

POLITICAL SUMMATION OF THE WORK OF
THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE FOR A NEW AFRICAN LIBERATION
SUPPORT COMMITTEE--CHICAGO CHAPTER

Confidential Draft

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The national ALSC executive committee called on local chapters to "Please, send a detailed summary of your activity to our national office in Chicago after the demo" (see internal newsletter #4). They further indicated that "The main thing after the December 3rd demos will be to consolidate our local chapters and to do the sum-up of the impact of our mass work, including the (new) forces we got on with during the coalitions we built" (see internal newsletter #5). This document is the response of the Chicago chapter to these executive committee directives.

The Chicago chapter has reached general unity on this summation, though there are several aspects that require further investigation and theoretical study. Overall, one major self criticism of the local ALSC leadership is the incorrect handling of the Internal ALSC Newsletter. In retrospect, the newsletters were giving correct political leadership and should have been more central to the life of the Chicago chapter.

The summation is in four sections

- (a) October 2nd Forum (page 2)
- (b) Making a big battle against the Krugerrand (page 8)
- (c) Regional Demonstration. (page 14)
- (d) Overall political lessons

A. THE OCTOBER 2nd FORUM

On October 2, the Chicago chapter of ALSC conducted a militant and successful community forum at Holy Angels Church in a South Side Black Community. ALSC had only a few weeks to prepare for the forum but the audience, the participants, and ALSC members agreed that the forum was indeed a major contribution to their understanding of Africa and U.S. imperialism's relationship to Africa and South Africa in particular. The forum also contributed clarity on what our responsibilities are as American people, especially Black people.

Because the October forum was one of the most important "first" steps taken by the Chicago Chapter, it is important to sum up our work in preparation for the forum (the main work of ALSC before Oct. 2), the forum itself, and the period following the forum.

I. Before Oct. 2

ALSC at this time included ten people with various levels of experience, theoretically and practically. The group can be described in 3 ways:

- a. 5 men; 5 women
- b. 2 whites; 8 blacks
- c. 3 law students; 1 undergraduate student
4 teachers; 1 businessman; 1 worker/activist

The group was characterized by original members of the ALDC (African Liberation Day Coalition) - Chicago contingent and ALDC members who had come from other areas of the country. After ALD and the Baltimore meeting, there was an initial attempt to consolidate the work of New ALSC. There was a lull of several months and the work picked up again when more new forces arrived.

Within the Chicago Chapters, the principal contradiction in the second attempt at reorganization after the Baltimore meeting was whether to focus on consolidation around the political line or to unite around an organizational structure and division of labor. At first the dominant aspect of this contradiction was the demand for organizational structure. Thus, in the meetings before Oct. 2, a great deal of attention was paid to organizing the ALSC chapter in Chicago and getting on with the tasks, while little

attention was paid to the political line around which the members were supposed to be united. We, in fact, assumed that everyone was united around the line. The results of this error had at least two manifestations:

- (1) Everybody did not understand the general line of ALSC (Fight Imperialism and National Oppression from USA to USA) as well as the three objectives: education, material aid, struggle.
- (2) Different levels of commitment and (personal freedom) to struggle were revealed as the increase in the quantity of work divided those with activist commitment (who rolled up their sleeves and got down) from those who had the commitment of supporters.

When this contradiction heightened, making it impossible to move forward, we struggled to resolve it: we were able to correctly identify the contradiction, reorient our approach, and move toward making political line principal.

As this contradiction was resolved and the work moved forward, three other contradictions were significant:

- (1) Education vs. struggle: should we have study groups and forums before engaging in struggle? We decided that the political line of ALSC in Baltimore was correct: struggle was primary. Our approach was to educate through struggle so we launch the anti-krugerrand demonstrations before our forum and in this context conducted our education - among ALSC members and among the masses - around the line of ALSC: the general theme "Fight Imperialism and National Oppression from the USA to the USA" and the three points of unity: support for national liberation struggles, especially in Southern Africa, opposition to both superpowers, support for the struggles of the American people, especially the struggles against the national oppression of Black people).
- (2) Consolidating the core vs. mobilizing the masses. Mobilizing the masses was most important in the long run. But in the short run, it was our lack of internal consolidation that prevented us from taking our politics to the masses so that they could join us in the work of ALSC. Thus, we paid more attention in the initial period to consolidating the core while reaching out to the masses, and emphasized mass mobilization were as our internal consolidation increased. The Ban The Krugerrand struggle and the preparation for the forum was key to this consolidation.

(3) Building ALSC vs Building the Coalition: We were presenting the Ban the Krugerrand campaign at the Forum. But our main emphasis was on presenting the line of ALSC because this line represented the correct approach to work around Africa. We wanted to win people to the line of ALSC and unite with them in our ongoing work. At the same time we put forth the independent line of ALSC and took the initiative to launch the Krugerrand campaign, we also want to unite everybody who could be united in the broader coalition to fight the Krugerrand.

Thus, the period before our October 2nd forum represented the necessary process of consolidating our chapter after the Baltimore meetings, developing our understanding of the political line of ALSC, and gearing up to take ALSC to the masses. We viewed the forum as our first attempt to reach out to the masses, fulfilling the ALSC objective of providing education around Africa, and testing our capacity to put forward the politics of ALSC to the masses in a good way. The forum would serve the overall purpose of ALSC giving political leadership to the development of a mass movement in support of African liberation.

II. The Forum

The principal contradiction of the Oct. 2 Forum was grasp of political line vs. practical tasks. It is clear that the forum was successful in carrying out the line the main aspect of the contradiction, although there were problems with the execution of the work. Approximately 90 people attended the forum including 10 ALSC members.

Most of the participants were Black and about 5 whites were present. Only one other nationality was present, two Latin American students. Although the forum was planned around broad community out reach, mass leafleting was done only on Saturday, Oct. 1 at PUSH (Andy Young was speaking), at several community locations, and four campuses.

At the forum, every attempt was made to put the line of ALSC forward in an interesting and informative way. To this end, we were most successful.

As people entered, background music played indicating the USA to USA connection (Masekela, Gil Scott-Heron, Civil Rights struggle, Robeson, etc.), In addition, posters from ALSC demonstrations lined the room. A display of informational posters, maps and news-clippings on African liberation struggles gave more detail as participants browsed. The selling of refreshments allowed an opportunity to fund-raise, but to also set a congenial and stimulating atmosphere. Each person present at the forum had at least one half hour to introduce himself/herself to ALSC in an informal and yet well planned way since the photographs, music, and news clippings all raised the line from USA to USA.

The most direct presentation of the political line of ALSC at this forum consisted of 4 short speeches by members of the Chicago chapter and a speech by the Executive committee summing up the general political line of ALSC. There were positive and negative aspects to these speeches.

- (a) The speeches were short and to the point. Each speech was primarily written and delivered by individual chapter members. This had the impact of building self-confidence and demonstrating a good political basis among local leadership. In addition, the speakers reflected varying styles of writing and delivery. This was essential in avoiding stereotypes and presenting a good mass face for ALSC.
- (b) On the other hand, the chapter had planned collective discussions of all presentations and failure to do this lessened slightly the overall political consolidation of the chapter. However, chapter leadership and a member of the Executive committee did discuss each presentation so that the line put forward generally correctly reflected the line of ALSC.

Each of the talks on areas in Africa gave a brief description of the area, summed up recent developments, and made the following particular points:

- (1) Zimbabwe: ZANU and ZAPU have learned from Angola and have struggle to build unity in the Patriotic Front; the Patriotic Front is continuing to wage armed struggle and reject a sell-out compromise; and that Carter, Young and the imperialists are collaborating with Ian Smith, escalating their efforts to sabotage this fighting unity and install a puppet government.
- (2) HORN OF AFRICA: that the competition between the two superpowers for domination and control of "the horn" is clearly a most important factor in the escalation of the bloody wars in the region; that the Ethiopian, Eritrean, and Somalian peoples are learning valuable lessons about the superpowers, and their just struggles for national liberation should be supported.

(3) NAMIBIA: that South Africa has been occupying Namibia since 1920 and this occupation has been declared "illegal" even by the United Nations, a fact about which the American people should be educated; that the Namibian people, led by SWAPO, has been striking armed blows against the U.S. - backed South African occupation, and are defeating attempts to install a puppet government.

(4) Azania: that imperialism and national oppression was coming down harder on the masses of people, as seen in the murder of Steve Biko; that with the Soweto rebellions, the struggle is escalating and that our task is to take up struggle in support of the people in Southern Africa, and the Krugerrand is one way that we will do this; and that this struggle will bring out the "USA to USA" part of ALSC's line since those responsible for rip-offs in this country (steel layoffs, Zenith closings and layoffs, and Chase-Manhattan) are on the board of the company which sells the Krugerrand.

The speech from the Executive Committee on "What is ALSC" focussed on the politics of ALSC, explaining why we say what we say and do what we do. We say "fight imperialism because we believe that most problems in this society and all over the world are fundamentally the result of a system of exploitation, a system in which it is normal for a handful of rich blood-suckers to rip off the masses of poor working people and everybody else." "National Oppression, one of the most important aspects of imperialism in today's world means the exploitation of nations of peoples throughout Asia, Africa, and Latin America and this includes the oppression and exploitation of nationally oppressed people in this country. This is the focal point of racism, in all its forms. We call it national oppression because although this issue question comes down mainly on colored peoples, it is not strictly a race issue."

The speech went on to discuss that we are dealing with Africa because of the struggle of the superpowers over Africa and how this relates to the threat of a new world war, and how important it is for us to support the struggle in Southern Africa against imperialism and national oppression at this particular historical period. Finally, "from USA to USA" points out that imperialism is our common enemy causing here and in Southern Africa.

While Black people in the U.S. have a special relationship to Africa and have shared a common history of white supremacy with Africans "the most important link is the fact that a common enemy must be fought." Education, material aid, and struggle were then discussed as the objectives around which we will carry out the work of ALSC.

While speech from the executive committee was effective in presenting the line of ALSC, we unite with the criticisms raised in Philadelphia that more discussion and documents from the National are necessary throughout ALSC to develop our political position more fully.

The speech by the Executive committee led into the discussion period. The audience responded in a lively and intense way. Most of the questions and comments were action oriented, though one white Trotskyite did arrogantly exclaim in a dogmatic out-of-context-way, "If you are a socialist, then stand up and join me." He was ignored by everyone and the discussion continued.

The composition of the forum audience was quite broad, although the effort to build broadly for the forum was not executed as full as we had planned. A large number of students were present, mainly after being encouraged by their teachers who were members of ALSC. This made the forum have a real Chicago area wide character since the South Side, West Side, Evanston and other areas were represented. Others came as friends of those in ALSC. Members of the ALSC chapter in Gary and Indianapolis (workers and community activists) came out. Others had a specific interest in Africa and saw the forum as an opportunity to learn more about what was happening in Southern Africa. Since current newspaper clippings were on display reflecting events in South Africa and in the USA, a few of these people found their questions were on the agenda of ALSC and were won over to ALSC after Oct. 2.

A strong part of the program and the effective presentation of the line was the skit written and performed by ALSC members. The skit depicted the history of the ALSC theme, from USA to USA, in a lively manner. The line was clear and the audience responded as jubilantly. This cultural format continued as one ALSC member read a poem about the Krugerrand, written for the occasion. The entire audience got a chance to participate in an original ALSC song with words reflecting the theme of ALSC. Throughout the forum, the

audience focused on a brightly painted banner with the theme and drawings of Africa and USA as well as the maps, picket signs, and clippings around the room. In addition, a literature table was set up to provide material to interested ones. (not much was sold, but some was!)

This approach to demonstrating the line of ALSC was judged to be quite good. Several participants at the forum have commented on how valuable the cultural aspects of the program were, especially the skit. Comments ranged from the fact that the skit was easy to get into and they found themselves identifying with the slaves and workers against the capitalists, to the fact that the slogan "Fight Imperialism and National Oppression from USA to USA" was clearly understood.

The skit was a success because it carried out the line of ALSC through to the audience in a big way. On the other hand, the skit itself fell short of representing the collective work and preparation of the chapter and could have contributed more to the process of internal consolidation, a contradiction we continued to face as the work moved forward.

At the conclusion of the skit another ALSC objective was accomplished as the audience viewed slides of struggle. Scenes from the ALDC march on the White House (May 28, 1977) and slides of ALD 1974 captured the most militant moments of struggle during ALD (1977 & 1974) in a sharp way. For those who had been in Washington at ALD 77, this was a time to relive an important experience. For others, it presented a clear view on what must be the answer to the problems of exploitation and national oppression: struggle!

The program also included solidarity messages from other ALSC chapters, from Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), and from a exiled South African who spoke about the murder of Steve Biko.

With regard to what had been planned for the forum, ALSC was criticized for not having Childcare, which was advertised on the leaflet. The children who were present, however, joined together in constructive activity and were not disruptive during the program.

III. After the Forum

The composition of ALSC was transformed after the forum, though not immediately. It was clear as we went into the Carson's Ban the Krugerrand

campaign that the consolidation of ALSC had to be based on political line and building the mass struggle. We lost the active participation of a few original members while more new members came forward from the forum and the Carson's demonstrations. At the same time, the relatively low level of internal consolidation was reflected in our organizational work, presenting us with another contradiction at this stage: we had mobilized a large number of people for the forum, but were unable to systematically attempt to consolidate them. Specifically, the follow-up that had been intended was only partially done. Of the 45 forms filled out by participants at the forum, only a few were called (though each few times.) Only those who had signed up for the Carson's demos were called. Others who were interested in fund-raising, making contributions community leafletting and programs, assistance in production and similar tasks were never called. As a result, there was no immediate sign that those in the forum were consolidated around the line of ALSC and/or the Krugerrand coliation. Likewise, most of those who attended the forum were not themselves present at the December 3 regional demonstration. However, 6 people from the forum had become committed ALSC people by Dec. 3. In addition, the original membership had changed its character substantially and on this basis, additional recruitment has been carried out.

B. MAKING A BIG BATTLE AGAINST THE KRUGERRAND

The initial target of the Ban the Krugerrand Campaign initiated by the Chicago chapter of the New ALSC was Carson Pirie Scott & Co., a popular department store located throughout the Chicago area.

During the late 60's, Chicago's Black middle class began frequenting Carsons since it was one of the first stores, for the middle class consumer, which openly and hungrily welcomed Black people. During this period, Carson Pirie Scott began its climb to the position it now holds as the Chicago department store with the highest profits. Since Carson's high profits depend on Black consumers, Carsons was potentially a vulnerable target. Our tactical problem was to convince the people that Carson's selling the Krugerrand, and therefore supporting the South African government, was good reason to say: STOP! - DON'T SHOP! - AT CARSON PIRIE SCOTT! Our overall task was to use this campaign as part of the process of building support for our strategic anti-imperialist work goal - using both education and struggle.

Carson Pirie Scott's main store is located exactly in the heart of Chicago's central shopping district covering almost one square block between State and Wabash, and Madison and Monroe. Since thousands of people pass the State and Madison entrance of Carsons (since Madison is the dividing line of the north side and the south side of Chicago and State is the east-west dividing line) our strategy was to demonstrate, leaflet, and agitate on the corner of State and Madison every Saturday from 10 a.m. til after 1 p.m. (prime shopping hours)

We understood that the people would force Carsons to withdraw the Krugerrand only if we informed and educated them about the issues. To do this we developed several tools of struggle:

1. LEAFLETS - the leaflets developed for the Carsons Krugerrand campaign served the purpose of education and agitation.

A. WHO ARE WE?

The first leaflet introduced the new ALSC to the masses by explaining the overall line of ALSC and our commitment to struggle, and demonstrated what is meant by "FIGHT IMPERIALISM AND NATIONAL OPPRESSION FROM USA TO USA"

B. WHAT IS THE KRUGERRAND? WHY CARSON PIRIE SCOTT?

The second leaflet exposed Carsons relation to imperialism by outlining how Carson's sale of the Krugerrand helps to support the South African government and Carsons relation to corporations and banks which rip-off the people's of the world. The leaflet also contained facts about the Krugerrand and its role in maintaining the government of South Africa.

C. STRUGGLE AGAINST THE KRUGERRAND!

The third leaflet raised the notion of struggle by further broadening the Krugerrand issue as one which represents overall imperialist exploitation in South Africa and here at home. This leaflet also contained sponsors of the upcoming regional demonstration.

The actual development of the leaflet involved extensive discussion allowing us to improve our leaflets as the campaign progressed. Each leaflets to advertise the forum, give the times we demonstrated in front of Carsons, Carson's telephone number, and the upcoming regional demonstration.

One major aspect of the leaflets is production. The struggle over this question revolved around whether to ask close friends (two organizations) to assist us or whether to build ties with the masses and develop our own ways to get materials reproduced. We followed the correct line of building unity with the masses, and having faith that when this is done in a correct and good way that all of our problems could be solved. The way this question is handled (The low easy road or the hard high road) is a basic test of the political orientation of a mass organization.

2. PICKET SIGNS - Our picket signs were designed to attract attention by educating the masses about the Krugerrand while raising the line of ALSC. This was not an easy task since so much had to be said in a few words. As a result of this contradiction, we narrowly (and therefore incorrectly) raised racism as the main danger. Also, none of our signs were in Spanish so we were not successful in reaching out to the Latin population. Our posters did begin to improve and the most popular posters became our three fact sheet posters which (1) explained how imperialism works, (2) educated people about the Krugerrand and (3) demonstrated the relation between the wave of repression in South Africa and the fight against the Krugerrand. We also

made a large poster-petition that sign up was used to gather hundreds of signatures in support of the campaign.

3. THE BANNERS - two banners were used in the demonstration. One raised the slogan FIGHT IMPERIALISM AND NATIONAL OPPRESSION FROM USA TO USA while the other was a banner with a 3 foot Gold Krugerrand. The banners were a good tool because not only did they spread the line of ALSC and educate the people around the Krugerrand, from a distance or in cars, but they were also used to obstruct Carson's display windows.

4. BULLHORNS - The bullhorns were used to educate and agitate. People could ask questions and hear an explanation of the Krugerrand campaign. Individuals on the street could be singled out as examples of those who either support or don't support the just struggle in South Africa.

5. DEMONSTRATION SUMMATIONS - Summations were held immediately following the weekly Saturday demonstrations by everyone in the demonstrations who had time. One shortcoming was that this was not stressed enough though most people came. These summations turned out to be central to the development of ALSC since the various experiences at the demonstration were usually taken up by applying the line of ALSC to our analysis. The importance of the summations will be discussed later.

6. DEMONSTRATION GUIDELINES AND SIGN IN SHEET - Instructions were developed that explained why we demonstrated, what the regulations were, and who was responsible for specific aspects of the demonstration. These instructions were for all those who entered the demonstration, but were only used at one demonstration. The guidelines were not used because (a) when people entered the demonstration, time wasn't taken to familiarize them with the guidelines, (b) Some marshalls were not aware of their existence, (c) some marshalls didn't consider it important. Once a formal attendance sheet was established, we were able to keep track of who was moving through the demonstration.

7. CHANTS. The main chants of the campaign were:

Stop, Don't Shop at Carson, Pirie, Scott!

If Carson's sells South African Gold, we won't buy Carsons clothes!

We say NO! The Krugerrand must GO!

We will not be sold on Krugerrand Gold!

Miners die for South African Gold, the Krugerrand must not be sold!

Take a stand against the Krugerrand, the people can stop the Krugerrand!
US hands off African lands, stop the sale of the Krugerrand!

South African police say crackdown; FREEDOM fighters won't back down!

The chants served as tools for education and agitation and usually worked along with the bullhorn. Chants were done as we stood in line in front of Carson's or as we marched in a circle. There was also a small rally with short speeches at the end of each Saturday's demonstration. As new people worked hard and developed they were able to give these speeches.

8. FUNDRAISING - One serious criticism of the campaign was that no fundraising activities occurred and no dues were collected. During the campaign we distributed 50,000 leaflets which were paid for out of individuals' pockets and donated labor.

9. ATTENDANCE - Overall, attendance fluctuated. Some people would participate in the last hour of the demonstration, while others came sporadically. The weather, exams, irregular welfare payments all contributed to the high turnover at the demonstrations.

Dates:	Number attending Demo:
Sept. 24	approx. 11
Oct. 1	did not demonstrate
Oct. 8	approx. 8
Oct. 15	approx 15
Oct. 22	21
Oct. 29	24
Nov. 5	30
Nov. 12	25 (coldest temperature)
Nov. 19	19
Nov. 26	19 (Carson's stops selling Krugerrand)
Dec. 3	Regional Demonstration 325 (approx.)

The key questions that developed during the demonstrations were handled in Saturday summation sessions as well as in the area committees. Applying the political line of ALSC was key to answering these questions.

A. The other renegade ALSC: The first 3 Saturdays that we demonstrated required that we be in front of Carson's before the crowd because another group (Socialist Youth League) had occasionally picketed the corner. They (SYL) asked us why we called ourselves ALSC when there was already an ALSC. The other ALSC that they were referring to is the renegade ALSC (led by

Workers' Viewpoint Organization, WVO). Our experiences with the renegade ALSC is slight since they have done very little mass work and have little visibility. However, they have created some confusion among dishonest and opportunist political forces (who desire confusion), and among honest forces including (a young Black reporter at the Chicago Defender, a daily Black Newspaper). Our line, practice and general style of work, has been consistently strong in smashing all confusion that arises.

B. The Trotskyites: We encountered the SYL. They tried to claim the corner we had chosen as the site for our demonstration and we moved them to the other end of the block. They consistently tried to recruit people participating in our demo and we had to consistently turn them away. Both of these actions were accomplished by politically exposing their opportunism and stronger measures were avoided. The political differences between the two demonstrations became important since after a few consecutive Saturdays they began coming out every Sat). The Trots, as usual, liquidated the national democratic revolutionary stage (in which a whole nation is at war against imperialism and national oppression) and concentrated solely on working class struggle in South Africa. We attacked their line, particularly in our post-demonstration summation sessions. While the most advanced were consolidated around the correct line that this meant the Trots do not support national liberation struggles, the majority of ALSC members and supporters need more discussion for their understanding to deepen.

C. Anti-Communism: Another aspect of the Trotskyite element was how it turned some people off. A student new to political work was passing out leaflets and someone walked down the street with a Trot leaflet. He shouted "Throw that leaflet away and take ours. Those people down there are some god-dam communists!" This followed the Trots approaching him in an ultra left dogmatic way, tricking him into signing a petition he thought was from ALSC. We took this issue up head-on. Basically we isolated the Trots (around their bad line) and argued that ALSC had to be open to honest forces from many political positions. Further, while ALSC is not a Communist organization, it must fight against anti-communism and red-baiting because there are Communists in ALSC who have proven themselves as honest forces, willing to work

hard and build ALSC as a fighting organization with the correct line. And the real aim of such cowardly attacks will be to smash the demo regardless of what forces are involved.

D. The police: The police were always a concern during the demos. The Chicago police are noted for "serving the ruling class, protecting property" and cracking head (like all pigs), and it was important for us all to understand "who are the police?" In the summation sessions, three (3) types of police were discussed: (a) Carson's private police, the actual store detectives who worked both inside and outside the store; (b) uniformed police, who strolled past our demo numerous time and on three occasions surrounded us with squad cars and horses; and (c) the political police and/or "agent provocateur." During one demo, the political police was standing observing the demo when a man was welcomed into the demo by another demonstrator. He began causing a disturbance and in a matter of 15 seconds, a police car and this political police were attempting to dragging the man down the street, all in an attempt to disrupt the entire demo. This incident actually strengthened the demonstration as our ranks tightened and our chants became louder. The initial contact with the police brought on a reaction of fear by the people new to demonstrations. However, after a full discussion the atmosphere of fear was smashed and a new spirit of struggle was achieved. The main point was that we could not simply rely on the "law" or "cool down" our demo. The only way to deal with police intimidation is with discipline in our ranks, including respect for the leadership of the demo and decisions they made, and most important of all, doing our work well and relying on the masses. After a month of demonstrating people knew us (even when in disagreement) and therefore would probably not have spontaneously supported the police if the police initiated a disruptive incident. A bad thing was turned into a good thing by putting politics in command and carrying out a correct line with discipline and a positive attitude toward struggle.

C. DECEMBER 3RD REGIONAL DEMONSTRATION

(1) Political Line

Chicago ALSC summed up in our discussions before the October National Steering Committee meeting that understanding the politics of what we were trying to do, and taking this understanding out to the masses was the key to our work. So we are summing up the work around the December 3rd regional demonstration using the line as put forward in the National Internal Newsletters.

A. The Baltimore meeting did not go into details on the Krugerrand. The minutes say that OC/ALSC agreed to a national campaign around an issue that we can get widespread mass involvement like the Gulf and Portuguese wine campaigns of earlier years. However, the overall key to our work, the essence of the general line of ALSC was put forward and adopted.

B. Internal Bulletin #1 (early Sept.) raised a number of issues necessary to the formulation of correct tactics for our Krugerrand campaign: what target, local/national (Congress vs. local stores), what masses can be drawn into campaign, what principles of unity for the Coalition, etc. A summation of local experience was called for to answer these questions. Chicago ALSC took up a discussion of these questions before the Newsletter was available and its input into the national (and vice versa) was that representatives of the national usually met with the Chicago chapter. But Chicago did not forward to the national a detailed response to the questions as requested.

C. Internal Bulletin #2 contained more detailed guidelines for the Krugerrand Campaign. (1) The main theme "Fight Imperialism and National Oppression from the USA to the USA" should always be the frame of reference". This was a very important point that we made errors on: (a) a lot of opportunists-come-lately jumped on the Krugerrand bandwagon at the last minute and were not seen by the masses (and some of our contacts) as any different from ALSC; (b) many honest forces in the Coalition were not enough exposed to the political line of ALSC so that many who came to December 3rd did not know about ALSC.

(2) The way to make a big battle of the Krugerrand is to educate through struggle--investigate who sells the Krugerrand, pick a visible and vulnerable target, and make a real fight of driving it out of a particular store..." Chicago's discussion of this took place before the guidelines were received (and the guide-

lines added to our grasp of the overall correct line on this question). Our success in driving the Krugerrand out of our chosen target--Carson Pirie Scott department stores--reaffirms the importance of studying and implementing the political line and tactics of the national OC/ALSC Executive Committee as put forward in the Newsletter. This is also the basis of raising criticisms of what is put forward and arriving at a correct position.

(3) Our education work used the Krugerrand to show what imperialism was. Leaflets pointed out the link of Carson's to the Krugerrand and South Africa, and to other imperialists sitting on the board or connected to Carson's (Chase Manhattan, Inland Steel, First National Bank which still sells the coin and makes loans to South Africa). We were also able to bring out the "USA to USA" here since these firms have been involved in recent rip-offs of the American people--First National lending money for Zenith plants to move from the USA to Mexico, Rockefeller's Chase oil crisis, etc. But the central theme "USA to USA" was not systematically and consistently brought out. The next target and campaign of ALSC should be selected based in part on how well it enables us to educate the masses about imperialism and the correct political line of ALSC.

We also learned that developing leaflets should have collective input as much as possible. Drafts should be worked on, circulated, studied and criticized-and people united around them before they are distributed!

Chicago ALSC could have also done a better job of discussing our work with the other groups doing work on the Krugerrand, bank loans, etc.

(4) Regional demonstrations (first scheduled in Nov.) initially were seen by the National Steering Committee as a first stage of the Krugerrand Campaign ending with work over the Xmas holiday season. But the change of dates to December 3rd made the regional demos the culmination. This Newsletter was when the Coalition slogans were put forward: STOP THE SALE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOLD COIN! BAN THE KRUGERRAND! VICTORY TO THE PEOPLES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA! But the political significance of the slogans, banning the Krugerrand as a short term tactical action, on the one hand, and victory to the peoples of Southern Africa as a long term strategic action, requiring more struggle against imperialism was spelled out in the Chicago discussion, but not as clearly as in the National Internal Newsletters.

At this point we realize a major political error made during the campaign. In some area committees, ALSC was the main focus and coalition work was not taken up as much and was not effective (a left error). But in other areas, Coalition work was

primary and consolidation around the line of ALSC was neglected (though the politics ALSC was put forward in all areas). This is considered a serious right error. In sum, the task of "carrying out militant struggle" in the form of ALSC Saturday demonstrations at Carson's was done. But "to struggle with people in a fraternal way to win them over to the complete political unity with ALSC", as called for by the Newsletter, did not characterize the work of the entire chapter.

(5) Materials. The National Internal Newsletters were a real victory for the National Executive Committee and for ALSC, Chapter one that Chicato did not fully understand until we summed up the lessons of this campaign. But other materials from the national fell short of what was needed. The first button was useful, but did not make the strong, bold statement of our politics that the second button did. This was the correct opinion of the masses, some of whom came up and asked to exchange buttons.



BUTTON #1



BUTTON #2

The poster was important and effective because it gave ALSC and the regional demonstrations a national image--especially with the four phone numbers around the USA. But they could have been better designed and should have included the date. This error resulted in more expenses, and detracted from the poster's effectiveness. Chicago also paid twice for its posters, once in Philly and at the airport, and also paid and picked up posters for Gary. A good pamphlet would have helped put forward the line and helped us to raise funds. A "model" speech would have been useful in our work. (In fact one of the two speeches by Abdul given during ALD in Washington could have been used). In short, research and development of materials should be a high priority of the National Executive Committee if it is to give leadership to the work in local areas. Materials should be completed and mailed in time to enable the local chapters to adapt them to local conditions and to have them reproduced.

(2) Gettin' Ready

ALSC National Internal Newsletter #4 provided the guidelines and hence the framework for summing up the December 3rd rally itself.

General Approach to the Regional Demonstration. Chicago ALSC did not develop in a correct manner an overall comprehensive plan as called for, a plan which covered political consolidation of the local chapter, mass education, mobilization of the masses, fund-raising logistics, etc. Therefore, while a lot of good things were accomplished overall, and the regional demonstration was a success, a lot of the work carried out was done spontaneously, without a plan, and did not contribute as much as it could have.

1. Political Consolidation of the Chapter. This is where a big contradiction arose. Because of the size of Chicago and because our focus were scattered in various parts of the city, Chicago ALSC initiated area groups to (a) serve as a bridge into local areas of the city; (b) facilitate more detailed discussion of the work of ALSC (c) encourage local leadership and initiative to come forward. While this worked successfully on most aspects, the most serious shortcoming occurred around the presentation of ALSC's line. In some areas "continuing discussion of the overall line, points of unity and general theme (Fight Imperialism and National Oppression from the USA to the USA) of the ALSC" were constantly held. But, in the area (a campus) where we mobilized the largest contingent (about 75 people, mainly students, some faculty, and staff, and community people), we did not consistently "struggle for clarity and unity" and did not "maintain a distinction between ALSC and the more generally acceptable line of our two points of unity in the Ban the Krugerrand Coalition." As a result, several people who might (and will) unite with the line of ALSC were not exposed to it enough. An attempt to correct this error by having a speaker from the Executive Committee speak resulted in another contradiction because Coalition members felt that too much time was devoted to discussion about the line of ALSC (especially on our opposition to both Superpowers--the USSR and the USA), and not enough time on building for the December 3rd demonstration, "what we came here to do." (But when Somalia expelled the Soviet Union and Cuba a few days after the talk, many Coalition members said that they wanted more discussion.) However, in the final analysis, this presentation turned the situation from too much coalition-too little ALSC more toward the correct unity of the Coalition and ALSC, with ALSC in clear leadership.

As already stated, documents from the national were not used effectively in

Chicago. This error has been corrected by duplicating copies of all newsletters from the national and making them available immediately, studying them, and discussing them in our meetings, and trying to apply them in our work and summation.

2. Mass Education. Chicago ALSC succeeded in turning the Krugerrand into a broad social question, into an issue that was on the minds and lips of the masses. Key to this were ALSC's weekly demonstrations in front of the largest department store in Chicago at the central downtown intersection. Hundreds of thousands of people heard our chants, saw our banners, and some 50,000 people got our leaflets. We leafletted downtown, at key public transportation centers, and at other locations in various communities.

There were more than 15 film showings and speaking engagements. Button sales were also effective in getting the line out, especially with button #2. This was not organized in a good way, however, because buttons were not sold quickly enough and money turned in to enable more buttons to be purchased. In the end, more than 1500 buttons were sold!

Posters were not given the priority they were to have had. Some parts of the city were dissected and targets were assigned and posterred. Others areas were not. Also, we did not use an effective paste or glue so that the posters and leaflets would be around for a while.

Regional coordination was also needed in a more effective way than it was handled. Chicago (since it is central) should have regional meetings some time prior to any event planned on a regional or national basis and all chapters should try and send delegations to visit other ALSC chapters in the region.

Fundraising. Our attempts to raise funds prior to the December 3rd demonstration did not carry out our line of mobilizing and relying on the masses. Instead we relied on a few individuals who could beg, borrow, steal or otherwise put up the funds needed to finance the work of ALSC. This is a very bad precedent, the basis on which many organizations have been limited in carrying out their political work. THIS IS A PRIORITY IN THE NEXT STAGE OF THE WORK. IN FUNDRAISING, PUT POLITICS IN COMMAND!

The Demonstration

About 325 people participated in the regional demonstration on December 3rd, (though some press accounts reported 400). 60% of those participating were mobilized by ALSC and the rest came from contingents of organizations that waited with the line of ALSC and joined the demonstration. 60% of the march was made up of Black people. Over 80% of the march were students from 7 or 8 campuses in the Chicago area. Delegations came from Gary, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Iowa, Detroit, and Chicago.

Several large and colorful banners (6 by 8 feet) were added to the 2 banners that ALSC had already used, and others were brought by other contingents. These 8-10 banners put forward the line of ALSC and the line of the Coalition (and one banner mentioned Steve Biko). For example, one unique banner proclaimed in bold letters and bright colors:

STUDENTS OF SOWETO, SOUTH AFRICA!
STUDENTS OF CHICAGO, U.S.A.!
SAME ENEMY, SAME FIGHT!
DOWN WITH IMPERIALISM!
VICTORY TO THE PEOPLES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA!

At the front of the march (and on the podium during the speeches) there were two large pictures: of Steve Biko and of his wife and children giving a militant Black power salute!

This fighting spirit also characterized the spirit of the march. The march lasted about 30-45 minutes through the heart of Chicago during the middle of a busy shopping day. It was loud and it was militant! It made a big impression on the thousands of people who were downtown (and got a t.v. news showing that evening and a front page picture in the local Black Chicago Daily Defender). The chants were the coalition slogans and some we had used during the weeks of demonstrations against the krugerrand. (Our implementation of the chants fell short and we did not provide coordinated leadership and political direction in some instances)

The political line of the Coalition was put forward in a leaflet (attached) which included on the back a partial listing of Coalition sponsors groups as campus related, church-related, and organizations and individuals. The political line of ALSC was put forward in a separate leaflet (attached) which laid out the politics of ALSC, and called on people to unite with the line of ALSC as the basis of doing ongoing work in support of the liberation struggles in Africa and the struggle against national oppression in the United States, particularly around the Bakke decision and attacks on affirmative action.

The rally was held in front of the Federal Building, pointing out the role of the U.S. government and U.S. corporations in supporting minority rule in Southern Africa. It included a welcome by a leader of the local ALSC chapter (a woman) who also served as moderator, solidarity messages from ZANU and an exiled South African freedom fighter, a talk by a local activist and member of the ALSC executive member (who initiated a call for funds and the hat was passed), a poem about the Krugerrand, and a militant speech on behalf of the National executive committee of ALSC. Throughout the rally, there were many loud chants of the slogans of ALSC and the coalition.

In summation, while there were problems with our work that we will struggle to correct, the mobilization for December 3rd was a success, a solid first step in carrying the work of New ALSC ~~forward~~ onward and upward!

D. OVERALL POLITICAL LESSONS

The overall lessons from the work of New ALSC--Chicago Chapter over the past four months can be summed up in a clear and concise way that can be easily applied in our future work. These lessons were:

(A) POLITICAL LINE IS DECISIVE. The application of ALSC's line was the basis on which we overcame many obstacles, at key points in our work and made rapid progress. While we were initially few in numbers the correct line of ALSC enabled us to do good work and to grow--both in numbers and in deepening our political understanding. We were able to confront and solve problems which came up in the course of our work. This calls for a more serious and deliberate effort to study the line put forward in the National Newsletters, to apply this to local conditions and carry out our work.

(B) WALK ON TWO LEGS WITH MASS STRUGGLE AS THE KEY LINK. We learned that New ALSC should always rely on mobilizing the masses in struggle, aiming all our work toward this goal. There were five ways that this came down in this recent period (and the principal aspect of the contradiction, that basis on which we solved the problem, is underlined).

(1) leaflets vs. press: Leaflets were our direct contact with the masses and not relying on a few journalists and slick press releases to build our movement.

(2) weekly demonstrations vs. one big march: We know that if we concentrated our forces in a protracted, long-term and militant struggle, even as a few people we could eventually win many more people over to participation in a big march. This is how we mobilized for December 3rd.

(3) Area work vs. City-wide work. Area committees were our bridge to the ~~masses~~ local areas, and this enabled a ~~small~~ small group to build solid links with the masses. Careful attention must be paid to consolidating area committees into one city wide chapter which functions as a whole.

(4) Campus vs. Community. Most of the initial members of ALSC were connected with campuses. And campuses were already in motion around Southern Africa, especially with forums and discussions. So campus work became our main focus, while we paid ~~more~~ close attention to building our community links through film showings, contacting churches and organizations, etc. The real success of ALSC as a mass organization, however, will be determined by the extent to which those connected with campuses take up the work to ~~work~~ mobilize the masses.

(5) masses versus community leaders: We wanted to build ALSC on a solid foundation, from the bottom up. So we made contact with the masses. ALSC succeeded in making the Krugerrand such a burning social question that eventually some community "leaders" were forced to add the Krugerrand to their rap, trying to ride the wave of struggle and victory that was built by the hard work of ALSC.

(C) CORRECT CONCENTRATION OF A FEW FORCES CAN MAKE A BIG BATTLE! We achieved success in each of the three stages of our work (the Forum, the Ban the Krugerrand campaign, the Regional Demonstration) because we grasped what was central to ALSC's work and concentrated our forces in dealing the most effective blow. The masses of people in Chicago are more and more talking about Southern Africa and willing to do something about it. As the struggle builds in Southern Africa and in Chicago, the ground is being prepared for a new leap, a mass upsurge of sentiment and struggle. By concentrating our forces, by hard work and bold action in carrying out our work guided by ~~by~~ our correct political line, the work of ALSC may be the spark which touches off a ~~prairie~~ prairie fire of mass struggle which burn imperialism beyond recognition, striking a mighty blow in our overall struggle to

FIGHT IMPERIALISM AND NATIONAL OPPRESSION

FROM THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA (USA) TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (USA)!