

South Africa

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GRS 70A
SECRET
FM CAPE TOWN EMBASSY 120845A APR 1980
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NO 293 OF 12 APRIL

MY TELEGRAM NO 290

LORD HUNT'S MESSAGE TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE.

1. REGRETTABLY TWO SERIOUS MISTAKES OCCURRED IN THE TRANSMISSION OF THIS TELEGRAM.
2. PARAGRAPH 13 NINTH LINE: "DESPARATE" (SIC) SHOULD READ "DISPARATE".
3. PARAGRAPH 13 FIFTEENTH LINE: SOME WORDS HAVE BEEN OMITTED. IT SHOULD READ "THE WHITES IN NAMIBIA, WHO WERE DIFFERENT FROM THE WHITES IN RHODESIA, WOULD SEE TO IT THAT THEY WON IT."
4. THERE IS ALSO A MINOR ERROR IN THE FIRST LINE OF PARAGRAPH 2 WHERE "DISCUSSION AND TACTICS" SHOULD READ "DISCUSSION OF TACTICS".
5. IN THE NINTH SENTENCE OF PARAGRAPH 15 "HAVE" SHOULD READ "WAVE".

LEAHY

FILES
HD/S AF D
PS
PS/LPS
PS/MR LUCE
PS/FUS
MR DAY

COPIES TO:-

PS/ NO 10 DOWNING ST.
SIR R ARMSTRONG CABINET OFFICE

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SECRET

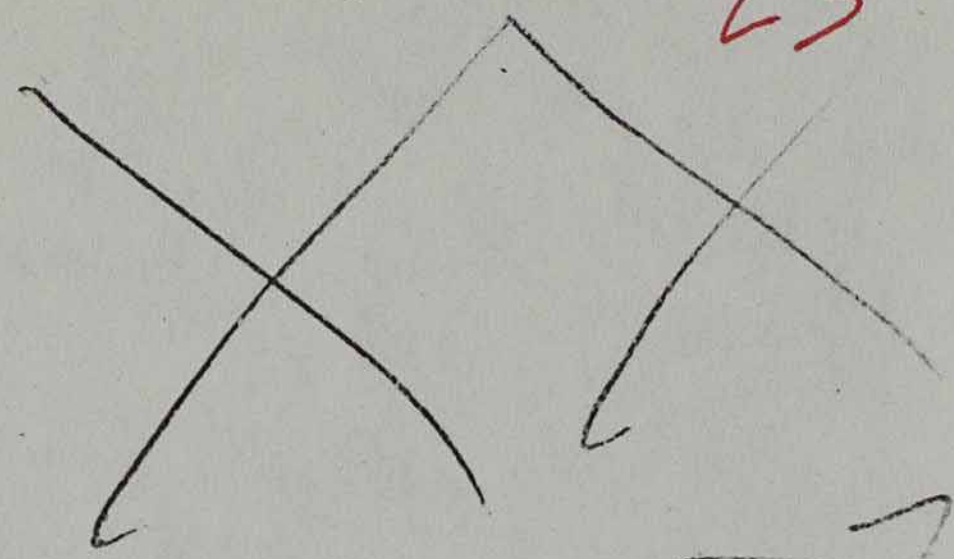
FM CAPE TOWN EMBASSY 110940Z APR 1980

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TEL NO 290 OF 11 APRIL

NY TELEGRAM NO 282

(Files + as ref tel)



3 *PS*

ADVANCE COPY

(H) S.A.F.D
No. Day

PERSONAL FOR THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No 10 Downing

FROM LORD HUNT

Read in full (you have seen the ref tel)

Ans

1. AT YESTERDAY'S TALKS THE PRIME MINISTER WAS ACCOMPANIED BY PIK BOTHA, FOURIE, DE VILLIERS AND GENERAL MALAN, AND THE AMBASSADOR ACCOMPANIED ME.

2. FOLLOWING DISCUSSION ^{OF} TACTICS WITH THE AMBASSADOR I DECIDED TO TAKE THE INITIATIVE THIS TIME IN THE HOPE OF AVOIDING A SERIES OF QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS TO WHICH I SHOULD HAVE TO GIVE STALLING OR NEGATIVE ANSWERS. THIS TACTIC WORKED SUCCESSFULLY.

3. I BEGAN BY SAYING THAT I HAD REFLECTED ON THE PREVIOUS DAY'S DISCUSSIONS WHICH I HAD FOUND VERY HELPFUL: AND, ALTHOUGH I HAD NOT CONSULTED MRS THATCHER OVERNIGHT, I HAD TRIED TO ENVISAGE WHAT HER REACTION TO THEM MIGHT BE. I THOUGHT SHE MIGHT WELL SAY SOMETHING LIKE THIS. WE SEEMED TO SEE EYE TO EYE ON FIVE POINTS VIZ:-

(A) THERE WAS A SOVIET THREAT TO THE REGION WHICH NEEDED TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY:

(B) SOUTH AFRICA HAD AN IMPORTANT PART WHICH SHE COULD PLAY IN THE REGION AND MORE WIDELY IN AFRICA AND THE WESTERN WORLD:

(C) BRITAIN HAD A VERY GREAT INTEREST IN THE STABILITY AND PROSPERITY OF THE REGION AND OF SOUTH AFRICA:

(D) WE SHOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO HELP BRING THIS STABILITY AND PROSPERITY ABOUT AND TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR SOUTH

(D) WE SHOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO HELP BRING THIS STABILITY AND PROSPERITY ABOUT AND TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR SOUTH AFRICA TO PLAY ITS PROPER ROLE BY USING OUR INFLUENCE WHERE WE COULD:

(E) WE COULD DO THIS MORE EFFECTIVELY BEHIND THE SCENES AND COULD IN ANY CASE NOT BE SEEN TO ACT AS A SPOKESMAN FOR SOUTH AFRICA, PARTICULARLY WHEN WE HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT HER POLICIES.

4. THE EXTENT TO WHICH WE COULD BUILD ON THESE POINTS OF AGREEMENT AND MAKE OUR INFLUENCE FELT WAS HOWEVER BOUND TO BE GOVERNED BY THE PERCEPTION OF CHANGES TAKING PLACE IN SOUTH AFRICA. WE HAD NO INTENTION OF PRESCRIBING WHAT THESE CHANGES MIGHT BE OR, FOR EXAMPLE, PRESSING THEM TO ACCEPT ONE MAN ONE VOTE. WE RECOGNISED THAT THEY HAD BUILT AN ECONOMY AND CIVILISATION THAT THEY DID NOT WISH TO SEE DESTROYED. IT WOULD HOWEVER BE ESSENTIAL FOR THEM TO MANAGE THE PROCESS OF CHANGE SO THAT IT HAD WIDE-SPREAD DEMONSTRABLE ACCEPTANCE INCLUDING THE NON-WHITE POPULATION. IN THE MEANTIME IT WAS VITAL TO AVOID A MAJOR CONFRONTATION OVER NAMIBIA WRECKING WHAT WAS BOUND TO BE A GRADUAL AND STEP BY STEP PROCESS. I HOPED WE ALSO AGREED THAT THE NEW ZIMBABWEAN GOVERNMENT MUST BE GIVEN A FAIR CHANCE OF SUCCESS AND THAT THEY WOULD DO ALL THEY COULD TO ASSIST THIS AND THUS TO KEEP MUGABE ON A MODERATE COURSE. AS REGARDS THE SOVIET THREAT, WE BOTH RECOGNISED IT AS REAL AND MENACING BUT WE SAW IT AS LARGELY POLITICAL AND OPPORTUNISTIC WHEREAS THEY SEEMED TO PERCEIVE SOME GRAND MILITARY DESIGN. PERHAPS THIS REFLECTED OUR DIFFERENT GEOGRAPHICAL STANDPOINTS. WE SAW THE THREAT IN A WORLD-WIDE CONTEXT WHEREAS THEY WERE NATURALLY PREOCCUPIED WITH AFRICA: AND WE DREW A SHARPER DISTINCTION BETWEEN AFRICAN NATIONALISM AND MARXISM EVEN THOUGH THE TWO COULD OVERLAP.

5. THERE WERE, HOWEVER, TWO POINTS ON WHICH THE PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS HAD LEFT ME UNCLEAR. WHAT DID HE REALLY MEAN BY HIS CONSTELLATION OF STATES IDEA WHICH SEEMED INTENDED TO MARRY DOMESTIC CHANGE WITH BETTER RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA'S NEIGHBOURS? WHO WOULD BE INVOLVED? HOW WOULD IT WORK? WHAT WOULD BE THE CITIZENSHIP POSITION OF AFRICANS OUTSIDE THE HOMELANDS ETC? MY SECOND DOUBT RELATED TO HIS PROPOSAL FOR DETAILED DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE WHOLE REGION "COUNTRY BY COUNTRY". WHAT HAD HE REALLY IN MIND? TAKE, FOR EXAMPLE, ZAMBIA. WAS HE SAYING THAT WE SHOULD DISCUSS WHETHER TO HELP ZAMBIA OR TO DAMAGE HER; OR TO SEEK TO BRING ABOUT CHANGES IN ZAMBIAN POLICIES? THE DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF SUCH A DISCUSSION WERE OBVIOUS. WHEREAS A GENERAL TOUR

THE WAY OF SUCH A DISCUSSION WERE OBVIOUS, WHEREAS A GENERAL TOUR D'HORIZON MIGHT SERVE LITTLE PURPOSE.

6. THE PRIME MINISTER THANKED ME FOR THESE REMARKS AND SAID THAT HE AGREED WE SAW A NUMBER OF THINGS THE SAME WAY. HE WOULD MAKE A NUMBER OF COMMENTS IN REPLY. BY WAY OF PREFACE, HE WOULD SAY HONESTLY THAT HE HAD BEEN BROUGHT UP TO DISLIKE BRITAIN - AND HIS PEOPLE HAD HAD GOOD REASON FOR THAT. BUT HE HAD TO ADMIT OBJECTIVELY THAT SINCE BRITAIN HAD RETIRED FROM THE CENTRE OF THE STAGE THE WORLD'S AFFAIRS HAD TAKEN A TURN FOR THE WORSE.

7. HE PREFERRED NOT TO SPEAK ABOUT "CHANGE" IN THE INTERNAL CONTEXT SINCE RADICAL LEFT-WINGERS TRIED TO MAKE POLITICAL CAPITAL OUT OF IT. HE LIKED TO TALK INSTEAD OF DEVELOPMENT AND OF "UPLIFTING" THE LESS ADVANCED ELEMENTS IN THE POPULATION THROUGH BETTER EDUCATION, TRAINING, HOUSING, HEALTH AND EMPLOYMENT. SOME PEOPLE THOUGHT IN TERMS OF ONE MAN ONE VOTE IN A UNITARY STATE, BUT HE BELIEVED THEY WERE WRONG. JUST AS THE NATIONAL PARTY HAD SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE WHITE MINORITY AS ONE OF ITS FOUNDING PRINCIPLES, SO SELF-DETERMINATION SHOULD BE THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE FOR THE OTHER PEOPLES. THESE PEOPLES WERE IN ANY CASE TOO DIVERSIFIED AND JEALOUS OF EACH OTHER TO MAKE MAJORITY RULE IN A UNITARY STATE A PRACTICAL ANSWER. (MR BOTHA GAVE A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC EXAMPLES TO ILLUSTRATE THIS POINT.) THEY MUST BE HELPED INSTEAD TO RUN THEIR OWN AFFAIRS. FOR EXAMPLE HE WANTED TO SEE A ZULU NATION AGAIN IN ITS OWN CONSOLIDATED AREA. HE WAS WORKING ON THESE THINGS BUT THEY WOULD TAKE TIME ("MORE THAN JUST A YEAR OR TWO"). PEOPLE HAD TO BE TRAINED TO GOVERN THEMSELVES POLITICALLY.

8. TURNING TO THE CONCEPT OF A CONSTELLATION OF STATES MR BOTHA EXPLAINED THAT THERE WERE THREE DIFFERENT TYPES OF STATE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT: THE HOMELANDS WHICH WERE NOT YET INDEPENDENT, THOSE STATES WHICH SOUTH AFRICA HAD HELPED TO INDEPENDENCE (TRANSKEI, BOPHUTATSWANA, VENDA), AND NEIGHBOURING INDEPENDENT STATES. THE FIRST TWO GROUPS WERE PART OF THE RAND MONETARY AREA AND NEEDED TO COORDINATE THEIR POLICIES IN THE ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL FIELDS AND OVER SUCH PRACTICAL MATTERS AS TRANSPORT, HEALTH AND WATER RESOURCES. THEY COULD ALSO HAVE CLOSE COOPERATION IN SECURITY AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THEY SHOULD MEET TOGETHER AT LEAST ANNUALLY AND IN COMMITTEES TO DISCUSS THEIR COMMON PROBLEMS AND COULD HAVE A DEVELOPMENT BANK AND SOME FORM OF JOINT SECRETARIAT. HE WOULD ALSO WELCOME THE PARTICIPATION OF NEIGHBOURING INDEPENDENT STATES ON CONDITION THAT THERE WAS NO INTERFERENCE IN EACH OTHER'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS. THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION HAD MUCH TO OFFER

INTERNAL AFFAIRS. THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION HAD MUCH TO OFFER ONE ANOTHER AND SOUTH AFRICA DID NOT WISH TO DOMINATE THE OTHERS.

9. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION MR BOTHA SAID THAT IN THE CONSTELLATION CONTEXT BLACKS IN THE REPUBLIC ITSELF WOULD BE ABLE TO ENJOY A FORM OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION OF "HIGHER THAN MUNICIPAL STATUS". THIS TOO WOULD TAKE TIME SINCE IF THEY WERE GIVEN IT BEFORE THEY WERE READY IT WOULD BE LIKE GIVING A PISTOL TO A CHILD AND TELLING HIM IT WAS READY TO USE.

10. MR BOTHA WENT ON BRIEFLY TO OUTLINE THE SEPARATE CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS WHICH HE HAD IN MIND FOR THE COLOURED AND INDIAN POPULATIONS, BUT DID NOT GO INTO DETAILS. ON A SEPARATE POINT HE SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD WHY PEOPLE IN THE STATES WHICH SOUTH AFRICA HAD HELPED TO INDEPENDENCE DID NOT LIKE HAVING TO GIVE UP THEIR SOUTH AFRICAN CITIZENSHIP. A MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE WAS WORKING ON THIS PROBLEM AND IT COULD BE THAT SOMETHING AKIN TO "COMMONWEALTH CITIZENSHIP" WOULD BE THE RIGHT ANSWER.

11. ON THE SOVIET THREAT HE SAID THAT HE DID NOT THINK THAT THE RUSSIANS WOULD ALLOW THEMSELVES TO BECOME DIRECTLY INVOLVED MILITARILY SO FAR FROM THEIR OWN BORDERS. THEIR LINES OF COMMUNICATION WOULD BE TOO STRETCHED. THEY WOULD WORK INSTEAD THROUGH SURROGATES SUCH AS THE CUBANS AND EAST GERMANS. MOREOVER AS HE HAD FORESEEN WHEN THE BRITISH FLEET WITHDREW FROM THE INDIAN OCEAN THE RUSSIANS COULD NOW APPLY THEIR SEA POWER IN THE AREA. AS FOR WHAT BRITISH INTELLIGENCE TOLD US OF RUSSIAN INTENTIONS, HE COULD ONLY SAY THAT UNLIKE SOUTH AFRICAN INTELLIGENCE OUR INFORMATION ON RHODESIA HAD BEEN BADLY WRONG WHEN WE HAD FORECAST THAT MUZOREVA WOULD EASILY WIN THE ELECTION. (I CONTESTED THIS AND THERE FOLLOWED SOME GOOD-NATURED REPORTEE ABOUT WHO HAD SAID WHAT.)

12. TURNING TO ZIMBABWE MR BOTHA SAID THAT HE HAD RECEIVED A VISIT FROM AN INTERMEDIARY RECENTLY ("NO NAMES NO PACK DRILL") AND HAD ASKED HIM WHETHER MUGABE WOULD HONOUR RHODESIA'S FINANCIAL DEBTS OF MORE THAN 400 MILLION RAND TO SOUTH AFRICA AND WOULD PREVENT THE ANC FROM USING ZIMBABWE AS A BASE FROM WHICH TO ATTACK SOUTH AFRICA. WHEN I ASKED HIM WHETHER HE HAD HAD A REPLY HE SAID THAT HE HAD NOT. I SAID THAT I UNDERSTOOD MUGABE HAD AGREED ON BOTH POINTS. (HE DID NOT DISPUTE THIS AND IN SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION AFTER THE MEETING FOURIE CONFIRMED THAT MUGABE WOULD GIVE A WRITTEN ASSURANCE ON THE DEBTS IMMEDIATELY AFTER INDEPENDENCE.) MR BOTHA WENT ON TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT IN GENERAL THE S A G WOULD SUSPEND JUDGMENT ON THE COURSE OF THEIR FUTURE RELATIONS WITH ZIMBABWE AND WOULD NOT ENTER INTO ANY NEW OBLIGATIONS (AS DISTINCT FROM

WOULD NOT ENTER INTO ANY NEW OBLIGATIONS (AS DISTINCT FROM FULFILLING PREVIOUS ONES) UNTIL THEY COULD SEE HOW MUGABE'S GOOD INTENTIONS STOOD UP TO THE PRESSURES HE WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY COME UNDER.

13. AT MY SUGGESTION WE DID NOT HAVE ANY FURTHER DETAILED DISCUSSION OF THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS FACING US IN NAMIBIA, HAVING GONE OVER THE GROUND THOROUGHLY THE DAY BEFORE. BUT MR BOTHA READILY AGREED THAT WE BOTH HAD GOOD REASONS TO AVOID AN IMMEDIATE CONFRONTATION AND HE EMPHASISED ONCE AGAIN THAT TIME WAS NEEDED. HE REALISED THAT WE DID NOT WANT TO RUSH MATTERS AND HE THOUGHT THE SAME WAS PROBABLY TRUE OF THE GERMANS, FRENCH AND CANADIANS. BUT THE AMERICANS SEEMED BENT ON FORCING THE ISSUE. LIKewise THE FRONT LINE STATES. THE LATTER WERE REALLY A VERY DISPARATE GROUP AND HAD SERIOUS PROBLEMS OF THEIR OWN TO CONTEND WITH. COULD WE NOT GET THEM TO SEE THAT THEY WERE 'PLAYING WITH FIRE' IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND ESPECIALLY IN NAMIBIA? IF THEY FORCED A CONFRONTATION NOW THERE WOULD BE WAR. HE DID NOT WANT A WAR BECAUSE IT WOULD SOLVE NOTHING. BUT I SHOULD MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT IT, IF WAR CAME THE NAMIBIA WHO WERE DIFFERENT FROM THE WHITES IN RHODESIA, WHITES IN ~~ZIMBABWE~~ WOULD SEE TO IT THAT THEY WON IT. HE HOPED WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO MAKE THE FLS SEE SENSE, BUT HE WAS NOT PRESSING ME FOR AN ANSWER TO HIS QUESTION NOW AND WOULD LEAVE IT AT THAT.

14. THE MEETING ENDED WITH WARM EXPRESSIONS OF THANKS AND GOOD WISHES ON BOTH SIDES.

ASSESSMENT

15. THE ATMOSPHERE WAS VERY GOOD THROUGHOUT: FRIENDLY AND RELAXED BUT NO GLOSSING OVER OF DIFFERENCES. IT WAS INTERESTING THAT I WAS NOT PRESSED AT ALL ON SOME OF THE POINTS WHICH COULD HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT. IN PARTICULAR HE DID NOT RESPOND TO MY QUESTION (PARA 5 ABOVE) ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF MORE DETAILED BILATERAL TALKS. NOR DID HE PICK UP MY REMARK (PARA 2 OF THE T U R) THAT MRS THATCHER HOPED TO SEE HIM AGAIN 'SOME TIME' OR SUGGEST AN EARLY MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO OF THEM. IT IS OF COURSE JUST POSSIBLE THAT HE JUDGED MY REMARKS SO NEGATIVE THAT HE FELT REBUFFED AND WAS WRITING US OFF. ON BALANCE (AND THE AMBASSADOR AGREES) I DOUBT IF THIS WAS THE CASE: AND PIK BOTHA WENT OUT OF HIS WAY, WHEN I SAW HIM AT DINNER LAST NIGHT, TO SAY THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD BEEN WELL SATISFIED. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT, AS ON SO MANY OTHER POINTS, P W BOTHA HAD NOT THOUGHT THROUGH THE PROPOSALS IN HIS LETTER BEFORE HE SENT IT AND WAS COMING HIMSELF TO SEE THE DIFFICULTIES IN SOME OF HIS IDEAS. FOR EXAMPLE, WHILE HE WOULD BE

DIFFICULTIES IN SOME OF HIS IDEAS. FOR EXAMPLE, WHILE HE WOULD BE READY TO DISCUSS THE POSITION IN OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES HE CLEARLY DOES NOT WANT TO BE PRESSED ON THE PRECISE CHANGES HE ENVISAGES IN SOUTH AFRICA ITSELF. UNDOUBTEDLY HIS LETTER WAS INSPIRED BY A KEEN SENSE OF SOUTH AFRICA'S ISOLATION AND IT IS POSSIBLE THAT FOR A MOMENT HE FELT WE COULD WAVE SOME KIND OF MAGIC WAND FOR THEM. I THINK HE NOW SEES THAT THIS IS QUITE UNREALISTIC AND THAT HE HAS COME TO THIS CONCLUSION FOR HIMSELF. HIS LAST WORDS TO ME WERE "EVEN IF NOTHING FURTHER COMES OF THIS VISIT I AM GLAD YOU CAME AND I HAVE FOUND OUR DISCUSSIONS VALUABLE". I PROMISED TO REPORT FAITHFULLY EVERYTHING HE SAID.

16. I THINK THAT OUR OPTIONS REMAIN OPEN. WE CAN LET THE WHOLE THING DROP WITHOUT, I JUDGE, CAUSING GREAT SURPRISE OR DISAPPOINTMENT; OR WE CAN SEEK TO FOLLOW UP SOME ASPECTS THROUGH MORE NORMAL CHANNELS; OR WE COULD SUGGEST A MINISTERIAL VISIT (HERE OR IN LONDON) AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME. IN THEIR PRESENT SENSITIVE AND ISOLATED MOOD SOME KIND OF FOLLOW UP OF AN INNOCUOUS KIND COULD WELL PAY DIVIDENDS IN RESTRAINING THEM FROM SELF-DEFEATING COURSES.

17. IN SHORT, NO BREAK-THROUGH, BUT WE DID NOT EXPECT ONE. BUT I HOPE NO DAMAGE EITHER. MY OWN FEELING WAS THAT ON BALANCE THE VISIT WAS WORTHWHILE AS A FRIENDLY GESTURE WHICH ALSO SERVED TO BRING OUT MORE CLEARLY WHAT WE COULD AND COULD NOT DO. THE AMBASSADOR WILL OF COURSE REPORT ANY SUBSEQUENT FEED-BACK.

LEAHY

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