

June 18, 1975

Dear Friend and Supporter:

Enclosed are three Action Memos which are bulletins put out by SCEF to let our friends know of struggles that need support immediately. Many of you have received these memos before, but for those of you who haven't, let us know if you are interested in receiving them.

In this mailing there are three struggles that need support. They are:

- 1) the United Farm Workers' organizing drive in east Texas that is uniting "illegal" Mexican workers with citizens and Mexicans with documents and is facing vigilante terror,
- 2) the fight against the intensified repression and murder of inmates at Atmore-Holman Prisons who are fighting for prison reforms,
- 3) protests over the recent arrest and harassment of Tapson Mawere and Synos Mangazva, both representatives of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU).

All three of these struggles are tied together. They are the system's attacks against the people's fight-back against the crisis. Resistance is growing. Many times in the past, the South has been in advance of the rest of the country both in the development of the struggle and the level of repression. Since the crisis is hitting the South hardest, this may prove to be true again. Your continuing support can make a difference in the rapid development of the movement in the South.

In struggle,

Sandy Stimpson
Dave Simpson

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SCEF Staff

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ACTION MEMO

ON: Farmworkers Attacked in East Texas

In late May, farmworkers from four major melon ranches in the Rio Grande Valley in east Texas were on strike. Most melons weren't picked in the very short harvest season, leaving millions of dollars worth of rotting melons. On May 26, while picketing, 10 farmworkers were gunned down by grower C.L. Miller, owner of El Texano melon ranch.

Miller has admitted to the shootings which left two farmworkers seriously wounded. In a TV interview he said he "opened season" on the farmworkers. Miller has only been charged with aggravated assault, and this happened only after mass demands that he be arrested. Now the grand jury says that there isn't enough evidence to indict him.

This attack only increased the resistance and support for the organizing drive. That day, 300 more workers walked out of Miller's fields, and the next day 3,000 farmworkers and supporters marched on the ranch. The harvest season is now over in the valley and the UFW organizers are following the harvest northward into the Panhandle.

The growers are also organizing to try to defeat the UFW again. The last major UFW strike in Texas in 1966-67 was smashed with help from the notorious Texas Rangers. Using vigilante terror, harassing, and brutally attacking picketlines and murdering leaders, they did much to defeat the strike.

This time, the same methods are being used against a struggle with added significance. This strike and organizing drive in Hidalgo County, Texas, was one with a high level of unity between the "illegal" workers and those here "legally", citizens and green card holders. Support was strong for the organizing drive among farmworkers from both sides of the border. Close to 80% of the strikers were Mexicans, many without their immigration papers. The success of strikes based on such unity can very well set a precedent for successful farmworker organizing everywhere. As one UFW organizer said, "This time it should be clear that the so-called 'illegal aliens' aren't strikebreakers. From this day on, no union member can say with a straight face that Mexican workers are strikebreakers." This development of unity can also push ahead organizing among "illegals" everywhere, especially in the Southwest and South.

This potential is probably an important factor in the severe repression the UFW and farmworkers have encountered in this strike. Your support could make a difference in this important struggle for unionization.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

1. Send letters and telegrams demanding that the grand jury indict Miller for attempted murder to Sheriff Claudio Castañeda and to District Attorney Oscar McInnis, both at Hidalgo County Courthouse, Edinburg, Texas 78539.
2. Support is needed for the organizing drive. The strikers themselves have donated the little money they have to continue the organizing drive. Money, food and clothing are needed. Send contributions to UFOWC, P.O. Box 15415, Houston, Texas 77020.

June 18, 1975

ACTION MEMO

ON: Stepped-up Repression of the Atmore Holman Brothers

The prison authorities of Alabama have singled out Black activists in Inmates for Action (IFA) for particularly brutal repression. The IFA, formed in 1971, has led several protests against the brutal and inhumane prison conditions at both the Atmore Prison Farm and the Holman Prison Unit.

Following two separate struggles, a total of forty-five indictments were obtained by the state and three IFA leaders, Yukema (Tommy Dotson), Chagina (George Dobbins) and Frank X. Moore were murdered. All the prisoners singled out for repression by prison authorities are Black — clear evidence of the racism built into the Alabama prison system.

New Indictments

This May Alabama Attorney General Bill Baxley and his assistant John Yung obtained six new indictments against prison activists based on the rebellion at Atmore almost a year and a half ago. These new indictments constituted double jeopardy since the men had previously been indicted and tried for their alleged participation in the rebellion.

"Death List"

There are now at least twenty names on the "death list," all Black inmates. First exposed in March of 1974, the list at that time included twenty-three prisoners, three of whom are now dead. The list made it clear that the prison officials wanted the named prisoners killed and would take no action against any prison guards or inmates who participated in such a process.

State and prison authorities, thinking that the case is out of the public eye, now feel free to step up their repression against the IFA. One IFA member has been recently sentenced to death by the courts and another brother was murdered in April. New indictments have been filed, and years are being piled onto the sentences of other inmates. Your protests are urgently needed now.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

1. Letters of protest about the murders, repression of the IFA, and prison conditions generally should be sent to L. B. Sullivan, Commissioner of the Alabama Board of Corrections, 101 South Union St., Montgomery, Ala. and Governor George Wallace, State Capitol, Montgomery, Ala.

2. Contributions are urgently needed to cover legal expenses, printing and publicity expenses, and to help with travel expenses for family and supporters both to the prisons and the courtrooms.

3. It is crucial to show that the Brothers have broad and national support. You can help by publicizing the case, by distributing the newsletter, and by adding your name to the growing list of sponsors of the Defense Committee. For more information write to the Atmore Holman Brothers Defense Committee, 802 6th St., North, Birmingham, Ala. 35204.

Southern Conference Education Fund (SCEF)
3210 W. Broadway, Louisville, Ky. 40211

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ACTION MEMO

ON: Protest Delaware Police Attacks on ZANU Leaders

While traveling to speak about the racism and brutality of the Rhodesian police who have recently killed thirteen Zimbabweans, Tapson A. Mawere, North American representative of Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), and ZANU colleague Synos Mangazva were beaten and arrested by police in Harrington, Delaware, on June 7. Mawere was the keynote speaker at the recent SCEF-initiated Conference to Stop the Importation of South African Coal. SCEF Board members have helped to set up speaking engagements for Mr. Mawere throughout the South.

Mawere and Mangazva were waiting for a replacement for the broken down Trailways bus that was taking them to Norfolk, Virginia. They had entered a nearby restaurant, People's Service, and were waiting to be served when a plain clothes policeman burst into the shop and told Mangazva to get out. Mangazva was pushed through a plate glass door by three cops and beaten and pushed into a car. Tapson Mawere, trying to come to Mangazva's rescue, was pushed away. He jumped into the car before the door closed in an attempt to protect his friend from further beating. While Mangazva was put under arrest outside the restaurant, Mawere was arrested only after he started writing down the names of the police and the particulars at the police station. Mangazva was arrested for disorderly conduct, resisting arrest, and assault. Mawere was arrested for disorderly conduct and obstructing police.

The two men were taken to Dover where they were stripped except for shorts and put into maximum security cells. They spent the night sleeping on cement slabs with no cover and the windows open. Mangazva was badly in need of medical care for a deep gash resulting from being pushed through the glass door. By Sunday morning their friends and ZANU supporters had raised their bail.

On investigation after their release, Mawere and Mangazva were told by the Black community in Harrington that People's Service is known for serving whites only. The two men were casually dressed and it seems apparent that the police thought they were American Black men. Some of the Delaware papers are using Mawere's position as the representative of ZANU to try to enflame public opinion against the two men.

SCEF is asking friends to send letters and telegrams demanding that the charges be dropped and that the state of Delaware officially apologize to Mr. Mawere and Mr. Mangazva. We also demand an investigation into the racist policies of the Harrington police, the Dover jailers and People's Service Restaurant. Send telegrams and letters to Governor Sherman Tribbit, Dover, De. 19901, or State Attorney General Richard Weir, Willmington, Del.

Their hearings are scheduled for June 27 at 3 pm, Court 7 in Dover, Del. The Black community in the Dover area is organizing around the incident. The courtroom will be filled by ZANU supporters from Delaware, Baltimore, Boston, Washington, New York and elsewhere. Money is needed to cover these legal expenses. Please send any checks to ZANU, 89-09 167th St., Jamaica, N.Y. 11432. Be sure to note "legal defense" on the check.