 I.O. - S. Africa



**Senate Resistance Strong:**

# Sanctions Against South Africa Passed by Partisan House Vote

The House Aug. 11 pushed the United States a step closer to widening its economic war with South Africa. But before tougher trade and investment sanctions tied to apartheid can become law, House backers must overcome forces closer to home: the Senate, President Reagan and time.

The bill (HR 1580), approved by a vote of 244-132, has become immersed in election-year politics. And unlike in 1986 — when 81 House Republicans broke ranks to help override Reagan's veto of a weaker sanctions bill — the party line generally held during House voting on the eve of the Republican National Convention.

The margin fell well short of the two-thirds needed to override the veto the White House again threatened on Aug. 10. Only 24 Republicans voted for the bill.

As the 100th Congress draws to a close, House Democrats now must search for a way to force a vote in the Senate, where support is far weaker.

Key Republican supporters of the 1986 sanctions — such as Sens. Richard G. Lugar, Ind., and Nancy Landon Kassebaum, Kan. — have backed away from the near-total trade embargo and divestiture now being proposed.

Kassebaum, for one, noted that the Senate's "plate is very full." She added that she has trouble seeing when or how a vote would come, although the Foreign Relations Committee has scheduled a Sept. 8 markup.

House Democrats also are considering ways to avoid a Senate filibuster while compelling a vote. One possible tactic is to attach the sanctions bill to a must-pass continuing appropriations resolution that contains spending for the Pentagon and contra aid.

In reiterating its veto threat, the White House said it fears new sanctions against South Africa would jeopardize U.S.-mediated negotiations among South Africa, Angola and Cuba to end hostilities in Angola and grant independence to Namibia. A cease-fire was put into effect Aug. 8 and South Africa was to begin withdrawing troops from southern Angola within the week.

As approved, the bill would prohibit nearly all U.S. trade with South Africa. It also would prohibit investments by U.S. citizens or companies except in businesses 90 percent owned by "South Africans economically and politically disadvantaged by apartheid." *(Weekly Report p. 2149)*

Imports from South Africa would be barred with three exceptions: "strategic minerals," publications, and goods produced by businesses wholly owned by the disadvantaged. A controversial Banking Committee amendment to expand the import ban — to any item from any country, if any part of the item originated in South Africa — was stripped from the bill by the Rules Committee Aug. 10.

The bill would require the president to retaliate against foreign companies that take significant commercial advantage of the U.S. sanctions. It also would bar U.S. subsidiaries of foreign oil companies doing business in South Africa from bidding on U.S. oil, gas or coal leases.

"This comes as close to economic warfare as you can put two nations," said Sam Gibbons, the Florida Democrat who chairs the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Trade.

## Political Fight

Republicans were simmering as they departed for their New Orleans convention. "This bill is not really about fighting apartheid, but about domestic politics," complained Dan Burton, R-Ind. Democrats have cast the issue in moral terms, the foreign equivalent of the domestic civil-rights battle. GOP members doubt the usefulness of sanctions, but fear Democrats will use Republican opposition to label the party as anti-civil rights.

William S. Broomfield, Ill., the ranking Republican on the Foreign Affairs Committee, accused the Democrats of "trying to construct the Dukakis-Jackson platform" at the "11th hour before the Republican convention."

Republicans carped about the three hours and 15 minutes allowed for debate (they wanted more), the three amendments permitted (they wanted more) and the timing of floor consideration (they wanted it after the convention recess).

In attacking the bill, Republicans noted it would take jobs from South African blacks and American workers — points the Democrats conceded. The sanctions would eliminate U.S. exports to South Africa, worth $1.13 billion in 1987, while forcing American companies to sell nearly $1 billion in assets at "fire-sale prices," according to the administration.

"Sanctions hurt, but apartheid kills — and it kills violently," countered Ronald V. Dellums, D-Calif., the bill's original sponsor.

Speaking with passion, Dellums recounted his 18-year effort to enact sanctions. He warned his colleagues, "Do not underestimate the power of this issue" in domestic politics, and rejected its labeling as conservative, liberal, Democratic or Republican. "It's an American issue, as American as apple pie," he said. House Democrats, and many Republicans, rose to applaud Dellums at the end of his speech.

The House rejected three Republican attempts to amend the bill:

- By 155-236, an amendment by Broomfield allowing the president to waive the bill's sanctions if West Germany, Japan, France, Britain and Italy do not adopt similar penalties.
- By 125-259, an amendment by Burton to strip the new sanctions and to exempt from the current import ban products made by black-owned businesses. It would have earmarked some foreign aid monies for minority business development in South Africa.
- By 169-214, an amendment by Jon Kyl, Ariz., to allow military and intelligence cooperation with South Africa if deemed in the "best interest of the United States" by the president. The bill would ban all such sharing of intelligence, except in the case of Cuban troop activities in Angola. The amendment was adopted by the Armed Services Committee but turned down by Rules, which coordinated differences among seven House committees. ▮

—*By Chuck Alston*

## CORRECTION

**Sanctions on South Africa.** Weekly Report p. 2150, right column of box, second full paragraph: Mobil Oil Corp. says it has a position opposing a provision extending sanctions to U.S. subsidiaries of foreign oil companies operating in South Africa. ▮