



ACOA ACTION NEWS

UNIONS OPPOSE APARTHEID

John Hudson, President of the Headwear Joint Board of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union, recently alerted ACOA to the fact that Caldor and several other retail chains were carrying children's headwear made

in South Africa. Such economic links not only strengthen the apartheid regime but threaten the wages, working conditions and even jobs of union workers in the U.S.

ACOA immediately contacted anti-apartheid groups throughout New York

and New England where Caldor is concentrated. The Albany Committee Against Racism and Apartheid held a very successful Caldor demonstration in the driving rain on April 16 which received extensive television and newspaper coverage. In Northampton, Massachusetts anti-apartheid activists decided to picket Caldor after the local manager refused to even meet with a delegation from the American Friends Service Committee and the Smith College Committee for Divestment.

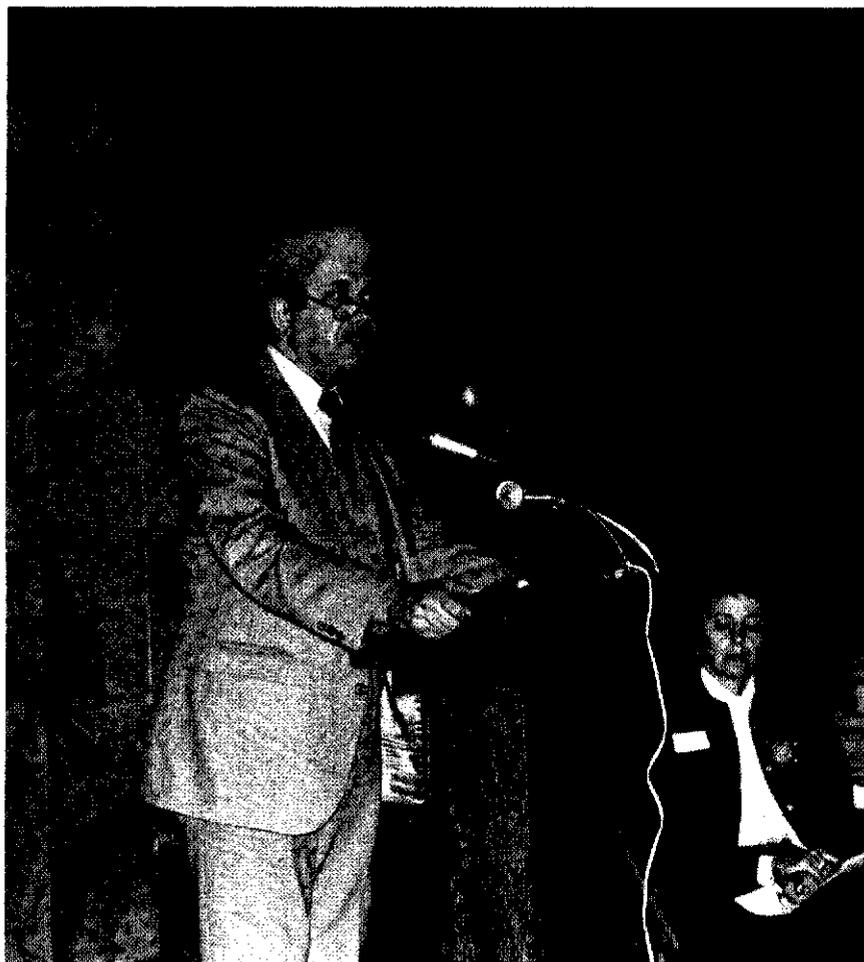
Caldor has now agreed not to carry the South African headwear in the future. The union expects to start a campaign in the very near future focusing on other retail chains that carry the hats.

ACOA has also been working to build support in this country for the emerging black unions in South Africa. Staff member Sandy Boyer, the author of "Black Unions in South Africa" published by The Africa Fund, spoke at an all day conference in solidarity with these new unions sponsored by the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid on March 24. He said in part, "Because South Africa is totally and permanently dependent on black labor the black unions can be a major force for freedom."

ACOA Executive Director Jennifer Davis met several times with the producers of the recent ABC documentary on the black unions "Adapt or Die." She briefed them on the major unions and leaders in the black labor movement and the repression they face as well as making suggestions about people to interview.

ACOA's campaign to end public investment in South Africa was given prominent coverage in "Solidarity," the United Auto Worker's newspaper and in "Public Employee," the newspaper of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees. Both articles quoted ACOA extensively. Vice President Don Ephlin stated the UAW's position clearly in "Solidarity." "We cannot tolerate public monies being invested in a country which practices institutionalized racism through its laws."

DIVESTMENT CAMPAIGN GROWS



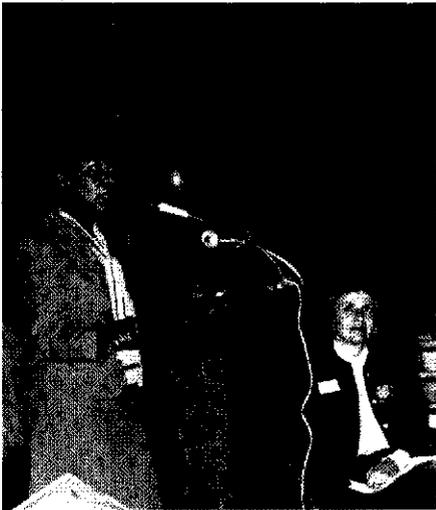
ACOA President William H. Booth opening the Conference on Public Investment and South Africa. Story on page 2.



State Rep. Virgil Smith (MI) and State Sen. Thomas Mann (IA) at the United Nations



Massachusetts State Rep. Mel King with ACOA's Gail Hovey and Joan Bavaria of Franklin Research



Keynote speakers: California Assemblywoman Maxine Waters (standing) and Philadelphia Councilwoman Joan Spector

Conference On Public

On April 15 and 16 over 100 state and municipal elected officials, union leaders, and grass roots activists came together in Boston for the second national Conference on Public Investment and South Africa. The conference was organized by ACOA and Mass Divest, the local coalition responsible for passage of the most comprehensive divestment bill yet to succeed in any state. (A study of the campaign, "Make it in Massachusetts—Not in South Africa" by Mass Divest has been published by ACOA.) Nine other organizations, from the American Friends Service Committee to TransAfrica, co-sponsored the Boston Conference.

The weekend event began in New York at the United Nations where 16 legislators made statements before the Special Committee Against Apartheid on Friday morning. Those who responded to the legislators remarks, thanking them for their efforts, included the representatives from Algeria, Nigeria and the Sudan.

The legislators then flew to Boston where they were joined by others at a reception hosted by Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis.

Speaking at the State House reception was AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer and President of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists William Lucy. AFSCME is the largest public employee union in the country and was key to passage of divestment legislation in Massachusetts, Michigan and Connecticut. Lucy said, "I am pleased that our union has been able to play some small role here in the State of Massachusetts . . . Let me assure you that wherever we go we will try and continue to press for the kind of legislation that has passed here in Massachusetts."

The conference was opened formally on the evening of the 15th by ACOA President William Booth and Massachusetts State Senator Jack Backman and Representative Melvin King. King and Backman were the legislators most responsible for



AFSCME Secretary Treasurer William Lucy, ACOA's Executive Director Jennifer Davis and Michigan State Rep. Perry Bullard



Councilmember John Ray (Washington, DC)



Conference Coordinators Kumalo (ACOA) and Farris (Mass Divest)



Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis flanked by State Sen. Jack Backman (MA) and State Rep. Tyrone Brooks (GA)

Investment And South Africa

the Massachusetts victory. ACOA's Project Director Dumisani Kumalo, one of the conference coordinators noted at the conclusion of the evening that the difference between 1981, the year of the first conference and 1983 is that those gathering in 1983 had been hard at work, gaining experience and winning key victories. This was not just a campaign for blacks, he said, not one just for whites. It is not just for Democrats, not just for Republicans. The energy in the room was tremendous and it carried over into the next day's workshops.

ACOA's Executive Director Jennifer Davis led off Saturday morning with an address on change and resistance in South Africa. Of course change is taking place in South Africa, she said, but what kind and in whose interest? She pointed to the rising tide of resistance, mentioning specifically the African National Congress and the black trade union movement. She exhorted the participants to share their very

significant experience in the workshops.

Veterans and newcomers to divestment campaigns, financial experts and members of the sponsoring organizations as well as elected officials then got to work sharing practical information on how to run a successful campaign. This was the heart of the weekend's work. Participants came away with new information on countering anti-apartheid strategies by South Africa and the corporations, new sources for developing the financial arguments, and a detailed understanding of how to get a bill successfully through a legislature. As important, the participants left with renewed energy to carry the campaign to states and cities throughout the entire country.

Other Actions

ACOA representatives have been invited to provide expert witness on divestment legislation before a number of state

legislatures and municipal councils. Projects Director Dumisani Kumalo spoke before the District of Columbia City Council concerning an ordinance which would affect \$180 million in publicly held funds. He also testified before the Rhode Island Legislature in Providence and met, at the invitation of Senator Joe Neal, with Nevada legislators in Carson City about legislation there.

Research Director Gail Hovey was invited to testify before the Personnel and Pensions Committee of the Illinois House of Representatives April 20 in Springfield. She urged passage of a bill introduced by Rep. Carol Braun for divestment of Illinois funds from corporations doing business in South Africa. Prexy Nesbitt, former ACOA associate director, also testified. He and Hovey met afterwards with representatives of the Champaign-Urbana Coalition Against Apartheid and Rep. Braun to discuss strategy.



Opening session in the Massachusetts State House

RESOURCES

In March, the American Committee on Africa published two new publications. *Divesting from Apartheid: A Summary of State and Municipal Legislative Action on South Africa* by Sandy Boyer and *Make It In Massachusetts—Not In South Africa: How We Won Divestment Legislation* by Mass Divest. Copies are available for 30¢ each, over twenty, 15¢ each.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

• Executive Director Jennifer Davis represented ACOA at a weeklong UN conference in support of Namibia held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris the end of April. While in Europe, Davis participated in a consultation on Western nuclear and military collaboration with South Africa. The meeting to help coordinate actions of groups working on the problem was held in the Netherlands.

• Associate Director Paul Irish represented ACOA at a three day international conference in Solidarity with the African Front Line States held in Lisbon, Portugal the beginning of April. Ministers from all of the states—Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe—addressed the conference as well as the presidents of SWAPO of Namibia and the ANC of South Africa, Sam Nujoma and Oliver Tambo, respectively.

• Director Emeritus George Houser traveled to Zimbabwe in February where he accompanied writer Sharon Sopher on a project supported by The Africa Fund to produce a biography of Prime Minister Robert Mugabe. Upon his return, Houser briefed supporters in New York on recent developments.

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

• Executive Director Jennifer Davis recently addressed the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid on the occasion of its twentieth anniversary.

• ACOA Projects Director Dumisani Kumalo has fulfilled a number of speaking engagements the past few months. Kumalo was keynote speaker at the first national conference of the Canadian Committee of the International Defense and Aid Fund for Southern Africa held in Nova Scotia. He also spoke at Williams College, Wesleyan University and Union College in the northeast, the University of Washington at Seattle and other engagements in the northwest organized by the American Friends Service Committee in Seattle and Portland, Oregon. While in Seattle, he appeared on Channel 5 television.

• ACOA Vice-President Elizabeth Landis and Research Director Gail Hovey appeared at an all day program on "Namibia under International Law" held at Columbia University Law School in New York. They also briefed the faculty of the National Model United Nations on Namibia. An article by Hovey on U.S. corporate investment in Namibia appeared in *Christianity & Crisis*.

• ACOA Student Coordinator Joshua Nessen recently addressed universities in

This newsletter was prepared by Sandy Boyer, Gail Hovey and Richard Knight.

STUDENT ACTIONS

Support for the ANC 6

ACOA declared April 6 National Armband Day to focus attention on the ANC 6, freedom fighters who have been sentenced to death by the South African Government. In New York City more than 1,000 people wearing armbands held a candlelight vigil and rally outside the South African Mission to the United Nations. Other actions on behalf of the Six took place in Maryland, New York, Michigan, Oregon, New Hampshire, California, Wisconsin, Arkansas and Massachusetts. Thousands of signatures were gathered on petitions to save the Six and forwarded by ACOA to the South African State President.

Divestment

Divestment continues to be the focus of much student activity. In March, the Columbia University Senate, which includes students, faculty and staff, voted unanimously to ask the Trustees to divest all University funds from banks and corporations operating in South Africa. ACOA provided the sponsor of the resolution, Barbara Ransby, with information which she used in her powerful and moving address to the Senate. The Trustees have sent the matter to committee.

New Jersey and Kentucky. He spoke with Gail Hovey at a forum at Drew University and at a rally of 300 students for divestment at Rutgers, New Brunswick. He joined a group conducting panels at the University of Kentucky at Lexington and the University of Louisville.

CULTURAL BOYCOTT

• Entertainer Tony Bennett was recently invited to sing for a lucrative sum in the South African resort of Sun City outside Johannesburg. After ACOA staff provided background on the resort, which is in the bantustan of Bophuthatswana, an area falsely declared "independent" by South Africa, Bennett rejected the offer. Quipped a *New York Post* columnist "And he told them what they could do with their Krugerrands."

Another blow to South Africa's attempts to win credibility through entertainment and sports was struck when New York City Parks Commissioner Henry Stern cancelled a contract to transmit two boxing matches and a performance by

An ACOA organized meeting for the northeastern U.S. held at Amherst College declared April 15 and 16 to be coordinated "Days of Action." Protests took place on those days at Harvard and Wesleyan Universities and at Amherst, Williams and Dartmouth Colleges. In each case students called on their schools to divest from South Africa related corporations. Further plans for coordinated protests were formulated at an April 30 meeting at Amherst, organized by ACOA.

For Better Not For Worse

Anti-apartheid organizing on campuses was strengthened by a national tour of the play *For Better Not For Worse* by South African playwright and actor Selaelo Maredi. Coordinated by ACOA's associate The Africa Fund, performances have been held at over 50 campus and community theaters in states including Kentucky, Iowa, California, Illinois, Texas, Arkansas, Michigan, New York, New Jersey, Oregon, Washington, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Colorado, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. If you wish to have the play come to your area, contact Joshua Nessen (212) 962-1210.

Frank Sinatra from Sun City to the city-owned Shea Stadium.

REFUGEE AID

• A twenty-foot container with one and a half tons of medical equipment worth \$56,000 recently arrived in Luanda to help the tens of thousands of Namibian refugees in Angola. The materials, from bandages to wheelchairs, were shipped by ACOA's associate The Africa Fund with UN assistance. They are the result of a collection drive by a Twin Cities support committee in Minnesota. The SWAPO Women's Council recently wrote ACOA in thanks for a previous shipment of women's underwear for the refugees collected in United Methodist churches in Indiana. Said SWAPO's Ellen Musialela, "Words cannot express our sincere thanks—only when our country is liberated will the people of the U.S.A. realize the friendship and respect we have for them."