The House of Representatives will vote in mid-May on a five-year extension of the Sugar Act. There is a chance to strip out of the bill a quota - and a subsidy - for South Africa.

WHAT IS THE SUGAR QUOTA SYSTEM

No American shopper these days needs to be reminded that food prices are out of sight. Sugar prices have doubled in the last year. But did you know that one of the reasons sugar has been more expensive for U. S. consumers than for other consumers around the world is the Quota System which awards the premium U. S. market to favored foreign nations, including South Africa?

Since 1962, this bill has allowed South African sugar growers and refiners to reap a sweet treat for themselves of more than $33 million over and above what they would have been able to get on the world market. In 1973, the world market price went higher than the U. S. price, but this has happened in only one year out of ten. The South African Sugar Association was back again in March pleading with the House Agriculture Committee for an increased quota. Their well-paid New York lawyers used grossly incorrect mathematics to inflate their alleged 1972 and 1973 "losses" by a factor of five! Their conduct verges on fraudulence. As a matter of fact, South Africa sold ninety percent of its 1973 sugar exports to Japan and Canada at supply commitment prices lower than the U. S. price.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ENDING SOUTH AFRICA'S QUOTA

There is a chance to beat this costly subsidy if we can act now while Congress is alarmed by inflation. While ending South Africa's quota is a small step against Apartheid, it would be an important symbolic act. If Congress revokes the quota, it will be the first time U. S. - South African trade relations have been interrupted because of U. S. opposition to Apartheid. South Africa surely doesn't want to open up this Pandora's box.

Meanwhile, the Administration has steadily moved away from condemnation of Apartheid toward U. S. participation in South Africa's economic growth. Some U. S. military strategists are advocating
stronger ties with South Africa to counter the Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean and the success of liberation forces in Mozambique. Admiral Bierman of South Africa is in Washington now making his pitch for collaboration to the Navy Department. His visit to the Pentagon was not stopped by the Executive Branch. So we, U. S. citizens and consumers, must find another way to express our continued opposition to Apartheid, by urging Congress to delete South Africa's sugar quota.

**ACTION NEEDED, URGENTLY!**

The conservative House Agriculture Committee will complete its mark-up of the Sugar Act by the end of this week. Chairman W. R. Poage wants to push the bill through the House soon to please his sugar-producing constituents in Texas. Congressman Diggs, joined by a number of others, is preparing to offer from the floor an amendment to strike South Africa's quota, when the bill comes up for final consideration. In 1971, when Diggs moved to open the bill to a similar amendment, a last-minute lobbying effort brought a respectable showing: 166 with Diggs, 213 against. We need to improve that vote in 1974.

The Sugar Act will probably come before the Senate during early summer. Senator Kennedy, with twelve co-sponsors, has already introduced a bill deleting South Africa's quota. In 1971, the Senate effort to strike the quota lost by only two votes. We can win in the Senate this time if we work at it.

This year, we may find more allies in the fight against the Sugar Act. Many people are angry about the entire quota system in this time of inflation; labor groups are trying to include in the bill improvements for workers in the U. S. sugar industry. You can multiply your strength locally if you can join with consumer and labor groups in an approach to your Representative.

********** The timing on the House vote is very close. The final vote will probably come before May 22nd. Telegrams and conference calls to your Representative are in order. We've enclosed a fact sheet for your use. We will let you know the results of the House vote later in the month, along with more information about Senate action. **********

/A NOTE ON SANCTIONS: S. 1868, the bill to renew U. S. compliance with U. N. sanctions against Rhodesia, has yet to be brought before the House Foreign Affairs Committee. We believe that Chairman Thomas Morgan will schedule Committee action toward the end of May. It is still imperative to focus on Committee members, as we need as strong a vote as possible in this first step.

Meanwhile, the steel industry lobbyists opposing sanctions are steadily at work in the entire House. We feel we have made progress none the less, but clearly it is going to be a close vote when S. 1868 comes to the floor, probably in the latter half of June. Write or call us for the latest information on your Representative's position./