ADAers Push Gulf Boycott

Gulf Oil represents 75 percent of U.S. investment in Angola, a Portuguese African colony whose people have been fighting a war for independence since 1961; Gulf will pay Portugal from $30 to $50 million in 1972 for rights and taxes, money which will help Portugal maintain 50,000 troops in Angola.

ADA's 1972 national convention urged "all Americans, individuals as well as institutions, (to) boycott all products of the Gulf Oil Corporation."

The Gulf resolution came to the convention from the Miami Valley ADA chapter in Ohio and Ohio ADA's state convention. Rev. Richard L. Righter, an initiator of the multi-group Gulf Boycott Coalition, is president of the relatively new Miami Valley ADA chapter in Dayton, Ohio.

"I was most pleased at the way a chapter resolution can become national ADA policy through commission deliberations and floor action", Righter said after the national convention had acted.

Righter said Gulf Oil, measured by profits and net assets, is the seventh largest industrial corporation in the world.

Historically Gulf has been a conservative corporation; 27 percent of its stock is owned by the Mellon family of Pittsburgh, called by Fortune in 1967 “the richest family in the land.”

Herbert Alexander's studies on national campaign financing have shown the Mellon family to be the most loyal of major family givers to the Republican party since 1952. In 1968 the Mellon family topped the list of prominent family contributors to non-family national candidates with the sum of $298,962.

Some Washington observers believe that more than coincidence is behind the fact that the Nixon Administration has been the first since Eisenhower’s to reach an agreement with the Portuguese dictatorship. Nixon agreed in December 1971 to grant Portugal $435 million dollars in loans and aid; Rep. Charles Diggs (D-Mich.) resigned his United Nations position in protest over that agreement.

Gulf struck oil in Angola in 1966 and has since invested some $150 million in its operation. (All U.S. direct investment in European Portugal totals only $160 million.) Despite United Nations General Assembly support of Angolan independence and its condemnation of corporate investment in the Portuguese colonies, Gulf continues its operation in Angola, where production now exceeds 150,000 barrels a day.

ADA’s minimum objective is to force Gulf to contribute to the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies an amount equal to its contribution to the Portuguese nation.

The Gulf boycott is supported by the African Liberation Day Committee, a large southern African conference which met in Washington in March 1972, and many other groups and individuals, in addition to ADA and United Church of Christ.

A number of ADA leaders serve on the boycott coalition’s advisory board: national chairman Al Lowenstein; Dolores Mitchell, chairman of the national executive committee; national vice chairmen John Kenneth Galbraith, Harvard economist and author, Joseph L. Rauh, Jr., civil rights lawyer, and Joseph Duffey, national chairman of the Citizens Committee for McGovern; Joseph Clark, former U.S. Senator from Pennsylvania; New Yorker Ann S. Phillips, a member of ADA’s national board; Philip Heller; and national director Leon Shull. Ms. Pat Roach chairs the coalition.

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