CHICAGO COALITION ON SOUTHERN AFRICA
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PRESS STATEMENT

CHICAGO GROUPS CALL ON CONGRESS AND THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION TO STRENGTHEN SANCTIONS AGAINST RHODESIA

The Chicago Coalition on Southern Africa welcomes Sister Janice McLaughlin to Chicago today as part of a local campaign to urge the U.S. Congress and President Carter to strengthen American compliance with economic sanctions against the illegal Smith Government in Rhodesia.

This past week two resolutions were discussed in hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, one would end U.S. compliance with U.N. mandated economic sanctions against Rhodesia after the elections scheduled for April 10 and the other would send a U.S. delegation to monitor those elections. Sr. Janice McLaughlin, a staff member of the Washington Office on Africa, testified against both resolutions on Monday, March 5. As a Maryknoll Sister working with the Catholic Commission for Peace and Justice, she was jailed and subsequently expelled from Rhodesia for her work in documenting government repression and atrocities against African civilians there.

As we speak here today, 90% of Rhodesia is under martial law. Smith's government continues to reject domestic and international pressure to accede to majority rule. A statement by the 17 members of the Black Congressional Caucus, chaired by Repre-
sentative Cardiss Collins of Chicago, to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, pointed out that there can be no integrity to the electoral process in a country where the 97% of the population which is black is excluded from voting on the constitutional framework under which the elections scheduled for April 20 are to be held.

In light of the escalating civil war inside Rhodesia, the widespread intimidation of voters by the private armies representing African participants in Smith's so-called "internal settlement" and continued racial discrimination mandated under the new constitution, the Caucus concluded that passage of either resolution would seriously damage U.S. credibility in the world and among African nations.

These statements echo the views of the Congressional Ad Hoc Monitoring Group on Southern Africa, composed of congresspersons who do not sit on Senate or House committees involved in international affairs. In a letter sent to President Carter this past week, they strongly opposed the McGovern-Hayakawa resolutions proposals for a monitoring team as implying legitimization of the present regime. This view was echoed in yesterday's 12 to 0 vote in the U.N. Security Council (with the U.S. abstaining) calling on members to intensify their economic isolation of the illegal Smith government and to actively discourage the sending of election observers whose presence might imply legitimacy to these elections and to the current Rhodesian government.

The Chicago Coalition on Southern Africa urges Senator Percy, as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Stevenson and all Illinois Congresspeople to oppose these and any other similar resolutions which come before Congress and to work to tighten American compliance with economic sanctions against the white minority government in Rhodesia.
The Coalition also strongly condemns South Africa's recent raid into Angola and its rejection of the U.N. plan for independence in Namibia which had been agreed to previously by South Africa and the South West African People's Organization.

The South African Apartheid system is one of the prime supporters of white minority rule in Rhodesia. Through South Africa flows most of Rhodesia's essential imports - such as oil - which are used to fuel Smith's continued repression of the African people there. We urge Congress to enact legislation which will end all U.S. government cooperation with South Africa in economic and technical fields and call on American banks and corporations to end all loans to and investment in South Africa.

Chicago Coalition on Southern Africa:

Wellington Avenue United Church of Christ
8th Day Center for Justice
Chicago Committee for African Liberation
Campaign for a Democratic Foreign Policy
Amilcar Cabral Collective
New World Resource Center
Illinois Prisoners Organization
Workers World Party
National Anti-Imperialism Movement in Solidarity with African Liberation
Chicago Peace Council