

ACTION ALERT

INFORMATION FOR ACTION ON SOUTHERN AFRICA ISSUES

April 4, 1988

SUPPORT COMPREHENSIVE SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA HR 1580 / S 556

In February 1987, in anticipation of the continued anti-sanctions position by the Reagan Administration and congressional conservatives, Representative Ron Dellums (D-CA) and Senator Alan Cranston (D-CA) introduced HR 1580/S 556, legislation to impose comprehensive sanctions against South Africa. Since that time, sanctions supporters around the country and in the Congress have been calling for passage of the Dellums/Cranston bill. **Comprehensive sanctions are the necessary response to the continuing apartheid violence in South Africa and to South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia.**

Content: HR 1580/S 556 mandates complete disinvestment of all U.S. corporations from South Africa and Namibia within six months of passage of the legislation. In addition, **virtually all trade with South Africa will be banned.** The Dellums/Cranston bill also includes some of the stronger sections of the present sanctions law, such as the termination of the treaty permitting air flights between South Africa and the U.S.

Background: While the present limited sanctions law enacted October 2, 1986 was an important step towards ending U.S. support for the apartheid government and economy, its provisions are limited and circumventable. **The Reagan Administration has exploited the loopholes in the law and weakened some of the stronger provisions of the bill by implementing loose regulations which permit business as usual in many sections of the South African economy.**

However, even the adoption of selective sanctions by the U.S. has had some impact on South Africa. White business, academic and church groups have been encouraged to open discussions with the ANC. Confidence among some whites has been shaken. The apartheid government, which arrogantly proclaims that it can ignore outside pressure, has been forced to allocate more resources to sanctions busting and anti-sanctions propaganda. Much of this reaction would never have occurred without U.S. sanctions and the threat of future stronger measures.

However, the apartheid government continues its brutal oppression of black South Africans and its violent attempts to destabilize the southern African region. **On February 24, 1988, the South African government announced sweeping new restrictions on the activities of anti-apartheid organizations and leaders.** The restrictions effectively ban 17 organizations, including the United Democratic Front, the Detainees Parents Support Committee, and the trade union federation COSATU, from any political activity whatsoever. **In the face of this latest crackdown, it is even more important that the United States respond**

forcefully against South Africa's continued suppression of non-violent anti-apartheid opposition.

Analysis: The anti-apartheid movement has never claimed that sanctions were the "quick-fix" for apartheid. But only comprehensive sanctions, globally applied, can exert the maximum pressure on the Pretoria regime to raise the cost of maintaining apartheid for white South Africans. Black organizations including COSATU, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), the South African Council of Churches (SACC), and individual leaders such as Alan Boesak and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, continue to call for disinvestment and stronger sanctions against the apartheid regime. The fact that the apartheid government still feels free to crack down on all anti-apartheid opposition shows that there has been insufficient international pressure on South Africa. In fact, in its statement in response to the crackdown, COSATU placed explicit blame on the international community for its failure to fight apartheid, saying "it is clear that the government has been encouraged to opt for the path of increased repression through the support it has received from ... right-wing governments of Thatcher, Reagan, and Kohl..."

Status: HR 1580 currently has 95 co-sponsors. On March 22-23, the Africa Subcommittee and the International Economic Policy and Trade Subcommittee (IEPT), which have jurisdiction over HR 1580, held joint hearings on the Dellums bill and other sanctions legislation. HR 1580 will be "marked-up" (amended and voted on) in these two subcommittees on April 13. Full Foreign Affairs Committee consideration and a House floor vote could follow as early as mid-May.

S 556 was referred to the Senate Foreign Relations committee, and currently has 6 co-sponsors (Senators Kennedy, Levin, Weicker, Simon, Riegle and Lautenberg). The Senate will be watching the House closely to see how the Dellums bill is received there. Strong support in the House will encourage the Senate to act in support of stronger sanctions against South Africa.

****WHAT YOU CAN DO****

- * **CONTACT MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, especially members on the Africa and International Economic Policy and Trade Subcommittees.** Express your support for HR 1580. Ask them to support the bill when it comes before their committee. **It is vital that the following swing members support the bill:** James Bilbray (D-NV), James Clarke (D-NC), Fofu Sunia (D-Samoa), Dan Mica (D-FL), Don Bonker (D-WA), Doug Bereuter (R-NE), and John Miller (R-WA). *chroy XXX*
- * **RECRUIT COSPONSORS FOR HR 1580 / S 556.** The Dellums/Cranston Bill needs additional co-sponsors immediately! Contact your Senators and Representative and urge them to co-sponsor HR 1580/S 556 and work for its passage.
- * **PARTICIPATE IN THE JUNE 16TH NATIONAL ANTI-APARTHEID LOBBY DAY.** A day of lobbying, demonstrations, vigils, church services, and other activities commemorating the massacre of Soweto schoolchildren in 1976, and calling for the passage of HR 1580/S 556. For further information on the June 16th lobby day, contact the Washington Office on Africa.