December 1981.

Dear Friends:

On November 24, ACOA President William Booth testified before the Special Political Committee of the United Nations General Assembly.

I thought you would be interested in seeing the testimony which is an account and an analysis of developments in United States policy towards South Africa under the Reagan administration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Davis
Executive Director

JD:bd

Enclosure:
On behalf of the American Committee on Africa may I thank the members of the Special Political Committee for this opportunity of sharing with you some of our concerns about current developments relating to the United States and South Africa.

U.S. "NEUTRALITY"

In late August, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Chester Crocker, made a major address elaborating the Reagan administration's policy on Africa, in which he proclaimed U.S. neutrality regarding development in South Africa. "...It is not our task to choose between black and white," he said. "We will not lend our voice to support those dedicated to seizing and holding power through violence..."

The political blindness and moral bankruptcy of that statement cannot be overemphasized. At a time when the Reagan administration is increasingly supportive of the propaganda of the South African regime, increasingly committed to "constructive engagement" it behoves us to demonstrate again and again the consequences of this policy.

Not choosing between black and white in South Africa is to ignore the plight of 2000 squatters outside Cape Town, who have been driven from their homes by bulldozers and have watched the deliberate burning of their shacks by the police. It is to ignore the cruelty inflicted on women and children who are detained and then deported to barren homelands 800 miles to the east where they are dumped in the bush that cannot support them. The Minister of Cooperation and Development, Pieter Koornhof who is responsible for...
the removals says that the problems have arisen because of concessions he made in the past to illegal migrants, because he has been "too human".

And the US government will not choose between Koornhof and the woman who has lost track of her husband and lives in extreme poverty with her children in a barren reserve because of his racist laws which make it illegal for black families to live together under the same roof in a place where there are jobs and services to sustain decent human life.

The Reagan administration would not even participate in a French initiated, mildly worded expression of concern about the squatters, even though it was supported by Austria, Sweden, Belgium and Denmark.

**POWER THROUGH VIOLENCE**

The US "will not lend support to those dedicated to seizing and holding power through violence". How does it think the South African government stays in power? Let us not forget Sharpeville, or the deaths following the 1976 Soweto uprising or the recent detentions of black trade unionists.

Let us not forget that three men were recently sentenced to death by the South African regime. Members of the African National Congress, they were alleged to have been involved in acts of sabotage. No one died from their alleged actions as property, not people, was the target. The men were sentenced to die nonetheless. Johannes Shabangu, David Moise, and Anthony Tsotsobe had been held under the Terrorism Act which permits the state to detain suspects indefinitely without charge and without access to lawyers or relatives.

All three were convicted on the basis of "confessions" extracted under torture. Johannes Shabangu was hung head down by his leg irons from a tree during his interrogation. Anthony Tsotsobe was stripped, and a wet sack was pulled tightly over
his head making breathing extremely difficult, while he was beaten with a hosepipe.

But the US is against "holding power through violence".

This becomes even more meaningless in light of the South African invasion of Angola in August of this year. The attack was made in an attempt to destroy SWAPO and to punish Angola for its continuing support for the Namibian liberation struggle. The invasion penetrated 120 miles into Angola, occupied six Angolan towns, bombed villages to smithereens, and left more than 1,000 people dead.

When the Security Council passed a resolution condemning the South African invasion, the United States was the only nation to cast a veto. The veto was justified in the Reagan administration's view because the resolution "places blame solely on South Africa". The Reagan administration wants to shift the blame for the continuing conflict from South Africa to SWAPO, Cuba, the Soviet Union and Angola. The South African invasion had to be seen in the "context" of the Cuban and Soviet presence in Angola, and their support for SWAPO, said an administration spokesman.

The Reagan administration has linked a Namibian settlement and the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola by calling for "parallel movement" in the two areas. In effect this justifies South Africa's continued occupation of Namibia so long as there are Cubans in Angola.

The linkage brings to the surface the world view which underlies Washington's embrace of Pretoria as a friendly ally. Apartheid and racism are perceived as a lesser evil than any association with a liberation struggle backed by the Soviet Union.

The current administration's hostility to the MPLA, the political leadership of Angola, has a considerable history. Even before his election, Reagan told the Wall Street Journal that he
was willing to sell arms to UNITA, the rebel Angolan group being kept alive by South Africa. More recently Crocker announced that in Washington's eyes, "UNITA represents a significant and legitimate factor in Angolan politics." Thus the administration has consistently urged the repeal of the Clark Amendment which prohibits covert US actions in Angola. The vote on this crucial matter will come in the US Congress in the next few weeks.

**THE ARMS EMBARGO**

Besides a strong effort on the part of the administration to see the Clark Amendment repealed, the US is also moving away from an effective enforcement of the UN arms embargo against South Africa. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Chester A. Crocker has told top-level South African officials that the US will work towards "a greater acceptance of South Africa within the global framework of Western Security." Since the new Administration took office there have been instances of increased South Africa-US military relations, relaxation of arms embargo regulations and cases where evidence indicating a possible violation of the arms embargo has not been adequately investigated by the Administration.

In June, the Reagan Administration revised the controls on exports to South Africa and Namibia so that certain products may now be sold directly to the South African military and police. Restrictions were lifted on the sale of medical supplies to South African military and police institutions. Further the Administration used the US commitment to international civil aviation safety to justify the relaxation of controls on the sale of equipment to South Africa and Namibia, including sales directly to the military and police, which will be used to "combat international civil aviation terrorism". This amendment has already allowed for the sale of metal detectors to the South African police, and possibly may have also facilitated computer sales to the military.
Particularly disturbing is the fact that equipment purchased from the US under the pretext of maintenance of civil aviation safety could also easily be used by the police and military in carrying out their repressive functions as enforcers of apartheid. Also, the new export control regulations do not define exactly what constitutes "civil aviation terrorism". The phrase "combating international terrorism" is open to wide interpretation, and legitimate action by South African freedom fighters is regularly termed "terrorism" by the regime. Under this amendment to the regulations US equipment might be sold to the South African military and police which would be used in suppressing the legitimate struggles of the oppressed peoples of South Africa and Namibia.

The Reagan Administration appears to be encouraging contacts between the US and the South African military and police. Last March, five top-ranking South African military officers met with members of Congress and the National Security Council in Washington and with US Ambassador to the UN, Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, as well. In September, two South African military officers, one from the Navy and the other from the Air-Force, attended a US Coast Guard training program in New York. Washington and Pretoria recently increased their military attaches in each others embassies. This fall three top-ranking South African Police (SAP) officers were allowed to attend international police conferences in the US. Two Major-Generals from the SAP attended the International Association of Chiefs of Police in New Orleans from September 26-October 8. In New York, an officer from the South African Railway Police attended the board of directors meeting of the International Association of Airport and Seaport Police. A State Department spokesman noted that granting visas for these agents of apartheid constituted a break with past practice.

Last month a team of American nuclear experts held high-level
talks in Pretoria, foreshadowing the likelihood of the US resuming sales of enriched uranium to South Africa. The US had suspended such sales in 1975 because South Africa has refused to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, which pledges the disavowal of any nuclear weapons development. It is now widely accepted that Pretoria has the capability to produce such weapons, and enriched uranium from the US could be used by South Africa in the further development of a nuclear weapons program.

While research and investigation is still in progress, there is also ample evidence to suggest that certain aircraft and computer companies are selling products to the South African military in violation of the arms embargo. Our official enquiries indicate that the Reagan Administration has not made any attempt to investigate these possible violations.

PUBLIC INVESTMENT AND SOUTH AFRICA

The policy of the Reagan Administration makes it imperative that the American people take action against US "constructive engagement" with South Africa. One of the most important arenas for this action is state governments and city councils. Legislation which prohibits the investment of public money in banks and corporations that operate in South Africa is being introduced in dozens of places across the country.

State and municipal action was stimulated by a unique national conference held in June in New York City. Attended by 200 state and municipal legislators, investment experts, trade unionists, church leaders, academics and grassroot activists, it gave participants the opportunity to learn from previous campaigns and gain skills for launching new ones. Of special importance, helping legislators appreciate the significance of their efforts, was the press conference held at the United Nations and hosted by Ambassador B. Akporode Clark of Nigeria,
who was chairman of the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid.

ACOA Field Representative, Dumisani Kumalo has just completed a trip to the mid and far west where he has helped to focus attention on the importance of this kind of action against apartheid. So far legislation has been successful in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Michigan, and Nevada and bills are pending in at least eight more states.

**STUDENT ACTION**

Student action against apartheid is also growing and again, the United Nations has played an important role. A National Student Anti-Apartheid Strategy Conference was sponsored by the Hunter College Student Government in early October in New York. Organized by the American Committee on Africa and supported by the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid, it was attended by students from 50 campuses in 20 states.

A useful way of increasing the overall effect of inherently decentralized campus activity is to have activists from different campuses plan their major events within a limited time-span and well in advance. Two weeks of national action will be held from March 21-April 4, commemorating the dates of the Sharpeville Massacre and the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.

Although the particular nature of activity will vary from campus to campus, to give the two weeks of action national cohesion, the following four point political focus has been adopted:

1) Support for the liberation movements of southern Africa, and in particular call for the immediate independence of Namibia.

2) Demand the immediate withdrawal of US corporations from South Africa and Namibia and an end to all bank loans. Build support for mandatory UN sanctions against South Africa, particularly an oil embargo.

3) Opposition to the Reagan Administration's increasing...
collaboration with South Africa, and the current effort to repeal the Clark amendment.

4) Stress the links between US support of racism in South Africa and racism in this country. Since the weeks of action run through April 4, groups are to plan events that link commemoration of Martin Luther King Jr. with support for African liberation.

CONCLUSION

Georgia State Legislator, Julian Bond was the keynote speaker at the June Conference on Public Investment and South Africa. Speaking here at the United Nations in the Friday night session, he spoke for all of us. "South Africa today constitutes a direct personal threat to us all. Forty years ago, Adolf Hitler demonstrated that genocide is yet possible, even in democracy, even among people who look alike. [Apartheid] is evil supreme and we cannot allow it to continue; to be neutral on this issue is to join the other side."