December 6, 1976

Dear Friends,

The November election brought us a new President and a question mark about how United States policy toward southern Africa will shape up over the next four years.

Jimmy Carter campaigned on a pro-majority rule platform, which called for many improvements in southern Africa policy that we were not able to achieve during the Republican Administration:

- tightening of the arms embargo against South Africa
- denial of tax credits to companies operating in Namibia
- full enforcement of sanctions against Rhodesia
- normalization of relations with Angola.

But Carter has also expressed basic agreement with the recent Kissinger strategy of promoting moderate governments in Zimbabwe and Namibia amenable to the economic and strategic interests of the west. Carter chose a South African newspaper as the forum for his first policy statement on southern Africa as President-elect rather than candidate, and hinted there that he might pull back from some of his Party's campaign promises. In this interview, which you will find enclosed, he called for:

- more U.S. investment in and lending to South Africa, instead of denying "tax advantages" to all U.S. corporations "who support or participate in apartheid practices and policies"
- "achieving the removal of Cuban troops" from the Peoples Republic of Angola, instead of normalizing relations with that country.

With a Democratic Administration, we will need to develop new ways to try to influence U.S. - southern Africa policy. We will need to pay more attention to the Executive branch, especially since the Democratic Congress will look to the President for foreign policy initiatives in the near future. Many of us have greater access to the Carter Administration than we did to Ford. Also, Carter has a debt to repay to Black Americans who swung the election into his column.

But Carter will also be subject to the same pressures which shaped the Kissinger policy. U.S. companies will still want unrestricted access to raw materials and guaranteed cheap labor in South Africa and Namibia, and will clamour for a quick end to sanctions against Rhodesia and new incentives to invest in an independent Zimbabwe. South Africa is also vastly increasing its politicking and propaganda in this country.
Ambassador Botha met with two key Carter advisors in Atlanta within a week of the election. The South African government has also committed more than one million dollars to trying to influence governmental policy and public opinion in the United States.

What do these recent political developments mean about our role in pressing for U.S. support of genuine majority rule and self-determination in southern Africa? Of one thing we can be sure: we must not decrease our efforts just because a Democrat is moving into the White House. We must keep up the pressure, increase our numbers and our efficacy. Every improvement in U.S. policy will require an explicit change in the policy that the Carter Administration will inherit. And every issue will be hard-fought, since southern Africa is becoming an area of greater attention from all political sectors in the United States, from right to left.

We are therefore asking you for a contribution to our work during the first year of the new Administration. Your contributions to us this year were twice what they were the year before, for which we are very grateful. In 1977, we will depend on you even more, because we must increase our staff to three full-time, permanent people to meet the growing demands which events in southern Africa and mushrooming interest in the U.S. place on us.

In return for your contribution, we will continue to supply you with up-to-date, detailed and carefully written materials on how U.S. southern Africa policy is being developed and where the key points for meaningful citizen pressure are. We will send our "Washington Notes on Africa" newsletter and "Africa Action" bulletins to all who can use them, as always. But we would very much appreciate any contribution you can make. The materials and postage alone cost us $5 per person/ per year. And the research, writing and production time cost much more. So please give as generously as you can.

The struggle for justice and majority rule in southern Africa progressed rapidly in 1976, and will continue to do so in 1977. After six months of police repression in South Africa, the Soweto Students Representative Council made this Christmas appeal:

"All things that we enjoy must be suspended for the sake of our kids who died from police bullets... The year 1976 shall go down in history as the year of mourning, the year that flowed with sweat, blood and tears for our liberation."

The students in Soweto and all those struggling for their liberation in southern Africa deserve support - from us and from our government.

Sincerely,

Edgar Lockwood

Christine Root