



American Friends Service Committee

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Carole J. Collins

October 24, 1947 - September 22, 2006

Carole J.L. Collins, an activist since the 1970s in organizations seeking global economic justice, a campaigner against South African apartheid and a writer specializing in African affairs, died at home in Long Beach, CA September 22, from complications associated with congestive heart failure. She was 59.

Collins was a leader in anti-apartheid organizing in the 1970s and eighties, and a crusader in the movement for third world debt cancellation in the 1990s. After moving with her husband, Steve Askin, and son, Joseph Samora Collins Askin, from Washington, DC to Long Beach, CA in 2002, she devoted much of her energy to family and often introduced herself as a “hockey mom.”

Carole has been associated with the **American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)** in many different staff, volunteer, consulting and board capacities for more than 25 years. She served as AFSC’s Harare, Zimbabwe-based southern Africa International Affairs Representative in 1986-90, and traveled extensively in war-ravaged Angola and Mozambique, working with women’s producer cooperatives and other community-based organizations to support grassroots reconstruction of war-ravaged communities. For most of the 16 years since her return from Africa, she has served on boards and committees responsible for supervising



AFSC programs on African and global development issues.

Carole served as National Coordinator of Jubilee 2000/USA in 1998-1999, leading the U.S. arm of an international movement demanding cancellation of the debts of the poorest nation. During the June 1999 G-7 summit in Germany she joined the rock star Bono, Honduran Archbishop Oscar Rodriguez and women representing each continent for a meeting in which they presented debt cancellation demands to then-German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder.

In 1981-83, as national coordinator of the Campaign to Oppose Bank Loans to South Africa, she testified before city councils, state legislatures and United Nations bodies supporting often-successful efforts to sever financial relationships with banks doing business in South Africa.

On her first trip to Africa in 1976-77, she was a visiting lecturer on Mideast politics at Uganda’s Makerere University.

Carole also worked as a policy analyst and advocate with groups including the Africa Faith and Justice Network (2001-02) and Interfaith Action for Economic Justice (1983-85). She is a former visiting fellow (1981-83) at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, DC and she co-authored *From Debt to Development: Alternatives to the*

International Debt Crisis, published by IPS in 1986.

She used her talents as an organizer and writer to serve many other justice and development organizations. Those wide-ranging activities included Cofounder of the Debt Crisis Network and the International Labor Rights Working Group and many years of involvement with Association of Concerned African Scholars.

As a writer, Carole was most closely associated with the National Catholic Reporter, where she was an Africa Correspondent in 1985-86, UN/Diplomatic Correspondent in 1991-92, and a freelance contributor from the late 1970s to the 1990s. Her writing also appeared in journalistic and scholarly publications worldwide, including academic and policy journals Africa Confidential, Africa Recovery, the Chronicle of Higher Education, Le Monde (France), MERIP/Middle East Report, In These Times, Journal of Palestine Studies, Ms., Multinational Monitor, the Nation, Newsday, Nigrizia (Italy), Pacific News Service, The Progressive, the Review of African Political Economy, the Weekly Mail (South Africa), the Women's Features Service.

Carole's world travels began in 1966 when she lived with an Iranian family as part of the Experiment in International Living. She and her husband lived and worked in Kenya (1985-86) and Zimbabwe (1986-90). Her writing, development work, public speaking and justice advocacy also took Carole to 19 other African countries. Among the many highpoints for her were work on behalf of rural women in Angola and Mozambique, writing on the evils of the Mobutu regime in Zaire (now Congo) and the months she spent living as the only outsider in a small Sudanese community. Carole's working travels

also took her to Israel and Palestine on a human rights study tour (1982) to Brazil for the 1992 Earth Summit and to many European nations for consultations with global justice advocates.

During her years in Chicago, 1968-80, she participated in countless social justice and community development projects. She was especially proud of her role as a cofounder of the New World Resource Center, Chicago's anti-imperialist bookstore, of her work resettling Argentineans escaping the Pinochet dictatorship and of her service in programs for older adults.

Carole had a tremendous ear for languages and for music. She learned in the course of her travels to speak fluently in Portuguese and French. Through daily human contact on various journeys she learned to hold simple conversations in Arabic, Farsi, Swahili, Shona and countless other languages. During her final hospitalization, Carole was delighted to exchange greetings with a nurse from Tanzania. She was rightly proud of her singing voice and her skills with her favorite musical instrument the blues comb.

Collins earned a BA with honors at Bryn Mawr in 1968. She dropped out of a graduate program in the University of Chicago Political Science Department while participating in the 1968-69 student protests against the Vietnam War. She earned an MA in International Affairs at Columbia University (1993).

Since moving to Long Beach, CA in 2002, Carole has continued to write and work on justice and development issues in Africa, while devoting her time principally to family, especially seven year old son Joseph Samora Collins Askin. She often referred to herself as "the oldest hockey mom."

Carole was born in Plainfield, New

Jersey and grew up in Cranford. She is survived by son Joseph, husband Steve Askin, brothers Gary and Charles Dillard Collins and sister Rosalie Gleeman.

Steve and Carole have been together as a devoted couple since 1980 and married

in 1984. They named their son in honor of two leaders of African liberation struggles: South Africa's Joe Slovo and Samora Machel of Mozambique.

A memorial service will be held in Washington, D.C. in October. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to:

**The New City Public Charter
School Expansion Program**
1230 Pine Avenue
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www.thenewcityschool.org

AFSC
Africa Peacebuilding Unit
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