New York, N.Y. July 1, 1980.... Major American corporations including General Motors and Goodyear Tire and Rubber are assisting in the South African government's efforts to put down the current wave of strikes and demonstrations by black workers and students.

The South African government has passed new legislation ordering owners of facilities already designated as industrial "key points" to upgrade security programs in collaboration with the South African authorities. The June 16 New York Times described the new security measures writing of "legislation that obligates owners of industrial 'key points' designated by the government to take adequate steps to protect them."

The order came in the wake of the demonstrations which began on the anniversary of the Soweto uprising and the recent attacks on South African oil refineries by guerrilla fighters belonging to the African National Congress.

The American Committee on Africa has previously obtained and released secret 1977 GM memoes revealing that GM's South African plants are designated industrial "key points" and that GM plans to work closely with South African security forces in the event of "industrial disruption or civil unrest". According to these memoes the South Africans are already supervising security at these facilities on a day to day basis. The memoes state that in periods of intense confrontation between the minority regime and the majority black population "it is almost certain that National Key Point industries would be taken over by an arm of the Ministry of Defense which would regulate output and coordinate the entire industrial effort."
"At such times operating control of plants like General Motors and Ford as well as others would be vested in South African nationals and all materials, manpower and production requirements would be tied into the national requirements."

These memoes were hand delivered from South Africa to Detroit to preserve secrecy. GM has acknowledged their authenticity.

GM also supplies the South African army with troop and supply transports. This was confirmed by The Economist of London in its June 21 issue "American vehicle firms in South Africa, such as General Motors, provide the army with troop and supply transports."

Goodyear has fired over a thousand striking black workers at its Uitenhage South Africa plant. The workers are demanding higher pay. Goodyear is attempting to break the strike. The June 26 New York Times reports in a dispatch from Johannesburg dated June 25 that "Policemen used tear gas, clubs and dogs today to disperse more than 1,000 South African black workers protesting their dismissal from the American-owned Goodyear Tire plant at Uitenhage."

GM and Goodyear are both signers of the Sullivan Principles, a code of conduct for foreign business in South African, promulgated by the Rev. Leon Sullivan, a member of the GM Board of Directors. Dumisani Kumalo, and exiled South African journalist (now field representative for the American Committee on Africa) commented "The recent action of these companies make a mockery of their claim that by adhering to the Sullivan Principles they are a force for change in the apartheid system. Instead they have shown they will cooperate fully with the South African government in suppressing black people's protests against apartheid. These are the kinds of actions which the late Steve Biko to say "It should be understood in Europe and North America that foreign investment supports the present economic system of political injustice. If Washington is really interested in contributing to the development of a just society in South Africa, it would discourage investment in South Africa."