



SISTER COMMUNITY ACTION UPDATE

WINTER
1989

BUILDING A NEW ANTI-APARTHEID STRATEGY IN THE UNITED STATES

Welcome to the first issue of the Sister Community ActionUpdate. Two years of intense discussions in South Africa and the United States led to the establishment of the United States-South Africa Sister Community Project. We work closely with the major anti-apartheid organizations in South Africa, and are endorsed by the United Democratic Front, Black Sash, the Institute for Democratic Alternatives in South Africa, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

The Project has already helped to establish linkages between four U.S. cities and threatened black communities in South Africa. These are the first official linkages anywhere in the world between overseas communities and

LOUISVILLE TAKES STEPS TO HELP SAVE EMBATTLED COMMUNITY

Louisville, Kentucky became the third city in the United States to establish a linkage with a threatened black community in South Africa. Alderman Reginald K. Meeks led the Louisville action to support the embattled community of Kleinskool.

At a meeting of the Louisville Board of Aldermen on October 7, a formal sister community relationship was established with Kleinskool, near Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape. Just weeks before, the Group Areas Board had declared Kleinskool a "coloured" area under the Group Areas Act. Hundreds of mixed "black" and "coloured" families could be split apart under this manifestation of South Africa's bizarre system of racial classification.

The linkage was announced during a telephone hookup between elected officials in Louisville, and members of the Kleinskool Action Committee. According to a story in the *South African Weekly Mail*, "Residents of Kleinskool crowded into a candlelit house at midnight this week to receive a phone call from the mayor of Louisville, Kentucky. A representative of the Kleinskool Action Committee said, 'We ask you to put pressure on the South African government to reverse their decision about Kleinskool and to give us press coverage and support.'"

Louisville has already sent letters of protest to the South African Ambassador Piet Koornhof and the Group Areas Board, as well as to other officials of the apartheid government. A community-based group, including representatives of church, labor, and community activists, is being formed to carry on the new Louisville-Kleinskool sister community relationship. ♦



"People's Park" in Oukasie declares community's resistance to removal

progressive communities in South Africa. Our goal is to help establish 12 such linkages by the end of 1989.

You won't see any of our South African sister communities on an official map of that country. Most South Africans haven't even heard of them. But the Sister Community Project will put them squarely on the map of global attention. Along with American cities involved in the Project, we've told the world about Pretoria's insidious efforts to force the removal of whole communities. We've let people know that this policy is part and parcel of the apartheid regime's schemes to reserve 87% of South Africa's land for whites, while pushing the black majority onto the least desirable remaining land.

With the election of George Bush as President, the anti-apartheid movement will have to find new strategies to put pressure on the apartheid regime as well as the Bush Administration. We believe this project provides one such strategy.

continued overleaf

St. Paul adopts South African township as sister city



City will aid in blacks' fight against government-ordered forced removal to another settlement area

Court battle to stop homes being razed



Lawaaikamp removal to 'go ahead'

Oukasie 'beseiged' by army, police



Legal Maneuvers Replace Force

Tangle of S. African Rules Drives Blacks From Town

The Uprooting of Blacks Resumes in South Africa

BUILDING A NEW ANTI-APARTHEID STRATEGY IN THE UNITED STATES *continued from front page*

Let's take a look at the human cost of apartheid in three South African sister communities:

- *Oukasie*, which has formed a linkage with Berkeley, is a community of 10,000, adjacent to the white suburb of Brits, and two hours from Johannesburg. The government wants to move it simply because it is too close to the white town Brits, a bastion of Afrikaner conservatism. Oukasie residents refuse to move. They say they've lived there for more than five decades, and demand that the government spend money on upgrading rather than destroying the community.
- *Lawaaikamp*, St Paul's sister community, is home to 2,000 people, just outside President P. W. Botha's hometown of George. Botha says Lawaaikamp must be moved to another township miles from where they work and go to school. Lawaaikamp has been a center of resistance, and its residents say they won't leave the homes they've lived in for a half century and more. Their demand? Upgrade, don't destroy.
- *Kleinskool*, linked to Louisville, Kentucky is a mixed "coloured" and black community of some 900 families in the Eastern Cape, near Port Elizabeth. In defiance of Pretoria's attempts to impose artificial racial classifications on them, the people of Kleinskool have lived together, gone to school together, and intermarried. But now the government, through application of the "Group Areas Act", is trying to declare Kleinskool a "coloured" area, and force all black residents to leave.

The South African government has moved some 3-1/2 million people against their will over the last three decades. Involvement of U. S. cities with threatened communities lifts the veil of secrecy in which the policy flourishes. At the same time that they are working on divesting their financial ties to South Africa, this project gives Americans the chance to invest "human capital" in that country. ♦

We are grateful for support from the following foundations who recognize the importance of our efforts. The people of South Africa deeply appreciate their support.

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| Arca Foundation | Lilian Boehm Foundation |
| BridgeBuilders Foundation | National Community Funds |
| Charles Stewart Mott Foundation | Pacific Peace Fund |
| L.J. and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation | Weyerhaeuser Family Foundation |

The United States-South Africa Sister Community Project does not seek or accept funding from any government sources, in the United States or abroad. Our fiscal sponsor is Humanitas International Human Rights Committee. We gratefully acknowledge their assistance. Please contact us if you would like more information on forced removals or the Sister Community Project. If you think people in your own city would be interested in having a sister community in South Africa, we especially want to hear from you. Contributions are gratefully accepted. Please make cheques payable to the Sister Community Project, 2601 Mission Street, Suite 400, San Francisco, California, 94110



GOALS OF THE US-SOUTH AFRICA SISTER COMMUNITY PROJECT

- ▼ Help viable black South African communities which face removal or other catastrophic government action survive by putting pressure on the Pretoria regime.
- ▼ Allow Americans to break through Pretoria's press blackout and establish direct links with victims of apartheid.
- ▼ Provide a vehicle for anti-apartheid work in the United States by giving Americans the opportunity to invest human capital in South Africa, while continuing to demand divestment and sanctions against the apartheid regime.
- ▼ Educate Americans about the full impact of the regime's policy of forced removals and other aspects of apartheid.
- ▼ Create an "urgent action" network of communities that can be mobilized on behalf of threatened communities, as well as on behalf of individuals and organizations threatened by the Pretoria regime.

DAY BY DAY

by Abe Berry



Reproduced from the Johannesburg Star

VOICES OF SUPPORT FROM INSIDE SOUTH AFRICA

"It is the UDF's view that the international community can play a crucial role in bringing a speedy end to apartheid. The UDF therefore supports your project. We hope it will be enthusiastically received in the United States."—Azhar Cachalia, United Democratic Front

"You have my wholehearted support for your splendid effort. May God richly bless the work you are doing."—Archbishop Desmond Tutu

"I would like to assure you that the US-South Africa Sister Community Project will have our full support. I believe that a sister community relationship could be of great importance to threatened communities in strengthening their resistance and could be a major determinant in cases where a community has won a reprieve against removals."—Ethel Walt, Black Sash

"I am more than happy to give my unqualified support for the US-South Africa Sister Community Project."
—Frederick Van Zyl Slabbert, Institute for Democratic Alternatives in S.A.



SISTER COMMUNITY UPDATES

St. Paul Residents Help Stall Eviction Deadline

Lawaaikamp was facing a May 31, 1988 eviction deadline issued by local authorities with the full endorsement of P.W. Botha and other top officials. The eviction deadline spurred a series of impressive activities in St. Paul, and so far Pretoria has not implemented its eviction order.

A press conference and phone hookup were held in the mayor's office to announce the St. Paul-Lawaaikamp linkage in February 1988. Considerable press coverage was generated, and St. Paul reporters and members of the community were able to talk directly with Lawaaiakamp residents. Clergy, elected officials, teachers, school children and citizens formed the St. Paul-Lawaaikamp Sister Community Support Committee. They produced a videotape for use in schools and elsewhere, and sponsored church services and rallies on Lawaaiakamp's behalf.

In late May, at the request of the people of Lawaaiakamp, a delegation of eight travelled to Washington, DC to meet with South African Ambassador Piet Koornhof, who was once in charge of forced removals. In an extraordinary meeting, the delegation delivered 1500 letters of protest from St. Paul residents. It also met with State Department representatives, and as a result US Embassy officials were sent to Lawaaiakamp to report on conditions there.

The day before the May 31 eviction deadline, joint church services and a telephone hookup were carried out in St. Paul and Lawaaiakamp. The Lawaaiakamp church service was attended by leading church figures, including Rev. Alan Boesak and Rev. Frank Chikane, head of the South African Council of Churches. On May 31, a ninety-minute exchange between 100 school children in St. Paul and their fellow students in Lawaaiakamp generated considerable press attention.

Although South African authorities have not implemented their eviction plans, Lawaaiakamp is still under threat of removal. Lawyers from the Legal Resources Center have gone to court to hold up new eviction papers served on hundreds of residents. Lawaaiakamp residents still look to St. Paul to keep up the pressure on Pretoria not to move them. ♦

Berkeley Helps Force Release of Detainees

On January 19, 1988 Berkeley became the first city in the U.S. to establish linkage with a black South African community. The new relationship was kicked off at a press conference in the mayor's office, attended by local press and community groups. The highlight was a live phone hookup with Oukasie.

Shortly after the linkage was established, seventeen Oukasie leaders were detained, and the community appealed to Berkeley for help. It is illegal in South Africa to report activities of the security forces, to publish names of detainees, or even call for their release. Mayor Loni Hancock and Congressman Ron Dellums sent letters to the South African government protesting the detentions. The Berkeley-Oukasie Support Committee initiated a campaign which generated hundreds of letters to the South African government.

Exactly four months after they were detained, all seventeen leaders were released without any charges being filed against them. Oukasie residents say Berkeley's support was instrumental in securing the detainees' release.

Other activities in Berkeley also aim to inform and educate the Bay Area community about South African conditions. The Berkeley-Oukasie Support Committee sponsored a highly successful dinner for Geoff Budlender, Oukasie attorney and director of the Legal Resources Center in Johannesburg. The opening night performance of Selaelo Maredi's brilliant play "Homeland" was staged as a benefit for the Berkeley-Oukasie linkage. ♦

MILWAUKEE FORMS LINKAGE WITH POTSDAM

As we go to press, we have learned that Milwaukee has just established a linkage with Potsdam, a threatened community trying to escape brutal repression in the Ciskei "homeland." The linkage, which has been in the planning stages for months, was established by a unanimous vote of the Milwaukee City Council.

Other U.S. cities are also considering forming links with threatened communities in South Africa, including Birmingham, Atlanta, Wichita, and Philadelphia.

U. S. SOUTH AFRICA SISTER COMMUNITY PROJECT

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SISTER COMMUNITY PROJECT

Dear Friend:

In our Winter 1989 Action Update you will notice an expression of support for our work from Azhar Cachalia on behalf of the United Democratic Front. These comments were made in September, 1987. Since then the United Democratic Front has been restricted, and effectively banned. Mr. Cachalia, who was on the UDF's National Executive Committee, has also been restricted.

Yours sincerely,

Sister Community Project