SEPTEMBER, 1988

IMPORTANT FALL PLANNING MEETING

Thursday, September 27, 1988 at 7:30 p.m. - Albany Urban League, corner of Livingston Ave. and Ten Broeck, Albany, New York

Representatives from each member organization of the Coalition and interested individuals are urged to attend - this will be an important planning session to set the agenda for fall work.

SUMMER UPDATE

During July and August members of the Coalition took part in two actions aimed to educate the public about the international boycott against the apartheid regime. In July, the Coalition joined with the Schenectady NAACP to hold a placard demonstration against the South African tennis players appearing at the OTB tennis matches in Schenectady. In August, members of the Coalition demonstrated at the appearance of the cultural collaborator, Ray Charles, at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center. Both demonstrations were well attended and good opportunities to send the message to the community that South Africa is a pariah state that must be isolated until apartheid is ended.

The Coalition also had a booth at the annual Black Arts Festival in July at the Empire State Plaza in Albany. Sechaba, the ANC cultural group, appeared at the Festival. Following the Festival, the Coalition sponsored a party at Page Three in Albany.

City of Albany settles for the violation of the civil rights of anti-apartheid activists in Springbok case. (see inside)
DEMAND FULL ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AGAINST APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA!

On August 11, 1988, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1580, the Anti-Apartheid Amendments of 1988, by a vote of 244-132. Grassroots support was critical in this major anti-apartheid victory. The efforts of the anti-apartheid community were instrumental; formidable opposition was defeated.

Now the battle shifts to the Senate, where the companion bill, Cranston-Weicker S2378 is scheduled for line by line examination beginning September 8. It is crucial that we let our senators know that we want this bill passed, that sanctions by the U.S. are a powerful weapon in the struggle against the racist apartheid system in South Africa.

The Coalition is in receipt of a letter from Rep. Ronald V. Dellums, the representative who introduced the House bill, calling for this tough sanctions legislation. Dellums is asking anti-apartheid activists to again write letters - this time to members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee where the bill will first be examined. Letters are also needed to be sent to those senators who are considered "swing" votes on S.2378.

Below is a list of the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The two New York State senators, Daniel Moynihan and Alphonse D'Amato, are considered "swing" votes. Also note that Moynihan is a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and has not signed on as a cosponsor.

Visit or write your senator
Time is short

MEMBERS OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE
Claiborne Pell, RI, Chairman

DEMOCRATS
Joseph R. Biden, Jr., DE
Paul S. Sarbanes, MD (cosponsor)
Alan Cranston, CA (cosponsor)
Christopher J. Dodd, CT
John F. Kerry, MA
Paul Simon, IL (cosponsor)
Terry Sanford, NC
Brock Adams, WA
Daniel P. Moynihan, NY

REPUBLICANS
Jesse Helms, NC
Richard G. Lugar, IN
Nancy L. Kassebaum, KS
Rudy Boschwitz, MN
Larry Pressler, SD
Frank Murkowski, AK
Paul S. Trible, VA
Daniel J. Evans, WA
Mitch McConnell, KY
Nelson Rohlihlala, the African National Congress leader and international symbol of the anti-apartheid struggle, turned seventy years old on July 18 of this year. The Pretoria government had offered an unprecedented six hour birthday visit for Mandela and his family which would have enabled the entire Mandela family to be together for the first time since his incarceration nearly 26 years ago. Winnie Madikizela-Mandela rejected the offer because they did not want to accept favors denied to the many other political prisoners and detainees.

Then on August 12, a statement by the ANC reported that Mandela lay sick in bed for days before South African prison authorities were forced, due to his critical condition, to rush him to a hospital. South Africa's jailed leader is seriously ill with TB, a disease which is commonly associated with inadequate medical care and diet.

The apartheid regime has come under increasing pressure, inside and outside of South Africa, to free Mandela. P.W. Botha, the minority regime's leader, still insists, however, on a conditional release. Mandela remains firm on his insistence that he will accept no conditions, that all political prisoners be released, that he is not "prepared to sell the birthright of the people to be free."

The dilemma that Mandela - free or imprisoned - poses for the apartheid rulers was captured well in a birthday message to Mandela from Fidel Castro: "With your unyielding attitude after more than a quarter of a century of unjust imprisonment, it is you who have confined your jailers to a prison without bars."

Nelson Mandela!
Costly battlefield losses made S. Africa compromise

(Continued from page 1)

South African withdrawal from Namibia, and a Cuban pullout from Angola on the agenda. Pretoria said it would remove its forces from Angola by Sept. 1, and, if the Cuban withdrawal timetable is acceptable, cooperate at last in the implementation of the UN plan for Namibian independence. The UN plan—Security Council Resolution 435—calls for a complete South African withdrawal from Namibia, and UN-supervised elections leading to independence. The resolution will be 10 years old next month, and observers caution that Pretoria may still have considerable tricks up its sleeve to avoid complying with the plan.

Pretoria agreed to the 4-party talks as the number of whites coming back home from Angola in coffins mounted, as the Angolan anti-aircraft defenses proved that Pretoria had lost aerial supremacy, and as the South African attempt to seize the strategic town of Cuito Cuanavale degenerated into a lengthy and futile siege. The main lesson of the past year in Angola is that force is really the only language that Pretoria understands and responds to. If Namibian independence is nearer now than ever before, it is thanks to Angola/Cuba successes on the battlefield.

The ceasefire agreement reached at the talks in Geneva would have been unilateral. The South Africans, who have not suffered a severe mauuil at Calueque, near the Angola-Namibia border, have said they want to see dismantling of seven bases in northern Angola. The Cuban and Angolan air forces have said they are prepared to be flexible on the issue of South African (and U.S.) supply Unita from the north, through a military box depot and is thus not addressed in the plan. Will the notorious police unit "koevert" (Afrikaans for crowbar), which acts as an armed death squad, be dismantled? What guarantees will there be for the physical safety of SWAPO leaders who return to the territory?

But any celebratory mood in Southern Africa, the latest turn of events was tempered by some sober realities. In hailing the ceasefire, U.S. Under Secretary of State Chester Crocker stressed that the Reagan administration is prepared to supply military aid to South Africa-backed white leader Jonas Savimbi and his Unita forces. And it is far from clear that South Africa has actually concluded that it can afford to pull out of Namibia and allow the territory its independence. Kaunda spoke as the four parties to the latest round of talks, this time in Geneva, announced an immediate ceasefire on Namibian territory. Negotiations among the four—An
gola, South Africa, Cuba and the U.S.—are to resume Aug. 22, just in time for the 10th anniversary of the Namibian cease-fire. (Continued from page 16)
City settles Springboks suit

Michelson charges pattern of police abuse

By Jay Jochnowitz 3/3/89

ALBANY — Buoyed by a $47,000 settlement with the city in a $9 million civil rights suit, an anti-apartheid activist said Tuesday that the case fit into a "pattern" of city police abuse.

"They are abusing the power and the authority that's been entrusted to them," said Vera Michelson, who was arrested during a 1981 raid the morning before she was to participate in a protest of a South African rugby team's match in Albany's Bleecker Stadium.

Albany has paid nearly $330,000 in connection with five civil rights or police abuse cases in recent years. The city denies the cases are part of a pattern and the rugby issue must be looked at separately.

"I don't think there's been anything to indicate that there was any wrongdoing on the part of the department," police spokesman Sgt. Robert Wolfgang said.

Michelson's comments during a news conference at City Hall were based on a series of lawsuits against the city and police officers.

• A $465,000 judgment in April was issued against the city and two officers by a federal jury which found police abused three Hispanic and black students during a 1982 arrest. A U.S. District judge later reduced the award to $235,000.

• The city paid $25,348 to a black couple arrested in 1982 after a federal jury found an officer, Detective Valerie Von Dollen Burke, conducted an unreasonable search while responding to a reported incident of child abuse.

• Burke was held liable for allegedly hitting a black woman with a flashlight while arresting her son in 1980. The city settled for $9,700.

• The city agreed to a $12,509 settlement with a 22-year-old homeless man who claimed officers kicked him while he was handcuffed during an arrest last year.

"We don't know how much money the city has to pay out to protect the cops before they realize there's a pattern," Michelson said. Her comments were echoed in a written statement by Vicki Smith, a representative of the Capital District Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism.

Mayor Thomas M. Whalen III was out of town and unavailable for comment, but before the latest settlement — filed last Thursday — he said he sees no such pattern. Corporation Counsel Vincent J. McArdle Jr. said Tuesday that the rugby case "is impossible to put into any kind of pattern."

Michelson, Aaron Estis and Michael Young were arrested at 3 a.m. in her Central Avenue apartment Sept. 22, 1981, the day of a game between the Springboks of South Africa and the Schenectady-based Eastern Rugby Union.

City, state and federal officers obtained a search warrant on the basis of allegations by a confidential FBI informant that the apartment contained weapons and bombs. Police found only a small quantity of marijuana and a few firecrackers. The demonstration went ahead with no major incidents.

McArdle said Tuesday the tip appeared valid and the raid had to be viewed in the context of tensions at the time. He noted that Gov. Hugh Carey was so alarmed at possible violence that he ordered the game stopped, an action reversed only after the city and rugby union went to court.

Michelson and her attorney, Lanny Walter, contended that didn't excuse the city or state and federal officers involved in the arrests for reportedly holding shotguns to the heads of the suspects or taking papers from her apartment. The city's settlement gave Michelson $12,000 and Estis spent more time in jail, $35,000.

Walter called the claims against the city "minor" and said a portion of the settlement will be used to pursue an appeal of court decisions that denied Michelson access to the FBI's informant. The FBI was originally named in the suit, but last fall a judge ruled the agency out because of lack of evidence.

As part of its ongoing campaign in the struggle against racially motivated violence, Vicki Smith serves as the Coalition representative to the Albany Community Police Relations Board. If you have any complaints or suggestions, contact Vicki in care of the Coalition, Box 3002, Pine Hills Station, Albany, N.Y. 12203.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING...

ARBOR HILL FAMILY DAY - Sept. 20th to Sept. 24th, sponsored by A Universal Being, at the Arbor Hill Softball Field, Lark and Colonie Streets, Albany, N.Y. NOTE: Sept. 21st has been set aside as a "Salute to South Africa" If you can volunteer to work on this night, call 462-0988.

"TAKE BACK THE NIGHT" - Rally and March sponsored by the Rape Crisis Center on Sept. 23rd. Beginning at the Capitol at 7:00 p.m. and ending at the Women's Building on Central Ave. in Albany. For more information, call 447-7100.

THE CURRENT SITUATION IN PUERTO RICO" - a talk by a representative of the Socialist Workers' Movement of Puerto Rico on Wed., Oct. 12 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Patrick's Church, 283 Central Avenue, Albany, New York. Sponsored by CASA, the Campanera Project. For more information, call 463-0777.

COALITION FUNDRAISER - "INTERNATIONAL PARTY". The Coalition is having a party on October 28th. This will be a night of disco, reggae, calypso, Latin and African music. Our parties are always a great time so set aside the date - more details on place and price are coming... Invite your friends, bring your family - October 28th.

Free South Africa Regional Conference

Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, September 23-25, 1988

In 1987, hundreds of delegates from throughout the world gathered at the invitation of the ANC in Arusha, Tanzania, to formulate a coordinated international program of support for the liberation of Southern Africa. This conference is a calling together of anti-apartheid activists to plan strategies in order to mobilize support for this movement. The Coalition is sending a delegation to New Haven. If you are interested in being part of the delegation, call 432-3594 for details.

Trade unionists, civil rights and community activists, students and educators, religious activists - your participation is essential to the success of these efforts.
Capital District Coalition  
Against Apartheid 
and Racism  
A Project of the Social Justice Center  
33 Central Avenue  
Albany, New York 12210

NEXT MONTHLY MEETING:  
Thursday, September 27, 1988

AMANDLA!

STEERING COMMITTEE

Vera Michelson, co-chair  
Merton Simpson, co-chair  
Shobhna Gopal  
Eileen Kawola, newsletter editor  
Mark Mishler  
Roli Varma, treasurer

Bill Ritchie  
Yvette Scarlett  
Vicki Smith, representative to  
Community Police Relations  
Board  
Anita Thayer

We are a Coalition of several community organizations and of individual members. We are supported by our members - you! We have no paid staff or overhead expenses so all funds go directly to lobbying efforts, education, printing and postage. The struggle cannot continue without your support. For more information, or to join the Coalition, call 518-436-0562. We desperately need contributions to the Coalition - send whatever you can afford today to:

CAPITAL DISTRICT COALITION AGAINST APARTHEID AND RACISM  
BOX 3002 PINE HILLS STATION, ALBANY, N.Y. 12203

Victory to ANC of South Africa  
Victory to SWAPO of Namibia