An Open Letter to the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders, Union County, New Jersey:

The American Committee on Africa strongly protests the invitation of Gary Player to a demonstration day at the Ashbrook Country Club in Scotch Plains, New Jersey on June 21, 1971. We call for the retraction of the invitation for the following reasons:

1) Apartheid, the segregation and subjugation of the 80% non-white majority by the laws and force of the 20% white minority permeates all of South African life, including sports. In all sports, including golf, there is rigid segregation enforced for both players and spectators. International pressure has forced the South African government to allow non-white participants in "international" events in South Africa, but the basic apartheid system is unchanged. Americans, including the public of Scotch Plains, must support those in South Africa, Africans and whites, who are struggling against the racist system for liberation. We must oppose all ties, including sports ties, with those who participate in apartheid in South Africa. Gary Player has never truly repudiated apartheid, continues to play in segregated sports in South Africa, and in his autobiography has declared his loyalty to the white South African government and its policies.

2) International sports are an important part of the South African government's effort to gain acceptance of its apartheid system. Gary Player, who has golfed with South African Prime Minister Vorster, an architect of apartheid, is regarded by white South Africa as a kind of international goodwill ambassador for their white supremacist system. He is a local celebrity in South Africa in between international golf tours, and has never taken a public stance against apartheid in South Africa.

3) Although it is often said that "politics should be kept out of sports", it must be realised that it is South Africa which has promoted segregated sports. Sports are a mirror of a society and racism in a society will dominate its sports. Lauding a major sports figure from South Africa, who is part and parcel of that system and still participates in it, is wrong. We do not say that Gary Player is "guilty by association", but simply that he, in fact, chooses to participate in South African segregated golf, thus supporting it.

4) While black Americans, such as Arthur Ashe, are blocked from participation in South African sports, and black public figures such as Congressman Charles Diggs, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa, are barred from South Africa, South Africans, like Gary Player, should not be invited to participate in sports events here unless they publicly and specifically repudiate their government's racist policies. Only then can we make clear that our intention here to reject all forms of racism is more than empty words.

Further, we want to point out that the Boston NAACP has taken a similar position regarding all sports events in Massachusetts, and we support this stand.