



ACOA ACTION NEWS

THOUSANDS OPPOSE APARTHEID RUGBY TOUR

Two thousand people gathered in Albany in the pouring rain to protest the September visit to the United States of the Springboks, the South African national rugby team. The demonstration was organized by Stop the Apartheid Rugby Tour (SART), a broad based coalition of over 100 civil rights, anti-apartheid, political, religious and sports groups, chaired by ACOA president William Booth. There was nationwide opposition to the tour with protests organized in many cities including New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Rochester, N.Y., Washington, D.C., and Racine, Wisconsin.

The first protests began long before the Springboks arrived with a

flood of messages urging the administration to deny the team entry into the US. Consistent with its policy of "constructive engagement" with South Africa, the Reagan administration chose to grant the players visas, claiming that the team was "multinational." In fact, of the 30 team members, all but one was white.

RUGBY CONNECTION

The Springboks were invited to the US by the Eastern Rugby Union (ERU) after it received \$25,000 from South African millionaire, Louis Luyt. The donation was five times the ERU's entire 1980 budget. Luyt has previously been exposed as a conduit for secret South African

government propaganda projects, including the international placement of newspaper advertisements supporting South Africa's sports policies by a "Committee for Fairness in Sport." Also, ERU president Tom Selfridge received a "gift" of \$50,000 from the South African Rugby Board.

Because the structure of sport in South Africa is thoroughly racist, with 99% of all organized sport segregated, South Africa has been expelled from virtually all international amateur sports. Rugby is the most segregated sport of all. The South African Rugby Board consists of 22 white, one African and one "Coloured" club. But the African and "Coloured" clubs do not play with the white clubs in any regular competition. "Multiracial" teams only enter the picture for international tours.

The Springboks came to the US following a tour of New Zealand marked by protests involving hundreds of thousands of people. They were originally scheduled to play in Chicago, Albany and New York but protests changed those plans.

VICTORY IN NEW YORK

SART's first victory came when New York City mayor Edward Koch withdrew permission for the use of city facilities. Koch had originally announced that the Springboks would be allowed to play at Randall's Island. The reaction to this announcement, including a delegation of top black elected officials organized by Booth to meet with the Mayor, helped reverse the decision.

Public pressure also stopped the
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Students Plan Action

A Student Anti-Apartheid Strategy Conference was held by ACOA with the support of the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid on October 3 & 4th at Hunter College in New York. 200 students from across the country attended the conference to plan divestment and other actions in support of African liberation. Plans were made for two weeks of action, starting on March 21, the anniversary of Sharpeville to April 4, the anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. A report by ACOA student coordinator Joshua Nessen is available on request.



ACOA President William Booth
at student conference.

Mike Freshman/Southern Africa

Public Investment Update

Since the Conference on Public Investment and South Africa, co-sponsored by ACOA, was held in New York in June a number of legislative actions have taken place.

- **Michigan:** A regional conference was held to promote the Education and Pension Bills. The Bills would prohibit investment of education and pension funds in banks and companies dealing with South Africa. Last spring, Representatives Perry Bullard and Virgil Smith co-sponsored a successful Banking Bill which prohibits the investment of state funds in banks making loans to South Africa.

- **Connecticut:** Governor William O'Neil vetoed a divestment bill

that had overwhelmingly passed the legislature last spring. But support for the legislation has grown. O'Neil, who supports the use of the Sullivan Principles in carrying out divestments, a tactic that was rejected by the legislature, has appointed a commission to review divestment legislation.

- **Wisconsin:** A legislative subcommittee has held hearings on a divestment bill introduced by Marcia Coggs that will withdraw state funds from banks and corporations dealing with South Africa. This bill was co-signed by 50 legislators, more than a third of the members of the legislature.

- **California:** Activist groups have asked ACOA to be a resource at a regional conference that is planned for early next year. A divestment bill is pending before the legislature.

Dumisani Kumalo, ACOA's Field Representative, is scheduled to travel to several states where campaigns against public investment in South Africa are taking place.

Africa Fund Aids Refugees

The Africa Fund (associated with ACOA) is continuing its refugee aid program. This fall shipments to Africa include medical and surgical supplies, pharmaceuticals, medical texts, educational books, a microscope and audiovisual equipment for programs for Namibian refugees in Angola and health projects in Zimbabwe. A large quantity of supplies are expected in cooperation with the Namibian Refugee Medical Aid Drive in Minneapolis.

So far this year The Africa Fund has made over \$35,000 in grants to benefit Namibian and South African refugee projects in Africa, and to assist individual African refugees with emergency needs in the US. The Fund has received a recent request from the SWAPO Women's Council for workable manual typewriters and sanitary napkins.

BANKING ON THE ROCKEFELLER REPORT

Often referred to as the Rockefeller Commission Report because of the source of its funding, *South Africa—Time Running Out* is already being used by banks and corporations to defend investment in apartheid.

In a July 14, 1981 letter to the Rev. Claude Lenehan O.F.M. of Holy Name College, Citibank executive vice president Reuben F. Richards explained the banks participation in the 1980, \$250 million syndicated loan to the government of South Africa.

Richards enclosed a copy of the Commission's recommendation that corporations should "support black economic and social development through investments and loans" and noted that the Citibank loan "easily falls within" the Commission's recommendation.

A study by ACOA's Dumisani Kumalo and Gail Morlan of the Citibank loan, submitted in testi-

mony before the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid, exposes the flaws in the Study Commission's recommendation.

Housing at New Crossroads is one of the projects to be financed by the Citibank loan. The reasons for the existence of the New Crossroads community are rooted in the apartheid system. Laborers and their families, unable to make a living in the barren rural reserves of the Transkei and Ciskei, came to Cape Town, often illegally, seeking work. Once employed they brought their families, breaking more laws. Unable to find legal housing they created squatter towns like Crossroads.

In 1978 the government decided to destroy Crossroads. People refused to leave voluntarily but the government knocked down their houses with bulldozers. Still, the community held together, winning international support, and finally forcing the

government to plan a permanent settlement, New Crossroads. The new settlement is still segregated, still subjected to pass law raids, still closed to "illegal" blacks who do not have permanent permission to live in Cape Town.

Citibank's prospectus portrays its loan as humanitarian, supporting "improved housing for Black and Coloured communities." But far from weakening apartheid or supporting "black economic and social development" the bank is financing the perpetuation of a system which destroys the lives of black South Africans. Blacks will still be forced to live in barrack-like conditions, with wives and children subject to being sent away to the bantustans at any time.

This is just one example of the use to which the Rockefeller Report will be put by those who wish to continue conducting business in South Africa.

Booth Attacks Reagan's Africa Policy

The Reagan administration's open support of South Africa was criticized by ACOA's president William Booth in a press statement. He attacked the policy laid out by assistant secretary of state for African affairs, Chester Crocker, in late August, after the South African invasion of Angola. Crocker said the US will not "choose between black and white" in South Africa. Two days later the US was the only country to veto a United Nations Security Council resolution condemning South Africa for invading Angola, and Washington refused to join a behind-the-scenes British, French and West German demand that South Africa withdraw.

"The Administration has aligned itself with South Africa by refusing to condemn the invasion of Angola," said Booth. He went on to challenge the Crocker statement that the US will not "support those dedicated to seizing and holding power through violence." "The South African government holds power precisely through violence against the black majority," said Booth. "Demonstrators are shot down. Peaceful meetings in churches are broken up with tear gas. When the Reagan administration condemns violence it ignores the violence against black people. We can only conclude that the over \$2 billion in direct US investment means more to them than the human rights of over 20 million black South Africans."

"CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT"

Indeed the administration's policy of "constructive engagement" has turned out to be one of complacent acceptance of apartheid. To date the new administration has steadfastly refused to make even token criticism of apartheid or the illegal occupation of Namibia.

This policy was shown in action in mid-August when the US refused to protest South Africa's eviction of thousands of homeless black people from Nyanga, a squatters camp near Cape Town.

Families attempting to live together had built cardboard, tin and plastic shanties. The police moved in, bulldozed the shelters, arrested over 1,000 people, and dumped bus-

loads of women and children back in Transkei, the impoverished rural reservation from which they had come.

When the French initiated a mildly worded expression of concern about the government's handling of the squatters, support came from several countries including Australia, Sweden, Belgium and Denmark. The US, however, refused to participate.

NAMIBIA

Another consequence of the administration's turn toward South Africa is in its consistent refusal to characterize South Africa's occupation of Namibia as illegal.

A plan for Namibian independence, embodied in UN resolution 435, was accepted in principle in

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1978 by both South Africa and SWAPO, the Namibian liberation movement. The plan calls for UN supervised elections for a constituent assembly that will write a constitution for an independent Namibia. But South Africa, fearing SWAPO will win any free and fair election, has refused to allow the plan to be implemented, forcing SWAPO to continue its political and military struggle for independence.

THE US VETO

The Reagan administration has tried to shift the blame for the continuing conflict from South Africa to SWAPO, Cuba, the Soviet Union and Angola. In justifying its veto of the Security Council resolution condemning South Africa's invasion of Angola, the US said that it did so because the resolution "places the blame solely on South Africa." The South African invasion had to be seen in the "context" of the Cuban and Soviet presence in Angola and their support for SWAPO, said an administration spokesman.

The Reagan administration has linked a Namibia settlement and the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola by calling for "parallel movement" in the two areas. In effect this justifies South Africa's continued occupation of Namibia so long as there are Cubans in Angola.

The linkage also brings to the surface the world view which underlies Washington's embrace of Pretoria as a friendly ally. Apartheid and racism are perceived as a lesser evil than any association with a liberation struggle backed by the Soviet Union.

The current administration's hostility to the MPLA, the political leadership of Angola, has a considerable history. Even before his election, Reagan told the *Wall Street Journal* that he was willing to sell arms to UNITA, the rebel

Angolan group being kept alive by South Africa. More recently Crocker announced that in Washington's eyes "UNITA represents a significant and legitimate factor in Angolan politics." Thus the administration has consistently urged the repeal of the Clark Amendment which prohibits covert US actions in Angola, and many observers believe that the US gave at least tacit support to the punishing South African invasion of Angola.

OTHER FRIENDLY GESTURES

At a less dramatic but disturbing level "constructive engagement" has involved a series of friendly gestures towards Pretoria including:

- Relaxation of arms embargo regulations to allow sales of equipment to the South African military and police.
- The training in August at Governor's Island N.Y. Coast Guard Station of two military officers from South Africa.
- Increased exchange of military attaches.

Apartheid Rugby

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game from being played in Rochester, NY where the ERU rescheduled the match. Rapidly mobilized community protest forced withdrawal of the invitation to play in Rochester's municipal stadium, as local groups organized themselves into a branch of SART. Within a week the ERU was forced to shift the site again, announcing that the game would be played in secret at an unnamed Northeastern city.

SECRET MATCHES

In Chicago the Rugby Union was forced to declare that the match would be played in secret to avoid protests by the Chicago SART chapter. The Chicago city council adopted a resolution against the use of public facilities for the game. The players eventually sneaked across the state border to Racine, Wisconsin where the game was played on a Saturday morning in an unsuccessful attempt to escape the protesters.

"The Eastern Rugby Union is looking more and more ridiculous every minute," said William Booth in a statement issued to the press. "They are treating this as if it were a guerilla action, moving from city to city, and secret site to secret site."

Action against the Springboks culminated on September 22 in a major rally in Albany, New York outside Blecker Stadium while the Springboks played inside. Several days prior to the match, the game was cancelled by New York Governor Hugh Carey but a Federal Court overruled the Governor's action just prior to the match.

Despite the uncertainty about whether the game would be played, and despite the pouring rain, over 2,000 demonstrators gathered to protest the Springboks presence in Albany. ACOA arranged for long time supporter Pete Seeger to sing at the rally. Along with many black and community leaders speakers included ACOA executive director Jennifer Davis and ACOA board members Elombe Brath of the Patrice Lumumba Coalition and Richard Lapchick of ACCESS. ACOA projects associate, William Robinson devoted major efforts to coordinating SART actions, including three weeks spent in Albany mobilizing for the demonstration.

A Tribute to George Houser



George Houser and Jennifer Davis at the Tribute.

A moving evening of music, dance, slides and anecdotes was enjoyed by over 500 persons who came to the Community Church of New York June 17 to celebrate the quarter century of good works of George Houser on his retirement as executive director of ACOA. Over one hundred individual and organizational sponsors helped make the evening a financial success for the cause George has championed.

Joining in commemorating George's life were civil rights activists James Farmer, Ossie Davis and Ruby Dee, the Nigerian drummer Olatunji, Chet Washington,

SWAPO representative Moses Garoeb, ACOA co-founders including past president Peter Weiss, vice president Elizabeth Landis and African Fund chairman Frank Montero.

A host of African leaders, including Tanzania president Julius Nyerere, Zimbabwe prime minister Robert Mugabe and Zambia president Kenneth Kaunda, sent warm messages of greeting.

George has been given the title of director emeritus by the executive board and will continue to work on special projects with ACOA.

PUBLICATIONS

Recent publications by The Africa Fund include: *South Africa Fact Sheet*, 4pp. 25¢ and *Fluor: Building Energy Self-Sufficiency in South Africa*, 6pp., 30¢. Other new publications available from The Fund include: *Namibia—To Be Born a Nation* by SWAPO Department of Infor-

mation, 357pp. \$7.50 and two new International Defence & Aid Fund-London publications *Women Under Apartheid*, 120pp. \$6.00 and *To Honor Women's Day — Profiles of Leading Women in the South African and Namibian Liberation Struggles*, 56pp., \$2.50.

Bequests

ACOA has received over \$12,000 in bequests this year. These remembrances help expand our work into new areas like the campaign to divest public funds from South Africa. We are very grateful to those who care deeply about the work of

ACOA and make provision for it in their will.

For those who wish to provide for the continuance of their interest in the purposes of the Committee the following form of bequest is suggested:

I hereby bequeath to the American Committee on Africa, 198 Broadway, New York, NY, for use in its programs, the sum of \$_____.