



MADISON AREA COMMITTEE
ON SOUTHERN AFRICA
731 State Street
Madison, Wisconsin 53703
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macsa

news

MACSA WILL TEMPORARILY CEASE PUBLICATION OF THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE SUMMER. OUR NEXT REGULAR MEETING WILL BE ON SUNDAY, SEPT. 4, 1977 at THE PRES HOUSE 731 STATE ST 3:30 pm

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SOWETO REMEMBERED

The disturbances throughout South Africa triggered off by the police massacre of school children demonstrators in Soweto on June 16, 1976, represent the greatest upsurge against white domination since the Union was formed in 1910.

The actual total of people who died in the 1976 disturbances will probably never be known, but it mounts into the thousands. The Soweto police chief told a commission of inquiry that between June 16 and August 30, more than 16,000 rounds of ammunition were fired by police in attempts to restore order there. 16,000 times that give lie to Vorster's claim that apartheid brings peace.

It is clear that the Government embarked on a program of mass execution as a means of ending demonstrations. Not only were ring-leaders systematically picked off, but men, women and children died by the hundreds simply because they were in the area of operations.

The journalists who reported by photograph and story have been detained without trial. The coroners and doctors who reported that most of the dead were shot in the back are detained. Those doctors who reported death of the arrested by torture have been detained. New laws have been passed completely muzzling the press and cutting off information. The South African government is spending millions in North America to give a pleasant face to apartheid.

Very striking in June, 1976, was the almost complete absence of inter-racial violence. Instead there was mass action displaying grass roots solidarity between the black peoples of South Africa--Indian, Colored and African--on a scale never before witnessed in South Africa. There was solidarity on the part of some white students from English-language universities. The initiative taken by the students became a formidable force when allied with the power of the urban African working class which rallied to the call.

Despite 13 years of detention without trial, of unrestrained police terror in which the liberation organizations and their leaders were harrassed and arrested, despite the mass arrests from June 16 onwards of Black leaders, the worker-student alliance continued to rally the forces of the entire community in disciplined mass action.

Strong new demonstrations that broke out in May over rent increases of 40% to 80% for Soweto's residents herald a fresh wave of anti-apartheid struggle rising among the Black majority. An important feature of these new outbursts is that those few Black groups that last June tended to side with the Government police against the students, playing a vigilante role, are now in the forefront of the rent protest.

Twelve years ago, in June of 1955, representatives of all South Africa's people met in Kliptown, near Johannesburg. It was there that the "Freedom Charter" was unanimously adopted by the "Congress of the People." The Congress was convened by the African National Congress, together with the South African Indian Congress, the South African Coloured People's Organization and the Congress of Democrats (an organization of whites supporting the liberation movement). The "Freedom Charter" proclaimed that "South Africa belongs to all who live in it, Black and white;" "The People Shall Govern;" "All National groups shall have equal rights;" "The People Shall Share in in the country's wealth;" "There shall be work and security;" "The doors of learning and culture shall be opened;" "There shall be houses, security and comfort;" and "There shall be peace and friendship!"

Soweto is the watershed. There is no turning back. The mass uprising reflect the peoples total and active rejection of the Vorster government. An ANC pamphlet circulating within South Africa says: "FIGHT! / Let us not climb / The mountain of despair, / or drown in the pool / of hopelessness. / Instead / Let us cry AMANDLA / and follow the trail / of the WARRIOR.

DON'T WEEP! ORGANIZE!
MOBILIZE! DON'T MOURN!

DANE COUNTY BOARD PASSES RESOLUTION ON SOUTH AFRICA: NEXT STEP
IS WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE

At their June 2nd meeting, the Dane County Board of Supervisors passed Resolution 344 which discouraged county contracts with companies doing business with South Africa. The final form of the resolution (Macsa News, 62, March, 1977, pp. 4-5.) deleted all the "Therefore" clauses except numbers 2 & 4 which became 1 & 2 in the final resolution. The following letter was sent June 10, to Assemblyperson David E. Clarenbach on Macsa stationery:

Assemblyperson David E. Clarenbach
422 North Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin 53702

Dear Mr. Clarenbach:

Your excellent record in the House encourages me to address you on a matter that has been our concern here in Madison for more than a decade. The Madison Area Committee on Southern Africa has been organizing since the late sixties around issues that affect the freedom of the majority of South Africa's people. While we welcome Attorney General La Follette's recent ruling with regard to the University of Wisconsin's investments in companies doing business with South Africa, we have been organizing on the principle that good foreign policy may have to begin in our local political institutions--especially where powerful transnational corporations are involved.

Thus we initiated Madison Common Council Resolution 29.355 of June 29, 1976 which sought to encourage contracts with companies that did not have ties with South Africa. Dane County Supervisors W. Bird and N. Kaufler modeled their Resolution 344 after the City's, and it passed in the Board Chambers on June 2.

The purpose of this letter is to urge you to initiate an act in the Assembly that would bring this matter one step higher in our form of democracy. While MACSA has all the documentation you will need at your disposal, I am enclosing only a copy of a similar act introduced into the New York State Legislature on March 29, 1977. A summary memorandum is also attached. Would you be willing to introduce such an act for our State Legislature? What would be its chances of passing and what kind of support could MACSA members provide?

We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience. I could meet with you on this matter any time in June, early July, or late August. We feel certain that you share our feeling of urgency in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Henry H. Bucher, Jr.

Dr. Henry Bucher, Jr.

Convener of MACSA (238-6947)

Curriculum Specialist, African Studies
Program, U-W (262-2380)

WORKERS UNITY

MACSA editors are pleased to announce the receipt of a new trade union publication, WORKERS UNITY, Organ of the South African Congress of Trade Unions. The first issue appeared in January, 1977. For those desiring to subscribe, write: SACTU, 49 Rathbone Street, London W1A 4NL, England. Please send donation. They cannot operate without funds.

From this important publication we excerpt a few paragraphs.

During the past six months, South Africa has been shaken by the greatest mass upsurge in the revolutionary struggle of the black working people since the early 1960s... Now, for the time being, there is a pause. Before long the struggle will move forward again even more fiercely. All the shootings, beatings, arrest and torture have failed to crush the spirit of the people. The determination to fight on is stronger than ever before.

Of course the apartheid regime is making the most of this relative calm. The police are tightening their grip. The house-to-house searches, the arrests of suspected militants by the hundred, the torture of detainees, infiltration by informers and the systematic intimidation of workers and students--all these have been stepped up. These measures will not succeed...

What is the way forward? To answer this question correctly is the task of all leaders at every level, in the factories, schools and organizations of people.

From Soweto to Langa to Athlone they are emphasizing that the main battleground in the struggle against apartheid lies in the big cities, in the industrial areas where the power-houses of production have been built up.

They are showing, secondly, that in this struggle, nothing can take the place of the mass power of the oppressed people themselves.

Thirdly, they are showing what apartheid really means to the majority of the black people... It means far more than racism, far more than discrimination on the grounds of colour. It means far more than just the denial of democratic rights or the humiliation of inequality. To the working people, apartheid is part and parcel of the system which exploits them economically. It holds them in utter poverty, it controls their every movement through the pass laws and the contract labor system, and it yokes them as mere oxen of labour in the service of the capitalist class.

Fourthly, they are showing that once the struggle against apartheid breaks out into the open, it rapidly becomes a social struggle against the ruling class.

On June 16 (1976), when the school-children demonstrated peacefully in Soweto against compulsory teaching in Afrikaans, they were shot down by the police in cold blood. Although the young people returned to the streets day after day, marching unarmed against bullets, they soon realized that bravery alone was not enough. They had shown their willingness to die if need be... but they lacked the means to strike an effective blow.

For this reason they turned to the black workers--the labour force on which the whole capitalist economy in South Africa rests. They realized that without the labour of the workers there is nothing: no production in the factories, no transport, no deliveries, no communications. Everything would grind to a halt.

The workers were slower to move than the students, but when they did move they immediately raised the entire struggle to a new and higher stage. On two occasions black workers successfully carried out three-day political general strikes which paralysed industry on the Witwatersrand and in the Cape.

In September, more than 500,000 African and Coloured workers were on strike in Johannesburg and Cape Town alone.

What is the significance of these strikes?

First, that so many workers were prepared to strike in spite of the threat not only of arrest, beating and shooting by the police, but also of mass dismissal from their jobs. Unemployment among Africans is approximately 2 million, or 20%, and many unemployed workers face the additional threat of deportation to the reserves under the pass laws.

Second, that the strikes were carried out on such a large scale with such skill, discipline and maturity by a working class which has, for more than a decade, been deprived of open leadership and organization, and which lacks even basic trade union rights.

Third, that for the first time in the history of our struggle the Coloured workers (and indeed also the youth) have rallied in their thousands to the side of their African brothers.

Finally, and most important, it was the strike action of the black workers which really shook the confidence of the regime and of the whole capitalist ruling class.

The Roots of Apartheid

The struggle in South Africa is not against apartheid "pure and simple," not against white domination alone, but also against the whole system of class exploitation which underlies it. Why are black people so oppressed in South Africa? Why has this monstrous apartheid system grown up? Is it because there is some special evil in white people? Of course not!

At the root of it all is an economic system in which the wealth of our country, the mines, the factories and the big farms, are owned by a tiny minority. This ownership enables them to exploit the labour of the working people for their own profit.

Everything which is produced is made by the labour of workers. But instead of enjoying the benefit of the wealth they produce, black workers are paid wages which are just enough to survive--and to keep on working. For the bosses it is different. Simply because they own the mines, factories, land, etc., they take from the workers whatever is produced and become the holders of vast fortunes which they can manage as they please. This makes them the masters, not only of "their" workers, but of society as a whole. They are the real power behind the government and it is for their benefit above all, and for the protection of their property, that the repressive forces of the South African police are set to work.

Apartheid serves the interests of this capitalist system in South Africa. To suit the needs of the employers, it moves black workers like cattle from place to place under the strictest control, by means of the pass laws, "Bantu administration" and the contract labour system. It uses the reserves ("Bantustans") as great dams of unemployed labour, where Africans are made to wait until the bosses call. It denies black people democratic rights. It bans their political organizations and imprisons their leaders. And now it is trying again to suppress their trade unions. It imposes an "education" system whose stated aim is to prepare blacks only for the role of menial labourers. Apartheid means near-slavery.

In future issues we will deal more fully with the trade unions of the African working class.

Special Reports

CASTRO IN AFRICA

In Tanzania the banners read "Karibu Ndugu" as Castro stepped off his plane. The words differed in the language of other places but the meaning was always the same: "Welcome, Comrade."

This cry swelled up each day of the more than 30 days Fidel Castro spent in Africa. It came from thousands of ordinary citizens who turned out to catch a glimpse of the leader of a country whose actions have galvanized the entire Third World.

Castro's tour occupied the whole month of March and took him to eight countries: Algeria, Libya, Yemen, Somalia, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Mozambique and Angola.

In each of these nations, tumultuous crowds pressed around him wherever he went—in motorcades, on foot, at plazas, historical sites, places of work.

In Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzanians lined the route from the airport to the capitol, holding aloft placards inscribed with greetings such as:

"Ndugo Castro, your actions are a radiant hope for the oppressed masses;" and "Long Live Ndugu Castro, long live proletarian internationalism."

The enthusiasm was genuine and often spontaneous. It was manifest in Mozambique (where Cuba and Frelimo signed a cooperative agreement in the fields of industry, fishing, education and culture) and surpassed only in Angola. There, animated crowds repeatedly interrupted the Cuban leader's speeches with chants and applause.

Community of Interest

The people's welcome everywhere indicates the extent of a continent's appreciation of Cuba's internationalist stance during the Angolan civil war. It springs too from an awareness of the profound community of interest between Africa in diaspora and the continent itself, both areas linked in a common struggle to throw off oppressive forms of social order.

On this essential point, the incomprehension of the Western press seems to devolve from a tendency to view world events solely in terms of Good Guys and Bad Guys, with all that is evil having its beginning and end in the Soviet Union.

Looking for Stooges

When the various facets of Castro's African tour are reduced to simple functions of superpower politics, the

Western press produces the following revision of recent history:

- the Cuban leader is a stooge, dutifully carrying out orders from his "paymasters in Moscow;"
- his tour was an imposition upon the African leaders concerned;
- he had as a hidden agenda further to enmesh his hosts in the economic web of "Soviet imperialism," and to prepare plans for delivering southern Africa into the jaws of the Russian bear.

Thus Castro is portrayed in the Western press as a slick advance man, simply greasing the way for a follow-up visit by Soviet Premier Podgorny.

Mesmerized by their own fantasy of heavy-handed plotters inside the Kremlin, such analysts overlook a crucial point:

While Castro's visit generated mass excitement among the people, the Soviet leader received a more subdued, though friendly, welcome.

The difference exists because the exchange between Cuba and the African nations is perceived as one involving equals. The basis of the identification is a common Third World perspective, and a shared struggle against underdevelopment.

It does not follow that this identification leads directly to a loss of national independence in a slavish relationship with the Soviet Union.

Nevertheless, the Western press smells a plot in which the Africans must be unsuspecting dupes, beguiled by the machinations of Soviet "imperialism."

The intrigue discerned in all this is one aiming immediately to subvert Zaire (thus severing Africa at the middle by means of an uninterrupted chain, coast to coast, of pro-Moscow states), and ultimately to "terrorize" Rhodesia, South West Africa and South Africa so that they fall, like lambs, into the Kremlin fold.

Maintaining Independence

This sinister rendering of African reality, the result of Western ideological imperatives, denies Africans any independent ability to play determining roles in what transpires on their own continent.

In actual fact, Africans see themselves as rising up against colonial domination in a conscious exercise of free will. They achieve national libera-



Prensa Latina

Crowds greet Fidel Castro in Luanda.

tion; they are not taken over by the Soviets.

The "front-line" states support the liberation struggles in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa also in a conscious exercise of free will. They are not pliant pawns in a grand foreign design in which Castro becomes "Moscow's shuttle diplomat" and Cuba the spearhead of Soviet hegemony in the whole of southern Africa.

Africa now is breaking up into two camps (one progressive, the other reactionary) because of the sharpening of its own internal contradictions. That impetus cannot be ascribed to Cuba, a tiny island of eight million inhabitants, located at the other end of the globe and acting as a proxy for Moscow.

Liberation Support

At a press conference just before leaving Dar-es-Salaam, Castro denied charges made by Mobutu and others implicating Cuba in the popular uprising in Zaire. He said:

"The struggle for independence is first and foremost a task for the people of that country. Each people, with the solidarity and support of all other progressive peoples, must carry forward the struggle for independence. That is, independence cannot be brought in from abroad. It is obtained from within the country with the support of progressive countries. That's what happened in Angola. The people of Angola gained their independence. Direct foreign aid came about at the time of an attack from abroad.

National liberation there would mean, in their eyes, a weakening of global imperialism. Any weakening of imperialism is conversely a strengthening of

the Socialist camp, of developing nations generally, in a world in which the primary confrontation remains that between Capitalism and Socialism.

In Zimbabwe, the Patriotic Front gets Socialists support precisely because it rejects the Kissinger plan, and its ploy of a "development fund" which would neatly locate a majority-rule economy in the hands of the US.

SWAPO President Sam Nujoma told reporters later that the Cuban leader had "promised to continue to support SWAPO . . . with material assistance, and he did the same for other liberation movements in southern Africa."

An Open Agenda

The Socialist countries, then, would not appear to have a hidden agenda in

Socialist reply that proletarian internationalism is, in the end, the recognition of necessity. Cuba did not need to be coerced into assuming a leadership role among Third World nations. It assumed that role and engaged in the battle in Africa because it was one of the few Socialist nations in a position to counter the interventions of external forces of reaction, and thus prevent the strengthening of forces hostile to its own survival.

Any intervention of the Soviet Union or a Warsaw Pact nation directly into an African conflict could lead to its complete internationalization. Progressive African nations still have limited capacities to give assistance because of their own internal weakness, and the lack of unanimity in the Organization of African Unity.

But when the African nations choose the direction of Socialism, they too are moved by the recognition of necessity.

"Times are changing," said Castro, recognizing the African position, in a speech in Luanda. "The progressive African countries long ago staked out their legitimate right to maintain relations with those countries they chose. But although this movement for complete independence began many years ago with Kwame Nkrumah, with Patrice Lumumba, with Amilcar Cabral, with President Marien Ngouabi, it is here in Angola that imperialism has met its strongest challenge so far. Angola means a strong rearguard enabling the frontline states to be utterly firm in their determination to support the liberation struggle in South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe—with all this entails for capitalism's exploitation of the three countries' 32 million workers and the mineral resources. And Angola has had the courage to stand by Marxism-Leninism as the only road out of colonial exploitation to independence and a better life for all of its people. . . . How can one expect a neocolonial regime to be able to answer the needs of the African people?"

Some countries in Africa have begun to shape their futures by recognizing that the answer to that question is "It is impossible."

That recognition lies at the heart of the struggle now being fought in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. While the minority regimes seek to entrench themselves through record defense budgets and western alliances, the people are organizing.

Castro spoke about what that can mean for the future in a speech at the Stadium in Benadir, Somalia. "There is another sun which shines over us, the sun of revolution and socialism—a sun which is rising all over the world. There is a dawn for this sun but there will never be a dusk." □



Tempo

President Samora Machel of Mozambique greets Fidel Castro in Beira.

Is proletarian internationalism just a euphemism for Soviet world conquest, to be carried out by stooges behind a screen of Havana cigar smoke?

"I also feel that regarding the countries of southern Africa, the greatest part of solidarity must come from the African peoples, from the so-called front-line countries. We will help them as much as we can."

A man of his word, Castro conferred in Luanda with leaders of the Zimbabwean Patriotic Front, the South West Africa People's Organization of Namibia, and the African National Congress of South Africa.

Africa. Their aims, like those of the neighboring front-line states, are clear—nothing less than the complete liberation of the southern African nations, and their placement on a path of non-capitalist development.

"Socialism," Fidel told his Dar-es-Salaam press conference, "is a matter of life or death for underdeveloped countries. The people will not resign themselves to death; they will struggle for progress and for their lives."

For the Soviet Union, Cuba and the progressive African nations, a convergence of interests now exists in the region of southern Africa.

Wisconsin's Attorney-General Bronson La Folette on May 19, issued an opinion that, under state law governing the University of Wisconsin, the University cannot legally buy new stocks in firms that practice racial discrimination, and he applied this principle to corporations doing business in South Africa.

He strongly urged that stock already held in those corporations be sold. Soon after, a second major official, University of Wisconsin Senior Vice-President, Donald Percy, also urged the University Board of Regents to sell stock now owned by corporations with holdings in South Africa. The University's \$8.9 million worth of such stock in 19 corporations, nearly half of its total stock holdings, will be important items on the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents agenda in the near future.

Some of those corporations with South African holdings include Exxon, Ford, U.S. Steel, Xerox, General Motors, IBM, Union Carbide, General Electric, Mobil, Goodyear, and others.

On Friday, June 24, 1977, at noon, at the Citibank headquarters (NYC) a protest rally will be sponsored by the South African Freedom Day Coalition, the American Committee on Africa, Clergy and Laity Concerned and several other organizations. The purpose of the rally is to protest Citibank's loans to the racist South African regime, while at the same time its policies in New York have led to the laying-off of thousands of workers.

For further information regarding the South African Freedom Day coalition, write: Akosua Barthwell, Chairperson, 126 West 119th Street, New York, N.Y. 10026.

Chicago Black unionists back South Africa boycott

Special to the Daily World

CHICAGO, June 1—The Chicago chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, in a recent statement, fully supported a local bargaining demand by Local 1011 of the United Steelworkers of America AFL-CIO, that Youngstown Sheet and Tube (YST) not use or purchase products produced under non-union conditions in Southern Africa. The ban would include chrome from Rhodesia and coal and coke from the Republic of South Africa.

The statement pointed out that the South African government does not allow the majority of its citizens to belong to trade unions.

"We support the banned South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) as the legitimate voice of the working people in South Africa. The American trade union movement has a duty to support the rights of working people in South Africa and Rhodesia since these two governments do not represent the majority of its citizens. We also feel that the apartheid regime of South Africa is illegal and does not represent the interest of the people since the majority of its citizens cannot vote.

"In the country of South Africa, where the Black population is over 75 percent and working under slave conditions, we of the CBTU support the right for immediate majority rule by the Black majority. Furthermore we feel that South African and Rhodesian raw materials or products should not be shipped or sold in this country, and we also support the boycotting of those materials or goods that are shipped or sold in this country."

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