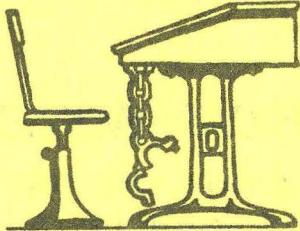


# SOUTH AFRICA UPDATE

1980

1980 was a turbulent year in South Africa. It witnessed successful guerilla actions against strategic government targets, a burgeoning black union movement, increasing SWAPO successes in Namibia, revolutionary change in Zimbabwe, and year-long student boycotts throughout the nation.

The student boycotts had the biggest impact on the lives of South Africans, particularly the black community. Beginning with 'coloured' youth in the Cape Province, the boycott spread rapidly to include almost every district in the nation. All over, black students marched in the streets singing "We don't need your education" from the banned Pink Floyd song that became the anthem of the movement.



The issues of the school boycotts were basic: students were protesting apartheid education, and decided to reject it wholesale. They demanded an end to the disparity in educational expenditures for different races (the government spends ten times more money on a white child's schooling than on a black child's), an end to the free access to schools for security police, and the establishment of autonomous student representative councils.

Government response was predictably harsh. Outdoor gatherings were banned, as were meetings of more than 10 people. Demonstrations were attacked by police with weapons and dogs. Over 400 students and 30 teachers were arrested and charged; over 50 people were killed by police actions.

Although the apartheid education system remains, the boycotts did bring about positive changes. They had a cathartic effect on all South African society as they brought home the realization that resistance can and will succeed:

**Blacks scored real gains on the labor front.** Although they continue to work under draconian labor laws, there was a mild liberalization of the restrictions on their labor organizing. Thus several radical black trade unions have grown rapidly; unions whose demands are political as well as economic.

Along with expanding memberships in black unions, strike actions rose sharply in 1980. Results, though, were not always successful. Labor laws prohibit most strikes. And corporate response is as harsh as that of the police. In Johannesburg, when black municipal workers struck, union leaders were rounded up and detained. Workers were evicted from their dormitories, their work permits revoked, and they were forcibly bussed to their 'homeland' in the Transkei. Unemployed men in the Transkei were hired to replace them.

But black unionists still view 1980 as a successful year. Their refusal to be coopted or suppressed and their efforts for political and economic changes pose a serious threat to the government.

**Another encouragement to the black population** was the successful African National Congress (ANC) sabotage of the government's SASOL plant (a coal liquification plant to make synthetic fuel for energy-vulnerable South Africa). Millions of dollars worth of property was damaged. No one has yet been caught.

**Due to this widespread resistance,** Prime Minister Botha hinted that the government would make changes. It did: by the year's end, apartheid was even stronger. Thousands of families were forcibly moved; living spaces for Indians, Coloureds and Africans were expropriated for white development. Arrests, detainments and political trials increased, while evidence of government torture and murder of witnesses and prisoners continued to surface. 129 people were hanged; one was white.

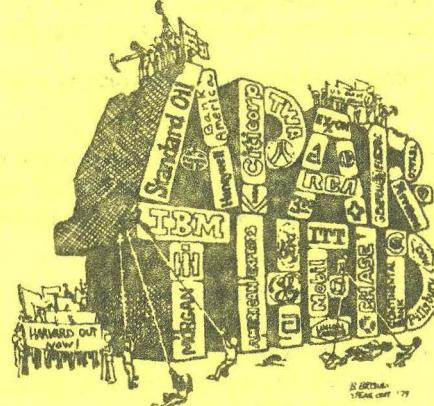
**In spite of this government and corporate suppression,** blacks have increased their resistance to apartheid. Undoubtedly, their resolve has grown even stronger with the victory of Zimbabwe's revolution.

1981

South African law forbids blacks from living in areas designated for whites only—87% of the country. Since 1948, over 3½ million have been forced to move to black reservations, called 'homelands', to make room for whites. Only when a black obtains the proper pass can s/he live and work in these white areas. The homelands are barren pieces of land, rife with poverty and malnutrition. Thus men are forced to leave as migrant laborers. Their wives and children, denied access to official work passes, follow illegally to seek work, medical care and food.

The past year has seen thousands of blacks uprooted and sent to these homelands. Correspondingly, the police have intensified their arrests of pass law violators—especially women and children. In the last few weeks, the black townships of Nyanga and Langa have been targeted—over 1,000 have been arrested, over 500 remain in prison. Victims of these police raids have fled to the fields between the townships where they built squatter camps. In response, the police slashed and burned every shelter they erected. When the people resorted to the cover of bushes due to heavy winter rains, the police bulldozed the land to remove all protection. Yet they continued to defy the authorities, facing fines and arrests, choosing to remain unsheltered in the cold winter rather than return to the starvation of the homelands. In the words of Colin Eglin of the Progressive Federal Party, "*All this policy is doing is to turn tens of thousands of people into statutory illegals, making them live their lives at the mercy of the police and officials.*" (New York Times, 8/7/81)

**Anglican Bishop Desmond Tutu**, General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches, has repeatedly infuriated the South African regime by his outspoken condemnation of apartheid. In March 1980, his passport was revoked in retaliation for urging the Danish government to stop buying South African coal. It was finally returned in January 1981, whereupon the black prelate accepted invitations for a 5 week speaking tour in Europe and the US. While here last April, he said that it was "humbug" for foreign investors to believe they were helping black South Africans when in reality "*they must know they are investing to buttress one of the most vicious systems since Nazism.*" (The Times, 18/4/81) Upon his return, the South African government again confiscated his passport. The Bishop responded by asking, "*Why should they be frightened of one little black man who goes about saying a few things, if what he is saying is untrue?*" (Washington Post, 29/3/81)



**Due to the 1976 Soweto riots, the recently successful ANC actions, and continuing student and labor unrest, South Africa initiated a plan for extensive security arrangements with local businesses, including US firms.** One of the first US firms to collaborate was General Motors, which has had a 'contingency security' plan since 1977. This plan uses armed white employees who split their duties between work and guard duty to defend the plant from Black protesters. Ironically, the plan was made at the same time GM board member Rev. Leon Sullivan wrote his codes of conduct for US firms investing in South Africa, called the Sullivan Principles. (Southern Africa, Jan.-Feb., 1981)

**Phillips Corporation**, a Netherlands based multi-national, is now selling musical door chimes to South Africa, in addition to the military hardware it provides the South African police and army. One of its chimes plays the song, *Land of Hope and Glory*. (Anti-Apartheid News, April 1981)

## CALIFORNIA BANKS LENDING TO SOUTH AFRICA:

Bank of America, Chartered Bank of London, Crocker, French Bank, First Interstate Bank, Security Pacific, Sumitomo, and Wells Fargo.

## SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN'S DAY

August 9, 1956 - 1981



**SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN'S DAY**, August 9, salutes the resistance of women throughout South Africa when the hated Pass Law System was extended to cover African women. On August 9, 1956, 20,000 women of all races assembled in Pretoria. Processions were banned, so the women walked to the government building in 'threes'. Afterwards they stood in complete silence for 30 minutes, then began singing freedom songs. The United Women's Organization of South Africa was recently formed by black women to further their struggle. Its projects—including sewing, knitting and childcare collectives—are being developed to give African women a source of economic and communal support as well as a means of controlling their own lives. If you're interested in finding out more about these projects and how you can contribute, contact the Africa Resource Center-\$BOA at (415) 763-8011.

## RESOURCES

**The \$top Banking on Apartheid Slide/Tape Show** is an excellent introduction to apartheid, the role of US businesses in this system, and the widespread resistance growing in South Africa. It's accompanied by music, narrative and songs (23 mins.)

**A list of US banks and corporations** investing in and with South Africa.

**\$BOA's Rebuttal** presents counter-arguments and quotes by South African leaders, government officials and scholars which refute US corporate justifications for continued involvement in South Africa.

**Leaflets for Bank of America customers** are available in quantity. They are a basic description of conditions in South Africa, involvement of the Bank of America and other US banks, suggestions for individual and group actions, and lists of socially responsible investment alternatives.

**Nuclear Leaflet:** summarizes US-South Africa nuclear links.

**Questions for banks** to determine their practices re: loans to South Africa, redlining, hiring and collective bargaining.

**Religious Packets** listing conditions in South Africa, statements by South African religious leaders against apartheid, arguments for divestment, suggestions for actions, and various denominational resolutions on divestment.

**Alternative Investment Summaries** which list investor resource organizations for those desiring to divest large sums from banks and corporations involved in South Africa.

**Alternative Investment Packets** offer examples of investment opportunities for those divesting large sums from businesses investing in South Africa.

**Our Town Out of South Africa:** detailed manual outlines how to withdraw your city's/county's funds from banks investing in apartheid. It's based on our experience with Berkeley's Responsible Investment Initiative which passed overwhelmingly in 1979.

**Presentations** can be made to your organization about the \$BOA campaign, emphasizing California bank involvement in South Africa, their contribution to problems in our own communities, general US-South Africa links, and investment alternatives.

**Return to: AFRICA RESOURCE CENTER - \$BOA, 464 19th Street, Oakland, CA 94612**

- Slide Show @ sliding scale (+ postage)
- Bank and Corporation List @ \$.40
- \$BOA Rebuttal @ \$.05
- B of A Leaflets @ \$1.50 per 100
- Nuclear Leaflets @ \$3.00 per 100
- Questions for Banks @ free
- Religious Packet @ \$2.50
- Alt. Investment Summary @ \$.15
- Alt. Investment Packet @ \$3.00
- 'Our Town' manual @ \$10.00
- Presentations @ sliding scale

**Send to:**

**Name**

**Street**

**City, State**

**Phone**

**Date must be received by:**

To counteract the support our government and businesses give to the South African government, we depend on your donations. It is only with the generous contributions in the form of money and time from people like yourselves that we can build and maintain the strength to oppose the growing racism here at home and the increased repression in South Africa. Donations over \$10 are tax deductible. Checks can be made out to the 'Africa Resource Center', c/o \$BOA, 464 19th St., Oakland 94612. THANKS!