

BAY AREA FREE SOUTH AFRICA MOVEMENT
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PRESS RELEASE

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The courage and determination of South African women will be celebrated at the Pass Book Burning Ceremony being held on International Women's Day, Friday, March 8th. Responding to the theme, "Now you have touched the women, you have struck a rock," women of all ages will assemble at City Hall Plaza in downtown Oakland from noon to 2 pm. They will be adding their voices to the rapidly spreading outcry challenging U.S. support of South Africa's apartheid system.

Pass Books are used by the South African government to totally control the lives of black South Africans. They are thus one of the most hated symbols of the apartheid system. They are also a symbol of one of the worst roles played by U.S. corporations in South Africa: computers and programs supplied by companies such as IBM and Control Data are absolutely essential for the functioning of the Pass Law system.

Ceremony

Linda Tillery and her band will open the Ceremony at 11:45. At 12:10, Edward Mogane, President of the Building, Construction and Allied Workers Union of South Africa, will give a brief update on the current struggle in South Africa with a special focus on the role of women. He will be followed by an excerpt from the South African play, "Homelands," which will feature a discussion between the American domestic worker and the South African servant.

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Yvonne Golden, Principal of Alamo Park High School will then speak to conditions affecting women today and their linkages with the lives of South African women and their families.

At 12:35 Pearl Alice Marsh, a Black American with extensive experience inside South Africa, will lead off the Testimony and Pass Book Burning. Setting the pace will be percussion by a Senegalese drummer. 40 prominent women, representing all sectors of the Bay Area, will be wearing red sashes carrying the name of a South African woman. Brief testimony will be given on the woman's behalf and a Pass Book will be burned in her name. Everyone attending the Ceremony will be encouraged to testify and burn Pass Books as a symbol of their resolve to oppose the apartheid system through whatever means possible. As the burnings come to an end, the Freedom Song Network will sing South African freedom songs.

The Ceremony will be completed with an action at IBM's Oakland headquarters, located across the street from the Plaza. The approximate time for this action will be 1:15 p.m.

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