

BOSTON COALITION FOR THE LIBERATION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

(with B.C.M.H.E.)

box 8791, boston, mass. 02114



NEWSLETTER October 1979

WOMEN AND THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

All Black South Africans suffer under the laws of apartheid; a system which has been designed to create an underpaid, unskilled Black workforce from which whites and foreign corporations in South Africa can profit. This workforce has been created by forcing Blacks to reside in rural "homelands" (or "Bantustans") that are too small and infertile to support their large Black population. To support themselves, many Black people must leave the "homelands" to migrate to cities to take the underpaid jobs to which they are restricted. Only able-bodied, employed Black people, however, are legally allowed into urban areas, and anyone who is sick, too old, or too young, or unemployed must remain in the "homelands." This enables white employers to pay wages that barely provide for the needs the individual worker, much less a family.

This apartheid system oppresses men and women, but women bear a greater burden. Since men are preferred employees, it is difficult for women to enter the cities. Many women are left in the "homelands" to try and scratch a living out of the poor soil. Those women who enter the cities illegally are forced into the worst jobs — often domestic work —

and they must leave their children with relatives. Some women illegally join their husbands in urban areas. They usually have to live in illegal squatter camps and live in constant fear of being caught and sent back to the "homelands."

The burden of discriminatory employment practices in the urban areas and rural poverty in the "homelands" is particularly heavy on women, who bear the responsibility for raising children. Isolated in the "homelands" with little or no income they are frequently unable to adequately provide for their families.

WOMEN AND THE LIBERATION STRUGGLES

South African women recognize that they are oppressed as women; but they also recognize that it is apartheid's oppression of all Black people that has made this female oppression intolerable. In discussing the liberation of women, a South African woman said, "Were our women to launch a frontal attack on men... would they attain their liberation? Do our women really want to share the dismal oppression of our men — do we want to be equal to such abysmal humiliation?"

(cont. on next page)

Certainly not. We are then left with one option only, and that is to fight side by side with our men for national liberation."

Echoing this call, South African women have actively worked with men in the national liberation movements. In 1943, for example, 15,000 women and men took part in a bus boycott in Johannesburg. Participants walked 18 miles a day to and from work to protest an increase in bus fares.

In 1949, women and men workers engaged in a spectacular national work stoppage. Hundreds of thousands took part in what was primarily a protest against apartheid and the election of the ultra-conservative Nationalist government in a whites-only election.

During the Soweto uprising of 1976, young women along with young men organized, protested and were jailed. Older women were active in forming the Black Parents Association to show solidarity with Black youth.

THE WOMEN'S PASS LAW CAMPAIGNS

Women have also struggled separately from men. Probably the most important struggle of South African women against their oppression has been the struggle against the pass law system. This struggle began in 1913 in the Orange Free State (a province of South Africa). There, women who lived in urban areas were forced to buy a permit or pass each month that they chose to remain in these areas. First, women petitioned against the passes, but this failed and across the Orange Free State women held mass demonstrations. Although many women were arrested and jailed, the struggle continued for several years and eventually the women won. Passes were withdrawn.

The pass struggle was rekindled in 1955 when the Ministry of Native Affairs once again stated that all women would be required to carry passes. The first big protest against the passes, attended by 2,000 women, took place that October in Pretoria, the capital. The actions spread and the following year in August 20,000 women assembled in Pretoria. Since all processions were banned that day the women walked to the government buildings in groups



Winnie Mandela

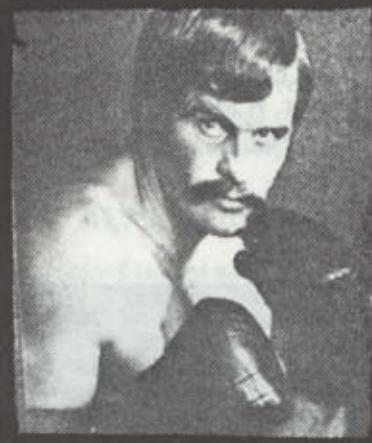
of three. All Pretoria was filled with women. Though protest continued in rural areas as well as urban areas, passes were issued. Women were forced to accept them in order to obtain pensions, to teach or nurse, and to register the birth of their children.

SOLIDARITY WITH SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN

The U.S. solidarity movement has begun to emphasize the importance of women's resistance to the apartheid government. In Boston, a group of women has been active since Nov. 1977 in educating and organizing women in support of South African women and their role in the national liberation struggle. This group is called the Winnie Mandela Solidarity Committee (WMSC). It is named after Winnie Mandela, a Black South African woman who has helped lead the fight against apartheid and who has been interrogated, jailed, banned and tortured for her activities. Despite this, she continues to be an inspiring and active leader

(cont. on p. 4)

THE SOUTH AFRICA BOXING CONNECTION



WBZ-TV 4
WE'RE 4
APARTHEID

AND AS PROUD AS A PEACOCK

Among the problems South Africa's whites face is the rather enviable one of ample leisure time. With almost every white household well supplied with servants of all kinds, including cooks, laundry 'girls' and garden 'boys,' whites have lots of spare time. Many of their homes have swimming pools and/or tennis courts in the back yards. Furthermore, the government provides excellent sports facilities for whites. As you might expect, then, sports are a very significant part of white South African culture.

International sports competition has for many years provided South Africa with a forum where the country could participate as an equal with other nations. In sports, the notorious apartheid nation has enjoyed a rare acceptability. Sports therefore have provided a natural avenue for the South African government's overseas propaganda machinery.

SOUTH AFRICA ISOLATED

In 1970 South Africa was excluded from the Olympics. Apartheid apologists cried foul; "sports should not be mixed with politics." In 1979 the governing body for international Track and Field prohibited South African participation. Earlier this year South African ath-

letes were officially excluded from the Boston Marathon. These were serious setbacks for white South Africa. Every time a South African athlete is barred from international competition, the message that the racist policies of that country are unacceptable is hammered home to all white South Africans.

However, as South Africa has become increasingly isolated from the sporting community, it has become more desperate to open new opportunities for sports contact. South Africa has found that opportunity in professional boxing.

U.S. PROMOTER SERVES APARTHEID

According to an anti-apartheid group, the American Coordinating Committee for Equality in Sports and Society (ACCESS), the South African government secretly spent over \$1 million in the U.S. in the past year to promote the participation of South African athletes in professional boxing. The World Boxing Association (WBA) is largely controlled by the American promoter Bob Arum. Over the past few years the WBA and Arum have forged close links with the South African Boxing

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(Women in S.A. cont.)

of the resistance.

Most recently, the WMSC has published a pamphlet on South African women and their struggle. The pamphlet highlights the life of Winnie Mandela as a woman engaged in women's struggles and in the national liberation struggle as a whole. Further it draws out the connections between the South African liberation struggle and the struggles of op-

pressed people in the U.S. This pamphlet, written in common language, is one of the first successful attempts to make information on women available to people outside the academic and political communities. Information on the pamphlet or WMSC can be obtained from WMSC, c/o P.O. Box 8791, Boston, MA 02114.

-Liz Dressen



WOMEN IN ZIMBABWE

A new role for women in Zimbabwe is being born, and the midwife is that country's struggle for liberation, led by the Patriotic Front. Last May, the first seminar for women in the Zimbabwean liberation movement took place in Mozambique. The goal of the seminar was to increase women's participation in the struggle.

TRADITIONAL AND COLONIAL REPRESSION OF WOMEN

Delegates talked about how people in the liberation movement could overcome the obstacles to women's advancement posed by the present society. Customs such as bride price, or *lobola*, polygamy and ideas of male superiority still inhibit women.

In traditional African society, women produced much of the surplus wealth by their agricultural work, but men controlled the fruits of women's labor. Polygamy (the practice of having more than one wife) meant that a man could obtain the labor power of several women to increase his own wealth and prestige. In addition, the *lobola*, paid in cattle and set by the bride's father, would be paid to the groom's family. No young man could marry unless his family provided the *lobola* for him.

When colonialism came to Zimbabwe, it had to destroy the self-sufficiency of African economies in order to create a labor pool for its mining and agricultural business. Eventually, more than half of all African men had to leave their homes to work for the Europeans. Meanwhile, women were left behind to maintain subsistence farming and to tend the livestock. However, since men now contributed money, their superior status remained unchanged.

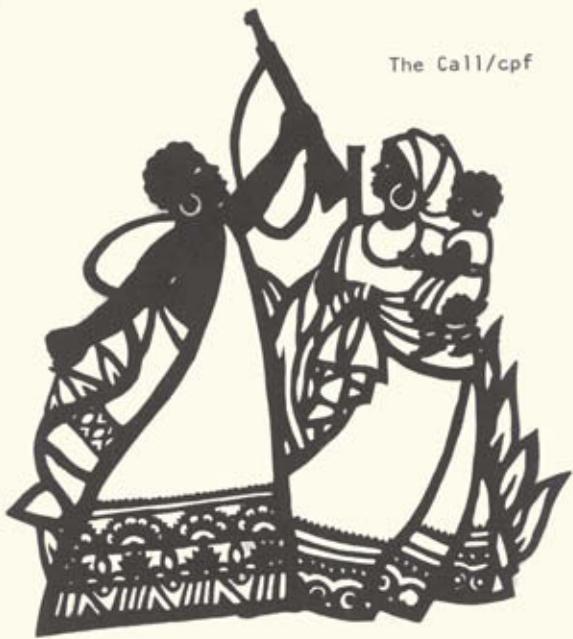
With the cash influx, young men could now obtain the *lobola* for themselves and as a result, bonds between the couples' families have been diminished. Previously, difficulties in a marriage would be handled by the elders of the two families. A woman today has little recourse if her husband should prove cruel or unjust.



ALWAYS A MINOR

Regarding polygamy, Rhodesian law has cooperated with the conservative aspects of traditional African society to keep women down. Legislation against polygamy has been confusing, contradictory, and ineffective. The Marriage Act of 1964 distinguishes marriages according to traditional law from civil marriages. Thus, a man may have only one wife according to civil law, but many according to traditional law. For civil marriages, the Marriage Act fixes the minimum age of the bride at 16, insists on free consent of both partners, and requires the consent of the guardians of minors. The catch is that all African women, no matter what age, are considered under the law to be minors. A Zimbabwean woman in Rhodesia, as a minor, cannot open a bank account, become a tenant, or even collect a registered letter. For as long as she is married, she remains a minor under the guardianship of her husband. The only way she can obtain legal standing in her own right is after the dissolution, by divorce or husband's death, of a civil marriage. Even then, she can receive custody of her children only if her husband has thus provided in his will.

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(Zimbabwe Women cont.)

CHANGING CONSCIOUSNESS

Charm Zvipange, a Zimbabwean woman at the seminar in Mozambique, reported "We spoke of how women always looked to men for guidance and the right answers and that this must stop. We analyzed *lobola*, the bride price paid by a man for his wife, so we could understand better how this made us into commodities who were not respected by others and did not respect ourselves. We discussed how women are at a disadvantage under polygamy so we can better oppose that as well."

A MILITANT HISTORY

ZANU President Robert Mugabe addressed the seminar and talked about the militant history of Zimbabwean women. During the 1896-7 Chimurenga rebellion against the British, it was a woman religious leader who mobilized a nationwide underground resistance movement. Nehanda Nyakasikana then commanded the armed struggle until it was crushed. She was hanged by the white settlers in 1898. He also cited the women's demonstration against the 1961 constitution which gave

only 15 out of 65 parliamentary seats to Africans. Two thousand protesting women were arrested and put into the Salisbury prison. When fined in court, they refused to pay, preferring to serve their sentences. Unfortunately, Mugabe recalled, their husbands paid the fines and threatened to find other women if their wives didn't leave the prison and come home. In this instance, Mugabe concluded, "Women had shown greater courage and resolve, indeed far greater commitment than the cowardly men."

GAINING EQUALITY IN THE STRUGGLE

In addition to looking back to history to understand the roots of women's oppression and resistance, the women's seminar also looked to the future. It decided that women's leadership must be strengthened. As Zvipange explained, "Why should we wait for the male cadres to interpret the news we hear on the radio? We must learn to analyze for ourselves, to understand politics and to think for ourselves."

The seminar also called for equal representation of women in higher posts, for improved technical education in engineering and mechanics, and for the creation of a special secretariat for external relations to send women abroad as representatives of the struggle.

In building a new society, the Patriotic Front is addressing basic questions which will improve the quality of life for all Zimbabweans. Many of these have special impact on women — maternity and children's health care, equal opportunity in education at all levels, and greatly increased employment options. As Zimbabwean women fight shoulder to shoulder with men to liberate their country, they are also working and organizing to liberate themselves and their sisters from their second class status in the old society.

-Bonnie Bishop

THE MAKING OF A WOMAN ACTIVIST

Early in 1970, Caroline Hunter, a young Black woman employed by Polaroid (a Cambridge based company) was looking through their stockrooms when she noticed a photograph of someone she knew attached to an ID card. It had written on it, "Republic of South Africa, Dept. of Commerce, Dept. of Mines," and a phony African name. Caroline didn't know much about South Africa, but "I knew it was a bad place for Black people." She realized that this advertising mock-up, destined for South Africa, must mean that Polaroid was doing business in the country.

She discussed her discovery with some fellow workers and by the weekend they had prepared a leaflet about the apartheid system in South Africa, and Polaroid's involvement there. It was providing film and equipment for instant photographs for the "passbooks" — the system of identification by which apartheid operates. Over the weekend, Caroline and the group of Polaroid workers posted these leaflets all over the company buildings.

THE LIBERAL IMAGE SHATTERED

When she arrived at work Monday, Caroline was prevented by the police from entering

Polaroid. She was surprised by the company's response. She had been disenchanted with her work at Polaroid — I knew what it meant to be employed in a corporation of that kind as an individual and as a Black person" — but up until then she had accepted the liberal image that the corporation put forward. "Employees could protest and raise issues and these would be dealt with," she said. "Though this was not the traditional means of raising an issue we didn't think it was going to prevent us from getting in!"

The next few days were busy. A number of workers reproached Caroline for daring to challenge Polaroid's liberal and paternalist image. Some of them accepted Caroline's suggestion to call the Human Relations dept. and ask about the issue. When they got no satisfactory responses, they were less convinced of Polaroid's "innocence."

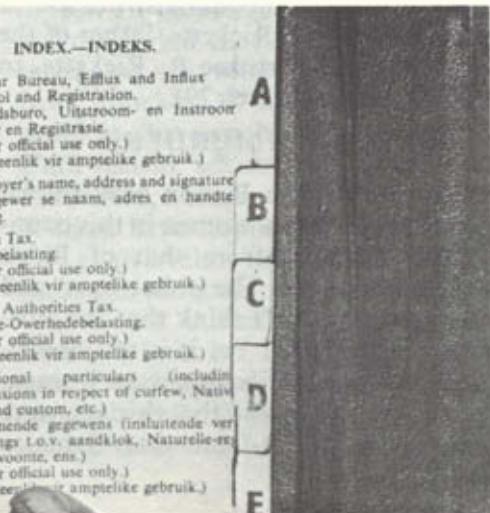
At a rally outside Polaroid, a South African speaker confirmed, from his own experience, that Polaroid's instant film was used in the passbooks that all Black people in South Africa must carry with them at all times, under penalty of imprisonment. He explained that by

(cont. on p. 10)



INDEX.—INDEKS.

- A. Labour Bureau, Efflux and Influx Control and Registration.
Arbeidsburo, Uitstroom- en Instroom behoer en Registrasie.
(For official use only.)
(Alleenlik vir ampelike gebruik.)
- B. Employer's name, address and signature.
Werkgever se naam, adres en handtekening.
- C. Union Tax.
Unie-belasting.
(For official use only.)
(Alleenlik vir ampelike gebruik.)
- D. Bantu Authorities Tax.
Bantoe-Owerhedebelasting.
(For official use only.)
(Alleenlik vir ampelike gebruik.)
- E. Additional particulars (including concessions in respect of curfew, Native law and custom, etc.)
Bykomende gegevens (insluitende ver gunnings t.o.v. saandklok, Naturele-re en gewoonte, ens.).
(For official use only.)
(Alleenlik vir ampelike gebruik.)



WOMEN ORGANIZING AC

Fourteen women — thirteen black and one white — have been murdered in Boston since January.

All violence is an exercise in power. The further down you are on the economic and social totem pole, the more society accepts the violence against you. Being black and female puts you at the bottom, both in the U.S. and in South Africa.

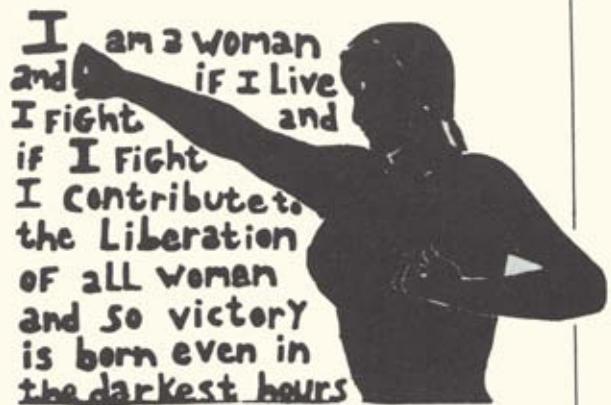
The apartheid system in South Africa is based on the violent suppression of Black people. The murder and rape of Black women is an 'accepted' way of 'keeping all Africans in their place.'

In addition to this violence at the hands of white South Africans, all Black South Africans, but particularly Black South African women, suffer from abuse from local drunks, or "tsotsis," who have been dehumanized by the repressive system. Because of the poverty, the deprivation of basic rights and the indifference of the police, South Africa has one of the highest murder rates in the world.

"I feel that crime will always be a part of the fabric of everyday life as long as there is poverty and as long as there is inferior education and as long as there is unequal distribution of wealth," wrote Byron J. Ricketts, father of the first Boston victim, Christine R. Ricketts, to the *Bay State Banner* (March 29).

THE BOSTON MURDERS

The recent murders in Boston have shown that the situation of Black women in this country is not so different from that of Black women in South Africa. The police have said repeatedly that they don't think that the Boston murders are related. Yet it is not coincidental that all fourteen victims were women, that thirteen were Black and that thirteen were killed in the Roxbury-Dorchester-Jamaica Plain district.



cpf/women: a journal of liberation

Many people are disturbed by the quality of what little media coverage there has been on the murders. Rather than emphasizing that the streets aren't safe, the media tends to shift the blame onto the victims. They accused two of the victims of being prostitutes, and dug up a previous criminal record of another. This encourages the myth that all women, particularly Black women, "ask for it." Even though it is assumed that a "good girl" cannot get raped or murdered, violence happens in every community.

The attitude, held by the police and the media, that the Black community accepts crime as a way of life has got to be dispelled. These cases represent only a small fraction of violence against women, in the Black communities and in low-income areas. Rep. Mel King (South End) told an April 28th rally on the Boston Common that the murders of the women and the city administration's attitude toward them stems from an atmosphere in which violence against women is commonplace and accepted.

AGAINST VIOLENCE

Black and white women have joined forces to combat the rising tide of violence against us. This is an important coalition. Through the feminist movement, we have come to acknowledge our shared interests and experiences as women, to recognize that which unites us is stronger than the forces that keep us apart. Acknowledging our very real cultural differences and differences in educational and financial resources which result from growing up in a racist, patriarchal society, white women are providing support to our sisters in a time when being a woman — particularly a Black or Third World woman — in Boston is extremely dangerous. (from a letter from the Support group for Women's Safety)

WOMEN FIGHT BACK

Women are uniting to gain our rights to be free of physical abuse and fear. We are demanding fundamental changes in men's attitudes towards us. We are organizing different ways to protect ourselves and to make the streets safe. There is a growing awareness that we can not rely on the police. Communities have to start looking after themselves — not just during a crisis, but all the time.

Night marches, a women's freedom stride and poetry readings have occurred in response to the murders.

Women, Inc., a residential drug program for women and their children created the Coalition for Women's Safety which serves as an information clearing house for all the groups working on the murders. Crisis, a group formed after the death of the first two victims, holds weekly meetings at the Harriet Tubman House in the South End. Aswalos House in Roxbury also has regular meetings to organize against the murders.

A safe house network, where women can go to designated houses when in danger on the street, was organized block by block. This green light program was started by the Dorchester International Women's Day Committee and the Roxbury Alianza Mothers Associated (RAMA) Day Care Center. The green light program has expanded to Jamaica Plain where they also have a phone chain in order to respond to an emergency quickly. The Roxbury Multi-Service Center has also developed a hotline to educate, inform and provide support for women who are victims of violence.

Community Programs Against Sexual Assault (CPSA) has distributed thousands of cards which preventive measures that women should take in the city. Transition House, Casa Myrna Vasquez and Elizabeth Stone House serve as temporary shelters for women in crisis. The Blackstone Community School offers self-defense classes.

THE LARGER STRUGGLE

Even these special precautions for women will not lessen the impact that this violence has had on all women's mental and emotional health. At community meetings, they discuss not only what they can do to protect themselves, but also what can be done to stop men from attacking. This is not just a women's problem, but a problem of our whole society. Until racism, sexism, and poverty have been eliminated, women will continue to live in fear. Women have responded to the Boston murders at all levels — they have targeted both the racist and sexist elements of U.S. society.

In South Africa, violence against Black women is built into the apartheid power structure. The struggle for women's rights there, as here, is a necessary part of the entire struggle against the system.

-CR



Join Hands LNS/CPF

(Woman activist cont.)

providing the technological means by which the South African government could implement the passbook system, Polaroid was directly participating in the oppression of Black people there.

Polaroid first denied, and then had to admit, to its involvement. It then tried to obscure the issue of its supplying the means of making passbooks, by claiming that it could improve conditions for its Black workers in South Africa. This "reform from within" approach tries to convince the public here that the corporations in South Africa can "liberalise" the apartheid system. Black leaders in South Africa, however, insist that corporations can help them only by withdrawing their investments from the country.

DEVELOPING THE STRUGGLE

To provide an organizational form for their activities Caroline and other Polaroid workers formed Polaroid Revolutionary Workers. They called for an international boycott of Polaroid products. They distributed information locally, nationally, and internationally, exposing the hypocrisy behind Polaroid's humanist image.

Particularly strong support came from the Black community and Black organizations. The Black United Front (since disbanded) refused to use, for themselves, a grant from Polaroid. Instead, despite their own considerable financial needs, they sent the money to the UN for the South African Liberation movements. In another example, Roxbury Multi-Service Center voted to return their grant from Polaroid.

As from 1977 Polaroid claims that it is no longer dealing in South Africa. Caroline expresses scepticism on this count, since Polaroid has on several occasions, announced its withdrawal, only to be exposed again!

AFTER POLAROID

Her experience with Polaroid drew Caroline into political activity and, since then, she has been an outstanding activist against apartheid and U.S. involvement in South Africa, and against racism in the U.S. She was involved in forming People Against National Identity Cards, which evolved out of her Polaroid activities. As a founding member of the Third World Women's Organization, she was a leading force in setting up, and is still active in, the Winnie Mandela Solidarity Coalition. WMSC focuses on the plight of Black women in South Africa and their struggle against apartheid. Her jobs, since being fired from Polaroid in 1971, and her community involvement, further reflect her increased political commitment. She has worked in social service programs for prisoners, organized and taught in drug education programs, and is on the Board of Directors of Margaret Fuller House, a Cambridge-based community agency. Most recently, she has taught in alternative community-based high schools, including the Group School in Cambridge where she is now teaching.

For Caroline, her Polaroid activities were only a beginning!

-Peig

Death of a Leader

President Neto was imprisoned several times by the Portuguese for his revolutionary activities. The following poem was written while he was in prison in 1960.

WE MUST RETURN

*To the houses, to our crops
to the beaches, to our fields
we must return*

*To our lands
red with coffee
white with cotton
green with maize fields
we must return*

*To our mines of diamonds
gold, copper, oil
we must return*

*To our rivers, our lakes
to the mountains, the forests
we must return*

*To the coolness of the mulemba
to our traditions
to the rhythms and bonfires
we must return*

*To the marimba and the quissange
to our carnival
we must return*

*To our beautiful Angolan homeland
our land, our mother
we must return*

*We must return
to liberated Angola
independent Angola.*

Agostinho Neto
Aljube Prison in Lisbon,
October 1960



UPI

Agostinho Neto.

The members of the BCLSA wish to recognize the passing of Dr. Agostinho Neto, President of Angola. This great African revolutionary leader and poet died of cancer on September 10. His life will remain an inspiration to all fighting against exploitation, oppression and injustice everywhere.

BCLSA has organized a meeting to commemorate the life of Agostinho Neto on Oct. 12th at 7:30 P.M. at St. Mark's Church, 100 Townsend St., Roxbury (near Boston Tech High School). The informal program will include poetry, music, and a brief presentation about President Neto's life and work. All people interested in learning about and honoring this great man are urged to attend.



(boxing cont.)

Board of Control (SABC), a government agency. Mike Mortimer, an official of SABC, is currently head of the rankings committee of the WBA. Since he took this office, two white South African heavyweights, Knoetze and Coetzee, have climbed to 2nd and 5th in the WBA rankings.

Black American boxers, controlled by Arum, have been pressured into fighting South Africans. Arum has arranged the so-called "title eliminators" between Leon Spinks, John Tate (2 Black Americans) and two white South Africans, Knoetze and Coetzee. He purposely selected one of the so-called African "homelands" for the Tate-Knoetze fight. CBS covered the fight and referred to this "homeland" or Bantustan as "the independent nation of Bophuthatswana" on TV, even though not a single nation outside South Africa recognizes Bophuthatswana. The South African government is willing to spend a lot of money to improve its public image. Bob Arum's willingness to serve apartheid propaganda is making him a rich man.

STOP THE FIGHT

Arum has announced a fight on October 20 between John Tate and Coetzee. According to the *New York Times* (July 7), Arum calls Coetzee the "best white fighter" he has ever seen. NBC has agreed to cover this fight which will determine Muhammad Ali's successor. NBC's Boston affiliate, WBZ-TV, has refused to cancel the broadcast of the fight.

Summing up the South African boxing connection, ACCESS states that the only winner from this seedy series will be the South African regime. South Africa will have gained a rose-colored spotlight to showcase apartheid as they want the world to see it, not as it is for the 20 million South African Blacks who are forced to live — and die — under apartheid every day.

All sympathetic people in Boston are asked to write to Sy Yanoff, General Manager of WBZ-TV, 1170 Soldiers Field Road, Boston, 02134, and to request that WBZ not carry the fight.

-Vukani Futhi

THE VICTORY OF THE NICARAGUAN PEOPLE



Last July the people of Nicaragua poured into the streets to welcome their new provisional government. The dictator Anastasio Somoza had finally left the country, forced out by popular resistance.

SOMOZAS — MADE IN U.S.

The Somoza family had ruled Nicaragua since the 1930's. They were installed in power by the U.S., which had occupied the country and created the National Guard to guarantee U.S. interests. The Somoza family regarded Nicaragua as their private estate. Through their control of the government they took over the country's economy, piling up a fortune of \$500 million. Meanwhile the majority of Nicaraguans lived in dire poverty, and repression was severe.

THE RESISTANCE

The Sandinista Front for National Liberation (FSLN) was formed in 1961 to overthrow the Somoza regime through armed struggle. They built up a support network through ties with the labor movement, student organizations, indigenous communities, urban slum dwellers, and priests. They made alliances with members of the bourgeoisie who opposed Somoza, forming a united front organization.

Guerilla actions, combined with strikes and boycotts, against the regime led to U.S. sponsored negotiations. These failed. The National

Patriotic Front was formed to unite all the opposition forces in the final struggle against Somoza. The FSLN called for a general strike and popular insurrection, which succeeded, at last, in defeating Somoza's National Guard.

THE NEW GOVERNMENT

The FSLN selected a broad-based provisional government, and all sections of the opposition held firm behind this five member junta, despite efforts by the U.S. to undermine it. The new government has dismantled the Somoza institutions, and nationalized Somoza property and banks. A new army was created, and civil defense committees are being set up to involve the people in defense and reconstruction.

DEFEAT FOR U.S. IMPERIALISM

U.S. plans for intervention through an Organization of American States "peace-keeping force" were blocked by the refusal of the OAS to co-operate. Popular support for the FSLN had been openly expressed in many Latin American countries, and their governments could not risk going against that feeling.

There are some interesting parallels between the Nicaraguan and South African struggles. In both cases, the U.S. sold arms to the governments until popular pressure forced them to end this. In both cases, with U.S. collusion, Israel took over supplying the arms. In Nicaragua there were, and in Southern Africa there have been many layers of political struggle — most decisively armed struggle, but also strikes, boycotts, demonstrations, all of which involve massive numbers of people. The Nicaraguan people have shown the vulnerability of U.S.-backed repressive regimes. In Nicaragua, deep hatred of the dictator united all classes. In South Africa, deep hatred of white minority rule unites the great majority of the people. Botha and company will go the way of Somoza.

-Mina Reddy

APARTHEID AND THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge voters will have an opportunity to take a stand against South Africa's system of apartheid in the upcoming city elections this November. One of the referendum questions on the ballot asks, "*Shall the City of Cambridge refrain from investing public monies in banks and other financial institutions doing business in or with the Republic of South Africa?*" These monies take the form of pension funds and general funds for city expenditures. The exact dollar figure of Cambridge's South African connection is not yet known. What is known, though, is that city funds are diverted to support apartheid when they could be invested in jobs and housing for citizens of Cambridge.

BCLSA has joined a Cambridge coalition organized to educate the public about what apartheid is, how investment decisions by the city support it, and why a "yes" vote on the referendum question can help the struggle for freedom in South Africa. Since the referendum is non-binding, it is important that every Cambridge resident vote "yes" on the question. This would put pressure on the City Council to act on the issue.

Many Cambridge organizations, which have never dealt with issues like apartheid, will be approached on taking up the campaign. The coalition will contact church groups, neighborhood associations, minority peoples' organizations, union locals, and tenant groups. BCLSA especially urges our newsletter readers in Cambridge not only to vote "yes" on the referendum question, but also to get friends, co-workers and relatives to do the same. The deadline for registering to vote is Oct. 17; the elections are Nov. 6.



NEPA News/cpf

BCLSA UPDATE

WILLIE SANDERS MARCH

On Saturday, August 18, 250 demonstrators, black and white, marched from the Harriet Tubman House through Roxbury to the Roxbury Boys Club. The march was in support of Willie Sanders, a Black man who has been framed for a series of rapes that occurred in Brighton last winter. The BCLSA endorsed the march. Ten of its members marched behind a banner which said, "Fight Racism from Boston to South Africa. Free Willie Sanders." Speakers at the rally held after the march included Skip Robinson of the United League of Mississippi, Boston mayoral candidate Mel King, and Willie Sanders himself. A representative from the broad coalition of woman's groups which sponsored the Take Back the Night march the same evening also spoke. She stressed the common interest we all have in fighting both racism and sexism. Willie Sanders goes on trial in October.

FALL ACTIVITIES

BCLSA has decided that its major focus this Fall will be a combined educational and material support program for the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. A slide or film show and a leaflet will soon be available for use in outreach work to union groups, churches, schools, community organizations, etc. Anyone interested in arranging such a program should call the program coordinator, Melinda Tuhus at 522-8699.

In addition to the work on Zimbabwe, the coalition has appointed committees to work on two short-term projects: the upcoming referendum in Cambridge on the divestment of

city funds from companies and banks doing business in South Africa, and the campaign to stop the Gerrie Coetze-John Tate boxing match scheduled to take place Oct. 20 and to be aired locally by Channel 4, WBZ. (See article in this newsletter for details).

If you are interested in working with BCLSA call the address on our logo.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Oct. 12th, Agostinho Neto Memorial, St. Mark's Church, 100 Townsend St., Roxbury.

Oct. 17th, last day for Cambridge residents to register to vote for the coming election.

PLEASE HELP

We need money. We need funds—to publish this newsletter; to organize and conduct teach-ins and film shows on Southern Africa; to keep abreast of events in Southern Africa; to challenge the exploitative, racist, or sexist activities of American corporations at home and abroad; to expose U.S. governmental collaboration with the terrorist minority regime in Southern Africa; to discredit South Africa's multimillion-dollar propaganda machinery—we really need your assistance. We ask that you pledge yourself to at least \$1.00 per month, and more if you can, to support our work.

WHO WE ARE

BCLSA is a coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to the fight against economic exploitation and political repression, particularly in the U.S. and Southern Africa. The function of our newsletter is to (1) publish news about Southern African liberation support activities in the Boston area, (2) inform our readers of events and issues in Southern Africa, and (3) explain basic concepts relevant to these issues. We would appreciate any questions, comments, or suggestions that you may have.

BCLSA
Box 8791
Boston, Mass. 02114

I pledge a monthly donation of: \$1, \$5, SEVEN MORE
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SPECIAL FOCUS ON WOMEN

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