



The American Committee on Africa

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SPECIAL ALERT

6/6/90

To: Friends of ACOA
From: Jennifer Davis

I have just received a call from a key Congressional staff member saying that in July the Bush Administration will ask Congress to repeal sanctions against South Africa. The package will include landing rights for South African aircraft, imports of South African agricultural products and, most important, an end to the ban on new investment in South Africa.

They say we need to lift sanctions because the apartheid government has released Nelson Mandela and opened preliminary talks with the ANC. But without sanctions Mandela would still be in prison and the ANC would still be banned.

White minority rule - the essence of apartheid - is alive and well in South Africa today. Nelson Mandela summed it up by saying "Twenty seven years ago when I went to jail I had no vote. I have come out and I still have no vote." South African President F.W. de Klerk has repeatedly vowed that he will never allow what he calls "unsophisticated majority rule" to come to South Africa.

Nor is apartheid today any kinder or gentler than it was in the past. Let me share with you a few of the reports we have received from South Africa in recent weeks:

* As I write this letter ten political prisoners who have been imprisoned without charge or trial are on hunger strike. Their condition is deteriorating. They have been bleeding and vomiting blood and are suffering from kidney pains and continual nausea.

* Four young people ranging in age from 13 to 16, were shot dead when police opened fire on a youth march in Ramulotsi township in the Orange Free State. Twenty others were wounded.

* Former Security Police officers have admitted that Foreign Minister Pik Botha knew about the death squads which assassinated apartheid opponents including author Ruth First and civil rights attorney Griffiths Mxenge.

* Security guard Louis van Schoor has killed 39 black people but the police refuse to even suspend his gun permit. A police spokesman said he was "bloody efficient."

This is the regime that the Bush Administration says we should reward by lifting sanctions. Yet without strong and effective sanctions apartheid's rulers will have no incentive for meaningful negotiations, let alone fundamental change. As Nelson Mandela said in his first public statement after being released from prison, "To lift sanctions now would be to run the risk of aborting the process toward the complete eradication of apartheid."

That's why we need your help today.

Please write your Senators and your Congressional Representative saying you support Nelson Mandela's call for sanctions. The address of Senators is U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510. The address for Representatives is U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515.

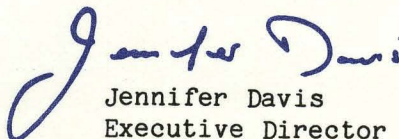
Then please write a check to ACOA to support our campaign for strong sanctions against apartheid.

I'm sure I don't need to remind you that it was ACOA that pioneered the drive for sanctions and divestment. Our staff has spent years criss-crossing the country helping to build the grassroots support that can translate into action in city halls, state houses and the halls of Congress.

Now we're gearing up for a fight to stop the Bush attempt to lift sanctions. Already 14 major cities including New York, Los Angeles, Denver, Dallas and Seattle have passed resolutions calling for comprehensive and mandatory sanctions. In the months to come we will need to mobilize tens of thousands of people in every region of the country.

Your contribution is vital to this effort. ACOA receives no corporate, foundation or government support. People like you, who give as generously as they possibly can, make all our work possible. I know we can count on you again now. Thank you.

For freedom,


Jennifer Davis
Executive Director