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SOUTHERN AFRICA

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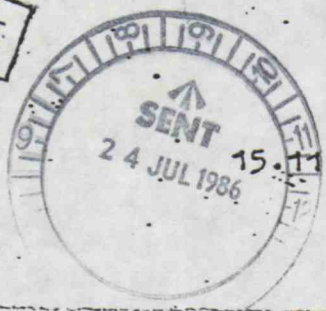
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INFO SAVING CANBERRA, DAKAR, KINSHASHA, DELHI

FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY  
SECRETARY OF STATE'S MEETING WITH PIK BOTHA, 23 JULY

SUMMARY

1. CURTAIN RAISER FOR P.W. SECRETARY OF STATE PRESSED BOTHA HARD ON NEED FOR CHANGE, MANDELA/ANC. PIK UNYIELDING. COMPLAINED THAT OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE MADE CHANGE MORE DIFFICULT. INSISTENT THAT THE ANC WAS VIRTUALLY SYNONYMOUS WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY; AND THAT THE SAG HAD NO INTENTION OF NEGOTIATING A TAKE OVER BY MARXISTS. APPRECIATION FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S ROLE; BUT CRITICISM OF THE EUROPEANS FOR "FIGHTING THE BATTLE OF THOSE WHO DO NOT WANT TO NEGOTIATE". NO SIGN OF ANY IMMINENT BREAKTHROUGH ON SUBSTANCE, BUT VAGUE HINTS THAT SOMETHING MIGHT BE BREWING ON MANDELA PROVIDED THIS DID NOT APPEAR THE RESULT OF FOREIGN PRESSURE. WARNINGS THAT SOUTH AFRICA'S NEIGHBOURS WOULD SUFFER IN THE EVENT OF SANCTIONS.

DETAIL

2. THE SECRETARY OF STATE HAD ALMOST AN HOUR AND A HALF OF TALKS WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN FOREIGN MINISTER ON THE MORNING OF 23 JULY, FOLLOWED BY A WORKING LUNCH.

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3. PIK BOTHA BEGAN BY COMPLAINING THAT THE EPG AND OTHER MISSIONS, INCLUDING THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S HAD CREATED A HIGH PROFILE IN THE MEDIA. THIS CONTINUAL INTERFERENCE HAD HAD AN ADVERSE CUMULATIVE EFFECT ON WHITES AND ON MODERATE COLOURED, INDIAN AND BLACK OPINION. MANY NOW FELT THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER IF THE EUROPEANS DECIDED ON SANCTIONS, LEAVING THE SAG TO CONCENTRATE ON OTHER MATTERS. THERE WAS A DANGER OF REFORM BEING SEEN BY THE GOVERNMENT'S OWN SUPPORTERS AS THE RESULT OF FOREIGN PRESSURE. THIS MADE CHANGE MORE DIFFICULT.

4. MANDELA WAS A CASE IN POINT. VERY CONFIDENTIALLY, BOTHA CLAIMED THAT BEFORE THE EPG VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA THERE HAD BEEN REASON TO BELIEVE THAT A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM MANDELA PRESENTED MIGHT BE FOUND. WITH THEIR VISIT, MATTERS HAD REVERTED TO SQUARE ONE. PROSPECTS WERE ONCE AGAIN LOOKING BETTER, THOUGH BOTHA COULD NOT SAY MORE AT THIS STAGE.

5. BOTHA SAID THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S VISIT HAD COME AT A VERY DIFFICULT TIME. THE SAG WAS FULLY ACQUAINTED WITH THE VARIOUS KINDS OF PRESSURE FOR SANCTIONS ON THE PRIME MINISTER. THEY COULD SEE THAT WITHOUT TANGIBLE RESULTS THERE WERE ROUGH WATERS AHEAD WITHIN THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY. THE MESSAGE WAS THEREFORE THAT SHOULD THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT FEEL THAT THEIR POSITION HAD BECOME UNTENABLE IT WOULD BE BETTER TO OPT FOR SANCTIONS (''THROW SOME MEAT TO THE WOLVES'') THAN TO ALLOW BITTERNESS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA TO DEVELOP. BUT THAT WOULD BE A TRAGEDY; THINGS COULD HAPPEN IN COMING MONTHS WHICH MIGHT WARD OFF SANCTIONS. (PRESSED ABOUT THIS LATER BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE, BOTHA SPOKE VAGUELY IN TERMS OF EVENTS, TRENDS, DIRECTIONS).

6. BOTHA SAID HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY WE DID NOT BELIEVE THE SAG WHEN THEY TOLD US THAT PRESSURE TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE ANC AMOUNTED TO A REQUIREMENT TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY. IN TURN SAG'S VIEW THIS WAS A ROAD LEADING NOT TO POWER-SHARING AND THE REMOVAL OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, WHICH THE SAG WANTED, BUT TO A MARXIST TAKE-OVER.

7. IN REPLY THE SECRETARY OF STATE BEGAN BY REFERRING TO THE MANY CONNECTIONS, HUMAN AND FAMILY, BETWEEN THE UK AND SOUTH AFRICA AND THE ABUNDANT GOODWILL FELT TOWARDS A FUTURE SOUTH AFRICA WHICH WOULD BE STABLE, PROSPEROUS AND WESTERN ORIENTATED. THE SAME WENT FOR OTHER EC COUNTRIES. WHAT WORRIED US WAS THAT WE DID NOT BELIEVE IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE OUR GOAL ON THE BASIS OF SUCH A FUNDAMENTALLY DISCRIMINATORY AND UNEQUAL POLITICAL AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE, AS THE STATE PRESIDENT HIMSELF HAD ACKNOWLEDGED. NOR DID WE THINK IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO CREATE A FRAMEWORK TO ACCOMMODATE THE NECESSARY CHANGES WITHOUT DIALOGUE WITH A FREELY CHOSEN AND FREE BLACK LEADERSHIP. THIS EXPLAINED THE INTERNATIONAL FOCUS ON FREEING MANDELA AND OTHER POLITICAL PRISONERS AND ON UNBANNING POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS INCLUDING THE ANC.

8. THE SECRETARY OF STATE MADE CLEAR THAT WE DID NOT SEE THE ANC AS THE ONLY NEGOTIATING PARTNER. BUT IT WAS ONE REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATION AND ITS INVOLVEMENT IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS WAS THE KEY TO THE PARTICIPATION OF MODERATES SUCH AS BUTHELEZI. OF COURSE THERE WAS COMMUNIST INFLUENCE WITHIN

BUTHELEZI. OF COURSE THERE WAS COMMUNIST INFLUENCE WITHIN THE ANC, AS IN MANY NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS. BUT NEGOTIATION WOULD DISARM SUCH ELEMENTS. COVERSELY, 523 12-, 13 9% A MOSCOW-DOMINATED SOUTH AFRICA COULD ONLY BE ENHANCED BY FAILURE TO NEGOTIATE.

9. BOTHA SAID THAT THE SAG WERE UPSET AT THE LACK OF APPRECIATION BY THE TWELVE OF THE COMPLEXITY OF THE SITUATION, OF THE VARIETY OF FORCES IN PLACE (INCLUDING WITHIN THE WHITE COMMUNITY) AND OF WHAT HAD BEEN ACHIEVED IN THE PAST TWO YEARS: EG ABOLITION OF THE PASS LAWS, INFLUX CONTROL, THE IMMORALITY ACT. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT HE HAD INDEED ACKNOWLEDGED THE DEGREE OF CHANGE ACHIEVED. HE DID NOT DISCOUNT ITS IMPORTANCE, THOUGH IT HAD COME LATER THAN WE HAD HOPED. THE FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM REMAINED THAT THE MAJORITY IN SOUTH AFRICA WERE UNABLE TO PARTICIPATE AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL IN POLITICAL STRUCTURES. THE SOONER THIS WAS PUT RIGHT THE BETTER. SURELY THE SAG HAD A REAL INTEREST IN NEGOTIATING WITH MEN OF THE CALIBRE OF MANDELA AND TAMBO WHILE THEY WERE STILL ON THE SCENE? BOTHA ACKNOWLEDGED THE FORCE OF THIS ARGUMENT. MANDELA MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN DIALOGUE BUT STATEMENTS BY HIS WIFE AND LAWYER MADE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE SAG.

10. BOTHA WENT ON TO ALLEGE AGAIN THAT THERE WAS LITTLE APPRECIATION ABROAD OF SOUTH AFRICA'S EFFORTS TO GET DIALOGUE GOING. THE QUESTION WAS HOW TO ACHIEVE DIALOGUE WITH A PARTY THAT DID NOT WANT IT. THERE WAS ALSO A PROBLEM OF INTIMIDATION. THE SAG SAW EUROPEAN PRESSURE AS UNHELPFUL. HE CLAIMED THAT THE SAG HAD MADE CLEAR THAT THEY WERE READY FOR DIALOGUE WITH ANYONE. THE ONLY CONDITION WAS THAT THERE MUST BE A COMMITMENT TO PEACEFUL CHANGE AND TO RENOUNCE VIOLENCE. HE SHOULD TO SHOW THAT THE SAG ACCEPTED THE NEED TO COMMAND THE SUPPORT OF THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION. THE TWELVE AND THE UNITED STATES COULD HELP BY ENCOURAGING BLACK LEADERS TO NEGOTIATE. WHAT ABOUT SOMETHING POSITIVE, SUCH AS ARRANGING A MEETING BETWEEN THE SAG, THE FLS AND EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS?

11. THE SECRETARY OF STATE PRESSED THE CASE FOR COURAGE ON BOTH SIDES. THE SAG NEEDED TO MAKE THE QUANTUM LEAP OF REACHING OUT TO MANDELA AND TAMBO. THIS WOULD DISARM THEIR CRITICS AND CREATE AN OVERWHELMING CALL FOR A SUSPENSION OF VIOLENCE. WITHOUT SUCH ACTION, PRESSURE FOR EARLY DECISIONS ON FURTHER MEASURES WOULD GROW. THE EC, COMMONWEALTH AND U.S. HAD ALREADY TAKEN A SERIES OF MEASURES. IT WAS NOT JUST THE EC WHO WANTED FURTHER ACTION. THE COMMONWEALTH (INCLUDING THE OLD COMMONWEALTH) WERE PRESSING STRONGLY AND IT WAS CLEAR THAT CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURE WAS RUNNING IN THAT DIRECTION. TOGETHER THE THE GERMANS AND THE PORTUGUESE, WE WERE RESISTING SANCTIONS. BUT IN THE ABSENCE OF CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA ON THE REQUIRED SCALE THE QUESTION WAS INCREASINGLY BEING ASKED WHAT ALTERNATIVE COURSE THERE WAS.

12. BOTHA SEEMED RESIGNED TO DECISIONS ON FURTHER MEASURES SOON IN ONE OR MORE FORUMS. THE TROUBLE WAS THAT ONCE IMPOSED SANCTIONS WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO REMOVE. THE SAG HAD ALREADY DRAWN UP PLANS TO RETURN MIGRANT WORKERS TO NEIGHBOURING STATES, CURTAIL TRANSPORT FACILITIES, REVISE THE CUSTOMS UNION AND SO ON. IN ORDER TO AVOID THIS HE HOPED IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO DRAW OUT THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S VISIT AND

POSSIBLE TO DRAW OUT THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S VISIT AND GAIN TIME.

13. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT RETALIATION AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA'S NEIGHBOURS WOULD ADD TO EXISTING PRESSURES FOR SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA AND THUS BE COUNTER PRODUCTIVE. FURTHER MILITARY RAIDS WOULD MAKE THE SITUATION EVEN MORE DIFFICULT. THE SIGNS POINTED TOWARDS AN ESCALATION WHICH WOULD BE BAD FOR SOUTH AFRICA, FOR HER NEIGHBOURS, AND FOR THE WORLD. THE ONLY SOLUTION WAS DIALOGUE. BUT IN THE ABSENCE OF READINESS TO FREE POLITICAL PRISONERS AND UNBAN THE ANC IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO TURN THE CORNER. THIS WAS WHY WE WERE ALSO SO WORRIED ABOUT DETAINEES UNDER THE STATE OF EMERGENCY. (PIK BOTHA APPEARED TO ACCEPT THE FORCE OF THIS ARGUMENT ALSO). THE FACT THAT THOSE DETAINED INCLUDED LEADING TRADES UNIONISTS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF REPUTABLE ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS BLACK SASH CREATED THE WORST POSSIBLE IMPRESSION ABROAD.

14. THE SECRETARY OF STATE PRESSED HOME THE ARGUMENT ABOUT THE NEED TO NEGOTIATE WITH REPRESENTATIVE BLACK LEADERS THEREBY ENCOURAGING THOSE WHO PREFERRED NEGOTIATION TO VIOLENCE AND SO PROMOTING PEACEFUL CHANGE, BUT BOTHA WOULD NOT BUDGE. IF THE CHOICE WAS BETWEEN TOTAL ISOLATION AND COMPREHENSIVE SANCTIONS OR SURRENDER TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY, THE SAG COULD UNDOUBTEDLY MANAGE ISOLATION FOR A WHILE. BUT AS ONE SOUTH AFRICAN BUSINESSMAN HAD PUT IT, THE CHOICE WAS BETWEEN ULTIMATE DISASTER AND GREAT DANGER, IE GOING DOWN THE ROAD OF DIALOGUE. THE LONGER THINGS WERE LEFT, THE GREATER THE CHANCE OF DISASTER. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT RELEASE OF MANDELA AND UNSANNING OF THE ANC CONTAINED RISKS BUT THERE WAS NO OTHER WAY AND THE PRIZE WAS GREAT. CONFIDENCE CUT TWO WAYS. MANY PEOPLE HAD LOST CONFIDENCE IN THE SAG AFTER THE 19 MAY RAIDS, THE TIMING OF WHICH HAD BEEN EITHER WILFUL OR RECKLESS.

15. BOTHA SAID THAT HE FELT BETRAYED. HE WAS TEMPTED TO THINK THAT THERE WAS A HIDDEN AGENDA OUTSIDE AND THAT SOME EUROPEANS WERE ACTUALLY RESIGNED TO SEEING A MARXIST GOVERNMENT INSTALLED IN SOUTH AFRICA. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT THE EUROPEAN AIM WAS CERTAINLY NOT A COMMUNIST TAKE OVER BUT A REALISTIC DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE SAG AND THE BLACK POPULATION THAT COULD BRING AN END TO VIOLENCE AND ENABLE PROGRESS TO BE MADE TOWARDS A NON RACIAL REPRESENTATIVE SOCIETY.

16. REEVE MAY DRAW DISCREETLY ON THIS TELEGRAM IN BRIEFING THE AFRICAN WORKING GROUP IN STRICT CONFIDENCE ON 29 JULY.

17. FOR COPY RECIPIENTS. THE FOREGOING IS FOR YOUR BACKGROUND INFORMATION ONLY, EXCEPT THAT WASHINGTON MAY GIVE A GUARDED ACCOUNT TO THE STATE DEPT.

MOBERLY

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FCO PASS SAVING CANBERRA, DAKAR, KINSHASHA, DELHI

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