

End Cultural Collaboration with Apartheid

COME TO THE JAZZ FESTIVAL
Sunday July 3 at SPAC

PROTEST RAY CHARLES' VISIT
TO SOUTH AFRICA



STOP AIDING APARTHEID — Hundreds of protesters turned-out Saturday night to boycott the Ray Charles concert at the Beacon Theatre in Manhattan. The well-known entertainer is one of several Black performers who has travelled to racist South Africa despite protests from the United Nations and groups like the National Black United Front. (Dave Greene Photo) *NY Amsterdam News* 10/30/82.

In 1980 Ray Charles attempted to tour South Africa. Defending himself he said, "I don't live here. I know that every country I have been in has some kind of problem, so what's the big deal?" The "big deal" is that black South African organizations have requested that foreign entertainers not perform in South Africa.

In a formal appeal to foreign artists, the Azanian Peoples Organization (AZAPO) asked for "total support and commitment in our move to have South Africa completely isolated in sports, culture and foreign investments... in order to pressurize the racist minority regime into implementing fundamental change inside the country."

"Artists who come to South Africa are insensitive to our feelings and are imbued with capitalistic greed," AZAPO continued. "Granted, many of them are talented in the field of music and are regarded as heroes by our people, but must they stoop so low by siding with the enemy of humanity?"

In the case of big-time artists like Ray Charles, ignorance of the conditions of racial oppression in South Africa is no excuse. This is pointed out by boycott organizers in the U.S. As Elombe Bath, chair of the Patrice Lumumba Coalition argues, "some people have really become obnoxious in their response to people who try to give them information. And while some people didn't know (about apartheid) before they went, others did... Stephanie Mills, Millie Jackson, Chick Corea, Frank Sinatra, Ray Charles. These people have been talked to over and over again. These people are hard targets."

(OVER)

Ray Charles' tour of South Africa was particularly offensive. Even before he left the U.S., AZAPO tried to persuade Charles not to go. Once he arrived in South Africa, Charles was contacted and urged to cancel his tour. He refused. Even worse, he scheduled a concert in Soweto on October 19th, a day reserved by blacks for anti-apartheid protests. AZAPO and other organizations responded by organizing a boycott of his performance and tour. Only 30 people showed up at the concert and it was cancelled. Later concerts were cancelled as well and his entourage was stoned by black protesters.

Besides asking artists not to go to South Africa, boycott organizers have requested that artists who have gone there openly apologize and pledge not to return until the apartheid regime has been overthrown. Those who refuse to meet these simple demands, like Ray Charles, face pickets, boycotts and financial losses. It is against this background that Ray Charles' visit to Saratoga takes place.

All we are asking is that these artists take a principled stand on performing in the most racist society on this earth. This is what black South Africans want. We should support them.

WE ARE ASKING YOU TO:

Wear an armband: Demonstrate your opposition to collaboration with apartheid. Show solidarity with the South African liberation struggle.

Boycott Ray Charles' Part of the Program When he comes on stage, join us in walking from your seat or place on the lawn to the area behind the lawn. Return to your seat when the performance is over.

Leaflet: People are needed to leaflet concertgoers at SPAC from 11-2pm. Carpools will be leaving from Albany. Call if you want to be included.

Next Meeting: Friday July 1 7:30pm. Call for details.

Further logistical information will be available from anti-apartheid organizers on the day of the Jazz Festival.

For more information call 489-1767 or 463-4654 eves.