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ACTION 10-13

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AF-08 ARA-10
EA-09 EUR-12 NEA-10 USIE-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

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FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3187

UNCLAS GENEVA 8501

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UK, RH

SUBJ: PRESS ACCOUNT OF RICHARD'S OPENING STATEMENT

AMBASSADOR RICHARD DID NOT FOLLOW PREPARED TEXT IN DELIVERING HIS OPENING SPEECH AFTERNOON OCT 28. CONSEQUENTLY, BRITISH CURRENTLY PREPARING TEXT OF SPEECH AS DELIVERED WHICH WILL BE AVAILABLE TOMORROW MORNING LOCAL TIME. FOLLOWING IS A PRESS SUMMARY OF RICHARD'S PRESENTATION PREPARED BY BRITISH DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION JOURNALIST.

BEGIN TEXT

THE GENEVA CONFERENCE TO DISCUSS THE STRUCTURE AND FORMATION OF A TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT FOR RHODESIA OPENED THIS EVENING WITH THE CHAIRMAN, MR IVOR RICHARD, WELCOMING THE DELEGATIONS TO A UNIQUE AND HISTORIC MEETING WHICH WAS A MAJOR ATTEMPT TO SOLVE THE RHODESIAN PROBLEM BY AGREEMENT AND NOT BY CONFLICT.

IN HIS OPENING SPEECH TO THE CONFERENCE HE SAID THAT THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT ALL THE PARTIES HAD COME TOGETHER IN PURSUIT OF THE COMMONLY-ACCEPTED AIM - THAT

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RHODESIA SHOULD BECOME INDEPENDENT WITHIN TWO YEARS ON THE BASIS OF MAJORITY RULE. HE SAID THE CONFERENCE HAD SEEMED IMPROBABLE UNTIL RECENTLY BUT NOW IT WAS A QUESTION NOT OF WHETHER THERE WOULD BE MAJORITY RULE BUT WHEN AND HOW.

THERE WERE STILL BIG PROBLEMS BUT IT WAS NOT BEYOND THE CAPABILITIES OF EVERYONE TO RESOLVE THESE.

IF EVERYONE HAD COME TO GENEVA WITH THE COMMON PURPOSE, THEN DESPITE THE DIFFICULTIES, THE PROBLEMS SHOULD NOT BE INSURMOUNTABLE. THE AIM WAS TO DEVISE ARRANGEMENTS TO ENSURE INDEPENDENCE WITHIN THE SET PERIOD BY SETTING UP A TRANSITIONAL ADMINISTRATION, WHICH WOULD BE HELPED BY BRITAIN. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT RETAINED UMLTIMATE CONSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR RHODESIA BUT RHODESIA WAS NOT AND NEVER HAD BEEN A NORMAL COLONY.

THE CONFERENCE WAS DIFFERENT FROM PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO FIND A SOLUTION IN THAT MR IAN SMITH, HAD NOW AGREED TO MAJORITY RULE. A MAXIMUM OF TWO YEARS WAS AGREED - SOME WANTED A SHORTER PERIOD BUT THAT WAS FOR NEGOTIATION.

THE CHAIRMAN OUTLINED SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE'S PROGRAMME OF WORK. FOLLOWING THE OTHER OPENING STATEMENTS IT IS SUGGESTED THAT FORMAL DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BREAK SO THAT BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS CAN BE CONTINUED WITH INDIVIDUAL DELEGATIONS. THEN THE BEST WAY TO CONDUCT THE NEXT STAGES OF WORK COULD BE CONSIDERED.

MR RICHARD SAID THAT HE HAD A RECEIVED A SPECIAL MANDATE FROM THE BRITISH CABINET TO BE THEIR REPRESENTATIVE AT THE CONFERENCE. END TEXT.CATTO