

**Confidential**

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 FM OTTAWA  
 TO DESKBY 150930Z FCOLN  
 TELNO 214  
 OF 142215Z APRIL 87  
 INFO SAVING WASHINGTON

MY TELNO 210 AND TELECON WENBAN-SMITH/PRENDERGAST *mb*

## SUMMARY

1. DEA CLAIM THAT MEDIA REPORTS OF A CANADIAN PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A SUMMIT GROUP ON SOUTH AFRICA ANALOGOUS TO THE EPG IS MUCH TOO SPECIFIC. THEY PLAN TO COMMUNICATE THEIR IDEAS TO SUMMIT PARTNERS IN NEXT FEW DAYS.

## DETAIL

2. CBC CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT REPORTED ON MAIN EVENING NEWS ON 13 APRIL THAT MR MULRONEY INTENDED TO PROPOSE AT VENICE THAT THE SUMMIT COUNTRIES ESTABLISH A GROUP ON THE LINES OF THE COMMONWEALTH EPG TO SEEK A WAY FORWARD IN SOUTH AFRICA. WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY OFFICIAL DENIAL.

3. DEA, CLEARLY EMBARRASSED, INVITED DHC, IN MY ABSENCE IN MONTREAL, TO CALL THIS AFTERNOON. MIDDLETON (DG, AFRICA) AND SCHIOLER (CHAIRMAN, SOUTH AFRICAN TASK FORCE) MAINTAINED THAT CANADIAN IDEAS WERE STILL AT A FORMATIVE STAGE. THEY WERE LOOKING AT WAYS OF BUILDING ON THREE POINTS OF WHICH WE WOULD ALREADY BE AWARE:

(I) THE PRIME MINISTER'S CONCERN WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN ISSUE AND WISH TO SEE IT DISCUSSED WHEREVER POSSIBLE, INCLUDING VENICE SEMI-COLON

(II) THEIR FEELING THAT THE SOUTH AFRICANS NEEDED OUTSIDE INTERLOCUTOR(S) SEMI-COLON AND

(III) THEIR BELIEF THAT THE EPG WAS A GOOD MODEL TO FOLLOW.

AS RESULT OF THE LEAK (ASCRIBED TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE) WORK OF PUTTING TOGETHER THE CANADIAN IDEAS WAS BEING GREATLY ACCELERATED SEMI-COLON AND THEY HOPED TO BE READY TO COMMUNICATE THEIR THOUGHTS, PERHAPS IN THE FORM OF ELEMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED AT VENICE, TO THE SUMMIT PARTNERS IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. THIS WOULD BE FOLLOWED BY A MORE FORMAL PRESENTATION BY SYLVIA OSTRY AT SHERPAS' MEETING ON 30 APRIL. MEANWHILE SI TAYLOR WOULD, THEY HOPED, BE ABLE TO GIVE ME AN ACCOUNT OF WHAT THE CANADIANS WOULD BE PROPOSING WHEN HE SEES ME ON 16 APRIL. CHARLES FREEMAN (DEP ASSISTANT SEC, US STATE DEPARTMENT) IS DUE IN OTTAWA TONIGHT FOR TALKS WITH THE CANADIANS TOMORROW.

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4. ASKED WHAT THE BRITISH REACTION WAS TO THE MEDIA REPORTS, DHC SAID THAT WE WOULD WANT TO CONSIDER WHAT THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT ACTUALLY PROPOSED. AT THE SAME TIME (DRAWING ON WASHINGTON TELNO 811) HE ADDED THAT WE WERE DUBIOUS ABOUT THE IMPACT THAT WOULD BE MADE BY A VENICE STATEMENT AND ABOUT THE UTILITY OF ANY NEW GROUP. IT WOULD PROBABLY BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO AGREE A STATEMENT AND IT WAS HARD TO SEE HOW A STATEMENT COULD BE DRAFTED NOW WHICH WOULD MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF WHATEVER THE SITUATION MIGHT BE A MONTH AFTER THE SOUTH AFRICAN ELECTIONS.

5. OUR INTERLOCUTORS WERE CLEARLY EMBARRASSED, BUT EQUALLY CLEARLY UNWILLING TO GIVE A FULLER ACCOUNT OF CANADIAN INTENTIONS. THE MOST LIKELY EXPLANATION OF THIS IS LACK OF COORDINATION BETWEEN THE DEA AND PMO RATHER THAN DELIBERATE STALLING ON THE PART OF MIDDLETON AND SCHIOLER.

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