

**To: Southern Africa and Central America Activists**

March 9, 1987

A few months ago, a group of activists from the Central America and Southern Africa solidarity movements began meeting to discuss ways to deepen our work and learn from each other's experiences.

Both movements have important strengths we feel could be built on:

\*Central America activists have demonstrated an ability to mobilize grassroots support for the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran people.

\*Southern Africa activists have been able to expand the anti-apartheid movement to the broad mainstream of US politics.

At the same time, we recognize problems. In often parallel ways, it has been difficult to move from anti-intervention and anti-apartheid work to explicit support for revolutionary governments and social movements in the Third World. Our movements have often failed to broaden their constituencies to include groups working on domestic issues--farmers, the Rainbow Coalition, the women's movement, anti-racist activists, etc.

Most of all, it has been difficult for us to "internationalize" as effectively as the Reagan administration does. While our movements tend to take a country-by-country approach (or, at best, a regional one), the Reagan Doctrine has developed a global perspective--linking counterrevolution in Nicaragua and Angola with a reactionary domestic agenda.

Given the Reagan Doctrine's current crisis, we think it is time to take the offensive by confronting it directly, concretely linking the issues of Southern Africa and Central America through joint action. The demonstrations planned for this April are a step in this direction, but we believe our movements have the potential to build substantial ongoing projects that bridge Central America and Southern Africa solidarity work.

### **Proposals**

We have two suggestions for pilot projects on which Central America and Southern Africa groups could collaborate. We are not proposing setting up new organizations, either for political work here or for actual aid delivery. We're outlining, instead, concepts that can be used by existing groups in cooperation with each other.

1. **A joint, short-term fundraising appeal to raise medical aid for two countries facing similar attacks--Mozambique and Nicaragua.** A direct mail appeal signed by Central America and Southern Africa groups would be sent to membership or supporter lists from groups in both movements. The appeal would emphasize the emergency wartime conditions facing Nicaragua and Mozambique and the need to support medical work in both countries. The letter would link the two countries and discuss health care issues related to wars in the Third World, linking these to US policy in both regions.

2. **Perhaps developing from such a short-term appeal, efforts could begin to expand existing "sister-city" and other people-to-people projects.** Three-way sister cities could link New Haven, Maputo and Leon, for example; sister hospital projects could build on existing aid campaigns to African frontline states or to El Salvador; three-way sister schools could raise funds for educational supplies and sponsor exchanges and tours of students.

Other possibilities for joint action include speaking tours, publications and lobbying drives against US aid for the contras in Angola and Nicaragua. We might consider organizing international volunteers to work in different parts of the world. There are dozens of immediate, real-life possibilities: we expect different groups will come up with new suggestions.

### May 1987 Pilot Project

Now is the moment to strengthen all of our work by working together. We would like to start a pilot direct mail project this May and we need your support.

1. We'd like to have a New York meeting in late March or early April. Can you, or a representative of your organization, attend?

2. Will your group make your mailing list available (with the understanding that names of those who respond to the mailing would be made available to you)? Would someone from your organization co-sign a letter, if appropriate?

3. Would your group sponsor a joint speaking tour or other activity?

Please consider joining us to plan for effective collaboration between Central America and Southern Africa groups. Give us your ideas, criticisms, suggestions; let us know about others who should be a part of this. In the process, we hope that our movements can seize the political initiative to work more strongly against the Reagan Doctrine in all its aspects.

We'd like to hear from you in writing. Please send your response and suggestions to: Central America/Southern Africa Task Force, c/o North American Congress on Latin America, 151 W. 19th Street, New York, N.Y. 10011.

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