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REPORT ISSUED ON BLACK TRADE UNIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

New York, NY, March, 1982... At a time when black trade unions in South Africa are coming under sustained attack, The Africa Fund has published the first US report on the growth of the new black labor movement. "Black Unions in South Africa" explains to Americans what the black trade union movement stands for and the struggle it is waging under South Africa's racist system of apartheid.

"Black workers are on the move in South Africa," the report begins.

"In spite of government repression, they are organizing independent black unions. They have forced companies like Ford, General Motors and Volkswagen to recognize their unions and negotiate substantial wage increases. The South African government sees black workers' growing power as a threat to the apartheid system where 42 million whites exercise unmitigated control over 23 million black people."

The report traces the history of black unions, the rise of strikes over the last decade, the restrictions on and problems faced by the black unions, and provides specific information on the growth and policies of the major black unions in South Africa today.

"As this review goes to press" the report notes, "the South African government has launched a brutal crackdown on the black trade union movement. On February 5, Neil Aggett, the Transvaal secretary of the African Food and Canning Workers Union, was found dead, hanging in his cell in security police headquarters... Two hundred thousand black workers throughout South Africa stopped work for half an hour February 11 to honor Neil Aggett."

"The black unions are growing extremely rapidly and show every sign of being able to continue that growth..." the report concludes.

"If the unions respond to the challenge and play an active role in opposing the apartheid system they can become a powerful new force for liberation in South Africa. Black workers and their unions will be key to any struggle for freedom and human dignity in South Africa in the years ahead."

Written by labor consultant Sandy Boyer, "Black Unions in South Africa" is published by The Africa Fund. Since it was founded in 1966 by the American Committee on Africa, The Africa Fund's publications have become a primary source of concise and reliable information on southern Africa and United States policy for university, religious, trade union, legislative and civil rights organizations.

Copies of the report are available from The Africa Fund at 198 Broadway, New York, NY 10038. Bulk orders of twenty or more are available for $.35 per copy.