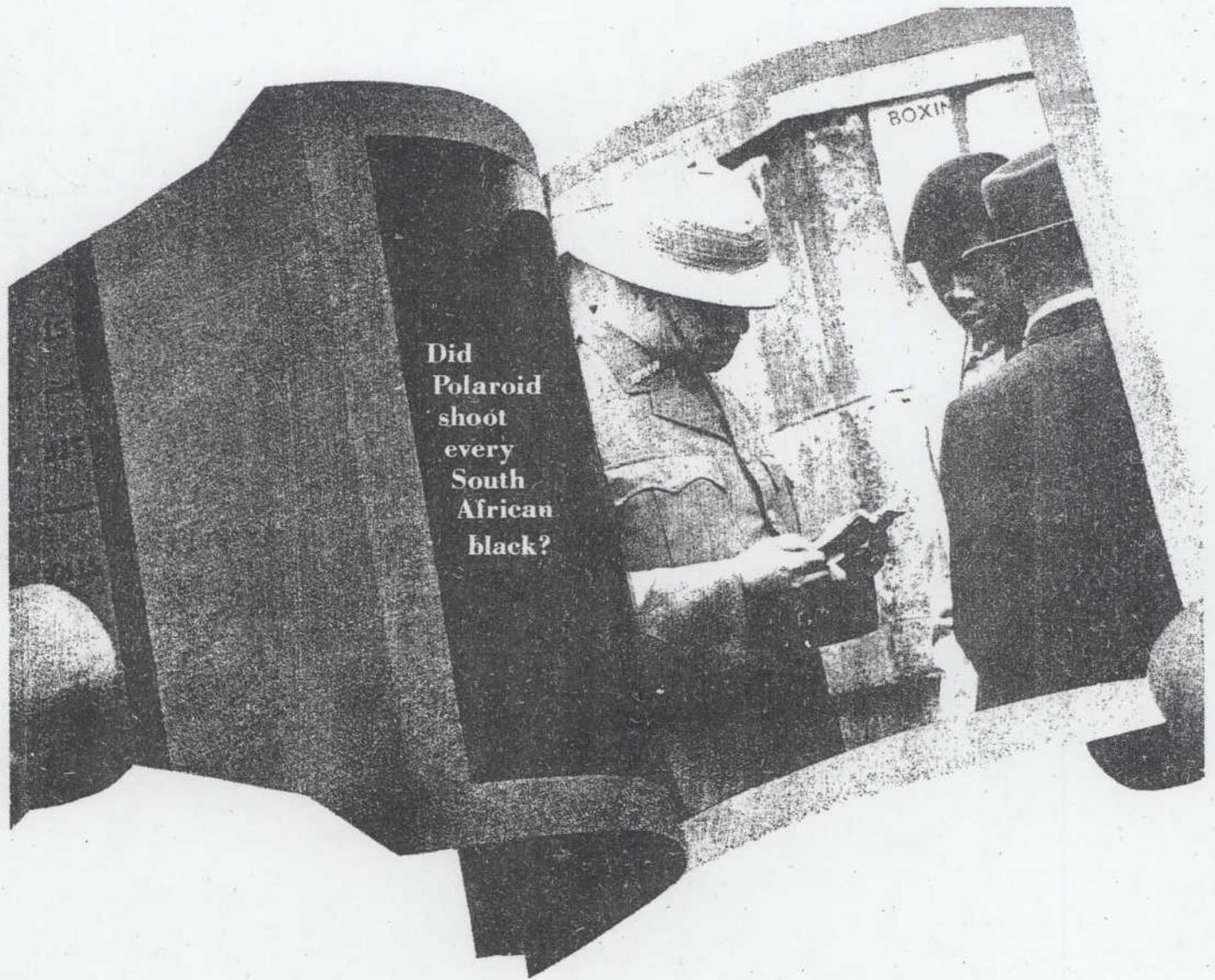


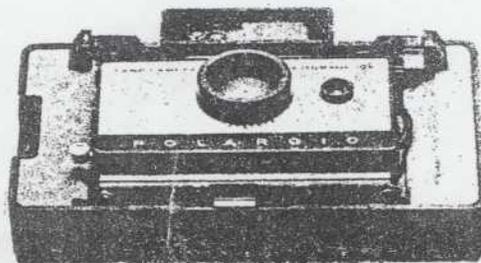
POLAROID and SOUTH AFRICA



Did
Polaroid
shoot
every
South
African
black?

Boycott

Support the black
revolutionary workers
at Polaroid.



Polaroid

Until all sales
to South Africa
are discontinued.

THE STRUGGLE BEGINS....



Ken Williams



Chris Nteta

On Oct. 8, 1970 the PRWM initiated its struggle against Polaroid with a large rally before the plate glass windows of Polaroid's corporate headquarters in Cambridge. Attended by many Polaroid workers, the rally drew attention to Polaroid's sale of its ID-2 identification system in South Africa. Ken Williams, a member of the PRWM and a Polaroid employee, accused Polaroid of supporting fascism in South Africa and demanded Polaroid's immediate withdrawal from South Africa.

Prior to the rally Polaroid tried to take away some of the demonstration's heat by releasing a slick statement about its position in South Africa. Polaroid's trick back-fired when Chris Nteta, a black South African exposed the lies in Polaroid's statement. With the enthusiastic support of the crowd, Nteta called on Polaroid to meet three demands: 1) get out of South Africa completely and immediately, 2) denounce apartheid, and 3) donate past profits from sales in South Africa to liberation movements. The struggle had started.

POLAROID REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS MOVEMENT

JANUARY 12, 1971

ON BEHALF OF BLACK SOUTH AFRICANS AND ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLES,
THE POLAROID REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS DEMAND:

- 1.) THAT POLAROID ANNOUNCE A POLICY OF COMPLETE DISENGAGEMENT FROM SOUTH AFRICA. WE BELIEVE THAT ALL AMERICAN COMPANIES DOING BUSINESS THERE REINFORCE THAT RACIST SYSTEM.
- 2.) THAT POLAROID ANNOUNCE ITS POSITION ON APARTHEID PUBLICALLY IN THE US AND SOUTH AFRICA, SIMULTANEOUSLY.
- 3.) THAT POLAROID CONTRIBUTE PROFITS EARNED IN SOUTH AFRICA TO THE RECOGNIZED AFRICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS.

POLAROID CORPORATION SINCE OUR PROTEST BEGAN OCTOBER 5, 1969, USED ALL TECHNIQUES, SUCH AS ADVERTISEMENT, BRIBERY, INTIMIDATION AND FINANCIAL HARASSMENT, TREACHERY AND LIES - TO COVER THE MAGNITUDE OF ITS DEEDS IN SOUTH AFRICA. E.H. LAND FOUNDED POLAROID CORPORATION IN 1937 - IN 1938 HE BEGAN TO BUILD HIS \$600 MILLION DOLLAR EMPIRE OFF THE BACKS OF BLACK SOUTH AFRICANS. HIS PERSONAL GOALS OF CONTROLLING THE WORLD THRU PHOTOGRAPHY - THE INSTANT I.D.2 SYSTEM - HAVE BEEN PERFECTED IN SOUTH AFRICA, AND IS NOW BEING SOLD THRU OUT THE WORLD AS A REPRESSIVE TOOL OF TECHNOLOGY.

PRWM WILL ENFORCE AN INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC BOYCOTT AGAINST POLAROID UNTIL THEY COMPLETELY DISENGAGE FROM SOUTH AFRICA OR UNTIL SOUTH AFRICA IS LIBERATED IN THE NAME OF HER PEOPLES.

PRWM CALLS UPON ALL RIGHT-ON THINKING PEOPLE TO BOYCOTT ALL POLAROID PRODUCTS UNTIL POLAROID IS FORCED OUT OF SOUTH AFRICA.

WE SEE THE SOUTH AFRICAN APARTHEID SYSTEM AS THE SYMBOL OF THE MANY 'INHUMANITIES' IN THE UNITED STATES. WE CANNOT BEGIN TO DEAL WITH RACISM IN POLAROID OR THE US UNTIL POLAROID AND THE US CEASE TO UPHOLD AND SUPPORT APARTHEID. BLACK PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA ARE ENSLAVED AND DEHUMANIZED IN ORDER TO INSURE THE SECURITY OF APARTHEID AND THE CAPITALISTS' MARGIN OF PROFIT. THE UNITED STATES AND ITS CORPORATE SOCIETY HAVE MADE EXPLICIT ITS INTENTIONS OF PROFITS AT ANY HUMAN EXPENSE.

WE DEMAND THAT WE NO LONGER BE USED AS TOOLS TO ENSLAVE OUR BROTHERS AND INSURE CORPORATE PROFITS.

THE PRWM AND OUR BLACK BROTHERS IN SOUTH AFRICA HAVE DEDICATED THEIR LIVES TO THE STRUGGLE OF THOSE OPPRESSED PEOPLES.

Ken Williams

KEN WILLIAMS

POLAROID REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS

POLAROID'S FIRST ADVERTISEMENT
APPEARED IN BOSTON NEWSPAPERS
THE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 25th



What is Polaroid doing in South Africa?

Polaroid Corporation has been selling its products in South Africa since 1938. We sell cameras and film and sunglass lenses to a local distributor there. Our business isn't large compared to what we sell in other countries. As a matter of fact it is about equal to our business with a single big American department store.

We have no company in South Africa. No plant. No investments.

Recently a group who call themselves revolutionaries have demanded that we stop doing business with our customers in South Africa. There are several hundred American firms who have their own companies or factories in South Africa and many more who sell products there as we do. It is claimed that American business, by its presence, is supporting the government of South Africa and its policies of racial separation and subjugation of the Blacks.

Why was Polaroid chosen to be the first company to face pressure (handbills, pickets, a boycott) about business in South Africa? Perhaps because the revolutionaries thought we would take the subject seriously.

They were right. We do.

We have built a company on the principle that people should be recognized as individuals.

We abhor *apartheid*, the national policy of South Africa, that divides the races and denies even the most fundamental individual rights to Blacks.

So what is Polaroid doing about South Africa? Is it going to stop doing business there?

We don't know.

That may seem an unusual answer for an American corporation to make. But we feel the question of South Africa is too important and too complex for a hasty decision. We want to understand what is the best solution for the black people of South Africa.

And we feel that solution will be the best one for us too.

We have formed a committee of people from all over the company. Black and white, women and men, hourly and salaried employees. They want to try to understand the complexities of South Africa. A big undertaking? Indeed it is.

Should we stop doing business there? Our financial stake is certainly small. (Less than half of one percent of our worldwide business.) What effect would cutting off business have? Would it put black people out of work there? Would it influence the government's policies? Should we perhaps try to increase our business there to have a stronger say in the employment of Blacks? Should we try to establish businesses in the nations of free black Africa?

How do you answer tough questions like these? The committee is talking to South Africans, both black and white, to economists, to political scientists, to educators. It is reading, studying films, asking questions that require research to answer.

And it is sending four of the group to South Africa. They are going to see and question and report for themselves. South Africa is 10,000 miles away from Cambridge, Massachusetts. They don't want all their information secondhand.

Why is Polaroid concerned about South Africa? Because, if a corporation has a conscience it must be considered to be the collective conscience of the people who manage the company and those who work there. Injustice to Blacks in South Africa concerns many black people and many white people no matter where they live.

We feel South Africa is a question that other companies will try to answer in the future. We seem to be the first. Our answer may not be right for other companies. But we intend to take the time and effort and thought to be sure it is right for us.

When we know what it is, we want to tell you about it.



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

SUPPORT

The PWRM is not alone in its fight against Polaroid's involvement in South Africa. Since the beginning of the struggle, the PWRM has received a growing amount of support from a wide range of people and groups. The boycott of Polaroid products has spread around the world through demonstrations and leaflets. Liberation fighters in South Africa, American workers, students and just ordinary community people have all raised their voices to protest Polaroid's continued presence in South Africa. What follows are reports from just a few of the groups which support the PRWM.

ABROAD...


western union

Telegram

927A EST NOV 06 70 BA088 KB106

MISS CAROLINE HUNTER

CAMBRIDGEMASS 02140

ON BEHALF NATIONAL EXECUTIVE ANC SA SUPPORT STAND OF
REVOLUTIONARY POLAROID WORKERS MOVEMENT WITH REGARD TO POLAROID
INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA ENDORSE YOUR DEMANDS FOR TOTAL
DINSNGAGEMENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS DENOUNCING APARTEID STOP
RE AFFORM ANC PROGRAMME DEMANDS THAT THE NATIONAL WEALTH
OF SA MUST BE RETURNED TO THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA
REG SEPTEMBER EUROPEAN AND UK CHIEF REPRESENTATIVES

The African National Congress (ANC) is a liberation movement currently engaged in armed struggle in South Africa.

POLAROID TAKES A TRIP... FOUR EMPLOYEES SENT TO SOUTH AFRICA TO UNCOVER THE "FACTS"

THEIR TRIP:

HAVING A GREAT TIME-- WISH YOU WERE HERE!...

POST, December 13, 1970

Johannesburg

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 their 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.

THEIR CONCLUSIONS:
[Boston globe: Jan. 12th]

"Black South Africans felt that if nothing could be done to stop the system, Polaroid film could be an asset. They wouldn't have to stand in the sun so long," said Chuck Jones, a member of the committee.

AT HOME ... ROXBURY, MASS.

Early in December 1970, Polaroid donated \$20,000 to Boston's Black United Front. The Front already supported the boycott of all Polaroid products. Now it had to decide what to do with Polaroid's gift.

At a special meeting in Roxbury, more than 200 members of the black community decided to accept the money, but to give one half of it to the African National Congress, a liberation movement in South Africa, and the other half to the Black United Front in Cairo, Illinois.

This decision followed a dramatic confrontation between Ken Williams of the PWRM, and John Carrington, a black administrator from Polaroid. Williams accused Polaroid of bribing black people. Carrington claimed that the money was given with no strings attached. As the argument became heated, Williams told Carrington:

"I have tried to encourage the brothers in Polaroid to put aside their personal gains for the common interest. If you want to be a big man, be a black man."

After the decision, Polaroid privately spread the word that corporate contributions to the Front's activities would be hurt by the action. Polaroid was particularly bitter because its trick backfired: the black community refused to be divided or bought off. The decision indicated that black people demand liberation, not liberalism, from white corporate America. This fact, more than the loss of a mere \$20,000, was what frightened and annoyed Polaroid.

DAVID DEITCH

Polaroid and Black Front

Something that the corporate state is great at doing is diverting people's attention from fundamental issues to trivia, disguising what is basic under a barrage of advertising and plastic gimmickry that promises material salvation in exchange for public power. This typical perversion of values is contained within the Polaroid-in-South Africa situation.

The issue of Polaroid in South Africa has been complicated recently by the corporation's donation of \$20,000 to the United Black Appeal, the fund-raising arm of the Black United Front, which had based its solicitations for use of the gifts on local black development projects. In this case, however, the Front decided to split the \$20,000 gift between black liberation organizations in South Africa and the Black United Front of Cairo, Ill., where sporadic civil war has been underway.

Polaroid said that it was "shocked" by the Front's decision, and the Bay State Banner, a black weekly that dutifully carries the corporate message into Roxbury, predicted that the corporate money tap would be shut off in retribution. By calling the Front's credibility into ques-

tion and emphasizing this point through the media, Polaroid has succeeded in diverting public attention from the fundamental issues of its involvement and tacit support of racist South Africa, and the fact that its identification equipment is being used in many other places as an instrument of human oppression.

Since last fall, the Polaroid Revolutionary Workers Movement has been pressuring the company to disengage from South Africa and support black liberation there with money and by serving as a model for other corporations with a "liberal image." For Polaroid, the RWM was the black plague because of its uncompromising moral stand. It was the enemy that couldn't be negotiated with.

The question was whether the Black United Front would also consider RWM the enemy and the answer was no. To its credit, the Front took the same moral stand designed not only to unite a very large chunk of the black community in this area, but also to express solidarity with oppressed blacks everywhere in the world.

Polaroid has sent a delegation of four workers (since returned) to South Africa to "help it decide" whether to leave or stay. One wonders what sort of fundamentally important information the delegation expected to find out that the company didn't already know.

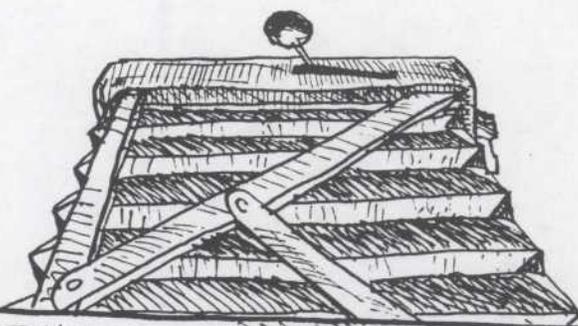
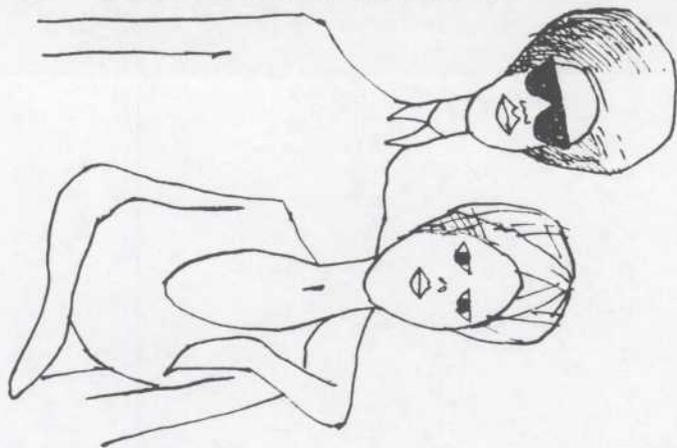
If Polaroid pulls out of South Africa, as it should, then one important RWM demand will have been validated by the company itself. Under the circumstances it would be inconsistent to complain that \$10,000 of its money is being used for black South African liberation, and it should make another big contribution. If Polaroid does not pull out, the Front can hardly be faulted for contrasting its own moral consistency with Polaroid's contradictions.

The basic issue is not what the Front did with Polaroid's money but whether Polaroid gets out of South Africa. The public relations aspect of this story must not be allowed to obscure the overriding moral issue which is Polaroid's role in the system which oppresses human beings. This applies to any white liberal interested in fighting repression and protecting his own eroding liberties.

Attempts, legal and otherwise, might be made to block the Front's fund-raising capability because of its Polaroid stand. This would be unfortunate and simply expose the conditional nature of the donations from people who believe themselves to be well-meaning. It would, once again, expose the reality of corporate liberalism.

Polaroid denies that its \$20,000 contribution was an attempt to rebuild its crumbling image. There is some controversy over how direct this effort was. The subsequent pressure on the Front by Polaroid and others, however, indicates that the donations are made less because it's the right thing to do and much more for political purposes.

Boston Globe, Jan. 11, 1971



Svendell

