

June 16, 1976

American Committee on Africa
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To: ACOA Key Contacts

From: Paul Irish

Protest South African Participation in U.S. Bicentennial

The South African frigate, President Kruger, has been invited to participate in an international naval review to be held as part of the Bicentennial celebrations in New York harbor July 3rd. In addition, a Chilean clipper, used as a torture chamber just after the military coup, the Esmeralda, will be participating in "Operation Sail" in the harbor July 4th. The Esmeralda will have an honorary South African captain and personnel from the South African armed forces on board. The alliance between the military junta and the racist regime will be literally on display at this event, which will be nationally and internationally televised.

The SAS Kruger will be the first vessel of the South African navy to visit the United States. The invitation, announced in a communique to government offices by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, came six months after the original list of 90-odd participating countries was announced. The invitation was approved by the State Department.

The United States claims to have an official arms embargo of South Africa. This implies no contact with South African forces. The United States also officially claims to "abhor" apartheid, South Africa's brutal system of white supremacist exploitation. Yet official policy has once again been flagrantly violated, and a mockery made of the legitimate purposes of the Bicentennial.

We ask you to protest the participation of the Kruger and the Esmeralda in the celebrations to the Secretary of State, Washington, D.C. 20520. (Please drop a copy of your protest to ACOA in the enclosed postage-free envelope.)

For further information on plans for "greeting" these ships, contact ACOA.

P.S. The Committee for Southern Africa Freedom Day is sponsoring a rally in solidarity with African liberation Friday evening, June 25, at 7:30 p.m. at the Williams AME Church, 131st Street and 7th Avenue in Harlem. The program features the Ambassadors from Mozambique and Angola, liberation movement representatives from South Africa and Namibia and Tony Monteiro of the Anti-Imperialist Movement in Solidarity with African Liberation - Tickets \$1.00.