Short History of the Southern African Liberation Committee
A Task Force of the Peace Education Center

1972 SALC Founded
• Founding Members: Bill Derman, Lovemore Nyoni, Carol Thompson, Bud Day.
• Early Activities:
  a) Emphasis was on all African colonies: Guinea Bissau, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa.
  b) Self education: for example learning that Angola had 3 "revolutionary parties" some funded by CIA.
  c) Public Educational Projects: flyers that provided reliable and supportable facts; a film series; several conferences; and position papers on each country.
  d) Proposal writing to do constructive research on U.S. corporate involvement.
  e) Protesting a South African presence on campus.
  f) Debate with McGoff and co on WJIM.
  g) crashed a DAR meeting.
  h) attended regional and national meetings.

1973 New Members: Jim Thomas, Gerry Kleiss, David Dwyer, Barb Thibeault, Anabel Dwyer, Malcolm 2X, Milt Taylor, Jerry Bennett.

1974 SALC Acquires Last Grave at Dimbaza.


1976 SALC worked with thousands of other Americans to prevent another Vietnam war in Angola.
• New Members: David Wiley, Marylee Crofts (previous work with analogous group in Madison, Wisconsin).

1977 East Lansing Selective Purchasing Act
• In 1977 SALC worked for the passage of a resolution by the EL City Council.
• Conceptualization of action: something that could involve local people in an action which forces them to commit themselves or their organization.
• Strategy: Before approaching Michigan State University, SALC approached the community.
• Strategy: Thoroughness of action "never let them forget!"
  1) supply the city council with documentation on South African apartheid; 2) letters to editor; 3) public demonstrations;
  • direct lobbying with members of city council.
• New Members: Frank Beeman and Pat Beeman (Earlier Work with the civil rights movement in U.S. Got interested in S.A. and Namibia through their Nephew Rick who had worked in northern Namibia. They discovered SALC from publicity on selective purchasing).
• Organizing Principle: SALC relied on “cooperative anarchy” a principle which supported and integrated the initiatives, interests and abilities of individual members. For example, Diane Flugrad’s interest in film lead to her writing a proposal to RHA and receiving support for a SALC film series on topics related to Southern African Liberation and Michael Bratton and Ann Schneller’s focus on acquiring information from Zimbabwe’s white minority government and passing it on to the liberation forces.
• SALC held Teach ins on campus on Southern African issues.

1978 State of Michigan Sanctions on South Africa (House Divestiture Bills, Vaughn Resolution (Joint))
• New Members: Maggie (at-the-bridge) Vasacceano, Pat Costa, Mike Bratton, Anne Schneller, Chris Wiley, Diane Flugrad.
• SALC worked closely with state representatives Vaughn and Bullard; preparing information packets on SA; writing letters to editors; writing to politicians; preparing preaddressed and printed postcards for citizens to send to their representatives; lobbying politicians; testifying and house and senate hearings.

1981 MSU Divestiture
• Organizing Principle: be thorough and persistent.
  • working with friendly trustees Martin and Radcliffe.
  • lobbying others, direct visits, information packets, films.
  • maintaining a presence at all relevant meetings.
  • public board meetings, subcommittee meetings.
  • forceful testimony: Bill Derman’s response to the question, “if we don’t invest in South Africa, then someone else will.” That sounds like a good argument for robbing banks.
• Organizing Principle: seize the opportunity (South Africa provides recriminating evidence every day; The Iranian Film Project had already sensitized the board to issues concerning the role of the university in issues of justice.
• Demonstrations, letters to the editor, sympathetic editorials.

1These notes were made in 1982 in preparation for giving an award to Pat and Frank Beeman by the Peace Education Center as Peacemaker of the year. Some of the notes are sketchy and detached from their details.
Organizing Principle: innovation action

the photographic display

the banner across from the Union urging the Board of Trustees to divest (Upon learning that SALC could not display a political banner, SALC asked the Union Programming board to define “political,” whereupon SALC was told that it could display its banner.

“keeping the bastards at bay” (South African Presence (de Keiffers & McGoff's pals) < do not recall the context of the quote>

problem of “prudence” and “fiduciary responsibility” (A. Dwyer's discovery of the proper definition in a law dictionary.

actual drafting of the resolutions

1981 Banking Bill:
• Passage of State Representative Virgil Smith’s bill (Public Act 325) prohibiting state institutions from investing in corporations operating in South Africa.

1982 The Bullard Bill (#512) Prohibiting State Educational Institutions from investing in corporations in South Africa

1984 MSU Naming Policy
• As a result of SALC’s objection to the McGoff name on the festival stage because of its association with apartheid, the Board of Trustees established a naming policy.

1984 McGoff Off campaign 1979-1984
• new members: Rick Peterson, Jim Orders, Rick Pokreikwa, Andria Rother, Ann Schriver, Sudeven, Joytsna Vaid, Garry Cooperberg, Kofi Egbo, Kgai Sathekge, Debora Miller, Ken Harrow, Liz Harrow, Emily Philips, Matingo
• Kofi Egbo and the African Students Union
• supporters: Kitty Theurmer, John Masterson, John Landeck, Melba Lacy, James Madison, National Panhellenic Frats, and literally a cast of hundreds
• The Campaign
  1) Lobbing trustees (really entrenched this time) (Big deal cut, with Wharton, & plus $$$$)
  2) began with picketing
  3) flier
  4) information packet on McGoff to Board, State News, other news groups etc.
  5) contacted performing groups to explain situation
  6) petitions individual and group early signatories MEAC instantaneous; PEC 1st board mtg; Bob Carr (?)
  7) Work on on campus organizations, fraternities, ASMSU, COGS, others (the pressure rises)
  8) Committee against racism and apartheid on Campus (CARAC: McConnel, Thorne, Beeman, Masterson, Lee June, Forest Carter, Ernie Moore, Conrad, David Dwyer and Frank Beeman (Worked with Faculty Governance and requested, Departmental resolutions)
  9) painting the rock (important pt #7)
  10) Work of David and Pat Barnes- McConnel with Trustee Sawyer
  11) Role of McGoff: 1) racist remarks, 2) getting in bar fights; 3) muldergate scandal, 4) indicted as an unregistered foreign agent
  12) the name came off.

Outreach Activities
• Contact with other groups around the country giving information packets
• E.g. Northern Michigan University (McGoff Lecture Series)
• SALC has a national reputation.

Organizing Principles
#1: reliable and supportable facts
#2: conceptualization of action: something that could involve local people in an action which forces them to commit themselves or their organization.
#3: thoroughness of action “never let them forget”
#4: direct contact (lobbying)
#5: cooperative anarchy:
#6: be thorough and persistent
#7: innovation action

Self-Determination for South African peoples.
The institutionalized system of racial exploitation in South Africa known formally as Apartheid must come to an end. As responsible Americans this means (1) exposing and working toward a reversal of the current U.S. policy of support for the white, racist minority regime in South Africa, (2) working toward the withdrawal of all U.S. corporations currently profiting from the injustices of apartheid in South Africa and opposing loans and financial aid to that country, (3) supporting the world-wide economic, political and cultural boycott of South Africa, and (4) educating citizens of our community concerning these issues.