTIONS ON BLACK PARTICIPATION IN A RESTRUCTURED PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT IS ENVISAGED, BUT FEW BLACKS SEEM LIKELY TO WISH TO PARTICIPATE.

DETAIL

2. SPEAKING YESTERDAY IN CAPE TOWN, THE STATE PRESIDENT P W BOTHA, INVITED THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL TO ADVISE HIM ON THE FUTURE COMPOSITION AND FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL, TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF HIS SUGGESTION MADE IN PORT ELIZABETH ON 30 SEPTEMBER THAT BLACKS MIGHT PARTICIPATE IN THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL'S ENQUIRIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO HIM.

3. THE PRESIDENT REPEATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS COMMITTED TO THE PRINCIPLE OF 'A UNITED SOUTH AFRICA, JOINT CITIZENSHIP AND FRANCHISE FOR ALL WITHIN STRUCTURES CHOSEN FOR SOUTH AFRICA BY SOUTH AFRICANS'. THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE ON THE ROAD TO REFORM AND WOULD NOT ALLOW FOREIGN INTERESTS AND POWERS TO DICTATE THE FUTURE, HE SAID.

4. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL, DR KOOMHOF, COMMENTED THAT CONSIDERATION OF THE FUTURE OF THE COUNCIL'S COMPOSITION WOULD NOW BE A PRIORITY FOR THE COUNCIL.

COMMENT

5. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THE PRESIDENT ENVISAGES THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL BEING ANYTHING MORE THAN THE ADVISORY BODY. WHEN THE HEAD OF CHANCERY SPOKE TO DR KOOMHOF LAST MONTH HE WAS ADVOCATING GIVING AN EXPANDED COUNCIL SIMILAR POWERS TO THE PRESENT COUNCIL. WITHOUT ADDITIONAL POWERS BLACK PARTICIPANTS WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO FIND THAT THEY HAD A SIGNIFICANT VOICE.

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6. EVEN IF AMENDING LEGISLATION TO RESTRUCTURE THE COUNCIL IS INTRODUCED DURING THE NEXT PARLIAMENTARY SESSIONS AND BLACK COUNCILLORS ARE APPOINTED BEFORE THE END OF 1986, FEW SIGNIFICANT BLACK LEADERS ARE LIKELY TO MAKE THEMSELVES AVAILABLE FOR APPOINTMENT. UDF AND AZAPO REACTIONS TO THE PRESIDENT'S LATEST STATEMENT HAVE BEEN PREDICTABLY HOSTILE AND DISMISSIVE, AND ANY BLACK APPOINTED TO THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL WOULD SIMPLY BE REGARDED BY THEM AND MOST OF THE BLACK POPULATION AS A PUPPET.

MOBERLY

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