

Tutu will call for sanctions, unless ...



Bishop Desmond Tutu addresses Senator Edward Kennedy at Jan Smuts Airport before the Senator's departure from South Africa. Dr Allan Boesak is pictured, left, listening.

VARIOUS newspaper reports have claimed that Nobel Peace Prize winner, Bishop Desmond Tutu, has warned Western governments against giving aid to South Africa.

Bishop Tutu was quoted as saying in Frankfurt in January: "South Africa is capable of looking after its people but the Government is not carrying out its obligations. If the country were to disarm, a considerable amount of funds could be released."

Bishop Tutu is also said to have urged Western nations to press South Africa for improvements in human rights — otherwise he would seek sanctions if Western firms did not aid Black workers.

Bishop Tutu was speaking during a visit to West German evangelical churches which raise more than R2-million a year for the South African Council of Churches, of which Bishop Tutu was general secretary until February when he was installed as Bishop of Johannesburg.

Bishop Tutu said Western nations should insist on the abolition of banning orders and the ending of forced removals and demand that all those detained without trial in South Africa be released or brought to court.

"... what must our people do which will awaken in the West a real revulsion which will lead to action to dismantle apartheid?" Bishop Tutu asked.

Firms should house Black workers as family units and free trade unions should be introduced.

"If this is not done within 18 to 24 months, then I will call for punitive economic sanctions against the South African Government," he said.

He went on to say that the situation in South Africa was

already volatile and violence could start exploding in rural areas as well as towns.

A report quoting the Dutch Foreign Ministry in the Hague said Bishop Tutu had said South Africa's Blacks needed two years to find a "peaceful solution" to their problems.

During talks with the Dutch Foreign Minister, Mr Hans van den Broek, Bishop Tutu said the international community should not impose economic sanctions against South Africa's apartheid Government for the next two years.

If no solutions were found within those two years, international economic sanctions should be imposed, the spokesman quoted the Bishop as saying.

Bishop Tutu also told Mr van den Broek that international political and economic pressure on the South African Government should be increased gradually.

Bishop Tutu, together with Dr Allan Boesak, President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, invited Senator Kennedy to South Africa on behalf of the United Democratic Front and the South African Council of Churches.

The tour was marked by various factions hostile to Senator Kennedy — in particular the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO), some groups from within the United Democratic Front, the White right wing and also White liberals and businessmen.

Bishop Tutu said he was "saddened to the point of tears" that Senator Kennedy was forced to cancel his final speech in South Africa because of a demonstration by AZAPO.

A report in The Times of London said Senator Kennedy's tour had served "... only to bring to the surface the polarisation among the people whose cause he sought to champion."