Welcome Home

Exiled since 1977 ACOA staff member Dumisani Kumalo was allowed to return home on a brief visit in February and met with African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela. They last met in 1973 when Kumalo saw Mandela on Robben Island. "Photos of Nelson don't do him justice," Kumalo exclaimed, "he is vibrant and full of vigor and it rubs off on the people around him."

Vote Campaign

National Sanctions Ballot

Activists in sixteen cities have adopted the End Apartheid: Vote For the People Campaign. This Africa Fund program ties the call for one person, one vote in a unified nonracial South Africa to economic sanctions in the United States.

The release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the ANC and other organizations represent a major victory for the people of South Africa. These concessions by the South African government are a response to the internal mobilization of forces, most visibly in the recent Defiance Campaign. They are also a result of external diplomatic support for the ANC preconditions on negotiations and pressure caused by international economic sanctions.

However, the South African government refuses to address the core demand of the South African people for one person, one vote. The Vote Campaign ballots give voters the opportunity to vote both for democracy in South Africa and for continued sanctions in the U.S. The ballots for democracy will be sent to the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa to show support for the struggle, and the ballots for sanctions will go to Congress.

Many cities which are already active in anti-apartheid work have joined the campaign by passing resolutions on the release of Nelson Mandela. These resolutions credit the release of Mandela to pressure, call for the release of all political prisoners and demand that the U.S. Congress enforce comprehensive sanctions on South Africa, until full democracy is established.

The Vote for the People Campaign has already been enthusiastically taken up in Albany, Miami, Houston, Pittsburgh, Boston, Seattle, Los Angeles,

(continued on page 2)
For thirty years March 21 — Sharpeville Day — has been a painful day for the people of southern Africa. On March 21 1960 apartheid’s guns killed 69 South African protestors, and all peaceful political opposition was driven underground.

Now, thirty years later, March 21 marks a day of celebration in southern Africa— Namibian Independence Day. With the flag of apartheid lowered for the last time, the people of this long occupied land can turn to building a free Namibia. For South Africans this day confirms the hope that popular action can win over a seemingly invincible enemy.

I remember other such moments of joy for southern Africa in the years since Sharpeville. Days like June 25th, 1975, when long guerrilla war at last brought the Mozambican people victory over Portugal, independence and the chance for peace. All over South Africa young men and women celebrated this peoples’ victory, and went to jail for their celebration.

But Mozambique’s early days of promise were followed by smashed dreams, as South Africa intervened to preserve its apartheid way of life at home by destroying possibilities of a better alternative in neighboring countries.

Can we hope for a different future now — for the young independent Namibia and for the South Africans celebrating Namibia’s freedom as a precursor to their own?

The answer may lie in a new balance of forces in southern Africa. Apartheid South Africa no longer bestrides the subcontinent like an indomitable Colosus. Its power has been shaken at home and across its borders.

The birth of a free Namibia is a serious setback to Pretoria’s plans. It resulted from a combination of pressures including the powerful resistance of the Namibian people and international sanctions.

Inside South Africa similar pressures have pushed the de Klerk government to new forms of management. Its public refrains are negotiation and reform, but repression remains a key policy element. Despite some significant moves — the unbanning of political organizations and release of major political leadership — the regime has relinquished no power and is certain to seek as slow a rate of change as it can possibly control.

Already, as new waves of popular militancy shake the bantustans and reverberate through small villages and major cities, some government spokesmen have issued warnings about “threats to negotiations”, and state connected vigilante squads are provoking ferocious street wars. The destabilization techniques which worked with such brutal success in Mozambique are being brought back home, for use against the movement for democracy.

**Vote (continued from p. 1)**

New York, Denver, Detroit, Chicago, Washington DC, Tuscon, Kalamazoo, Champaign-Urbana and San Jose. Following are highlights of some of the activities currently on going:

**Washington**
- The Seattle City Council became the first city in the U.S. to endorse the campaign when it passed the Vote resolution on February 13, 1990.

**New York**
- In Albany the campaign was launched in January at a public meeting featuring the Mayor and Rev. Allan Boesak. The event was organized by the Capitol District Coalition Against Racism.
- In Brooklyn, the Black Veterans for Social Justice passed the Vote Resolution.

**Michigan**
- In Detroit, the Michigan Coalition for Human Rights, together with the United Auto Workers hold Vote events every Tuesday.

**Illinois:**
- At the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, viewers of the Southern African Film Festival, organized by the Champaign-Urbana Coalition Against Apartheid vote at every screening.
- In Chicago, the Labor Committee Against Apartheid has pledged to collect one hundred thousand votes.

**Colorado**
- In Denver the campaign was kicked off on February 25 at an event to commemorate the release of Nelson Mandela. The Vote Resolution was passed by the City Council.

**California**
- In Los Angeles the Vote Resolution was passed by the City Council. The Vote Campaign was launched at a Mandela Release rally.
- In Oakland at the National Congress of SANE/FREEZE the Vote Campaign was adopted as a national project within that organization.

The Vote Campaign is a forceful way to demonstrate support for the struggle for a democratic South Africa directly and through international economic sanctions. Copies of the Vote Ballot are available along with an organizers packet, from our office. We encourage you to join us and have an election in your area.
Human Rights
Olive Branches and Sjamboks

“They’re opening up at the top while they crack down at the bottom,” COSATU General Secretary Jay Naidoo told The Africa Fund in December. While violent repression against high ranking members of the anti-apartheid movement has been reduced, over and over again sources inside the country stress the fact that local organizers and lesser known community activists continue to be targeted for violence and assassination. Police brutality against demonstrators still claims many lives - the same weekend that Nelson Mandela walked out of jail South African security forces shot dead 28 unarmed demonstrators.

Throughout 1989 The Africa Fund continued efforts to protect these lesser known activists. The Africa Fund was a distribution point for information used by local activists in the U.S. to publicize and protest the violent repression brought down on the Defiance Campaign during the Fall. Before the story of police “death” squads finally broke and captured the headlines of newspapers all over the world The Africa Fund had alerted its network to the growing use of assassinations and the death penalty as a method of political repression. A detailed Action Alert providing background and suggestions for protest actions was mailed to over 1,000 people.

As Action News went to press over 300 political prisoners had launched a hunger strike on Robben Island. They were protesting the fact that they and over 3,000 other political prisoners remain in jail under poor conditions virtually ignored by F.W. De Klerk’s announced reforms on February 2nd. They have vowed to remain on strike until they are released. The same networks which worked with us to support the hunger strike in early 1989 have begun to mobilize for the prisoners on Robben Island. The Africa Fund’s human rights work in 1990 will also focus on the situation in the bantustans, exposing so-called Black on Black violence and the fight against repressive legislation.
In February Jennifer Davis testified in Washington in support of legislation imposing new financial sanctions on South Africa. She told the House Subcommittees on International Development and Africa: "The democratic forces are winning, but have not won. Only when a new government has been democratically elected by all South Africans can we legitimately say apartheid is ended. Only then will we have reached the proper time for lifting sanctions."

Sopholes on City Sanctions

Mafole and Cleveland Robinson, from District 65 UAW, in a delegation that met with the mayor's staff in February to discuss how to move this legislation forward.

Continuing Pressure

ACOA continues to resource ongoing activity in such local city councils and state legislatures as Denver, Ann Arbor, Dallas, and Massachusetts.

In Denver, city council member Bill Roberts asked ACOA to help the city develop a policy to ensure that investment banks used to raise funds for a new airport were not involved in South Africa. Corporate researcher Richard Knight worked with the city finance department to develop questions that could be put to banks bidding for the city's business.

When Ann Arbor tried to purchase IBM computers for use in the city government, local activists contacted ACOA for information to persuade the city council to pass stronger legislation to block the purchase. ACOA briefed the council on model language for a city ordinance and provided background on IBM's involvement in South Africa.

In Dallas local anti-apartheid activists became concerned when the city signed a $4.5 million contract with Texaco, which has more than $200 million invested in South Africa through Caltex Oil Company. ACOA provided documentation to the city proving that Caltex continues to sell oil to the police in South Africa and helped to block the contract.

The Massachusetts state finance committee has worked closely with ACOA to develop a list of companies that are prevented from doing business with state agencies.

Knight spends much of his time trying to track down answers to questions about corporate involvement in South Africa, answering dozens of phone calls, sending out background reports and briefing local legislators, comptrollers and city officials. As part of this ongoing effort, The Africa Fund is now updating its Unified List of U.S. Corporations in South Africa.

PUBLICATIONS

The following are publications available from ACOA. Prices are listed. Please indicate the number of copies desired. Please add 15% postage to all orders.

NELSON MANDELA - "UNBROKEN SPIRIT" (Africa Fund, 1990) Text of the speech Nelson Mandela delivered the day of his release after 27 years in prison for his opposition to apartheid. 4pp. 30c each. Over twenty, 15c each.

NELSON MANDELA PHOTO EXHIBIT. (International Defence & Aid Fund - London, 1988) Fourteen poster size sheets that chronicle the life of the anti-apartheid leader. (25" x 17 1/2") $20.00.

NELSON MANDELA: FREE AT LAST (Video, VHS only) (South Africa Now, 1990) An in-depth news special aired over PBS, includes the complete speech Mandela gave in Cape Town after his release and interviews with other anti-apartheid leaders. 1 hour, 19 minutes. $14.95.

TESTIMONY OF JENNIFER DAVIS BEFORE THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (ACOA, February 21, 1990) An analysis of the continued need for sanctions and disinvestment in the struggle for democracy in South Africa. 10pp. $2.00.

END APARTHEID: VOTE FOR THE PEOPLE CAMPAIGN brochure/ballot. (Africa Fund, 1990) Circulate this brochure in your community and collect ballots as part of the campaign. Sets of 10, $1.00 each up to 9 sets. Sets of 100, $5.00 each.

I enclose $ ________________

Name _____________________________
Organization _______________________
Address ____________________________
City __________________ State ________ Zip ________

Fill out and return with payment to: American Committee on Africa, 198 Broadway, New York, NY 10038
Religious Action Network

From Queens to Savannah

Building on the first successful year of activities, the Religious Action Network (RAN) played a major role in the Eleventh Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Weekend in Savannah, Georgia, in January 1990. Despite recent bomb threats and the murder of Savannah's own civil rights lawyer Robbie Robinson by letter bomb, more than 100 churches from all denominations and nearly 10,000 people joined together for the tribute to Dr. King.

ACOA President Bill Howard and RAN Coordinator Dumisani Kumalo spoke at the citywide service held at First African Baptist Church, founded in 1773 by former slaves who settled in Savannah. It is the oldest structure built and owned by Black people in the United States. Kumalo also led five workshops for local pastors on involving their congregations in anti-apartheid work.

Regional Training Workshop

Pastors from more than 100 congregations gathered at a regional training session for New York, New Jersey and Connecticut members on December 7, 1989. The meeting was held at the Allen AME Church in Jamaica, New York, where Congressman Floyd Flake is the presiding minister. In the daylong series of workshops, participants discussed the current situation in South Africa, the continued fight to pass a comprehensive sanctions bill, launching boycott campaigns and developing an overall strategy for finally dismantling apartheid in the 1990s. "Passing strong sanctions in Washington will require each and every person here to contact their congressional representative," said Pastor Flake.

Given the reformist image projected by South African President F.W. de Klerk, a number of people expressed disbelief that so many remained in detention. Debate on these and other issues was a major focus of the conference, which also developed a plan of action for RAN activities in 1990.

Just before Christmas, RAN sent a holiday message of solidarity to the people of South Africa by taking a full page ad in The New Nation, a leading Johannesburg newspaper.

According to National Chair Wyatt Tee Walker, the network is planning other regional meetings in the Midwest, South and the Far West. Details will follow.

NELSON MANDELA IS FREE, BUT WHAT ABOUT HIS COUNTRY?

When ACOA was founded Nelson Mandela was leading the "Campaign to Defy Unjust Laws."

After twenty seven years imprisonment, Mandela is free again, but the unjust laws remain. No Black person can vote. Political prisoners are still in prison cells. The government can still lock up anyone, at anytime, without even the formality of a charge or trial.

Now the Bush Administration wants to end the sanctions that helped force Mandela's release. Your generous contribution to ACOA will enable us to resist this pressure and campaign to stop all U.S. investment in apartheid.

Yes, I will stand by the people of South Africa until their struggle for freedom is finally won. Here is my contribution of □ $500 □ $100 □ $50 □ $25 □ $10

Name ________________________________________

Address _____________________________________________

City __________________________ State ________ Zip _______

(Contributions to ACOA are not tax-deductible.)

American Committee on Africa, 198 Broadway, New York, NY 10038
ACOA Bulletins

NEW YORK WELCOMES MANDELA

As the rumors of his release started to circulate in early 1990, so began the formation of Nelson Mandela Reception Committees all over the world. In New York City, the Committee includes the ANC, ACOA, District 65 UAW and others. On Friday, February 16, 1990, one week after Mandela left prison, a massive rally attended by 3,000 celebrated this victory for the South African people. Held at New York’s Riverside Church, the event featured musicians Babatunji Olatunji, Hugh Masekela and Abdullah Ibrahim. Among those who spoke were Pastor James Forbes, ACOA President M. William Howard and Patrick “Terror” Lekota who is publicity secretary for the United Democratic Front.

INDEPENDENT AT LAST

At 12 am on March 21 1990 the new Namibian flag will be raised over the country which has suffered under the cruel colonial policies of South Africa for over 70 years. After the SWAPO victory in the November 1989 elections, Namibia’s constituent assembly wrote and ratified a constitution in just four months.

Independence day will be celebrated all over southern Africa, as it is a victory not just for Namibia, but for the entire anti-apartheid struggle. Activists throughout the world have been recognizing March 21 for 30 years now, as the anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre. It will be especially momentous this year to combine that solemn occasion with a long awaited victory celebration over the policies of the South African Government. ACOA joins the world community in congratulating the Namibian people and welcoming their independence.

ACOA IN AFRICA

During this time of rapid change in the region, ACOA Executive Director Jennifer Davis made a brief trip to southern Africa in January 1990. Her first stop was at the South African Women’s Conference in Amsterdam, Holland where she met with a broad spectrum of women from the Dutch Anti-Apartheid Movement, the ANC Women’s Section, the Federation of Transvaal Women, and the Federation of South African Women. Particularly compelling were the stories from young union organizers of harassment and physical abuse they have suffered.

Davis then traveled to Namibia, where she met with SWAPO officials, church leaders, union and grassroots organizers, women’s groups and staff of the Human Rights Center in Ongwediva. The process of drafting the Namibian Constitution was then underway, making for much excitement and anticipation. Davis, last in Namibia 30 years ago, commented, “It was great to see the SWAPO building with flags flying in downtown Windhoek.”

Her final stop was in Mozambique, where the effects of South African destabilization are evident in every aspect of day to day life. In several meetings Government ministers and political leaders welcomed the promise of change in South Africa, but stressed the importance of sanctions in weakening apartheid’s grip on the region, and urged Davis to return to the U.S. with this message.

American Committee on Africa
198 Broadway
New York, NY 10038
Address Correction Requested