

CAPITAL DISTRICT COALITION AGAINST APARTHEID AND RACISM-JUNE 26 '83

Entertainer Ray Charles will be the target of protest next Sunday at Saratoga Performing Arts Center. Charles is slated to perform at the Kool Jazz Festival July 3.

The Capital District Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism is protesting Charles's appearance in the Capital District because of his violation of the United Nations Resolutions calling for "all states and organizations to suspend cultural, educational, sporting and other exchanges with the racist regime in South Africa which perpetuates apartheid."

Ray Charles arrogantly ignored pleas of South African liberation groups not to support the racist regime by performing in South Africa. In October of 1980, Charles was stoned by black protesters in South Africa. Even before he left the U.S. he was urged to cancel his tour. He refused and was met in South Africa by protests and boycotts and some concerts were cancelled. Recently Charles's appearances in New York City were picketed.

The Capital District Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism, which organized the protest at Chick Corea's performance recently in Troy and will be protesting Linda Ronstadt's appearance at SPAC July 17, maintain that South Africa uses performers like Charles, Ronstadt, the Beach Boys, Chick Corea to legitimize its policy of racist apartheid. "They have to be met with protest," said Coalition spokesperson Vera Michelson, "because we and South African liberation groups and the United Nations and international community feel that the cultural boycott of South Africa is one way we have of pressuring the South African government to end its disastrous racist policies."

At the Kool Jazz Festival, Coalition members will hand out informational leaflets and stage a "walk-back" when Charles begins his performance. The Coalition calls upon all members of the audience to join in leaving the hall and the lawn area during Charles's performance. *and walking back after*. Audience members supporting the protest will be wearing black armbands, as well.

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