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# Educators Against Racism and Apartheid

October 1990

164-04 Goethals Avenue, Jamaica, NY 11432

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## End the Columbus Myth!

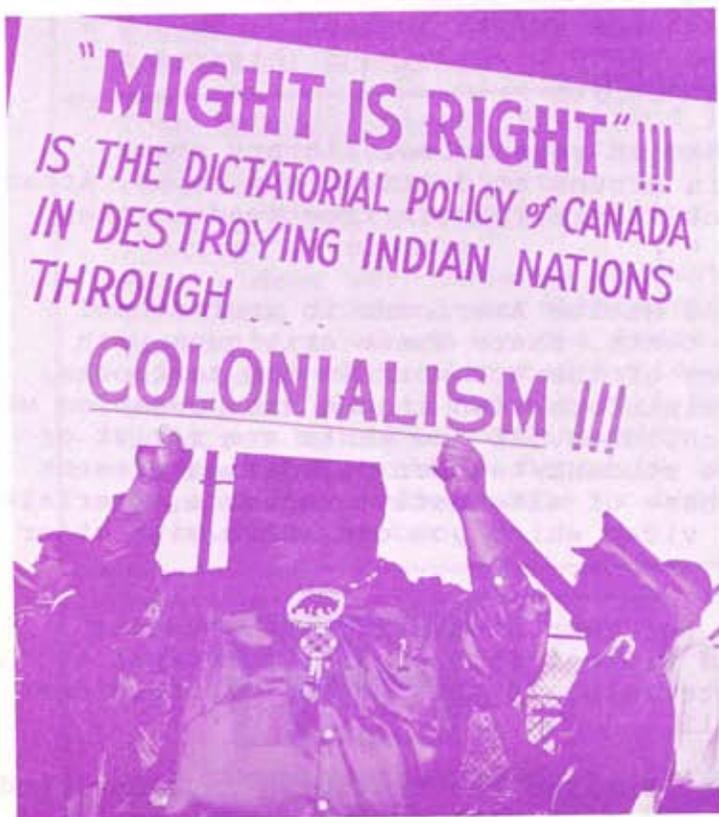


Photo by Milton Rogovin, 1960's

By the time this newsletter reaches you, your school will have "celebrated" Columbus Day. Teachers and textbooks sang praises to the great Columbus, who "discovered" America. Maybe you had the day off from school so you could "celebrate" this important event.

Soon teachers will be making preparations for the "celebration" of Thanksgiving. Most likely children will parade around with construction paper Indian war feathers and cute little pilgrim hats and bonnets. We'll hear lots of war hoops. Does this happen in your school?

Educators and parents have an enormous task ahead. We must struggle to undo the lies of history, to re-educate teachers, and to teach our children the truth. We are up against 500 years of miseducation. We are up against all the media hype in preparation for the 1992 Columbus Quincentenary Celebration (CQC).

"By 1992, Columbus will be the BIGGEST of big businesses in America. Everyone is trying to get their share of the millions of dollars that the government agencies are beginning to distribute for funding of the many "educational" projects that will be used to prepare the public for the grand finale in 1992. The federal government has a big stake in protecting this ideology and in protecting its image. One way to insure that the CQC enhances the government's image is to indoctrinate the school children through school curricula with the "official" version of American History ...

(continued on the next page)

(Columbus Quincentenary, continued)

The National Endowment for the Humanities is one of the funding arms for these educational projects. To date, the NEH has funded over 150 CQC museum exhibits. These exhibits will be crisscrossing the country between now and 1992 and will be viewed by hundreds of thousands of school children and adults...One of the first of these exhibits to open in the US was First Encounters: Spanish Explorations in the Caribbean and the United States, 1492 - 1570. Its cost was over \$650,000. It presented the Spanish perspective..."

(from Re-View, 1492-1992.)

Perhaps your co-workers don't know that Columbus didn't discover America. Perhaps your co-workers don't know that for many Native people, Thanksgiving is a time of mourning, a time to recall the massacre of Native people. There is no reason to expect your colleagues to know the real history of that period. We teach what we were taught.

Educators Against Racism And Apartheid urges you to challenge what you were taught, to help reeducate your colleagues, and to bring new resources into your school. We will provide resources in this newsletter. EARA board members are involved in a coalition of educators who are working on this issues. The Coalition is involved in self-education as well as action. Please contact Educators For Social Responsibility/Metro if you want to join the coalition. Call (212) 870-3318.

## Student Projects

1. Students can make a list of all books in your school library about Columbus and the Native People. Work in groups to critique the books. Attach these critiques to the books to prevent future readers from reading them uncritically.
2. Find the chapters about Columbus and Native Americans in your school textbooks. Have students critique the texts. Share these critiques with other classes and teachers. Make slides of the art work in the textbooks. Discuss the images, stereotypes, and misinformation in the art. Question why such images are presented for school children. If the texts are racist or are filled with misinformation, have a student/teacher delegation present demands for new textbooks and/or purchase of alternative resource materials. Document your class' work by making a video which you can share with other schools.
3. Provide quality resource materials for your students. Have students critique these books, newsletters, and videos. Call on your principal or school librarian to purchase these materials. If this gentle approach does not work, perhaps a protest action will.
4. Have students critique CQC exhibits. Publish the critiques in school and local newspapers. Student delegations can meet with museum directors to voice their criticism and concerns. Organize student/ community informational pickets. Students can even write the flyers to be distributed.
5. Teach about this period of history through every subject area. Turn your classroom into a Native American village of 500 years ago. Investigate the culture and history of this period. Build a replica of a wigwam, make a pretend fire with construction paper animals being "smoked," grow crops such as beans and corn, paint murals on butcher paper or cardboard to depict aspects of Native culture. etc.

(Columbus Quincentary, continued)

Use the wigwam, farm, art work, instruments, and so on as the scenery for role-playing events in this period of time and for developing an awareness of the colonialist nature of this period. Act out the arrival of Columbus. Who was living here when he arrived? Why do textbooks say that he "discovered" America? Act out scenes from the time of "Thanksgiving." Role-play the destruction of Indian crops to force them off the land. Role-play the slaughter of Indians, introduction of diseases, and the deception. Work with your students to write a play about this period of time. Present it in the school auditorium. Video your play.

Work to undo stereotypes presented on TV. Discuss the cowboy and Indian programs. What image do they present about Native Americans, about the cowboys? What can we do to get these racist programs off the air?

Develop math problems such as this one: There were 5,000,000 American Indians in the land area of the United States in the 15th century. There were only 250,000 by the last decade of the 19th century. How many people were eliminated from the Native American population? Was this genocide? Can this be called a Holocaust? What were the causes of this drastic reduction of population? (We would love to publish some student responses in this newsletter.)

ALERT: Be very careful to bring Native American history and culture up-to date. Don't leave your students with the image of life 500 years ago. Investigate with them current history, culture, problems, and struggles. There is lots in the news lately, so start a news file.

## CQC Resources

- \* Alliance for Culture Democracy. Box 81952, Albuquerque, NM 87198. (505) 836-4235.
- \* Clergy and Laity Concerned. 198 Broadway. NYC, NY 10038 (212)964-6730
- \* Once Upon A Genocide: Columbus in Children's Literature. By Bill Bigelow. This article will appear in the Oct-Nov issue of Rethinking Schools. Contact Rethinking Schools for related articles. See address below.
- \* Learning About Native People Through All Curriculum Areas. By Paula Rogovin-Bower. For daycare through grade 3. 625 Linden Avenue. Teaneck, NJ 07666. (201) 836-6644. (\$2.)
- \* The Native People of the Northeast Woodlands: An Education Resource Publication. Museum of the American Indian/ Heye Foundation. Broadway and 155th Street, New York City, NY 10032. 1990. This is an excellent book about past and present as well a resource lists.
- \* Rethinking Schools. 1001 E. Keefe Ave. Milwaukee, WI 53212. (414) 964-9646. This newsletter addresses many issues including the myth of Columbus.
- \* ReView: 1492 - 1992. PO Box 801, New York City, NY 10009. This bilingual (Spanish-English) newsletter is filled with analysis and information about protests against the Columbus Quicentenary Celebrations.
- \* Unlearning "Indian" Stereotypes. 15 minute filmstrip and cassette with a teachers' guide. Interracial Books For Children. 1841 Broadway, New York City, NY 10023. (212)757-5339.

## Pension Divestment Victory

Educators Against Racism And Apartheid welcomes the announcement by the Teachers Retirement System of the completion of the divestment from corporations involved in South Africa. The final \$19 million was divested in September, 1990!

The divestment of over \$300 million of TRS money was done without any loss to the membership. (We said it could be done.)

Congratulations to Joe Edelman, EARA Board member and to all EARA members and friends who helped in this effort.

New York City educators can sleep knowing that our pension money is not bolstering apartheid.

## Military/Right-wing

### Connection

"New research shows that strong, disturbing military influence is emerging within the swelling ranks of the right-wing movements...Allegations of the paramilitary connection have been strengthened by the apparent ease with which SA Defense Force weapons have been stolen from military arsenals." The article names people connected with the Anglo-Africaner Bond, formed by a member of the Hitler Youth. It tells of a rise of anti-semitism. Sunday Star 22/7/90

## ANC Women's League Launched, August 9, 1990

After a period of 30 years, women who left South Africa were reunited with those who remained and resisted. On August 9, 1990 the ANC Women's League was launched.

"Even as we grapple with this prospect, and the hues of a possible dawn of a democratic non-racial SA tinge our horizon, the voice of women in our country must be raised and heard so as to ensure that our new society will be built on a non-sexist foundation. For experience of other societies has shown that success in the struggle for national liberation does not automatically lead to the liberation of women".

August 9, 1990

ANC Women's League Statement  
ANC Newsbriefing, 4/8/90



*I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against Black domination. I have cherished the idea of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if need be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.*

Nelson Mandela first made this statement at the Rivonia Trial in 1964. Twenty-seven years later, he made the same statement in Capetown after his release from prison.

Have your students discuss the character of Nelson Mandela. Which other people in world history maintained their convictions, sacrificed for their convictions under the most difficult conditions? Write about this.



# ANC

## Domestic Workers Demand Union Recognition

For the second time in just over a year, domestic workers in the Witwatersrand took to the streets of Johannesburg this week, demanding recognition for their union. Hoisting brooms, brushes, buckets and other cleaning equipment, about 5 000 domestic workers marched from Saratoga Avenue near Berea to the Johannesburg regional offices of the Department of Manpower in President Street.

They handed a letter to director of local affairs JJ Knoesen, demanding coverage in terms of the Employment Act and protection as workers under the Labour Relations Act. Spokesperson for the South African Domestic Workers' Union (Sadwu), Selinah Vilakazi, said by defying a directive which gave permission for only 500 people to march, domestic workers were displaying impatience at the authorities' reluctance to respond to demands ... Domestic workers are also demanding a minimum monthly wage of R450, a 40 hour week, the right to receive visitors, decent accommodation, maternity leave, and unemployment and pension benefits ...

*City Press 22.7.90*

## OK/Checkers Strikes End

Calm returns to the retail industry this week with the resolution of the long and bitter wage strikes at OK Bazaars and Checkers. In a settlement hailed as a victory for the labour movement, thousands of retail workers will return to work at Checkers tomorrow and OK on Wednesday. The seven-week OK strike was characterised by picketing, arrests, police intervention and supreme court orders ...

OK workers have won R135, R145 and R155 a month increases, depending on the number of years of service. Other gains are March 21 as a holiday and a company undertaking to withdraw the 587 retrenchment notices served during the strike. Saccawu spokesman Jeremy Daphne said the OK strike focused on two issues — bad management and low wages ...

After a two-week strike, Checkers workers won a R140 across-the-board increase and a R770 minimum wage. The company has also undertaken to pay full salaries to striking workers still in detention, without charges being laid on their return to work. A Saccawu spokesman said union membership had increased dramatically during the strike, as head officer workers joined the industrial action which led to the closure of two Checkers stores at Madadeni and Umlazi.

*City Press 22.7.90*

## Protest March by 3000 Miners

About 3 000 miners were to march through Johannesburg today to demand the recognition of their union at the three Anglo American companies, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) said yesterday. The Johannesburg magistrate had given the march a thumbs up, NUM said. A meeting at the Union's offices in Wanderers Street would precede the march, scheduled to start at 10 am, the union said.

The workers — employed at Anglo's head office, laboratories and at Ampros — would make their way to Anglo's head office at 44 Main Street where a petition would be handed over, they said. The workers were demanding:

- The recognition of NUM.
- A minimum wage of R1 600.
- Service increments every 12 months.
- The abolition of racist practices and the resignation of two racist managers.
- Recognition of Sharpeville Day, May Day and June 16 as paid public holidays. *Saturday Star 21.7.90*

## Thornhill people refuse to return

Thornhill residents, who crossed Ciskei's border into South Africa on Wednesday in an attempt to force the government to keep its 14-year-old promise of farmland, were adamant yesterday they would not return to Thornhill. Altogether 162 men, women and children made the move to the farm Merino, owned by the South African Development Trust and earmarked for incorporation into Ciskei. The farm is about 20km from Thornhill, and just a few kilometres inside South Africa.

According to a field worker for the Grahamstown Rural Committee, the families moved without any belongings and were occupying domestic quarters on the Trust farm. He said they needed blankets, food and health care, and expressed concern for the elderly and for very young children.

The 12 000-strong Thornhill community moved from Herschel and Glen Grey districts in 1976, with promises of land from the South African government, to avoid becoming part of an independent Transkei...

*Daily Dispatch 20.7.90*

## URBAN AFFAIRS

### Grievances of Sowetans

The erasure of R800 million rent arrears by the Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA) would not necessarily mean that Soweto residents — who have not paid rent and service charges for four years — would resume paying. This warning came from Soweto community leader and member of the Soweto People's Delegation Mr Lebamang Sebidi... 'Until the government addresses the real grievances of the people, no one will be prepared to pay,' Mr Sebidi said...

'People demand affordable and high quality services. No Sowetan in a right frame of mind would want to stay without paying for good services,' the community leader explained. Another big problem, according to Mr Sibidi, was the question of townships not being treated as part of their adjacent cities. He said Soweto people also felt that the ownership of houses should be transferred to the residents who have paid rent years on end...

*Star 21.7.90*

### Housing Dilemma in Boksburg

Estate Agents in Dawn Park, Boksburg, are facing a dilemma — they do not know whether to market the houses in the suburb to coloureds or whites. One agent, Lauretta Featherstone-Cobbaert has written a letter to Deputy Minister of Planning and Provincial Affairs, André Fourie, and submitted a copy of a letter to Minister of Housing in the House of Representatives, David Curry, to try and clarify the issue.

According to Mrs Featherstone-Cobbaert agents do not know to which race to market the houses in Dawn Park, despite a recent referendum held by residents in the suburbs which was in favour of having the area opened to coloureds. Mrs Featherstone-Cobbaert said there was a 10-year waiting list of at least 400 000 coloureds wanting to buy houses. She said if an agent introduced a coloured buyer to a white seller the buyer has no guarantee that a permit allowing him to live in the area would be issued in three months. She said the salaries of the average coloured buyers enabled them to qualify for a house between R60 000 and R65 000. There was a government subsidy for first-time house buyers of up to R65 000, but it was not applicable to coloureds...

It has been established that the official who issues the permits in Germiston, is helping out in Midrand and will not be available for another month, which compounds the permit problem for the buyer ...

*Star 18.7.90*

Free Video Rental

# RESOURCES

These videos are available free of charge to educators in the New York area. Send \$5 for postage and handling. Make checks to Educators Against Racism And Apartheid. Indicate your name, address, phone, and school.

- \* Spear of the Nation: History of the African National Congress
- \* South Africa Belongs To Us (impact of apartheid on family, women)
- \* Destructive Engagement (impact of apartheid South Africa on the Front Line States)
- \* The Cry of Reason (about Rev. Naude, anti-apartheid leader)
- \* Biko: Breaking the Silence
- \* Educators Against Racism and Apartheid: Interview. 1 hour

- \* Torn Between Colors: Youth And The Media. 24 minutes. About the media coverage of Bensonhurst.
  - \* Road to Mississippi: Reclaiming Our History. 29 minutes.
- Both videos were made by students at Satellite Academy, an alternative public high school in the Bronx. The videos were directed by teacher Pam Sporn. Your students will be inspired by these student-made videos! EARA will be happy to list your student-made videos or books in the newsletter.

## APARTHEID IS WRONG

1. A Curriculum For Young People  
Number of copies \_\_\_\_\_  
@ \$15.00 + \$3.00 each for postage and handling    Subtotal \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Filmstrip And Cassette  
Number of copies \_\_\_\_\_  
@ \$15.00 + \$2.00 each for postage and handling    Subtotal \$ \_\_\_\_\_
  3. Curriculum Kit  
(Curriculum and Filmstrip/Cassette)  
Number of copies \_\_\_\_\_  
@ \$23.00 + \$5.00 each for postage and handling    Subtotal \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make check or money order payable to Educators Against Apartheid. Send to: Educators Against Apartheid, 164-04 Goethals Avenue, Jamaica, NY 11432.

## Slide-tape Show

Forget Not Our Sisters: Women Under Apartheid. A slide-tape show. For rental or purchase. American Friends Service Comm. 2161 Mass. Ave. Cambridge, MA. 02140 (617) 497-5273.

## NEW NEW NEW NEW

\*Unified List (A complete list of U.S. Corporations involved in South Africa, Sept. 1990) The Africa Fund has an extensive list of books and pamphlets about Southern Africa. 198 Broadway. NYC, NY 10038.



New York City Schedule  
WNYC Channel 31--WNET Channel 13  
Wednesdays                      Saturdays  
9:30pm                                      12:30pm

## South End Press

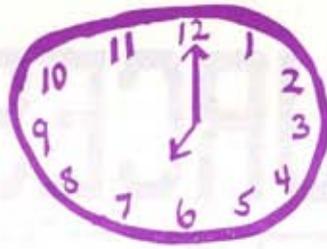
Race, Gender, and Work: A Multi-Cultural Economic History of Women in the United States.  
By Teresa Amott and Julie Matthaei. Sept. 1990.

Oppression and Racism in Academia. By Monte Pillawsky.

Institute for Social and Cultural Change. South End Press  
116 Saint Botolph Street.  
Boston, MA 02115  
Ask for a catalogue.

Please join Educators Against Racism and Apartheid. Only \$10. Contributions are welcome!!!!

# It's time to Boycott Kellogg's!



by Eric Age 8

A Kellogg's representative recently called Educators Against Racism And Apartheid, saying that it is "American arrogance to boycott Kellogg's." We informed him that the liberation movement in South Africa has called on the international movement to initiate divestment boycotts to eliminate the economic support of apartheid.

We believe that it is "American arrogance" for Kellogg's to ignore the call by the South African majority for divestment. Kellogg's claims it is helping the struggle by remaining and doing "good deeds"

At the same time it does those "good deeds", Kellogg's is reaping profits, Kellogg's cereals are being sold to the South African Defense Force, and Kellogg's is paying taxes which bolster the apartheid economy.

IT'S TIME TO STEP UP THE KELLOGG'S BOYCOTT IN YOUR SCHOOL OR CITY. TELL KELLOGG'S TO COME HOME. WE HAVE LOTS OF "GOOD DEEDS" THEY CAN DO IN THE UNITED STATES!

People from these cities joined the Kellogg's boycott in September:

Gilbert, AZ - Westfield, MA  
Boston, MA - Punta Gorda, FL  
Lexington, MA - Beacon, NY  
Marion, MA - Medesto, CA  
Highland Park, NJ - Bronx, NY

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Free all political prisoners!