

GRS 270
CONFIDENTIAL

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FM CAPE TOWN

TO DESKBY 151800Z FCO

TELNO 265

OF 151630Z MAY 86

INFO PRIORITY JOHANNESBURG, HARARE, LUSAKA, WASHINGTON

INFO SAVING DURBAN, CAPE TOWN CONSULATE

MT

MIPT: SPEECH BY PRESIDENT BOTHA

1. LORD BARBER TELLS ME THAT THE COMMONWEALTH GROUP TAKE THE VIEW THAT THE SPEECH DOES NOT SUBSTANTIALLY CHANGE THE SITUATION AND THAT THEY SHOULD CONTINUE AS BEFORE. THIS IS ALSO MY OWN VIEW.

2. THE COMMONWEALTH GROUP WERE NOT THEMSELVES MENTIONED IN THE SPEECH ALTHOUGH SOME SPECULATION IS INEVITABLE ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMENTS BY THE PRESIDENT ABOUT VISITORS FROM ABROAD WHO INTERFERED IN SOUTH AFRICA'S DOMESTIC AFFAIRS. HE SAID THAT SOME WERE WELL INTENTIONED ALTHOUGH OTHERS ONLY COMPOUNDED CONFUSION.

3. IN ONE RESPECT THE SPEECH MAY APPEAR INCONSISTENT. THE PRESIDENT REJECTS THE IDEA OF PEOPLE LAYING DOWN PRIOR CONDITIONS FOR NEGOTIATIONS YET HIMSELF TALKS OF NON-NEGOTIABLE PRINCIPLES. THE DANGER MUST BE THAT MANDELA AND THE ANC WILL FIND THIS UNACCEPTABLE WHICH COULD MAKE THE GROUP'S WORK MORE DIFFICULT. BUT THE PRESIDENT ALSO TALKS ABOUT THE NEED TO RETAIN NEGOTIATING FLEXIBILITY. ALSO HIS FORMULATION ABOUT TALKING TO THOSE WHO DO NOT RESORT TO VIOLENCE SEEMS MARGINALLY BETTER THAN PAST PERSISTENCE ON PRIOR RENUNCIATION OF VIOLENCE (ALTHOUGH THERE IS A LATER REFERENCE TO REJECTING VIOLENCE).

4. EARLIER IN THE DAY THE GROUP ASKED COMMONWEALTH AMBASSADORS THAT THEIR CAPITALS SHOULD DEFER ANY IMMEDIATE REACTION TO THE SPEECH UNTIL THE GROUP THEMSELVES HAD BEEN ABLE TO CONSIDER THEIR POSITION. I UNDERSTAND FROM LORD BARBER THAT THEY ARE NOW CONTENT TO WAIVE THIS REQUEST.

5. IF YOU WISH TO RESPOND PUBLICLY I SUGGEST IT WOULD BE ENOUGH TO SAY THAT THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS UNDERLINE THE NEED FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA AND THAT WE BELIEVE THE COMMONWEALTH GROUP CAN CONTINUE TO FULFILL A USEFUL ROLE.

MOBERLY

SOUTHERN AFRICA
STANDARD (PALACE)

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UND
NAD
ECDs
SOVIET D
MR REEVE

CABINET OFFICE

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