



February 14, 1989

Brian Sellers-Petersen
Director, The Episcopal Center
for South Africa Ministry
132 N. Euclid Avenue
Pasadena, California 91101

Dear Rev. Sellers-Petersen:

Thank you for your letter dated December 29, 1988 in which you asked us for information regarding the establishment of a task force. Our Task Force on Southern Africa is composed of various clergy and lay people representing a broad spectrum of the religious community in the Greater Seattle area. Neither church membership nor religious fervor is a criterion for membership. All that is required is an interest in Southern African issues coupled with commitment to the anti-apartheid struggle. Because the apartheid regime in South Africa has devastating and direct effects on the people and governments in the neighboring Front Line States and because South Africa has continued to occupy Namibia in defiance of United Nations mandates, we have chosen to identify our task force as the Task Force on Southern Africa.

In past years the Task Force focused on bank divestment and was instrumental in getting Seafirst Bank, one of the largest in our area, to change its loan policy regarding South Africa and become one of the better examples of bank divestment. During the past year the Task Force has focused primarily on encouraging churches and synagogues to divest completely from any stocks and/or banks which continue to profit from apartheid. In November of 1988 we mailed to about 1,000 congregations in the area updated information regarding the appropriate guidelines for total divestment and a summary of responses that the Task Force had received from banks. A copy of that letter with its attachments is enclosed for your information. You will note that the letter tells of the establishment of an Honor Roll in the newspaper of the Church Council of Greater Seattle, the Source, for those congregations which have completely divested in accordance with the suggested

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The Rev. Dr. William B. Cate
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guidelines. To date, 20 churches have been honored in this way, and we expect to feature more congregations in the coming months.

In the meantime, we have written to all the banks which responded to our survey during the summer of 1988, asking them to review our summary and report to us any changes in their banking policies regarding South Africa and Namibia so that we may update our information accordingly. The next step in this process is probably to write again to those banks which did not respond to our earlier inquiry in order to confirm their South African policies.

Immediately prior to embarking on this renewed divestment campaign, the Task Force, under the leadership of then Chair Dr. Robert Schmidt, launched what was known as the ABC Campaign. A short version of the plan involving Aid to the Front Line States, oil Blockade of South Africa, leading to Constitutional conference, is enclosed for your review. Before formally announcing the ABC Campaign, Dr. Schmidt solicited opinions from national anti-apartheid organizations, representatives of the African National Congress and the South African Council of Churches, and the Congressional Black Caucus as well as local business people and community activists. The campaign was officially launched at the commemoration of Soweto Day in front of the then-existing South African consulate in Seattle. Since then we have been so busy with total divestment (we figured we would like to get "beyond divestment" but could not say we truly were) that we have not done anything with the ABC campaign. However, we expect to revive and broaden discussion of the idea as soon as possible.

The Task Force on Southern Africa also supported (and some members participated in) weekly picketing of the South African consulate. The picketing was initiated by the Seattle Coalition Against Apartheid in 1984 and continued every Sunday thereafter until the consulate closed in September, 1988 when the "honorary" South African consul, who had actively lobbied for the creation of such a post, died. So far we have not determined whether a new person will be appointed to represent the South African regime. If so, we will work with other anti-apartheid groups and individuals to oppose it.

Our Task Force is committed to working with other anti-apartheid organizations in our community whenever possible. We support as a Task Force weekly picketing of Shell gasoline stations, rotating to a different one each Saturday. Although this may be a watering down of the ABC plan, we feel

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that it is important to join with the other organizations who are actively engaged in providing information (through leaflets and picket signs) regarding apartheid and our economic complicity with it.

The Mozambique Health Committee is another organization with which we expect to become more fully involved. A representative of that organization will be speaking to us at the March meeting of our Task Force. I enclose a brief summary of the work of the Mozambique Health Committee.

Educational activities for our group and for the community continue. In the past couple of years the Task Force has, for example, been responsible for public presentations by Saths Cooper, Black Consciousness activist; Solly Simelane with the ANC Observer Mission to the UN; and Thomas Bvuma, Information Counsellor with the Embassy of the Republic of Zimbabwe. We have recently acquired the videotape, "The Cry of Reason," and plan to show that to as many groups as possible.

Another one of our present projects is outreach to involve more clergy and lay people in our efforts. We are planning a social/educational event in the next few months in order to invite participation from many people who cannot attend the weekday meetings. We seek to be more inclusive of all religions and races and are actively seeking African-American congregations to feature in our divestment Honor Roll.

In addition, members of our Task Force make presentations on various Southern African topics at churches on an ongoing basis. Dr. Tyna Fields, for example, former Chair of the Task Force, recently completed a six-week course on apartheid and Southern Africa at a large Eastside church. Maryamu Eltayeb, Co-Chair of the Seattle Coalition Against Apartheid, has numerous similar engagements, including a recent trip to address anti-apartheid workers in Yakima, Washington. Gary Nelson, Rev. Clarence Solberg and Helen Solberg speak frequently on Namibia. Todd Hawkins is our expert on the situation in Mozambique, and Mary Frances Aldrich has spoken about her trip this past summer to Zimbabwe.

Our Task Force is indeed fortunate to have the active participation and loving support of the Rev. Dr. William B. Cate, the President and Director of the Church Council of Greater Seattle. Without his courageous leadership, we would not be able to embark on any of these projects.

We believe that we have much to learn from you and your experiences. Our Task Force seeks your guidance and invites

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your suggestions on any and all aspects of our work. Our hope is that we can all work together to eliminate racism and apartheid.

Thus, we look forward to visiting with you and expect to shower you and Rev. Xundu with some Seattle hospitality within the next month or so. I trust that you will let me know as soon as you have some firm dates when you and Rev. Xundu will be here so that we can begin as early as possible to publicize the tour.

Your letter indicated a specific interest in persons in the Episcopal Diocese who are involved in anti-apartheid work. St. Mark's Cathedral, Saint Paul Anglican Church, and St. Peter's Episcopal Parish here in Seattle have all been recognized in our divestment Honor Roll, and it would be most appropriate, therefore, if you and Rev. Xundu could include those congregations on the tour. In the meantime, thank you for the opportunity to share ideas and activities with you.

Sincerely,

TASK FORCE ON SOUTHERN AFRICA

Marjorie Prince

Marjorie Prince, Chair

Enclosures

cc: Dr. William Cate (w/out encls.)
Task Force members (w/out encls.)
St. Mark's Cathedral (w/out encls.)
Saint Paul Anglican Church (w/out encls.)
St. Peter's Episcopal Parish (w/out encls.)