

# Letters to the Editor

## Don't Hold Water

Your May 7, 1986 article by Bob Lothian, "Israel and South Africa: The partheid Connection," in which he quoted Themba Ntinga, a representative of the African National Congress to the U.N. Observer Mission in New York, raised several issues worthy of comment.

There is no basis in fact that "Israel is one of the countries most responsible for keeping apartheid alive," nor to any of the "similarity" arguments between Israel and South Africa.

The statements that equate Israel as a racist country don't hold water. Conditions in Israel and South Africa cannot be compared. Unlike South Africa, where apartheid is legal, Israeli Arabs enjoy the right to vote and freedom of movement, including the freedom to reside where they wish and key civil and political rights that black South Africans seek. To extend Israeli citizenship to Arabs in the West Bank and Gaza would necessitate formal Israeli annexation of these territories — a position the Israeli Government has not taken.

Black South Africans want full integration in their country — politically and civilly; the situation and goals of the two groups are fundamentally different. Furthermore, Israel recently welcomed and is assimilating thousands of black Ethiopian Jews, removing any question, if there was one, of its devotion to racial equality.

As for the military and economic al-

legations, the facts are otherwise. Israel trades less with South Africa in absolute terms than Western nations, and even black African states, according to the International Monetary Fund's *Directory of Trade Yearbook* (Washington, D.C. 1985).

A congressional research study issued in 1984 was unable to find any evidence that Israel did not adhere to the 1977 U.N. embargo on arms sales to South Africa. The emphasis placed on Israel obscures the fact that Pretoria is largely self-sufficient militarily.

Lastly, one must look at the historical differences between the two countries. Both nations are surrounded by hostile neighbors. The reasons are utterly distinct: Israel faces opposition from the Arab World because, with the exception of Egypt, no Arab state is willing to publicly recognize Israel's right to exist. This policy dates back to 1948, long before there was the problem of the Palestinians. The Arab-PLO program is not aimed at altering internal Israeli ethnic relations; its aim is to eliminate Israel. South Africa's neighbors oppose it because of its cruel and unjust policy of apartheid. They do not claim South African territory as their own.

To draw an historical analogy between the origins of Israel and the development of South Africa is to ignore history. Israel's birth was not for colonization for profit or proselytism. It was a wish to overcome European hos-

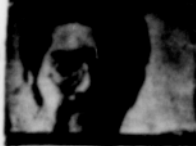
tility toward Jews, Jewish tradition and the horrors of the Holocaust.

The roots of South African apartheid lie in the South African slave trade administered by the Dutch East India Company in the early 1700's. Separate areas were established for the two races. Legally mandated residential restrictions and the pass requirements provided prototypes for current South African "homelands" and "pass laws." Nowhere in Israel's history can one find discriminatory legal decrees, slavery, or doctrinal statements favoring inequality.

In conclusion let us take a look at who is behind the campaign to link Israel and South Africa in a so-called "alliance." The list includes the Soviet Bloc, the Arab countries, non-governmental organizations such as the PLO, and the Soviet-front World Peace Council. Their aims are to (1) depict Israel as illegitimate so that it will be ostracized like South Africa and thus generate support for the Palestinian cause; and (2) to undermine the U.S. image in the Third World by linking Israel with South Africa and in turn the United States, thereby increasing Soviet influence.

Statements which misrepresent ties between the two states serve only to divert public attention from the injustice being visited on blacks and other non-whites in South Africa.

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## "South African Terrorism and Reagan's Responsibility"

Along the Color Line by Dr. Manning Marable

For five years, the Reagan administration has followed a policy of "constructive engagement" with the South African government. No divestments from the apartheid state. Reagan has pleaded, because American corporations somehow exert a positive influence on the racist state's economic system. No sanctions, the President has insisted, because quiet persuasion is more effective than direct confrontation.

Now the world has seen in grim detail the logical consequences of "constructive engagement." South Africa's recent military commando air and ground raids against Zimbabwe, Botswana and Zambia, were denounced throughout the world. The Reagan administration was probably not upset about the loss of Africans' lives — it was simply embarrassed that its covert ally in Pretoria had acted so rashly and in such an overtly criminal manner. Consequently, Reagan promptly ordered the expulsion of South Africa's senior military attaché from the U.S. But the U.S. government simultaneously vetoed efforts at the United Nations to carry out effective sanctions against the apartheid regime.

South Africa also embarrassed Reagan by proudly justifying its military maneuvers by pointing to the example of the American bombing of Libya. We have only done what you Americans did in Africa, South African President P.W. Botha claims.

However, this recent example of armed, state-directed terrorism has backfired. Even inside the apartheid system, some influential whites are attempting to divorce themselves from their government's desperate actions. The Johannesburg *Star* termed the raids "irresponsible" and "shortsighted." South Africa's *Business Day* journal warned that the actions could "weaken the economy, delay the long-awaited revival of business and aggravate employment." Since September, 1984, about 1,600 people have been killed in political violence; and growing numbers of white leaders in the private sector are recognizing finally that the only resolution to their crisis is open, political negotiations with the African National Congress (ANC), the legitimate representative of oppressed blacks.

The raids have nearly destroyed the Commonwealth's peace efforts in the region. A team of negotiators was in Capetown when the attacks occurred. Reportedly, the ANC

had been urged to use its influence to reduce political demonstrations and strikes. In return, the apartheid regime was to legalize the ANC and to release imprisoned ANC leader Nelson Mandela. In the wake of these assaults, the ANC has called for a massive, national strike on June 16. Oliver Tambo, the highest ranking leader of the ANC in exile, has declared: "Let every university and school be emptied of its youth. Let every mine, factory, farm and white home be without labor. Let every shop close its doors. Let every community strike a blow for freedom."

What obligations do we have in this campaign for democracy and black freedom in South Africa? We must organize solidarity marches, demonstrations and vigils on June 16, speaking out against the criminality and immorality of apartheid. Second, these demonstrations should support efforts by over twenty Congressional Republicans and Democrats to have more effective sanctions against South Africa. The proposed legislation would halt any new U.S. investment and ban bank loans to South African businesses. It would halt U.S. firms from engaging in construction, energy-related, or engineering contracts with apartheid corporations. And the bill also bans the importation of South African steel, uranium and coal into the U.S.

Finally, we must again demand the immediate release of Nelson Mandela and every political prisoner. These steps might not end the alliance between the Reaganites and the apartheid regime. President Reagan bears the responsibility for these recent murderous assaults against African people, because he has continued to defend the crimes of apartheid more than any other politician outside of South Africa. But if we succeed in the next steps, we'll go a long way toward fusing a climate of strong, external pressure. This will culminate in meaningful negotiations, at long last, between the ANC and the white minority. And perhaps in the long run, this may represent a major transition toward the destruction of the apartheid system.

Dr. Manning Marable will become Professor of Political Science and Sociology at Purdue University, in West Lafayette, Indiana, beginning this July. "Along the Color Line" appears in more than 140 newspapers internationally.



## The Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986

By U.S. Rep. William H. Gray, III

On July 4th, we will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Statue of Liberty — America's worldwide symbol of freedom and justice.

As we celebrate, however, let us not forget the over 27 million black South Africans who remain oppressed by the world's only official government policy of racism.

And let us not forget our obligation as a freedom loving people to eliminate United States economic support for the repressive apartheid regime in South Africa.

On May 21 along with a coalition of bipartisan colleagues, I introduced the Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986. The bill, HR 4868, would go a long way toward removing the United States as a financier of apartheid.

The legislation would ban all loans to South Africa — in effect depriving the apartheid regime of \$3 billion with which to finance its trade. In addition, the bill would:

- close South African bank offices in this country, denying South Africa lower-cost access to U.S. capital;
- deny landing rights to South African aircraft, making business and other bilateral relations significantly less convenient;
- ban all new U.S. investment in South Africa — including the purchase of shares issued by South African entities and traded on stock exchanges anywhere in the world;
- prohibit U.S. contribution of technology to South Africa's energy sector, thereby not aiding South Africa's quest for energy self-sufficiency; and,
- ban the importation of uranium, coal

and steel, reversing the unfair inroads South Africa has made into our coal and steel industries because of its essentially slave labor market.

The sanctions would be lifted if South Africa met two conditions: the release of political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela, president of the banned African National Congress, and the start of good faith negotiations between the government and black leaders for a new political system.

Last year, an overwhelming bipartisan majority in Congress took a stand against apartheid. By a vote of 380-48, my House colleagues approved the Anti-Apartheid Act of 1985.

The bill was derailed in the Senate by a filibuster. But as a result of the tremendous Congressional support for the measure, President Reagan issued an executive order on September 9th which included a ban on the importation of krugerrands and a ban on bank loans to the Pretoria government.

Mr. Reagan's sanctions have not stopped the killing and maiming of thousands of black South Africans or the jailing of hundreds more. The black death rate in the townships has almost doubled from 70 a month during the state of emergency to a tragic 130 per month this year. Government-sanctioned segregation is still the law of the land.

In the past two weeks, South Africa has raided Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana and Angola. These forays into neighboring black countries demonstrate that apartheid is not simply an internal problem but also a threat to regional peace.

History shows that the South Africa

regime makes changes only when its economic interests are at stake. The bipartisan coalition sponsoring the Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 believes that this legislation can apply the proper leverage to force the government to make meaningful reforms and negotiate a democratic system with black leaders. However, more importantly, it will reduce U.S. economic fuel for the political engine of apartheid.

We believe the bill is an important step forward. As Congressman Walter Fauntroy (D-D.C.), co-chair of the Free South Africa Movement and co-leader with Gray of the congressional delegation to South Africa last January noted at its introduction, our bill "is strong medicine for a seriously ailing country."

Randall Robinson, executive director of TransAfrica and co-chair of the Free South Africa Movement said, "TransAfrica welcomes the Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 as another positive step towards the removal of international support for the government of South Africa. It is our hope that Congress ratifies this bill without delay."

The Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 may indeed be strong medicine. But it may be just the elixir of hope South Africa so desperately needs.

It is essential because instead of giving aid and comfort to the regime in Pretoria, we should be extending our hand to black leaders who still hold hope that meaningful change can come about without even greater violence.

And it is essential to us as Americans if we are to be perceived as truly being on the side of freedom and justice in South Africa.

# EDITORIAL/OPINION

## Police Bureau Famous Again, for the Wrong Reason

Once again the Portland Police Bureau has become famous again for the wrong reasons. The Bureau is now looked upon by the entire nation as sexist. The treatment of former Police Chief Penny E. Harrington is a classic example of sexual discrimination.

During her 22 years with the Bureau, Harrington had to file numerous civil rights suits, accusing the Bureau of denying her opportunities because of her gender. This came to a climax when a bias commission, right-wing extremists with the Bureau, and a non-supportive Mayor forced her to resign.

Portland's recognition for having a sexist Police Bureau is an accurate assessment. For the Bureau is already known nationally as being a racist, brutal, and corrupt organization. The dumping of dead opossums by White officers in the Bureau in front of a Black owned restaurant; the distribution and selling of the "Don't Choke 'Em, Smoke

'Em" T-shirts by White officers; the killing of Lloyd D. Stevenson by White officers; and the Special Investigation Division (SID) scandal, all reinforce such a negative perception of the Bureau.

Harrington's treatment by the "White male dominated Bureau" should become a rallying point for feminists and other minorities. For her treatment by the Police Bureau demonstrates what can happen when someone other than a White Male challenges the "status quo."

Equally important, the Portland City Government Body must move to eradicate the elements of racism, sexism, brutality, and corruption in the Bureau. As elected officials, they are responsible for the welfare of its citizens.

By continuing to allow such conditions to exist with the Police Bureau, city politicians are jeopardizing the safety of its citizenry, which is dereliction of their duties as elected officials.

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