

June 28, 1976

Dear Friends,

At least 170 people have been killed during the past two weeks of rioting in South Africa. The number of injured exceeds 1200. These are the most recent official South African government figures. Unofficial estimates put the toll much higher.

But whatever the statistics are, for thousands in South Africa the past few days have been a time of deep personal tragedy. It is difficult to respond to this outrage in a way that is both meaningful and politically effective. Yet we must respond, because, as the U.N. Security Council has stated, the policy of apartheid is "a crime against the conscience and dignity of mankind," and because our own country is giving massive support to the white supremacist regime there.

There are many levels at which one can respond to the current situation in South Africa. At the minimum, one can sign the enclosed petition to President Ford and members of Congress. This will probably have little or no effect on the policies of either the American or the South African governments. It is meant simply as a statement of solidarity with the South African people and as a warning to the South African government that its brutality has not gone unnoticed. The South African government is deeply concerned with its image in the rest of the world. It is also a warning to the American government - a warning that the American people will not tolerate its continued support of the white supremacist regime in South Africa.

We urge you, therefore, to take this petition to your workplace, your church, your union, or even to the street corners, and get it filled with signatures. We want at least 30,000 signatures, and in two days of working around Boston and Cambridge we have already obtained several hundred. As soon as you have filled a petition, please send it to the Southern Africa Solidarity Committee, P.O. Box 101, Boston, MA., 02123. And please send it in by July 15, even if it hasn't been filled. We will then send it to President Ford, our Congressional representatives, and the South African Embassy in Washington. We will also send it to the South African press. Our South African friends believe that such a petition could make a strong impact in that country.

If you need more copies of the petition or of the enclosed flier, call Alan (625-7199), Anne (524-7142), Barbara (876-1750), or Julie (566-6662).

What has been happening in South Africa is tragic, but it is also a hopeful sign that the South African people are on the move toward radical change. They deserve our support.

The struggle continues!

The Southern Africa Solidarity
Committee

TO THE HONORABLE GERALD R. FORD, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, AND TO MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS:

We, the undersigned, register our strongest protest against the South African government's massive use of violence against demonstrators resisting apartheid in South Africa. We agree with the U.N. Security Council that the policy of apartheid is "a crime against the conscience and dignity of mankind and a serious danger to peace and security."

We call upon you to oppose actively the policy of apartheid and to terminate any means of assistance to the white supremacist government in South Africa.

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Please return this petition by July 15, 1976 to the Southern Africa Solidarity Committee. P.O. Box 101, Boston, MA 02123.