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FM WASHINGTON 290420Z JUNE

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1740 OF 29 JUNE

AND TO IMMEDIATE TOKYO (FOR S OF S)

INFO PRIORITY MIRIMBA SALISBURY,

INFO ROUTINE PRETORIA, DAR ES SALAAM, GABORONE, LAGOS, LUSAKA,  
MAPUTO, UKMIS NEW YORK, LUANDA.

MY TELNO 1549: RHODESIA.

1. LATE TONIGHT, 28 JUNE, THE HOUSE ADOPTED BY 350 VOTES TO 37 A BILL CALLING FOR THE TERMINATION OF SANCTIONS AGAINST RHODESIA ON 15 OCTOBER UNLESS THE PRESIDENT DETERMINED THAT IT WOULD BE AGAINST U.S. NATIONAL INTERESTS TO DO SO AND REPORTED THUS TO CONGRESS.
2. EARLIER, OPPONENTS OF THE BILL HAD SOUGHT TO INSERT A WRECKING AMENDMENT CALLING FOR THE AUTOMATIC LIFTING OF SANCTIONS ON 1 DECEMBER, REGARDLESS OF ANY PRESIDENTIAL DETERMINATION. THIS WAS DEFEATED BY 242 TO 147 AFTER A STORMY DEBATE. A MOVE TO INSTRUCT THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE TO DRAFT A SUBSTITUTE BILL REQUIRING THE U.S. TO LIFT SANCTIONS IF H.M.G. DID SO FIRST WAS ALSO DEFEATED ON A VOICE VOTE.
3. SUPPORTERS OF SOLARZ'S BILL ARGUED AGAIN THAT IT WAS BEST TO DELAY MATTERS UNTIL H.M.G. HAD REACHED ITS OWN DECISIONS. THEY ALSO MAINTAINED THAT U.S. INTERESTS IN AND RELATIONS WITH BLACK AFRICA WOULD BE SERIOUSLY DAMAGED BY THE PREMATURE LIFTING OF SANCTIONS. OPPONENTS OF THE BILL ASSERTED THAT THE U.S. HAD A MORAL RESPONSIBILITY TO TAKE THE LEAD IN SUPPORTING WHAT WAS DESCRIBED AS RHODESIA'S MODERATE, MULTI-RACIAL DEMOCRACY.

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4. PASSAGE OF THE BILL WITH SUCH A COMFORTABLE MAJORITY WILL GREATLY ENCOURAGE THE ADMINISTRATION, WHICH HAD LOBBIED HARD IN ITS SUPPORT. THE VOTE SHOULD FORCE A STALEMATE IN CONGRESS FOR THE TIME BEING, SENATE HAVING VOTED IN FAVOUR OF LIFTING SANCTIONS ON 12 JUNE. IT IS UNLIKELY THEREFORE THAT U.S. POLICY ON THE QUESTION OF SANCTIONS WILL CHANGE IN THE NEAR FUTURE. CERTAINLY THIS CONVINCING VICTORY IN THE HOUSE AND THE UNEXPECTEDLY NARROW DEFEAT IN THE SENATE WILL GIVE THE PRESIDENT ADDITIONAL CONFIDENCE IN HIS HANDLING OF POLICY TOWARDS RHODESIA.

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