

**Capital District Coalition  
Against Apartheid  
and Racism**

Box 3002 - Pine Hills Station  
Albany, NY 12203

March 4, 1987

Mr. Don McKeever  
123 Livingston Avenue  
Albany, New York 12207

Dear Mr. McKeever:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in "Racism and Violence, a community forum. As a panelist, you will be provided an opportunity to share your experiences regarding racial violence and the police.

The overall goals of this forum are:

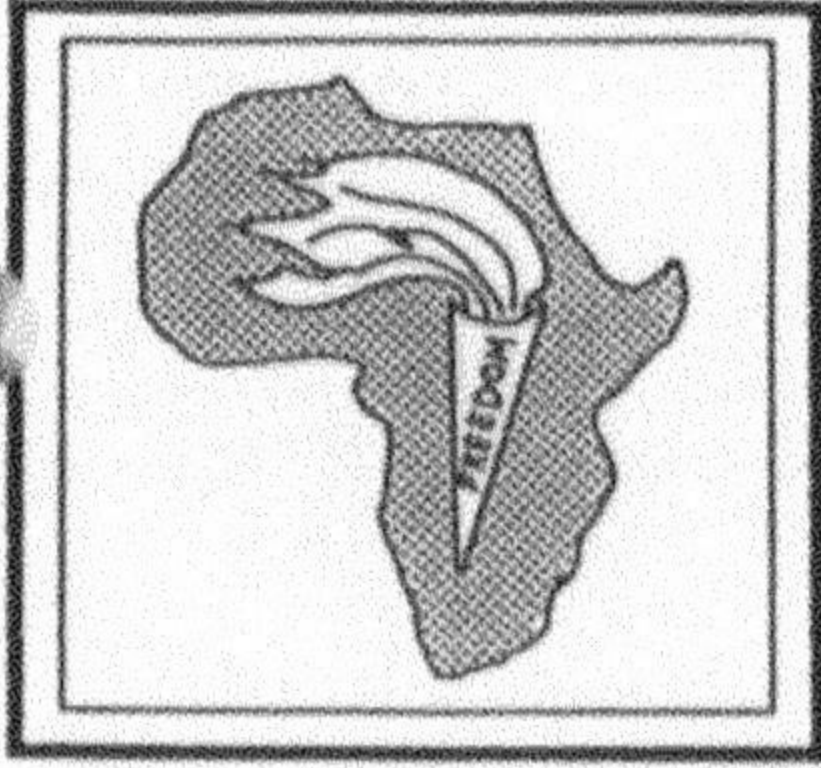
1. to provide information to the community about police and racial violence in Albany and the United States,
2. to draw the linkage between racism in South Africa and in the United States,
3. to create an atmosphere where concerns and issues can be raised, and
4. to work toward police accountability to the community.

The format of the program includes short presentations by the panelists followed by a question and answer period. The forum will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Arbor Hill Community Center on March 24, 1987.

We appreciate your participation.

Sincerely,

Odell Winfield  
Frank Lownes  
Co-chairs of the Community  
Forum Committee of the Capital  
District Coalition Against  
Apartheid and Racism



Capital District Coalition  
Against Apartheid  
and Racism

Box 3002 - Pine Hills Station  
Albany, NY 12203

March 4, 1987

Ms. Alice Green  
53 Ramsey Place  
Albany, New York 12208

Dear Ms. Green:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in "Racism and Violence," a community forum, as a panelist. We would like you to address the issues of racial violence, police misconduct in Albany and the role of the Community Police Relations Board.

The overall goals of this forum are:

1. to provide information to the community about police and racial violence in Albany and the United States,
2. to draw the linkage between racism in South Africa and in the United States,
3. to create an atmosphere where concerns and issues can be raised, and
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Your assistance in this endeavor is vital to the success of the program.

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Co-chairs of the Community Forum  
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Against Apartheid  
and Racism

Box 3002 - Pine Hills Station  
Albany, NY 12203

March 4, 1987

To Ms. Kim Russell:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in "Racism and Violence," a community forum. As a panelist, you will be provided an opportunity to share your experiences regarding racial violence and the police.

The overall goals of this forum are:

1. to provide information to the community about the police and racial violence in Albany and the United States,
2. to draw the linkage between racism in South Africa and the United States,
3. to create an atmosphere where concerns and issues can be raised, and
4. to work toward police accountability to the community.

The format of the program includes short presentations by the panelists followed by a question and answer period. The forum will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Arbor Hill Community Center on March 24, 1987.

We appreciate your participation.

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*Odell Winfield*

*Frank Lownes*

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Box 3002 - Pine Hills Station  
Albany, NY 12203

March 4, 1987

El Wise Noisette  
72 Herkimer Street  
Albany, New York

Dear El Wise:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in "Racism and Violence," a community forum. As a panelist, you will be provided an opportunity to share information about the relationship between the police and the young people of Albany.

The overall goals of this forum are:

1. to provide information to the community about police and racial violence in Albany and the United States,
2. to draw the linkage between racism in South Africa and in the United States,
3. to create an atmosphere where concerns and issues can be raised, and
4. to work toward police accountability to the community.

The format of the program includes short presentations by the panelists followed by a question and answer period. The forum will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Arbor Hill Community Center on March 24, 1987.

We appreciate your participation.

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Box 3002 - Pine Hills Station  
Albany, NY 12203

March 4, 1987

The Honorable Roger Green  
New York State Assembly  
New York State Legislature  
Albany, New York 12223

Dear Assemblyman Green:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our community forum, "Racism and Violence," as a panelist. We are requesting that you present an overview of the escalation of police and racial violence nationally, and particularly in New York State; the struggle to obtain a special prosecutor for the Howard Beach case; the organizing efforts in response to police and racial violence; proposed legislation relevant to these issues; and the linkage between racism here and in South Africa.

The overall goal of this forum is to create an atmosphere where information about racism and violence can be presented to the community.

The format of the program includes your presentation and short presentations by members of the local community who are also serving on the panel, followed by a question and answer period. The forum will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Arbor Hill Community Center, 50 N. Lark St., Albany on March 24, 1987.

In order to help us build for and promote the event, we would appreciate a biographical sketch and additional information about your involvement in Howard Beach and related incidents. The contact person to arrange for pick up of this information is Odell Winfield at (518) 474-3703.

Your assistnace in this endeavor is vital to the success of the program.

Sincerely

*Odell Winfield*  
*Frank Lownes*

Odell Winfield  
Frank Lownes *ck*  
Co-Chairs of the Community Forum  
Committee of the Capital District  
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Against Apartheid  
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Box 3002 - Pine Hills Station  
Albany, NY 12203

April 13, 1987

Charmaine Woodard  
Special Programs  
JCA  
140 New Scotland Ave.  
Albany, N.Y. 12208

Dear Ms. Woodard,

On behalf of the Capital District Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism, it gives us great pleasure to send these words of friendship and solidarity to Vijay McWann.

On this joyous occasion we join with you in recognizing someone who has been consistent, insistent and persistent in his work; someone who is looking to go deeper, search more.

Vijay, in your quiet way, you have had a tremendous impact on the students you have served and the community at large.

We have always enjoyed working with you because we know that whatever the task...the outcome will be positive.

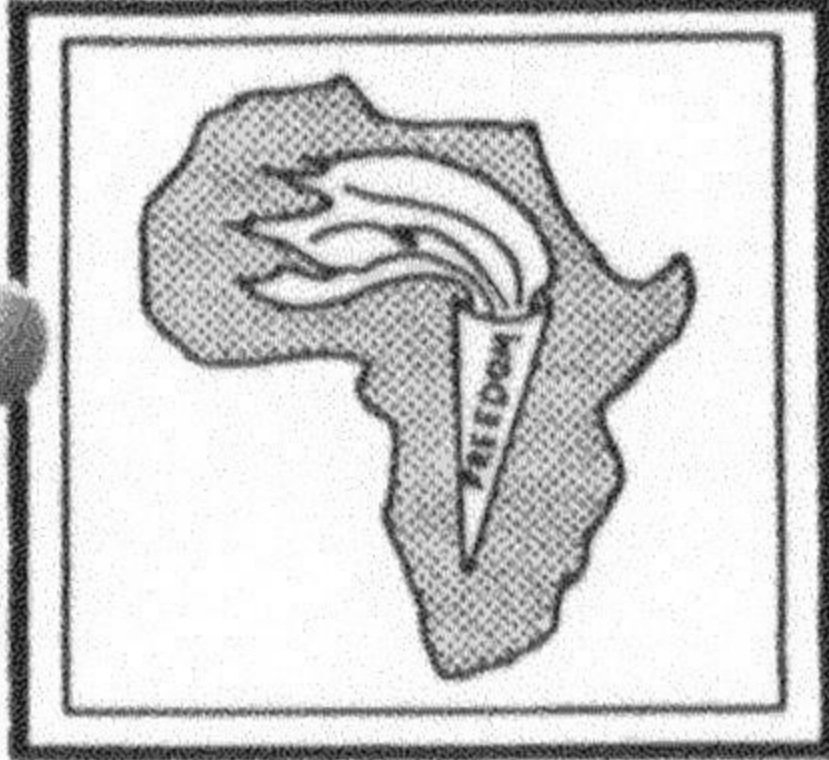
Congratulations to you.....

A luta continua,

Vera Michelson

Merton Simpson

CoChairs



**Capital District Coalition  
Against Apartheid  
and Racism**

Box 3002 - Pine Hills Station  
Albany, NY 12203

April 23, 1987

Honorable Martin C. Barell  
Chancellor  
NYS Board of Regents  
645 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York 10022

Dear Chancellor Barell:

On behalf of the Capital District Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism (A Coalition of Groups and Individuals which includes: the NAACP, Capital District Association of Black Social Workers, Capital District Labor Religion Coalition, National Lawyers Guild, Blacks In Government, Albany County Central Federation of Labor, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., NYPIRG, Black Women's Association, Urban League, A Philip Randolph Institute and the Y.W.C.A. among others) I would like to express our deep concern for the recently reported racial incidents at Colonie Central School (see enclosed April 3, 1987 Knickerbocker News Article, "Principal says he was slapped in School dispute.")

The Colonie Central situation is particularly disturbing when viewed against the backdrop of the escalating trend in racial violence in New York State and throughout the Nation (see enclosed articles from the April 1987 edition of Black Enterprise Magazine "Racism on the Rise" and "Stemming The Tide of Racial Violence.")

Of greatest concern to us are reports we have received that indicate that the police, school district officials and others involved are trying to confine the investigation of alleged incidents of racial bias to the specific case of the Sims family, in an attempt to deny the existence of any racial problems at Colonie Central.

If any of the allegations reported are true then what is required is a thorough investigation of the entire school and perhaps other schools within the district. Among the more disturbing allegations are the following:

- Colonie Central School District Officials Are  
Condoning Racism.
- Minority students are frequently subjected to  
Racial epithets by non-minority students and  
staff.
- Racial slurs have been written on school walls  
and carved into desks.
- That the principal used excessive force in  
restraining a Black student.
- That a Black student had to be taken out of the  
school in an ambulance after being assaulted by  
a white student.
- That there are race related fights between  
minority students and white students.

We petition the state to investigate this situation on a systemic basis through the Civil Rights Division of the State Education Department and any other agency which may have jurisdiction.

The only thing that could be worse than the occurrence of such incidents of racial violence as alleged in this situation would be a less than comprehensive investigation of all the aspects involved. If problems are identified there must be a detailed and well implemented plan of action to remedy any deficiencies.

We are confident that you will give this urgent matter the attention it needs.

Sincerely,

*Merton Simpson*  
Merton Simpson  
Co-Chairperson

Enclosures

cc: Hon. Gordon Ambach, Chancellor, NYS Education Department  
Hon. Arthur O. Eve, Deputy Speaker NYS Assembly  
Hon. Roger Green, Chairperson NYS Black and Puerto Rican Caucus  
Mr. Sterling Keyes, Director Office of Civil Rights NYS Education  
Department





**Ralph Martin**  
Editor in Chief

## Why not give DMV a license to build cars?

The state Department of Motor Vehicles and our penal system: a marriage made in heaven. OK, Albany.

Those little gremlins down at the department are always throwing some work toward the cons when they find time between flogging up things, which takes a lot of time.

The latest goof concerns the issuance of new license plates. Those flimsy jobs on which Miss Liberty looks like someone in a bleached dress.

The DMV is six to eight weeks behind in passing them out. If you want special plates, chances are you'll have forgotten your catchy phrase before they arrive.

Why? Golly, Lona Ringer, don't ask me. It would seem they would have enough cheap labor to make scans of plates. Could it be that the planning was a little off -- like a few years' pit?

The DMV certainly is aware of the ready work force behind walls. The department even put cons to use last year running a "customer service telephone center," where complaints and inquiries about licenses and registrations were answered.

Talk about cruel and unusual punishment!

SO IT'S EASY to see the DMV people have a cozy relationship with the prisons, although the report that the DMV commissioner and her deputies stop around on visitors' days is still being checked out.

But the DMV folks can do even more, if they can talk the correction department begwags into it. The DMV has a chance of making an enduring mark on the economy of

## Principal says he was slapped in school dispute

The Sims could not be reached for comment, while school officials played down the racial aspect.

"I find a great difficulty in associating behavioral problems with racism," Board of Education President Margaret Schwartz said. "In my mind, it has nothing to do with racism. A student is misbehaving. That's not racism."

Principal Theodore Gilkey, who is white, has asked police to investigate a charge of harassment against Mrs. Sims.

The Simons have asked police to investigate their charge Gilkey used "excessive force" in disciplining their daughter, 16.

"We are not pursuing this as a racial incident," Police Detective Sgt. Steven Heider, who was supervising the investigation, said. "We will be calling in witnesses ... to get to the bottom of this."

Thursday morning the parents met Gilkey to discuss their appearance before the Board of Education Tuesday night when they claimed their daughter had been harassed by other

students because of her race.

They also said racial slurs had been written on the walls at school and criticized school officials for condoning this behavior. The Thursday meeting was to iron out differences.

About 1:30 p.m., Gilkey was "asking" the daughter to come into his office when some kind of altercation took place in the hall outside the principal's office, police said.

The Sims contended the principal used "slightly excessive force."

There were no witnesses to this, police said.

At 1:51 p.m., police responded to a call of a "racial incident" at the school. When they arrived, Gilkey told them Mrs. Sims and he had "exchanged words" and she had slapped him in the face.

There were dozens of witnesses to this, according to Heider.

Meanwhile, there were reports of fights between black and white students. Schwartz labeled these "scuffles" and said she believed they involved only four or five people and she

was not sure if the students involved were of different races.

Gilkey and the Sims filed their complaints at the police station, and detectives planned today to interview witnesses and sort out the facts.

The matter is expected to go before a local justice next week in an informal proceeding, Heider said. Formal charges could follow.

Schwartz said the conflict stemmed from the "behavior problem" of one student, whom she would not identify but hinted was the Sims' daughter.

"We have 1,900 students in that building and we just can't have this kind of thing going on," she said. "I think the situation has been blown out of proportion, particularly on a lot of unsubstantiated charges that came out at our board meeting."

The Sims "accused everybody in the room of being a racist. I just can't take those charges. It just isn't so," Schwartz said. "Tomorrow we will have more information available. To be honest, we're still sorting it out."

## Police unit missed in Arbor Hill Year after redeployment, many residents feel less safe; police say coverage better



STREET SCENE — A group of young men on a street corner Thursday in Albany's Arbor Hill.

street corners in Arbor Hill at certain times of the day.

That move was prompted, in part, by complaints that street corner gangs were throwing objects at passing vehicles.

In November the department compared 1985 and 1986 crime statistics in Arbor Hill and found crime had declined 14 percent overall, but had risen in the categories of murders, rapes, robberies, burglaries and car thefts. The overall net decline was the result of a significant drop in the number of larcenies and arsons.

Officials at the time said the statistics showed that the changes had had no negative effect on the neighborhood.

But other community leaders disagreed, saying the figures showed the need for a return to the neighborhood police station.

The comparison also showed that response time to priority calls in Arbor Hill had jumped from 2.06 minutes to 2.55 minutes.

Crime statistics for Arbor Hill during the last six months are not committed, said department spokesman

By Brian Kelly  
The Knickerbocker News

When the Albany Arbor Hill police unit closed its doors a year ago, longtime resident Mary Thomas stopped taking walks in her neighborhood after dark.

"When it gets dark, I stay in the house," said Thomas, who lives in the Robert E. Whalen housing project on Colosse Street. "There used to be a time you could walk the boulevard. The old people ... they don't want to come out," she said.

A year after the Albany Police Department closed the 135 Northern Blvd. police unit, Thomas, like other residents and merchants of this predominantly black and poor neighborhood, say they no longer feel as safe as they once did. Police officials maintain the streets are safer now than they were when the unit was operating.

"We want them back," said Henrietta Garrett, who lives in the same Colosse Street project.

Garrett said since the unit closed, more and more people were loitering in her building's hallway.

66 It made you feel safe. If you did walk down to the store, and



Over 4,000 New York City demonstrators were confronted by a white mob in Howard Beach, shouting racial slurs.

## Racism On The Rise

A racially motivated assault on three black men last December, resulting in the death of one, sparked angry protests by New York's black residents against the increasing number of attacks by whites against blacks and other minorities. In the incident, a mob of white youths attacked the men, whose car had broken down in an all-white section of Howard Beach, Queens, kicked them and beat them with their fists, tree limbs and baseball bats. Twenty-three-year-old Michael Griffith, a Trinidadian immigrant, was killed when he was chased onto a highway and hit by a car as he tried to escape.

The incident also provoked charges of a police misconduct as one badly beaten victim, Cedric Sandiford, was reportedly harshly interrogated by police and kept in the back of a patrol car for several hours without medical attention.

As this article went to press, a grand jury, headed by the special state prosecutor, handed up 12 indictments, including three for second degree murder.

Community leaders held several mass meetings and demonstrations to pressure city officials to vigorously investigate and prosecute the case, the largest of which was a march on January 21st that ended at Mayor Ed Koch's Manhattan residence. Four thousand demonstrators rallied there chanting slogans against racist violence. Such tactics eventually forced New York Governor Mario Cuomo to appoint a special prosecutor to handle the case.

Many black leaders point out that the rise in attacks in New York against blacks by law enforcement officials over the past two years has created an atmosphere that encourages violence by racist mobs.

"Mayor Koch is responsible for the senseless racial hostility that exists in this city today," asserts attorney C. Vernon Mason, who specializes in defending victims of police violence. "Koch has set the precedent. A white will never be convicted for killing a black in this city."

The city's history of racially motivated violence seems to substantiate Mason's charge. In 1982, 34-year-old Willie Turks was attacked and killed in the Coney Island section of Brooklyn by a gang of white youths

yelling racial slurs. In 1983, 35-year-old Michael Stewart died from injuries he received while in the custody of white New York Transit police. In 1984, 20-year-old Darryl Dodson was shot to death by a white police officer as he walked down a Brooklyn street. In 1985, Edmund Perry, an honors graduate of a leading prep school, was shot to death by a white plain clothes police officer. None of the perpetrators in these cases were convicted of murder.

Marcell Adler, the public relations director of the Human Rights Commission, a city agency that keeps records of racially motivated assaults says that in 1984, 245 racial assaults were reported. In 1985, there were 298 reports, and in 1986, there were 253—76 of which involved assaults that occurred after the Howard Beach attack.

These incidents appear to be part of a nationwide trend. In October, a black cadet resigned from the Citadel, a prominent military academy in Charleston, S.C., after a group of white students broke into his room shouting racial slurs. Last June, white mobs menaced a black family that had recently moved into a predominately white area in Cleveland, Ohio. And in Jan-

uary, Ku Klux Klansmen threatened over 20,000 black marchers in Forsyth County, Ga., marching in honor of Martin Luther King's birthday.

But many national black leaders and activists see the Howard Beach case as the incident that will spark a renewed national struggle against racism. Community actions have even gone beyond demonstrations. For example, a boycott of non-black and Hispanic stores was part of the January 21st protest in New York, and organizers were pleased with the outcome.

"We see the boycott as a success," says Mason. "Restaurants closed down. Black people withheld all kinds of financial transactions because people are becoming aware of what's going on."

Lisa Williamson, president of the National African Youth Student Alliance, one of the sponsors of the march, says that the issue can no longer be defined only as a "civil rights struggle."

"We see this as a human rights movement," says Williamson, who adds, "We are not interested in getting a new pile of civil rights legislation that no one intends to enforce."

—Raoul Dennis

# PUBLISHER'S PAGE

## Stemming The Tide Of Racial Violence

**I**t was another black American tragedy. On December 20, three black men, whose car had broken down in the Howard Beach section of Queens, N.Y., were attacked by a band of white youths armed with baseball bats and tree limbs. The life of one of the men—23-year-old Michael Griffith—came to an end that night. He was chased onto a highway and struck by a speeding car.

The aftermath of the incident was just as repulsive as the racially motivated attack. There were allegations of a coverup when the Queens County district attorney refused to prosecute the driver of the car, who happened to be the son of a retired police officer from a local precinct that was allegedly linked to acts of police brutality. Also, one victim was reportedly kept in the back of a patrol car for several hours without receiving medical attention and had been harshly questioned by police officers.

As a result, black community leaders held several meetings and rallies to pressure the city to beef up the investigation and appoint a special prosecutor to the case. In fact, 4,000 marchers demonstrated in front of Mayor Edward Koch's Manhattan residence to highlight how poorly the case had been handled. (See *In The News*, "Racism On The Rise.")

It does not surprise me that such a senseless murder of a young black citizen could take place in Howard Beach. My mother has lived in this middle-class community for several years, and residents have always openly shown their hostility toward blacks. What happened in Howard Beach is not an isolated case. The slaying of Michael Griffith represents the growing number of racist assaults on black citizens. In New York, such cases have risen with disturbing regularity in the past five years. In 1982, a gang of white youths attacked three black transit workers in Brooklyn and beat one of them to death. And last Spring, a 20-year-old black man was beaten to death by whites after his bicycle collided with their car.

New York is not the only city where racial violence has run rampant. In Charleston, S.C., a black cadet resigned from the Citadel Academy after five white students, wearing sheets, brought a burning cross into his room. In Cleveland, white mobs terrorized the only black family in a white neighborhood. And in Forsyth County, Ga., Ku Klux Klan members threatened 20,000 blacks marching in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Ironically, this march occurred on the same day I was in Atlanta to receive the Salute to Greatness Award from the Martin Luther King Center for Nonviolent Social Change. As I watched television coverage of the march-



*Publisher Graves (left) and Peter Stroh (center) are honored at the Salute to Greatness Award ceremonies. They are pictured here with Coretta Scott King, Barbara Graves and Jesse Hill.*

ers being taunted and jeered, it conjured up chilling memories of Sheriff "Bull" Connor and the Birmingham police department beating and hosing down peaceful demonstrators. Although such atrocities occurred more than 20 years ago, the same forces are prevalent today.

Statistics on racially motivated incidents are alarming. According to the Justice Department's Community Relations Service, such attacks increased 42% between

1985 and 1986, and many were perpetrated by "hate groups." Additionally, the Southern Poverty Law Center's Klanwatch investigated 20 cases of harrassments and firebombings nationwide.

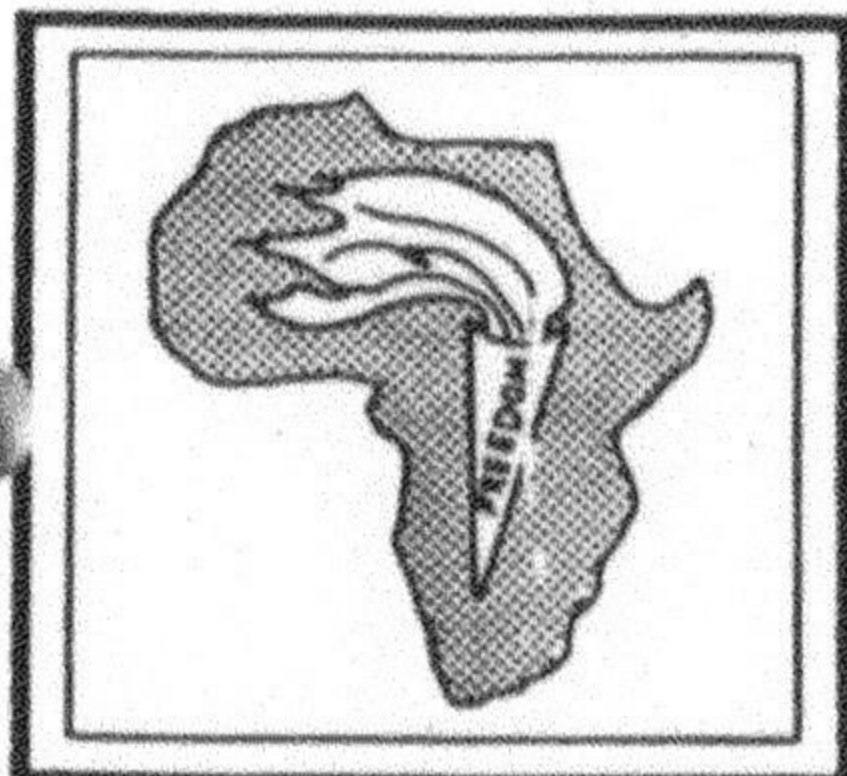
The real tragedy is that more and more black Americans have little faith that they can obtain justice from law enforcement officials. As demonstrated in the Griffith case, local officials and police have an apathetic attitude when it comes to safeguarding the lives of blacks. Many times, we are made to feel like criminals even when we have been the victims of a crime.

To stem the tide of violence, we need a Justice Department that is committed to enforcing the law and preserving the rights of all Americans. At present, the mission of the Justice Department appears to be eliminating affirmative action policies that could improve the quality of life for blacks and other groups who have traditionally been disenfranchised.

Moreover, we as black Americans must exercise our individual and group power. We should engage in a vigorous letter-writing campaign to our congressmen as well as the media to denounce these actions and call for reforms. We need to continue to support our civil rights organizations, most notably the NAACP, the Urban League and the SCLC, all of which have been in the forefront of this struggle. And we must make a commitment to contribute to defense funds to ensure that such cases are thoroughly investigated and tried. Attorneys associated with such organizations as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, the National Bar Association and the National Conference of Black Lawyers have taken the lead in these courtroom battles. They need our full support.

Racial violence and police brutality must come to a screeching halt. The existence of black America depends on it.

*Earl G. Graves*



*MAJIMA*

**Capital District Coalition  
Against Apartheid  
and Racism**

Box 3002 - Pine Hills Station  
Albany, NY 12203

May 22, 1987

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are writing to you because you have expressed an interest in the work of the Capital District Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism on the issue of police and racial violence in Albany. (Our immediate concern at this time is the McKeever case - see enclosed flier.) In this letter we will summarize our work to date, layout our analysis and goals for this period and present our plans for the future.

On Tuesday, March 24, 1987, the Coalition held a forum on racism and violence which over 150 people attended. The goals of the forum were:

1. to provide information to the community about police and racial violence in Albany and the United States.
2. to draw the linkage between racism in South Africa and the United States
3. to create an atmosphere where concerns and issues about police and racial violence can be raised, and
4. to work toward police accountability to the community.

New York State Assemblyman Roger Green and NAACP Representative Alice Green presented historical and current information about police and racial violence and drew the linkages. Community representatives, Don McKeever, Kim Russell and El Wise challenged the atmosphere of repression and fear under which citizens of Albany's minority communities live. They told of the police and racial violence inflicted on their families. They named the names of police officers involved. They asked the community to never again let an individual, a family, suffer from and then stand alone against illegal police activities. Overall, the forum moved us forward in creating an atmosphere where concerns and issues about police and racial violence can be raised, but there is still much to do.

In order to be able to hold the Albany police accountable to the community, we must develop a strong community united and organized against police and racial violence. In order to develop a united and organized community, we must continue to create an atmosphere where people are safe and supported in speaking out against this violence. We see the creating of this atmosphere as the key step at this phase of developing our community movement against police and racial violence and are therefore directing our present efforts toward that goal.

On Tuesday, May 26, 1987, Don and Barbara McKeever will take their law suit against the Albany Police Department back to court. We are organizing around the case to offer support to the McKeever family, to take a stand against police and racial violence, and to let members of the community know that they can take action and they will be supported. We plan to involve organizations and individuals in these efforts.

(over)

During the summer, we also plan to do educational work with the Legal Redress Committee of the NAACP on what to do if arrested or stopped by the police. We will continue to press for a viable Community Police Relations Board. As well, there may be additional support work around other police abuse cases.

At present, there are many areas of work in which you can participate. The committee needs your help planning and co-ordinating support work for the McKeever case. If your time is limited, there are always specific short term tasks which you can do such as phoning people to inform them of the trial, postering or handing out flyers or attending the trial for an afternoon.

Your help is crucial, not only in the immediate work around the McKeever case, but, overall, to bring an end to police and racial violence. The next Coalition meeting is Thursday, May 28, 1987 at 7:30 p.m. at the Urban League, Livingston and Ten Broeck in Albany. If you are not able to attend but can work with the committee or would like more information, please feel free to contact us at 463-4654 or 438-0309.

Sincerely,

*Odell Winfield*  
*Eileen Kawola*

Odell Winfield  
Eileen Kawola  
Co-chairs, Committee on  
Police and Racial Violence



Capital District Coalition  
Against Apartheid  
and Racism

Box 3002 - Pine Hills Station  
Albany, NY 12203

5/23/87

Dennis Brutus  
Dept. Of Black Community Education Research & Dev.  
University Of Pittsburgh  
230 S. Bouquet St. 3T01 Forbes Quad.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

Dear Dennis,

How nice to hear from you. It has been a long time. Memories of the Springbok Rugby Tour, 1981, seem somewhat distant now. How the struggle has advanced since those days.

We are expecting the S.A. tennis players in Schenectady, July 18-26, I believe. They will be participating in the OTB Tournament with 100,000 spectators expected throughout the week. It is our understanding that their next stop will be NY City where I understand Gerald Horne and others are organizing a protest. (Schenectady, by the way, is approx. <sup>10</sup> ~~15~~ miles from Albany). We are incredibly busy these months but we are looking forward to making a lot of noise at the tournament. This will be the fifth year that OTB has sponsored these games. South Africans have been involved for at least two years but each year it was during a time when we were conducting a cultural boycott effort and were unable to deal with tennis. As a matter of fact the particular entertainers being boycotted during those times here were the Temptations and Chick Corea. With the help of Unity In Action, we were able to secure statements from both. (enclosed)

I agree that the national sports boycott should be put back on the agenda. We should be motivated by the utter success of the cultural

boycott..Paul Simon,Hugh Masekela and company not ~~with~~ standing.

I do believe, a committee, such as the one you suggest to coordinate a national effort, is an excellent idea. While we also do not have the ability to initiate something of that scope, we would be pleased to serve on it. South African sports people have been sneaking around in this country and others for years and we've been acting like it's okay. Of course, a concerted sports boycott could also serve as a way to highlight the demand for comprehensive sanctions against the regime.

I am quite sure there would be interest nationally in reviving this effort.

Your suggestion of a national committee is a good one because it would allow the movement (sports) to become a coordinated effort, offering a way to track these apartheid representatives as they go from city to city. This coordination has been sorely lacking in the cultural boycott and our network has been an informal one. This was bound to lead to problems...witness the floundering which has taken place around Paul Simon sabotaging. Indeed, if the national network had been formalized, these entertainers...all of them would have seen us everywhere with more impact. Well, the C.B. has still been an enormous success but we must recognize our short comings.

I am copying additional people on this correspondence. Maybe your idea will take hold. If you want to discuss the general effort further please feel free to call me at 518-436-0562. Any discussion regarding our immediate Schenctady effort and any help that can be forthcoming should be directed to our Tennis Boycot coordinator, Roli Varma 518-482-4370 <sup>eves</sup>. and days. Of course we would welcome any

assistance we can get, including but not limited to, guest appearances for media purposes, to help build etc. remembering that we are pretty well busted financially now, as we are involved in several campaigns around Southern Africa and local police abuse (racially motivated violence).

Please circulate this letter as you see fit.

MAKE A RACQUET.....DON'T BACK IT !!!!!

Aluta Continua,

Vera Michelson, Co Chairperson

- C.C.
- Richard Lapchick
- Richard Knight, ACOA
- John Dommissie
- Sam Ramsamy
- Elombe Brath Unity in Action
- Jerome Bibuld
- Gerald Horne
- Angela Hope-Weusi
- Solly Similane -ANC
- Ron Wilkins, Unity In Action, LA
- Hinyangerwa Asheeke, SWAPO

*P.S. would some one please send a copy of this to Sam Ramsamy and Angela Hope Weusi.?? I do not have their addresses.*





University of Pittsburgh

DEPARTMENT OF BLACK COMMUNITY EDUCATION RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

May 15, 1987

Dr. John Dommissie  
3304 Wisteria Court  
Chesapeake, Virginia 23321-4620

Dear John,

Thank you for the copy of your letter to Vera Michaelson.

I believe we should make a serious effort to try and revive the Sports Boycott Issue--either via ACCESS or some other organization.

I would also like to see the article you referred to. Do you think you can send me a xerox?

Perhaps between you, Richard Knight, Vera Michaelson, Jerome Bibuld and myself, we could actually get together a group and get something done. Perhaps Richard Lapchick could join us?

There are several issues we need to address: one of the most pressing is South African participation in tennis and golf events.

I am sure we could get many others to join a committee, if we put one together. I would suggest that you might initiate some action. Failing that, I would be willing to get something started, but I am reluctant to do so because of my other commitments.

Let's stay in touch. All good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

*Dennis*

Dennis Brutus,  
Chairman

DB/ms

cc: Richard Knight

6/89

Vera Michelson  
414 Third Street  
Albany, NY 12206

Harry Rosenfield  
Editor  
Knickerbocker News  
P.O. Box 15000  
Albany, NY 12212

Dear Mr. Rosenfield,

I was recently surprised to learn from reading Metroland that Ms. Georgia Urban had resigned as a jazz columnist for the Knickerbocker News.

I just spoke with Ms. Urban. Apparently she resigned because her article on Hal Miller was tampered with and that the result was an inaccurate letter published in her name. Knowing Georgia as I do, her resignation was a logical conclusion to a sequence of events that simply should not have happened.

Ms. Urban has a passion for accuracy. For an article to be published in her name that had inaccurate information added to it without her knowledge was too much of a blow. And of course, the fact that the Knick did not acknowledge the error immediately was irresponsible.

I would also like to add that over the years Ms. Urban's knowledge of jazz and jazz artists has proven to be invaluable to Capitaland readers. Additionally, her understanding of the history of jazz has helped us all to realize that jazz is one of the many contributions of African American culture and that, as such, it is part of all of our heritage. Ms. Urban has consistently covered Black jazz musicians and given them the prominence they deserve. Her absence from the Knickerbocker News will be a tremendous loss to all of us in the Capital District who have benefited by reading her column.

Sincerely,

*Vera Michelson*  
Vera Michelson

x34  
6856



**Capital District Coalition  
Against Apartheid  
and Racism**

Box 3002 - Pine Hills Station  
Albany, NY 12203

July 23, 1986

Honorable Mayor Thomas Whalen  
Albany City Hall  
Albany, New York

Dear Mayor Whalen:

I am writing on behalf of the Capital District Coalition Against Apartheid and Racism regarding the formation of Albany's "all white jazz band." While the idea of an Albany jazz band is an exciting one, the fact that this jazz band is "all white" is most disturbing.

What concerns us further is the fact that the City of Albany is involved in this insult to the Black community as well as to jazz lovers in general.

Even a cursory look at the history of jazz will enlighten those who care to know about the racism and special harassment of Black jazz musicians in the United States.

African American musicians created the jazz motif - the music grew from the Black experience. By not aggressively seeking out area Black musicians at the inception of this band is to deny and rewrite history. And it is not only musical history that is being denied. During this year when Albany proudly celebrates the tricentennial, this band could have been used to highlight one of the contributions of the city's Black population. With all the focus on the river, one possibility could have been a recognition of the Black musicians of the early 19th century who frequently performed on the day boats on the Hudson.

Unfortunately, the showcasing of a jazz band which excludes Black musicians, funded with city monies, makes a strong tricentennial statement. The statement is unjustifiable and inexcusable.

Sincerely,

Vera Michelson  
Co-Chair

c.c. Pat Devane  
Don McKeever  
Jack Duggan  
Georgia Urban  
Nat Williams  
President, American Federation of Musicians

**A sour note**

6/26/86

To the editor:

Jazz reviewer Georgia Urban's column (*KN*, 6/11/86) on "Albany's new all-white jazz band" haunts us with an all-too-familiar theme.

Band leader Paul Evoskevich simply "couldn't find" any black players for his new band. Clearly, he didn't look. So what else is new?

Racism in the music industry is as much a part of American history as the music itself. Even a cursory look at the history of jazz will remind us of the special harassment and racism black artists have had to face over the years. Jazz is only one example of the richness of African-American history.

It is unfortunate Mr. Evoskevich had decided to downplay the contribution of area black musicians by not seeking them out to participate in the formation of the new Albany jazz band. We only hope Ms. Urban's column will serve as a catalyst to push the new bandleader in the right direction.

VERA MICHELSON  
Capital District Coalition  
Against Apartheid and Racism  
Albany