

Interview with Frank Beeman

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" The idea behind [the Southern Africa Liberation Committee] was that people would do what was right if they knew the truth, if they knew what was actually happening. ... That was what made the arguments easy—because it was true. It was so wrong to have enslaved a whole nation of people ... How do you argue for it?" — Frank Beeman

Introduction

In the decades-long international campaigns against collaboration with apartheid, two recurrent strands were the demand to break economic ties with South Africa and the campaign to isolate South Africa in sports. In each there were dramatic highlights, such as passage of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act by the U.S. Congress in 1986, and the massive protests against South African sports teams in the United Kingdom and Australia in 1969-71. In the United States, national organizations such as the American Committee on Africa pushed divestment from the 1970s through the 1980s, while on the sports front South African exiles such as Dennis Brutus joined with prominent athletes such as Arthur Ashe to spread the boycott message.

The impact of such campaigns, however, also depended on local activists who year after year brought the message to specific local constituencies. Two such activists were Frank and Patricia Beeman, whose colleagues credit as being the core of Michigan's Southern Africa Liberation Committee (SALC). Founded in 1972, this small group based in East Lansing worked consistently to educate Michigan residents and isolate South Africa until the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990.

The Beemans, who grew up in Michigan and worked there all their lives, never visited Africa during the years they were active with SALC, though Frank Beeman was finally able to visit South Africa in 2001. He was the tennis coach and director of intramural sports at Michigan State University (MSU) from 1947 until his retirement in 1987. As

director of intramural sports, he successfully opposed efforts by apartheid South Africa to get its sports teams invited to universities, and he spearheaded a national effort to block their teams from intramural sports at other U.S. universities. Patricia Beeman was inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame in October 1999 for her anti-apartheid work in Michigan.

As noted in the interview below, Frank and Patricia Beeman were the ones who always showed up with a literature table, posters, and films on South African apartheid and other liberation struggles in Southern Africa. Their message, repeated in dozens of demonstrations and meetings and hundreds of private conversations, was not a political or ideological argument but a moral one: apartheid was wrong, and therefore any collaboration with the apartheid regime was also wrong.

SALC was not large, but its work was a key factor making Michigan one of the earliest states in which universities, cities, and states took specific action to bar economic ties with South Africa and with U.S. companies investing in South Africa. In the mid-1980s, the committee actively cooperated in Detroit with the local TransAfrica chapter, with the Shrine of the Black Madonna (Congregational Church), and with the Coalition for Human Rights. In Grand Rapids they worked with an anti-apartheid committee based in a (Congregational Church), in Ann Arbor with an anti-apartheid student and staff committee, and in Kalamazoo with faculty and students at Western Michigan University.

SALC's efforts first paid off in the passage of the East Lansing Selective Purchasing Resolution in 1977, which prohibited the City of East Lansing from using suppliers that were operating in South Africa. In 1978 SALC successfully campaigned for MSU to divest its stock from companies with subsidiaries in South Africa, making MSU one of the earliest major universities in the United States to take such action.

That same year, an MSU faculty member working with SALC met with Representatives Lynn Jondahl of East Lansing, Virgil Smith of Detroit, and Perry Bullard of Ann Arbor and developed a decade-long plan to seek State of Michigan sanctions on South Africa. They supported a Michigan State Legislature resolution calling for national sanctions against South Africa, and then a series of three sanctions bills for the state of Michigan. The three legislators were joined by others, including Reps. Carolyn Kilpatrick (of Detroit, now a U.S. representative), Nelson Saunders, and Charles Harrison, and Senator Jackie Vaughn, to win passage of the three sanctions acts.

These acts prohibited the state from depositing its funds in banks making loans in South Africa (1979); prohibited state university and college investments in firms operating in South Africa (1982); and divested the \$4 billion state employees' pension fund of any

companies operating in South Africa (1988). After a long series of court battles initiated by the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor to strike down the 1982 divestiture act, the Michigan Supreme Court struck down the act as "unwarranted interference" by the state in the "internal affairs" of the University of Michigan.

At Michigan State University, meanwhile, the faculty of the African Studies Center also voted unanimously to support the United Nations Cultural Boycott of South Africa, probably the only U.S. university African studies faculty to formally support the international boycott and to stay out of South Africa. In 1986, SALC won their demand that the MSU Foundation divest its holdings of stocks of companies operating in South Africa, the same year in which the State of Michigan decided to require state pension funds to divest from South Africa.

In the same year, Michigan Congressman Howard Wolpe, an African specialist PhD who had taught at Western Michigan and Michigan State Universities and who had been actively supported by SALC and the Africanist faculty in East Lansing, cooperated with the Congressional Black Caucus in Washington to pass the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 over President Reagan's veto.

There is still no comprehensive study of the national divestment movement, which targeted universities, churches, and local and state governments with demands to break ties with companies involved in South Africa.[1] While Michigan, with SALC as one of the principal catalysts, was among the states that took the lead, there are scores if not hundreds of potential histories of institution-specific and locally specific campaigns that have not been documented. Richard Knight, who worked for the American Committee on Africa during this period, compiled a list of 28 states, 24 counties, 92 cities, and the Virgin Islands that had imposed such "people's sanctions" as of 1991 (see <http://richardknight.homestead.com/files/aim.htm>).[2]

The SALC papers collected by Patricia and Frank Beeman, consisting of 36 boxes of folders, 104 books, and other materials, were deposited in the Michigan State University archives. An inventory is available online at http://www.lib.msu.edu/coll/main/spec_col/rare/mss/258.htm.

The Michigan divestment campaigns, through 1983, are dealt with extensively in chapter 5 of Janice Love, *The U.S. Anti-Apartheid Movement: Local Activism in Global Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1985), 161-224. The book also contains a case study of the divestment campaign in Connecticut in the same period.

The interview below with Frank Beeman was conducted by MSU African Studies Centerdirector David Wiley and MSU Africana librarian Peter Limb. It includes significant background information provided by Wiley, who was also a key activist involved in SALC and the divestment campaigns after he arrived at MSU in 1977 from his previous position at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Wiley and Limb are planning interviews with other SALC participants that will be housed in an audio collection at the MSU library.

William Minter
September 2004

Transcript

Interviewee: Frank Beeman
Interviewers: David Wiley and Peter Limb
Location: East Lansing, Michigan, USA

Date: December 12, 2003

WILEY: This morning we have the opportunity to interview Harris Frank Beeman, about the work of Frank and his wife, Patricia, at Michigan State University on Southern Africa issues. And interviewing him will be myself, David Wiley, director of the African Studies Center and professor of Sociology, and Peter Limb, Africana librarian and historian, MSU. We want to focus on the Africa issues, but we also want Frank Beeman to tell about his work at MSU in his history here as he became MSU's tennis coach, and his work as a director of Intramural Sports and Recreative Services at Michigan State.

Colleagues have told me that Frank really is one of the founders of " democratic sport" in intramural sports in the United States. A colleague in New Orleans told me that. But Frank and his wife were known as two of the core members of the efforts at Michigan State to focus on justice and democracy issues in Southern Africa, from the 1970s to the 1990s. So Frank, we would like you to tell us more about how you became involved in this effort and to recall various developments in the anti-apartheid work at Michigan State.

Let's first begin with some personal history. When did you actually come to MSU?

BEEMAN: Well, I came as a freshman in 1939. And graduated from Michigan State and went in the service and came back and started as an intramural director and tennis coach in 1947. And we got involved in civil rights, partially because of Pat's brother, who was an Episcopal priest who went to Africa and taught in Africa.[3] and so forth and gave us the straight scoop on what was happening there. And so we got involved, figured that that wasn't right, that our country shouldn't be involved that way. And then our actual first encounter was the meeting of SALC over in the East Lansing Library.

WILEY: Frank, are you a Michiganiaan, did you grow up in Michigan?

BEEMAN: Yes, I grew up in Royal Oak, Michigan, which is a suburb of Detroit.

WILEY: And your wife, Patricia, who's sadly no longer with us, was she also from the same area?

BEEMAN: No, she wasn't from that area. She was from Ionia, Michigan. Her family had moved from New York to Ionia, and then she came to Michigan State and that's where we met.

WILEY: Where were you in the service in World War II?

BEEMAN: I was in France and Germany.

WILEY: In the army?

BEEMAN: I was the athletic officer of the 508 Parachute Infantry Regiment. And in fact, that's where I learned a lot of the things that I used as a director of intramurals, because I ran the intramural program, so-called, there.

WILEY: You seem to have come to MSU with a great deal of concern about racial injustice and the righting of wrongs, of prejudice and discrimination. Did that have an origin in your earlier years, either in high school or at Michigan State or in the army?

BEEMAN: It must have started from the beginning. My parents were both teachers. My dad was an athletic director in Detroit and my mother taught fourth grade. And somewhere along that line, I was inculcated with the idea of right and wrong. Actually it was interesting because there were no African Americans in my school district that I went to and so forth. And [when I] went down to play Pontiac, it was quite a shock to see black faces. But it just grew out of somewhere that [segregation] is not right.

WILEY: So your parents had a strong concern about social rights and wrongs, and so on.

BEEMAN: Right. That's right.

WILEY: And you must have seen a lot of discrimination in the industrial triangle, where so many African Americans and, actually, Appalachian whites had come up during World War II to work in the defense plants—over in Pontiac and Saginaw, and Detroit area.

BEEMAN: That's right. Yes, it must have been those children that I went to school with.

WILEY: Right. Patsy also had a strong concern about that. Were her parents also strongly focused upon issues?

BEEMAN: Yes, they were. Her father used to work with the Mexican laborers that came up and worked in the fields up in Ionia. And he spoke Spanish and so he was kind of a go-between between the farmers and the workers. And so that had an impact, too, an impact on both of us actually.

WILEY: Were either of you involved in any of the civil rights activities after World War II, in the '50s and '60s?

BEEMAN: Well, we got involved with a program called STEP, Student Teacher Education Program. And a group of students, in fact from Michigan State, met and went down to Rust College in Holly Springs, Mississippi. And that started because Bob Green had been down through there and had been involved in voter rights and so forth.

WILEY: Bob Green is the former dean of urban affairs at Michigan State and former president of the University of the District of Columbia. And before that, I guess, one of Martin Luther King's lieutenants, right?

BEEMAN: That's right. Yes. And he was on the march while we were down there. I took about a half a dozen students and taught in the school. We integrated the pool that was there. There were two pools, a white pool and a black pool. And we integrated the black pool and taught swimming and things like that. And then the Meredith March^[4] occurred during that period of time and we joined that march at Tuskegee and marched all the way to Jackson. As we turned the corner in the neighborhood, we saw the Capitol and the Capitol was ringed by soldiers in at-ease position with their shotguns. And so we marched up to the Capitol and Bob Green and other people spoke and so forth. It was quite an adventure.

WILEY: All right, so when you came back from that adventure in the South, did that translate into activity here at Michigan State?

BEEMAN: Yes, we were involved in a number of demonstrations for voter rights and for—actually, at that time, East Lansing had a [housing] covenant and they wouldn't allow any Native American or nonwhite people to move in. So our daughter and 46 other students sat in front of the police station and blocked the traffic in East Lansing.

WILEY: When was this approximately?

BEEMAN: Oh boy, I'm not good on dates any more.

WILEY: But in the early '60s, perhaps?

BEEMAN: Right. Bob Green had talked at the [student] union [building], gave a speech at the union and then he left for Chicago. But the kids then said, to the streets, and they left the union and ran and went into the streets. And Bob was gone, so there was no leadership there. We tried to convince the students, well, you've made your point now, you can go, because the police said, we'll give you three more minutes and then we'll arrest you. Well, they all wanted to get arrested [laughter].

WILEY: And Bob Green himself had been turned down from buying a house in East Lansing, I believe, when he moved here, because he was a person of color.

BEEMAN: That's right. Yes.

WILEY: So was there an organization here at Michigan State or in the community that channeled this concern?

BEEMAN: No, there really wasn't at that time. It was just the beginning and I'm trying to think what connection that had with SALC later on.

WILEY: So the Southern Africa Liberation Committee began, I guess, in approximately 1972, is that right? A committee of faculty and students here at Michigan State and some people from the community as well?

BEEMAN: Right, yes. SALC was always a combination of students and faculty and community people.

WILEY: Right, but how did all that get started? I mean, how did you bridge over from this period of civil rights interest in the '50s and '60s into SALC. I guess there had been many anti-Vietnam War protests here on campus there in the late '60s, and '70s, '71, '72, but then we see the birth of SALC in '72. Do you have memories of how all that emerged?

BEEMAN: Well, I'm not quite sure. We did hear about the meeting that was being held and that was the first contact we had with any of the SALC people, yourself and Bill [Derman] and other people. And it just seemed to be a natural shift from the civil rights to apartheid.

WILEY: Do you remember who convened that first meeting of the Southern Africa Liberation Committee, because some of it was related to the United Ministries in Higher Education, I believe, in which Warren Day,[5] Lynn Jondahl,[6] and John Duley were the pastors at the University Methodist Church, I believe. And then out of that also was emerging the Peace Education Center, and so there was some association of all of that.

BEEMAN: Yes, there was. A number of people were in both organizations, the Peace Education Center and SALC. Well, I had thought that you had convened that meeting as a matter of fact.

WILEY: I wasn't here at Michigan State yet, until '77. So I think that other people that I remember were said to be involved were especially William Derman, now professor of anthropology at Michigan State, and Carol Thompson, who is now a professor of political science at Northern Arizona State University, but who at that time was a graduate student in political science here. And I don't know if there are other people that that come to mind besides yourself.

BEEMAN: There were a number of other people. I'm trying to think who they were besides yourself. There was Maggie Ethebridge Versino, who was a student, and Pat Costa was a student. Mike Bratton and [Anne] Schneller[7] also were—

WILEY: And they came in '78, right?

BEEMAN: Right.

WILEY: So, what led you to go to join with the Southern Africa Liberation Committee? You and Patricia became the organizational core of SALC in those days, keeping things moving and going when other people were busy.

BEEMAN: Well, I think that partly it was, again, from Pat's brother, Rick Houghton, who was actually in South Africa and in Namibia and kept us informed on how unjust things were.

WILEY: And he was a clergyman in the Episcopal Church in the United States, right?

BEEMAN: Right.

WILEY: He was also here in Michigan.

BEEMAN: Yes.

WILEY: But he had been gone to Namibia for the Episcopal Church, is that right?

BEEMAN: Right, yes.

WILEY: In Namibia, or as the South Africans called it, South West Africa. But then he was asked to leave by the authorities?

BEEMAN: He was the last white clergyman out of Namibia at that time. And then when he left there wasn't anybody left there.

WILEY: This was in the early 1970s that he was—

BEEMAN: Right.

WILEY: So this led both of you to have a heightened concern about apartheid.

BEEMAN: Well, we knew the information we were getting was straight because it was coming from Rick and we can believe him. And so we just followed from there.

WILEY: So what were some of your early activities in SALC, in the '70s?

BEEMAN: Well, one of the constant things was the leafleting and in effect picketing of Wharton Center [for Performing Arts].

WILEY: Which emerged later, right?

BEEMAN: Any event that was on, the general rule was that if three people would show up then we would stay there and leaflet and hand out information, and so forth. The idea

behind SALC, too, was that people would do what was right if they knew the truth, if they knew what was actually happening. And so most of this stuff that we put out was informative and educational.

WILEY: So you emphasized that a great deal in your work with SALC. You and Patricia, as I remember in the '70s and '80s, always had a literature table outside of any film, or any occasion concerning Southern Africa, with materials from the International Defense and Aid Fund (IDAF) in London, and from the American Committee on Africa in New York.[8] And showed a lot of films.

BEEMAN: A lot of films.

WILEY: And had these very large boards with pictures on them. These were about four-by-eight-foot sheets of—

BEEMAN: Oh, they were six by eight feet.

WILEY: Six by eight feet?

BEEMAN: Yes, and we would take the pictures that we got from the IDAF and make a story of them and then at each end of the display were cards addressed to legislators or what it was appropriate for people to take and mail. How many of those we got through, I don't know, but they always were out when we would check it out.

WILEY: You always had postcards, postage-paid postcards, with people ready to send their opinions.

BEEMAN: The idea was to educate people, inform people and get them to do something.

LIMB: So Frank, how did you link up with IDAF and other people for these materials? Did you write to them? How did you network in those days?

BEEMAN: I'm trying to think of the Englishman, the man that had that idea— —

LIMB: Canon Collins.

WILEY: Canon Collins was the coordinator of the International Defense and Aid Fund.

BEEMAN: It was someone else. I don't remember his name at this time.

WILEY: But you had your materials from the American Committee on Africa and the Africa Fund and later from the Washington Office on Africa, I guess that was.

BEEMAN: Right, you get all information and from—

WILEY: There were channels of these materials.

BEEMAN: Also from you, you were our source here [laughter].

WILEY: The Southern Africa Liberation Committee actually focused originally, I remember, on some material aid support for some of the refugees and the liberation movements in Southern Africa. And there were Zimbabweans and South Africans who asked, we need to help people with clothing, with dried foods and so on. So you were involved in those campaigns, too, to raise support for South Africans who needed to help people with clothing, with dried foods and so on. You were involved in those campaigns, too, to raise support for them?

BEEMAN: Yes, we sent books and later once we also sent tennis rackets and tennis balls.

WILEY: I see, out of your sports connection. All right. Well, let me take a little diversion just for a second. As I said, I was told by someone in New Orleans, well, you're at that university where the father of democratic sport in America worked, tennis coach, director of intramural sports, Frank Beeman. How did that reputation of yours get established, nationally?

BEEMAN: Well, it was kind of interesting, because generally, jocks weren't so much involved in civil rights and things at whatever level, whether professional or whether they were college people. And so we kind of stood out, because we were straight and that really came in handy. When I would say it as a coach, people would stop and think about it, at least other coaches would, and wonder about what was all this activity. And so that kind of became known that we were interested in this sort of thing and maybe there must be something to this if Beeman is saying it.

WILEY: I see. On the Southern Africa issues.

BEEMAN: Yes.

WILEY: What was your vision about the use of sports on campus?

BEEMAN: Well, one of the things that I was involved in was, South Africa was working very hard to bring over sports teams, to show that they were all okay, they're just like everybody else.[9] And so they contacted the universities and intramural directors and said, can we come and play your rugby team? Or your volleyball team or your soccer team? To give them status. And so we sent out oh, 2,500 or so letters to intramural directors throughout the country and at the national meetings indicating that it was not the thing to do, to let South Africa bring teams and play and so forth. And so that became quite a movement in terms of South Africa not being brought up as if they were just a bunch of good guys because they're athletes.

WILEY: Right, and that emerged into a movement in the United States of sports boycott, I guess, of South Africa, as it had in the Commonwealth.

LIMB: How did that play out here in Lansing, in Michigan State? I mean, this was a time, I remember, Arthur Ashe was prominent, and as you've outlined it, the South African government tried to send these rebel teams to break sanctions in different countries. So was the sport issue important here? Did students and faculty and members of the public get interested in this?

BEEMAN: I don't know how much they did. I don't know really how much the students were aware, because since we didn't cooperate with South Africa, they were never a presence here and so I don't know what the thing was. But Arthur Ashe and— now who was the Jamaican singer?

WILEY: Harry Belafonte.[10]

BEEMAN: —Harry Belafonte started a Sports against Apartheid national movement and sent us materials that we could use here also, as well as throughout the country. And in fact, Arthur Ashe refused the invitation to go and play in tournaments [in South Africa], which became known, too.

WILEY: But you were doing that among the intramurals. Were you the person who started the letters to the intramural directors around the country?

BEEMAN: Yes, yes. They originated here, actually, yes.

WILEY: I see. Well, that's interesting history. One of the first things that SALC focused on after the material support for Southern Africans was trying to get the East Lansing City Council to do something in the late 1970s, '77-'78. Do you have some memories of that campaign?

BEEMAN: Yes, that was the first thing starting at the grassroots and trying to get the council to pass a selective purchasing agreement, which means that they would not buy cars, for example, because Ford and Chrysler and GM were all involved in that.

WILEY: They were in South Africa, producing vehicles for them

BEEMAN: Right, and so they did pass that selective purchasing agreement. That was the first action. The thought was that you worked with your community, you work with your university, you work with the state, you work with the nation and it was progressive. Each step, bills were passed. The thought was we should make our community, our university, our state as good as they can be and they can't be very good if they're involved in supporting apartheid.[11]

WILEY: So at that time, it was the economic boycott of South Africa and turning off U.S. technology and investment support.

BEEMAN: Right.

WILEY: That was the goal.

BEEMAN: Well, and the thing is that people generally, and we also in the beginning, thought that if GM goes into a country, they're going to help that country, because it will bring jobs and skills and so forth, not realizing that if you go into South Africa, it doesn't help the people at all. It just helps the white government.

LIMB: On this question of boycotts and goods, did SALC have any grassroots campaigns against, say, supermarkets or chains that stocked South African goods? I remember in Australia and other countries, there were protests about South African fish and wool and various goods. Did that happen here as well?

BEEMAN: It happened in the Coke boycott. We got several student organizations and the dormitories to go along with the idea that they shouldn't make Coke available, because that just meant more money for apartheid and so forth. And so that was a pretty successful campaign and the students would go from dorm to dorm and generally Pat and I were with them and they would make speeches and talk about it. And again, spreading information about why we shouldn't do this.

LIMB: I know it was something very practical that the students could do and I guess they switched to Pepsi or something like that [laughter].

WILEY: Well, the entire thing with Coca-Cola, they had stayed in South Africa. Pepsi had never gotten there, so that made the choice easy. In fact, Pepsi still is having trouble getting into South Africa in the 1990s, when they tried to go back with Whitney Houston as their representative. But Coke was also deeply involved with some of the civil rights and the Martin Luther King family in Atlanta, the Coke headquarters, right? So it was a difficult target. And I actually remember that the seniors of SALC, including myself, counseled the students that do you really want to take on the Coca-Cola behemoth, because it is so large and so powerful and so linked with African American grants and communities and so on. But the students went ahead anyway.

BEEMAN: Well, it was interesting, because there would be quite a number of students at each of these meetings, when the students would make arrangements to come and talk and bring information. And so it made an awful lot of students aware of the whole situation, which they weren't before. How many students were involved with South Africa? Well, this brought it right down to their level.

LIMB: I'm sure this whole process was complex and involved a lot of work from you and other colleagues in SALC. This winning people over, the arguing, the presenting of information through your booths and things. How did this play out then within SALC? Did you have branches, did you have a branch structure, different groups of SALC? Were there particular questions that were acrimonious—like you mentioned the involvement of Coke in African American communities. Did some issues stand out as particularly difficult to convince people on?

BEEMAN: Well, I don't remember any—we didn't have branches, for example. It was interesting. When you stop and think about it, SALC generally generated at these weekly meetings that we had, probably six to 10 people really. But it became evident that with persistence, and constantly bringing this to the fore and getting the State News [MSU student newspaper] to cover things, that the word was going out. One of the things that we had was a shanty that we built out in front of the administration building, trying to get the MSU Foundation to divest. Students would come by and we had stickers that were cut out, with "No to Apartheid" and "Support Mandela" and this kind of thing. And during the weeks of that shanty being up, in the winter time, practically every student had a sticker on his backpack or someplace that they could stop by and we could hand them out and so forth. So that became quite widespread.

I remember when we actually got the news that McGoff was off and the divestiture was going forward.[12] After the shanty, we had brought a coffin and put it out in front of the steps here, which said "Protect the People of South Africa" and so forth. I remember that

the vice president for finance called me up and said, okay, they've done it. Now get that coffin out of my front yard [laughter].

LIMB: So this was a really significant symbolic action then and one that the students could relate to—that whole popular theater thing.

WILEY: The shantytown was actually built right here on the banks of the Red Cedar [River], right across from the MSU computer center, near Wells Hall. Did you help with the building of the shantytown?

BEEMAN: No, that really wasn't tied in to the group.

WILEY: Well, it was a protest against, because Michigan State had divested its stockholdings in 1978, but then MSU Foundation had not divested until the mid-'80s. So this must have been '85, '86, that period when the shantytown was built to reflect the Crossroads community and the displacement of South Africans of color in the country.

LIMB: So that was an independent action by the students?

BEEMAN: Yes, right.

LIMB: That's why I asked earlier about whether there were branches of SALC, because it seems to me that SALC must have had a great impact as it seems to have been the main or the only anti-apartheid organization. But here's a case of the students perhaps taking their inspiration from SALC and going ahead. So you supported the shantytown?

BEEMAN: Yes, we supported it. I don't think that we actually had a table at that particular—

WILEY: It was in the dead of winter, as I remember. It was very, very cold. And the shanties were sometimes being torn down by right-wing students opposed to that protest, right.

LIMB: What opposition did you get from the right wing? I mean, I presume there were heated arguments and you also mentioned this person, is it Goff?

WILEY: McGoff, yes. We'll come back to Mr. McGoff in just a moment, yes.

LIMB: OK, sorry. So what extent was there opposition?

BEEMAN: Well, what it was generally would be a student would come up at one of these tables of information where we had books and things that we would sell and pass out, and students would come up and argue. And of course, I found that the best argument we had was to say well, do you believe in the Constitution of the United States? Well, of course they did. Well, if you believe that, then you can't speak out against this sort of thing.

WILEY: Let's go back to a little bit of the earlier history before we leave it. One of the more significant things that you had a major hand in, Frank, was the decision of the Michigan State University Board of Trustees, in 1977, '77-78. There was a long process there, to sell off Michigan State stockholdings in companies that remained invested in apartheid South Africa. How did that campaign develop?

BEEMAN: Well, part of that was the idea that we would have a representative at every meeting on the campus, whether it was the trustees or the faculty group and so forth. We would have a representative there to speak on [the divestment proposal], so that it was constantly kept in front of their noses, actually. I can remember, in one of the trustee meetings one of the trustees said, well, if we use the word slavery, they'd know what we were talking about. As you mentioned before, with Trustee Radcliffe and Trustee Martin and so forth, we had a lot of support there.[13] But there was nothing that was held on campus that we didn't have a representative at, whatever it was. So it was constantly in front of them and I'm sure it must have had some effect on some of their individual activities.

WILEY: The student organizations made some inputs on that, right? The ASMSU [Associated Students of Michigan State University, representing undergraduates]— —

BEEMAN: The ASMSU—

WILEY: —and the Council of Graduate Students, COGS. They both— —I mean, the divestiture proposal was referred to the Faculty Committee on Academic Environment.

BEEMAN: That's right.

WILEY: That was to make a recommendation.

BEEMAN: Right and they met—this took about a year's time, as I recall. One interesting thing that we had prepared was a green book folder with a lot of information, it must have been 20 pages. When the trustees were having one meeting, we would go there early and put one at each of their places. And so they thought that that was part of the official documents that they were supposed to talk about that day [laughter].

WILEY: But two of the key movers on the MSU Board of Trustees, then, were Aubrey Radcliffe, a Republican and also an African American teacher in the Lansing area, and Blanche Martin, who was a Democratic representative, an elected representative, also African American. Did you feel you had strong support from them in the '70s?

BEEMAN: Oh, yes, we did have very, very good, very verbal, commitments and so forth.

WILEY: And Radcliffe actually made the motion for MSU divestiture in the Board?

BEEMAN: Yes, it was Radcliffe, that's right.

WILEY: And I guess later he says he paid a political price for doing that.

BEEMAN: Yes, he felt that, because he didn't get reelected the next time around.

WILEY: And he felt the [Republican] party was not supportive of his having done that. So were you surprised when MSU took that action?

BEEMAN: Well, yes. I guess I was, or we were. Although of course, we felt that they couldn't not, when they had the information, if they believed it, on what actually the support was when the company was in South Africa.

WILEY: What about the MSU administration? Did you have their support in that with President Clifton Wharton at that time?

BEEMAN: Yes, yes, he was also—then when President DiBiaggio— —In fact, one of the pamphlets we have shows a picture of him on Apartheid Day getting an armband from Debbie Miller, who was president of SALC at that time. And he'd also come out and looked at the shanty and talked with the students at the time.

WILEY: I've heard a rumor, Frank, that you used your tennis coach position to lobby the MSU presidents on their position on the Southern Africa issues. Is that true?

BEEMAN: Well, generally, yes. There wasn't any pitched discussion but they knew how I felt. And occasionally, because both of them were tennis players and I would be playing with them and discussing that kind of thing. So it was—

WILEY: So was that Clifton Wharton as well?

BEEMAN: No, that was with John DiBiaggio.

WILEY: John DiBiaggio and then Cecil Mackey as well, perhaps?

BEEMAN: No, he was after that. I was trying to think who the connection was that played with us. It was a Stan Drobac who was then the tennis coach, who had followed me, and the—I can't bring to mind the person that was involved at the time.

WILEY: But so MSU does pass this bill in the Board of Trustees and becomes the first university to divest South African stocks in the nation. And that becomes a significant movement, then, later in the '70s and '80s, across the nation, as others follow suit.

BEEMAN: Well, you know what was interesting, is we could make the point very well from newspaper clippings and other information ... One of the arguments that the opponents used, was well it will cost us money if we change and we restrict our portfolio, it's going to cost the university money. It turns out that the university made more money on their investments after they divested.

WILEY: Right. I believe that their Ann Arbor investment firm had been heavily invested in large capital stockholdings and by switching, they ended up at the time, happened to invest in small cap stocks and their value went up on the stock exchange. So as you say it did not cost MSU anything. Were you in touch at all with the efforts at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor in this direction?

BEEMAN: Well, yes, having graduated both from Michigan State and [University of] Michigan, I felt that I had a vested interest and so I spoke at one of their trustee meetings that they had when they were considering it. And the University of Michigan was fighting it all the way, saying that they were independent, autonomous, and they didn't have to do what the state did and so forth. And so I did speak to the trustees and handed them information also.

WILEY: The State of Michigan then got involved, and I guess the first bill was the so-called banking bill in 1979. This was a bill that said that the surplus funds of the State of Michigan—ironic in these hard-pinned times—which were the current accounts funds that were held in banks, could not be deposited in banks that were making loans to South Africa or people who were investing in South Africa. And were you involved in the run-up to that decision in the state legislature?

BEEMAN: Yes, again, we met with Perry Bullard, we met with Virgil Smith.[14]

WILEY: Virgil Smith, who later became senator, but at that time was a representative and an attorney.

BEEMAN: So we had met with them. In fact one time we had a meeting with the Ford Motor Company lawyers in Bullard's office, and they were trying to defend their position and so forth for staying there [in South Africa].

WILEY: There's a number of official hearings and I believe you had your literature and your information tables and your—

BEEMAN: Yes, right, we got permission to put the tables up in the Capitol building, when they're having those things, so the senators had to go by it to get in and out. So that helped, I think.

WILEY: And you even showed films for the representatives and senators and their staffs.

BEEMAN: That's right, yes.

WILEY: Do you remember what films were especially important?

BEEMAN: Well, one was Last Grave at Dimbaza, which we used a lot of places. In fact, I used it in one of my classes, stretching a little bit the core material. But as one of our activities, we had every other Friday night, a new showing. These were the advertisements for the film.

WILEY: Posters—Friday night horror movies, you called them, on South Africa.

BEEMAN: Right.

WILEY: And got pretty good turnouts at those meetings on campus?

BEEMAN: Yes, good, yes. And again, we would have cards [preaddressed stamped postcards] there to senators and to congressmen and officials that people could send.

WILEY: Right. So the banking bill gets passed and then a year or two later, the state legislature passes the higher education sanctions bill, right, that requires all the Michigan state colleges and universities, some 35 or so, to follow Michigan State's suit and divest of stockholdings and so on. Did you have much interaction with the other campuses in regard to that bill?

BEEMAN: Yes, we did. In fact, we had the mails that we had generated through you and other Africanists, we would send throughout the country as a matter of fact. When Northern Michigan, I remember, California schools, who had groups and wanted information, we would send them out a packet.

WILEY: And lots of information. And then finally you have in the mid-'80s, the MSU Foundation divestiture and that was successful in the end after the shanty campaign and the SALC information efforts there. And then all that leads, I guess, in many ways, to 1986, where you've got both the State of Michigan Banking Bill divestiture, which I think is some \$3 or \$4 billion of state pension fund divestiture of stocks and commitment to do that. And at the same time, the MSU Foundation decides to divest as well, to follow the Michigan State University Board of Trustees policy. Is that correct?

BEEMAN: Was that the pension fund?

WILEY: The pension fund is 1986. I think the same year as in Washington, the comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986, supported by the Congressional Black Caucus, an organization started by Michigan's Charles Diggs of Detroit. And by Representative Howard Wolpe, PhD African studies, representing Bower Creek, Kalamazoo, and later, Lansing. But together those worked toward the national action, the Anti-Apartheid Act of '86, which then actually overcomes President Reagan's veto of that. So that '80s period was a period of great ferment and great activity for you and for SALC, was that correct?

BEEMAN: Yes, that's right.

WILEY: I guess among the more colorful campaigns at Michigan State, in the middle of all that, was in 1984, the so-called McGoff Off campaign. Can you share with us who Mr. McGoff was and what the genesis of that campaign was?

BEEMAN: Well, Mr. McGoff at that time owned about half a dozen or so newspapers.

WILEY: Here in Michigan, right?

BEEMAN: Right. And it became known that he would instruct his editors not to print anti-apartheid information and only have information supposedly supporting it. And the crux came when he appeared before the South African Parliament and made some statements saying that it was a great institution and it's a great country and supporting South Africa and so forth. And so, what brought it to a head was then he and his wife

donated \$100,000 to [MSU's] Wharton Center for the small stage that was there.[15]
There were two stages, a large stage and a small stage.

WILEY: What was called the festival stage.

BEEMAN: Right. And then one time when they were having a program that we were outside picketing, Mrs. McGoff came out to discuss things with us and there was WINS [Lansing, Michigan television station], I think, there was a reporter there with a camera. And she's saying, well, those people are not like our people. They enjoy living as they are living. Well, these statements made a great—

WILEY: Referring to South Africans?

BEEMAN: Referring to South Africans.

WILEY: South Africans of color were enjoying their apartheid situation.

BEEMAN: Right, and so then in the middle of that her husband came out and took her by the arm and brought her back into the auditorium. Wharton, who was then in [New York], wrote a column, two-column article on the fact that we should get out of South Africa. And that finally clinched the whole thing there as far as the McGoffs were concerned.

WILEY: Yes, Wharton had left MSU to become the chancellor of the New York state university system, the SUNY system. And then he became the head of TIAA-CREF, the retirement company for many faculty in the United States. And he made that statement then which helped move that along.

BEEMAN: Yes, it did.

WILEY: Mr. McGoff, I guess, was also involved with South Africans in trying to seek a presence for South Africans in a newspaper in the United States as well?

BEEMAN: Well, yes, and the other thing that got involved is he was being investigated by South Africa because some \$4 million had gone astray somewhere along the line. They couldn't account for it.

LIMB: This was the Muldergate scandal, isn't it?

BEEMAN: Yes, Muldergate, right.

WILEY: Which then led the South African government to publish a white paper which told the whole story of how the money had been passed to Mr. McGoff to purchase a newspaper. I think they then bought a newspaper in Sacramento, California, in Reagan's [state], that cost less than the \$10 million that had been passed to him to do this. They wanted the Washington Star, which today is the Washington Times, as a pro-apartheid voice in Washington in the policy debate.

BEEMAN: That's right, yes.

WILEY: All during that period as well, I mean, the South Africans were making very large efforts to influence Americans on policy. Did you see evidence of them here in Michigan?

BEEMAN: Well, that was one of the efforts of this sports thing, that they tried to do, is they tried to send over teams of various sports and so forth to play on the campuses. And that was one of the efforts that they made.

WILEY: Right. I think someone estimated that they may have been spending in the heyday of the '80s, when the tipping point had not yet been reached in the decision to release Mandela, the U.S. Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act had not been passed. And so there was a feeling that the U.S. might still be won over. And so they may have been spending as much as \$1 million a year, just on Michigan, for trips of legislators and newspaper editors and influentials in the companies and so on in order to influence Michigan policy, even with information kits out in the schools, right, on the " happy Bantu."

BEEMAN: That's right. Posters, that's right. Posters supporting that kind of thing.

WILEY: So did you ever have encounters with any of the South African visitors here in that period?

BEEMAN: Well, no, I never did. One, because we didn't let them come on campus from the sports end, and I don't know from the other, but I remember calling the State Journal [Lansing, Michigan newspaper] reporter who was covering the McGoff situation. She said, well, I shouldn't say this, but the trustees are going to have the McGoff name removed from the festival stage. And so then I called one of the trustees and talked with them and they said, well, it was a very hard decision, but we gave them their money back.

WILEY: So that was a long-term victory for the Southern Africa Liberation Committee.

BEEMAN: And the next day, if you noticed, if you've ever been in the auditorium, by the festival stage, there's an aluminum plaque and it had envisioned to have Mrs. McGoff's name on it. The next day, that plaque was removed.

WILEY: So what happened with all this now. The McGoff Off campaign wins. Michigan State is divested. The state of Michigan passes bills, three bills, more than any other state legislature. The nation passes the comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 and we're only just a few years from Mandela then being released, culminating in the 1994 elections that brought democracy to South Africa. What was happening with SALC and all this, with its reason for existing being taken away—

BEEMAN: Yes it was.

WILEY: —by the collapse of apartheid?

BEEMAN: Yes, it was gone, and actually at that time, too, I had been the faculty adviser for SALC at that point. Of course my wife Pat, from the community, was kind of the leader. We just simply didn't have to do the things that we had been doing for several years, movies and meetings and so forth.

WILEY: So there was kind of a gradual tailing down of the information.

BEEMAN: Yes, SALC had always been under the umbrella of the Peace Education Center and they were able to supply materials and things like that and put posters up. And so then generally that activity did go to the Peace Education Center—if there was ever anything going on there.

WILEY: And you also made an effort then to see that the records of SALC and so on were deposited with the MSU special collections in the American radicalism section so that one can find all the records there, right?

BEEMAN: Right, that was very, very nice of them to do that because all of the materials and things had been stored in my garage, which people didn't get to see very often.

LIMB: And that collection is now being fully catalogued and we've had the pleasure on a number of occasions to show it to visiting South Africans, including Andre Odendaal from the Mayibuye Centre.[16] And I'd been delighted to see such a treasure house of anti-apartheid materials.

I'm wondering, Frank, with your interest in sport and tennis, and given the changes in South Africa and liberation in '94, did you have any views and experiences on sport in the new South Africa?

BEEMAN: Well, I was very fortunate. I forget the year now, they held the International Tennis Championships in South Africa and so I thought this is a good excuse and an opportunity for me. So I went there and played in that tournament and also visited with one of the graduate students, Kgati Sathekge,[17] who we had helped with tuition and things like that here at Michigan State. I stayed with him and toured a great deal of South Africa. And it was very interesting: there was really only one nonwhite player in that tournament, Nehemiah Johnson, who was an African American from the South who was a very good player and he was in the tournament. So I had a chance to meet a lot of international players and also visit places in South Africa.

WILEY: What was your feeling about South Africa, having worked on it for 20 or 30 years and suddenly you're seeing that in the post-Mandela period—what were your impressions of that?

BEEMAN: Well, it was interesting. Conditions weren't a lot different, I don't think, as far as people's daily lives. Every corner that you went by, practically, in the country, there was somebody on a corner selling fruit or so forth to make a little money. One thing that bothered me a little bit was in the hotel that we stayed at, in the lobby, there were always several young black men basically who would greet you very much, yes, sir, no, sir, this kind of thing. That bothered me a little bit. They were all dressed in suits and things like that but it still put it on the basis of the old master kind of thing. That was a noticeable thing.

LIMB: If we can go back just for a minute, you mentioned Ford and the auto industry. I'm just wondering how SALC managed to perhaps work with the labor unions, and what sort of involvement there was from the other side of Lansing—if we go away from East Lansing for a while, of course, it's the center of the auto industry. Did the anti-apartheid movement manage to link up with labor unions? Because this was also a big issue in the '70s and '80s—the super-exploitation of black labor in South Africa.

BEEMAN: Yes, the unions that were involved all supported the activity. I can't think of any specific instance but the unions were definitely in favor of anti-apartheid activity. I remember the time we met with the Ford lawyers in Perry Bullard's office. They were quite surprised that the information we had pointed out how Ford's activities in South Africa aided South Africa and not South Africans, which was a difference here.

WILEY: I believe SALC was involved as well with the United Mine Workers in their campaign out of Ohio—I believe their headquarters was in Cleveland—for a boycott of Shell Oil Company because of its presence in South Africa and especially its work in the homelands, the Transkei especially. There was a support of that Mine Workers boycott, right? And there was a boycott of Shell service stations everywhere that SALC supported as a part of the union campaign. I think also a few people from SALC made presentations to the United Auto Workers at their headquarters in Detroit, as well, to try to bring them on the side of the sanctions as well.

BEEMAN: I do think that the actions of SALC basically did educate and inform an awful lot of people during that period of time about South Africa and the connections and why it wasn't good to be there.

LIMB: What coverage did you get in all your activities from the media? You mentioned the State News earlier. What about television and radio? Did they come and cover your protests and did you manage to get on—did some members get on TV and radio?

BEEMAN: Well, this one instance I mentioned earlier, out in front of the Wharton Center, was covered by the television people. And also the shanty that we had built out in front of the administration building, that was covered. Basically the media supported the activities, as I recall, in editorials and discussions.

LIMB: What about marches and rallies? Did you have any anti-apartheid marches?

BEEMAN: Oh, yes, we had a number of them. So many I can't remember.

WILEY: One of the key ones, I think, was when SALC joined in the Hands around the Capitol demonstration—

BEEMAN: Exactly.

WILEY: —downtown, when the Michigan Capitol Building was completely surrounded by—

BEEMAN: Completely surrounded..

WILEY: —by people wanting the passage of the Pension Divestiture Bill of 1985-86. SALC and others appealed to the TransAfrica chapter in Detroit to come up with support. And I remember there were several busloads of people from the Shrine of the Black

Madonna in Detroit that came and joined SALC and others in this, that completely surrounded the Capitol.

BEEMAN: Completely surrounded. There was no spot where there wasn't somebody holding hands or somebody on either side all the way around. Right.

WILEY: The untold story is that in my garage today are my tomato ties—two-foot- long strips of cloth to tie up my tomato plants—that were held in reserve in case we didn't have enough people to surround the Capitol that we could hold on to [laughter].

LIMB: Must have been a great moment. What about South Africans themselves? Were there black South Africans or other South Africans here in Michigan who got involved, maybe in a later stage or even earlier? Or, for that matter, African students at MSU?

BEEMAN: Well, I can remember some on both sides. I can remember some South Africans coming up and saying, well, this is all propaganda and it wasn't like that, and so forth. And on the other side we would have South African students who would applaud us and support us. So there were both sides of it. Again, the best argument we had was the [U.S.] Constitution. Of course, you couldn't use [that argument] in South Africa because their constitution specifically said that whites were better than blacks.

WILEY: And I believe SALC sponsored some South African and Zimbabwean and Namibian speakers to come to talk about the situation.

BEEMAN: SWAPO. [18]

LIMB: That's interesting, the Namibian angle, because earlier you mentioned that your direct source initially was Rick [Houghton], who'd been a clergyman in Namibia. Did anything specific develop around Namibia? I presume on your information stores you had stuff from SWAPO or the U.N. on Namibia. Were there any interesting developments in that regard?

BEEMAN: No. I was trying to think of the connection with SWAPO and the other organizations, but I can't think of anything that occurred after that or specifically. Actually, Rick, I remember now, was at Odibo, yeah, St. Mary's Church in Odibo. He was the last white clergyman out of there.

WILEY: I think it's fair to say that SALC's heavy focus was initially on Zimbabwe, and so there was support of the Rhodesian chrome sanctions in the Congress. And there were a lot of visitors from ZANU and ZAPU[19] that came to speak to campus, and there

were a number of Zimbabweans here, people who worked in Southern Rhodesia, as it was called before. So there was kind of a focus first of all on Zimbabwe, but then mostly on South Africa. Is that fair?

BEEMAN: I think so. In fact, originally in '72 when SALC got started they were concerned with all the African countries over there, not just South Africa or Namibia.

LIMB: Did you ever have an office or would SALC run out of your respective homes?

BEEMAN: Yeah, and Dave Wiley's office [laughter]. No, we never did have an office, a place. We had our house basically where materials came from.

WILEY: A lot of the SALC materials were in the Peace Education Center library— the reference materials. But as I remember your car was always full of—

BEEMAN: Posters.

WILEY: Posters and photo displays and so on.

LIMB: I'm also wondering whether SALC linked up with other solidarity organizations such as among African Americans or Native Americans or antiwar groups. Was there any involvement in this broader movement of solidarity?

BEEMAN: There was—

LIMB And including from those organizations back to you, which is always an interesting one to think about.

BEEMAN: I can't think of any specific group that we worked with, although we were open to any group that was interested in activity.

WILEY: It's fair to say that SALC in many ways drew on the information and the campaigns of the American Committee on Africa in New York and the Africa Fund's information. And then later in the 1970s from the Washington Office on Africa and the Washington Office on Africa Education Fund. I think those were the two national—

BEEMAN: Bill Johnston was—

WILEY: And Bill Johnston of the Episcopal Churchmen for Southern Africa,[20] was it, that really focused on Namibia because of the Episcopal Church's connection there. And I

think there were also some local campaigns, like I remember SALC asking the Crop Walk, which is the Church World Service[21] fundraising event, to first of all focus its campaigns on the needs of people in Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe, and South Africa and to dedicate the funds that were raised by all these hundreds of churchpeople across Michigan that marched to raise funds for the needs of Third World people. So SALC was involved in that, in trying to get the black pastors' group in Lansing to participate in that, that solidarity.

I think the main organizational coordination, if I remember, Frank, from the SALC years, was with the TransAfrica chapter in Detroit, with Akua Budu and Margaret Baylor, who were co-chairs of that chapter of TransAfrica out of Washington.[22]

BEEMAN: In Washington, who was—Frank somebody, can't remember—he came and made some talks.

WILEY: There's Ted Lockwood, who was the director of the Washington Office on Africa—oh, Randall Robinson was the head of TransAfrica. He made a couple of visits here in addition to others. But in some ways SALC was fairly self-contained, focused on the Michigan issues, the Michigan State issues and really homing in here. And I think probably SALC was not understanding fully how unique this mobilization in Michigan was compared with the other states around the country.

LIMB: Just to clarify, then, was SALC structurally or organizationally an MSU body, or was it an East Lansing body?

BEEMAN: It involved students and faculty and community people.

LIMB: So it was beyond the campus.

BEEMAN: Yes, right.

WILEY: But it was registered as a student organization, I believe, at one time, so that it could show its films and use university facilities.

BEEMAN: Yeah, and one time they received an award. I can't remember now where it was. I can remember seeing—getting the award or plaque for being an outstanding student group.

WILEY: Frank, did you get much resistance from your colleagues, either in the sports arena or more generally in MSU, that oh, here comes this Beeman who's got this thing about South Africa?

BEEMAN: I guess we can say this: the main opposition I got at that time was—at that time the Intramural Department was under the Athletic Department rather than the Student Affairs Department, and I had requested a six-month leave which I was entitled to, to go work down in Mississippi on voter registration. And I can remember talking with Biggie Munn, he had one of these phones that you talk to and everybody in the room could hear it. And he said, I didn't know you were interested in that color, you're going down there. I thought you were more a—what is the phrase he used—mid-colored, so forth. So there was a little—

WILEY: Biggie Munn was the athletic—

BEEMAN: Athletic director.

LIMB: Athletic director at Michigan State.

BEEMAN: Yes.

WILEY: This was in what period?

BEEMAN: Well, that would be—

LIMB: 1960s?

BEEMAN: That was during the Meredith March, the summer of the Meredith March [1962] that we went down there for. And so whereas he couldn't stop me from going, he certainly didn't encourage me in that activity.

WILEY: And then when you were showing all these films and doing all this information activity, no one was questioning your—

BEEMAN: Very rarely was there anybody that really argued about this is wrong or this is right, and so forth. Did have one, he wasn't a student, he was from Lansing area. He was a South African who would say, well, this is propaganda that you're handing out. I said, well, it may be so but it's true whatever it is. That was what made the arguments easy—because it was true. It was so wrong to have enslaved a whole nation of people under the rules they would order, that how do you argue for it? And so that helped a little bit.

WILEY: As you look back over all this activity, all these thousands of hours that you invested in—

BEEMAN: I cannot imagine how we did it [laughter]. Absolutely cannot. When you stop and think of it, every other week you had to come up with another poster and design it and make it and get it to the printer and this kind of thing. That was a constant of our life.

WILEY: Did that give you some satisfactions in looking back at it?

BEEMAN: Very much so. In fact, I think the biggest point we had was the day that they took the McGoff name off the Wharton Center and as a specific thing that was such a relief. We didn't think it would ever happen, that the university would give back \$100,000.

WILEY: So that was the high point for you?

BEEMAN: Right.

WILEY: And then when you went back to South Africa and actually could see this you realized that there were real results of this campaign and this struggle, and that you were at the core of Michigan State which in many ways was the precipitant of the national higher education anti-apartheid effort—

BEEMAN: Yes, it was certainly—

WILEY: —that made a contribution to this.

BEEMAN: Yes. Right.

WILEY: Several South Africans have come to campus to recognize you and others in SALC for the contribution that this made in their struggle—Ahmed Kathrada, who had been in Robben Island [prison] for those many years, and others. And I think that has been a source of pleasure and satisfaction to you to know that that's possible.

BEEMAN: It's really interesting. I got a chance to visit Robben Island when I was there at the tennis tournament. And all of the men, I believe it was just men, who worked there had been there in prison and now it's turned around and they were running the thing as a tourist event kind of thing. Interesting.

WILEY: That must have been an emotional moment to step onto Robben Island and here's where—

BEEMAN: Yes, it was.

WILEY: —where [Nelson] Mandela and [Walter] Sisulu and all those folks were.

BEEMAN: To see the cells and so forth, almost two-by-four cells that they lived in.

WILEY: So out of all this, do you have advice to Michigan State faculty and students about how they think about such issues and the future of this university?

BEEMAN: I think they should not limit themselves. They should be open, again, to education information and, I think, to do something that is good for your community, your university, your state, and your nation, to try and make them as best as they can be.

WILEY: Well, Harris Frank Beeman, thank you very much for sharing this very significant history at Michigan State that you were at the core of, and congratulations on having been so historically wise as to have chosen the good struggle.

Beeman: Well, I had a good mentor in my wife.

WILEY: Thank you very much.

LIMB: Thanks, Frank.

[1] For an early summary, see David Hauck, Meg Voorhees, and Glenn Goldberg, *Two Decades of Debate: The Controversy over U.S. Companies in South Africa* (Washington, DC: Investor Responsibility Research Center, 1983). The topic also features prominently in Robert Kinloch Massie, *Loosing the Bonds: The United States and South Africa in the Apartheid Years* (New York: Doubleday, 1997). For the viewpoint of a South African official charged with countering the campaign, see Les de Villiers, *In Sight of Surrender: The U.S. Sanctions Campaign against South Africa, 1946-1993* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995).

[2] Knight is also working with Michigan State University on the project to document the location and availability of archives from both national and local groups involved in anti-apartheid activism. See <http://www.africanactivist.msu.edu>.

[3] Rick Houghton worked with the Anglican Church in Namibia and was deported in the 1970s. [David Wiley]

[4] James Meredith, who in 1962 became the first black student to attend the University of Mississippi, organized a march in June 1966 from Memphis, Tennessee to Jackson, Mississippi, to encourage voter registration. After he was wounded, there was a national mobilization to continue his march. See <http://www.jofreeman.com/photos/meredith.html> and http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/english/ms-writers/dir/meredith_james.

[5] Warren (Bud) Day, after participating in the early years of SALC in Michigan, became a key local activist and active participant in national networks on Africa and other issues, based in Los Angeles, California and then in Flagstaff, Arizona. He also worked as an environmental health consultant and teacher in Tanzania, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe as well as in the United States. He died in Flagstaff in 2003.

[6] Lynn Jondahl was also a representative in the Michigan State Legislature from 1973 to 1992. From 1995 to mid-2002 he served as co- director of the Michigan Political Leadership Program at Michigan State University.

[7] Michael Bratton is professor of political science at Michigan State University. Anne Schneller teaches in the College of Education.

[8] For references to both organizations and location of their archives, see <http://www.africanactivist.msu.edu>.

[9] For a short overview of the international boycott of apartheid sport, prepared by the United Nations in 1971, see <http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/aam/abdul-2.html>. Another account, by a sports activist and director of the Center for the Study of Sport in Society at Northeastern University, is Richard E. Lapchick, *The Politics of Race and International Sport: The Case of South Africa* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1975). See also the memoir by tennis star and activist Arthur Ashe: Arthur Ashe and Arnold Rampersad, *Days of Grace: A Memoir* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf , 1993).

[10] Throughout his career, Harry Belafonte provided important support to movements working for the liberation of Africa, including organizing African Liberation Day concerts in the late 1950s and early 1960s with the American Committee on Africa, supporting the initial career in the United States of Miriam Makeba, and making the initial contacts for a delegation from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee to visit Africa. The role of Belafonte in particular, as well as of other artists with political

commitments, is another aspect of the history that has yet to be systematically documented or studied.

[11] For the most detailed account yet available in print of the sequence of these campaigns in Michigan, see Janice Love, *The U.S. Anti-Apartheid Movement: Local Activism in Global Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1985), 161-224.

[12] The role of John McGoff, a prominent Michigan newspaper publisher, is described later in this interview. Also see Mervyn Rees and Chris Day, *Muldergate: The Story of the Info Scandal* (Johannesburg: Macmillan South Africa, 1980).

[13] Trustee Aubrey Radcliffe, an African American Republican, was a Lansing schoolteacher with a PhD in education. Trustee Blanche Martin, an African American Democrat, was an East Lansing dentist.

[14] Representative Perry Bullard, Democrat of Ann Arbor, was chair of the House Banking Committee in the state legislature. Representative Virgil Smith, Democrat of Detroit, later became a state senator and also visited South Africa on a legislators' trip organized by The Africa Fund.

[15] The Wharton Center was the performing arts center on campus. It was named after MSU president Clifton Wharton, the first African American president of a major university.

[16] The Mayibuye Centre for History and Culture was based at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) in the 1990s. In 2000 the center's collection was incorporated into the new UWC-Robben Island Mayibuye Archives, also located at UWC. See <http://www.robben-island.org.za/departments/heritage/mayibuye/mayibuye.asp>.

[17] Kgati Sathekge, who holds a BA from Michigan State University, is director for provincial and public liaison in the South African government's Department of Social Development.

[18] SWAPO (South West African People's Organisation) was the principal liberation movement in South West Africa (Namibia), and became the ruling party after independence.

[19] ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People's Union) and ZANU (Zimbabwe African National Union) were the principal nationalist movements before independence of Zimbabwe. ZAPU was merged with ZANU in 1988.

[20] See Edgar Lockwood, " One of God's Irregulars: William Overton Johnston and the Challenge to the Church to Divest from Apartheid South Africa, 1954-1971," *Anglican and Episcopal History* 71, no. 3 (2000): 411-37 (available at <http://www.africanactivist.msu.edu/remembrances.php>). The archives of the Episcopal Churchmen for South Africa are at Yale University; see <http://www.africanactivist.msu.edu> for a short description and <http://webtext.library.yale.edu/xml2html/divinity.102.con.html> for a detailed listing.

[21] Church World Service is a national ecumenical relief agency. See <http://www.churchworldservice.org>.

[22] TransAfrica was founded in 1977. See Randall Robinson, *Defending the Spirit: A Black Life in America* (New York: Plume, 1998).