

SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS' SUPPORT NETWORK

November 2, 1989

Hello to old members and welcome to new members.

You will be happy to learn that all four of the prisoners the network began action on last month have been released (Gloria Veale, Estelle Leonard, Neil Mentor, and Revd. Ntshingwa Lulama).

One can never know what role letters played in the release of a prisoner, but after her release Gloria expressed great joy over the many letters she received while in Pollsmor Women's Prison (they're now in her scrap book). She gained much inspiration from them and is positive the letter writing campaign was instrumental in accelerating her release.

The recent developments in South Africa are truly exciting. It is easy to be encouraged by the release of Walter Sisulu, Oscar Mpetha and the six other imprisoned heroes, but we must remember that behind all of the international media hype detentions without trial are still taking place. We must not forget that people continue to be beaten, tear gas continues to be fired, and political prisoners are still spending long, lonely nights in the cold jail cells of apartheid.

Enclosed are the names of three prisoners recently detained. They are unable to take part in the wonderful rallies and celebrations sweeping South Africa. Please let them, their families, and the South African government know that they are not forgotten.

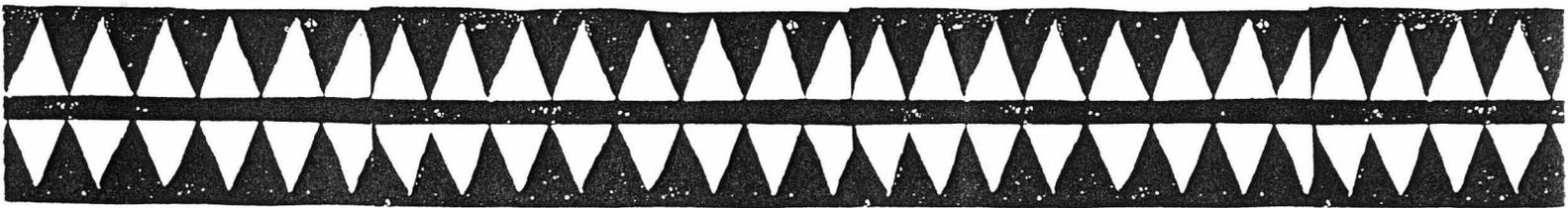
Those of you who are new to the network will also find additional information about the network has been enclosed for you.

It appears the wheels of change are in motion, but a long and arduous struggle remains to be won. We all must continue to speak out for those who are imprisoned when they speak out for themselves.

In Peace,



Robert Jenkins
Co-ordinator



SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS' SUPPORT NETWORK

RECENT DETAINEES: LOUIS MNGUNI
PUPU MGWANGQA
TITUS MAFOLO

November 2, 1989

LOUIS MNGUNI was detained August 15. The police have given no reason for his detention. He is being held under the state of emergency regulations near Pietersburg.

LOUIS is 34 years old and a university lecturer. He is presently the Acting President of the United Democratic Front's (UDF) Northern Transvaal region. On March 13 of this year, he was released from 19 months of detention.

No address is available for LOUIS or his family.

PUPU MGWANGQA was detained September 28th. He is being held under the state of emergency regulations and neither his family nor his lawyer have been allowed to visit him.

PUPU is an Anglican Youthworker in the Mlungisi location in the Stutterheim area. Recently the rector of his parish, the Revd. Lulama Ntshingwa was detained and released. In the last few weeks Revd. Ntshingwa has been receiving death threats and violent harassment from armed members of the South African security forces.

Unfortunately, we have no address for PUPU's family.

TITUS MAFOLO was detained September 22. He is being held under the state of emergency regulations in Grootvlei Prison, Bloemfontein. He recently ended a two week hunger strike. This is his seventh lengthy period of detention and his second this year.

In the mid-seventies TITUS was very active in organizations under the leadership of Steve Biko. He is presently a member of the national executive of the UDF. Earlier this year he met with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and President George Bush.

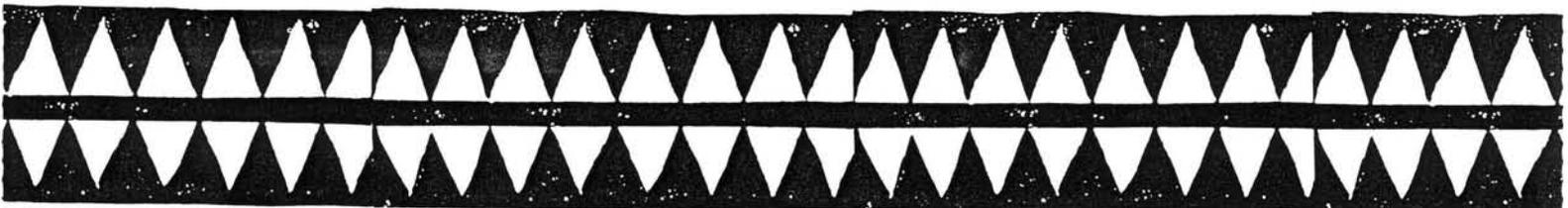
Unfortunately again, we have no address for Titus' family.

For LOUIS write:

Divisional Commander of Police for the Far Northern Transvaal
Private Bag X9428
Pietersburg 0700
SOUTH AFRICA

Mr. Pupu Mgwangqa
c/o The Revd. Lulama Ntshingwa
P.O. Box 118
Stutterheim 4930
SOUTH AFRICA

Mr. Titus Mafolo
Grootvlei Prison
Private Bag
Bloemfontein 9300
SOUTH AFRICA



SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS' SUPPORT NETWORK

WHAT IS THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS' SUPPORT NETWORK?

In short, it's the product of many long discussions with many anti-apartheid activists in the Cape Town area, former South African political prisoners, their families, and the friends and loved ones of people currently imprisoned in apartheid jails. When asked, "What can a person in the United States do to aid in the fight against apartheid?" time and time again the same response is given: "Write letters!"

DO LETTERS WORK?

In the South African context, letter writing is much more than a symbolic show of support. It is a proven and effective non-violent tactic in the struggle against apartheid injustice. Letter writing campaigns on the behalf of specific prisoners often lead to an end to torture, better treatment by warders, and release.

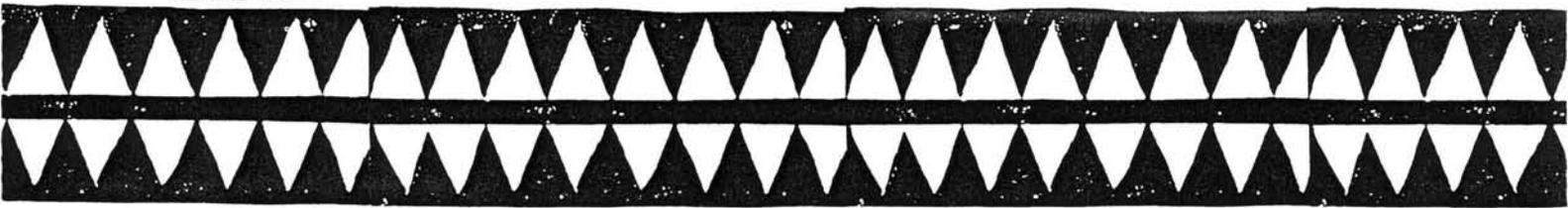
WHY DO LETTERS WORK?

The South African government is like perhaps no other government in the world in it's concern for international public opinion. The Nationalist government finds itself caught in a constant public relations battle. Growing fear in South Africa over increased economic sanctions and further alienation from the international community impels the government to make concessions to foreign critics.

However, the network does not only make appeals to the South African government on the behalf of political prisoners. It is a "support network." It provides prisoners and their families with strength when they need it most.

WHAT DO I DO?

First, you are mailed the names of recent political prisoners. You write three letters of equal importance: one to the South African government, one to the prisoner, and one to the prisoner's family. Then you make some copies of the addresses and give them to friends. Letters are effective, but they work in numbers. That is why the network is a "network." If every person involved in the network gets more people involved, the possibilities are endless.



THE LETTERS.

WRITE TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT:

Ask for specifics: why is this prisoner being detained? Under what law is he/she being held? Does he/she have access to proper legal counsel? Access to their family, minister, friends? Request a written response to your questions and politely demand their unconditional release. Send your letter to Adrian Vlok, the Minister of Law and Order, and a copy to President de Klerk c/o Ambassador Koornhof (letters to the president prove more effective going through the embassy).

WRITE TO THE PRISONER:

Prisoners are almost always held in solitary confinement. Prisoners are not always allowed to receive letters but often times letters do get to them. Write them a letter of solidarity and support. Tell them that they are not forgotten. Tell them you have written to the government specifically demanding their release and to their families offering support. Make it personal -- your letter could be the only letter the prisoner receives. Write the letter you would like to receive if you were imprisoned in solitary confinement solely for your beliefs.

WRITE TO THE PRISONER'S FAMILY:

The prisoner's family also needs letters of support and encouragement as they attempt to cope with the imprisonment of a loved one. Often they are not allowed any access to the prisoner and sometimes do not even know where he/she is being held. Tell them of the other letters you have written and remind them they are in your thoughts and prayers.

OUR GOVERNMENT?

If you wish to do more than write just the letters outlined above, write to the U.S. State Department and your congressional representatives. Demand to know what is being done by our government on behalf of these detainees. Request a written response.

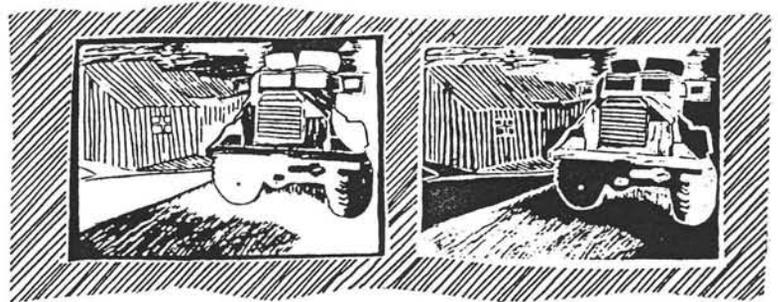




FREE ALL THE PRISONERS OF APARTHEID UNCONDITIONALLY!

State President F.W. de Klerk
c/o The Honorable Piet Koornhof
South African Ambassador to the United States
3051 Massachusetts N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20008

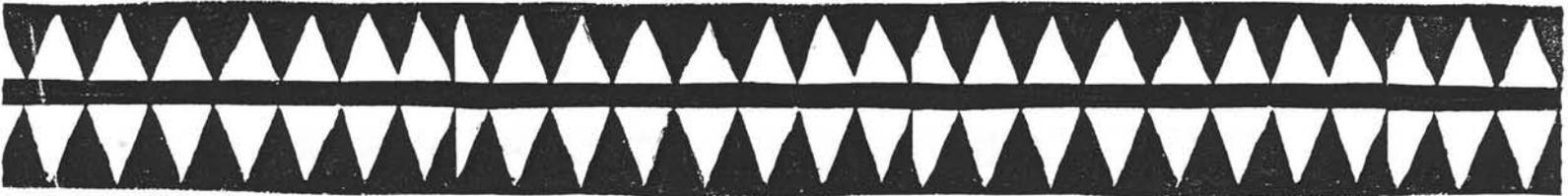
The Honorable Adrian Vlok
Minister of Law and Order
Private Bag X463
Pretoria 0001
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Secretary Herman Cohen
Assistant Secretary of State
(Assistant for Africa)
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20510

Your Senator
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Your Congressperson
United States House of
Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510



WHAT THEN?

So you've written your letters and mailed them off (don't forget airmail stamps). Now what? You tell any and everyone you can find about the letters you have just written and try to get them to write letters too. Talk to friends, political organizations, church groups, anyone who might wish to take part. Remember: THE MORE LETTERS THAT ARE SENT, THE GREATER THE EFFECT WILL BE.

Then you just wait for more names and addresses to be sent to you. In the meantime keep informed about the plight of the South African people, and talk to more people about the network.

If people want to be put on the network list, or if you have any questions or input of any kind, write or call Rob Jenkins at

M.U. Box 284
Bowdoin College
Brunswick, ME 04011
(207)725-3917

A FINAL WORD.

Always keep in mind that your letters do have a real effect on real people. People undergoing great hardship. Rare is the opportunity where something as simple and effortless as writing a few letters can make such a great difference in the lives of so many people.

While the writing of a single letter might not seem like a worthwhile gesture, never forget your letter could make a world of difference to that lonely prisoner in solitary confinement and to that family sorely missing their loved one.

Between the concrete walls of a cell in South Africa, what price can be put on a single smile? What price for the joyous homecoming of a single detainee? Are these things worth the cost of a few stamps? Yes.

FREE ALL DETAINEES
**"Remember those in prison
as if you were in prison with them"**

Hebrew: 13:3