Friday March 21, 1986: PROTEST DAY AGAINST U.S. POLICY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

FOCUS: U.S. FUNDING FOR UNITA IN ANGOLA

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On March 21, 1960 the South African police killed 69 unarmed demonstrators protesting against the pass laws in Sharpeville.

The worldwide outcry against apartheid following that massacre, led to a large outflow of foreign capital that threatened to undermine white minority rule until U.S. banks stepped in with millions in loans.

26 years later, the Reagan Administration is helping to sustain apartheid in South Africa and Namibia through its policy of "constructive engagement" with the white minority regime.

While escalating protest in South Africa and the United States has made it more difficult to openly embrace the Botha regime, the Reagan Administration is in fact moving to cement military ties with apartheid.

This strengthening of the U.S.-South African military alliance is going forward under the guise of "combating communism" in southern Africa—specifically in Angola. The Reagan Administration is planning to provide millions in covert aid to UNITA—South Africa's "contra" surrogates in Angola headed by Jonas Savimbi.

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Since 1975 South Africa has waged a war of destabilization against Angola through direct invasions and by providing military and financial support for UNITA. With South African backing, UNITA has helped destroy billions worth of Angolan infrastructure, and waged a war of terror against the Angolan population.

This ongoing war ensures Pretoria's continued control over Namibia and delays economic reconstruction in resource-rich Angola, thus frustrating efforts of the frontline states to alter economic relations in the region. UNITA's activities also encourage perception of the war as a civil war, obscuring its fundamental nature as a South African war of aggression.

As it struggles to suppress growing domestic unrest, South Africa's minority regime is having great difficulty financing its war of destabilization against Angola. By funding UNITA in Angola, the Reagan Administration will enable South Africa to put more resources into maintaining its illegal occupation of Namibia and apartheid in South Africa. All funding and material would pass through the South African military. AID TO UNITA IS AID TO SOUTH AFRICA.

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The time has arrived for coordinated action against this dangerous—and underreported—U.S. escalation in southern Africa.

March 21, as the kick-off day for the National Weeks of Anti-Apartheid Action and the Sharpeville Anniversary, is a strategic time for action on this critical issue. While covert aid cannot be formally vetoed by Congress, strong public pressure can make such aid politically untenable.

BELOW ARE ORGANIZING SUGGESTIONS FOR COMMUNITY AND STUDENT GROUPS:


2) Noon time or late afternoon march to a U.S. government building to protest U.S. backing for UNITA.
   - Federal buildings in major cities are good sites, while pickets outside post offices are fitting in smaller towns. Mock funeral march could conclude by leaving black coffins at government building.
   - In addition to rallies some groups are considering also engaging in civil disobedience actions.
   - At some places protests will jointly target aid to UNITA and aid to the Nicaraguan contras.

3) In addition to a public rally pressure your Congressional representative and senators to oppose any aid to UNITA.
   a) Immediately write and call your Congressional representative and senators:
      Call: #202-224-3121 (general congressional switchboard)
      Write: U.S. House of Representatives Wash DC 20515 and U.S. Senate, Wash DC 20510

4) On March 21 and throughout the Weeks of Action set-up a phone bank to call the White House citizen "hotline" expressing opposition to any aid to UNITA: 202-456-7639.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
American Committee on Africa • 198 Broadway, NYC 10038 • 212-962-1210