

March-April 88

# Inkululeko \* Freedom

Newsletter of the Michigan Anti-Apartheid Coordinating Council

No.1



## Apartheid Regime Launches New Attacks!

*Political Activities of 18 Civic & Labor Groups Banned..*

On February 24th, the apartheid state issued orders forbidding 17 anti-racist organizations "from carrying out or performing any activity or acts whatsoever". Groups affected range from the nation's largest anti-apartheid coalition, the multi-racial United Democratic Front (UDF) to the smaller but influential Black Consciousness Azanian Peoples Organization (AZAPO) and its National Forum Committee alliance. The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) was ordered to cease all its political activities and confine itself to narrow collective bargaining issues.

Most press reports stressed the ruling Nationalist Party took these steps to appear tough on "law and order" for two whites' only by-elections. These elections were subsequently lost to the even more extreme racist Conservative Party. The ruling party's main intent however is to block resistance to those forces in the Black community willing to collaborate with the racist regime. An immediate by product of the ban is the disruption of peace talks between anti-system forces and confused and conservative elements in the townships. In some townships, a state of civil war instigated by the police, has existed between these groupings. There have been hundreds of deaths in these conflicts.

This October all race groups will be able to vote in "their" respective municipal elections. By obstructing political campaigns by the liberation movement either within or in opposition to this round of elections the racist state hopes to foster an appearance of legitimacy and fake mass support for the collaborators and the Botha regimes' bogus reform stance. Messages supporting the freedom movement can be sent to:

COSATU  
P.O. Box 1019  
Johannesburg 2000  
South Africa  
Telex: 486519

Weekly Mail  
P.O. Box 260425  
Excom 2023  
South Africa  
Telex: 486379

The New Nation  
P.O. Box 10674  
Johannesburg 2000  
South Africa  
Telex: 482226

The Weekly Mail and The New Nation are democratic newspapers. Protests sent to:

Ambassador Dr. Pieter Koornhof  
Embassy of the Republic of  
South Africa  
3051 Massachusetts Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20008

# March 21, 1960



It should still be fresh in our minds. It is sad that it isn't. March 21, 1960, South African police firing on peacefully protesting unarmed men, women and children in Sharpeville, killing 69, wounding 176. Yes, Sharpeville is but one of the many struggles of the freedom fighters of South Africa, but one of the sacrifices they've made and a sole example of the price that is being paid. However the significance of Sharpeville, of the massacre, is far reaching, causing us to mourn not only the numbers of those Africans who perished from the guns and bullets, but the subsequent proclamation of a state of emergency, that since has become a common and immediate reaction by the South African government to any protest and the accompanying declaration of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) as unlawful organizations.

There should be no doubt in our minds that we must be careful never to forget Sharpeville and the lessons it has taught us. Reminding us to do as the people of South Africa have done since the massacre, take the stance the ANC and PAC immediately took following the massacre, i.e., everytime we are repressed, we must come back stronger. Anything else is abject surrender.

Sharpeville is not the past. Today six young men and women from Sharpeville face the death penalty

stemming from charges of attacking a local township official.

The anniversary of Sharpeville is upon us. Now is the time to renew your commitment to fighting apartheid and demonstrate that commitment by participating in and initiating anti-apartheid activity. Sharpeville has taught us the question is not whether or not to fight, but how to continue to fight.

*Free the Sharpeville Six  
No Justice, No Peace!*

## **Sharpeville Commemoration**

1 PM SATURDAY MARCH 19

DAVID MILLER CENTER

8731 E. JEFFERSON, DETROIT

*Speakers: South Africa, UAW & TransAfrica.*

What is important about Sharpeville is not that seventy died: nor even that they were shot in the back retreating, unarmed, defenceless

and certainly not the heavy calibre slug that tore through a mother's back and ripped through the child in her arms killing it

Remember Sharpeville bullet-in-the-back day Because it epitomized oppression and the nature of society more clearly than anything else; it was the classic event

what the world whispers apartheid declares with snarling guns the blood the rich lust after South Africa spills in the dust

Remember Sharpeville Remember bullet-in-the-back day

And remember the unquenchable will for freedom Remember the dead and be glad

— STUBBORN HOPE —  
Dennis Brutus

# South African Labor in '87



Throughout 1987 Black workers and their organizations play an increasingly central role in the South African freedom struggle. Here are some of the highlights:

On the political front--

On May 1st (International Labor Day), 2.5 million workers out of an industrial workforce of approximately 6 million stayed off their jobs.

Less than one week later 1.5 million workers and 1 million students stayed away from work and school for two days protesting national elections in which the Black majority could not vote. On May 8th, the Congress of South African Trade Union's (COSATU) Johannesburg headquarters was bombed.



In July, 1,500 delegates to COSATU's 2nd national congress issued a demand for legalization of the outlawed African National Congress (ANC). Delegates adopted the ANC associated Freedom Charter as encompassing the minimum demands necessary for a democratic, non-racial South Africa. Giving lie to the Reaganite claim that divestment and sanctions are not in the interest of the African people, the Congress adopted resolutions calling for 1) stiff sanctions and 2) that divestment be carried out in negotiation with the unions to ensure terms most favorable to the workers. Union representatives and their affiliates stated their intentions to formulate additional working class demands and struggle for a "non-exploitive society".

Earlier in its 1987 New Year's message, "The Future is in Your Hands", COSATU called on union members to build street and neighborhood committees modeled on democratic workplace organizations. Building a fighting alliance with the youth, what it termed "the working class's strongest, best and most reliable allies" was to be a priority. The successful implementation of this policy is increasingly evident. Many unionists imprisoned by the government are charged with leading community resistance as well as workplace actions. The case of Moses Mayekiso is a good example. Mayekiso, General Secretary of the National Union Of Metalworkers (NUMSA) and four co-defendants from the Alexandra Action Committee are on trial for treason. They are charged with "seizing areas of Alexandra, organizing rent boycotts, establishing peoples committees and courts and launching a campaign against the police, the Defense Forces (army) and collaborators with the system".



On the industrial front--

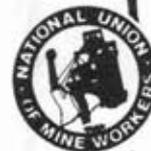
1987 began with a strike by 11,000 members of the Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union (CCAWUSA) already in progress. Directed against the OK Bazaars retail chain it centered on wages. After ten weeks a clear cut victory was won.



In early June a bitter three month strike in the Transvaal against the government railway corporation ended. Six workers died, 400 were arrested. Management reinstated 16,000 fired strikers and agreed to recognize the South African Railway and Harbor Workers Union (SARWHU). Since then, management has gone back on this last point.

In that same time frame, 8,000 striking postal workers won a union grievance procedure. On three occasions, 60,000 metalworkers struck demanding freedom for Moses Mayekiso. They were unsuccessful and had three members killed. Also, several unions in six cities had their offices raided and sacked by police.

August saw a three week strike by 340,000 miners in the country's strategic gold and coal operations. It was led by the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). The strike was the largest and costliest in the nation's history. The NUM retreated in the face of 44,000 firings, nine deaths, and 300 wounded and 400 jailed. The NUM failed to achieve its objective of a 30% wage increase, but it carried out the longest strike ever by African miners there and it retains its organization and loyalty of its members.



The stage is set for future battles. Labor and democratic forces worldwide must be prepared to respond.



## UAW Supports Mayekiso

## Amon Msane Freed!

Moses Mayekiso and his co-defendants' treason trial began this past October and was subsequently recessed. It is scheduled to resume in February.

The United Automobile Workers Union (UAW) is a member of the International Metal Workers Federation, as is Mayekiso's union NUMSA. The UAW has helped assemble a team of jurists to travel to South Africa to observe the trial. In addition the UAW regularly publicized his imprisonment.

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For a brochure and pre-printed post-cards, contact the UAW International Affairs Dept., 1757 N. Street, Washington, D.C. 20036

The Labor Committee of the Michigan Anti-Apartheid Coordinating Council meets at 1:00 p.m. on the first Thursday of every month at UAW local 262, 8490 St. Aubin, south of Holbrook. Official representatives and individuals are welcomed.

Recently the labor committee worked on behalf of imprisoned South African union steward Amon Msane. Msane, a 3M employee was active in building contacts between U.S. and South African workers. Following a visit to Detroit, he was jailed without trial. The committee demonstrated twice at area 3M locations, urging 3M to get involved and get Msane released. We have just received word of Amon Msane's release. For information on the committee call 592-8179 (days).

# michigan against apartheid

ANN ARBOR--Free South Africa Coordinating Committee. Meets regularly. For meeting details and further information on future activities contact the Committee at: 3909 Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mi. 48109

TRANSAFRICA--TransAfrica announces that December 18, 1987, House and Senate conferees agreed to include Congressman Rangel's Amendment denying foreign tax credits to U.S. corporations doing business in South Africa as part of the revenue package designed to meet the deficit reduction established by Graham-Rudman. When this is accepted by Congress, it will be the first tightening of sanctions legislation since Congress enacted legislation in 1986. Mi. TransAfrica call Margaret Bailor, 548-1430.

MICHIGAN COALITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS--Library of films on apartheid. Regular activities, and an active study group. For information contact Tom Fentin, Director, 832-4400. 4800 Woodward Ave., Detroit, Mi. 48201.

MAYFLOWER UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST--Direct aid to the ANC. Rev. Aldridge of the Mayflower United Church of Christ is spearheading a local campaign to provide direct financial aid to the ANC. For further information contact MAACC at 862-2034 and someone will assist you in contacting Rev. Aldridge.

AFSCME LOCAL 312--Continuing their drive to stop the Detroit Department of Transportation (D-DOT) from use and purchase of South African glass. The glass is used in its coaches. It has been two years since Local 312 first pointed the use of the glass out and how the purchase was supporting apartheid. Although the city said the practice has ceased, it has not. Find out how you can support the protest against the DOT waged by Local 312, call 868-7310.

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Call MAACC at 862-2034 with your upcoming events and activities for our next issue. Updates on current events are also welcome.

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## **Sanctions Update**

Reagan is now calling sanctions imposed on South Africa in 1986 a failure and has refused to impose additional sanctions, leaving out that the 1986 sanctions were limited in scope and never fully imposed. Leaving out that sanctions were never intended to end apartheid over night. Sanctions are intended to cut off economic support for the racist regime and force them to pay a cost for continuing apartheid. Recent surveys have shown the oppressed people of South Africa fully support sanctions.

California State Representative Ron Dellums and Senator Alan Cranston, have introduced H.R. 1580 and S. 556 to not only maintain already introduced measures, but to impose stronger sanctions needed to put real pressure on the Pretoria regime. Support in Congress is slim. We must communicate with our legislators and stress we expect their support for the bill NOW!

## **....Boycott Alert!**

The Namibian Information Service requests anti-apartheid activists to be alert to a possible cultural boycott of the film "Red Scorpion".

The film, being shot in South African occupied Namibia, is a fictitious film about UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi. The film reportedly will star Grace Jones and Dolph Lundgren.

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Katrina Ganey will speak and show slides from her recent trip to South Africa's Black townships. Sponsored by Michigan Coalition for Human Rights. Tuesday, March 29th, 7:00pm., Barth Hall, St. Pauls Cathedral, 4800 Woodward.

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# BIKO & CRY FREEDOM!



Cry Freedom is a film about South Africa. We encourage you to see it if you haven't already. Containing powerful scenes and exposing the savage nature of the government there it can only aid the anti-apartheid effort in this country.

This picture gives U.S. audiences a look at slain Black liberation figure Steve Biko. Biko was a leading activist in the 1970's Black Consciousness movement. He was the founder and first president of the South African Students Organization (SASO). SASO united Africans, so called "Coloreds" and Indians as Blacks in the face of attempts to divide their groups. After July 1970, in charge of SASO publications and writing under the name of Frank Talk, he elaborated the basic principles of Black Consciousness.

The government tried to blunt his influence and in March 1973, he was sent back and restricted to his hometown, Ginsberg. In May 1976, he was the celebrated defense witness in a nationally publicized trial of other BC activists. Six weeks later the Soweto uprising broke out. From that August to December he was detained without trial under the Terrorism Act. In 1977, while restricted to Ginsberg, he was named Honorary President of the newly formed Black Peoples Convention. In this period he worked tirelessly to build an effective unity between the various liberation currents; Black Consciousness, African National Congress, Pan-Africanist Congress and the Unity Movement. This work was cut short

by his tragic death. In August 1977, while returning from an organizing trip to Capetown, he was arrested at a roadblock for violating his restrictions. During this, his last imprisonment, he was shackled and beaten. On September 12, 1977, just over 10 years ago, he died of a brain damage. 20,000 people marched behind his coffin to bury the fallen fighter. He was only 30 years old.

The production does have a weakness that seriously detracts from its positive thrust. Many have commented upon the fact that Biko, played by Denzel Washington disappears halfway through the film. From there the main character is Donald Woods, played by Kevin Kline. Woods, a white South African helped make the world aware of Biko's life and death and had to flee the land of his birth to do so.

Many of us would love to see a film more fully about Biko the man and the movement of which he was part. No question about it, but Cry Freedom fell short as a political piece in a far more serious way. The film is meant for US/British audiences, but the not insignificant role, past and present, of our two countries' corporations and governments in the oppression of Black people there is ignored.

The Michigan Anti-Apartheid Coordinating Council was founded to promote unity among groups and individuals participating in anti-apartheid activity. Our main goal is to promote action oriented anti-apartheid activity. MAACC membership consists of individuals and representatives of groups and labor unions doing anti-apartheid work on any level.

Monthly meetings are held at 11:00 am., the first Saturday of every month at Hartford Memorial Baptist Church, 18700 James Couzens, Detroit, Mi.

All interested persons and groups are invited.

April Meeting, April 9th