...a sophisticated apologia for continuing U.S. economic, military and diplomatic support for South Africa's white minority regime."

This was how one organization working for African freedom responded to the policy statement on southern Africa by Under Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger.

Jennifer Davis, executive director of the American Committee on Africa (ACOA) which has supported African independence for thirty years, criticized Eagleburger's claims about change in South Africa as "false, if by change one means a movement to abandon apartheid." She noted that the parliamentary maneuvers to include "Coloreds and Indians" in a secondary role, but to exclude the African majority "do not abolish apartheid but are themselves a continuation of apartheid."

The ACOA statement also chided the administration for playing with words concerning South Africa's continuing illegal occupation of Namibia, noting Eagleburger's use of a new phrase demanding "reciprocity" in the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola as a condition for the withdrawal of South African troops occupying Namibia. "Eagleburger's new word 'reciprocity' is just another word for linkage," Davis stated. "The issues of southern Africa cannot be solved semantically," she charged.

The statement also criticized the false choice outlined by the administration statement between peaceful change and violence. "Violence is a daily fact of life for all black people in South Africa...with millions of people being removed by force from their homes and sent to the rural slums known as bantustans," Davis noted. "Opponents of apartheid are detained without trial and tortured. And the courts dutifully enforce apartheid laws, whether by sending people to jail for singing freedom songs or by hanging people for attacking a police station."

"The issue before Americans is not whether there will be violence in South Africa. The issue is whether we will allow U.S. dollars and expertise to be used to prolong the violence and perpetuate racism," Davis stated. She cited the states of Connecticut, Massachusetts and Michigan and cities such as Philadelphia and Wilmington, DE who have "already moved to divest their funds from U.S. corporations that invest in South Africa."

"These actions were taken because citizens throughout the country understand what Washington refuses to comprehend," Davis charged. "Apartheid is not a system that can be patched up or reformed into acceptability. It has to be destroyed. Blacks in South Africa are moving to take this action. They need the full support of the American people," she concluded.

Full text of the statement is enclosed.

June 25, 1983
The "new" Reagan Administration statement of U.S. policy toward South Africa expounded by Under Secretary of State Lawrence S. Eagleburger is nothing more than a sophisticated apologia for continuing U.S. economic, military, and diplomatic support for South Africa's white minority regime.

Urging regional co-existence, Eagleburger allocates equal responsibility to South Africa and the independent African states for what he terms an intensifying "cycle of violence" in southern Africa. In fact the continued illegal occupation of Namibia and much of southern Angola, the racist apartheid system in South Africa itself, the destabilization of the independent neighboring African states, all emanate from the white minority government.

Namibia

Virtually no observers or participants of the Namibian independence negotiations see an early end to South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia. Seventeen years ago the United Nations, with U.S. government support, terminated South Africa's mandate. Yet today, South Africa's occupation of Namibia is more repressive and intense than when Reagan came to power. The Reagan administration continues to link the ending of South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia to the departure of Cuban troops from Angola. This linkage has been widely condemned internationally. Eagleburger's new word, "reciprocity," is just another work for linkage. The issues of southern Africa can not be solved semantically. If the U.S. administration wants Cuban troops out of Angola, it must take seriously Angola's security concerns and use its economic and political force to get South Africa out of Angola and Namibia.

South Africa

Eagleburger's claim that there is movement towards change in South Africa is false, if by change one means a movement to abandon apartheid. The South African government's new constitutional proposals for a tri-cameral parliament do not abolish apartheid but are themselves a continuation of apartheid. Under the proposals Africans are still denied citizenship in the land of their birth. Those designated "Coloreds and Indians" under South Africa's strict system of racial classification are once again given separate powerless institutions, different from previous apartheid bodies only in that they are now to be called chambers of parliament. The black rejection of separate institutions is longstanding.
in South Africa. Last year, the Indian community organized a virtually total boycott of the separate so-called "elections." Ironically, it is precisely those organizations the U.S. claims to support, the black trade unions, students, and civic organizations, that are leading the fight against the government's constitutional proposals.

The issue in South Africa is not a choice between violence and peaceful change. Violence is a daily fact of life for all black people in South Africa. The violence of the state against the people continues with millions of people being removed by force from their homes and sent to the rural slums known as bantustans. Opponents of apartheid are constantly detained without trial and tortured. And the courts dutifully enforce apartheid laws, whether by sending people to jail for singing freedom songs or by hanging people for attacking a police station.

The issue before Americans is not whether there will be violence in South Africa. The issue is whether we will allow U.S. dollars and expertise to be used to prolong the violence and perpetuate racism. Many have already said no. States such as Massachusetts, Michigan and Connecticut, cities such as Philadelphia, Wilmington, and many others have already moved to divest their funds from U.S. corporations that invest in South Africa.

These actions were taken because citizens throughout the country understand what Washington refuses to comprehend. Apartheid is not a system that can be patched up or reformed into acceptability. It has to be destroyed. Blacks in South Africa are moving to take this action. They need the full support of the American people.

June 24, 1983