

NEW YORK Labor *Against* Apartheid

New York Labor Committee Against Apartheid c/o Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers, 15 Union Square, NYC 10003

(212) 242-0700

ACTION ALERT -- FEBRUARY 25, 1988

THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT YESTERDAY RESTRICTED THE CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS (COSATU) FROM ALL POLITICAL ACTION.

TOGETHER WITH RECENT RESTRICTIONS IN THE PROPOSED LABOR RELATIONS AMENDMENT ACT, COSATU IS EFFECTIVELY BANNED.

YOUR PROTEST IS URGENTLY NEEDED. PLEASE SEND TELEGRAMS IMMEDIATELY.

1. Messages of solidarity to:

COSATU
P.O. Box 1019
Johannesburg 2000
South Africa

Telex No: 486519

2. Statements of protest to:

Ambassador Pieter Koornhof
South African Embassy
3105 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20008

Telex No: 248364

3. Send copies of your statements to the following newspapers for the maximum impact on the South African public:

Weekly Mail
P.O. Box 260425
Excom 2023, S. Africa

Telex No: 486379

The New Nation
P.O. Box 10674
Johannesburg 2000, S. Africa

Telex No: 482226

For future updates, call NYLCAA (718) 768-1756.

Co-chairs: Stanley Hill, Exec Dir, DC 37, AFSCME; Georgianna Johnson, Pres, District 1199

Steering Committee: Lou Albano, Pres, Local 325, DC 37, AFSCME; Ed Allen, Assoc Dir, Corporate Campaign, Inc; John Flynn, Dir, Region 9A, United Auto Workers; Jim Bell, Pres, NY Coalition of Black Trade Unionists; Jim Butler, Pres, Local 420, DC 37, AFSCME; Arthur Chellotes, Pres, Local 1180, Communication Workers of America; Charles Ensley, Pres, Local 371, DC 37, AFSCME; Barry Feinstein, Pres, Local 237, Int'l Brotherhood of Teamsters; Janet Friedman, Pres, Committee of Interns & Residents; Henry Foner, Pres, Farmers Council, United Food & Commercial Workers; John Glasel, Pres, Local 802, American Federation of Musicians; Bill Henning, Vice Pres, Local 1180, Communication Workers of America; John Hudson, Manager, Headwear Joint Board, ACTWU; Dan Kane, Pres, Local 111, Int'l Brotherhood of Teamsters; Josephine LeBeau, Vice Pres, NYS Coalition of Labor Union Women; Barry Liebowitz, Pres, Doctors Council; William Lucy, Pres, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists; Josie McMillan, Pres, Metro Area Postal Workers Union, APWU; Sam Meyers, Pres, Local 259, United Auto Workers; Henry Nicholas, Pres, Nat'l Union of Hospital & Health Care Employees; William Nuchow, Sec-Treas, Local 840, Int'l Brotherhood of Teamsters; Jan Pierce, Vice Pres, District 1, Communication Workers of America; Bettye Roberts, Pres, DC 1707, AFSCME; Cleveland Robinson, Sec-Treas, District 65, United Auto Workers; Edgar Romney, Manager, Local 23-25, Int'l Ladies Garment Workers Union; Charles Sallee, Sec-Treas, ACTWU; Mike Shay, Manager, Central & South Jersey Joint Board, ACTWU; Jack Sheinkman, Pres, ACTWU; Cecil Toppin, Manager, Service & Allied Industries Joint Board, ACTWU; Ida Torres, Vice Pres, Local 3, Storeworkers Union, RSDWU.

Coordinators: Vicki William and Kate Pfordresher

COSATU STATEMENT ON THE BANNING AND RESTRICTIONS ON ORGANIZATIONS

Received February 24, 1988

The promulgation of the orders affecting COSATU and 17 other organisations are a direct attack on the democratic movement.

The State has obviously chosen a path of total repression. They intend to destroy the few remaining vestiges of democracy after the clampdown on the emergency regulations.

The closing of the avenues of democratic expression will possibly lead to an escalation of civil conflict and violence. There cannot be a peaceful resolution of S. Africa's crisis without freedom of expression and association, and without credible organisations which can articulate the needs and interests of the majority.

Democratic organisations in the country have recently faced severe attacks from vigilante and conservative right wing forces. All peace initiatives we have taken to resolve the violent in P.M. Burg, KTC, etc. are jeopardised by the banning and restrictions which open the way for conservative forces to continue at will their campaigns of violence and intimidation against our members and the community.

It is clear that the government has been encouraged to opt for the path of increased repression through the support it has received from employers and right wing governments of Thatcher, Reagan and Kohl, as well as through the vocal fanaticism of the right wing.

The banning and restrictions of our organisations is the action of a panic stricken Government which is unable to deal with the realities facing South Africa today. Conflict in our country is inherent because the majority of people are denied access to the formal political institutions. The Government has rejected the option of stability through dealing with the legitimate demands of the majority in favour of total control and iron fist repression.

The State is attempting to restrict COSATU to what they see as legitimate trade union functions. We reject this because there is no democracy in South Africa, and COSATU and other organisations are part of the extra-parliamentary opposition that are legitimately putting forward the demands and interests of our members both on the shopfloor and in broader society.

The promulgation is aimed at smashing the campaigns which COSATU has already embarked upon and undermining COSATU's strength. All these campaigns are lawful and reflect the demands of our members and the concerns of the oppressed majority.

The restrictions on COSATU, taken together with the proposed Labour Relations Amendment Act, will place COSATU in almost the same position as the other 17 organisations which have been effectively banned.

(OVER)

The order prohibits COSATU from:

- * Calling for the unbanning of banned organisations.
- * Calling for the release of detainees.
- * Calling for the release of our comrades in prison, for example Moses Mayekiso and the Alex 5 as well as the members of SARWHU presently on trial.
- * Calling for the commuting of sentences, e.g. comrades on death row, amongst them 3 NUM members and 1 CCAWUSA member.
- * Opposing any local authorities or boycotting any local or municipal elections, e.g. from campaigning against the October municipal elections.
- * Taking up a campaign to oppose the system of detention or any provision of security regulations.
- * To commemorate or celebrate the founding of any banned organisation.
- * Commemorating any days of mourning such as June 16, Sharpeville Day, Kinross or the shooting of railway workers.
- * Involvement in any way in developing democratic structures in the community in opposition to the structures set up by the government itself.
- * "Meddling" with the affairs of a local authority, e.g. rent collections, rent evictions, forced removals.
- * Supporting disinvestment and sanctions or the international isolation of South African organisations.
- * Any public meetings which would discuss any of the above issues affecting open debate and democratic discussion in all COSATU structures.
- * Opposing forced removals and violent vigilante action.

COSATU has convened a special Central Executive Committee meeting to discuss all possible steps to defend our democratic rights.