

## S.O. 29

mined in South Africa. It is being mined efficiently by certain standards. There is a good transportation network.

● (1850)

There is a well-established set of mines and no controls over the rate of mineral extraction. There are no health and safety regulations to speak of. What is really important is there is a really cheap labour force. The Hon. Member for Nepean—Carleton estimated that the black miners are probably paid one-tenth of what white miners are paid. The mining companies in Africa and other countries, including Canada, have found it in their joint interest to create a kind of artificial dependency on South Africa for certain minerals. These minerals are supposedly scarcely available except, of course, in the Soviet Union. The minerals platinum, vanadium, manganese and chrome are the big four. In fact, it is an artificial dependency. There has been a very consistent effort, particularly by some quarters in the U.S., to distort that picture. I want to quote a few sentences from the book *Trafficking in Apartheid*:

Out of the necessity to defend this systematic exploitation of black miners against the growing international pressure for economic sanctions against South Africa, one argument that has been established with 'smoke and mirrors' goes like this:

'However much we may dislike South African policies, we cannot afford to cut or reduce the economic ties that support the regime because we need those minerals.'

Of course, we heard the same note when President Carter, referring to Iran, insisted that "We Americans are going to defend our oil". Any oil or minerals in the world appear to belong to the U.S. in the opinion of some American leaders. To continue the quotation:

The argument has been further refined by suggesting that if we did not have access to these minerals and ores from South Africa, we would be dependent upon the Soviet Union.

That has been put in much more hysterical terms:

"Roughly a decade ago we received a jolt. Shifting political patterns, coupled with rising Third World nationalism sharply tempered our expectations . . . Others well away from our borders can now place their hands on our economic throttles and on our economic throats . . . We could lose access to the minerals chromium, cobalt, tantalum and others . . . It would mean massive shocks to our economic system and current lifestyles.

Without these minerals, we cannot make TV sets or computers or heart lung machines or produce high grade stainless steel for a thousand uses—no supersonic jets and no sophisticated submarines."

That was said by no less a personage than William Casey, Ronald Reagan's CIA Director. He was spreading that smoke-screen. That is the sort of job the CIA does when they are not busy mining harbours in Managua. In fact the lie was given to that statement by the Congressional Research Service which in 1980 tabled a report on imports of minerals from South Africa by the U.S.A. and other OECD countries which had been requested by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. I quote:

The key conclusion of this report, contrary to conventional wisdom, is that South African minerals are of significant but not critical importance to the west. It is fortunate that in the case of each of the critical minerals imported from South Africa, means are available for dealing with an interruption without

depending on the Soviet Union as an alternative supplier. These means may be costly—

I said before that the big attraction of South African minerals results from low cost slave labour. It continues:

—and they cannot in all cases be implemented without disruption. But, in general, the disruptions can be minimized if preparations for a possible cut-off in South African supplies are made in advance.

I think that is a fairly good statement of the truth about the minerals we get from South Africa. We would like them but we do not absolutely depend on them.

The hysterical talk strategy, the invoking of the fear of the Soviet bogey, is the sort of thing that gives the key to the policies of certain Governments in supporting the South African apartheid regime. The fact is that South Africa is becoming part of a network of fortress countries along with Chile, Honduras, South Korea, the Philippines and Indonesia. Of course, at the hub of that network, not in a geometric sense but in a fundamental sense, is the Pentagon. The Pentagon and American military corporations have extensive relationships with all these countries.

A characteristic of these countries, along with the Pentagon, is that they all get high on the export trade. They all despise their own population as consumers. They do not need them. They are going to sell to someone else who has more money. They do not even need to pay subsistence wages to their own population. These countries are all armed, arming, and all trading in arms. Most of them produce arms for trade. They all from time to time make war on their populations or their neighbours. They all, in conjunction with a number of big corporations, use anti-Communism as the smoke-screen for their aggression.

It is not just some mysterious feeling of black against white or white against black. It is not some mysterious ancient tribalism. It is an expression of highly-developed corporate greed focused not primarily in Africa, because Africa has been the victim of western corporate greed for hundreds of years as has South America and Central America; the centre of this corporate greed is in our NATO countries, in fact in North America and western Europe, including notably Great Britain. Of course, when they are challenged on this we are told our jobs depend on it. The jobs of the British depend on trade with South Africa. Jobs here, we are told, depend on trade with South Africa. On the question of jobs we should ask those who are very directly concerned with jobs, the leaders elected by the workers through the labour movement.

Yesterday, at a convention in Montreal of the International Association of Machinists, there were some South African union leaders present as guests. They decided not to return to South Africa for a few days because events there made it seem quite unsafe to go home after attending a union conference here. Instead they went to visit London and Geneva for a little while and then decide whether it is safe to go to their home country. The convention adopted a resolution saying in effect that the Canadian Government sanctions are not strong