



Artists and Athletes Against Apartheid

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September 1, 1983

Executive Committee

Arthur Ashe
Harry Belafonte
Co-Chairpersons

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar	Ted Lange
Jane Alexander	Ramsey Lewis
Tony Bennett	Vivica Lindfors
Joseph Bologna	John Lithgow
John Carlos	Laurence Luckinbill
Bernie Casey	Janet MacLachlan
Rosalind Cash	Madelaine Manning-
Will Chamberlain	Mimms
Judy Collins	Carmen McRae
Bill Cosby	Anne Meara
Howard Davis, Jr.	Dave Meggysy
Ossie Davis	Michael Moriarty
Anita De Frantz	Paul Newman
Ruby Dee	Denise Nicholas-Hill
Ivan Dixon	The O'Jays
Harry Edwards	Alan Page
Lee Elder	Brook Peters
Jane Fonda	Oscar Peterson
Ruth Gordon	Sidney Poitier
Andre Gregory	Tony Randall
Dick Gregory	Wilma Rudolph
Joel Grey	Tommie Smith
Gregory Hines	Georg Stanford-
Larry Holmes	Brown
Robert Hooks	Jerry Stiller
Phyllis Hyman	Lynn Swann
Quincy Jones	Renee Taylor
Larry Kert	John Thompson
Dan King	Gene Upshaw
	Paul Winfield

Dear Colleague:

The launch of our boycott of South Africa will take place at the United Nations (Press Conference Room 226) on September 14, 1983 at 10:00 a.m. We urge you to attend since this represents our initial effort to persuade artists and athletes not to go to South Africa, while impressing upon the American public at large the seriousness of our commitment. In addition to representative of the endorsing organizations, Executive Committee members will also be present.

Immediately following the press conference, there will be a briefing session with the African ambassadors to the United Nations, which we expect to be particularly informative, and mutually beneficial.

Enclosed for your review is the brochure which will be mailed on September 14, 1983 to the national community of artists and athletes, with a covering letter appealing to them not to break the boycott of South Africa, and inviting them to become Executive Committee members. Enclosed also is the response card which we will be providing for their convenience.

Associated Organizations

Africa Committee, The National Council of Churches
African Heritage Studies Association
American Committee on Africa
American Co-ordinating Committee for Equality in Sports and Society
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO
Americans for Democratic Action
Black Music Association
Coalition of Black Trade Unionists
Coalition to End Cultural Collaboration with South Africa
Congressional Black Caucus
General Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Church
International United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, UAW
Jackie Robinson Foundation
Lutheran World Ministries
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials
National Black United Front
National Coalition of 100 Black Women
National Council of Negro Women
National Football League Players Association
National Urban League
Operation PUSH
Organization of African Unity
Phelps - Stokes Fund
Southern Africa Support Project
Southern Christian Leadership Conference
TransAfrica
United Church of Christ, Commission for Racial Justice
United Presbyterian Church in the USA
Washington Office On Africa

The attached memorandum provides some insight into the extent to which the South African government has invested in bringing artists and athletes to that country, and provides further background on why this is so important to Pretoria.

The Executive Committee now exceeds the number indicated on the stationery since some responses arrived after we had already gone to press. We will however be adding their names to the stationery, brochure and other material in due course.

Please note that the west coast launch will take place in Los Angeles on October 10, 1983. The Black Media Forum has arranged for many artists and athletes to attend, and we expect broad-based press coverage. Arthur Ashe and I will be the program speakers.

It would further the interests of the cultural boycott considerably if the endorsing organizations could be represented at this press conference.

I trust that I'll be seeing you shortly.

Sincerely yours,

Randall Robinson

BRIEFING MEMORANDUM: CULTURAL BOYCOTT OF SOUTH AFRICA

First emanating from the African National Congress as far back as 1958, pleas of black South Africa to the international cultural community to isolate the South African apartheid system acquired an inescapable urgency in the wake of South Africa's 1976 Soweto massacre, at which more than 1000 students and children were killed by South African police for protesting that country's racist laws.

In 1968, the United Nations General Assembly resolution 2396 requested all states and organizations to suspend educational, sporting and other exchanges with the South African regime and/or any South African organizations.

In 1972, the General Assembly recommended organizing a boycott, and in 1980 made a "direct appeal to writers, artists, musicians and other personalities to boycott South Africa."

1982 was declared International Year of Mobilization for Sanctions Against South Africa.

South Africa has become the pariah of the international community, its blatant repression of its black majority (80% of the population) having precluded any nation from openly condoning its warped sociological model. South Africa's 4 million whites, comprising 15% of the population, represent the group which created, upholds and benefits from the apartheid. Attempts to isolate South Africa from the international sports and entertainment community therefore affect them. Black South Africans do not now partake in the entertainment blitz sweeping South Africa, firstly because they cannot afford to, and secondly because they view the celebrities' presence as troubling stumbling blocks on the road to apartheid's dismantlement.

For example, at a per ticket cost of \$40-50.00 Sun City's concerts are well within the reach of white South Africans, many of whom make the 4 - 5 hour round-trip drive from Johannesburg willingly in order to experience, first hand, expressions of international culture. For the average Bophuthatswanan, whose monthly income often is \$40-50.00, these shows are not within his reach.

In addition to this, Bishop Desmond Tutu, Secretary General of the South African Council of Churches (which represents 15 million persons), Dr Alan Boesak, (President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches), the African National Congress, the Organization of African Unity, the Non-Aligned Nations all repeatedly attest to the hindrances introduced to black South Africa's quest for their own liberation each time a celebrity defies the boycott.

It is as important to the government of South Africa that celebrities continue to go there as it is to black South Africa that they stay away, since their very presence confers acknowledgement and respectability upon that state - despite its cruel profile.

A key public relations prop in South Africa's quest for international acceptance is a Las Vegas style resort called Sun City in the heart of Bophuthatswana. Eighty million dollars have been sunk in this investment which is owned jointly by the Southern Sun Hotel Chain and "the government of Bophuthatswana." Bophuthatswana,

part and parcel of South Africa is repeatedly presented to celebrities as an independent nation, possible confusion between Bophuthatswana and Botswana - a truly independent African nation, being no doubt convenient and welcome.

The glitter of Sun City (claimed to house the second largest casino in the world) if not sufficiently attractive to lure celebrities, is often supplemented by outstanding financial inducements. Offers of \$2 - 3 million, for example, have been made by South African interests to Frank Sinatra and Roberta Flack to break the boycott. The former accepted, the latter did not. In explaining Mr Sinatra's decision however, and underscoring the basic deception and confusion surrounding Bophuthatswana, press agent Lee Solters explained that "Sinatra's appearance at Sun City could strongly influence other entertainers who may have been reluctant to perform there because they assumed that Bophuthatswana was in South Africa." * Ivan Lendl, Czech tennis-player, repeatedly staved off criticism of his Sun City tennis tournament by insisting that he would not be playing in South Africa but in Bophuthatswana.

The United Nations Center Against Apartheid states that \$10 million was spent in 1982 by the South African government to bring athletes to that country. Dr Alan Boesak, President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and a tremendously popular black South African leader, warns that there is also substantial behind-the-scenes financing by the South African government, no matter who the publicly identified sponsor may be, the controversial West Indies cricketers tour of South Africa being a case in point. At an offer of roughly US\$100,000.00 per cricketer, Dr Boesak and others familiar with the South African milieu reject the notion that this was financed by South African private interests.

David Ndaba of the Africa National Congress estimates that an annual budget of approximately \$75 million is allocated strictly to public relations efforts by the South African government. Key proponents of Bophuthatswana's gilded image are Sol Kerzner (Managing Director, Southern Sun) and Peter Bacon (General Manager, Southern Sun). Their key contact in attracting US performers to South Africa has been identified as Lee Solomon, V.P. William Morris Agency. Gordon Winter, author of Inside BOSS (South Africa's Bureau of State Security) re-affirms in his writing, the fear among South African authorities of celebrities becoming aware of actual conditions inside the country because of their "high voltage publicity potential."

One of the more publicized and criticized US/South Africa links in recent years was the presence of the South African Springbok team in this country. It has since been established that Louis Luyr, the South Africa businessman who had been involved in the secret operations of the South African Ministry of Information during the Muldergate scandal, gave the US Eastern Rugby Union \$25,000 prior to their invitation to the Springboks to play in the United States, followed by a subsequent (and again secret) \$50,000 in connection with the tour.

In South Africa's determination to quash the cultural boycott, the overriding creed is that the end justifies the means. A major coup to the Durban Film Festival in recent years was the agreement for the first time of a black American film-maker to enter his work. The American's name was Charles Burnett and his film was entitled "Killer of Sheep." His initial opposition was broken down by Ros Sarkin, primary organizer of the festival, who assured him that his film would be taken into the townships and shown to black audiences, thereby exposing

* Rolling Stone, June 1982

black South Africans to the works of black American artists, and contributing to the removal of the confines and restrictions of apartheid. After much agonizing, and swung by the assurances outlined earlier, Mr Burnett entered his film.

The "cinemas" in the townships however, are such ramshackle relics that "township film festivals" are an impossibility. Lack of either transportation or economic wherewithal on the other hand make the idea of en masse migration of township residents to Durban for the festival quite ludicrous. However, the end of the festival's organizers was achieved. White South Africans were exposed to an array of international works, black South Africans were not, and Mr. Burnett now understands the need for the boycott.



ARTISTS AND ATHLETES AGAINST APARTHEID

"Over two billion people worldwide stand with us when we say 'NO' to the tyranny of South Africa"

I pledge not to perform in South Africa until apartheid is fully dismantled

I would like to join the Executive Committee of Artists & Athletes Against Apartheid

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City

State

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Home Phone

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