

Editorial

U.S. must take stand, save sanctions bill

Congress is expected to override the President's veto of South African sanctions this week, and it is with great optimism that we await this event. The sanctions bill, which passed both houses of Congress by wide margins, obviously enjoys overwhelming support. Reagan's staunch stand against the sanctions bill shows a gap between him and his constituents, including the majority of legislators in his own party.

The most striking example of the split between the president and his party was the effort of Sen. Richard G. Lugar of Indiana, who courted political suicide in the Republican party by saying he would lead the effort to override the veto. Lugar maintains, correctly, that the United States must stand on the right side of this issue. Indeed, the United States has taken a clearer and more substantial stand than our European partners.

The leadership of 12 European nations enacted bans on imports of iron, steel and gold coins earlier this month. The Germans and Portuguese drug their feet, and blocked a ban on coal imports. The United States' sanctions package bans all these items as well as coal and other important mineral imports from South Africa, including uranium and steel.

Moreover, the American bill includes bans on items that will hurt white South Africans almost exclusively. Most important are a ban on incoming air flights, predominantly used by whites, and a continuation of the ban on computer equipment used to administer apartheid.

Though it may seem ironic, these are not the most important aspects of the American sanctions bill. The South Africans will probably be able to get around the sanctions, either by trading through intermediary nations, or by creating "front" corporations outside of South Africa to do the trading. However, white leaders in Pretoria, the capitol of South Africa, will feel the pinch. Moreover, implementing devastating economic sanctions is not the point.

The most important aspect of the American sanctions bill is the symbolic intent of the bill, and the message it sends to South African blacks. Under constructive engagement, the president gave the blacks no hope of progress — relying on the good will of the South Africans is futile; some marginal reforms were made, but none in critical areas. The whites have not reformed laws that restrict black travel, education or property ownership; they not invited blacks to share power in government; they have not have changed their attitude toward basic civic responsibility to South African blacks; and they have not recognized or released certain black leaders, notably Nelson Mandela, former leader of the African National Congress.

Under constructive engagement, the South Africans could afford to sit in their suburban homes, sipping lemonade, while Reagan encouraged them to be more fair.

The new message to blacks in South Africa is that we recognize their plight, officially and staunchly. Sanctions are a vote of confidence for the blacks. The very minimum we should expect of White South Africans is the commencement of talks with key black leaders, including Oliver Tambo of the ANC, Gatsha Buthelezi of the Inkatha movement, and Alan Boesak of the United Democratic Front.

Note that the ANC is included in this list, although many feel it is Communist front organization. It may be, but it has gained growing support among South African blacks. The ANC, though it has not come to the point of signing resolutions against using violence, has become much more moderate in its representation of blacks. At the same time, violence is becoming more acceptable among the black populace. The time to recognize the ANC is now, before it degrades into one faction in a civil war.

Secretary of State George Schultz has planned to meet with the ANC, and he should still do so. But now, with sanctions, he can talk to the ANC about the strong support of the West and the reduced need for violence.

The sanctions bill assures white South Africans they cannot ignore this issue. It shows South Africans the bottom line: If South Africa wants to be accepted by the Western community, they will have to repeal apartheid. For black South Africans, this is good news, and for white South Africans, bad news. Sanctions state very clearly the message that Reagan muddled so badly, that the governmental conduct of South Africa is simply not acceptable.

Thus it is important to note that the sanctions are not "economic warfare," as Reagan called them — at least, not yet. Rather, they are a big chill. If South Africa doesn't mind the cold shoulder of the Western world, then sterner sanctions can follow.

The South Africans are perhaps the most stubborn people in the world, as history has shown. The West must now convince South Africans to give up their stubbornness for the sake of fairness, lest they face the consequences of a policy of oppression.

3 MILLION VOTERS LINE UP TO HEAL PAT ROBERTSON...



Letters

False Image

I recently visited Oregon on a bicycle tour. I had an experience in Eugene I would like to relate; a sort of school-year send off.

Having been on a bike for a few days without benefit of a shower or shave to make myself presentable, I pulled into Eugene. I stopped at an ice cream shop near the U of O. Two young women looked at me as if I was an alien. Or worse yet, they avoided looking at me altogether. I didn't think much of it at the time.

Later I realized they weren't seeing me at all, only an image they'd perceived. I thought about the way street people must feel. I arrived home a few days later and my girlfriend introduced me to the soap and razor. I later emerged transformed from vagrant to fine young man.

As I was going to lunch my first day back at work, dressed in a suit and tie, a man who probably didn't look much worse than I had only a few days before asked me for some money. I gave him some, but didn't bother to tell him that I understood, at least a little, what he was going through.

An earth shattering revela-

tion? No. Just a reminder that inside everyone, no matter what they look like, is a person with feelings as strong and fragile as your own. I had forgotten this; forgotten because it was easier.

Steven L. Gerhardt
Torrance, Ca.

Representation

As a frequent contributor to the letters section of the Springfield News and a concerned small business owner, my recent letter to the News in support of Peter DeFazio's congressional candidacy was not remarkable in itself. I support Peter because of the intelligent, sensitive, responsible representation he has provided me over the years. When DeFazio is elected to Congress in November, I am sure that he will continue to represent the interests of small business owners at the national level.

It is not unusual for me to get calls at home about my letters. I enjoy and often learn from these exchanges. What shocked me was the response from DeFazio's opponent. His campaign manager called me at my store in the middle of the mid-day rush and berated me for my letter. During his abusive tirade it was impossible for me to get

in a word. I was astounded at the completely unprofessional approach taken and plan to cite my experience to all my business acquaintances as one more reason to support DeFazio.

During these challenging times we can ill afford a representative whose staff reacts radically under pressure. Peter DeFazio is a seasoned leader who remains clam and reasonable under pressure. The responsibility of public office is not something we can afford to entrust to those who panic and react thoughtlessly. For my business, my family and myself, I support Peter DeFazio for Congress.

Bill Kittredge
Springfield

Letters Policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing fair comment on topics of interest to the University community.

Letters to the editor must be limited to 250 words, typed, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style. Letters to the editor should be turned into the Emerald office, Suite 300, EMU.

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