

First World Anti-Apartheid Newsletter

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Walter Sisulu

Albertina Sisulu

SISULUS RECEIVED WARMLY, POINT THE WAY

A commentary by Oscar L. Beard

Deputy President of The African National Congress Walter Sisulu and his faithful wife/activist Albertina Sisulu were received with open arms and a raucous welcome of stomps and the Toi-Toi (South African Freedom Dance) on their October 5, 1991 visit to the City of Atlanta at Morris Brown College. They drew a turn-out crowd, the likes of which have not been seen since the historic visit of Nelson and Winnie Mandela to the city. Shelby Lewis, the noted Africentric introducing the Sisulus even surmised that maybe this is what Atlanta needs, the occasional visit from our elders of South Africa.

Lewis' comment seemed to highlight the fact that support for the Anti-Apartheid Struggle has slacked off in Atlanta since the release of Mandela and other more well-known political prisoners, despite Mandela's repeated calls for continued activism. Walter Sisulu, himself, was imprisoned for a total of 26 years, also on Robbin Island with Mandela.

A MESSAGE OF UNITY

Deputy President Sisulu began by pointing up the cultural unity of global Black struggle against white domination. He stated that the ANC had established contact with Paul Robeson in the 1940's. The ANC was founded in 1912.

Sisulu named Africans who had re-inspired Africans to continue to fight. These were Marcus Garvey, George Padmore and Jesse Jackson. Marcus Garvey is perhaps most noted in Africa for his Black Star Shipping Line, making stops at major ports in Africa. The public stadium from which the Father of African Liberation, Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana, often spoke is named Black Star Square, after Garvey's Ship Line. Nkrumah had been influenced by Garveyism while working and studying in the U.S. Ghana's present-day shipping line is called Black Star. The Ghanaian National Soccer Team is called Black Star. The Black star is a prominent part of the Ghanaian flag.

George Padmore is one of the major theoreticians of the concept of Pan-Africanism, a concept that led to a series of Africa-world conferences that culminated in The African Independence Movement. The African Independence Movement, in return, re-kindled the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S. Jesse Jackson was instrumental in focusing international attention on South Africa after the U.S. Anti-Apartheid Struggle had been placed back on the world political map by Randall Robinson and TransAfrica. Walter Sisulu thanks Jesse for his characterization of South Africa as a terrorist "government" at a height of international focus on "Arab terrorism". Sisulu also thanks us for U.N. Ambassador Donald McHenry. At Martin Luther King's tomb, Sisulu stated, pointing at the crypt, "Here lies a great American. And here lies a great African."

THE CONTINUED CALL FOR SANCTIONS

The cruel fact is that our ears are more attuned to the official white propaganda about the unfolding events in South Africa. It is not possible to pointblankly state that the "Global White Supremacy System" controls international media; else, it would not have been possible to have rallied international sanctions culminating in the release of Nelson Mandela. But, it is accurate to state that the global white power structure "enjoys" a decisive edge on world media and opinion production.

As the result, it was possible for the white media, soon after Mandela stepped out of prison and with so-called "reforms" by South African president deKlerk, to misrepresent former ANC President Oliver Tambo's statement simply that sanctions needed to be re-assessed, to rather mean that Tambo was stating that sanctions should be ended, or that they were under some impending doubt. On the following day, The African National Congress met en masse in South Africa, to reaffirm the necessity for continued and comprehensive/mandatory sanctions until a democratic South Africa is a reality in fact. Soon, Margaret Thatcher dropped British sanctions, to be followed by the European Economic Community, and recently, by the United States, whose sanctions were never enforced to begin with.

At the outset, anti-apartheid groups world-wide were stating that what deKlerk and his global allies wanted to do was to use the release of key political prisoners, especially Mandela, as a means to dismantle international sanctions which, with divestment, disinvestment and various shabbily enforced embargoes, were crippling the South African economy, which is 60% dependent upon its international trade in a part of the world, Southern Africa, that contains 80% of the world's ten most strategic mineral resources.

Indeed, the lifting of sanctions was something that was discussed amongst whites. No one consulted with the inaugurators of international sanctions on the matter. And indeed, those same inaugurators yet call for the sanctions, though in an apparent sanctions void created by a temporarily successful white propaganda scheme.

J.P. MORGAN PULLING NEW TRICKS!

In an October 15, 1991 letter from Johannesburg, the ANC has complained of a current effort of the U.S. investment bank J.P. Morgan to raise money on the financial market, for South Africa. They are attempting to use a letter from ANC Secretary General Cyril Ramaphosa supporting the reception of grants from the Independent Development Trust to support "worthy" causes, as an excuse to raise a \$100 million bond issue for South Africa in violation of still existing international sanctions. Loans have historically been quite strategic to South Africa

to quicken its pace of extraction of strategic minerals from the earth, i.e. with more sophisticated technologies. The goal is to have all of the minerals out of the ground by the time the Blacks actually take power.

If you so desire to oppose this trickery, write to: Dennis Weatherstone, Chief Executive Officer, J.P. Morgan and Company, Inc., 60 Wall Street, New York, N.Y. 10260-0060. Please send just a copy of the complaint to **First World Anti-Apartheid Newsletter. YOUR ACTION WILL BE IMPORTANT IN REVITALIZING A SANCTIONS CLIMATE.**

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* **Publisher - Oscar L. Beard** *
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* *
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ALBERTINA SISULU SPEAKS AS THE MOTHER OF THE GREATER UNIVERSES!

Of Isis, of Hathor, of Yemonja! Albertina Sisulu, though brief, rang with a power achievable only by grandmothers or great great grannies! She ever once made any reference to African-American or West so-called Indian, or Haitian, Jamaican, certainly not Negro. She spoke only of one global and ever extended Black family. Indeed, she lovingly and unconditionally spoke of her children scattered afar. Certainly, she is old enough to speak such.

"You my children," she said, "who have ended up here, but who have the advantage of education, do not forget about the rest of the family in the abyss of South Africa." Indeed, the classic and over "harped upon divisions" between the ANC and the PAC have ceased, and the ANC and the PAC have formed the new Patriotic Front. So much so then that all Africans in this part of the globe should end our various schisms once and for all and work together with a renewed vigor and unity!

Albertina, and indeed Walter Sisulu seemed to be saying that, if Africans can end age-old ideological differences and form new fronts in South Africa itself, and while under the gun of "government" directed violence against progressive Africans, what excuse do any Africans in America have for not being organized, proactive and effective? It was a far-reaching message.

ANTI-APARTHEID ACTIVIST TANDE GCABASHE RETURNS FROM SOUTH AFRICA AND SPEAKSPOIGNANTLY AT THE SOUTHERN AFRICA STUDY GROUP IN ATLANTA

(This is a transcript of a talk delivered by Anti-Apartheid Activist Tande Gcabashe upon her recent return from a three-month visit to her homeland of South Africa. She spoke at the 11/2/91 session of The Southern Africa Study Group in Atlanta.)

Because...when I was in South Africa, towards the end of the three months, I began to get homesick. Then South Africans would say, "What do you mean you are homesick?" Of course, I had to explain that I do have a job to keep, and also, part of my family is still in the U.S. I have one daughter who has returned home to South Africa, but I still have three children in the U.S. I also have a house to take care of. But, anyway, I am truly glad to be back amongst friends, and all of you who have supported our struggle so faithfully and for so long. I need to tell you that because people at home really appreciate you, the anti-apartheid work, particularly the **sanctions**. We know that two factors are responsible for causing the so-called reforms, and that was of course, primarily the activism of the oppressed people of South Africa themselves, but also to a large extent, the **sanctions**.

I returned home after 20 years in exile. Sad to say, many many more political prisoners are still languishing in the deplorable conditions of South African prisons. A group of lawyers back home estimate about a thousand to be still in prison, but it could be more than that. The issue of political prisoners is a very thorny one in the sense that as the high profile name political prisoners were released, like our Nelson Mandela and our Walter Sisulu, the focus shifted away from the issue of political prisoners.

Some exiles who have returned home have had to get indemnity from prosecution, as the political trials continue. I cannot even begin to tell you the overwhelming emotional feelings I had at the Jan Smuts Airport in Johannesburg. In one sense I was happy to be home, because I was going to be meeting friends, relatives, comrades and so on. But, in another sense, I had this feeling of trepidation, really troubled, because, as you are well aware, the violence in the country. It is just damaging and devastating individuals and whole communities and families. Of course, the other uncomfortable feeling was just KNOWING that some of my friends, comrades and relatives had been killed. It is an amazing thing when you get to South Africa, because you visit grave sites, you visit cemeteries. I'm lucky because I still even have a home. Many return home back to South Africa and their family may have all

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been just simply killed and there would be no house for them. They would even have to travel around trying to identify which graveyard their relative was buried in. This is the grim aspect of this visit that was just overwhelming. But all the same, home sweet home!

I was very lucky to be in South Africa at this time, because three conferences occurred. There was the conference of The South African Council of Churches on June 25, 1991, the very day that I arrived in Johannesburg. I was very happy that the conference re-affirmed **sanctions**. It made a very clear statement that changes and so-called "reforms" have not reached a point of irreversibility and that Apartheid, if they are left on their own, that they will still go back to their old ways. They were very very strong on this point. It was good to hear that, because there has been so much confusion about sanctions. I also attended the ANC conference, the 2nd to the 7th of July. And again, I just went on an emotional trip! I just couldn't believe it that, after **30** years that we were all in that one room, all in that one hall, the ANC, present in South Africa, and in Durban, my hometown! For me, it was almost like coming home to an extended family that had been scattered all over the world due to their political beliefs. But there was an angry aspect of us as well, in that the going away should have never happened. We should never have been exiled!

The ANC conference was very very good. I'll just highlight some parts of it that were very very pleasing to me. There were **2,000** delegates to this conference. And mind you that the number could have been larger if it were not for the intimidating violence of Inkatha jointly with "government" that is clearly orchestrated to undermine the ANC. There were also **350** media people and **250** dignitaries, heads of State, from **56** countries. What is remarkable about this is that South Africa had never had a sense...it was its first experience at being cosmopolitan. And of course, you know why they were not cosmopolitan before. It was the international isolation of South Africa. I thought that we were beginning to demonstrate here how we are going to be running the country in future.

Not only was the conference represented well internationally, but also, it was just colorful! People from Africa! In their dresses and their garb. Very very colorful! Of course, all of these dignitaries had to say something, you know that. And they made very good statements as well; Sweden, Cuba, Holland, Namibia et all.

One social issue dealt with in the COSATU conference, Congress of South African Trade Unionists, was AIDS. AIDS is devastating people in South Africa. The thing about single-sex hostels is just a natural set-up for this kind of thing to occur. It is very serious. There is a current debate over what to do with the hostels.

I talked to a fairly representative group of people while in South Africa. I travelled quite widely. Now people, my people, the masses the people have lost hope, the hope they had when Nelson was released. That release also raised expectations. And since Nelson now, is not delivering, as people thought he would deliver, that is causing a lot of frustration. Of course, we know why Nelson cannot deliver. It is because the system is undermining him. The hand of the "government" drenched with blood, has already been proven to be directing the violence. Before Mandela's release, and through the years, the South African Police and Military killed and maimed the people openly. But since Mandela's release and the new so-called era of "reformism", they are doing it undercover. Our new call is for, of course, continued **sanctions**, but also for **Interim Government!** We cannot trust our future to these criminals! Support **Interim Government!**

BRIDGITT ANN ROBERTSON

PATRON

(404) 355-0457

RICHARD GREEN, II

Attorney at Law

FINLEY & GREEN, P.A.
101 Marietta Towers
Suite 3610
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

404/523-2868
FAX 404/522-1233