THE EMERGENCY COALITION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTH AFRICA
PICKETED THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONSULATE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New York, New York, October 25, 1977. Over one hundred representatives of organizations belonging to the Emergency Coalition for Human Rights in South Africa picketed the South African Consulate at 425 Park Avenue today between 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Wearing black arm bands, many carried signs protesting the South African policy of apartheid, while others held posters decrying the massive arrests and bannings which took place in a pre-dawn raid October 18.

"We were astounded at the number of people who came," said Franklin Williams, President of the Phelps-Stokes Fund. "George Houser, who heads the American Committee on Africa, and I decided late last week that groups concerned with human rights who were based in the New York area should get together and protest this latest wave of repression in South Africa. We made some key telephone calls, and more than 30 people dropped everything to attend a last minute meeting in my office. The Coalition was born during the meeting, and all agreed that at least for a start, we should urge the government to adopt the policies recommended by the Congressional Black Caucus. Those policies, together with a Coalition statement, were distributed to passers-by and the media here today. The response? Amazingly positive."

The statement, which contends that "the South African government is unmatched in its denial of basic human rights," reiterates briefly the history of white Afrikaner National Party oppression up to October 18 when "virtually all black consciousness organizations, the leading black newspaper, and several hundred black, colored, and white leaders (were) banned in a governmental attempt to completely stifle resistance." Stating Coalition goals, the document concludes: "We support the aim of the resistance movement to South Africa's apartheid regime--to gain majority, one-person-one-vote rule. We call upon our own government to initiate new policies designed to end repressive rule in South Africa. We support the actions proposed and urged on our government by the Congressional Black Caucus. Finally, we call upon our government to support United Nations actions designed to bring about international collaboration toward establishing a government representative of all the people of South Africa."
Among many other distinguished picketers were Percy Sutton, Manhattan Borough President, Margaret Bush Wilson, Chairman of the Board of the N.A.A.C.P., Warren Marr, Editor of Crisis Magazine, Frank Savage, head of the Black Council on Africa, Horace W. Morris and Clarence Coleman of the National Urban League, Robert Browne, President of the Black Economic Research Center, Clyde Kuemmerle, Producer of the black South African protest play, "Survival," Ossie Davis, and Frank Montero, Chairman of the Africa Fund. Commenting upon her participation, Ms. Wilson said that she was "greatly alarmed at the acceleration of tyranny in South Africa." "As head of an organization dedicated to the rights of the American minority," she continued, "I feel that it is our duty to protest vigorously and publicly--to make our convictions known to our government. They will--and must--react appropriately if we do our part."

Crisis Magazine Editor, Warren Marr, said that he felt "the action initiated today represents a unified effort of citizens of all backgrounds to force a change within South Africa which will bring social and political justice to their oppressed people. Demonstrations like this one must continue and should take place all over this country." Percy Sutton agreed, but added that he believed that "the only way to achieve justice and end racial tyranny in South Africa is armed resistance. We must furnish weapons for the coming struggle must be furnished to the liberation movements within South Africa."

While he stated that "armed violence is unfortunately inevitable in South Africa at this point in time," Frank Montero, Chairman of the Africa Fund, feels that "the American role should be to help bring an end to the bloodshed as quickly as we can. We must speak out, put pressure on our government to take actions which will speed majority rule. I am delighted to be a part of the Coalition, which has begun to work energetically in that direction."
STATEMENT: THE EMERGENCY COALITION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

We are a coalition of organizations who protest the repressive and despotic actions of the South African government in detaining and banning a large number of anti-apartheid groups and individuals. The white minority government of South Africa is unmatched in its denial of basic human rights. For almost three decades the white Afrikaner National Party has implemented racist policies which divide the country into ethnic units; disallow black people from entering white areas except for the purpose of exploitative labor; prohibit blacks from participating in elections and from holding public office.

Twenty-one years ago, 156 opposition leaders were arrested and tried for treason. In 1960, the African National Congress and the Pan-African Congress, leading liberation movements, were banned following the Sharpeville Massacre. Thousands have subsequently been banned, arrested, imprisoned, and other thousands have been killed by police while protesting apartheid, mostly in non-violent demonstrations.

Since October 18th, virtually all black consciousness organizations, the leading black newspaper, and several hundred black, colored, and white leaders have been banned in a governmental attempt to completely stifle resistance. The government's action makes certain that violence will displace strategies for peaceful change, because new movements and leaders will arise.

We support the aim of the resistance movement to South Africa's apartheid regime--to gain majority, one-person-one-vote rule. We call upon our own government to initiate new policies designed to end repressive rule in South Africa. We support the actions proposed and urged on our government by the Congressional Black Caucus. Finally, we call upon our government to support the United Nations actions designed to bring about international collaboration toward establishing a government representative of all the people of South Africa.

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS:

American Committee on Africa National Council of Negro Women
Association of Black Journalists (N.Y.) National Students' Coalition Against Racialism
Black Council on Africa One Hundred Black Men
Black Economic Research Center Phelps-Stokes Fund
Black Enterprise New York Amsterdam News
Black Tuesday The New York Voice
Community Church Washington Office on Africa
Crisis Magazine (Individual Members:
Encore Magazine Senator Carl McCall
Advancement of Colored People The Hon. Percy Sutton)
(N.A.A.C.P.)

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS U.S./SOUTH AFRICA POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Recall the U.S. Ambassador to South Africa for consultation.
2. Downgrade the U.S. Mission to South Africa.
3. Eliminate the positions of U.S. Commerce and Agriculture Attaches assigned to South Africa's embassy. Put an end to all cooperative agreements with South Africa, such as those with Treasury and Defense Departments.
5. Support the granting of aid to African countries through the Export-Import Bank--with the exception of South Africa.
6. End U.S./South African agreements on the sharing of nuclear materials and information; deny export licenses for such materials; specifically put a stop to the Commerce Department's sharing of nuclear information with South Africa.
7. Urge that this matter be brought before the United Nations Security Council for immediate action.