



Capital District Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism

Box 3002 - Pine Hills Station
Albany, New York 12202

A Project of the Social Justice Center

March 1991

NEXT GENERAL CD-CARR MEETING

THURS. MARCH 28, 1991 at 7:00 p.m

Albany Public Library

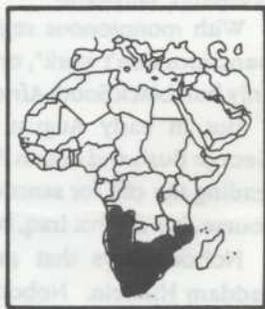
Washington Avenue, Albany, New York

Agenda:

**WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING IN
SOUTHERN AFRICA WHILE BUSH
HAS BEEN BOMBING IN THE GULF?**

An update on Southern Africa

**Also: A discussion on the impact of the
war on domestic issues**



and

Information on two upcoming events:

Capital District Community Conference on

Crime and Criminal Justice - "Education,

Mobilization, and Change" May 18, 1991

(see inside for more information)

and

Ten Year Anniversary of CD-CARR - plans

for community celebration in Sept., 1991

(if you would like to be part of the planning committee

for this event, call Pat Trowers Johnson at 463-4486)

The article below was written in August, 1990, several months before the Gulf War began. The points it makes, however, are still valid and point up the gross hypocrisy of U.S. foreign policy.

How Many Mozambicans Equal One Kuwaiti?



For decades now conservative leaders in the United States, Britain, West Germany and elsewhere have sternly lectured the anti-apartheid movement against the use of economic sanctions.

With monotonous regularity we have been told that "sanctions don't work", or alternatively that "sanctions will only hurt black South Africans and the neighboring states."

But in early August, we witnessed U.S. President George Bush and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher leading the call for sanctions, not against South Africa, of course, but against Iraq, because of its invasion of Kuwait.

Nobody says that sanctions "won't work" against Saddam Hussein. Nobody says that sanctions "will only harm the people of Kuwait, or the interests of Jordan and Saudi Arabia."

Of course, the occupation of Kuwait is a clear breach of international law. But it is far from the first crime committed by the Iraqi regime. The voices now stridently demanding respect for Kuwaiti sovereignty were strangely silent when Saddam Hussein was killing Iraqi communists, or butchering the Kurdish minority in Iraq.

Sanctions were in place against Iraq within a week of the attack on Kuwait. South Africa began open military attacks against its neighbors in 1975, the date of its first major push into Angola—but it was only in the late 1980's that most Western governments began to take hesitant steps towards economic sanctions against Pretoria.

So when an oil-rich Arab state is attacked by a powerful neighbor it takes a week for the international community to punish the aggressor, and declare a near-total blockade. But when impoverished African nations are attacked by a similarly powerful neighbor it takes over a decade for far from comprehensive sanctions to be imposed grudgingly,

and under great popular pressure, by that country's trading partners.

Are Kuwaiti lives more precious than Mozambican ones? Is there something special about the sovereignty of Kuwait that makes it more valuable than the sovereignty of Angola?

Perhaps several hundred innocent Kuwaitis have been killed in the Iraqi invasion. The United Nations estimates are that between 1980 and 1988 there were 900,000 war-related deaths in Mozambique, and 500,000 in Angola. The majority of these were children under the age of five. By now, those figures will be considerably higher, of course.

If the western world had reacted to South African aggression with the same admirable speed that it now shows towards Iraqi aggression, then most of those 1.4 million people would still be alive. Furthermore the Mozambican economy would not have been destroyed, the country would not be obliged to live on international charity, and the government might never have had to embark upon an IMF and World Bank sponsored structural adjustment program. But then maybe that was the whole idea...

And had the West reacted promptly to South Africa's aggression against the Frontline States, and imposed a serious embargo, it might also, ironically enough, have helped the Kuwaiti people. For the most sophisticated artillery the Iraqi army possesses is of South African manufacture. That is the G5 mobile cannon, produced by the apartheid state-owned arms company Armscor, and which Iraq has been buying from South Africa every year since 1981.

excerpt from Mozambiquefile, August 1990

Approximately 200 Americans died in the war in the Gulf War. An estimated 100,000 Iraqi soldiers were killed and 20,000 civilians died.

We Mourn the Unnecessary Loss of Life

The war is over and we "won." In this country we are mourning the loss of life of our service people. They were men and women, mostly young. They were loved ones, mothers, fathers. The news media has carried countless stories about the devastating effect their losses will have on the families and friends of these Americans who died in the Gulf.

We have heard nothing, however, of the loss of the Iraqis, people who also have spouses, parents, and children. The Iraqis are human beings. Their soldiers are as much victims of their government's policies as ours are of our government. Mass graves are being dug with no identification of the bodies. We have once again dehumanized another group of people in the world.

The roots of this war lie in the foreign policy of the U.S. government which has consistently viewed the lives and cultures of people and nations of color as having less value than that of white people. People of color, poor people and working people were the ones to die in large numbers. The U.S. spent a billion dollars a day to wage war while our communities at home lack adequate employment, housing, health care and education. There is money for massive arms and military "solutions" to world problems but no money for domestic problems.

The cost of this war was not cheap: lives lost, a possible renewal of U.S. Soviet hostilities, hostility in the Arab world, increased anti-Arab sentiment in the U.S., environmental destruction in the Gulf region and globally, and the bastardization of the U.N. by not continuing on the course of finding a peaceful solution through sanctions or negotiations.

There is no support for the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait or for Saddam Hussein. But everytime a country invades another country, we do not intercede. Everytime a country commits atrocities, we do not send in troops. We even give mild sanctions time (years, as is the case with South Africa) to work. This war was not about getting Iraq out of Kuwait. It was about establishing the U.S. as the dominant power in the Middle East. There are already stories about Kuwaiti repression beginning and there is talk the U.S. will help to enforce martial law in that country which was far from democratic long before Iraq invaded. This war was not about some ideas of democracy.

And in a democracy we have the right and the responsibility to speak out against our government's actions. The war is over. There is no cause for celebration... only an increased awareness that we must continue to work against the violent and racist tendencies that are so basic to the United States.

Los Angeles Incident of Police Brutality

National and Local Implications

by Mark Mishler

People across the country were shocked recently to see a home-made video-tape on the national news showing a small group of Los Angeles police officers viciously beating an African-American man in custody as a larger group of officers watched. Most readers of this newsletter know that incidents of police brutality occur frequently in cities throughout this country, including in the Capital District. This video is significant, therefore, not because it showed us something we didn't know, but because it documents the existence and acceptance within police departments of widespread abuse of authority by police officers.

The officers who beat Rodney King on March 3rd were not just bad "apples." If that were all they represented this incident would be a horrible example of police brutality, but would not have national significance.

These officers could not have acted in the way they did unless they felt absolutely sure that there would be no repercussions to them. In other words, these officers (who beat someone up in public) must have been positive that the other officers present would do nothing, that their superiors would not initiate an investigation despite the serious injuries received by Mr. King, that nothing would ever come of an internal affairs investigation were Mr. King to file a complaint and that Mr. King would be unable to successfully pursue any other legal recourse. The only thing the officers did not count on was that a citizen would be nearby filming the entire incident.

This incident caught on video-tape raises many questions about the inability of police departments to prevent brutality by officers through internal mechanisms. How many other Rodney Kings are there in Los Angeles and elsewhere who were not so fortunate to have a responsible citizen video-tape a police beating? How routine an incident must this have been for these officers if they acted with such impunity? And, how can we expect police departments on their own to prevent lawlessness by officers when the "blue wall" of silence prevents effective internal controls?

We have many "Rodney Kings" in Albany (and throughout the Capital District) who do not have video-tapes to prove what happened to them at the hands of racist and brutal cops. This demonstrates again the necessity of establishing an independent civilian review board with investigatory powers. Mayor Whalen, as an example, should be able to figure out that it would be better for Albany in the long run if effective controls and accountability were instituted in the police department before someone happens to catch on video-tape one of the savage incidents of police brutality for which Albany is known. There should be a review board now!



A community conference "Education, Mobilization and Change"

The Center for Law and Justice, Inc., along with a number of community groups and organizations, will sponsor the Capital District Community Conference on Crime and Criminal Justice entitled "Education, Mobilization, and Change." This important conference will be held on Saturday May 18, 1991 (save the date) at the Empire State Plaza. Its focus will be on the devastating impact of crime and the criminal justice system on a number of disenfranchised communities including African American, Latino, Youth and Women. The following workshops are planned: the criminal justice process, juvenile justice, how to complaining about police, reports on the disproportionate incarceration of African Americans and Latins and the impact on their communities, and women in the criminal justice system. There will be an afternoon session, "Reclaiming a Lost Generation," on setting an agenda to mobilize communities to work for change in criminal justice policy and practice. It is anticipated that about 400-500 community residents and criminal justice professionals will attend.

In addition to asking for your attendance, the Center also needs volunteer assistance in many areas that are necessary for a successful conference (writing, media work, flyer distribution, childcare, registration, refreshments, typing, etc.) Co-sponsorships are also being sought. Contact Barbara Silver of Lagatha Thompson at the Center for Law and Justice, Inc. at (518) 427-8361 for more information.



Help For Police Abuse Victims

POLICE ABUSE COUNSELING AVAILABLE AT THE URBAN LEAGUE

Police abuse counseling and assistance with filing police abuse complaints are now available at the Urban League office, 93 Livingston Avenue in Albany every Tuesday and Thursday from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. Individuals may call the League at

463-3121 or the Center for Law and Justice at 427-8361.

Deborah Williams-Muhammad, specialist with the Region IV Crisis Prevention Unit of the New York State Division of Human Rights and Reverend Hank Johnson representing the Center for Law and Justice will be available to provide assistance.

How To File A Police Abuse Complaint Against The Albany Police

THE SCENE MARCH 1991

Police Abuse Includes:

- verbal racial/ethnic slurs and derogatory comments
- physical shoving, kicking, beating, or any physical contact that is not necessary in order for the officer to do his or her job
- psychological intimidation—threats of harm or violence, threats of trumped-up charges

If you are a victim of police abuse or witness abuse, obtain the following information:

Name of officer(s); a badge and car numbers; date, time, and place; race, sex, height, weight, hair, complexion & eye color of officer(s); name, phone & address of witness(es), and names of victim(s). (Information taken from the Capital

District Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism.)

Formal complaint forms are available from the Center for Law and Justice, the Urban League, City Hall, and the police department.

Someone from the Center or any person you choose may assist you with completing and filing a complaint form and may accompany you to an interview with representatives of the Police Department. Completed forms must be filed with the Department's Internal Affairs Unit (Morton Avenue and Broad Street), which is responsible for completing an investigation of the complaint and forwarding a recommendation to the Police Chief. The Chief's determination will be sent to you, the complainant, in a letter.

Some C.D. CAAR Business..

Membership - In January we sent a membership letter. Your response has been excellent. **if you are one of those who forgot to send your dues, however, there is still time.** When we receive your dues, we will send you one of our highly desired membership cards. This will also guarantee that you will continue to receive the monthly newsletter. Your continuing commitment to the struggle against apartheid and racism is vitally important. **Don't wait any longer...send your dues today.** Yearly dues are only \$5.00 (more is great!) Membership form -back page.

Social Justice Center Bowlathon - On March 9th the Social Justice Center of Albany held the annual fundraising bowlathon. Thanks to **Peter Balint**, CD-CAAR representative to the S.J.C., for raising money and organizing three teams to take part in this event.

Congratulations - **Vicki Smith**, a long time member of the Steering Committee of CD-CAAR who served as our representative to the Community Police Relations Board, has resigned from the Steering Committee. While we are very sorry to lose you Vicki, we congratulate you on your appointment to the national steering committee of a newly formed organization, Sisters in Struggle. **Pat Trowers Johnson**, also a member of the CD-CAAR Steering Committee, has announced that she will return to T.V. Channel 10 as a reporter in mid-March. We congratulate you and look forward to your insightful and intelligent news reporting.

Members Out Speaking, Speaking Out

Merton Simpson, CD-CAAR Co-Chair took part in Peace Week at the Junior College of Albany where he spoke on the racist implications of the Gulf War. **Mabel Leon**, member of CD-CAAR Steering Committee, took part in a Schenectady forum on race relations which was co-sponsored by Emmanuel Baptist Church and Refreshing Springs Church. The panel discussed issues of racism, integration and future actions. For information about follow up plans, call Wendy Sambro, 374-4114 or Christine Parsons Tucker, 432-8650.

Note: In last month's newsletter we announced that Angela Davis would be speaking in Albany on March 7th. The organizers of the event were forced to cancel the program. We hope they will be able to reschedule sometime soon.

Picket Against Apartheid Collaborators

Chief
Buthelezi

Mayor Nelson
Botile

Bishop Isaac
Mokoena

Reverend Elijah
Maswanganyi



Same Game — Different Names

The white South African government has deliberately and systematically established apartheid structures in townships and municipalities. The local apartheid authorities have been responsible for increased rents, inadequate electric and water services, substandard and unlivable housing, unsafe sewage systems, poor health care, and inferior education.

The mass democratic movement of the local level has opposed this Apartheid structure for many years through widespread boycotts and rent strikes. The people have exposed these local officials for what they are
Collaborators of Apartheid.

Once again the John Birch Society — by bringing the speaker to the Marriott — feeds on racism and promotes hatred through intentional distortion and slander of the struggle against apartheid.

Protest Apartheid Support a Free and Democratic Society in South Africa

Date: Monday, March 25, 1991

Time: 7:15 PM

Place: In Front of the Marriott Hotel
189 Wolf Road
(Exit 4 I-87 Northway, Colonie)

✻ VIVA MANDELA ✻

✻ VIVA ANC ✻