Chicago Coalition on Southern Africa - Minutes - June 1, 1978

Present: OD (Illinois Prisoners Org'n) and two guests; RM (Workers World Party); RM (HAINSA); Ann March (Wellington Ave. Church); DB (Chicago Comm. on African Lib'ty); CC (Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa).

Regrets: UoC Action Group; Mary Ann Corley of AFSC CAIO and CPC staff out of town.

Reports on delegations:

1. Community Organizations: OD had drafted statement for CO delegation would circulate it the following week. Had called people from WAC, KOCO; would call PUSH (about distribution of leaflets). Comm. Renewal Soc. and Urban Dynamics. AH and FR to suggest other organizations.

2. Student groups: CC had letter drafted, still working on draft statement. To be sent out by Monday. Get list of Student groups, Block student org's from UC Action Group. Major problem is that city schools are out now, as well as many other schools, so difficult to contact. Will inquire re Metro HS, DB to pursue Afro History Club at HS; AH to look into Uptown Center.

3. Trade Unions: BM had draft letter and statement printed, was to send out the next day, follow up with phone calls.

4. Churches: being coordinated by OD of 8th Day Center; should get report at next meeting.

5. Politicians: FR coordinating; got commitment that Newhouse will send letter. Suggested contacts be made with some Black alderman, even if not independents, to assess if they are ready to move on this issue. OD to contact Rhodes (24th Ward on West Side) and Timothy Evans (who is also a Ward Commissioner). News from San Francisco that their city council had passed a resolution calling on the State Dept. to break ties with South Africa, close the SA consulate in SF.

Leaflet announcing demonstration
DB passed around penciled draft; DB will do layout, have mimeoed (decided on 3,000 copies; will be sent out with NWRC mailing on Monday, as well as to COSA mailing list). Should get numbers out to different organizations for distribution. RM will focus on mobilization for 16th.

Leaflet for June 16th
OD and CC will work on drafting, along with DB. First side will focus on what we are demonstrating about (Soweto), what is going on in SA now, the US role, how banks and corps tie into racism, unemployment and rising cost of living here, what people can do.

2nd side will be re Zaire Alert focusing on US involvement there, new rationalization by Carter of US intervention in Africa (this decision followed long discussion on Zaire and recent events, our need to respond quickly to this, sensitize people on this issue.)

Route: Decided we would picket SA consulate for ½ hr., then march down Michigan to Lake to State to Congress, back up State to Jackson and to Federal Building. Have to find out where State Dept. is, so we can submit petitions. Would hand out leaflet and flyer on the Coalition. Still unresolved: what kind of rally, speeches. Felt someone, perhaps RM, and speak on Zaire involvement. As we will march on sidewalk, don't need permit from police.

Logistics:
DB will check on that with MP. DB has two big heads that OD be adapted to represent African miner and Uncle Sam; need another to represent Vorster; thought that we go well with UoC dragon. CC to check on Dragon availability. Decided we would have weekend session next week to make signs; WWP volunteered to make large banner for the Coalition.
Chant loudspeaker: decided previous practice of having quotes good, CC to contact EC of Wellington and RH of CPC and CAIC on this. Also, ask RH re getting sound equipment. Decided to get tape of Gil Scott Heron song Johannesburg, play on tape recorder while marching. (Other sound systems: R. Bailey and War Resisters League are possibilities)

Mobilization: will try to get leaflets distributed at push, possibly a speaker; shd get leaflets out to local groups for distribution incl. Midwest Comm. Council (Nancy Jefferson); shd organise postereting on next weekend at next meeting. Set goal of 200-250 people for demo.

Coalition brochure: dealing with underpinning of econ. struggle and racism here w/ So. Africa; language could be less wordy, more brief; start with who we are, what we want, why, how it relates to situation here, how you can help, how the Coalition can help you. Question of who it is aimed at, how we will use it for organization # building, and what is most appropriate language. Decision: DB to re-edit based on criticisms; CC to help. Will look at re-edit at next CGSA meeting, following and based on at least a half-hour discussion of constituency and who we want to reach (which we didn’t have time for).

Zaire: discussion of recent US involvement, resurgence of right-wing & Congress on this issue; people shd urge others to write to newspapers, congressmen. Also need to deal with this issue in context of June 16th Demo; will make reverse of leaflet focus on Zaire a la Angola Alert; also, perhaps need speech by RH or another at rally on this question; shd relate Zaire issue to increased milt. spending, cutbacks in social programs, racism of media coverage. People at delegation press conferences shd deal with more global view, bring in Zaire.

Two suggested books in connection with this: The Secret Weapon in Africa by a Soviet author (deals with Angola situation & role of US groups); also, Stockwell book In Search of Enemies by for CIA member, on CIA involvement & manipulation of press.

Building Coalition: Discussion on Outreach: We didn’t have time, felt several at previous discussion shd be present; will spend at least a half-hour on this (also as basis for discussion CGSA flyer) at next meeting.

Upcoming events:
- June 15 - NAHSAL fundraiser, showing The Rising Tide; at 3rd Uni Church, 301 No. Mayfield; 8 PM; 11 donation (1 under 1)
- June 17 - Party fundraiser for Youth Festival (?)-dancing, card-playing; starts 9 PM; donation to get in and cash bar; at CAM Venue, 870 S. King Dr.
- June 16 - Workers World Party Program at 5/2 So. Dearborn; showing The Rising Tide; max 7:30 PM (demo announced in thr); Nov. 11 - NAHSAL dinner (hopefully guest speaker/frm. So. Africa)

Criticism/Self-criticism: fairly disciplined meeting, but people came late; decided in fairness to those who come on time not to start meetings until 5:30 PM and to start then promptly.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, June 8 at 5:30 PM to 7:45 PM
8th Day Center, 22 East Van Buren, 5th Floor

Tentative agenda:
- Delegation reports; arrangements for press/conferences (CAIC)
- Review of leaflet for distribution at June 16 demo
- Report on logistics (chants, songs, sound system, guerrilla theater);
- Discussion of rally at Federal building; speakers, focus, etc.
- Mobilization for June 16; leaflet distribution, etc.
- Scheduling of postereting around city, sign-making session
- Discussion of constituency-building for Coalition, followed by discussion of Coalition brochure