

A Wrecked Economy Won't End Apartheid

In an article in the Washington Post on June 15, under the above headline, veteran SA anti-apartheid and human rights campaigner, Mrs Helen Suzman, argued against more sanctions. The hugely respected Progressive Federal Party politician argued that sanctions would hurt black workers the most and would in effect take away the best weapon available to blacks - economic power. Mrs Suzman said: "It is surely senseless to blunt the only weapon with which blacks can improve their position at the work place and beyond the work place." On the same day, in a lead editorial headlined "More South African Sanctions?", the Washington Post said: "A Bill imposing tough new sanctions against South Africa is coming along, nearly all investment and trade would be ended, and if the

purpose is to express a hatred of apartheid and an impatience with its slow dismantling, this bill surely expresses both. The white minority regime has just extended the two years state of emergency, tightened censorship and curtailed political activity by the black labour federation. The regime's reach for reform, such as it was, has been closed off by the surge of opposition on its right. In Washington, the House said South Africa has not made the "significant progress" the 1986 act sets as the standard for lifting the lesser sanctions imposed at that time, and has even gone backward. In this analysis of what has happened, the House is right, but what it needs to ask is why progress has been disappointing. This underlies the argument against sanctions that Helen Suzman, a South African parliamentarian and veteran

opponent of apartheid, makes. Precisely this notion of giving blacks an economic base from which they can if they wish withhold their own labour and purchasing power stirs the strike movement that is becoming an increasingly important arena of black struggle. The bill was brought along at a moment when it could be hitched to the election campaign. Michael Dukakis may have doubts about the Jackson team's platform demand to designate South Africa as "terrorist" but he is foursquare for sanctions. In the Senate the issue is what changes will be made to win enough Republican votes to surmount the expected presidential veto. But we don't think any new sanctions are justified while such doubts exist about whether the old ones were wise."

Blacks Don't Want to Be Beggars

Black South Africans want to be "liberated on their feet and not as corpses and unemployed mendicants", the Secretary-General of Inkatha and KwaZulu Minister of Education and Culture, Dr Oscar Dhlomo, said recently. Opening a new paint factory in Natal, whose owners employ more than 2000 workers, he hit out at what he called the "sheer cruelty" of South Africans who spent time in the country and overseas advocating sanctions, disinvestment and disruption of the country's economy. Millions of workers would be deprived of their legiti-

mate right to earn a living were such campaigns to succeed. "Apparently the rationale is that instead of breeding chaos, violence, repression and economic depression, black unemployment and poverty,

they will bring order, peace, democracy, economic growth and liberation," Dr Dhlomo said. "Black people want to be liberated on their feet and not as corpses and unemployed mendicants." He congratulated certain companies for their equal opportunities programmes for employees also covering such social projects as community development, urban and rural school development and support for primary, secondary and tertiary education. There could be no business for business, he added, in an environment that was polluted by disparities and discrimination measures of all descriptions.

