August 28, 1973

Dear Friends,

We would like to share with you information on the progress of two bills concerning southern Africa which are pending before House committees.


The Subcommittee staff is seeking statements and testimony from representatives of public interest groups speaking not only to the present conditions of African workers but also to what positive steps can be taken to improve those conditions.

In the context of the long-standing public debate on United States corporate involvement in South Africa, we must recognize that this bill examines only the approach of pressing for equal employment practices and not other alternatives such as disengagement. It is important to include in testimony and statements an awareness of the role of United States corporations in South Africa from this larger perspective.

Statements for the record of the hearings and requests to testify should be sent to:
Ruth Robinson
Judiciary Committee
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

On June 11, 1973 Congressman Charles Rangel and 16 co-sponsors introduced "The Chemical Warfare Prevention Act of 1973," H.R. 8574, to ban the exportation of all herbicides to Portugal and South Africa. In introducing the bill, Congressman Rangel said, "The excessive amounts of chemical herbicides that the United States government and private business sell to Portugal and South Africa is being used to continue and intensify the colonial warfare in the Portugese colonies of Angola and Mozambique." In documenting the case in support of his bill, Congressman Rangel stated that United Nations documents and Western press have reported the use of chemical warfare for the purpose of starving the population in liberated zones of Angola. In addition he sited figures compiled
by the Department of Commerce that show that United States sales of herbicides to Portugal and South Africa have increased significantly since 1969.

H.R. 8574 is pending before the Subcommittee on International Trade of the House Committee on Banking and Currency. No date for hearings has been set. We feel that it is important to press for hearings on this bill because it focuses directly on United States support for Portugal in its colonial wars. Please write to Congressman Wright Patman, the chairman of the full Committee, and to Congressman Thomas Ashley, the chairman of the Subcommittee, urging that they hold hearings on H.R. 8574 this session. Write to other Subcommittee members also, especially if you are one of their constituents. It would be helpful if you could communicate with your membership or groups you know of in these districts to bring as much attention to this bill as possible.

Thank you for your efforts to raise the visibility of United States policy toward southern Africa in Congress.

Sincerely,

Christine Laet