



August 9, 1956 - 1980

SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN'S DAY

PROGRAM

Poetry Presentation

"Why We Come to Celebrate"

For Their Triumphs: Celebrating Black Women's Resistance to Apartheid

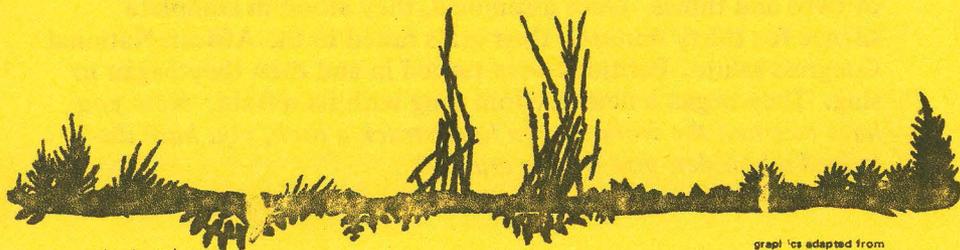
Feminism: Differences between the U.S. and South Africa

U.S. Economic Support of Apartheid

Supporting the South African Women's Fund

Questions and Answers

Crossroads: A Community Defies Apartheid (film)



labor donated

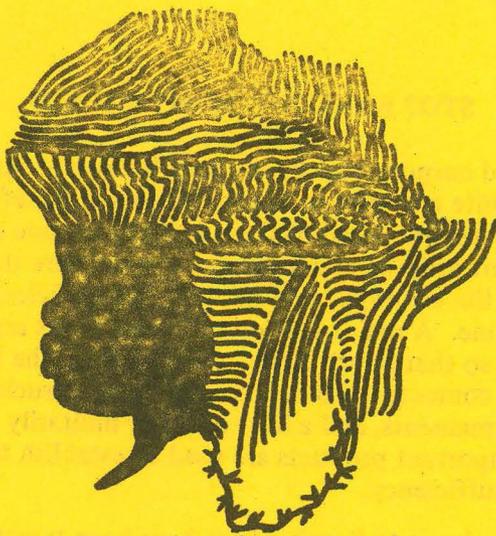
graphics adapted from
artwork by D. Bragin

HISTORY OF SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN'S DAY

In the mid-1950's, the South African government extended the much hated pass law system to African women. Until this time, passes had to be carried only by African men. Under the pass laws, all Africans must carry books, with their pictures and other required information, which states where they can and cannot be at a given time. The response of African women against this imposition was militant and organized. The first big protest against the pass laws took place in October 1955. 2,000 women, predominately African but including women of all other races, converged in Pretoria, the administrative seat of the South African government.

Women had reason to fear the carrying of passes. All their lives they had witnessed the effects of the pass laws on African men: the night raids, the searches on any pretext, jobs being lost due to arrests, disappearances of men with notification of their families, and prosecutions (over half the adult population is arrested for pass violations during the year). And for the women? In addition to the usual harassment by the pass laws, most women had helpless dependents, often young babies, who would be left totally alone if the mother was whisked to jail. Lillian Ngoyi, an African women's leader, explained: *Men are born into the system and it is as if it has become a life tradition that they carry passes. We as women have seen the treatment [of] our men—when they leave home in the morning, you are not sure if they will come back. If the husband is to be arrested, and the mother, what about the child?*

The women's anti-pass movement grew. Numerous protests and burning of passes took place throughout the country, culminating in a mass demonstration in Pretoria a year after the first demonstration. On August 9, 1956, 20,000 women of all races assembled, despite tremendous difficulties and intimidation. All processions in Pretoria were banned that day, so the women walked to the government building to see the Prime Minister in groups of twos and threes. Once assembled, they stood in complete silence for thirty minutes, their arms raised in the African National Congress salute. Petitions were turned in and then they began to sing. They began a new freedom song with its refrain: *Now you have touched the women, you have struck a rock, you have dislodged a boulder, you will be crushed.*



SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN'S FUND

The SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN'S FUND was formed in January 1980 to provide political education in the United States about Black women's oppression in South Africa, and to provide material support to these women. We support women working with women in a variety of ways—trade unions, women's groups, and community self-help projects. Our primary task is to create a strong base of support in this country for the women of South Africa in their efforts to achieve national self-determination.

The Fund focuses on the struggle of black women in South Africa because all too often their role in social and economic change is forgotten. South African women are prevented from maintaining an adequate standard of living. While they are often separated from their husbands and families for long periods of time, they are responsible, against all odds, for the survival of the black family in South Africa. We believe economic support of black African women is a necessary step towards national liberation.

We have committed ourselves to raising \$20,000 over the next 12 months to help black women develop child-care, educational and health programs. Through these programs, advocacy for women's rights and national self-determination will be important issues. We ask that you give what you can to help further these goals. Checks may be written to the South African Women's Fund. They may be sent in c/o of Stop Banking on Apartheid, 464 19th Street Oakland 94612.

STOP BANKING ON APARTHEID

U.S. banks and corporations have a long history of directly supporting the white minority in South Africa and benefiting from the apartheid system. Most of these loans have gone directly to the government or its state-owned industries where they're used to strengthen the economic and military self-sufficiency of the apartheid regime. A major part of U.S. bank loans represent trading credit so that South Africa can buy from the U.S.—40% of its oil comes from U.S. companies; cars, trucks, planes, computers, armaments, and a host of other militarily and technologically important products are used to establish the apartheid regime's self-sufficiency.

Banks granting loans to South Africa have been targeted internationally for a withdrawal campaign by religious, labor, civic, and community organizations. The goal is to end loans to South Africa and to get banks to make public an explicit commitment that they will not make such loans in the future. The strategy is to persuade organizations, families and individuals to withdraw their money and place it in more socially accountable financial institutions responsive to the needs of our communities.

STOP BANKING ON APARTHEID is the California component of this international campaign. While the Bank of America is by far the largest lender to South Africa, **\$BOA** recognizes the role played by 8 other California banks in support of apartheid: Crocker, Security Pacific, United California, Wells Fargo, French Bank, Sumitomo, Union and Chartered Bank of London. Their local discrimination is being publicized: redlining activities, deficient "affirmative action" practices, denial of their employees' right to unionize, and their use of public and private pension funds to support corporations operating in South Africa. **\$BOA** recommends banking institutions which have a good record of serving the needs of the communities they operate within.

\$BOA uses a variety of methods in the campaign: educational tools (brochure, slide/tape show, an informational packet, and various pamphlets and leaflets), radio shows, written articles, workshops, press conferences, and publicity materials. But what is most important is gaining individuals and organizations as active supporters. We hope **YOU** will join in whatever capacity you can offer. We can be contacted at 464 19th St., Oakland 94612, or call (415) 763-4998, or (415) 752-7767.