We stand for Christian Nationalism, which is an ally of National Socialism. You can call this anti-democratic principle dictatorship. In Italy it is called Fascism, in Germany German National Socialism, and in South Africa Christian Nationalism.”

John Vorster, Prime Minister, South Africa
"The Southern Africa Solidarity movement is growing in America, and we've started this newsletter to help it. We hope to do this in two main ways. Firstly, by linking together different struggles (on campuses, in city coalitions, and through various media) throughout the country, and, secondly, by introducing certain political ideas which we feel the solidarity movement needs in order to be effective.

In this issue, we have brought together a lot of material. Of special interest, we feel, are: direct reports from several colleges, branches, & coalitions; an article from Ahmed Shawki which we're very pleased to be printing, and a solicited letter which raises some interesting & important points.

Please bear in mind with us; Southern Africa Solidarity #1 is a trial effort, and we hope to do better next time. Please feel free to send us any comments, letters, ideas, or criticisms that you may have.

members of the N.Y.C. & Boston branches of the ISO
Why Southern Africa?
by Mike Egan

There are practical and theoretical reasons for closely following and understanding the developing political crisis in Southern Africa. These main elements are, of course, dialectically interrelated.

First, if we look at the international alignment of forces, that is, the political situation of the workers' movement internationally, it's clear that what's happening in Southern Africa, and more importantly what may happen in that part of the world, can and will play a crucial role in advancing or retarding the struggle. South Africa in particular is a key link in the imperialist chain. If that link snaps the whole system is threatened. If it survives the life of international monopoly capitalism is extended.

Marx remarked that history was the shank of all intellectual pursuit, and in order to appreciate the significance of the Southern African struggle we should begin by looking at its history. This is one important area of study. In particular, it is vital to understand (a) the process of formal decolonization which dominated the history of Africa through the sixties and early seventies; (b) why and how technically independent African countries are still under the political and economic countries of the West, especially of course the US and Britain; and (c) why and how both these factors are acting to undermine the stability of the white regimes south of the Limpopo River.

This is not the place to discuss (a). So far as (b) is concerned, however, the best analysis and explanation to date is Tony Cliff's theory of 'deflected permanent revolution'. This is a complex argument; however it's main lines are that in a period of capitalist stability and growth, such as the sixties, it was possible for decolonization to occur under the leadership of the indigenous African bourgeoisie and without excessive struggle. This has left the majority of Black African states formally independent but actually forced to play the role of clientelle to the West. Since the mass of African workers and peasants were largely inert during the decolonization process, the local Black bourgeoisie was able to seize the political initiative and hold onto political power after uhuru (freedom). This was an acceptable solution to the West. Unable to militarily hold Africa any longer — because of the collapse of the old imperialist systems and the expense and complexity of replacing them with new ones — it opted for the neo-colonial idea. This is the essence of the 'solution' now being offered Zimbabweans.

On the other hand, the decolonizing process came later to other territories in Southern Africa, and in particular of course to Angola, etc. By the late sixties international capitalism, as we know, was not as stable as it had been during the period of boom. This is one reason why the dismantling of the Portuguese empire resulted in armed struggle and the beginnings of the move towards African socialism. The masses of peasants and workers were in fact drawn into the struggle. This is part of the answer to (c). Getting all this clear is another important area of discussion and study which we ought to undertake.

Finally, so far as South Africa itself is concerned, we ought to consider as closely as possible the way in which Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution applies. The theory has consequences both for the workers in the U.S. and of course for the people of South Africa. The nub of the theory is that if (a) the Black proletariat in South Africa is the key to liberation then (b) an armed guerilla struggle in the veld and hills cannot succeed without support. So that (c) the main political task confronting revolutionaries in S.A. is the creation of a Black workers' party and agitational work among industrial laborers. And finally (d) when and if this is successful, that Black workers' struggle can have profound effects of the struggle being waged internationally between the two broad classes of our world. Our conclusion must be that their struggle and ours are ultimately the same.
Dear Friends,

It is becoming increasingly clear how vital support work in the U.S. may be for the liberation of Southern Africa. This is true for a number of reasons. The most obvious of these is the extent of U.S. governmental & corporate involvement there. This is well documented, and does not need to be discussed except to reiterate that the more we are able to force the withdrawal of U.S. support for the white minority rule there, the quicker liberation will occur.

Less obvious, perhaps, are some of the lessons learned during the anti-war movement. Many people in this country, including many anti-war activists, firmly believed that the struggle in this country was a mere drop in the bucket, and that the activities in this country—the teach-ins, the demonstrations, draft resistance, civil disobedience, etc.—were meaningless compared with the sacrifices and struggle of the Vietnamese people.

Granted, the Vietnamese struggle hard & sacrificed much.

However, the importance of the anti-war movement in this country should not be underestimated. In the first place, it was one of the primary forces operating to keep the U.S. from “bombing Indochina back into the stone age.” Second, it gave enormous encouragement to politicians and others who knew that the war was wrong, but who felt they had no constituency. Third, it contributed mightily to the disintegration of the U.S. military in Vietnam, and to the increasing refusal of soldiers to carry out orders. Finally, and extremely important—it gave enormous moral support to the Vietnamese.

In fact, even though North Americans have often considered the anti-war movement as less than something to be proud of, the Vietnamese at every chance have thanked and praised U.S. anti-war activists and have said that our support was vital to their struggle.

The situation in Southern Africa is in many respects similar to the situation in Vietnam in the early sixties—strong support by the U.S. government & corporations coupled with widespread public questioning of the North American presence there; a growing movement to resist further U.S. involvement; a determination on the part of Black South Africans to rid their countries of oppressive neocolonial economic & political institutions; growing international attention to the issue.

I would encourage persons committed to ending U.S. imperialism and supporting Southern African liberation to pay careful attention to these facts, and think about ways we can build a strong anti-imperialist coalition to support the liberation of Southern Africa. We could also profitably study the anti-war movement. There are many lessons to be learned from it.

Sincerely,

Steve Norris
Mission Hill Committee for the Liberation of Southern Africa
(Steve invites feedback & ideas on this letter. Write to him at: 22 Delle Ave., Roxbury, Ma. 02120.)
Permanent Revolution & Southern Africa

by Ahmed Shawkii

With the growth of the international Southern Africa solidarity movement, the nature of the struggle in South Africa has become paramount.

The fight against apartheid is often separated from the fight against capitalism — the struggle for socialism. It is as if socialism is a pleasant afterthought. First, the argument goes, it will be the national struggle to overthrow the white minority government, and then, at some unspecified date, will come the fight for socialism. If anything, recent events show the fallacy of such a view.

The development of apartheid & capitalism in South Africa has been totally interwoven. Apartheid isn't a deformation of an otherwise normal capitalist system, as Andrew Young would have us believe. Apartheid has been and is still central to the specific needs of capitalism in that country. The white ruling class needs apartheid — a pass system, cheap migrant labor, division of races — if the system is to continue operating on capitalist lines. The struggle against apartheid is thus the struggle against capitalism.

While apartheid requires the national oppression of African people, the national struggle in S.A. can only succeed if it is lead by the African working class. There is developing in South Africa a small African urban middle class, which has shown itself willing to collaborate with Vorster & the multi-nationals. Richard Maponya, a businessman in Soweto, being a prime example: and he had to flee Soweto to the white areas to save himself from the anger of the young blacks in the recent uprisings. This group, people like Maponya, will find themselves in the regimes's arms. Given these circumstances, the task falls squarely on the shoulders of the black working class which will be able to confront the regime.

(cont. next page)
As the economic & political crisis intensifies this vital role of the black working class becomes clearer. The regime can put down isolated uprisings, and even is has shown, uprisings that spread geographically. How long it can do this, however, remains to be seen.

The power of this class lies in its ability to cripple South African capitalism. Every strike, because of the nature of the regime, raises a host of political questions. The pass laws, the denial of political rights, repressive legislation and the like all become subject to question. Furthermore, it is the organized working class that can provide a lead to the "bantustans." This is apparent from the growth and intensity of the struggle in South Africa. In 1973, the Durham strikes won the first wage increase for many black workers since the 1940's. The Soweto rebellion & the rash of strikes that took place in 1976 shook the Vorster regime. Coupled with this, the impact of the world-wide recession has had its effect on the South African economy. A massive flight of foreign capital took place after the Soweto events that is comparable to the movement of capital which took place after the Sharpsville massacre. The difference however, is striking: in 1976 the blow strikes much deeper.

South Africa is the lynchpin to Southern Africa, and indeed to the whole African continent. It produces 22% of the continent's G.N.P., and 43% manufacturing output. While accounting for over 50% of the energy consumption. At the same time, South Africa is the most vital operating center for western capitalism in Africa. This means, therefore, the destruction of South African Capitalism is the key to the overthrow of capitalism & imperialism throughout the entire area. Victory for the South African revolution would be a blow to western capitalism, but at the same time, the ultimate success of the revolution will, as the liberation of Angola & Mozambique show, will depend on revolution in the advanced capitalist states — in particular here in America.

...THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES
Southern Africa After Soweto is a historical and contemporary analysis of social, economic & political forces in Southern Africa. It sees the Lisbon coup in 1974 and the defeat of the Portuguese colonialists in Angola shortly afterwards as the "turning point" which undermined the stability of the white regimes in the whole region, and brought the U.S. more actively into the political arena there.

Although the whole book analyzes the political forces at work in Angola, Rhodesia, and Zambia, it focuses on South Africa. Providing some detailed analysis of the history of South Africa since the turn of the century, the central idea of the book is that the capitalist mode of production has dominated South African's economic development throughout the period. Therefore, there is even less of a justification to support uncritically a nationalist revolution here that in lesser developed countries.

Callinicos & Rogers point out that apartheid came about as a specific response to a situation in which the black working class was challenging the ability of the Africaner bourgeoisie to rule. In 1943 the War Measures Act was passed outlawing African strikes. But there were over 60 illegal African strikes the next year. "The decisive battle came in 1946 when the African Mine Workers Union joined in the wave of strike militancy... This was a turning point in South African history. A settled urban African working class had emerged and was laying claim to trade union rights, higher wages, to end pass laws, and to better housing. The miners' strike had been based on demands which, if met, would have turned the most important section of the black proletariat into a stable urban group, ending their status as migrant workers." (p.50).

Instead, using fascistic ideology, and offering material benefits to the Africaner working class, the Nationalist Party, behind Vorster, won the 1948 elections, and implemented apartheid as a means to control every aspect of the lives of black workers.

Since that time, international capitalist investments have increased tremendously in South Africa, with the U.S.'s investments playing a more dominant role in the 1970's. The manufacturing industries have expanded in this time, increasing the size of the black proletariat. While apartheid has segregated the trade unions, which are "officially committed to defend the privileges of white workers" (p.80), there are an increasing number of strikes among the blacks, many of which have been organized from "spontaneous meetings at the workplace."(p.82).

Although there has been no organized effort to unite the struggles of the students who sparked the Soweto uprising in 1976 with the struggles of the black workers, there is great potential in South Africa for a revolutionary socialist movement. It is clear from the book, however, that the dominant organized political force among blacks in South Africa is the Communist Party backed African National Congress. Although they laud their heroism, the authors warn that "heroism is not enough." The ANC is controlled by the black petty bourgeoisie and is not socialist. It does not try to build the independent organization of the black working class. That is, if the black working class did develop an independent political perspective, the potential for socialist revolution would be too threatening to the interests of the black petty bourgeoisie.

The theory of revolution to which the authors subscribe is the theory of permanent revolution. That is, South Africa is part of the international capitalist economy. As such, even a socialist revolution led by the S.A. black working class would be subject to international political & economic forces, and its ultimate success would depend on a successful socialist revolution elsewhere, particularly in the United States.
REPORTS FROM COALITIONS & UNIVERSITIES

* Bloomington, IN. — On April 17th the Bloomington South Africa Committee is organizing a march and informational picket line to keep up the pressure on the Indiana University Trustees to divest. The informational picket will be outside a conference called by the Trustees on the question of investment in S.A. The conference, featuring several nationally known speakers, was set up by the Trustees in response to a petition with 2,300 signatures demanding that I.U. divest. The petition was presented by 150 demonstrators at the February Trustees meeting. (The trustees, no doubt, would like to discuss the issue until its forgotten.) The Bloomington South Africa Committee is determined to keep the pressure on for an immediate decision. Harold Kincaid

* Nashville, TN. — 3,000 people marched in the streets of Nashville to protest South Africa's policy of apartheid and Vanderbilt University's hosting the South African tennis team in the Davis Cup competition.

The march was largely organized by the NAACP, drawing people from as far away as New York.

But many left the rally unhappy with the NAACP strategy to end apartheid in South Africa, which consists of prayer, reliance on Congress and the United Nations boycott of South Africa. About 500 people broke off from the march to join a militant picket line in front of the gym. And it was this, the picket lines, which kept the tennis fans away — not the NAACP prayers. Dan Petty

* Columbia, N.Y. — we received a flyer from a friend that advertised a March demonstration that apparently went fairly well. She wrote: "This is mainly it — demos with some teach-ins, symposiaums, etc. But I don't think the general state is as active as at some schools."

* Ontario, Canada — In Ottawa, we hold semi-regular demonstrations outside liquor outlets to protest the sale & importation of South African wines, as well as circulating petitions to that effect. It is up to the provincial governments in Canada to refuse to sell these wines. Two other Canadian provinces, Manitoba & Saskatchewan, have already removed S.A. wines from the shelves.

As well as the CCSA (Canadians Concerned About Southern Africa), there is the Canadian Peace Congress. Beth Abbott

* L.A. California — The drive to force the Regents of the U.Cal. to divest over 900 million dollars in companies doing business in South Africa continued March 17th with a demonstration in L.A....at Berkeley, over 4,000 signatures have been gathered since a petition campaign began two months ago. Socialist Worker

* Madison, Wisconsin — As a student paper wrote: "The University of Wisconsin Board of Regents moved last week (2-17-78) by a vote of 14 to 2 to divest all University stock holdings with firms with assets in South Africa." This amounts to over 8 million dollars. Thanks to Bob Ginsberg
Chicago, Ill. — A campaign at the University of Chicago for the divestment of university investments in corporations involved in South Africa has already attracted more support than any issue since the height of the anti-war movement. The Action Committee on South Africa has already organized two successful demos. & collected over 2,500 signatures on a divestment petition.

On February 9th 100 students & staff picketed the Board of Trustees meeting, calling for divestment. The protest took place outside the First National Bank of Chicago, where the Trustees have their offices.

The trustees refused to hear a delegation from the students, and proceeded to vote unanimously to keep its South African holdings and instructed the Treasurer to oppose stockholders’ resolutions that would curtail South African operations.

Two weeks later a second demonstration was attended by over 200 students.

Trustee spokesman Alison Dunham has said that these investments will be maintained “no matter what happens in South Africa,” and has told staff & students “that the investment policy is none of their business.”

Another campus demonstration is being held on April 13 and will be addressed by a representative of the African National Congress. The Action Committee is also approaching other anti-apartheid organizations in order to organize a city-wide rally in Chicago during May.

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— As the leaflet for this conference read: “in solidarity with the growing struggle of the South African people, students and community people throughout the U.S. have responded with organized support. People from through the N.E. will be attending this conference to support, co-ordinate, and promote current and future anti-apartheid actions.” Over 300 people meet at Yale University April 1 & 2 and did just that.

On Saturday, workshops were held on various subjects like divestiture, back campaigns, and the history of liberation struggles. Sunday morning was the larger plenary session, where a number of important decisions. Among these were the following:

1. Amy Tyson of the New Haven S.A. Committee, and a member of the ISO, proposed that these three points should be the principles of unity for the group. First, opposing all U.S. involvement in S.A.; secondly that the group support all genuine liberation movements; and, finally that the movement translate the struggle from S.A. to America. These proposals were passed after a good deal of discussion — some felt that to be explicitly pro-liberation would alienate people. Southern Africa Solidarity supports the vote, however. We don’t feel that the argument is a valid one.

2. The conference then decided to support two demonstrations coming up: a regional demonstration April 30th in Boston, and the demonstrations in Washington on African Liberation Day were given broad support. No particular march was supported.

3. Finally, it was decided to put out a regular newsletter, and to hold regular steering committee meetings. The Editors
Better known actions include last year's occupation at Hampshire College, the arrest of 294 students at Stanford last May (see the latest Politics & Education for details). This year the Oregon State Board of Higher Education voted to divest itself of holdings in companies with operations in S.A. which employ more than 50 people, or which have fixed assets or earnings exceeding 500,000 dollars.

Princeton, N.J. — People's Front for the Liberation of South Africa are picketing daily on campus to force the administration to divest stock in companies in S.A. (The campus paper had an interview with Donald Bell Sole, the South African Ambassador to the U.S., that was very interesting because of his incredible frank brutality.)

Cornell University — The "Cornell Corporate Responsibility Project" are researching university involvement, and are pursuing local actions.

Wesleyan University — 100 minority students demonstrated on the steps of the main administration building earlier this year. Further actions are planned.

Smith College — The College sold 687,728 dollars worth of stock in Fireston, because of Firestone's policies in South Africa.

Seattle, Wa. — Here we are working with the American Friends Service Committee S.A. study group, particularly around the Krugerand. Actions have included picketing of stores selling the gold coin, getting a resolution to the City Council, and a few demonstrations at the University of Washington campus. There is a hearing on divestment called by the Board of Trustees that will be April 14th. We hope to get people demonstrating outside of the building during the meeting. Sheila Martinez

Boston, Ma. — The Boston Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa is over two years old, but it is only recently that it has gained a public image. The coalition is involved in a number of activities: sending clothes to ZANU, film showings, demonstrations (both local & city-wide), providing speakers, and a 'bank campaign', which asks people to take their money out of the First National Bank of Boston, a bank that loans the South African regime money directly. The coalition has also helped a number of smaller groups get started. These are located in different parts of town, in one workplace, and a number of universities. Right now, the coalition is working on an upcoming demonstration April 30th. Kent Worcester

"The four corner stones on which our labour peace in this country are based are: that the white worker may not be replaced by a non-white; that he may not be in the same work situation working shoulder to shoulder with a non-white; that he will not work under the authority of a non-white; and that he may not be incorporated into the mixed trade unions."

Viljeen, South African Minister of Labour, 1972
• Providence, Ri. — The South Africa Solidarity Committee at Brown University was formed in mid-March around the general principal of support for the liberation struggles in South Africa. Concretely, our activity is directed towards three goals —

1. Forcing Brown University to divest itself of stock of companies involved in South Africa.
2. Raising material support for the freedom fighters in Zimbabwe.
3. Drawing attention to the fact that South African and U.S. workers are exploited by the same oppressor: world capitalism.

Brown University owns 23.3 million dollars worth of assets in companies doing business in South Africa. This is slightly more than 25% of its endowment. In the top ten of these companies alone — IBM, United Technical, Ford, Caterpillar Tractor, GM, Smithkline, Shell Oil, Burrows, Baxter Travenol, & Johnson & Johnson — there is concentrated 12.7 million dollars. Thomas Watson, former Chairman of the Board of IBM is an influential member of the Board of Fellows at Brown.

The Board considers divestment an “unfeasable step.” It has invoked every rational from the Sullivan Principle to the university’s “moral obligation to maintain financial stability;” of course at the same time stating its “abhorance” of apartheid.

The South Africa Solidarity Committee consists of about 60 people, and is growing. We are going to door to door in dormitories with a petition for divestment. Both the local press, and the local radio station have expressed interest in the campaign.

On April 15th Soweto student Barny Mokgatle will be speaking. On April 17th there will be a rally where the petition will be presented to President Howard Swearer, and statements of support will be given by representatives of campus & community groups who have endorsed the divestment campaign. Beyond this our plans will depend upon the extent of student support and the administration’s response. David Marshall

• Portland, Or. — The Portland Citizens against Racism grew out of the Free South Africa Committee in Sept. 1977. The group started its work around support for the South African liberation movements with a longer range perspective of broadening its work to fight racism on a local, national, and international basis. The solidarity work is geared to fight the sale of the Krugerand by means of picket lines at coin dealerships & advertisers. In Nov. of last year a petition drive was started in support of a resolution opposing Krugerand sales in Portland, which would go to the City Council. The City Council passed an alternative resolution opposing the Krugerand’s sale earlier than the petition reached them.

In Dec. ’77 a newsletter was started regarding racism, and to inform people about P.C.A.R. activities. To advance our education we regularly have speakers. In March of this year we held a rally with 100 people, and initiated a material aid project at the same time. More activities are planned. Gloria Park

• Groups are now very active at U.Mass.(Amherst), U.Minn., Michigan State University. Other groups have formed in at least the following: Swathmore College, Vanderbuilt University, Harvard, all the University of California colleges, U.Mass (Boston), Boston State College, Brandeis, Dartmouth, Yale, Tufts, Rutgers, Temple, Brooklyn College, Vasser, SUNY Stonybrook, Boston University, MIT, Univeristy of Conn. (Storrts), Duke, Notre Dame, Oberlin, Erlam, Macalester College of Minnesota, University of Maryland, and Southern Illinois University. The list goes on & on & on!

Readers of Southern Africa Solidarity are invited to send their own reports on what’s happening at their school or in their town.
"The whites have built up these countries. They have worked hard to get where they are today and they have the right to keep what they've worked for."

Far from white Africans relying on their own labour to maintain and increase their standard of living, they haven’t lifted a finger. ‘Their’ wealth and ‘their’ prosperity has been created by a black working class exploited as cheap labor and held in chains by brute force. ‘Their’ farms, ‘their’ factories, ‘their’ homes in the quiet, tree-lined suburbs, ‘their’ schools, ‘their’ hospitals, ‘their’ cars, planes, trains, and buses, ‘their’ supermarkets and ‘their’ luxury goods were produced with the sweat and blood of black workers. For those workers white South Africa has provided Soweto, Sharpeville, and Robben Island.

People who ‘build’ a country in this way also build mass opposition, mass anger and the massive force which will, eventually and deservedly, overthrow them.

Abantu bakithi bahluphekile
Vukani Madoda
Silwele ilizwe lethu
Ela thathwa

Siqale ago Smith
Sicine ngo Vorster
Baphele Bonke
Vulani Madoda!
Silwele ilizwe lethu
Ela thathwa

Our people are suffering
Wake up!
Let us fight for our country
Which they took.

We shall start with Smith
And end with Vorster
And destroy them all
Wake up!
Let us fight for our country
Which they took.
For more information:

New York Times  
Le Monde (French quality paper, they print an English edition every week)
Africa Magazine (the TIME of magazines on Africa)
Guardian (radical newsweekly, 33 West 17th Street, N.Y. N.Y. 10011)
Southern Africa (156 Fifth Ave., Room 707, N.Y. N.Y. 10010)
International Bulletin (see vol.4 #21, P.O.Box 4400, Berkeley, C.A. 94704)
Politics & Education (see latest issue, Wesleyan Station, Fisk Hall, Middletown, C.T. 06457)

the Boston Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa published an excellent "Position Paper on Support for Liberation Movements", write to us for a free copy.

also:
The Africa Fund  
305 East 46th St.  
N.Y. N.Y. 10017

U.N. Committee on Apartheid  
U.N. Building, N.Y. N.Y.

Africa Press Clips  
Room 3509, Dept. of State  
Washington D.C. 20520

and further afield:

Southern African Solidarity Campaign  
21 Mayall Road,  
London, SE 24, England
The following are available from:
HERA PRESS, Box 18037, Cleveland, Ohio, 44118:

Button (with black & red lettering)
50 cents each, $4.00 for ten

Southern Africa After Soweto, by Alex Callinicos & John Rogers (see review article), $4.95 plus 30 cents postage, 220 pages, with bibliography

Socialist Worker [25 cents, monthly]
Paper of the ISO, with regular S.A. coverage

All suggestions, comments, articles, letters, ideas and criticisms, or orders for more copies of this pamphlet, please write to: Southern Africa Solidarity, attn: Kent Worcester, P.O. Box 131, Kendall Square Station, Cambridge, Ma. 02142
If you were black and born in South Africa, this could be you. Stop Apartheid!