

CONFIDENTIAL

GR 195

CONFIDENTIAL

FM HARARE 080834Z JUN 83

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 516 OF 8 JUNE

AND TO PRIORITY WASHINGTON, CAPE TOWN.

AC %

h.a.

MISS SOLESBY'S TELELETTER OF 18 MAY : TRIAL OF AIR FORCE OFFICERS.

1. SIR JAMES WILSON DID SUCCEED IN SEEING MUGABE AND REMINDED HIM OF ZIMBABWE'S FRIENDS' CONCERN AT THE PROSPECT THAT THE AIR FORCE OFFICERS MIGHT BE REDETAINED IF ACQUITTED.
2. MUGABE SAID HE WAS WELL AWARE OF OUR CONCERN. FOR HIS PART, HE OF COURSE HAD TO WEIGH OTHER MATTERS IN THE BALANCE: THE GRAVITY OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED AT THORNHILL, THE EVIDENCE THAT HE HAD INDICATING INSIDE INVOLVEMENT, THE RISKS TO THE SECURITY OF THE STATE OF RELEASING ANY PERSON SO INVOLVED, AND THE FACT THAT MASUKU AND DABENGWA HAD ALREADY BEEN REDETAINED. BUT HE ASSURED SIR JAMES WILSON THAT THE CONCERN EXPRESSED BY ZIMBABWE'S FRIENDS WOULD BE A FACTOR IN HIS CALCULATIONS.
3. IT IS CLEAR TO ME THAT MUGABE HAS GOT THE MESSAGE AND THAT FURTHER REPETITION OF IT IS BOTH UNNECESSARY AND INADVISABLE FOR THE TIME BEING. MUGABE'S RESPONSE WAS FRIENDLY AND NOT RESENTFUL - BUT WE HAD CAREFULLY SCHOOLED SIR J WILSON IN HOW TO APPROACH THE MATTER IN THE MOST TACTFUL WAY POSSIBLE.

EWANS

(REPEATED AS REQUESTED)

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING STREET]

SOUTHERN AFRICA
STANDARD
~~S-10~~ CAFD
OADS
MCAD
UND
NAD
WED
ECD
EESD
MR SQUIRE
CABINET OFFICE

CONFIDENTIAL