

S. Africa

CONFIDENTIAL

GR 210

CONFIDENTIAL

FM PRETORIA 011310Z OCT 80

TO ROUTINE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 379 OF 1 OCTOBER.

OUR TELNO 369: VAN ZYL SLABBERT.

1. SLABBERT'S RETURN LAST WEEKEND DID NOT ITSELF REOPEN CONTROVERSY OVER HIS CALL ON MRS THATCHER. BUT P W BOTHA IN HIS SPEECH ON 29 SEPTEMBER TO THE CAPE NATIONAL PARTY CONGRESS MADE A SLASHING ATTACK ON SLABBERT FOR, AMONG OTHER THINGS, CRITICISING THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRIME MINISTER IN HIS RECENT MEETINGS WITH LEADERS IN BRITAIN AND OTHER COUNTRIES QUOTE DR SLABBERT MUST EXPLAIN OPEN SQUARE BRACKETS HIS VIEWS CLOSE SQUARE BRACKETS TO SOUTH AFRICA, NOT TO GREAT BRITAIN OR ANYONE IN GREAT BRITAIN UNQUOTE.

2. THOUGH P W BOTHA WAS CAREFUL NOT TO COMPLAIN THAT MRS THATCHER HAD SEEN SLABBERT OR ABOUT THE WAY IN WHICH THE MEETING HAD BEEN ARRANGED, IT WAS CLEAR TO ME AS I LISTENED TO P W BOTHA THAT THE MEETING WITH MRS THATCHER STILL RANKLED AND THAT HE WAS INTENT ON MAKING POLITICAL CAPITAL OUT OF IT.

3. SLABBERT HAS SINCE ISSUED A STATEMENT THAT HE HAS A PERFECT RIGHT TO CRITICISE P W BOTHA IN HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH OVERSEAS LEADERS. HE HAD ALREADY MADE SUCH CRITICISMS IN MUCH STRONGER TERMS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

4. NO ONE HAS RAISED THE SUBJECT WITH ME DIRECTLY SINCE MR LUCE'S TALK WITH PIK BOTHA.

LEAHY

[THIS TELEGRAM WAS NOT ADVANCED]
[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING STREET]

LIMITED

S AF D
NEWS D
PS
PS/LPS
PS/MR LUCE
PS/PUS
SIR E YOUDE
MR DAY

CONFIDENTIAL