

Del Monte

PROFITS FROM
APARTHEID



DELMONTE VIOLATES INTERNATIONAL LAW BY PURCHASING AND SHIPPING SARDINES FROM NAMIBIA A COUNTRY ILLEGALLY OCCUPIED BY SOUTH AFRICA. WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA, DELMONTE PROFITS FROM SLAVE CONDITIONS IN ITS LARGE FOOD PROCESSING PLANT.

SUPPORT THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE
BOYCOTT ALL Del Monte PRODUCTS

"Now you have touched the women you have struck a rock,
you have dislodged a boulder, you will be crushed."

--Freedom song of South African black women

The Del Monte Corporation (DMC), with headquarters in San Francisco, is the world's largest processor and distributor of canned fruits and vegetables. Its current annual sales are nearly \$1.5 billion. This is more than the combined sales of its two largest competitors, Stokley-Van Camp and Libby. DMC has various operations in 21 foreign countries and 17 states in the U.S.

Del Monte has a special relationship to women in at least two ways. First, DMC has an annual budget of \$15 million for advertising, which is primarily aimed at women. Secondly, women are the majority of the 70,000 workers who find jobs in California canneries. They are employed only 3 months out of the year and 70% of them earn less than poverty-level wages. DMC plays a major role in fighting to hold down wages in California canneries.

DEL MONTE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

DMC has two important operations in southern Africa: 100% ownership of the South African Preserving Co. and a contract with a South African fishing firm to export sardines caught off the coast of Namibia (South West Africa). DMC's Namibian operation violates a U.N. decree banning exploitation of Namibia's resources as long as South Africa illegally occupies Namibia. The U.N. recognizes the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) as the only legitimate representative of the Namibian people.

DMC's South African operations--along with many other U.S. financial and industrial involvements--help to sustain the oppressive system of apartheid, or separation of the races. Under apartheid, Africans have no control over their working conditions and pass laws restrict their every movement. Unions and the right to strike are illegal. The extremely low wages paid to African workers, \$37 per month in the Namibian fishing industry, make possible the huge profits of U.S. companies like DMC. The rate of return on U.S. direct investment in South Africa in 1970 was close to 17%, as opposed to 11% worldwide.

AFRICAN WOMEN UNDER APARTHEID

Southern African women carry a double burden of oppression. They are discriminated against on the grounds of both sex and race. African women are restricted to jobs with the lowest pay that no one else wants. Most work in domestic services, doing laundry, cooking, and cleaning and nursing. A black nanny cares for white children while her own know only separation, suffering, and neglect. Most African women cannot find employment in the urban white areas and are forced to live on reservations called "homelands." There they experience poverty and living conditions worse than anywhere in the world. Apartheid destroys African families by making it virtually impossible for married women to live with their husbands, the majority of whom work in the cities and live in single-sex barracks just outside the "whites only" areas.

Despite these tremendous obstacles, women are leading the fight for national liberation in southern Africa. On August 9, 1956, the day that has since been designated "Women's Day" in South Africa, 22,000 African women from every part of South Africa converged on Pretoria to protest against the carrying of passes. This was one of the biggest demonstrations South Africa has ever seen. On that day, African women began a new freedom song with the refrain: "Now you have touched the women you have struck a rock, you have dislodged a boulder, you will be crushed."

The victory of this struggle against apartheid, against multinational corporations like Del Monte, and against the governments that international capital props up, is the absolutely necessary precondition for any change in the social status of African women as a whole.

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