SHANTYTOWN CONSTRUCTED AT STATE CAPITOL
COALITION URGES SENATE TO END NEW YORK STATE COLLABORATION
WITH SOUTH AFRICA

The Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism today constructed a Shantytown outside the State Capitol to protest the State Senate's refusal to end New York State's support for South Africa.

"In South Africa, Shantytown's are constructed to protest the forced removal of South African's from their homes. In Albany, we build a Shantytown in protest of the State Senate's refusal to pass divestment legislation, which would end our collaboration with businesses operating in South Africa," said Bob Jaffe, a member of the Capital District Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism.

The Shantytown was staffed for a 24-hour period, from 9:00 A.M. Wednesday, June 25 to 9:00 A.M. Thursday, June 26. Volunteers from student groups, labor unions, religious organizations and community groups maintained a constant presence at the site outside the Capitol.

On January 21, 1986 the State Assembly passed legislation that would provide for the orderly divestiture of all state public pension funds from companies operating in or with South Africa or Namibia. The legislation also provides for a ban on the purchase of goods from South Africa and Namibia and a prohibition on the purchase of goods or
services from companies that operate in or with South Africa or Namibia. The Assembly legislation has been held in the Senate Finance Committee, chaired by Senator John Marchi.

"Daily we read and hear about the tragedy of apartheid in South Africa--a nation where a "State of Emergency" is declared that prohibits the media from reporting the news; a nation where black South Africans cannot vote and cannot move about their country freely; a nation where people protesting a system which denies them every human right are arrested, detained, tortured and murdered. Yet, here in Albany, the State Senate apparently continues to live in a vacuum and refuses to end New York State's cooperation with South Africa," said Sipho Seepe, a South African student and member of the Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism.

"Just last week, in response to the worsening situation in South Africa, the U.S. House of Representatives passed legislation imposing severe economic sanctions on South Africa. Other states, including New Jersey and Massachusetts, have enacted divestment legislation. We believe that the State Senate should act as others have, and pass legislation that will send a clear, powerful message that New York cannot, and will not, do 'business as usual' with South Africa's racist and brutal government," said Everett Joseph, President of the Student Association of the State University of New York (SASU).

"In several days the State Legislature will recess for the summer. How many more deaths, how many more families must be relocated from their homes, how many more days of denying basic human rights to 22 million people will be allowed to occur, before the State Senate acts to stop our state's cooperation with South Africa? " said Vera Michaelson, Co-Chair of the Capital District Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism.