



# peace education center news

Spring 1998

<http://www.nonviolence.org/pec>

## Activism and Social Change: The Southern Africa Liberation Committee 1970s and 1980s

The Patricia Beeman Archives will be formally presented to the MSU Library in a ceremony and panel discussion on Thursday, March 19, 1998 at 4:00pm. These archives document the efforts of the Southern Africa Liberation Committee (SALC) to help eliminate apartheid in South Africa and European Colonialism in Namibia, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau. The Pat Beeman Archives will also be deposited at the Mayibuye Center Collection at Robben Island and the Archive of the African National Congress at University of Fort Hare in South Africa.

The March 19th ceremony and panel discussion, one event in a series of events at MSU marking the 20th anniversary of MSU's divestment from corporations doing business in apartheid South Africa, will be led by Frank Beeman. Frank and Pat Beeman formed the backbone of the Southern Africa Liberation Committee (a task force of the Peace Education Center), that for 15 years designed and conducted a series of successful campaigns to stop local complicity with apartheid and to achieve social justice in Southern Africa.

These campaigns included the 1977 East Lansing Selective Purchasing Ordinance; the 1978 MSU Board of Trustees Divestiture Action; several county resolutions; and three State of Michigan Acts in 1979, 1982 and 1988. Local community actions such as these in East Lansing and others throughout the country provided impetus for the 1986 US Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act. US action, along with parallel actions



throughout the world, provided international support for the internal struggle for majority rule in Southern and South Africa.

The Patricia Beeman Archives, containing documentation about the details of each of the campaigns of SALC, provide a rich historical perspective on this highly successful community organizing. The archives also show how SALC assembled highly effective educational materials on apartheid, making the actions directly relevant to hundreds of meetings and gatherings which Frank and Pat Beeman attended and organized. From these archives one can begin to appreciate the work of Pat Beeman, whose life provides an inspiring model for community organizing that produces positive social change and enhances human dignity. As Frank puts it, "Pat felt that if people understood the horrors of apartheid, they would want to remove their support for such an unjust system."

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The March 19th panel discussion will provide contexts for local activists and MSU students and faculty to study the Beeman archives. Presentations on the African National Congress, 1960s liberation and civil rights movements and the divestiture movement in the US, including MSU student involvement, local and state grassroots anti-apartheid campaigns, and lessons for present day peace and justice organizing in the US will be made by a panel of Frank Beeman, Lee June, Bill Derman, Barbara Thibeault, Kofi Egbo, David Dwyer and Anabel Dwyer.



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