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FROM: WASHINGTON 291530Z JUL 85
TO ROUTINE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 2261 OF 29 JULY
INFO BONN, PARIS, OTTAWA, UKMIS NEW YORK, PRETORIA,
INFO SAVING: LUANDA, MAPUTO,
WASHINGTON TELNO 2211: US/SOUTH AFRICA

SUMMARY

1. HOUSE/SENATE CONFERENCE ON SANCTIONS LEGISLATION TO MEET THIS WEEK. LUGAR IMPLYING THAT PRESIDENT WOULD ACCEPT THE SENATE VERSION, BUT STATE DEPARTMENT MAINTAINING THEIR PUBLIC OPPOSITION TO ANY SANCTIONS. NSC MEETING REAFFIRMS POLICY OF CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT, BUT ADMINISTRATION STATEMENTS SLOWLY BECOMING MORE CRITICAL OF SOUTH AFRICA.

DETAIL

2. SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN LUGAR LET IT BE KNOWN ON 27 JULY THAT HE WAS NOW IN FAVOUR OF RAPID PROGRESS ON LEGISLATION TO IMPOSE SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA. UNTIL 26 JULY HE HAD DELAYED NAMING SENATE PARTICIPANTS IN THE HOUSE/SENATE CONFERENCE, APPARENTLY IN THE HOPE OF PERSUADING HOUSE DEMOCRATS TO SETTLE FOR THE LESSER SANCTIONS CONTAINED IN THE SENATE PROPOSAL AND THUS AVOID THE NEED FOR ANY CONFERENCE AT ALL. BUT, AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND NEW YORK, HE AND OTHERS ON THE HILL HAVE EVIDENTLY CONCLUDED THAT CONGRESS HAS TO BE SEEN TO BE TAKING ACTION. THE CONFERENCE WILL THEREFORE GET UNDER WAY ON 31 JULY. THE STATE DEPARTMENT ARE CLEARLY HOPING THAT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES WILL STILL PROVE TOO GREAT TO ENABLE AGREEMENT TO BE REACHED BEFORE THE 2 AUGUST RECESS.

3. AS PART OF HIS EFFORT TO WIN DEMOCRATIC SUPPORT, LUGAR HAS BEEN IMPLYING THAT THE PRESIDENT WOULD NOT VETO LEGISLATION ALONG THE LINES PROPOSED BY THE SENATE. THE STATE DEPARTMENT, HOWEVER, CONTINUED TO INSIST PUBLICLY TODAY THAT THE ADMINISTRATION REMAINED WHOLLY OPPOSED TO PUNITIVE MEASURES OF ANY KIND. PRIVATELY, SOME OF CROCKER'S OFFICIALS ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THIS LINE IS BECOMING HARD TO SUSTAIN (AND IT APPEARS THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN HIMSELF STRAYED SOMEWHAT BEYOND THE AFRICAN AFFAIRS BUREAU GUIDANCE HE WAS DRAWING ON TODAY).

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4. THE ADMINISTRATION'S PUBLIC LINE ON EVENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA HAS, IN ANY CASE, ALREADY HARDENED. ON 26 JULY THE ADMINISTRATION FOR THE FIRST TIME DEMANDED AN EARLY END TO THE STATE OF EMERGENCY, AND CALLED ON THE SOUTH AFRICANS TO ACT WITH THE GREATEST RESTRAINT. BUT WHITE HOUSE AND STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMEN STILL REITERATE THE ADMINISTRATION'S FAITH IN CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENTS AND WE UNDERSTAND THAT A HIGH-LEVEL NSC MEETING HELD ON 26 JULY BROADLY REAFFIRMED THE THRUST OF THE PRESENT POLICY.

FCO PASS SAVING LUANDA AND MAPUTO

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