The Struggle for Justice

In South Africa . . .

And here at home.

How U.S. support for South Africa affects your community. . .

A publication of the Washington Office on Africa Educational Fund
Americans workers are losing their jobs.

Unemployment has recently been at the highest level since the Depression. Plant closings are crippling communities across the country. Workers are being forced to accept pay cuts and other concessions. Unions are being broken.

Why? Because multinational corporations are putting people out of work and gutting our communities. To cut union wages, avoid paying taxes or paying to keep our air and water clean, they flee the United States. They go to countries where they can exploit cheap labor and make bigger profits: countries like Mexico, Brazil, Taiwan, Korea...

And South Africa! Where laws keep black workers—84 percent of all South Africans—from organizing effectively for better wages and working conditions. Where an undemocratic government representing 4 million whites uses taxes paid by U.S. companies to ensure a repressed and compliant workforce of 26 million blacks.

American workers often resent workers overseas, saying "they've taken our jobs." This is not true. South African workers did not invite U.S. "runaway shops" to their country. These companies have made life worse, not better, for the majority of South Africans. These corporations profit from—and help prop up—the system of racism there—called apartheid.

What is Apartheid?

For 400 years, black South Africans have been denied their freedom. They live under laws that segregate them from whites and deny them basic human rights.

Five of every six South Africans are black. Yet:
- they cannot live or work where they choose;
- they risk jail if they strike for better wages or justice on the job;
- they have no say in the government that rules them—they are not allowed to vote.

South Africa's system of racism—called apartheid—runs on cheap labor. To stay out of jail, blacks must carry "passbooks" wherever they go. These record their fingerprints, work record, tax and family status, tribe and race, and where they can legally live and work.

For black South Africans, home is not where they were born or choose to live—it is where the government decides to send them. Those no longer needed by white businesses are sent to live in barren, rural wastelands—called "homelands"—chosen for them by whites. White privilege and wealth rests on keeping blacks poor, exploited and powerless.
What is It Like to Live Under Apartheid?

- Apartheid destroys land rights. Eighty-four percent of South Africans are forced to live on 13 percent of the land—because they are black. Black communities are bulldozed to make room for whites. The government has moved millions of blacks from "whites-only" areas by force.

- Apartheid destroys black family life. Racist laws prevent husbands and wives from living together in "white" cities. Black women face double discrimination because of their sex and race. Those who can find work as maids feed white children while their own go hungry in the barren "homelands."

- Apartheid denies access to education. Less than half of black adults can read and write. Whites get free schooling. Blacks don't. The state spends 11 times more on a white child's education than on a black child's. Only about 7 percent of black children finish high school.

- Apartheid starves blacks to death in rural areas. One of every five rural black babies die before their first birthday—many from lack of food—while South Africa exports $2 billion worth of food a year.

- Apartheid denies decent wages. Africans earn on the average less than a third what white workers do. Over 60 percent of black urban families earn less than the white government says is necessary to survive. Rural blacks are even worse off.

- The apartheid government defends white wealth by force. It jails and kills those who protest against apartheid. It attacks neighboring nations which support South African freedom fighters.

The Ties That Bind...

"... People are rising up wherever they are assembled today, whether they are in Johannesburg, South Africa... New York City, Atlanta, Georgia... or Memphis, Tennessee. The cry is always the same: 'We want to be free.'"

Martin Luther King, April 3, 1968

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<th>IN SOUTH AFRICA</th>
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<td>U.S. BANKS</td>
<td>Many &quot;red-line&quot; poor, inner-city communities, denying funds for housing and jobs</td>
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<td>Tripled their loans to South Africa in Reagan's first two years. Banks like Citicorp, Chase Manhattan, Chemical and JP Morgan lent to the South African government and private companies linked to its arms and nuclear weapons program.</td>
<td>Eliminate bank jobs—particularly for young, black and women workers—by using machines Many actively anti-union.</td>
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<td>U.S. COMPANIES</td>
<td>Many ignore affirmative action rules Force worker wage and benefit &quot;givebacks&quot; by threatening to relocate overseas Demand public subsidies while seeking to cut corporate taxes Many actively try to bust unions or keep them from organizing.</td>
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<td>Agree to turn over plant facilities to South Africa's military in the event of &quot;civil unrest&quot; IBM and Control Data sell computers to South Africa's military Mobil, Exxon and others sell South Africa 43% of its oil.</td>
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<td>REAGAN ADMINISTRATION POLICY</td>
<td>Fattens military budget while cutting social programs like education Supports tax credits for private segregated schools Tries to cripple the Voting Rights Act Ignores growing police brutality and violence against the poor and minorities.</td>
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<td>Supports political changes excluding blacks from political power Refuses to condemn attacks on black activists Allows 2500 electric shock batons to be sold to South Africa for &quot;crowd control&quot; Refuses to condemn South African attacks on neighboring countries.</td>
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Credit: Africa News
U.S. Companies Profit—So Does Apartheid!

U.S. companies are eager to invest in South Africa. They make better profits than in the U.S. because South Africa's racist system allows them to pay black workers less than whites, refuse to bargain with black unions, ignore health and safety concerns and refuse to pay for work-related injuries or illnesses.

U.S. companies in turn help the white minority government rule the black majority when they:

- pay South African taxes used to finance police and military repression;
- sell South Africa the oil needed to run its war machine of tanks and jets used to attack neighboring countries;
- sell South Africa computers used to track black and white citizens;
- sell South Africa trucks, planes and technology used to maintain apartheid by force, and loan the government money for such purchases;
- sell South Africa nuclear materials and technology.

Reagan Boosts Apartheid...

The United Nations calls apartheid "a crime against humanity" and asks the world's people to stop all forms of support for the South African government. Some have heeded this call. Sweden prohibits all loans to or new investment in South Africa. British trade unions and churches have removed over a billion dollars from British banks that lend to South Africa.

But not President Reagan. In 1981 he called South Africa a "friend" and "ally." Since 1981, President Reagan has:

- allowed electric shock batons to be sold to South Africa;
- approved US training of South African Coast Guardsmen with our tax dollars;
- eased restrictions on selling US goods to South Africa's military and police;
- actively backed South Africa's request for a $1.1 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF);
- backed South Africa's attempt to refuse Namibia—illegally occupied by South African troops—its independence;
- refused to denounce the forced removal of blacks and increased repression of opponents of apartheid.

...And Steps on People Here

In the U.S. as well as South Africa, racism and union-busting mean profits for a very few and poverty for many. Throughout American history, blacks have suffered under American forms of apartheid—slavery and segregation laws. The civil rights movement helped us overcome much of this.

But racism still hurts all Americans. Blacks suffer from poor education, lower than average wages and high unemployment. Whites suffer, too, when low wages paid black workers are used to lower all workers' wage levels. All workers suffer when employers use racism to divide those trying to organize a union and fight for better wages and working conditions.

Under Ronald Reagan, racism is on the rise. His anti-people, pro-business policies hurt minorities, women, workers and the poor—the majority of Americans. He has ignored growing hunger and unemployment to give tax breaks to the rich and fund the largest peacetime increase in U.S. military spending ever.

Reagan's policies hurt people in the U.S.—just as they do in South Africa. Because of Reagan's budget cuts:

- Unemployment is high and poverty growing. While plant closings force many Americans out of work, unemployment benefits are reduced.

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Black South Africans are fighting back against apartheid's brutalities. They are fighting back through their churches, unions, civic and student organizations, and through their national liberation movements.

Churches have denounced the immorality of apartheid and led protests against unjust laws and detentions. Bishop Desmond Tutu, head of the South African Council of Churches, says economic pressure is one of the few peaceful ways left to bring about change in South Africa. Pastors and laypersons who protest apartheid have been detained. Some have been tortured and killed.

Black unions staged massive protests against apartheid laws and for justice on the job in 1982 and 1983. Over 300 strikes and work stoppages last year forced the South African government and companies to make grudging concessions. Growing union successes led the government to detain over 400 trade union members—including 56 officials and organizers—between 1981 and September 1983. One union has been "banned"—declared illegal and severely restricted.

The liberation movements, developed after decades of peaceful protest, were met by rising government violence. The Sharpeville Massacre of 1960—when unarmed people were shot down in the street—and government repression forced the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan African Congress (PAC) to become underground resistance movements fighting for the rights of all South Africans. Their members—including many unionists—want majority rule and a future based on equality and economic and social justice for all. They have attacked military and police targets used to control South Africa's majority by force: military bases, police interrogation and torture centers, nuclear installations.

**Break the Links: What You Can Do**

We must use our economic strength—as workers, consumers and investors—and our political clout—as voters and candidates—to stop U.S. investment in South Africa and shift it to our communities here at home.

**WE CAN:**
- register voters and vote for leaders who support ending U.S. ties to repressive regimes abroad and building up our towns and cities;
- defeat those—like Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC)—who support racist South Africa and oppose the Voting Rights Act and social programs here;
- get our union, church or community group to pull their money out (or divest) from banks and companies that profit from South African racism and demand that these companies end their domestic anti-union and anti-people policies (For a list of companies involved in South Africa, contact the Washington Office on Africa).
- work to pass city and state laws barring deposit or investment of your tax dollars in banks and companies that profit from apartheid. The nationwide divestment campaign has convinced states like Massachusetts and Michigan and cities like Philadelphia to pull their money out of South Africa.
- support efforts to pass national legislation to end loans to or investment in South Africa and to compensate workers and communities for plant closings.
... And Steps on People Here, continued

- Deaths among babies of poor parents are rising. Detroit's rate of infant deaths is now as high as Honduras', Latin America's poorest country.
- Hunger is increasing. People are standing in soup-lines while over 5 million people have lost their food-stamps or have had benefits cut since 1981.
- Homelessness is rising. Over two million Americans now have no homes. They are harassed by police when forced to sleep in parks or on streets. Many can only house their children by giving them up to welfare agencies.
- Workers' rights are under attack. Training programs have been slashed, OSHA regulations gutted, and workers forced to take cuts in pay and benefits just to keep their jobs.
- Civil rights are being eroded. Reagan is refusing to enforce anti-discrimination laws. He supports tax benefits for segregated schools.

Should we spend time fighting for our black brothers and sisters in South Africa when so many are suffering here at home? Yes, because we are fighting the same banks and companies that put greed before need. Yes, because we are fighting the same politicians whose policies exploit working people at home and abroad.

Coca-Cola: Things Go Worse for Workers

Every day, people in 157 countries drink Coca-Cola and 35 percent of all soft drinks sold in the world are made by Coke. Yet until American blacks organized in 1981 to change company policies, Coca-Cola had no black or woman directors, few black franchise owners, and hired and promoted few black workers into skilled positions at its U.S. plants.

In 1981, Operation PUSH forced the company to change. Coke agreed to hire more black workers and give more business to black-owned firms.

Things have been worse with Coke overseas. Coke's Guatemala subsidiary worked with the military junta to intimidate and kill trade unionists, and only stopped after a 5-nation boycott of Coke's products was threatened. In South Africa, black workers asked the community to boycott Coke in 1982 until the company agreed to recognize and bargain with their union. Because the company still refuses to raise its workers' low wages significantly or share information on who controls their pension fund, the union has called two work stoppages and may go out on full strike.

Banking on Repression: Citicorp

Citicorp is the second largest U.S. bank. It manages millions of workers' pension benefits. A few bosses make huge salaries. But rank and file workers in Citicorp—and many other U.S. banks—earn outrageously low wages because they have no union.

Citicorp forced the N.Y. legislature to allow higher interest rates on loans by threatening to relocate. It has invested union pension funds in companies that are anti-union, pollute our environment, and discriminate against minorities and women.

In New York, Citicorp is replacing workers with machines, eliminating jobs. Now, only people with over $5,000 in the bank can talk to tellers.

Citicorp lent South Africa nearly $2 billion during the 1970s and has loaned them millions since. Community and shareholders' protests halted its loans to the South African government in 1979. But in 1980, it lent another $250 million to fund segregated housing and education programs there. Its policies have sparked many states to pass laws barring deposit or investment of public tax dollars in Citicorp and other banks that finance apartheid.