

RESTRICTED
FM FCO
TO DESKBY 122100Z OTTAWA
TELNO 292
OF 121738Z JULY 86

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FOR P.M. PARTY
FOLLOWING TELEGRAM NOW REPEATED TO YOU AT REQUEST OF RESIDENT
CLERK WAS RECEIVED FROM PRETORIA TELEGRAM NO MISC 005 OF 11/7/86

BEGINS
FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE AIRBORNE DESKBY 111800Z

MIPT: SECRETARY OF STATE'S MISSION: PRESS REACTIONS

1. THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE EDITORIAL COMMENT THIS WEEK. THE VISITS TO LUSAKA, HARARE AND MAPUTO HAVE BEEN REPORTED DAY BY DAY, MAINLY ON THE BASIS OF AGENCY REPORTS, BUT HAVE MOSTLY NOT MADE FRONT PAGE HEADLINES. THE SLANT HAS BEEN PRIMARILY ON ARGUMENTS OVER SANCTIONS AND RIFTS WITHIN THE COMMONWEALTH. THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENTS ON SANCTIONS HAVE BEEN WARMLY WELCOMED.

2. IN GENERAL, THE PRESS HAS HELD OUT LITTLE PROSPECT OF SUCCESS FOR YOUR MISSION, ALTHOUGH ONE OR TWO PAPERS CLEARLY WISH IT WELL. SPECIFIC COMMENTS OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS HAVE INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:-

"IT IS NOT CLEAR WHY SIR G HOWE IS COMING TO THIS COUNTRY AT ALL. IT WOULD BE QUITE FOOLISH TO BELIEVE THAT HE IS GOING TO MAKE ONE IOTA OF DIFFERENCE TO THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE TO THE IMPRISONED MANDELA, THE ANC OR THE STATE OF EMERGENCY...THE VISIT DOESN'T HAVE THE LEAST OPPORTUNITY FOR REDUCING VIOLENCE AND PROMOTING PEACEFUL CHANGE TO POWER-SHARING...A MEASURE OF SUCCESS NORTH OF THE LIMPOPO WOULD HAVE ENABLED HIM TO FACE THE BOTHAS WITH SOME CONCRETE DIPLOMATIC ADVANCE WHICH THEY WOULD NOT WANT TO IGNORE OR HAVE ANY DIFFICULTY ACKNOWLEDGING IN PUBLIC...IF HE WERE TO APPEAR IN CAPE TOWN NOW HE WOULD HAVE NOTHING REMOTELY OF THAT SORT WITH WHICH TO PARLEY."

(FINANCIAL MAIL, 11 JULY - INDEPENDENT WEEKLY)

"AFTER (PIK BOTHA'S OUTBURST LAST WEEK), IT IS A RELIEF TO KNOW THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOW AGREED TO A MEETING BETWEEN SIR GEOFFREY HOWE AND PRESIDENT BOTHA LATER THIS MONTH. IT RAISES HOPES THAT A PRAGMATIC RESPONSE MAY STILL GREET THE APPROACH OF THOSE WESTERN LEADERS WHO REMAIN CONVINCED THAT IT IS NOT TOO LATE FOR NEGOTIATING RATHER THAN FORCING THE DEMISE OF APARTHEID. BUT NOT ONLY THE GOVERNMENT MUST AGREE TO TALK...RADICAL OPPONENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT OUGHT TO BE EQUALLY WILLING TO TALK...THE ALTERNATIVE TO NEGOTIATION AND PAINSTAKING TALK IS VIOLENCE AND MORE VIOLENCE."

(THE STAR, 10 JULY - INDEPENDENT)

"SIR G. HOWE'S LACK OF FLAMBOYANCY MAY BE A DECISIVE FACTOR IN MAKING HIM A MORE CREDIBLE ARBITRATOR AS FAR AS PRETORIA IS CONCERNED AND OF THE HIGH AND MIGHTY KNOW-ALLS WHO HAVE CROSSED OUR THRESHOLD IN THE PAST...IF THERE IS ONE PERSON THAT CAN WIN THE CONFIDENCE OF BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND BLACK LEADERS, IT IS SIR G. HOWE."

(DIE TRANSVALER, 10 JULY - AFRIKAANS DAILY SUPPORTING RIGHT WING OF NATIONAL PARTY)

"THE MOOD IN PRETORIA IS UNMISTAKABLE - AT WORST DEFIANCE, AT BEST FATALISM...IF SIR G. HOWE DOES COME, HE SHOULD BE TOLD THAT THERE IS NO HOPE OF A QUICK POLITICAL FIX, NOT EVEN IF FULL-SCALE SANCTIONS ARE THE CERTAIN ALTERNATIVE. IF HE MANAGES TO FIX THAT IDEA FIRMLY IN HIS MIND, HIS VISIT WILL AT LEAST BEGIN ON A NOTE OF REALISM - EVEN IF IT ENDS UP, LIKE ALL OTHER PEACE-MAKING EFFORTS, IN DEEP FRUSTRATION."

(BUSINESS DAY, 8 JULY - INDEPENDENT)

ENDS

HOWE