

PEOPLE FOR SOUTHERN AFRICAN FREEDOM



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People for Southern African Freedom asks *you* to be concerned about the struggles now taking place in Southern Africa. This pamphlet is our effort to inform you about the roots of that struggle and to suggest that you have a vital role to play in support of its just and humane resolution.

BACKGROUND

Since World War II the continent of Africa has been undergoing a profound transformation. Out of a vast area that was almost totally colonized by major western powers there have emerged over forty internationally recognized independent African states. Since 1975, when the Portuguese colonial empire fell to the liberation forces, world attention has focused more and more on three countries: The Republic of South Africa, Zimbabwe (Rhodesia), and Namibia (South West Africa).

In all three of these countries the vast majority of people are black Africans and in all three countries these black majorities are subjugated by white minority governments. A brief description of the situation in each country follows:

South Africa

The harshest and most institutionalized forms of racist oppression are found in South Africa itself. All non-whites are enmeshed in a fabric of discriminatory laws that regulate every facet of their daily lives. Based upon the notion of *apartheid* or "separateness," this system's fundamental purpose is to promote racial discrimination in all aspects of South African life.

Homelands: All black Africans are treated as migrants whose only "rightful" homes are on the barren homelands created by the white government. Designated for 75% of the 25 million population in South Africa, these lands comprise only 13% of the total land area of the country. Very little agricultural or factory employment is available on these homelands, so the vast majority of black workers must seek employment in the cities. Once they leave the homelands they must carry a passbook with them at all times.

Townships: Urban workers must live in black townships several miles from the white-settled urban centers. Over the past decade the South African government has engaged in one of the most dehumanizing "resettlement programs" of modern times. All non-working relatives of workers are being forced to move to the "homelands," resulting in a massive fragmenting of the black South African family.

Work: While on the job black South Africans are prohibited by law from holding jobs above a certain skill level. This, combined with the fact that blacks are generally paid less than whites even on the same skill level, results in an average household wage for whites that is 8.5 times that of blacks (1975 figures).

Education: Black South African parents, unlike white parents, are required to pay school fees for an education on which the government expends less than 10% of what it allocates to white education. In June, 1976, the government provided the ultimate racial insult by requiring all black schools to begin teaching Afrikaans, the hated language of the white oppressor. The resulting student uprisings in Soweto and other townships was a clear signal to the South African government and the world that a mass popular resistance among blacks was growing and is here to stay.

Namibia (Southwest Africa)

On Oct. 27, 1966 the U.N. General Assembly revoked the 1920 League of Nations mandate which had given South Africa authority to govern this former German protectorate. The basis for this U.N. decision was that, by its imposition of apartheid policies on the inhabitants of Namibia, the South African government was violating Article 22 of the League Covenant. Article 22 stated that the Administrating power was to "promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being and social progress of the inhabitants of the territory."

Since 1966 the South African government has virtually ignored this U.N. decision and continued to exploit Namibia's considerable natural resources while simultaneously strengthening the *apartheid* system there. Active opposition is developing within Namibia especially by the Southwest African Peoples Organization (SWAPO), the largest liberation organization in Namibia and recognized by the U.N. as the representative of the people of Namibia.

Zimbabwe (Rhodesia)

While not under direct control of South Africa this former British "self-governing" colony has been, since its declaration of independence from Britain in 1966, almost completely dependent on South Africa for its continued existence. Its 6.5 million population includes only about 250,000 whites who nevertheless control the government through its infamous "double roll" electoral system, which gives the white minority 85% of the seats in parliament. Under the present system of laws, the education system is segregated, inter-racial worship is illegal, and blacks have been granted only the most underdeveloped sections of land. Wage differentials are similar to those in South Africa and about 80% of the blacks live below Poverty Datum Line, the income considered sufficient to maintain the barest minimum existence.

Active opposition is building under the leadership (primarily) of the Patriotic Front consisting of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU, Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) and Zimbabwe Peoples Army (ZIPA).

WHY AMERICANS SHOULD BE CONCERNED

Perhaps it is enough to say that the massive injustice taking place daily in Southern Africa should be an affront to us all. But our concern must grow with the realization that our government and U.S.-based multinational corporations are deeply implicated in the perpetuation of these conditions.

There are close to 400 U.S. based corporations in the Republic of South Africa. They receive a 19.5% rate of return on their investments there—nearly double what they make here. During the past 10 years U.S. investment in South Africa has risen a billion dollars to a total of 1.6 billion.

U.S. banks have loaned over \$800 million to the South African government-controlled corporations in 1976 *alone*. These banks include Citibank, Chase Manhattan Bank, Manufacturers Hanover Trust, Morgan Guaranty, First National Bank of Chicago, and the Bank of America. As First National of Chicago puts it, "credit extended to South Africa is profitable."

Profitable, yes. But when these profits are gained at the incredible cost of human deprivation and suffering experienced by millions of non-white Southern Africans—it is time that our government paid more than mere lip service to the "moral repugnance" it has expressed toward *apartheid*.

The deprivation of basic rights in Southern Africa also undermines our freedoms and well-being at home. Civil liberties and labor's right to organize are weakened when the U.S. supports denial of those rights abroad. In this age of global markets, the super-exploited workers of Southern Africa compete with U.S. workers for jobs—and both lose out. As taxpayers, we help pay for apartheid through U.S. government tax credits for American companies in Southern Africa.

WHY "PROGRESSIVE" U.S. CORPORATIONS CANNOT LIBERALIZE APARTHEID

Both President Carter and Ambassador Young have explicitly supported continued U.S. corporate investment in the *apartheid* regime. They claim that such investment will improve the living conditions of non-whites and that there are "signs of change."

In fact a growing number of corporations are attempting to promote an image of moral concern about the *apartheid* system which has heretofore provided them millions in inflated profits. A number have even signed a manifesto which states that those corporations will attempt to equalize all facilities and conditions of the workplace.

Never has any manifesto carried a more hollow ring. Since the white government considers Africans transient black labor units, whose only recognized homes are the fragmented "tribal" lands, Africans will always be subordinate to whites who control the economy to their own advantage.

The "moral concern" of these corporations is questionable. Mobil Oil has for years been defying the trade embargo with Rhodesia by funneling its oil through various "front" corporations in Europe and South Africa. The same is true of Lockheed, Avco Lycoming and other U.S. arms merchants with regard to the arms embargo in effect for both Rhodesia and South Africa.

Clearly U.S. corporations have no business doing business in Southern Africa at present. We believe that a major task of Americans is to urge the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. corporations from Southern Africa. The only way to reduce the growing bloodshed is to undermine the Southern African governments resolve to carry out a protracted war against the forces of liberation. The withdrawal of their most important investors would do just that.

A TRUE MANIFESTO FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

The majority of Southern Africans will someday exercise their human right to self-determination. To reach this goal the resistance forces are daily gathering more strength; and the struggle against the minority regimes escalates. They declare to the world that all people regardless of race, sex, or belief shall enjoy the following rights: The right to a job, housing, protection under the law, equal voice in governance, learning and culture, and a fair share of the land and wealth of their countries (from the South African Freedom Charter). This they will fight and even die for.

LOCAL ACTION IN SUPPORT OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN FREEDOM:

People for Southern African Freedom is a local group, formed in June, 1977, which includes a range of ages, occupations and politics. Our aim is to support the freedom forces of Southern Africa. Important objectives in this work are exposing the roles the U.S. government and multinational corporations play in propping up the apartheid regimes, and pressuring them to get out of Southern Africa. We plan a variety of activities, including resolutions, petitions, demonstrations, boycotts and speakers to further our aims. We intend to work with groups in the Eugene area such as churches, schools, unions or clubs that want to find out about or act on this crucial world issue.

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