SOUTH AFRICA -- WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING

A Chronology

March 1985  Government banned all outdoor gatherings other than sports events (Ban to last through March 1986)

March 1985  Government banned 29 organizations from holding indoor gatherings

June 1985  Extended the number of organizations banned from holding indoor gatherings to 64 (ban effective through December; only exceptions are where Minister of Law and Order issues permission)

June 28, 1985  Call by South Africa Council of Churches for economic pressure on the government of South Africa by foreign governments as necessary to bring about the end of apartheid

July 21, 1985  STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARED

State of Emergency Regulations:

Sect. 3  Provided a 14 day minimum period of detention (detention without charge) for anyone arrested by the police or military (allowing arrest by many categories of police down to the railway police, the equivalent of the subway police in US cities); detention to exceed the 14 day limit required a written decree from the Minister of Law and Order extending detention

Sect. 11  Provided protection from any civil or criminal proceedings against any member of the military, the police, any government employee (the indemnity provision) for behavior by them in the line of duty (this applied in the areas of South Africa where the State of Emergency was in effect)

Sect. 6  Empowered any police officer or military officer to issue orders limiting comments or news related to the State of Emergency--police/military officers could prohibit news coverage or ban press from areas included in the State of Emergency

Before July 21  Average of one person per day was dying in unrest related disturbances according to the Institute of Race Relations of South Africa

After July 21  Average of three persons per day were dying in unrest related disturbances (same source); 825 have been killed September 1984 to November 1, 1985 with police admitting that 2/3rds of this number were shot to death by state security forces
August 1985  Government banned COSAS (Congress of South African Students, a part of the UDF coalition of 700 some groups and the group through which high school students organize) More than 60% of those detained in 1985 were young people under age 25

September 25  Affidavits on torture of detainees presented in Port Elizabeth Supreme Court by Dr. Wendy Orr and 40 Co-signers

Dr. Orr reported that detainees she examined within 24 hours of their arrest evidenced physical injuries quite consistent with their own claims of having been assaulted or tortured by the police who arrested them. The co-signers with Dr. Orr were former detainees, family members of detainees, clergy, etc. who had seen the abused bodies of those who had been assaulted by police during their detention. (Similar affidavits in Durban, E. London, Capetown)

October 1985  South Africa police force increased by 11,000 from 45,000 to 56,000

October 28, 1985  Bishop Desmond Tutu (Bishop of Johannesburg) and Dr. Beyers Naude (General Secretary of the South Africa Council of Churches) urgently called on international banks to adopt a policy that the "rescheduling of South Africa's debt should be made conditional upon the resignation of the present regime and its replacement by a government responsive to the needs of all South Africa's people."

November 1, 1985  Minister of Law and Order extends indemnity provision to all police, military, prison officials, government employees throughout the whole of South Africa (protection from prosecution for their behavior while on duty)

November 1, 1985  Minister of Law and Order extends period of detention from 14 days to indefinite limit and removes requirement of written notice for extended detention

November 2, 1985  Blanket ban on the press decreed; no photos, film footage, sound recordings, or other first-hand information may be taken or distributed, published, broadcast of any boycotts, strikes, public disturbances, disorder, public violence, damage to property or conduct of a security force unit or individual. The press is allowed into areas where the above is occurring only if given police permission and accompanied by police personnel.

December 1, 1985  Congress of South African Trade Unions declared their support for divestment.