TO PRIORITY FCO TELNO 19A OF 1 JULY 1974. REPEATED FOR
INFORMATION ROUTINE LUSAKA, DAR-ES-SALAM, LUANDA AND
LOURENCO MARQUES.

LOURENCO MARQUES TELNO 67: PORTUGUESE/FERELIGO TALKS

1. THIS IS A USEFUL SUGGESTION WHICH MAY OFFER A WAY OUT.
   BUT AS SEEN FROM HERE IT HAS CONSIDERABLE SNAGS FOR BOTH
   SIDES.

2. THOUGH I REFER TO HMGG’S GREATER KNOWLEDGE OF THE LOCAL
   SITUATION, I WONDER WHETHER FRELINGO’S LEADERS ARE QUITE AS
   REASONABLE AS HIS TEL SUGGESTS. FROM THEIR POINT OF VIEW
   (AND PERHAPS THAT OF THEIR SUPPORTERS – SEE LUSAKA TELNO
   1481) ANY ACTION WHICH DELAYS THEIR ASSUMPTION OF POWER
   MUST SURELY BE A BAD THING, AND PROBABLY NO MORE THAN A
   ‘PORTUGUESE TRICK TO PROLONG CONTROL’.

3. FROM THE PORTUGUESE ANGLE, PRESIDENT SPINOLA KEEPS
   INSISTING ON THE THEME OF SELF-DETERMINATION BEFORE
   INDEPENDENCE, WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF SOME SORT OF COMMONWEALTH
   STATUS AS THE EXPLICIT BACKGROUND TO ANY CONSULTATION OF LOCAL
   WISHES. WE HAVE JUST LEARNT FROM HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY THAT
   THE PRESIDENT IS DISAPPOINTED NOT TO HAVE HAD PUBLIC BACKING
   FOR THIS LINE FROM THE BRITISH AND OTHER FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS.
   IT IS NOW COMMON KNOWLEDGE THAT THERE IS A DIFFERENCE IN THE
   PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT OVER THIS, AND ALTHOUGH DR SOARES IS TRYING
   TO PAPER OVER THE CRACKS, IT WILL NEED GREAT SKILL TO PRESENT
   THE LOURENCO MARQUES IDEA (OR SOMETHING SIMILAR) AS ANYTHING
   OTHER THAN A DEFEAT FOR THE PRESIDENT ON AN ISSUE WHICH HAD
   MUCH TO DO WITH HIS PRESENT POSITION AND WHICH LIES NEAR TO
   THE HEART OF HIS AUTHORITY.

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4. ON A LOWER LEVEL, FAMILIES IN PORTUGAL WHOSE MEMBERS HAVE DURING THEIR PERIODS OF CONSCRIPTION SUFFERED AT THE HANDS OF THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS MAY WELL PROTEST AGAINST HANDING THE POWER OVER PORTUGUESE NATIONS AND INTERESTS TO THE SAME PEOPLE WHO HAVE KILLED AND WOUNDED THEIR SONS.

5. I WELL UNDERSTAND THAT FROM THE AFRICAN POINT OF VIEW, THE PORTUGUESE PROBABLY APPEAR TO BE DRAGGING THEIR FEET, BUT THEY DO HAVE CONSIDERABLE INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES TO CONTEND WITH. WITH TIME, HOWEVER, THEY MAY POSSIBLY BE ABLE TO ARRIVE AT A SOLUTION ACCEPTABLE TO ALL ON THE GENERAL BASIS OUTLINED IN LOURENCO MARQUES TEL UNDER REFERENCE.

WHETHER FRELIMO AND THEIR FRIENDS ARE PREPARED TO WAIT LONG ENOUGH IS, OF COURSE, ANOTHER MATTER.

TRENCH

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