SOUTH AFRICA

... a rich and beautiful land. It produces most of the Western world's gold and diamonds; its vineyards, cattle ranches, and cornfields yield a plentiful harvest; its mills and factories pour out a growing stream of wealth...

but...
beneath its beauty, its modernity and its impressive economic development lies a brutal reality:
Prosperity for South African whites has been achieved through the systematic denial of political rights and the economic exploitation of its black majority. Whites, who comprise only 17% of the 23 million population, take home over 76% of the wealth. Why does such a large disparity in income exist?

- Whites may apply for any job; blacks are restricted to certain jobs no matter what their skills are.
- Whites organize trade unions and may strike for higher pay; blacks go to jail for striking while their trade unions receive no legal recognition.
- South Africa has been divided into white and black land areas — 14% of the land for the 19 million blacks and 86% for the 4 million whites. Every major city, town and village in the country is reserved for white ownership and control.
- The state spends approximately $340 a year for educating each white child, only $30 for a black child; education is free only for whites.

Above: Children play outside their tin shanty home in the Cape Flats near Cape Town.
Center: A pass card.
Below: A housing project for Africans near Port Elizabeth.
Apartheid — separate and unequal
The effects of domination and exploitation are clear:

- The white income per capita is about fourteen times that of the average African — $133 a month for every white man, woman and child; $9.50 a month for every African.
- A 1972 survey revealed that over 80% of all Africans live below the poverty line.
- One-half of the children born in the designated black areas — Bantustans or Homelands — die before reaching the age of five. The death rate is 25 times that of white children; tuberculosis, one frequent aftermath of malnutrition, is 10 times as common among Africans as whites.
- Whites have one doctor for every 455 people, one of the highest doctor-patient ratios in the world; the black doctor-patient ratio is one to 18,000.
- 93% of whites of high school age go to school; for blacks the figure is 8.9%.

Above: View of a transit camp, not far from Capetown. The Coloreds living here are awaiting relocation after their old neighborhood in Capetown was razed for all-white housing.
Center: Workers moving gold ore to be processed.
Below: An African at work in a sugar mill.
In effect, South Africa is a police state denying basic human rights and freedoms to most of its people. African men and women must carry passes; they may live or work only where the stamp in their passbook, put there by a white official, decrees. In fact, one half million people are arrested and jailed each year for infringement of the pass regulations. There are about one million migratory laborers in South Africa, men who are forced to leave their families behind in the Bantustans to live in prison-like, single-sex compounds or hostels. Whites vote and make laws in Parliament; blacks cannot.

South Africa has laws making it an offense for organizations opposed to apartheid to receive funds from abroad. Those accused of participating in “illegal political activities” are detained without trial and, at times, tortured. The grim story goes on and on.

**The United States role in white racism**

This is a brutal picture, but true. It is also true that the United States helps to maintain this system of apartheid. United States corporate investment in South Africa has grown dramatically from $286 million in 1960 to over $1 billion today.

U.S. investment policy has played a critical role in developing manufacturing in South Africa. U.S. involvement provides not only much of the capital for development of key industries, but also the licenses, technology and personnel, which, in many cases, is even more important than the capital itself. Today, United States firms control nearly 50% of the auto sales and 44% of the petroleum sales in South Africa.

### You can help through the ACOA

As a concerned American, you can help erase one of the last vestiges of colonial exploitation. You can express your democratic beliefs effectively through the American Committee on Africa (ACOA), which is dedicated to advancing the cause of freedom and self-determination in Africa.

Established over 20 years ago, the ACOA has aided many African countries to make the successful transition from colony to independent nation.

Currently, the ACOA is pressing for the immediate disengagement of U.S. business from South Africa because economic development there has served to widen rather than lessen the gap between blacks and whites. U.S. corporations conform to discriminatory South African business practices, thereby sustaining the oppressive political structure based on apartheid.

In its efforts, the ACOA —

- Publishes in-depth factual reports, pamphlets, and fact sheets on significant African issues and U.S. policy relating to Africa.
- Testifies before Congress and the U.N.
- Pressures banks to stop lending funds to South Africa.
- Assists political refugees with emergency needs.
- Sues in the courts to end practices that violate U.S. and international guarantees of basic human rights.
- Lobbies against preferential treatment for South African sugar in the U.S. market.
- Communicates with African leaders to express the concern of conscientious Americans and to learn about developments from the inside.

ACOA programs and projects support the legitimate aspirations of Africans for freedom and work for an American policy that will strengthen this aim.