

POLAROID REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS MOVEMENT

PRESS RELEASE

February 11, 1971

The firings of Caroline Hunter and Clyde Walton on February 10, 1971 by Polaroid Corporation are further proof of the racist response to the three demands of the PRWM on behalf of black South Africa and to the racist disregard to the needs of black workers here and in South Africa. The attempt to financially harass the RWM by the "suspension from employment without pay" and "the threat of discharge upon further investigation" is the direct result of the irrational anger of one man -E.H.Land.

On Tuesday, Feb.2,1971, at the American Physical Society Annual Convention in New York, the PRWM and Scientists and Engineers for Social and Political Action (SESPA) planned an action to speak before Land, the main speaker for the event, and to tell these scientists of his deeds in South Africa and Polaroid Corp. development and sale of repressive technology (the ID-2 and others). Edwin Land told the APS that the group of 'disrupters' should be allowed to speak. SESPA then took the stage and told of Polaroid's actions and the PRWM campaign against the sale of products to South Africa; twenty-five scientists came to the stage to show support for the RWM. Ken Williams of the PRWM made an appeal to the APS to support the three demands and the boycott, and the struggle of all oppressed peoples. Edwin Land then took the stage and in an irrational, incoherent, and self-incriminating manner attempted to respond to the PRWM and SESPA. he said; "Those people who were up here and those who joined them are liars, they want a bloodbath in South Africa.....The reason why I'm mad at (Ken Williams, Caroline Hunter) them is because they're interfering with my personal goals." He was then stopped by the APS president, and urged to give his prepared speech on "Color Vision". The following day the PRWM petitioned the United Nations Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid to censure Polaroid and to support the three demands and the boycott.

Since our protest began October 5, 1970, Polaroid has used all tactics to cover the fact that Polaroid Corp. has supported racist South Africa since 1938. Ken Williams was threatened by the management of Polaroid Oct. 9 to "be quiet" or he would not be able to continue to earn a living - Polaroid says he resigned; he was ~~dismissed~~ ^{FIRE} ~~dismissed~~. Clyde Walton has been on suspension with pay since Nov. 13 for activities on his time; he is now fired. Caroline Hunter is now fired, and yet Polaroid Corp. claims it has responded to the PRWM protests. The Polaroid "Experiment in South Africa" is an insult and a racist response to the demands of the PRWM; their actions of financial harassment are further proof of the racism that exists in Polaroid and of the treatment of blacks employed there.

The PRWM will not allow Polaroid to ignore the human and civil rights of black people and its members. We will not allow Polaroid to conduct investigations on our actions as they did in answer to our protest. We will not allow Polaroid to continue to set-up committees in our behalf or to determine what actions are in the best interest of black people. We will not allow Polaroid to ignore those natural and constitutional rights which the corporation does not include in its policy. Polaroid has violated the rights of free speech of its workers, and will have to respond to the legal system of this country.

The PRWM will continue its struggle against Polaroid and South Africa. We will continue to support the demands of all oppressed peoples and continue to call for an international boycott against Polaroid Corp. until they cease all trade with racist South Africa.

For further info: Caroline Hunter
46 Longwood Ave.
232-4611 (617)

Same Letter
given to
Clyde Waiton



POLAROID CORPORATION

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

February 10, 1971

Miss Caroline Hunter
Research Laboratories
Polaroid Corporation
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Dear Caroline:

In the recent past you have been, and you are currently, involved in the public advocacy of a boycott of Polaroid Corporation and its products. Such conduct is inconsistent with your responsibility as an employee of the Company.

Your persistent activities in fomenting public disapproval of the enterprise which employs you violates elementary principles of propriety and good faith. You have been involved in a deliberate campaign calculated to damage the well-being of a Company which represents the interests and commitments of thousands of employees and stockholders.

We will no longer tolerate a situation in which you accept the benefits of employment by Polaroid Corporation while you strive to hinder or counteract the effectiveness of its operations.

Your activities constitute misconduct detrimental to the best interests of the Company, and for this reason you are suspended from your employment at Polaroid Corporation, without pay. This suspension is to take effect immediately and may be followed by discharge upon further investigation.

Yours truly,

POLAROID CORPORATION

Terry W. Milligan
Laboratory Manager
Color Photography Research Laboratory

TWM:cbl

CC: Employees' Committee
Payroll Department



POLAROID CORPORATION

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

MEMORANDUM

To: All Members of the Company C.C.
From: Personnel Policy Committee 
Date: February 9, 1971
Subject: BOYCOTTS

Recently certain employees of the Company have publicly initiated or supported a boycott of the Company and its products. A boycott is a deliberate attack on the well-being of a corporate enterprise. A boycott is calculated to damage the Company, to reduce its volume of business, and adversely to affect its public image and the interests of its employees and its stockholders.

Any public support of, or any public advocacy of, a boycott of Polaroid products by Polaroid employees has been, is, and will continue to be "misconduct detrimental to the best interests of the Company" (as defined in PP-06.4) and any Polaroid employee so engaged has been, and is, subject to severe disciplinary action, including discharge.

AB/mmc

Note: Issued Feb. 10 - 2pm

C.H. given letter Feb. 10 - 10am.

Pass-Camera bosses hear Soweto

POLAROID, the company that produces instant cameras used for photographing millions of Africans applying for reference books, sent two Black American executives out here on a fact-finding mission. Their reports might stop sales of the "pass camera" to South Africa.

The fact-finding mission was sparked off by threats from American freedom movements that they would boycott Polaroid if they continued to sell the cameras to an apartheid Government.

The four-man mission flew back to America on Thursday. Before they left they said they would not reveal their findings until they had reported to the firm's workers' committee.

The two outspoken Black representatives, Mr. Chuck Jones and Mr. Ken Anderson, told POST this week: "We are totally against the principles of apartheid. We are aware that the pass system is enslaving the Black man in this country. This is the message we're going to take back to America."

Also, they've told the local branches of their company to pay their workers R120 instead of R60. "This would be a living wage for a family man with three children," said Mr. Jones.

Their first port-of-call in Soweto was the "Fish Pond," the well-known gaytime joint in Dube Village.

"I'll tell my buddies back home what a ball we had in this country. Imagine how excited they'll be when I tell them about our visit to a Soweto (pronounced Sew-ee-too) speakeasy," said the jovial Mr. Jones.

5-star hotel

The two executives booked in at a Johannesburg five star hotel, along with two White Americans who are on the same mission.

Mr. Jones said they were mainly interested in the ordinary man in the street. "And he's told us that his pass, and his photo taken on a Polaroid, stand for injustice."

"For this reason we can recommend to the company that they immediately stop the supply of their products to South Africa because they are promoting the cause of apartheid," he said.

On the other hand some Africans had told him the sales of Polaroid cameras should be encouraged.

Said Mr. Jones: "One intellectual in Dube Village told me the 'pass camera' was good because it only took a few minutes of humiliation to get the picture done."

"If Polaroid stopped selling cameras here for political reasons the Government would get a ready dealer to provide a slower camera. Then the process would take a lot longer."

He said they had already recommended that Polaroid make an annual grant for the education of the children of their African employees out here.

He conceded that there was an air of cloak-and-dagger secrecy over their visit.

"We are treading on dangerous ground. Our company is threatened by a boycott by a lot of people, especially by the radical freedom movements. They say we're assisting apartheid," he said.

Thursday, Feb. 4, 1971 THE WASHINGTON POST

Polaroid Employees Appear at U.N. To Criticize Firm's S. Africa Policy

Washington Post Foreign Service

UNITED NATIONS, Feb. 3—Two employees of the Polaroid Corp. today outlined their campaign among large stockholders to compel Polaroid to halt its operations in South Africa.

Caroline Hunter and Ken Williams, representing the Polaroid Revolutionary Workers Movement, told the General Assembly Apartheid Committee the company's program to benefit black workers in its South African business is a sham that actually supports apartheid.

Both spoke on behalf of an international boycott of Polaroid products called by their organization.

Williams asserted that at a mass meeting in the Boston suburb of Roxbury last Sun-

day he had asked "right-thinking people" to "act as guerrillas in their neighborhoods" to induce shopkeepers not to reorder Polaroid cameras, film and other products.

"Some of the brothers in the community" decided to paint white Xs on the storefronts of noncooperating storekeepers, Williams said.

The significance of the Workers Movement is seen here as an effort to arouse black employees of big American corporations that do business in South Africa, in the expectation that financial pressure will cause such concerns to halt their South African operations, eventually bringing the collapse of apartheid.

George Houser, executive director of the American Com-

mittee on Africa, asked the Apartheid Committee to conduct a study to make sure that United Nations agencies are not using Polaroid products.

Both Miss Hunter and Williams denounced an advertisement by Polaroid on Jan. 12 that told of a mission of two white and two black employees sent by the company to South Africa to study conditions. The advertisement expressed abhorrence of apartheid and announced an experimental program to benefit black education in South Africa.

Williams accused Polaroid of "brainwashing" black members of the committee. Polaroid cameras and film are used to produce the identification cards required for blacks in South Africa.



● Jones ● Anderson