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 FM WASHINGTON
 TO ROUTINE FCO
 TELNO 1004
 OF 180430Z APRIL 86
 INFO ROUTINE CAPETOWN

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WASHINGTON TELNO 916: US/SOUTH AFRICA: COMGEP

1. FRASER AND OBASANJO COMPLETED THEIR VISIT HERE ON 16 APRIL. THEIR OFFICIAL PROGRAMME INCLUDED SEPARATE MEETINGS WITH THE VICE PRESIDENT, SHULTZ, CROCKER AND HOLLADAY, AS WELL AS SESSIONS WITH THE HOUSE AND SENATE AFRICA SUB-COMMITTEES, OTHER CONGRESSMEN AND PROMINENT ACADEMICS. I BELIEVE THAT FRASER (PLUS OBASANJO?) ALSO CALLED PRIVATELY ON JUDGE CLARK, AND ON CASEY. I SAW THEM ON 13 APRIL.
2. BY ALL US ACCOUNTS OBASANJO SAID LITTLE THROUGHOUT. FRASER SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN MORE VOLUBLE BUT NOT PARTICULARLY HELPFUL. A SENATE CONTACT TELLS US THAT HE GAVE THE SENATE AFRICA SUB-COMMITTEE A DOWN-BEAT VIEW OF THE COMGEP EXERCISE AND APPEARED TO HAVE NO DOUBTS ABOUT THE MERITS OF PUNITIVE SANCTIONS. WITH THE ADMINISTRATION HE ALSO APPEARED TO BE ALL BUT WRITING OFF COMGEP, AND INSISTING ON THE NEED TO STEP UP SANCTIONS SOON.
3. AFTER THE MEETING WITH CROCKER, WHEN FRASER TOOK THIS LINE, DAVIDOW (DIRECTOR, SOUTHERN AFRICAN AFFAIRS) SOUGHT OUT MULHOTRA BEFORE YESTERDAY'S CALL ON SHULTZ, IN ORDER TO WARN THAT FIREWORKS WERE LIKELY IF FRASER PERSISTED IN CRITICISING EXISTING US POLICY. IN THE EVENT, FRASER MODERATED HIS APPROACH CONSIDERABLY, AND THERE WAS NO ROW. BUT SHULTZ MADE CLEAR THE US BELIEF THAT THE COMGEP EXERCISE WAS THE ONLY SHOW IN TOWN, AND THAT THE US WOULD CONSIDER SERIOUSLY ANY COMGEP REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE.
4. STATE'S VIEWS ARE DOUBTLESS COLOURED BY THEIR ANTIPATHY TOWARDS FRASER ON THIS SUBJECT. WE HAVE YET TO ESTABLISH WHAT IMPACT THE VISIT MADE ON OTHERS. IT HAS AT LEAST ATTRACTED NO PUBLICITY, BUT IT MAY ALSO HAVE HELPED TO ENSURE THAT THE SANCTIONS ISSUE RETURNS TO CENTRE STAGE IF COMGEP COMES TO NOUGHT.
5. STATE HAVE TOLD US THAT THEY ARE STILL STALLING ON THE PRESIDENT'S REPLY TO P W BOTHA'S LAST LETTER (PARA 2 OF TUR). THEY WOULD, HOWEVER, GREATLY WELCOME SOME INDICATION OF OUR THINKING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

WRIGHT

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