

Congressional Closeup by Ron Kokinda and Kathleen Klenetsky

Congress votes to **destroy South Africa**

Turning a deaf ear to the pleas of leading black South Africans, as well as to warnings from the Reagan administration, both houses of Congress voted to override President Reagan's veto of congressional legislation imposing punitive sanctions on the people of South Africa.

Unless the President chooses to take the issue to the courts, on the grounds that Congress's action represents an unconstitutional interference in the conduct of foreign policy, punitive economic sanctions, which will do grave harm to the well-being of black South Africans and many of southern Africa's black-ruled nations, will become the law of the land.

In a toughly worded veto message Sept. 26, the President called sanctions legislation, "the wrong course to follow." Charging that the bill "unconstitutionally ties the hands of the President in dealing with a gathering crisis in a critical subcontinent where the Soviet bloc . . . clearly sees historic opportunity," Reagan stressed that sanctions would significantly exacerbate the plight of the average black South African.

Emphasizing that the United States "must stay and build, not cut and run," Reagan asked: "Are we truly helping the black people of South Africa—the lifelong victims of apartheid—when we throw them out of work, and leave them and their families jobless and hungry in those segregated townships? Or are we simply assuming a moral posture at the expense of the people in whose name we presume to act?"

While saying that the administration had "no quarrel" with the purpose

of the legislation, he said sanctions would hurt blacks and deliver a "devastating blow" to South Africa's black-governed neighbors. "Do we truly wish to trigger a cycle of economic sanctions and countersanctions that end up crippling the economy of South Africa and devastating the economies of the front line states?" he asked.

The answer from the Hill was a resounding "Yes."

On September 29, the House, whose sanctions bill mandated a near-total cutoff of all economic relations between the United States and South Africa, easily overrode the President's veto 313-83.

In the Senate, the fight was more intense because a slim possibility existed for sustaining the veto. But thanks largely to the efforts of Senate Armed Services Committee chairman Richard Lugar (R-Ind.), the President was unable to rally sufficient numbers of Republicans to his side, and the Senate voted 78-21 to override.

Lugar, who demonstrated his predilection for destabilizing Western allies during the Philippines crises, when he emerged as one of Ferdinand Marcos's most vehement critics, spearheaded the opposition to the President.

As soon as Reagan's veto was formalized, Lugar lashed out, charging that if Congress failed to override, the United States would be seen as "the apologist of apartheid," and an "ally of the Botha government."

Mr. Lugar is a liar. It is a well-known fact, to even the dimmest wit in Congress, that the majority of black South Africans, including such influential leaders as Chief Minister M. G. Buthelezi of KwaZulu, vehemently oppose sanctions. During the debate,

several delegations of black South Africans came to Washington, specifically to support Reagan's veto.

By overriding the President's veto, however, the Hill has given a major boost to the African National Congress, the Soviet-backed terrorists who show their opposition to apartheid by slowly burning to death ("necklacing") more moderate blacks.

Immigration reform **nears another death**

For the sixth year and third Congress in a row, immigration reform legislation appears headed for another death.

In the 97th Congress, massive numbers of amendments which sought to change harsh employer sanctions for hiring illegals, prevent discrimination and abridgement of rights against American workers, allow employers to get adequate help in harvesting agricultural crops, halt an economic and foreign policy affront against Mexico, and similar controversies, blocked the House from passing any legislation. In the 98th Congress, House and Senate conferees were unable to resolve their differences.

This year, immigration "reform" lost all but the slimmest chance of passage, when the House rejected the rule to allow floor consideration of H.R. 3810. The major sticking point was the issue of foreign agricultural workers.

Sponsored by Reps. Schumer (D-N.Y.), Berman (D-Calif.), and Panetta (D-Cal.), this section of the bill was a compromise which agricultural employers and the AFL-CIO had both agreed to. It put no cap on agricultural

workers brought into the United States. Instead, workers who were in the United States for 60 days could get a green card and permanent-resident status.

Opponents such as Rep. Bustamante (D-Tex.) denounced it as "a foreign workers jobs bill." Rep. Fawell (R-Ill.) objected because it "provides a separate legalization track for a selected group of illegal aliens." He and many others also objected because this would immediately qualify these new permanent residents for federal financial assistance such as food stamps, Legal Services Corp. assistance, and some types of housing assistance.

Senate waters down and passes anti-drug bill

The Senate failed to include several tough anti-drug measures in the anti-drug bill it adopted by a 97-2 vote Sept. 30, after a group of liberal Republicans teamed up with Democrats to threaten a filibuster.

According to the Oct. 1 *Washington Post*, Senate leaders, including Senators Dole (R-Kansas), Byrd (D-W.V.), Thurmond (R-S.C.), and Biden (D-Del.), turned back all "controversial" amendments by convincing their colleagues they would sink the bill.

Among the provisions dropped were the death penalty, relaxation of the exclusionary rule, and drug testing of government employees.

In its favor, the Senate version differs sharply from House anti-drug legislation in its recommendations on the military's role in the war on drugs.

The House bill calls for extremely

broad use of the military in all aspects of anti-drug activities, including provocative "hot pursuit" chases across the U.S. border, and would, as Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger pointed out during an NBC-TV interview Sept. 28, literally mean having U.S. troops shoot down all 76,000 planes that cross into the United States every day, since the means to identify which of these planes are carrying narcotics do not exist.

The Senate bill, on the other hand, allows the transfer of military equipment to civilian agencies, but does not contain the "hot pursuit" provisions of the House version.

Helms ups pressure against Panama

Senator Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) continues to escalate his pressure to destabilize the government of Panama.

Helm's latest effort was an amendment to the Intelligence Authorization Act (S. 2477)—which funds intelligence activity—requiring the CIA to report to the House and Senate Intelligence Committees "to what extent the Defense Forces of the Government of Panama have violated the human rights of the Panamanian people, are involved in international drug trafficking, arms trafficking, or money laundering, or were involved in the death of Dr. Hugo Spadafora." The amendment passed the Senate 53-46 on Sept. 24.

Helms found co-sponsors in liberal Democratic Senators Pell (R.I.) and Kerry (Mass.). Senator Kennedy (D-Mass.) also spoke for the amendment, claiming it was necessary to investigate charges that Gen. Manuel

Noriega, commander of Panama's Defense Forces, was "personally responsible for the murder of Hugo Spadafora," and guilty of drug trafficking and political intimidation. "Doctor" Spadafora was a drug-trafficker and terrorist mercenary found dead earlier this year.

While the House-Senate conference officially dropped the Helms amendment, its intent was retained. The conferees said the agency already had a statutory responsibility to answer Senator Helms's questions and were expected to provide the relevant information.

Panama's legislative assembly formally protested the amendment, denouncing it as a "flagrant violation of international law."

Senate rejects \$200 million for Philippines

The Senate rejected \$200 million in additional aid for the Philippines by a 51-43 vote on Sept. 29, largely because the funds would have been cut out of aid earmarked for other U.S. allies. On Sept. 18, the House had approved the extra Philippine assistance by a 203-197, following an address to a joint session of Congress by Philippine President Corazon Aquino.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman Richard Lugar (R-Ind.) had wanted to take the funds for the Philippines out of the defense budget of the United States. Lugar then joined Senate Minority Leader Robert Byrd (D-W.V.), who sponsored the aid proposal, in suggesting it be taken from other nations' aid accounts. This was defeated by the Senate 57-41 on Oct. 3.