



American Committee on Africa

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To Whom It May Concern

CULTURAL BOYCOTT OF RACIST SOUTH AFRICA BROKEN

PERCY SLEDGE SELLS SOUL

Attached are several press clippings from the South Africa press about the current South African tour of Black American performer Percy Sledge. The presence of Sledge as an entertainer in the Republic of South Africa means that Sledge and the managerial machinery behind him accept the racist system of apartheid as created and controlled by the white minority police state there. It appears that Sledge originally agreed to enter South Africa with a permit to appear before "non-whites" only; but with money in mind and obvious pull, he will now be able to sing not only before his brothers, but also before all-white audiences. His manager simply says that Percy is "keen to perform to everybody - white and non-white" (Cape Times, June 11, 1970). Most recently Sledge was refused permission to appear before white audiences in the conservative capital of the Orange Free State, Bloemfontein.

Sledge's tour at the South African end is being managed by a Mr. Ronnie Quibell. Quibell may try to entice other Black American artists to follow Sledge's precedent of performing before non-white and white segregated audiences. Questioned on this by the Cape Times, he stated, "If all goes well with this tour and at the end the Government is happy, I will think about it."

A South African coloured has written about the Sledge case from Capetown: "Mr. Sledge should not have come here in the first instance. One feels that there has been collusion between Mr. Sledge and his promoter to appease the apartheid government through the backdoor. However, I feel that the U.S.A. should be informed of his duplicity..We would prefer a total cultural boycott of South Africa."

In 1965 a number of American artists pledged to observe a total boycott of South Africa. Black artists included Harry Belafonte, Leon Bibb, Godfrey Cambridge, Diahanne Carroll, Ossie Davis, Sammy Davis, Jr., Carmen de L. Holder, Lena Horne, Eartha Kitt, Miriam Makeba, Johnny Mathis, Frederick O'Neal, Oletta, Sidney Poitier, Paul Robeson, Nina Simone, and Poppy Cannon White. Percy Sledge, and all those with him who defy this boycott, act in support of the white oppression of Blacks symbolized by South Africa; and therefore sabotage the struggle being waged today by the African liberation movements to liberate their country. Percy Sledge, in verbalizing naivite, acts like the American businessman who denies that investment in South Africa is supporting a system of economic exploitation.

The American Committee on Africa calls on the press and the people to let Percy, his managers (Phil Walden and Redding Company, 535 Cotton Avenue, Macon, Georgia), and his fans know of his duplicity. In Capetown, Percy Sledge was allowed to stay at an all-white hotel where, again quoting from a South African newspaper, "regulations have been relaxed to accomodate him. No non-white South African is allowed to stay there."

At about the same time white American Stan Getz is also touring South Africa, reported as Mr. Quibell's "second triumph" on behalf of apartheid.

For more Information Call or write
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