MACSA PROPOSAL ACCEPTED BY COALITION STEERING COMMITTEE

A MACSA proposal for a nationally coordinated mass action was accepted for formal examination by the Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa. The Coalition’s steering committee, of which MACSA is a member, authorized the American Committee on Africa (New York) and the Bay Area Namibia Action Group (San Francisco) to join MACSA in submitting specific action recommendations to the next steering committee meeting to be held in October in Mississippi.

The Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa emerged from a conference held in Madison in October 1975 attended by 40 North American liberation support groups. The steering committee organized at that conference met in Philadelphia last February and Chicago the weekend of May 29.

MACSA’s proposal, the first mass action program to be accepted for study by the Coalition steering committee and researched and presented by Allan Cooper, focuses on eliminating U.S. government subsidies to a number of American multinational corporations whose trade with the colonial regime in Namibia is in violation of international law as well as U.N. decrees. Elimination of these subsidies could drastically affect present trade patterns between the U.S. and all of southern Africa. MACSA’s proposal was unanimously accepted by the steering committee.

The steering committee discussed in great detail its interest in accepting new members into the Coalition; the Philadelphia Coalition to Stop Rhodesian and South African Imports will coordinate recruitment in the interim before the next meeting. The Washington Office on Africa was chosen to oversee finances and internal coordination of the Coalition, and the Freedom of Information Service is to organize the next steering committee meeting. A national conference of all Coalition members was tentatively scheduled for Spring 1977.
ANGOLAN REPRESENTATIVES MEET AMERICAN GROUPS

An official delegation from the Peoples Republic of Angola met with more than one hundred representatives from various liberation support groups within North America at the Angolan Support Conference the weekend of May 29 in Chicago. This was the first time that an official delegation from the PRA had been sent to the United States. The four-member delegation presented speeches and participated in a number of workshops.

The Angolan Support Conference had been called to discuss methods to broaden and strengthen the political and material support by the people of the U.S. for the new society being built in the Peoples Republic of Angola. Workshop subjects were 1) the significance of Angola's victory for southern Africa, 2) material assistance to the PRA, 3) health assistance to the PRA, 4) dispelling myths about southern Africa, and 5) political support and recognition of the PRA in the UN and from the U.S. There were also statements from the "Angola 26" concerning structure and resolutions coming out of the Havana seminar last February.

U.S. Representative John Conyers of Michigan opened the conference with a talk on "U.S. Policy in Africa." A panel discussion by Jenifer Davis (American Committee on Africa), Ted Lockwood (Washington Office on Africa) and filmmaker Robert Van Lierop followed. Wandile Kuse of MACSA participated in a panel which examined the significance of Angola's victory for southern Africa. He emphasized the changing relationships of South Africa's "western connection" and noted that South Africa's defeat gave new hope for the liberation effort within the minority-ruled country. A highlight of the conference was a performance of the Illinois Prisoners Organization of skits from "Prison Scenes" and "Song of the Lusitanian Bogey."

An interim committee was established by the support conference to address resolutions passed by the participants. Nearly twenty groups were chosen to serve as a national coordinating committee to oversee implementation of all proposals. Among these was a commitment to raise $11,000 by November 1976 for medical supplies for the Peoples Republic of Angola.

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THEIR VOCABULARY

Time and again of late Pretoria has told the whole world that it is going to "enter into a dialogue" with the Africans, that it is going to look for a common language and to come to terms on how to coexist further. A phrase book has now been published with what would appear, on the face of it, to serve the useful purpose of helping whites in South Africa to understand the Sotho dialect spoken in the north of the country.

But how do the lily-whites intend to converse with their dark-skinned fellow-citizens? In that same old tongue of racist arrogance, even though in Sotho. The very first phrases given are: "Show me your pass," "Shut up," "Bring me coffee in bed," and that widely current "Don't move or I'll shoot."

The phrases, presented in the second such book, this time a Zulu phrase book, are similar. Advised as most essential for white contact with the indigenous population is: "You're not my equal," "Show respect," "Don't touch the telephone," and "Don't touch anything."

Will anyone now dare to say that Pretoria's whites aren't trying to find a common language with the Africans?

V. Zhitomirsky--NEW TIMES, April 1976.
LUANDA, Angola--Almost 100,000 Angolan workers from all sectors of Angolan life--from agriculture to health, mining to air transport--gathered together May 1 to celebrate the first May Day in the newly independent People's Republic of Angola.

Under a burning hot West African sun, column after column of Angolans marched past a reviewing stand where Agostinho Neto, President of Angola, Lucio Lara, Secretary General of the MPLA, and over one hundred Angolan and foreign dignitaries looked on. Neto is also the president of the MPLA, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, the movement which led a thirteen year long guerrilla war against Portuguese colonialism.

Angolan children led the May Day parade. After them came the contingent from the Organization of Angolan Women, followed by hundreds of groups of workers. Few wore uniforms of any sort. Most simply came as they work, some in torn clothes, and many without shoes.

But they did not lack enthusiasm. Many workers brought their tools: agricultural workers with their machetes, picks and shovels; metal workers with their torches and welder's masks. Timber workers came with huge chain saws, and oil workers, members of their local Workers Control Committees, marched under banners carrying the symbols of Shell, Texaco, and the Angolan state oil companies. All stopped before the president to chant, cheer, and sing.

Hundreds of posters and banners, practically all handmade, some with beautiful paintings of Angolan leaders or picturing the kind of work the various contingents were engaged in, filled the Avenida das Massacas, and the Praça do Primeiro do Maio where the rally was held. Near the end of the parade, heavy equipment and machinery--fork lift trucks, heavy cranes, caterpillars and earth moving machines--all covered with workers and children, rolled by. Suddenly the engine of one of the huge machines began to belch smoke and ground to a halt just as it arrived in front of the reviewing stand. One young mechanic jumped off its front end, and attacked the machine's engine feverishly. After first working with one wrench, then another crowbar, crawling underneath the machine, he finally called to the driver to start up again. Less than five minutes had elapsed. The engine kicked over with no smoke or fire. As the machine moved off, the mechanic jumped on its front and raised his fist and wrench in the air in triumph. The crowd roared back its approval.

The parade continued all morning, contingents singing and chanting, "A luta continua," "A vitoria e certa," "Viva o MPLA," and "Viva o poder popular." After several speeches by government leaders and guests, including representatives from Cuba and Vietnam, Neto rose to address the crowd. He was given no introduction; when it was time for him to speak, he simply walked to the microphone, and the crowd seemed to stir with anticipation and approval.

Where some of the speakers were energetic and oratorical, and others were hesitant and at times uncomfortable, Neto was neither. He seemed to be simply a man speaking to the people. He said quietly and affectionately that he knew it was hot, and that for the benefit of everyone's health, particularly the health of the guests, he only wanted to say a few words. First he announced a
new series of nationalizations of property previously owned by Portuguese settlers. Taken over by the state were major holdings in beer and other bottled beverages, and textiles. One company in particular, known as the "CUCA Group" had extensive interests in many areas of the Angolan economy including plastics, fishing, and printing. It was responsible for the printing of a now defunct colonialist weekly, "Noticia", which energetically opposed MPLA.

But nationalizations so far have only extended to the holdings of former Portuguese settlers who fled the country during the war. The settlers who abandoned the country are being given ample opportunity to return and participate in the reconstruction of the country, but when they show no interest in returning, or continue to engage in actions hostile to MPLA--like price speculation--their holdings are likely to be nationalized. There has been no indication that the nationalizations would affect the holdings of other foreign interests here. Representatives of many foreign companies, including Gulf Oil, are slowly returning to get their operations going again.

Neto reiterated a theme in his May Day speech which has dominated his speeches and the proclamations of other movement leaders in past weeks. Noting that Angola faced serious problems in the rebuilding of the country, he said that the working people must fight against the sabotage of the economy. "It's absolutely necessary," Neto said, "to guarantee now that the workers control the administration and the production of our enterprises. We will not permit determined reactionaries, inside or outside Angola, to sabotage our production process."

Angola's economy is facing serious difficulties in the aftermath of the war that saw the planned destruction of much of the country's important machinery and equipment, and the flight of most of the country's Portuguese skilled technicians and professionals--a flight that, according to one observer who has lived in southern Africa for the past two years, was consciously encouraged by the Portuguese and the South Africans in order to cripple the country's economy, and at the same time remove European witnesses to the South African invasion. According to one Western economist here, the economy is only producing at 20% of its operating capacity nationwide.

Speculations— the selling of products at far above the government-established prices—has contributed to the massive increase in inflation here. Products are very scarce, most shops as well as restaurants, markets, and other services are closed. What can be bought is sold at outrageously high prices. Food is scarce. Although much food is produced, most of it comes from the south. The distribution system has broken down because almost 150 bridges were destroyed during the war, and the Portuguese took most of the country's trucks when they fled to Portugal or South Africa.

But MPLA leaders are cautiously optimistic. "Starting now we are going to restructure our economy," Neto declared, "we are going to restructure our administration, our political organization, in a way to make sure that the workers control the economy and control the organisms of decision-making in our country. It is clear that all this will take time. We must not be impatient."

(Mike Shuster, who is in Luanda, is writing for Liberation News Service)
WISCONSIN CONGRESSPERSONS RATE WELL ON AFRICA ISSUES

In a survey of voting records compiled by the Washington Office on Africa, most of Wisconsin's congresspersons rated well on their awareness of Africa issues. The survey tallies the voting records of each member of Congress on several Southern Africa-related resolutions. The survey included votes on the South African sugar quota, on sanctions against importation of Rhodesian chrome, on U.S. intervention in Angola, and on limiting development of the Diego Garcia Navy Base. The survey covers major votes taken since 1970.

Of the five votes tallied in the U.S. Senate, both Sen. Proxmire and Sen. Nelson cast votes favorable to African self-determination and majority rule on all five votes. Other Senators with favorable records on these issues include Sens. Cranston, Tunney, McGovern, Church, Bayh, Muskie, Humphrey, Mondale, Eagleton, and Javits. Senators with poor voting records on these Africa-related issues include Sens. Sparkman, Goldwater, McClellan, Dole, Stennis, Baker, and Thurmond.

In the House, there were seven key votes on Africa-related resolutions. Of Wisconsin's nine Representatives, six cast votes favorable to African self-determination and majority rule on each of the seven resolutions (or, at least, on those votes for which they were present). They are Reps. Aspin, Kastenmeier, Baldus, Reuss, Obey and Cornell. Reps. Zablocki, Steiger, and Kasten cast votes unfavorable to African interests on those occasions when they were present to vote. Of the three, both Kasten and Steiger voted in favor of U.S. intervention in Angola; only Zablocki voted against.

Of the five members of Congress who are mentioned as potential Presidential candidates, all have similar voting records in the survey. Sens. Kennedy and Humphrey voted favorably on all five Senate votes on Africa-related resolutions. Sen. Church voted favorably on three of the Senate votes and was absent for the two others. Sen. Jackson voted favorably on four of the votes, but voted in favor of expansion of the facilities at the Diego Garcia Navy Base, which was viewed as unfavorable by the survey. Rep. Udall voted favorably on five of the seven votes in the House and was absent for the two other votes.


NAMIBIA CONFERENCE IN MILWAUKEE

On June 10, 1976 the Institute of World Affairs in Milwaukee, in cooperation with the Johnson Foundation, is sponsoring a conference on Namibia at the Kenwood Conference Center, UW-Milwaukee. Speakers will include Charles A. James, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, Golar T. Butcher, Washington attorney who spoke at the Namibia conference in Madison last year, Robert Boettcher, Staff Consultant to the Subcommittee on International Organizations of the U.S. House Committee on International Relations, and Sean MacBride, UN Commissioner for Namibia. U.S. policy toward Namibia, alternatives for U.S. action, possibilities for legislative action and the role of the UN are topics to be addressed. A report of the conference will appear in a future issue of the MACSA Newsletter.
MINTERS RETURN FROM MOZAMBIQUE

We are certain readers of MACSA NEWS remember Ruth and Bill Minter and the valuable work they accomplished for MACSA. In the last two and a half years they have been teaching and working at the FRELIHO Secondary School--first in Tanzania and then inside Mozambique after the decisive triumph of the liberation movement.

They were on the scene when the Portuguese empire in Southern Africa collapsed and kept us posted on the developments as the events unfolded. They also spent some time in Angola. Ruth and son, Sam, can be reached by mail c/o AFRICA NEWS, P.O. Box 3851, Durham, N.C. 27702. Bill will return from Europe, where he is doing some research for a second book on Southern Africa. They are eager and anxious to share their experiences and observations and will welcome invitations for speaking engagements.

MACSA plans to have them back in Madison at the beginning of the Fall semester. We would therefore welcome contributions to a fund that would pay their travelling expenses as well as an honorarium when they visit us.

BILL SUTHERLAND SPEAKS IN MADISON

Bill Sutherland, American Friends Service Committee representative in Southern Africa, spoke to MACSA members and the general public in May after his recent return from that area. Mr. Sutherland, who has lived and worked in the liberation movements in Africa for many years, provided a personal analysis of the current situation in Zimbabwe and Mozambique based on his talks with African leaders of those countries. His appraisal of the struggles in Angola, Namibia, and South Africa was also included in lectures given at the University of Wisconsin.

Mr. Sutherland was quick to react to Secretary of State Kissinger's recent remark that the United States would not recognize Angola as long as there are Cuban troops in that country. He pointed out the inconsistency of Kissinger's threats since the U.S. always recognized South Vietnam even when there were more than 550,000 foreign troops on its soil. But he sees historic significance in Kissinger's trip to Africa. "There's an old African saying," explains Sutherland, "that when two elephants go to battle, it is the grass that suffers. For the first time it appears the grass is being considered."

The AFSC representative expressed optimism for Zimbabwe's present struggle for liberation, noting that the struggle has initiated cooperation from neighboring states as well as support throughout the world.

African Studies Sandwich Seminars at UW-Madison. . . During the academic year 1976-77 the African Studies Program at UW-Madison will offer once again a series of informal noontime seminars at which speakers from both within and without the Madison area are invited to address interested listeners on topics concerning their research of particular areas of interest in the African continent. Allan Cooper, Zinta Konrad and Patfi Kuntz will be organizing the seminars. If you have any suggestions for programs and guest speakers, please contact any of the coordinators at:

African Studies Program  
1450 Van Hise Hall  
University of Wisconsin  
Madison, Wisconsin 53706  
(608) 262-2380
Security Council action on the application of the People's Republic of Angola for membership in the United Nations has been delayed because of the likelihood that the U.S. would veto admission if the matter came to a vote on May 11th as originally scheduled. That is the report from sources close to U.N. delegates.

Under U.N. procedures, the Security Council must favorably recommend membership to the General Assembly, which then votes on admission. Angola formally applied for membership in a letter from President Agostinho Neto to U.N. Secretary General Kurt Waldheim April 22nd.

ACOA has campaigned for U.S. recognition of the Angolan government. On April 22nd, ACOA President William Booth released a statement signed by 75 prominent Americans calling on our government "to take immediate steps to recognize the People's Republic of Angola." The statement noted that "...a stable government, under the leadership of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, firmly administers the affairs of state."

The issue of U.S. recognition of the Angolan government need not be tied to Angola's membership in the U.N. There is precedent for the United States voting to favorably recommend a state to the U.N. even though it has not yet recognized that state itself. ACOA representatives urged Ambassador William Scranton to vote favorably for Angola's membership in the U.N. at a meeting with the new U.S. representative to the U.N. last week. At worst, we expected the U.S. to abstain on the issue, thus allowing the application to proceed unimpeded.

It now appears, however, that domestic political considerations are preventing even this "worst" alternative. As the Secretary of State is just returning from his first trip to Africa, to editorial accolades and fanfare for a new policy supporting African aspirations, we find the administration crassly insulting a nation which has already been admitted as the 47th member state of the Organization of African Unity. And we also discover that the administration has scuttled perhaps its key promise to Africa, to actively support repeal of the legislation allowing the importation of chrome from Rhodesia, in violation of U.N. sanctions. Without administration support, legislation to repeal the Byrd Amendment is unlikely to be introduced before the political conventions, and perhaps not even before the election.

We ask that you write or wire President Ford, The White House, Washington, D.C.; Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, State Department, Washington, D.C. 20520; and/or Ambassador William Scranton, U.S. Mission to the U.N., New York, N.Y. 10017 to urge a positive vote by the United States on the application of the Angolan government for U.N. membership. And please send a carbon to ACOA.
We urge you to renew your subscription to MACSA News, if you have not already done so.

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