

Edinburgh Anti-Apartheid Group



NEWSLETTER

NELSON MANDELA FREEDOM MARCH!

A springboard to further action

The Freedom March has become a milestone in the history of the A-A movement. For some of us, you could say it has been 590 milestones. I consider it a great privilege to have been one of the 25 marchers.

For five weeks we shared together the same problems, hardships and, above all, one common goal. We were 25 very different people, each from very different backgrounds, but that single aim formed a bond between us that proved strong enough the physical and psychological stresses of the march. Looking back now I can forget the blisters, aching legs and tiredness, the heat of Northumbria and the rain of Staffordshire. Of course there were hard times and good times; times when I thought I couldn't go on and times when we shared a collective feeling of great strength.

Whenever we arrived in a town there were speeches, welcomes, civic receptions. Each time one of the marchers would address the people who had come to support us. Often our speaker would say: we are marching, not as 25 individual people, but as one." We all felt that unity. Sometimes, as we walked through the open countryside where only sheep would see us, I felt how small and isolated we were. But whenever people showed their support in any way, I knew that we were indeed a small part of something much bigger.

The event in Hyde park proved that. When we walked into Hyde Park (and it felt as if I had been walking on air for these last five miles) we were no longer 25 marchers, but 250 000 people united in our demand for freedom. That demand goes beyond Hyde Park and Glasgow Green, beyond the streets of Soweto and the frontline States. It is an International demand for justice and freedom.

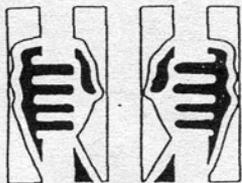
I feel proud to have been part of the Freedom March. We would willingly go through it again, blisters and all. But it is up to all of us to make sure we don't have to. Let's continue this march until we reach Pretoria and till we release all the victims of apartheid. The struggle continues. Victory is certain.



DAVID NICOL

EDINBURGH A-AG Campaigns Organiser and a FREEDOM MARCHER

- "THIS IS A TIME OF SCARIFICE"



During the nine months which I spent in South Africa in 1987, I lived for some time in Wentworth, a notoriously deprived and violent area of Durban before I was detained, interrogated, tortured and released after one week in gaol.

While I was there it was both a priveledge and a distressing experience to come to know the McBride family- 24 year old Robert McBride is currently under sentence of death for armed combat as a member of the ANC armed wing, Umkhonto we Siswe.

In June 1987 a petition was drawn up in Wentworth for clemency for Robert and one year later a nationwide petition has been sent to President Botha from the defense lawyers. Robert was refused an appeal by the defense that there were extenuating circumstances in the case. He was convicted for the murder of three civilians who died during a bomb blast on Durban beach front. Now only last minute international pressure can move P.W. Botha to exercise a pardon from the death sentence.

It was truly inspiring to witness the courage and strength of the McBride family during their time of tribulation and anxiety over their son who is himself a victim of the degrading apartheid system. In Wentworth Robert experienced the hopelessness and destitution of a community going nowhere. His education included being tear-gassed and baton charged at the age of 13, and later being personally rejected by the white social scene which he tried to identify with at college because he was of mixed race. He resorted to armed actions in a state of depression and deperation; and in June 1986 he witnessed the rounding up of close friends in the routine detentions around the state of emergency.

The Campaign to save the life of Robert McBride has focussed on the social and political context of desperation which led to his violent resistance against the repression. While not condoning his deviation from ANC policy of avoiding civilian casualties, it is important to note the circumstances which led to such a state of deep anger and frustration.

The life of this young South African now depends on international efforts to appeal for a reprieve from the death sentence, through petitioning and letter writing.

PLEASE WRITE URGENTLY TO SIR GEOFFREY HOWE ASKING THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO INTERVENE ON BEHALF OF ROBERT MCBRIDE BY ASKING PRESIDENT BOTHA TO EXERCISE CLEMENCY.

Do come along and help us to petition for prisoners on death row on Saturday on Princes St.

The Anti-Apartheid Group will address the subject of political detention and executions at our meeting on Wednesday 14th September.

John E. Gordon.



STOP APARTHEID

BOYCOTT SHELL!

The Shell Group is the second largest corporation in the world. In this country it cultivates a caring public image. But in Namibia and South Africa Shell fuels the brutal and repressive Apartheid regime.

SHELL FUELS APARTHEID -

...by breaking the international oil embargo against South Africa

SHELL FUELS APARTHEID -

...by providing supplies for the South African armed forces and police.

SHELL FUELS APARTHEID

...by operating in Namibia, thus supporting South Africa's illegal occupation.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ?

Boycott all SHELL products.

Join us at our regular picket of SHELL garages in Edinburgh - for more information in Edinburgh, contact Jaki McDougal 337 5397



SHELL

SOUL/ SKA/ REGGAE DANCE NIGHT

by

The Raging Inferno Soul Club

Sat 27th August

7.30pm - late

PORTOBELLO TOWN HALL

Tickets £2.00 + £1.00

ALL PROCEEDS

to

THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT

PRESENTED BY-

EDINBURGH CITY COUNCIL

EDINBURGH ANTI-APARTHEID GROUP

COMING TO A CINEMA NEAR YOU !
Shawn Slovo's "A WORLD APART" (PG)
Based on the true story of Ruth First and her family, A WORLD APART describes how a white South African girl comes to terms with the personal and political circumstances around her

Grand Special Jury Prize Cannes

Best Actress Award Cannes

Edinburgh Film Festival Screening on
Friday 26th August

CELEBRATE

SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN'S DAY

TUESDAY 9th AUGUST 8pm

at

THE SOUTHSIDER

TO ADVERTISE YOUR EVENT ON THIS
PAGE

PHONE (031) 554 4109

The Edinburgh Anti-Apartheid Group meets regularly at 7.30pm in the Edinburgh Trades Council, Picadilly Place on the second Wednesday of every month. All these meetings are open to everyone- so please come along to see videos/speakers and to plan activities in support of the fight for freedom in South Africa.

Forthcoming meetings:-

10th August :- Women under Apartheid- video and discussion

14th Sept. :- Apartheid, Detention and Death Row

Introduced by John Gordon

The Group will be very happy to provide speakers for other group and organisations. For further information contact the secretary.

The Group organises leafletting and petitioning every Saturday. If you would like to become involved or you would like more details please fill in the form below.

If you would like to help set up a group of musicians and singers against Apartheid please contact David Nicol, tel. 226-2883

The Group is holding a jumble sale later in the year. Please don't throw out anything: Phone the secretary and we'll collect it.

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- I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE EDINBURGH ANTI-APARTHEID GROUP
- I WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE GROUP
- I ENCLOSE A DONATION TO THE EDINBURGH ANTI-APARTHEID GROUP

NAME

ADDRESS

TEL

Please return to :-

The Secretary,
Edinburgh A-A Group,
89 Lochend Road,
Edinburgh,
EH6 8B7