

## Some hypotheses concerning the Southern Africa Issue and Wisconsin

### 1. There is a need for a community-based organization of concern for change in Southern Africa among Madisonians

Because:

- a. It now becomes more clear that the liberation struggle in Southern Africa will not be consummated in the next 5 - 10 years.
- b. If the liberation struggle is to be successful, the social structure that supports injustice in southern Africa must be weakened in any way possible. This can be accomplished at every level of the system - economic, technological, political, social, moral.
- c. Truly revolutionary action is ought by attempting to utilize any contribution which any person or group of persons is willing to make to the weakening of the southern African systems. This includes the activities acceptable to radicals, revolutionaries, moderates, moralists etc. The validity of an action offered by any source as a weakening of the southern African system is not to be challenged on the grounds of its congruence with any particular plan or model of how change will occur in southern Africa.
- d. It is clear that the greatest contribution of ordinary American townspeople and students is to seek to shape U.S. policy on southern Africa, as presently formed almost exclusively by the interests of the administration, the commerce and military establishments, private corporations.
- e. It is clear that the U.S. decision to continue, to escalate or to reduce engagement of political, military and commercial institutions is a crucial decision for the amount and form of change in southern Africa. The goal is to seek disengagement, or at the very least, no growth of engagement.
- f. Effective power of townspeople and students is exercised only to the extent that it is politically organized around the particular issue. Other "liberal", "student" and "civil rights" organizations have not demonstrated any "staying power" on an issue like southern Africa which is tangential to any of the immediate interests of the groups involved.

### 2. A Madison-based committee to deal with concern on southern Africa is needed now

Because:

- a. There is a growing involvement in southern Africa by American corporations of all kinds, many of which are based in or operate within Wisconsin. Information increasingly is available on these firms.
- b. There are important decisions made in Madison concerning Government, University and private agency relations with southern African white governments and their subsidiary organizations.
- c. There is a growing constituency of persons in and out of the University with strong motivations to seek institutionalized channels in order to pyramid individual efforts in seeking change in southern Africa. These resources of persons include returned volunteers of various kinds, Africanists, African students, American blacks, students, townspeople.
- d. There are a number of congressmen and senators from Wisconsin whose opinions are important in Washington and who may be open to new interpretations of events in southern Africa. This may be important in connection with the growing interests in southern Africa in the Congress among men like Congressman Diggs, Lowenstein, Fraser and Senator Brooke.



- e. There is an increasing level of interest in the problems of southern African blacks among some American blacks which could be important in the development of political pressure in the U.S.A.
  - f. There is a large body of information on southern Africa and U.S. involvements which is not being effectively disseminated either to the public through local media outlets or to the university communities.
  - g. There is a growth of such organization in other universities and cities to which such an effort can be linked.
  - h. There is a growing body of "awakened" students in the Madison area who are seeking outlets and channels for their concerns who could be involved in such an effort and who could become important in the future.
  - i. There is a need for an action-oriented research toward change in southern Africa, U.S. involvements, and other strategic involvements, and tactical considerations for which there are personnel on the Madison campus.
3. Considering the tangential nature of southern Africa to the real interests of most Madisonians and students, and the relatively small number of informed persons available, the action of such a committee should be focussed on:
- a. Information, including:
    1. Awakening the academic community in Madison and across Wisconsin through speakers, literature, films, use of radio and TV.
    2. Awakening the black community to the information and resources.
    3. Reaching high schools.
    4. Reaching the general public through middle-class voluntary associations, churches, clubs, interest groups etc.
    5. Reaching decision-making elites in government, industry, university
    6. Providing channels by which African students at the Universities can take the "southern African story" into every possible school, college, club, church, association etc.
  - b. Political pressure  
on Wisconsin national legislators  
on the Federal Administration
  - c. Research
    - on US ties to southern Africa  
(possible participation in a national division of labor on this task)
    - for action programs of Wisconsin and national agencies seeking change in southern Africa (black organizations, American Committee on Africa, Alben Luthuli fund etc.)
  - d. Seeking disengagement of various institutions for any exchange or informational flow beneficial to the southern African systems including -  
tourism, tour arrangements etc.  
exchanges of students, graduate study for southern African whites  
uses of university-gathered information for development of the southern African economies and for companies enjoying the profits of southern Africa
  - e. Sanctioning these organizations continuing to profit on the southern African economic relationships and systems (primarily through embarrassment)
    - private companies
    - investors, private and institutional
  - f. Fund collection
    - for legal aid and defense
    - for revolutionary movements
    - for the efforts at change in this country
    - for education of African students



4. It is urgent that all programs be chosen with the criterion of seeking change in southern Africa

It is characteristic of student-dominated movements to mobilize only sporadically and for short durations of time without achieving a long-term institutionalization of a concern or issue. The result is that gestures of symbolic importance against the most convenient targets frequently do not link to other developments that may accrue to develop political pressure. Symbolic action must not be used wastefully but strategically.

5. An important determinant in the success of such a committee will be its ability to institutionalize its concerns by an extensive division of labor and regularization of procedures.

Therefore:

- a. There must be some initial agreement on the priorities of action, the ultimate and proximate targets of that action, the resources available for such action, and the criteria for the inclusion or exclusion of various programs and plans.
- b. There must be a parcelling-out of responsibility for various tasks such as director of information, education in high schools, liaison with the Capital Times, consistent and persistent pressure on particular Congressmen, research on the U.S. and Rhodesia, fund collecting etc.
- c. Thus the extent of the committee's program should be determined not by an ideal scheme but by the number of persons available but by the number of persons available to fill particular "posts" - to assume responsibility for one narrow area of action. This does not eliminate wide-spread floating participation in all levels and kinds of action on southern Africa, but it does tie down responsibility and accountability to persons. This is more important in an organization the less the performance of the tasks needed is related to the "real interests" of the individuals in these particular roles.

6. It is urgent that the founding committee be constituted by American blacks and whites in concert to reach the multitude of constituencies involved in accruing pressure for change in southern Africa