How would you feel if a Ku Klux Klan athletic team was welcomed by the United States government to tour this country? And what if this vicious team was allowed to use a facility in your city? Well, that is what is happening...almost!

South Africa’s national rugby team, the Springboks, has been invited by the American Rugby Football Union to tour the United States after their controversial tour of New Zealand. If the tour takes place, the Springboks will play in Chicago, Albany and probably New York, on September 19, 22, and 26, respectively.

On July 13, the Reagan Administration rolled out the welcoming mat to the South Africans when the State Department approved the granting of visas to the Springboks for their U.S. tour. One week later New York City Mayor Ed Koch brazenly announced that he would allow the Springboks to use Downing Stadium on Randall’s Island, a public facility.

In the first major victory for the campaign, Koch was forced to reverse this position on August 7 due to mass pressure against the tour generated by the Stop Apartheid Rugby Tour coalition (SART).

Despite a repressive government crackdown currently under way, the largest in recent years, the masses of oppressed people in southern Africa are intensifying their 300-year-old struggle for liberation. On the sports level, black people and their resistance organizations are actively campaigning against apartheid in sports inside the country and against South Africa’s participation in international sports.

South Africa’s policy of apartheid makes it the most racist country in the world. Racism is enshrined in the South African constitution, which leaves blacks virtually voteless and landless, and denies them the legal right to move about freely in their country or to organize in any politically significant way. At the same time, South Africa has extended its apartheid system to Namibia, a country to its north western border which it continues to occupy illegally in spite of every effort by the international community to force the minority regime’s withdrawal and the granting of independence.

For these reasons the world community recognizes apartheid as a crime against humanity, and in solidarity with the struggling black masses, has called for the total isolation of the white minority regime. South Africa has been expelled from almost every major sports body, and both U.N. and OAU (Organization of African Unity) resolutions call for a boycott against South Africa in international sports.

The presence of four members of the South African Defence Force and two of the South African police on the team will be a further affront to the people of this country, if the Springboks do come. There can be no fair play with those brutal forces, which are used to massacre school children in Soweto, to invade sovereign African countries in southern Africa and to violently enforce the apartheid system against any opposition.

August, 1981

Dear Friends,

Endorsers: (partial list)

AMERICAN COORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR EQUALITY IN SPORT AND SOCIETY (ACCESS- COMposed of: AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON AFRICA, AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION, AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE, ARABAN, THE INSTITUTE FOR SPORTS AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS, CLERGY AND LITANY CONCERNED, COALITION OF CONCERNED BLACK AMERICANS, COALITION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, COMMITTEE TO OPPOSE BANK LOANS TO SOUTH AFRICA, EPISCOPAL CHURCHMEN FOR SOUTH AFRICA, GRAY PANTHERS, METHODIST FEDERATION FOR SOCIAL ACTION, NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF BLACK LAWYERS, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF BLACK CHURCHMEN, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NEGRO WOMEN, OPERATION PUSH, PROGRESSIVE NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION, SOUTHERN AFRICAN NON-RACIAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE, SOUTHERN AFRICAN STUDENTS MOVEMENT, SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, SPORTS FOR THE PEOPLE, TRANSAFRICA, UNITED METHODIST CHURCH BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES, WORLD DIVISION, UNITED METHODIST CHURCH (CONFERENCE TASK FORCE ON SOUTHERN AFRICA, UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, WOMEN'S DIVISION, WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE & FREEDOM, YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION,) AFRICAN AMERICAN WORKERS AND TENANT LEAGUE, ASSOCIATION OF BLACK SOCIAL WORKERS, COLUMBIA STUDENTS AGAINST MILITARISM, COALITION OF CONCERNED TRANSPORT WORKERS, COMMUNIST WORKERS PARTY, COUNCIL OF INTERRacial BOOKS FOR CHILDREN, DYKES AGAINST RACISM EVERYWHERE, GREAT NECK COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, HARLEM RIGHT BACK, JOHN BROWN ANTI-KLAN COMMITTEE, MONCADA LIBRARY, NATIONAL BLACK INDEPENDENT POLITICAL PARTY, NATIONAL BLACK UNIFIED FRONT, NEW ALLIANCE PARTY, PEOPLE'S ANTI-WARMOBILIZATION, REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST LEAGUE, REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH LEAGUE, SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY, SOUTHERN AFRICA COMMITTEE, UNITED FEDERATION OF BLACK COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS, UNITED TREMENDOUS TRADES, U.S. PEACE COUNCIL, WASHINGTON OFFICE ON AFRICA, WEST PAC, WOMEN'S COMMITTEE AGAINST GENOCIDE, WORKERS WORLD PARTY, YOUTH AGAINST WAR & RACISM, BROOKLYN ANTI-NUCLEAR GROUP, COALITION OF CONCERNED BLACK WOMEN, CONFERENCE ON NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS, GUARDIAN, 57th A.D. COMMUNITY ACTION ALLIANCE, HON. DAVID DINKINS, N.Y. CITY CLERK, HON. ROGER GREEN, N.Y. ASSEMBLYMAN, HUDSON-CENTRAL CLUB N.A.A.B.P.W., MATERIAL AID CAMPAIGN FOR ZANU-PF, MAY 19th COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION, N.Y. ANTI-IMPERIALIST ACTIVISTS NETWORK, N.Y. ANTI-KLAN NETWORK, N.A.A.C.P., PHELPS-STOKES WORKERS FUND, PROF. JOHN HENRIK CLARKE, REPUBLIC OF NEW AFRICA, SPORTS PROJECTS, INC., THE EAST/BLACK NEWS/CHURU SANA SHULE, UNITED NEGRO IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION AND AFRICAN COMMUNITIES LEAGUE, SWapo ACTION COMMITTEE, HON. HERMAN D. FARRELL, JR., N.Y. ASSEMBLYMAN

Chairperson: Judge William Booth, in cooperation with:

African National Congress of South Africa • Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania • South-west African People’s Organization
As South Africa's national rugby team, the Springboks represent the apartheid state. South Africa now uses "multiracial" sports teams to soften its image abroad in the hopes of overcoming its international pariah status. But back home in South Africa, sports at the club level, where 99% of all athletes compete, are almost totally segregated, and rugby is the most segregated of all. Training and facilities for the black majority, when available, are inadequate and inferior. Moreover, after the game is over blacks return to their tightly controlled lives in segregated neighborhoods under the oppression of apartheid.

This tour is part of a major international campaign by South Africa to break out of its isolation by trying to "court with sport." The Springboks' current New Zealand tour has dominated politics in that country in recent months. Tens of thousands protesting throughout the country against the tour have met the Springboks at each stop, and hundreds are resorting to civil disobedience to halt the tour.

The Springboks are being invited to the U.S. at a time when the Reagan Administration is describing apartheid South Africa as a "friendly nation", making clear its intentions to strengthen relations with the white minority regime and to help it maintain ultimate control over Namibia.

The Stop Apartheid Rugby Tour (SART) coalition was recently formed by over fifty organizations who have come together in a common and vehement opposition to this apartheid rugby tour. We are determined to put a stop to this tour and to prevent apartheid from getting an artificial facelift in this country. At the same time, we see this campaign as part of the wider struggle against the criminal apartheid system. We hope to build the kind of coalition necessary to stop the South African national rugby team from playing in the U.S. and to let the U.S. government know that the American people will not stand for further collusion with racist South Africa. But we need your help: your endorsement of our cause and our demands, and your organization's active participation in the coalition. The coalition is putting forward the following demands:

1. Don't Play Ball With Apartheid - Stop the Tour!
2. End U.S. Support for Apartheid!
3. Freedom and Independence for Namibia - Victory to SWAPO (SWAPO is the Namibian liberation organization recognized by the U.N. and the OAU as "the sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people.")

As an endorsing organization you are encouraged to participate in the following ways:

1. Have your organization's name used in publications and literature for the SART coalition.
2. Donate in-kind materials such as papers, postage, envelopes, etc., and any money for the purchase of these materials.
3. Distribute flyers, disseminate information, and mobilize your constituency for maximum involvement in this important campaign.
4. Invite speakers who are available for presentations at your request.
5. Suggest other organizations who may be able to become involved in the coalition.
6. Immediately issue press release announcing your endorsement of the coalition and your opposition to the tour.

SPORTS YES! APARTHEID NO! THE SPRINGBOKS HAVE GOT TO GO! STOP THE AFRICAN RUGBY TOUR!