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South African Congress of Trade Unions

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ATTN: JOEL DIKGOLE (2711) 465-2800

FROM: BAFO NYANGA, SACTU CO-ORDINATOR IN CANADA -
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MESSAGE: ENCLOSED PLEASE FIND INFORMATION ON THE CANADIAN
SOLIDARITY MISSION TO SOUTHERN AFRICA

- * PROFILES OF THE CANADIAN TRADE UNIONISTS
- * PROPOSAL TO PARTNERSHIP AFRICA-CANADA
- * INTERIM REPORT OF SOLIDARITY MISSION

PLEASE ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT



Solidarity Mission with Southern Africa
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FIONA BISHOP has been a researcher for the past three years with the Saskatchewan Government Employees Union. Previously she worked for 10 years as a research officer with the Saskatchewan government and was a member of SGEU.

She is now a member of CLC local 481, which includes the 40 staff reps for SGEU, and she serves on the provincial labour federation's human rights committee and is the staffer assigned to the SGEU human rights committee.

While a member of SGEU Fiona was a chief shop steward, was on the co-ordinating committee for the SGEU's 1979 general strike and chaired the union's labour solidarity committee. In her workplace she was active on the health and safety and affirmative action committees.

In interests outside the workplace Fiona has been active for years around child care and is a board member of the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association. She is also a board member of the Saskatchewan Committee Against Racism and has worked with anti-apartheid groups for a decade, most recently with the South African Solidarity Committee in Regina.

Her interest areas for the tour are women's issues, labour legislation, racism and land claims.

Her work address is 1440 Broadway Ave., Regina Sask. S4P 1E2. Telephone (306) 522-8571 or Fax (306) 352-1969.



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APRIL BOURGEOIS works in the anthropology department at the University of Regina as an academic assistant marking exams and term papers for professors.

She has been a member of CUPE 2419 for two years and serves as shop steward for her work area and as secretary for her local of 355 people. April is on CUPE Saskatchewan division's International Solidarity and Human Rights Committee. This committee has been involved with the Mission tour plus has planned educationals for CUPE's provincial division. One on racism was delivered at CUPE's spring conference; a package on aboriginal history and rights is being developed and a public educational was held in early September on the farm crisis.

April is a delegate on the Saskatchewan Coalition Against Racism, an education group that lobbies the provincial government. She is on the South African Solidarity Committee in Regina and the Saskatchewan Anti-Apartheid Network. She also helped plan an October conference aimed at politicizing young people and forming a youth wing of the Coalition for Social Justice.

Her interests for the tour are racism, co-operatives, women in unions, the CUPE-NEHAWU linkage, the Union of Democratic University Staff in South Africa, and workplace strategies/community coalitions.

Her address is 1036 Rae St., Regina, Sask. S4T 2E2.

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BARB BYERS has been president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour for the past two years. The SFL's 68,000 members represent two-thirds of the province's unionized work force.

Before her election Barb was president of the Saskatchewan Government Employees Union (SGEU) and was employed by the provincial government as a social worker. Her involvement with the SGEU began over a decade ago and she served in various capacities including shop steward, branch executive member, provincial executive member and vice-president. Her union has been on strike in 1979 and 1985, while she was in leadership positions.

As president of the SFL she also sits on the executive council of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). She has been chairing the SFL's women's committee since 1981 and also sits on the CLC's women's committee. She chairs the SFL's collective bargaining and strike strategy committee and is the SFL representative to a coalition group trying to build alliances between unions, churches and social action groups in the province. She also gives about two speeches a week to business, farm and community groups, besides her union constituency.

Barb says her reason for participating in the tour is because, "I believe in worker to worker contact. Although the issues may feel different at times - the specifics are different - but the overall goal is the same."

Her interests are in privatization, women's organizations, workplace strategies/community coalitions, labour legislation and discussions with a COSATU region about establishing solidarity programs.

She can be reached at the SFL office at 103-2709 12th Avenue, Regina, Saskatchewan. Fax (306) 525-8960.

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WALTER EBERLE has worked the past 12 years as a staff representative for the Grain Services Union, based in Regina, Saskatchewan. His duties include servicing of complaints by the union membership, handling grievances, collective bargaining with employers and other matters affecting the union members' working conditions.

Walter is a member of the occupational health and safety committees of the Canadian Labour Congress and the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour. He sits on the CLC's federal jurisdiction committee and is a representative on the federal government committee that reviews and recommends labour and health and safety laws and regulations.

He is also active in international solidarity work representing the GSU on the Saskatchewan Linkage Committee (SLC) and the Backing the Frontlines (BFL) organization. Walter was in Mozambique in the spring of 1987 to help get a health and safety project going with food workers there. That project is now established with support from the GSU and CUSO.

Walter's participation in the tour is being co-sponsored by the GSU, SLC and BFL. The linkage committee is an independent nonpartisan group formed to share information and resources in helping solidarity work among unions and non-government organizations; to do public education work about southern Africa; and to provide technical and material support to partners in southern Africa. The BFL project is supported by Canadian development agencies, solidarity groups and Partnership Africa-Canada to link community groups in this country with the frontline ones in Africa.

His areas of study for the tour include the GSU-SINTIAB linkage, labour legislation and international solidarity campaigns.

Walter's work address is Grain Services Union, 2334 McIntyre Street, Regina, Sask. S4P 2S2. Fax (306) 565-3430.

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DON FERREN works as a computer programmer for the Workers' Compensation Board of Saskatchewan and is a member of the Saskatchewan Government Employees Union.

The 17,500-member union represents most of the provincial government's workers. The public sector has been under attack with the past eight years of Conservative government. Privatization, budget cutbacks and reduced government programs have led to the loss of 1500 SGEU members.

Don is a shop steward and represents the 250 workers in his area on the SGEU bargaining committee. He also chairs a union committee overseeing the town sector workers and their major issue is privatization.

Don's solidarity work has been concentrated on Central America and he has been a member of Tools for Peace for five years. However he says solidarity work and peoples' struggles are the same the world over.

"We as unionists can learn much from our South African brothers and sisters. Their more severe experience can sometimes be an advantage in understanding the dynamics of injustice. In turn we can use our voice and strength here to educate and build an even stronger international movement against apartheid."

Don has also been active in provincial and political concerns and has worked with a Regina downtown community association, as a member of a street theatre troupe, and with the Central American Working Group, the Regina Group for a Non-Nuclear Society, the Regina Coalition for Peace and Disarmament, Oxfam and Amnesty International.

His interest areas for this tour are privatization, racism, workplace strategies/community coalitions, and discussion about solidarity programs with the South African Municipal Workers Union.

His home address is 1930 Quebec Street, Regina, Sask S4P 1J7.

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KEVIN FLAHERTY does public education work focusing on international and Canadian social justice issues at the Edmonton Learner Centre. As Public Program Co-ordinator (he says he co-ordinates himself) the programming over the past two years has moved to working with unions.

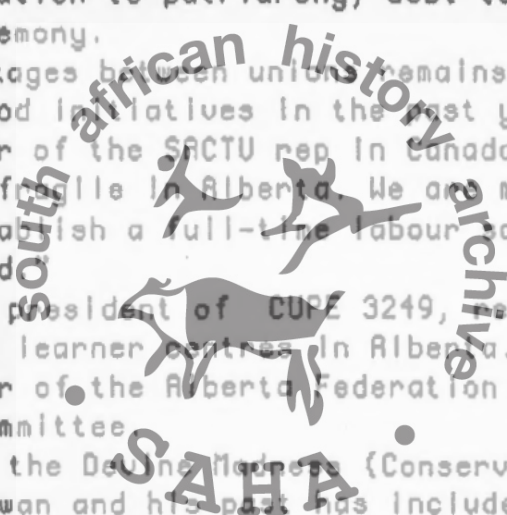
"Our program, Labour World, tries to work with the labour movement to enhance a sense of the common issues facing us around the world, from privatization to patriarchy; debt to deregulation; health and safety to hegemony.

"Building working linkages between unions remains a goal of Labour World. Despite good initiatives in the past year (including hosting a provincial tour of the SACTU rep in Canada), labour solidarity work is very fragile in Alberta. We are moving towards finding resources to establish a full-time labour solidarity program in the SILP mould.

Kevin is the founding president of CUPE 3249, representing workers in three of five learner centres in Alberta. For the past year he has been a member of the Alberta Federation of Labour's International Affairs Committee.

Kevin is a refugee of the DeLoane Ministry (Conservative government) of Saskatchewan and his past has included getting a sociology masters degree at the University of Saskatchewan, working for Canadian National Railway and the National Farmers Union.

His work address is Edmonton Learner Centre, 10920 - 88th Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 0Z1.



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GARNET LEE works as an elevator manager for a grain-buying co-operative in rural Manitoba. He has worked for the co-op 21 years and became an elevator manager in 1973.

Garnet and his wife also farmed from 1980-1988 but sold out two years ago because they had had enough of the economic pressure of farming in Canada.

Garnet's family have been strong supporters of co-operatives. His grandfather, father and brother have been active in co-ops and his wife has sat on the board of a large Manitoba consumers' co-op. He started taking courses on the co-operative movement in 1975.

"I believe that most of our co-ops currently existing in Canada were established here as your co-ops are in Africa - to provide a way of people working together for a common goal in a localized area.

"I believe that our co-ops are one of the ways we are going to be able to join together in the world economy in order to fight the multinationals."

Garnet is a member of the Grain Services Union (GSU) and is president of Local 2000, the Manitoba Pool Elevators group. He has been on bargaining committees in 1978, 1979, 1980 and 1990. In 1979 he helped the union hold its first strike. He is also a member of the union's joint executive council, the elected group that governs the GSU.

The GSU is a Canadian union representing 2800 workers employed by various companies operating the prairie grain gathering system. The union began in 1936 when workers at the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool organized themselves. In 1973 the union organized workers at Manitoba Pool, Garnet's company.

Garnet's studies for the tour are concentrating on co-operatives, the GSU-SINTIAB linkage in Mozambique, and workplace strategies/community coalitions. His address is Box 68, Ste. Agathe, Manitoba R0G 1Y0.

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LOUISE MCKINNEY works at a medical clinic in the city of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, as a native health worker. Her job is to help aboriginal people get the services they require and improve their health care generally.

"I am always available for the many native patients to come in and talk to me in their own language to attempt to help in any way I can. Most of the patients at Westside (Clinic) are native and they are living in poverty and experience a crisis on an almost daily basis just to keep their families fed and have a place to keep them."

In her role she also serves as a connection between the Indian community and other social service organizations. She sits on various committees including ones on child hunger, rental housing, and is on an organizing group for a teenage child care house, a native advisory group for the city's recreation department and helps organize workshops for women on their health and well-being.

Louise is a member of CUPE Local 974. The Canadian Union of Public Employees is the largest national union that includes 20,000 Saskatchewan workers in various municipal government jobs plus library and hospital workers. In her local she sits on her clinic's affirmative action committee. She is also a member of a CUPE (Sask. division) committee on the health care system.

Her concerns are racism and the CUPE/NEHAWU linkage.

Her work address is Westside Community Clinic, 631 20th Street West, Saskatoon, Sask. S7M 0X8.

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BILL ROBB has been an educator on development issues for the past 15 years -- most recently with the Saskatchewan International Labour Program (SILP).

He spent 10 years at One Sky (a resource and information centre on the Third World) and three with CUSO, the largest non-governmental international development agency in Canada.

While working at CUSO he was part of the initial organizing group that made the organization a staff member of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). He has been active in CUPE at the local, district council, provincial and national levels. He presently chairs the education committee for the provincial level and is a member of the executive.

In November-December 1988 Bill spent seven weeks in Zambia and Zimbabwe meeting with cooperatives, women's groups, the ANC, nongovernmental organizations and trade unionists. Out of that trip and subsequent discussions developed the idea for this tour.

On behalf of SILP, Bill is co-ordinating the 16-month "Solidarity Mission with Southern Africa" project.

Bill's interests in the tour are about privatization, workplace and organizing strategies, racism, and educational resources, techniques and approaches.

He can be reached at SILP, 136 Avenue F South, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Fax (306) 652-8377.

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SUSAN STOUT works as a ticket agent for Air Canada at the Vancouver International Airport. She has worked for the airline since 1973 and was a member of and shop steward for CALER (Canadian Airline Employees Association). That group later merged with the Canadian Auto Workers in 1985.

As a member of CAW 2213, Susan spent three years as a health and safety representative and trained as a Local Union Discussion Leader using a human rights course written by Ken Luckhardt, one of the original SACTU-Canada researchers. She is a member of the British Columbia Federation of Labour Health and Safety Committee and has helped supply materials to the Trade Union Group work in Nicaragua and she is in contact with Ken Hanson, the CUSO worker on the GSU health and safety project in Mozambique.

Susan has worked on various labour campaigns fighting deregulation, privatization and free trade. She has also been an active member of the Vancouver SACTU Support Committee since its founding in 1985. She attended a conference on southern Africa that was held in Montreal in February 1987 and in 1970 spent four months touring Ghana, Togo and Cote d'Ivoire.

Susan has worked for the New Democratic Party in campaigns since 1978 and is on the steering committee of the B.C. NDP Women's Rights Committee. (The NDP is Canada's social democratic political party.)

Her address is 2021 Panorama Drive, North Vancouver, British Columbia B7G 1V2.