May 1, 1981

Dear COBLSA affiliates and friends:

As you learned a few weeks ago, I was selected to be the new National Coordinator for COBLSA. Although my duties officially begin today, I have been busy in the past few weeks representing COBLSA at meetings and generally trying to catch up on what needs to be done, given that we have not had a Coordinator for 11 months. This letter is meant to update you on my initial activities, on some new informational resources, on upcoming conferences, and to ask for your feedback on what COBLSA needs to be focusing on right now.

International Seminar on Bank Loans to South Africa
Zurich, Switzerland - 5 - 7 April 1981

Shortly after my designation as Coordinator, I was asked to attend an international seminar on bank loans to South Africa co-sponsored by the U.N. Special Committee Against Apartheid in cooperation with the World Council of Churches, the Swiss Anti-Apartheid Movement, the Berne Declaration Group and the Non-Governmental Organizations Sub-Committee on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Apartheid and Decolonization. Following a phone poll of Implementation Subcommittee members by Carolyn Long, it was decided that I should attend and that efforts would be made to replace expended funds through fund-raising. (We did receive a $300 grant towards the trip from the United Methodist Church Board of Global Ministries.) Tim Smith of ICCR also attended the Seminar from the U.S.

The Seminar proved to be a unique opportunity to make direct contact with bank campaign activists from throughout western Europe, including Britain, West Germany, Switzerland, France, Holland, Belgium and Italy. Many presented country reports on the status of bank loans from banks in their countries to South Africa, as well as campaigning activities. Other papers were given on various aspects of financial relationships to South Africa.

I have enclosed with this mailing the following:
- a copy of the brief 3 pp. Summary of local Bank Campaign activities around the U.S. which I made available on an informal basis to Conference participants (it was based on brief phone conversations with only a few COBLSA affiliates whom I was able to contact prior to departure).
- a list of papers presented at the Conference and others available at the conference (should you want to obtain any of them immediately, follow the instructions on the 2nd page of the list and enclose the appropriate payment).
Those of particular interest to U.S. bank campaign activists include:

THE U.S. CHURCH CAMPAIGN AGAINST BANK LOANS TO SOUTH AFRICA. By Tim Smith of ICCR and Bill Howard of the N.C.C. (Contains recent figures on U.S. bank exposure in S.A.; a useful critique of the specifics of Citibank’s recent loan to S.A.; a summary of the positions of U.S. Churches on Bank Loans and investments in So. Africa; a list of present actions on Citibank by religious groups; and a copy of the December 1980 ICCR Brief on Krugerrands.)

BRICKS IN THE WALL: AN UPDATE ON FOREIGN BANK INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA. Background paper by Beate Klein for the WCC/PCR. It includes updates on SA borrowing activities; trade financing, including gold; foreign bank operations in South Africa.

A more in-depth summary of recommendations and the import of recent research on financial links to Apartheid will be given in my next letter in 3 weeks. More significant for COBLSA is that the action campaign groups from various countries met in two workshops to hammer out recommendations for the U.N. and for themselves on information/research and on coordinated actions.

Recommendations to the U.N.: The U.N. Centre Against Apartheid was asked to reprint all the papers formally given at the International Seminar. It was also asked to underwrite a basic handbook on bank loan campaigning that would include an array of articles by people from different countries. It was also asked to seek specific action on a list of 32 banks active in loans to South Africa (listed in the final declaration) by international bodies and members of the U.N. and to compile a report on trade union positions and activities in relation to the bank loan campaign.

Recommendations on Joint cooperation by Campaign Groups: A 'standing group' of 10-12 members of a self-designated International Bank Campaign Against South Africa (IBCASA) -- formed to link together national campaigns -- was formed to provide an international network for quick exchange of information, current research, etc., on the international campaign against bank loans to S.A. COBLSA and ICCR are members of this 'standing group'.

An international newsletter will be produced 3 times a year (coordinated from the U.K.) with brief summaries of different national campaigns.

Groups agreed to join in International Actions against bank loans to So. Africa, to begin with an International Day of Action against Barclay’s Bank on October 15, 1981.

Designated groups agreed to centralize research in specific targetted research areas. including the IMF, SASOL, Nuclear, Gold, Military and on right-wing organizations, esp. business-related, supporting trade with So. Africa.

Priority was put on involving trade unions more extensively in the international bank campaign.

Moving the Office to Washington, D.C.

On April 26, 1981, I moved from Chicago to Washington, D.C. Negotiations are currently going on with several groups concerning office space. Meanwhile, COBLSA affiliates should use the interim address and phone number listed on the front of this letter.

An account has been set up in COBLSA's name. There is a local "Support Committee" of members of the DC Bank Campaign who carried out interviewing of potential
candidates for National Coordinator, in conjunction with the local representative of the Implementation Subcommittee. They have expressed willingness to act as a 'support/accountability' committee for the National Coordinator. A meeting is in the process of being scheduled in the next 2 weeks to define how that committee will function in relation to the Coordinator and to other decision-making bodies of COBLSA.

CONFERENCE on Public Investment and South Africa, June 12-13, 1981 - New York City

Since early Spring, 8 organizations (ACOA, AFSC, CALC, ICCR, Transafrica, WOA, United Methodist Church for the U.N. and Connecticut Anti-Apartheid Committee) have formed the Campaign Against Investment in South Africa to focus on state and local legislative initiatives concerning bank deposits and pension fund investments by public bodies. CAISA is currently planning a conference on June 12-13 for state and local legislators at the U.N. Church Center to focus on how campaigns around legislative initiatives can be initiated. COBLSA is joining the campaign as a sponsor for the Conference and attended the last planning meeting as a member of the coordinating committee for the conference.

The Conference will kick-off Friday evening with an address by Julian Bond, State legislator from Georgia. Saturday morning there will be an address by Bill Lucy of AFSCME on Labor, Public Investment and South Africa, followed by workshops on the bank/corporate role in South Africa and arguments for withdrawal. Afternoon workshops will focus on the 'how-to's' of local legislative campaigns, followed by a plenary session on national cooperation in these state and local campaigns.

By now you should have received an invitation to the Conference from the Conference Coordinator, Dumisani Kumalo of ACOA. If you have not, or if you would like to suggest that specific legislators from your state or municipality receive an invitation, please contact Dumisani at (212)-962-1210.

PROPOSAL FOR NATIONAL BANK CAMPAIGN MEETING FOLLOWING CONFERENCE ABOVE

Given that many local COBLSA affiliates may send 1 or 2 representatives to attend the above conference, I would like to propose that COBLSA have a National Meeting on Sunday, June 14 in New York City, at a site yet to be designated. This would reduce the cost for affiliates of sending representatives to two separate national meetings, both of which affect their local work. I broached this at this week's planning meeting for the Conference and found no objections. Depending on people's level of fatigue, it may even be possible to meet informally Saturday evening to expedite COBLSA work.

I would propose that the National COBLSA meeting contain the following elements:
- Update on local activities (very brief; based on summaries submitted in advance which target successes and failures; research needs; etc.)
- Update on Banking links to South Africa (suggested resource person: Beate Klein)
- Strategies for targeting banks (suggested resources: Tina Simsich, CDE; Ray Rogers, formerly with JP Stevens Boycott)(broad discussion)
- Organization of COBLSA: based on working paper by C. Collins
- Campaign targets: Discussion of what activities can be jointly planned, prioritized, including possible targeting of American Bankers Association meeting (in conjunction with community groups) in
October 1981; action on Krugerrands; action on new banking links that are emerging, including trade financing; etc.

- Media workshop: how to get into the media effectively (suggested resource: Steve Askin, labor journalist)

Given the short time frame in which to make a decision on this (6 weeks), I will be calling up local COBLSA affiliates to assess whether groups feel a national meeting at this point is feasible in the next two weeks. *Please send me your reactions to the date and to the suggested agenda as soon as possible. Once this initial determination is made, I will then send out a suggested format for summary reports of local activities.* Please send any suggestions on other needed agenda items to me as soon as possible, including possible resource persons.

I hope that this date will prove feasible for COBLSA affiliates. It will be the first national meeting since January 1980, 17 months ago, and would be extremely helpful to me in providing direction, feedback and joint strategic focus for our national work. What is essential, however, is making sure it will be equally valuable to you and your local campaign at this point.

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Carole Collins
National Coordinator/COBLSA
Materials distributed at the International Seminar on Bank Loans to South Africa
5-7 April 1981 - Zurich, Switzerland

*URANIUM TRADE WITH SOUTH AFRICA AND NAMIBIA. Barbara Rogers. 12 pp.


*CANADIAN BANK LOANS TO SOUTH AFRICA. Renata Pratt, Canada. 3 pp.

*THE FINANCING OF SOUTH AFRICA'S NUCLEAR PROGRAMME. David Haslam, ELTSA, U.K. 5 pp. (also available thru the U.N. Centre Against Apartheid, Notes and Documents Series, No. 17/81 - March 1981; free)

*SASOL: FINANCING OF SOUTH AFRICA'S OIL-FROM-COAL PROGRAMME by Martin Bailey, U.K. 20 pp. (also available thru the U.N. Centre Against Apartheid, Notes and Documents Series, No. 8/81 - February 1981; Free)


FINANCEMENT DES GRANDES EXPORTATIONS FRANCAISES ET PRET AU GOUVERNEMENT DE R.S.A. & CAMPAIGNE CONTRE LES PRETS BANCAIRES A L'AFRIQUE DU SUD by Mouvement Anti-Apartheid (Paris, France) - 2 pp. summary


*STATEMENT FROM THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES TO THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON LOANS TO SOUTH AFRICA. 5 pp.


*LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON BANK LOANS TO SOUTH AFRICA. 10 pp.

*WORKSHOP ON CAMPAIGNS AGAINST BANK LOANS - SUMMARY. 5 pp.


*ACTIONS AGAINST BANKING RELATIONS TO SOUTH AFRICA (In Switzerland) by Swiss Anti-Apartheid Movement, Berne Declaration Group & others. 6 pp.

*WESTGERMAN BANK LOANS TO SOUTH AFRICA by Gottfried Wellnar, Informationsstelle Sudliches Afrika e. V., Bonn. 34 pp.

*DECLARATION OF INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON LOANS TO SOUTH AFRICA, Zurich, Switzerland, 5-7 April 1981. 10 pp. (Includes list of internationally targetted banks)

STATEMENT BY . . . BISHOP . . . TUTU BEFORE THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID 23 MARCH 1981. 2 pp. (Available free from U.N. Centre Against Apartheid.)

SOUTH AFRICA AND INTERNATIONAL BANKS: A WORKING PAPER FOR THE 1980s.


*BRICKS IN THE WALL. AN UPDATE ON FOREIGN BANK INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA.


INTRODUCTION TO REPORT ON WEST GERMAN BANK LOANS TO SOUTH AFRICA By Gottfried Wellmer, ISSA & AAM, Bonn, FRG. 3 pp. Summary of longer paper.

STATES AND CITY COUNCILS IN THE UNITED STATES PRESS FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION AGAINST INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA. By Ms. Gail Morlan, ACOA. Reprinted by U.N. Centre Against Apartheid, 7/81 March 1981. 10 pp.


*RECENT LOANS AND TRADE FINANCING TO SOUTH AFRICA. Urs Haymoz, Berne Declaration Group, Zurich, Switzerland. 19 pp.


* = On official list of papers contracted for conference; these should be published by the U.N. Centre Against Apartheid in the coming months and, thus, available for free (and in bulk quantities).

★ ANY OF THE ABOVE ARTICLES CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE National COBLSA Office by:
  - Writing to the COBLSA Interim Address at: COBLSA, c/o 1838 Calvert, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20009. (or call (202)-797-1253)
  - Enclosing a check, payable to COBLSA, to cover the costs of xeroxing.
    (Indicate the article desired, then multiply the number of pages by 10¢ ea.)

★ OTHER RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST:

State and Municipal Action Against Investment in South Africa. Folded brochure. Soon available in bulk from COBLSA.

Summary of State & Municipal Legislative Action on South Africa . 6 pp.
Soon available in bulk from COBLSA.