The anti-apartheid movement won a major victory on August 11 when the House of Representatives voted 244-132 to impose a near-total ban on U.S. trade with apartheid South Africa and require all U.S. corporations to disinvest.

The House bill, sponsored by California Democrat Ron Dellums, would also penalize foreign oil companies with ties to South Africa, require U.S. companies to negotiate the terms of their withdrawal with Black workers, and U.S. nuclear collaboration with Pretoria, penalize foreign corporations taking "commercial advantage" of sanctions, and mandate independence for Namibia as one of four specific conditions for resumption of economic relations with the United States.

A similar Senate bill, S2756, sponsored by Democrats Alan Cranston and Ted Kennedy, was narrowly approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in September, but failed to reach the full Senate before adjournment.

Passage of the Dellums bill, HR 1580, was ACOA's top priority through the spring and summer — particularly after the February 24 banning of the two-million member United Democratic Front and 16 other anti-apartheid organizations by the South African government.

ACOA responded to the bannings with a national mailing urging grassroots support for the sanctions bill. On March 2, Executive Director Jennifer Davis called on Congress to respond to the crackdown with new sanctions, calling them "a test of conscience" in a widely distributed New York Times op-ed.

In May a second national mailing to support the Dellums legislation urged local activists to lobby their Congressional representatives to co-sponsor the bill. The mailing included information that highlighted sanctions calls from prominent South Africans, including Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Winnie Mandela.

ACOA continued to rally support for the bill as it moved through the House this summer. In June, Projects Director Rob Jones testified for the Dellums legislation before the House Ways and Means Committee.

ACOA also worked closely with church, labor, and community groups in the home districts of undecided Congressional representatives. In Chicago, for example, we worked with labor, Black community, and Lutheran and Catholic leaders to urge Ways and Means Chairman Dan Rostenkowski to schedule an early markup and vote on the legislation. Grassroots support for the Dellums bill was critical to the successful vote in August — by far the strongest anti-apartheid measures ever legislated by a Western government.

But as we went to press in October, time ran out for action by the Senate. Since the House vote ACOA worked urgently to bring constituent pressure to bear on a dozen undecided Senators. In August and September special mailings to key activists and the religious community urged their active support for the Senate bill. In swing states, Rob Jones was in direct contact with labor, church and political leaders on the pressing need for Senate action. But strong conservative opposition convinced Senate Democrats to let the clock run out on the measure.

The recent crackdown on the churches and other opposition groups underscores the importance of the sanctions effort. As repression and government-sponsored violence escalates inside South Africa, the outside world must escalate its efforts to end that repression. Existing sanctions have hurt the apartheid government, but much stronger actions are needed to bring the system down.
Savimbi Dogged By Pickets, Protests On U.S. Visit

South Africa's Angolan surrogate, Jonas Savimbi, came to the United States in June to lobby for an increase in his U.S. arms budget and to woo black opinion in the deep South. But despite a $600,000 annual public relations budget and a secret itinerary, the bandit leader was confronted by pickets and protests at every stop after ACOA alerted area activists to Savimbi's true role in Angola and his ties to apartheid.

ACOA was particularly active in Mississippi, where the brother of slain civil rights leader Medgar Evers, Fayette Mississippi mayor Charles Evers, had organized a daylong tour for Savimbi. Information provided by ACOA resulted in an editorial condemnation and a damaging expose of Savimbi's South Africa lies in The Jackson Advocate.

Dumisani Kumalo also contacted Medgar Evers' widow, Mrs. Myrtle Evans about the attempt to link her deceased husband's name to Savimbi. Mrs. Evans and other members of the Evers family then issued a public statement denouncing Savimbi and effort to link Medgar's name to the Mississippi tour.

The resulting negative publicity prompted the Mayor of Vicksburg to cancel a meeting with Savimbi, and sparked pickets and boycotts at other locations. ACOA also worked successfully to head off a meeting between Savimbi and Birmingham Alabama Mayor Richard Arrington.

ACOA staff joined local activists to picket Savimbi's two major appearances in New York City, and The Africa Fund produced a widely distributed leaflet on Savimbi and UNITA for use at the protests. Prompt action and close ties to progressive groups around the country helped ACOA expose Savimbi's connection to apartheid and mobilize opposition to further U.S. military aid to UNITA.

More importantly, the protests that dogged Savimbi at every stop on his U.S. tour have frustrated UNITA's attempts to build Black support in the South.

Namibia: Hopes and Doubts

The ongoing negotiations between South Africa, Angola, Cuba and the United States over the terms of Namibia's independence are once again raising hopes that the end of Pretoria's brutal and illegal occupation of the territory is near.

And there are new reasons for hope. A sharp increase in the number of young white soldiers killed in the Angolan war, plus a dramatic surge of popular resistance by the Namibian people have raised the economic and political costs of occupation for Pretoria considerably.

These developments, plus mounting economic difficulties at home and anxieties about the impact of the proposed new American sanctions and a Democratic victory in the Presidential elections, have forced Pretoria to withdraw from Angola and announce a tentative date for implementation of the Namibia independence plan, UN Security Council Resolution 435.

But strong doubts about South African intentions remain. Pretoria and its Western allies have used negotiations as a pretext to deflect international pressure and delay Namibian independence. After all, South Africa and the West have been "negotiating" Resolution 435 for over a decade. Current talks may be no different.

These doubts have been strengthened in recent weeks as Pretoria resurrected arguments it used a decade ago to frustrate Resolution 435, including charges of UN "bias" in favor of the Namibian liberation movement SWAPO.

South African actions inside Namibia, including reinforcement of its forces in northern Namibia, and plans to go ahead with fraudulent "ethnic" elections in Namibia later this year, also cast doubt on the Botha government's intentions.

U.S. policy in the region presents another obstacle to a settlement. Since 1981, the United States has effectively held the Namibian people hostage to its global ambitions through the Reagan administration's "linkage" of Namibian independence to the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. At the same time, Washington's continued backing for the South African-sponsored insurgency of Angolan rebel Jonas Savimbi and his UNITA contra has made it more difficult for the Cubans — invited in by the Angolan government to guard against South African aggression — to leave.

Despite universal public condemnation of South Africa's twin policies of apartheid and regional destabilization, U.S. and European policy makers are unwilling to impose substantial economic and political penalties on their "old friends" in Pretoria — old friends who are also Washington's allies in the war against Angola. Western policy has doomed past attempts at a Namibia settlement. It may doom the current effort as well.
Fringe Benefits — Fundraisers Net Money and Awareness for The Africa Fund

From northern California to Manhattan’s Upper East Side, Americans are combining commitment and creativity to raise money for The Africa Fund. Michael Long, an eighth-grade student in San Rafael, California, raised over $100 for the Africa Fund by designing, printing, and selling anti-apartheid T-shirts at school.

Closer to home, a benefit showing of the film “A World Apart” at Manhattan’s Cinema One theater on June 15 raised over $14,000 for the Africa Fund. The showing was co-sponsored by Atlantic Entertainment Group, British Screen, Working Title and Filmmakers United Against Apartheid, a group of progressive filmmakers that includes Jonathan Demme, Spike Lee, Woody Allen and Martin Scorsese. The benefit was attended by “A World Apart” screenwriter Sean Slovo, actress Linda Mvusi, and director Chris Menges.

Singer Little Steven van Zandt, OAU Ambassador Oumarou Youssoufou, Broadway performer Spalding Gray and Manhattan Borough President David N. Dinkins joined FUAA’s Demme and Lee and an audience of 700 for the premiere showing of this powerful film about lives lived — and lost — in the struggle against apartheid.

Six weeks later, the New York New Music Seminar and Tack Head sponsored an event at a Manhattan nightclub, The Tunnel, that netted over $10,000 for Africa Fund projects. But support for the Africa Fund has come from all over. The Oregon Movement Banning Apartheid (OMBA) raised $300 for the Africa Fund at an April 30 event, while a South Orange New Jersey video store owner, George Iverson, celebrated the video release of “Cry Freedom” by donating over $1500 to the Africa Fund — one dollar for every film rented on the day of its release.

The thousands of dollars raised by these and dozens of other community fundraisers across the country are a vital source of support for Africa Fund projects. This summer they helped keep the office open and active while other funding slowed to a trickle. But as Africa Fund Executive Director Jennifer Davis noted, these events are about a lot more than money:

“When solidarity groups organize a community benefit,” she said, “they’re raising public awareness of the struggle in southern Africa along with the money. It’s a material expression of our solidarity with the South African and Namibian people, and a chance to make a real difference in their lives. And that’s the real benefit.”

A.F.R.I.C.A. Rap: A Tool for School

In 1987, the Stetsasonic’s A.F.R.I.C.A. record and video provided educators and anti-apartheid activists with an exciting new educational resource for use in inner-city schools. Now the Africa Fund and Stetsasonic, with assistance from USA For Africa, is set to begin a five city two-stage educational program to incorporate the A.F.R.I.C.A. and Sun City videos and other resources into a comprehensive educational curriculum on southern Africa for urban high schools.

During Phase I of the program, an Africa Fund representative and a member of the Stetsasonic will spend a week in each of the target cities, New York, Los Angeles, Birmingham, Atlanta and Boston, to give video presentations in the schools and consolidate contacts with city officials and education and community groups.

In Phase II, an Africa Fund representative will return to each city to assist in the development of follow-up programs — including “people-to-people” development projects, educational exchange programs and sister city and school relationships with the peoples of the Front Line States and South African and Namibian refugees.
Divestment Campaign '88: Major Victories — And More To Come

Activists working to cut state and local government ties to South Africa are targeting back-door corporate connections to apartheid and winning major new victories for the divestment movement.

In June, the Republican-controlled Michigan State Senate passed a five-year divestment bill affecting some $3 billion in public employee pension funds. The surprise vote, after a tough six-year campaign by Michigan anti-apartheid activists, was signed into law in July. Because the bill incorporates ACOA's divestment guidelines, U.S. corporations who maintain franchise and licensing agreements in South Africa are subject to divestment under the Michigan law. ACOA Projects Director Rob Jones worked closely with two key legislators, State Senators Perry Bullard and Virgil Smith, and the Michigan divestment coalition to strengthen key provisions of the bill.

Miami-area activists also scored a victory in July, when the Dade County Commission voted to divest county funds and prohibit county purchases from corporations operating in South Africa and Namibia. The bill, the result of a two-year campaign by the Miami-based Coalition for a Free South Africa, also incorporates the divestment guidelines in its divestment and selective purchasing provisions, and cites the Africa Fund's Unified List as a primary resource on corporate ties to apartheid. The county's selective purchasing requirements will affect 90 percent of the county's $296 million procurement budget.

Massachusetts Action Imminent

In Massachusetts, passage of a statewide selective purchasing law is expected before the end of the current legislative session. The bill, sponsored by Representative Saundra Graham, is similar to legislation that was defeated last year by only one vote, and would cover vendors bidding for $800 million in state contracts annually.

Under the act, H6098, companies with direct investments or licensing and franchising agreements in South Africa would be barred from bidding on state contracts. In 1988 the state did over $25 million worth of business with South Africa-linked businesses. After a two-year effort by Graham and the Coalition to End South African Purchases, Massachusetts is poised to pass one of the first and most stringent statewide anti-apartheid purchasing laws in the country.

The City of New Orleans is also near passage of municipal divestment and selective purchasing legislation affecting $435 million in municipal employee pension funds and nearly $300 million annually in city contracts. Action on the ordinance, sponsored by City Council Representative Johnny Jackson Jr., could come as early as October. ACOA worked with Jackson to ensure that the bill affects companies who maintain only indirect links to South Africa through licensing and franchising and distribution agreements as well as corporations with direct investments.

ACOA has also provided assistance to several municipal governments in the implementation and enforcement of divestment and selective purchasing laws. In New York City for example, ACOA corporate researcher Richard Knight is working with Manhattan Borough President David N. Dinkins to identify corporations whose links to South Africa make them ineligible for millions of dollars of municipal contracts under city law.

WON'T YOU PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT TO READ THIS MESSAGE?

Dear Reader: It is a sad fact that your government is helping to maintain apartheid in South Africa. With your support, we can help put an end to violence and brutality against South Africa's black people. Help us continue the struggle to end apartheid. Please make an immediate contribution of: a) $500 b) $250 c) $100 d) $50 e) $25 f) $10

Please send your check payable to ACOA at the address below. You can also call 758-6275 for more information. Thank you for your involvement in the struggle to end apartheid in South Africa.

Sincerely,

American Committee on Africa, 198 Broadway, New York, NY 10007.

100% of your contribution is tax-deductible.
ACOA Launches Religious Action Network

As other voices are silenced by the violence and oppression of apartheid, it has fallen increasingly on South Africa's spiritual leaders to articulate their people's aspirations for racial and social justice. As a result, they have come under unprecedented attack by the South African government and are appealing for our urgent support.

This spring ACOA responded to their call by initiating the ecumenical Religious Action Network (RAN) to link churches, temples and mosques in the United States directly to the struggle in South Africa. The purpose of the network, explained RAN Coordinator Dumisani Kumalo, is to complement the ongoing anti-apartheid work of the major faiths with a channel for swift distribution of information and coordinated urgent response.

The empowering effect of the network was demonstrated after the February 24 banning of 17 democratic organizations by the apartheid government. Within a week ACOA was able to place solidarity ads in South African and Namibian newspapers signed by dozens of American religious leaders and congregations. We also assisted the faith community in joining the successful campaign to stay the execution of the Sharpeville Six, and sent out a special Action Alert to the faith community about the bombing of South African Council of Churches national offices and recent government threats against Archbishop Tutu.

In September, Kumalo joined ACOA President William Howard in Dallas for the national convention of the Black Baptist churches to promote awareness of the network. Kumalo and the Rev. Howard held extensive discussions in Dallas with the Rev. Allan Boesak about the oppression of the churches in South Africa and the need for greater U.S. solidarity.

Kumalo also met with Archbishop Tutu, where he briefed the anti-apartheid leader about RAN's activities and future plans, including proposals for a national church conference in the spring of 1989.

For more information about the Religious Action Network, contact Dumisani Kumalo at ACOA.

Religious Action Network Coordinator Dumisani Kumalo with Rev. Allan Boesak, and ACOA President M. William Howard.
ACOA Around The Country

SHARPEVILLE SIX: The massive international campaign to save the Sharpeville Six — convicted of “common purpose” with the unknown killers of a South African township official in 1984 — has delayed but not removed the threat of their execution. ACOA has done national mailings to U.S. religious, human rights and anti-apartheid activists about the case since February, and remains an active part of the global movement to win clemency for the Six and free all South African political prisoners and detainees.

MATERIAL AID: During the first eight months of 1988 the Africa Fund shipped over $40,000 worth of books, medical supplies and other humanitarian materials to South African and Namibian refugees in Tanzania and Angola. The supplies were collected by church and anti-apartheid activists in communities throughout the country and forwarded to the Africa Fund for shipment to southern Africa.

AWARD FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Executive Director Jennifer Davis has been honored for her “exemplary service in the struggle to end apartheid in South Africa” by the National Bar Association. She received the prestigious Outstanding Service Award at their 63rd annual meeting in Washington D.C. on August 9.

DEMOCRATS ’BUTTONHOLE’ FOR MANDELA: Delegates to the Democratic National Convention in Atlanta were reminded of the continuing struggle in South Africa by hundreds of Nelson Mandela buttons printed by ACOA. Executive Director Jennifer Davis attended the convention as part of ACOA’s effort to keep opposition to apartheid on the party agenda — meeting with foreign policy advisers to the Rev. Jesse Jackson and labor and religious activists.

CULTURAL BOYCOTT: Executive Director Jennifer Davis was in Athens Greece to attend a United Nations conference on the cultural boycott against South Africa during the first week of September. The conference was called to examine ways to strengthen efforts to isolate apartheid while supporting cultural ties to what delegates described as the “culture of liberation.” Conference participants, including South African writers Wally Serote and Nadine Gordimer, British actress Glenda Jackson, West Africa author Wole Soyinka, U.S. producer Joseph Papp and television journalist Gil Noble, called for an international ban on broadcast of U.S. and European television programs in South Africa and for all cultural workers to refuse to perform or have their works performed in South Africa. The conference ended by observing that “the further development of the culture of resistance urgently requires positive support from the international community and we call upon that community to intensify its efforts on behalf of the struggle for freedom in South Africa.”

New Members of Executive Board, National Committee

ACOA has added three prominent new members to its Executive Board this year. They are the noted civil rights activist Reverend Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker, pastor of the Canaan Baptist Church in Harlem; the Very Reverend Frederick Williams, pastor of Church of the Intercession in Harlem, and Damu Smith, Executive Director of the Washington Office on Africa.

The ACOA National Committee also has three new members — Colorado Congressional Representative Patricia Schroeder, Manhattan Borough President David Dinkins, and the Reverend Canon Burgess Carr, Africa Partnership Officer for the Episcopal Church.

New Members of Executive Board:

- Reverend Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker
- Very Reverend Frederick Williams
- Damu Smith

National Committee:

- Burgess Carr
- David Dinkins
- Carlton Goodlett
- Donald S. Harrington
- John L.S. Holloman
- Sophia Yamell Jacobs
- John Markum
- Howard Metzenbaum
- Frank Montero
- Paul Moore, Jr.
- Paul O’Dwyer
- Sidney Putler
- Charles Rangel
- Cleveland Robinson
- Frederick A.O. Schwartz, Jr.
- Patricia Schroeder
- George Shepherd
- Jennifer Davis
- George M. Houser

American Committee on Africa

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Address Correction Requested