

Africa Report by Henry Tucker

Sanctions: prescription for genocide

Hypocrisy is the mildest term available for Western nations now backing the Soviet-controlled African National Congress.

South African President Pieter Botha had some harsh and very appropriate things to say about his country's Western detractors when he addressed a police graduation ceremony on June 20. "When South Africa has reached the greatest height of reform in its history, the outside world passes it off as nothing, as pretense," he stated bitterly.

Botha decried the international campaign for sanctions against South Africa as "hypocrisy." "The one country in Africa that has a chance of joining the industrialized world may conceivably be reduced by sanctions to the pre-medieval condition of the continent, left to stagnate like the rest of the continent.

"If our leftist critics abroad, and even radicals in this country, speak of 'genuine reform,' they mean something completely different. They speak of final transfer of power to the South African Communist Party and its front, the African National Congress."

Botha's speech characteristically received little press coverage in the United States, in the high publicity given South Africa in the wake of a government decree of emergency law to preempt the expected ANC-directed uprising set for June 16, the 10th anniversary of the Soweto uprising. The international press has put forward the Mandelas and Oliver Tambo of the Soviets' ANC as the heroes of the anti-apartheid movement, while blacking out the efforts of Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi, chairman of the South African Black Alliance and president of the mass-based Inkatha

Black Liberation Movement, whose perspective is based on the premise that "violence is not the answer to apartheid."

Speaking on ABC's David Brinkley Show June 23, South African Information Minister Louis Nel noted that Pretoria has repeatedly stated that it would negotiate with the ANC if it were to renounce violence and self-avowed revolutionary goal. The ANC has steadfastly refused to do so. The South African government is "working for a new South Africa, a new constitutional dispensation," Nels said. "We don't want apartheid; we are moving away from that, but that doesn't fit the desires of some people."

Support for the Botha government came from an unexpected source. In a June 21 interview with the French magazine *Le Figaro*, Ivory Coast President Houphouet Boigny noted that there is apartheid against black Africans elsewhere in Africa, especially in Arab-dominated Saharan countries. No political prisoner in black Africa would have survived in jail for 20 years, as has Nelson Mandela; most are "killed" after a few years, he noted.

Nevertheless, on June 24, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher reversed a previous decision and invited ANC leader Oliver Tambo to meet with the British Foreign Ministry. Thatcher had previously refused any official contact with the ANC until it renounced violence. However, pressure came down on Thatcher from Queen Elizabeth, who wants sanctions against

her lost colony.

While Tambo was in London gathering diplomatic laurels, ANC military commander Joe Modise announced: "Informers, policemen, special branch police must be eliminated. The people must carry out acts of sabotage against industries and firms producing wealth for the racist regime. Power stations and lines must be sabotaged. Railway lines and bridges destroyed. Strikes must be undertaken to paralyze the economy."

This war has already begun. On June 22, industrial plants in Durban and Johannesburg were bombed, and strikes of workers organized into the ANC's COSATU trade union broke out in Transvaal mining operations outside Johannesburg.

Just before his trip to London, Tambo, in a speech to the International Labor Organization, stated that Black people in South Africa are now "ready to lay down their lives. . . . The choice between sanctions now and sanctions later, or never, is a choice between a solution based on limited violent conflict and tolerable destruction of property, and a solution based on a bloodbath and massive destruction of property."

The demand for sanctions is, in fact, a demand for genocide of blacks throughout southern Africa. Said one report: "We have population growth rate of 2.8% a year and that means the South African economy has to grow by about 4% to clear the job market. But since 1980, the average growth rate has been far less than 2%, unemployment is soaring, and any major sanctions will batter us into the ground."

Moreover, so dependent on South Africa are the black African nations of the region, that knocking out the South African economy would destroy the last prop to the economies of southern Africa as whole, which are already threatened with starvation.