

**ACCESS**  
**THE AMERICAN COORDINATING**  
**COMMITTEE FOR EQUALITY IN SPORT AND SOCIETY**

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27 October 1981

Dear Friends,

Enclosed is our report on the 1981 Springbok rugby campaign. The report is broken down into two sections.

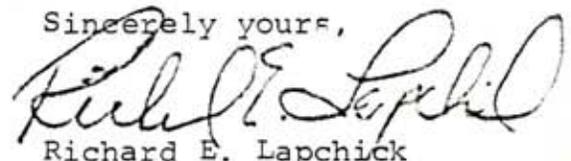
The first is an overview and analysis of the entire campaign. The second is a daily chronology of events from the time visas were granted until the campaign officially ended.

We thank you for the great work that you did during the past few months. It was especially important when put in the context of the increasing drift of the Reagan Administration toward a posture of embracing South Africa as a full ally. Attempts by officials to red-bait and violence-bait the movement were reminiscent of earlier times. However, we are pleased to report that the Stop the Apartheid Rugby Tour coalition, with which ACCESS worked during the campaign, was able to maintain all actions that it sponsored on a peaceful, non-violent basis.

There were substantial financial costs involved in the campaign. We know that the South Africans will be increasing their attempts to use sports contacts in the United States to break out of its international isolation. Therefore, we appeal to you to make a donation if it is possible. If you desire a tax-deduction, make your checks out to ARENA, Inc. Those monies will be spent on our educational efforts. Otherwise, simply make out your check to ACCESS.

Once again, we thank you for your support and look forward to continuing to work closely with you.

Sincerely yours,



Richard E. Lapchick

Dr. Richard E. Lapchick, National Chairperson  
Dr. John Dommissie, Secretary-General — Phone (804) 393-4066

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## ACCESS REPORT ON 1981 SPRINGBOK RUGBY TOUR

### Overview

ACCESS has recently completed its involvement in one of the largest anti-apartheid mobilizations in United States history. The Springbok rugby team that toured the United States was the first national South African team to come to the United States since the Davis Cup matches in Nashville in 1978 and the reaction to it was extraordinary.

The mobilization was not only from coast to coast but also international in scope. ACCESS initiated calls for cancellation of the tour in June and sponsored most of the early protests. Then, as it did in 1978, ACCESS joined a much larger coalition of groups that became known as the Stop the Apartheid Rugby Tour (SART) coalition. By September, more than 100 groups had joined the national organization based in New York City as well as SART affiliates in Chicago, Rochester and Albany. SART worked with the participation of the African National Congress (South Africa), the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, and the South West African Peoples Organization (SWAPO).

The United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and many individual nations had condemned the tour. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) called for cancellation to avoid potential problems with the United States' hosting of the 1984 Olympics.

The opposition to the tour at the grassroots level was organized by the SART coalition. It grew rapidly because of several important factors:

1. Many people saw the tour as an attempt by the Reagan Administration to expand its growing alliance with South Africa. It was viewed as a vehicle for the Administration to soften the overall image of a segregated South Africa by bringing an 'integrated' team here to compete in front of American spectators.
2. More specifically, many feared that the Administration would use the presence of four members of the South African Defence Force and two policemen in the Springboks to improve the image of the brutal military forces in South Africa. This seemed especially relevant since the Administration acknowledged that one area in which it might act was that of expanded military ties with Pretoria.
3. The scandalous behavior of the Eastern Rugby Union, the tour host in the United States, increased the anger of Americans as it became clear that South Africa was buying its way back into competition with Americans. The ERU solicited funds from more than 300 U.S. corporations to help finance the tour. The ERU informed the corporations that sponsorship would help them inside South Africa and promised anonymity if so desired. Then it was revealed that the ERU accepted \$25,000 from Louis Luyt a few days prior to inviting the Springboks. Luyt was the acknowledged conduit for up to \$25 million spent illegally in the Muldergate Ministry of Information Scandal. Finally, on the last day of the tour, another \$50,000 gift mysteriously surfaced. The Treasurer of the ERU didn't even know about this gift and many have speculated that either more money has already been received or had been promised. To place the \$75,000 in some perspective, the entire ERU budget for 1980 was \$5,000.
4. South Africa was clearly using rugby as part of a major international campaign to break out of sports isolation. This was in spite of the fact that rugby is the most segregated sport in the most segregated society in the world. British and Irish teams went to South Africa within the past year. The Springbok tour of New Zealand preceeded the American tour.

5. As much as any other factor, that tour of New Zealand captured the imagination and attention of the American community. Prior to the arrival of the Springboks 50,000 and 75,000 New Zealanders turned out to protest against the tour. During the six week tour, more than 100,000 demonstrated. The results were more than 1,000 arrests, many injuries and the almost total disruption of New Zealand society. The demonstrations were the most massive and militant in the history of the anti-apartheid movement. Two of the 12 scheduled matches were cancelled. Any potential propaganda value that the South Africans hoped for was destroyed. The opposite, of course, was the result.

A detailed chronology of events follows this analysis. However, it is accurate to say that while we failed in our goal to stop the tour from taking place, the mobilization that occurred once the team arrived resulted in what South African journalists called "the most humiliating tour in South Africa sports history."

Of the three games originally scheduled for Chicago, Albany and New York City, only the Albany game was held and that was after the entire U.S. court system overruled the Governor of New York State. Governor Carey had ordered the game to be cancelled.

Rescheduled games in Lake Geneva (Wisconsin), Evansville (Indiana), and Rochester (New York), were also cancelled. The first game was held in secret in Racine (Wisconsin). Blacks in Racine protested for the next month.

The only public game was held in Albany on September 22nd only two hours after the Supreme Court ruled the Springboks could play. Between 2,500 and 3,000 stood in a drenching rain for five hours in protest while only 300 spectators attended the tour's showpiece event.

The test match between the U.S. and South Africa was played on a farm field in Glenville, New York. There were no spectators and even the President of the U.S. Rugby Union was not told that the game was taking place.

The U.S. Rugby Union is conducting an investigation of the Eastern Rugby Union in light of how it handled the tour and why it accepted the \$75,000 from South Africa. Although it had originally supported the tour, the USRU called the tour bad for rugby and bad for the country. A large group of almost 300 rugby players in the ERU had protested its union's policy of ties to Pretoria.

Public officials condemned the tour and South Africa in unprecedented numbers. Two hundred members of Congress voted for a sense of the Congress resolution calling for the tour to be cancelled. The top public officials in Chicago, New York City, Rochester and Los Angeles opposed the tour. The Governors of New York and Illinois joined them. Even the City Council of Newark, which had no relation to the tour, voted to condemn it in a resolution.

The extent of the media coverage of South Africa was also unprecedented. There were three national television shows on the tour and more than 300 newspaper articles. An Albany reporter wrote that "in August no one in Albany knew what apartheid was. Now we know, now we understand why the world condemns apartheid."

However, wherever the representatives of apartheid go, they bring with them the climate of violence that permeates their own country. It was true in New Zealand and it was true in the United States. There were bombings of rugby offices in Schenectady (New York) and Evansville (Indiana). A number of anti-apartheid activists were arrested and some were badly injured. While the U.S. constitution was used to protect the Springboks, SART activists, including co-convenor Mike Young, were denied basic rights after being arrested in Albany.

Richard Lapchick, ACCESS Chairperson, was again singled out for special forms of harassment as he was in 1978 when the last national team came. His apartment was broken into, one car was destroyed and the other broken into. There were numerous threats on the phone and the family had to live with bodyguards around the clock for one month. Personal security costs for the family exceeded \$3,000. Other SART activists were harassed on the phone.

In spite of this, all actions of the SART coalition conformed to the principles of non-violent, peaceful demonstrations. Attempts to intimidate SART leaders or provoke demonstrators failed in all coalition-planned actions.

SART objected to the South Africans ever coming to the United States as it supported United Nations resolutions calling for the total isolation of South Africa. SART hounded them everywhere they went. However, it chose to isolate them on their departure because SART wanted the Springboks to feel the full impact of what apartheid means to most of the American people. They departed under the full protection of 150 riot-gearred policemen. It was no small irony that American policemen were used and taxpayer dollars spent to protect the representatives of the most repressive police state in the world today.

In conclusion, we believe that such a humiliating tour-with 5 cancellations, 2 secret matches, massive protests and extensive adverse publicity - sent the Pretoria regime the appropriate message that apartheid is despised and opposed by the vast majority of the American people.

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## CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

- July 13 U.S. granted visas to the Springboks and U.S. groups protest the decision.
- July 14 It was announced that four team members were from the South African Defence Force and two were policemen.
- It was also announced that the Eastern Rugby Union sought funds from Citibank, one of the largest U.S. lenders to South Africa. It was finally revealed that 300 corporations had been solicited.
- July 15 ACCESS sent telegrams to mayors and city councils where 3 U.S. matches were to be held. It also sent telegrams to governors of States of New York and Illinois requesting that no state or municipal facilities be used by the South Africans. Both governors and mayors and city councils in Chicago and New York eventually agreed.
- July 16 The South African team transited through JRK airport at 6 a.m. ACCESS organized a demonstration there to protest their tour and reminded them that they are not welcomed in the U.S.
- A planning meeting was organized at the OAU headquarters in New York. Many groups attended and the stop the apartheid rugby tour coalition was launched. Each group telexed Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, expressing the need for a public statement denouncing the stop-over of the South Africans in Los Angeles in light of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. Mayor Bradley finally came out against the tour one month later.
- ACCESS contacted Councilman Robert Farrell to introduce a resolution in the Los Angeles City Council to protest the rugby tour.
- A similar resolution was introduced in the New York State Assembly by the Black and Puerto Rican caucus.
- July 17 ACCESS organized a demonstration at Los Angeles International Airport for the departure of the Springboks.
- July 18 The International Olympic Committee called for the cancellation of the U.S. tour as a threat to the L.A. Olympics. The USOC agreed it was a serious threat.
- July 20 Mayor Koch announced he would not oppose South Africa's using Randall's Island. ACCESS protested to the mayor, pointing out his already bad image with black New Yorkers.
- July 23 Coalition met in New York. It officially adopted the name of the campaign to Stop the Apartheid Rugby Tour. First demo called for August 26th at City Hall and Federal Plaza.
- July 24 SART cabled New Zealand protesters a message of support and congratulations for the tremendous work they have done.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

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- July 24 Africa Group of the United Nations issued an appeal for the cancellation of the tour.
- July 26 U.S. Olympic Committee chief Simon met with ERU head, Tom Selfridge, appealing to ERFU to cancel to save the 1984 Games.
- Arthur Ashe wrote a syndicated column calling for cancellation of tour.
- Nigeria announced it might ask for a ban of all U.S. athletes at International events if the tour proceeds.
- July 27 SART press release announced its formation and plans for Tuesday press conference.
- July 28 SART press conference announced plans for protest.
- July 31 Chairman of U.N. Special Committee cabled all three mayors to appeal for cancellation of games in their cities.
- August 1 The International Olympic Committee again appealed to the American Rugby Football Union to cancel the tour because of threatened disruption of the 1984 olympics.
- August 2 New York Times ran companion pro and anti-tour articles by Selfridge (pro) and Lapchick and Franklin Williams (anti).
- August 3 SART announced plans to demonstrate at the press conference that would introduce white South African **heavy** -weight champion Gerrie Coetzee to the American press.
- August 4 Demonstration takes place. Coetzee says the demonstrators do not know about South Africa, which had done things wrong in the past but now is making progress. "I am proud to be a South African. I will not criticize my Country."
- Govin Van Eyk, the coloured captain of the national non-racial rugby team, was arrested in Port Elizabeth because he tried to attend a rugby game in a black township without having a permit.
- August 6 It was announced that Gary Player had persuaded 4 American golfers to play in Bophuthatswana (Sun City). They include Jack Nicklaus, Johnny Miller and Lee Trevino. The five would split a one million dollar pot.
- August 7 Mayor Koch announced the cancellation of the Springboks game at Randalls Island because of the high expected cost of police protection. He further barred the use of any municipal facility by the Boks.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

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- August 7      Reacting to that news, Tom Selfridge, president of the ERU, declared that the Union had no intention of cancelling the game. "If it has to become a private game, it will be."
- August 9      SART organized a demonstration in Tarrytown against the fight with South African heavy-weight champion Gerrie Coetzee.
- Another demonstration was held simultaneously in New York City in front of NBC-TV, the station broadcasting the fight.
- August 11     SART held a press conference at the U.N. during which it praised Mayor Koch's decision although it also criticized him for not cancelling because of apartheid itself.
- SART also announced that it would hold demonstrations at the New Zealand Mission to the U.N. on some days of matches in New Zealand.
- Albany protest leaders met with SART in New York City.
- In Chicago, an organizer of the match with the Springboks announced that the game would be played "in secret."
- August 13     The New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) urged Mayor Koch to reverse his decision. In a letter to the Mayor, the NYCLU contended that "the public safety rationale could easily become a device for denying access to City facilities for all but the most non-controversial user."
- Mayor Koch defended his decision in a letter to the NYCLU. He also appealed to the U.S. State Department to cancel the visas.
- The Acting Chairman of the Special Committee Against Apartheid issued a statement commending the Mayor for his decision. He also sent cables to Chicago's Mayor Jane Byrne and Albany's Mayor Ernest Corning requesting them to cancel the matches scheduled in their cities on 19 and 22 September, respectively.
- Chicago-SART was founded.
- August 14     SART held a demonstration in front of the New Zealand Mission to the U.N. during which it also publicized the August 26th demonstration.
- A New York Times editorial questioned the basis on which Mayor Koch had cancelled the game in NYC. It, however, stated the issuance of the visas was wrong.
- August 16     The Washington Post published a syndicated article disclosing that Louis Luyt, a man tied to the Information scandal in South Africa, had given \$25,000 to the ERU of America. The article received extensive international coverage. SART officials gave the Post documents to prove the gift had been made.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

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- August 17 SART coalition representatives met with ERU officials in New York City. No progress was made.
- August 20 A New York Times article (from Albany) disclosed that the ERU had solicited funds from companies that maintain business with South Africa. The funds would have been used to finance the Springboks tour in the U.S. None of the companies approached donated any money.
- August 25 Mayor Erastus Corning affirmed his decision to allow the Springboks to play in Albany. He declared that: "Our Constitution guarantees an individual the right to publicly expose an unpopular cause..."
- August 26 SART held a rally and march on Namibia Day. The rally, attended by 200, began at Federal Plaza and moved to the New York City Hall. Speakers included Judge Booth, Reverend Daughtry, Richard Lapchick, Paul O'Dwyer and representatives of the ANC, PAC and SWAPO.
- August 27 The game scheduled for New York City was moved to Rochester, New York.
- Democratic Representative Howard Wolpe, back from a visit to six African countries, urged American Rugby officials to withdraw the invitation to the Springboks. He declared that the Springboks tour in the United States would be interpreted as "American accommodation to apartheid."
- SART decided to have a national demonstration in Albany and also to mobilize for Rochester.
- August 29 SART officials met in Albany with local groups to coordinate efforts.
- Two SART activists were arrested while leafleting in New York City.
- August 31 Delmar Leach, the Rochester Police Chief, declared that the Springboks match should be cancelled because it posed a threat to public safety.
- September 2 Rochester city officials declared that they were looking for ways to stop the match in that city. The Commission that oversees the operation of Rochester's Holleder Stadium (where the Boks were supposed to play) voted unanimously to ask the Rochester Flash soccer team to cancel the match.
- Players from the Eastern Rugby Union declared their opposition to the Springboks and formed Against South Africa Playing (ASAP).
- September 3 The Rochester match was officially cancelled. SART decided to concentrate all efforts on Albany since it was the only remaining public match.
- Phil Harrington, representing HART in New Zealand, addressed SART's weekly meeting. He later went to Albany and Chicago.

- September 3 Richard Lapchick's apartment was broken into during the meeting. No valuables were taken but all of his things, including his files, were thoroughly searched. Some were ransaked. The possessions of no other family members were touched. The break-in came within 3 hours of the Rochester cancellation.
- September 4 Lapchick's wife was driving the family upstate in a car purchased only the day before. The engine was totally destroyed after it was tampered with so that all the oil drained out.
- September 8 SART sent two members of its Steering Committee to Albany to mobilize and coordinate for the national demonstration.
- September 9 Lapchick's old car had its engine broken into. The NYPD squad investigated. Bodyguards were arranged for the Lapchick family.
- Nazi Party announced it would protect the Springboks.
- September 11 SART held a demonstration and press conference at site of arrests of SART activists. Demonstrators then moved to Carnegie Hall to protest the appearance of Frank Sinatra who had just returned from South Africa.
- September 12 SART-Chicago held a rally at Federal Plaza. 400 attended as a warm-up for the first game of the U.S. tour and to commemorate the last game in New Zealand.
- September 14 100 demonstrated at 1 a.m. at the Los Angeles International Airport. The team never got off the plane and continued on to Chicago, arriving at 6:45 a.m.
- The Chicago City Council passed a resolution condemning the scheduled game in Chicago.
- A daily picket line was set up at the Chicago Athletic Club where the team was staying.
- September 16 Jesse Jackson announced that the game had been moved to Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Public officials forced cancellation there.
- September 17 New York Governor Hugh Carey announced he was cancelling the Albany game due to the threat of violence. The ERU announced it would appeal the decision in court.
- Mobilization for the National demonstration in Albany was suspended.
- September 18 Chicago SART learned that Evansville, Indiana might be the game site. This was fed to the press and public officials said no game would be played there. It was later revealed that Evansville rugby officials had agreed to let the Springboks play there.

- September 18 With no sites in hand, the Chicago Sun Times reported that the Springboks wanted to go home.
- September 19 The Springboks left the Chicago Athletic Club in the middle of the night to head for Racine, Wisconsin. The game was played there at 9 a.m. in the middle of the black community.
- A local protest grew and two people were arrested. The Chicago-SART protestors reached Racine shortly after the conclusion of the game.
- September 20 Demonstrators confronted the Springboks at their airport departure. Two were arrested.
- 100 protestors met the team when it arrived in Albany.
- September 21 A New York State judge ruled that the Governor did not have the authority to cancel the game. The Governor announced he would appeal the decision.
- Mobilization for the protest was resumed, but on a reduced level.
- The NAACP office in Albany received an anonymous call saying that if Lapchick came to Albany for the demonstration that he would not leave.
- September 22 The headquarters of the Eastern Rugby Union in Schenectady was bombed early in the morning.
- Four SART activists, including co-convenor Mike Young, were arrested by Albany police at 3 a.m. All four were held for 72 hours without bail.
- A federal judge and then Supreme Court Judge Thurgood Marshall ruled that the game could be played. Marshall's ruling was made at 5 p.m. just before game time.
- Between 2,500 and 3,000 protestors stood in a drenching rain for five hours outside Blecker Stadium where the Springboks were playing. Protestors outnumbered spectators by almost 10 to 1. The demonstration was judged to be a huge success by organizers considering it was a weekday night, no one new until shortly before if there would be a game, that it rained for 12 straight hours, and that a frightening climate of violence existed in Albany that day.
- September 24 SART began to organize a car caravan focusing on a 150 mile radius of Albany. Selfridge announced the last game would be played on Saturday, the 26th at 3 p.m.

September 25 The Boston Globe revealed that Selfridge of the ERU had accepted a \$50,000 gift from the South African Rugby Board. He had already spent \$42,000 without informing the ERU's treasurer.

A bomb destroyed the Office of the Evansville, Indiana rugby club. It caused \$50,000 in damage.

Selfridge staged the game a day early on a farm field in Glenville, New York. No press or spectators saw the game.

The U.S. Rugby Union held a press conference and called for an investigation of the ERU and Selfridge in particular. USRU President called the tour bad for rugby and bad for the United States.

September 26 SART was on-alert for the possible departure of the Springboks. Some protestors went to the airport on their own and staged a demonstration that resulted in a violent clash with airport police. Twenty-five were reportedly injured and 5 were arrested in the incident which did not take place under the auspices of SART.

September 28 The Springboks left for South Africa under the heavy police protection of more than 150 riot-clad police.

October 1 SART formed a legal defense committee for those arrested in Albany and to protect the civil rights of all those arrested in connection with the tour.

SART was dissolved as its work was accomplished.