January 23, 1976

TO: Philadelphia Coalition to Stop Rhodesian and South African Imports

From: Washington Office on Africa

Here are the results of the balloting for representation on the steering committee of the post-Madison coalition. We have received responses from 14 groups, including 10 of the 11 self-nominated groups. From these responses, it appears that Philadelphia has been selected as the convenor for the first steering committee meeting.

The tally also indicates that the February 28 date seems to be preferable. We hope you can host it at that time, as you suggested you would be open to doing in your January 5 note.

Our understanding of the decision made in Madison is that our responsibilities for pulling together the steering committee end with passing this information on to you. It is now up to you to set up the particulars of the meeting and work out a tentative agenda.

We want to respond to your suggestions as to how to deal with the weaknesses in the composition of the steering committee at present. We do not feel that it is appropriate for us to take steps to broaden the groups before the first steering committee meeting for the following reasons:

1) The decision made in Madison clearly placed this responsibility on the full steering committee: "If the steering committee which is elected feels that it is not sufficiently diverse, it can allow two additional groups who participated in the conference and who are in agreement with the points of unity to join." We could be seen as overstepping our authority to make this decision by ourselves.

2) Your suggestion raises the additional issue of participation of members in the coalition which were not present at the Madison conference. How this should be accomplished was also left specifically to the steering committee after it was constituted: "Participation in this coalition will initially be open only to those groups which participated in the conference and which accept the basis of unity statement. The steering committee will take responsibility for determining how to enable other groups to join the coalition or to be affiliated with its work."

3) It would be an important political decision as to which black groups or groups with significant working class membership should be asked to join. This responsibility should not be taken by one group acting alone.
January 25, 1976

DO: Philadelphia Coalition to Stop Rhodesian and South African Imports

From: Washington Office on Africa

There are two pieces of information that we should pass on to you about the post-Madison coalition which we forgot to include in the letter to you this week:

1) The decision on the number of groups which should be on the steering committee was eleven, not the originally-agreed-on ten.

2) Two other groups decided to be a part of the coalition after we sent out the ballots. These are the Lutheran Global Justice Task Force in Cleveland and the Southern Africa Action Coalition in Vancouver. I mention this since I think the groups which are part of the coalition but not a part of the steering committee would appreciate knowing what progress is being made toward the first meeting of the committee.

Sorry for the slip-up.

Chris