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The Anti-Apartheid Threat

ACCORDING TO LENIN the road to the communization of Europe lay through the heart of Africa. Today this dictum could be amended and sharpened. The road to destabilizing Africa's major economy, namely South Africa itself, and cutting it off from the West lies straight through the financial markets of Wall Street, the American universities, and the halls of Congress.

The spearhead of this attack on South Africa is the anti-apartheid lobby which aims to strike down all customs and laws making for the separation of the races. To this end liberals and communists demonstrate outside the South African Embassy in Washington and its consulates throughout America. Excited students parade across our campuses to force trustees to sell off South African securities. Meanwhile, Congress strongly favors legislation which strikes at the heart of South African sovereignty not to mention constitutional rights of American citizens.

The thrust of this Draconian legislation is to bludgeon South Africa into changing her racial ways by limiting U.S. bank loans to her government, prohibiting purchase of gold Krugerrands, and, worst of all, snuffing out new direct corporate investment in the country. Paradoxically, it has been black South African leaders who have seen the dangers of this approach. When Senator Kennedy visited South Africa he found to his astonishment that it was blacks who hooted him down. In a powerful article in *The Wall Street Journal,* Chief of the Zulus, Mangosuthu Gatsha Buthelezi, warned against this disinvestment policy. The cutting edge for social change, he argued, has been the presence of American corporations. Anything which decreases U.S. investment in South Africa, now running to two and a half billion dollars, must drag down the living standards of blacks no less than whites.

But as matters have turned out the anti-apartheid lobby is not much interested in raising black living standards. The attack on South Africa

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has been programmed by such outfits as TransAfrica and by radicals who have again and again favored Soviet interests in Cuba, Central America, and the Middle East. But this claque never could have achieved overwhelming influence in the House and strong support in the Senate had not Liberals succumbed to a perverse delusion. This delusion is that the United States has a *right* to impose its social ideals on South Africa by intimidation and ostracism.

Yet American experience, starting from the priceless inheritance of a common language and law but entailing long years of slavery and bloody civil war, offers a poor guide as to the road South Africa can or should travel. South Africa is not America. It is a sovereign state but one that embraces 4.5 million whites, nearly one million Indians from India who would not return if paid to do so; some three million Coloureds, product of early mixed marriages, who most closely resemble our American blacks, and finally seventeen million Bantu speaking a variety of tongues who retain strong tribal affiliations. Perhaps half of these live in the increasingly autonomous homelands; the other half in close association with whites in the country's urban areas.

In this strange mixture of cultures and subcultures the weeds of apartheid, an ugly word for separateness, took early root though its outward manifestations have changed over the years. Americans visiting South Africa no longer encounter those degrading signs of petty apartheid that used to disfigure Jan Smuts Airport. Job reservation for whites in the mines and factories has been undermined by that very investment which our American legislators are seeking to snuff out. What remains is a complex system of laws determining where each race can live. These surely do conflict with personal liberty. In the good society legislation *ought* to be color blind.

Yet even the most sanctimonious Congressman should have exhibited a measure of prudence before trying to tear up the country's social fabric. The people of Soweto, the sprawling black township in the shadow of Johannesburg's skyscrapers, may rightly resent the fact that while by day they can mix freely with the whites, they must return to Soweto by nightfall. Yet these same residents would be even more resentful if tribes from the hinterland invaded their township in search of better housing.

It is fatuous to believe that if all past laws were torn up tomorrow, peace and harmony would prevail. The result might well be wars between black and black such as have swept other areas of Africa. Time, education, and the kneading forces of a market economy may make