Sanctions

From page 9

press secretary, George Wilson, says that Dymally is waiting for the green light from the people who are most affected, by those who feel the oppression the most. When I hear them saying that, 'Yes, it's wonderful,' I think you would find the members of the black caucus would get on board.

The House subcommittee on Africa met late Tuesday to consider sanctions against South Africa.

...Publicly the ANC speaks with one voice supporting sanctions, but there are deep divisions within its ranks. Oliver Tambo, the ailing 74-year-old ANC president, upon his return to South Africa after a 30-year exile, told 1,600 delegates at an ANC conference in December, 1990: "It is no longer enough for us to repeat the tite slogans. We should, therefore, carefully re-evaluate the advisability of insisting on the retention of the sanctions, given the new developments in the country and abroad." Tambo was rebuffed by the younger, more radical delegates and quickly submitted a resolution the next day calling for continuation of sanctions. That resolution was overwhelmingly adopted by a cheering, whis- tling, clapping, standing ovation, remains ANC policy.

Bheki was one of the young delegates at the ANC conference. A senior member of the ANC legal department, he was unanimously elected the head of the ANC branch in the Jabulani neighborhood of Soweto where he lives. After finishing law school, Bheki began work with a liberal law firm that specializes in investigating South African hit squads.

The younger wing of the ANC—whose members were disillusioned by Mandela's agreement with the South African government to cease the armed struggle—currently dictates the ANC sanctions policy. But their power extends far beyond the ANC. The U.S. anti-apartheid movement is waiting for a green light from them. In effect, the young ANC cadres can determine the policies of TransAfrica, the Black Congressional Caucus, the U.S. Congress, and, ultimately, the Jewish community.

"This may not be a bad thing," says Sackstein. "While de Klerk has moved boldly, few guarantees exist yet that the ruling National Party will allow full voting rights to blacks, who outnumber whites by 25 million to 5 million."

Not all supporters of continuing sanctions are waiting for democratic elections, but many say they are looking for "irreversible change." Others say that certain laws, such as the Internal Security Act, must be abolished before they would support a waiver. The human rights group Africa Watch, in a recent report, argued maintaining sanctions until the South African government has met "all the conditions that would end human rights abuses."

All opponents of lifting the sanctions are maintaining a wait-and-see attitude.

On February 15, two days before the NJCRAE Plenary, where the sanctions issue was scheduled for debate, the ANC issued a statement from its Johannesburg headquarters. In recognition of the ANC's decision to suspend sanctions, the government has undertaken to instruct its security services and counterinsurgency units, in keeping with the spirit of the agreement, to desist from harassment of ANC members.

On that same warm evening in Soweto, following a quiet dinner at home, Bheki refused his wife Sepati's three-year-old son's request to listen to a tape he had brought home from work. The tape, marked "evidence of hit squads," came with a Walkman and earphones. He went into another room and put the earphones on. After pressing down the play button on the Walkman, explosives in each of the speakers blasted off the back of Bheki's head, killing him instantly.