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CONFIDENTIAL

1. PA ~~in~~ PW Botha

21 April speech
(to) ANC/Indaba file

152531

MDHIAN 7886

(C) ANC file

3/1

(1.0) cc: PW Botha's 21 April speech file
ANC file (for para 8)
PA on Natal file

cfw 5/5

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FM CAPE TOWN EMBASSY
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 150
OF 021225Z MAY 88
INFO PRIORITY HARARE, LUSAKA

MY TELNO 138: SOUTH AFRICA: INTERNAL POLITICS

SUMMARY

1. BUTHELEZI RECOGNISES THAT PW BOTHA'S REFERENCE TO BLACK REPRESENTATION IN THE CABINET IS A NEW STEP FORWARD IN NATIONAL PARTY THINKING AND A THROWING DOWN OF THE GAUNTLET TO THE RIGHT. BUT NEITHER HE NOR OTHER BLACK LEADERS WILL PARTICIPATE UNLESS PROVISION IS MADE FOR BLACK REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT.

DETAIL

2. IN THE PAST FEW DAYS I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TALK TO SEVERAL KEY BLACK LEADERS ABOUT PRESIDENT BOTHA'S RECENT STATEMENTS (MY TUR). BUTHELEZI GAVE ME A MEMORANDUM SETTING OUT HIS VIEWS, WHICH HE ASKED TO BE PASSED TO YOU AND THE PRIME MINISTER. HE POINTS OUT THAT LITTLE HAS BEEN ACHIEVED BY THE ANC'S CAMPAIGN OF VIOLENCE, ATTACKING THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT AT ITS STRONGEST POINT. THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT ON THE RUN. SANCTIONS HAVE BEEN COUNTERPRODUCTIVE. BUT P W BOTHA HAS NOT SUCCEEDED IN FINDING A WAY FORWARD. AMONG THE WHITES THERE IS GROWING DIVISION ABOUT WHETHER HE HAS FAILED BECAUSE HE HAS GONE TOO FAR OR BECAUSE HE HAS NOT GONE FAR ENOUGH. THERE IS A RACE AGAINST TIME BETWEEN THOSE COMMITTED TO REVOLUTION AND THOSE COMMITTED TO NON-VIOLENT CHANGE.

3. BUTHELEZI SAID THAT HE WILL NOT CONSIDER PARTICIPATING IN GOVERNMENT UNTIL THERE IS BLACK REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT. PRESIDENT BOTHA STILL WAS THINKING OF TRYING TO CO-OPT BLACK LEADERS. A FEW TOKEN BLACKS IN THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE OR THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL COULD HAVE NO EFFECT WHEN THE NATIONAL PARTY RETAINED THE DECISIVE SAY IN BOTH BODIES. NO BLACK LEADER WITH REAL SUPPORT WOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE CABINET ON THIS BASIS. FURTHERMORE, WHAT THE PRESIDENT WAS OFFERING WAS THAT THERE COULD BE A BLACK MINISTER WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR BLACK EDUCATION - NOT FOR A UNIFIED EDUCATION DEPARTMENT DEALING WITH EDUCATION FOR ALL RACES.

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4. BUTHELEZI EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION OF THE POSITION WE HAVE CONTINUED TO TAKE ON SANCTIONS. THIS REINFORCED HIS RESOLVE TO CONTINUE TO LOOK FOR WAYS TO MAKE PROGRESS BY NON-VIOLENT MEANS. BUT UNTIL THE GOVERNMENT OFFERED REAL POWER-SHARING, THERE WOULD BE A CONTINUANCE OF VIOLENCE AND COUNTER-VIOLENCE. ATTEMPTS AT COERCION FROM OUTSIDE WOULD SIMPLY REINFORCE WHITE RESISTANCE TO CHANGE. THE CLAMP-DOWN ON OTHER BLACK ORGANISATIONS HAD COMPOUNDED THE PROBLEMS FOR BUTHELEZI, WHO COULD NOT DEAL WITH THE GOVERNMENT AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL SO LONG AS THE LEADERS OF OTHER PARTIES WERE NOT RELEASED. HE WAS STILL TRYING TO MAKE PROGRESS IN NATAL. HE HAD TALKED TO VILJOEN AND HAD SENT A DELEGATION TO SEE HEUNIS. BUT THE GOVERNMENT WERE SHOWING NO INTEREST IN DISCUSSING THE INDABA PROPOSALS. THEY CLAIMED THAT THESE AMOUNTED TO MAJORITY RULE, NOT POWER-SHARING - CONTRARY TO ALL THE EVIDENCE, AS PROTECTION FOR MINORITY RIGHTS WAS SOLIDLY ENTRENCHED IN THEM.

5. BUTHELEZI DID NOT REJECT THE CONCEPT OF A NEGOTIATING FORUM TO DISCUSS A NEW CONSTITUTION. BUT IT WOULD HAVE TO BE A REAL NEGOTIATION, NOT ONE IN WHICH, AS THE NATIONAL PARTY INSISTED AT PRESENT, ONLY LIMITED ISSUES COULD BE DISCUSSED. THE WHOLE CONCEPT OF POWER-SHARING WOULD BE DISCREDITED IF THE NATIONAL PARTY CONTINUED TO INSIST ON TRYING TO DO IT THEIR WAY, IE WITHOUT SHARING REAL POWER. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT P W BOTHA'S STATEMENT THAT THERE COULD BE BLACK REPRESENTATION IN THE CABINET DID REPRESENT AN IMPORTANT IDEOLOGICAL SHIFT. BOTHA WAS SHOWING A RECOGNITION THAT THERE COULD NOT BE A FUTURE GOVERNMENT WITHOUT BLACKS IN IT. SO BLACK PARTICIPATION IN THE EXECUTIVE AT THE CENTRE AT LEAST WAS NOW ON THE AGENDA. BUT THE COLOURED LEADER, HENDRICKSE, WHEN IN THE CABINET HAD FOUND THAT HE HAD NO REAL AUTHORITY AND ENDED UP HAVING TO TRY TO JUSTIFY NATIONAL PARTY POLICIES. IT WAS NO USE PARTICIPATING ON THAT BASIS.

6. BUTHELEZI'S CHIEF LIEUTENANT, DHLOMO, WHO DOES MOST OF THE NEGOTIATING WITH THE GOVERNMENT, SAID THAT HE DID NOT SEE A FUTURE FOR THE INDABA PROPOSALS AS SUCH, BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT DISLIKED ANYTHING THEY HAD NOT INVENTED THEMSELVES. BUT HE DID HOPE THERE WOULD BE A FUTURE FOR THE INDABA PROCESS. IT HAD INVOLVED GENUINE NEGOTIATION, TRYING TO DEAL WITH THE LEGITIMATE FEARS OF THE WHITE MINORITY. THE KEY PRINCIPLE WAS THE PROTECTION OF MINORITY RIGHTS ON A NON-RACIAL BASIS. THE ANXIETIES OF THE WHITES COULD NOT BE DEALT WITH OTHERWISE. HE BELIEVED THAT THESE PRINCIPLES WOULD FEATURE IN A FUTURE CONSTITUTION.

7. I ASKED WHETHER THE INABILITY TO SHOW PROGRESS OVER THIS

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AND OTHER PROPOSALS WAS UNDERMINING INDABA SUPPORT. DHLOMO SAID THAT NEGOTIATION MIGHT NOT BE WORKING: BUT NOR WAS VIOLENCE. THE ANC HAD LITTLE TO SHOW FOR THE ARMED STRUGGLE WHICH THEY HAD NOW BEEN TRYING TO WAGE FOR THE PAST TWENTY-SIX YEARS. ✓

8. I ASKED DHLOMO ABOUT HIS CONTACTS WITH THE ANC. DHLOMO SAID THAT HE HAD HAD THREE MEETINGS WITH THABO MBEKI LAST YEAR. DHLOMO HAD PROPOSED TO MBEKI THAT THESE TALKS SHOULD LEAD ON TO A MEETING INVOLVING THEIR COLLEAGUES ON BOTH SIDES. THAT IN TURN COULD LEAD TO A TAMBO/BUTHELEZI MEETING. THE SECOND PHASE (IE A WIDER MEETING) HAD NOT BEEN ACHIEVED BECAUSE THE ANC HAD BACKED OUT OF THE PROPOSED MEETING IN LONDON IN OCTOBER. DHLOMO HAD SEEN MBEKI AGAIN RECENTLY IN HARARE AND HAD REMINDED HIM THAT THIS WAS STILL ON OFFER.

9. MOTLANA, HEAD OF THE SOWETO CIVIC ASSOCIATION, JOINED IN A MEETING I ARRANGED WITH BRITISH COMPANIES IN JOHANNESBURG TO HELP INCREASE SUPPORT FOR SMALL BLACK BUSINESSES. MOTLANA SAID THAT WHILE THE OBJECTIVE REMAINED POLITICAL FREEDOM, THERE HAD TO BE ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY. HIS OBJECTION TO P W BOTHA'S PROPOSALS WAS THE SAME AS BUTHELEZI'S: THEY WERE MEANINGLESS SO LONG AS THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUED TO EXCLUDE BLACK REPRESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT. |

10. I TALKED ALSO IN DURBAN TO GUMEDE, CO-CHAIRMAN OF THE UDF. GUMEDE SPENT MUCH OF HIS TIME PROTESTING ABOUT ATTACKS ON THE UDF BY INKATHA AROUND PIETERMARITZBURG. VIOLENCE AROUND PIETERMARITZBURG HAS DIED DOWN SOMEWHAT, BUT THE TWO SIDES REMAIN DEEPLY ANTAGONISTIC AND BUTHELEZI IS BEING CHALLENGED BY THE ANC AMONG ZULUS IN THE URBAN AREAS. GUMEDE WAS DISAPPOINTED THAT HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE UDF HAD TURNED DOWN HIS SUGGESTION THAT THEY SHOULD CONSIDER PARTICIPATING IN ELECTIONS. HE COMPLAINED ABOUT OUR ATTITUDE TO SANCTIONS. IN THE SAME BREATH HE SAID THAT THE MAIN PROBLEM WAS TO PROVIDE JOBS FOR THE YOUTH IN THE TOWNSHIPS. GENERALLY HE APPEARED PRETTY DEMORALISED. HE NO LONGER HAS MUCH AUTHORITY VIS A VIS HIS OWN SUPPORTERS.

"Key" blank?

COMMENT

11. THESE LEADERS, REPRESENTING A WIDE CROSS-SECTION OF BLACK OPINION, ALL ACCEPTED THAT IT WAS AN IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT FOR THE PRESIDENT TO BE TALKING PUBLICLY ABOUT BLACK PARTICIPATION IN THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. THEY RECOGNISED THAT THIS WAS A COURAGEOUS STEP TO TAKE

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IN THE FACE OF THE RIGHT WING AND THAT
IT COULD BE IMPORTANT IF FOLLOWED BY OTHERS. BUT WITHOUT BLACK REP-
RESENTATION IN PARLIAMENT, NONE OF THEM WILL PLAY. BUTHELEZI WILL
CONTINUE TO INSIST ON REAL POWER-SHARING AT THE CENTRE, OR THE
INDABA PROPOSALS IN NATAL.

RENWICK

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