

An Appeal to TUC delegates:

FIGHT APARTHEID



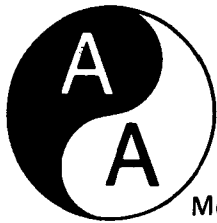
The picture shows a perfectly normal scene. A dustman runs after his truck. It could be anywhere in the world. In fact, it is in South Africa. There the refuse trucks never stop. The dustmen have to run behind them all day with the white mans garbage. As a result they have an average life expectancy of 35 years.

That is just one of the effects of apartheid.

Last month all the dustmen in Johannesburg and all the other 11,000 African municipal workers went on strike for higher wages. The city council refused to talk to their union, the Black Municipal Workers Union, and preferred to talk instead to a stooge union with only 40 members. Then, as the rubbish piled up, camouflaged police were put on the streets and the buses, and one of the striking bus drivers, Joe Mavi, the President of the union, was arrested and has now been charged with "sabotage". Meanwhile, workers were told that they must return to work or be "deported" to the rural bantustan "homelands". Non-union labour was brought in. White volunteers, including school children, took over the municipal services and eventually the police detained hundreds of the strikers, deported many of them and forced the rest back to work.

That is the story of just one strike by African workers in South Africa. The past year has seen many: car workers, miners, meatworkers, journalists, bus drivers, textile workers, construction men at the SASOL oil from coal plant - these and many others have protested against starvation wages, appalling conditions, non-recognition of their unions, segregation. And the employers have responded with great severity - often dismissing strikers en masse - while the regime has detained, banned, imprisoned and deported the workers and the strike leaders.

And it is not only South African workers who have confronted the regime - and been met with severe repression. Students have boycotted classes, there has been a massive campaign to free Nelson Mandela, mass consumer boycotts and intensifying guerilla activity.



FREE NAMIBIA

Meanwhile, in Namibia SWAPO's struggle for freedom has been stepped up, resistance of all kinds has intensified. And again, so too has the regime's repression. The round up of leaders of the National Union of Namibian Workers early this year has been followed by the house arrest of many of the leaders. And as in South Africa, it is not only trade union leaders and members who have been hit by the regime. South Africa has occupied Namibia with 100,000 troops who have imposed apartheid with the utmost brutality. Meanwhile Pretoria has blocked moves for a negotiated settlement and UN supervised free elections and has promoted a puppet government - an "internal settlement" regime like that of Muzorewa in Zimbabwe.

And Britain's response? Britain refuses to recognise the illegality of the military occupation. It has acted to protect South Africa when moves are made at the UN to force her to end her illegal rule. And the government confirmed only last month that it would not review the contract with RTZ under which the Rossing mine in Namibia supplies Britain with uranium, and has encouraged further economic links.

OUR RESPONSE

British trade unionists have a special responsibility to act. Britain's record is one of blatant collaboration with the apartheid regime. We are one of South Africa's major trading partners. We own £7 billion worth of investment there. The government has consistently blocked moves to enforce mandatory economic sanctions. Unless British trade unionists act Britain will be drawn more and more into defending apartheid and the regime's illegal occupation of Namibia.

How can you help? The Anti-Apartheid Movement believes that only the end of the apartheid regime will bring about a non-racial and free South Africa. To this end Black South Africans have called for the total isolation of South Africa. Act now -

- * demand that the Government ends British military, nuclear and economic links with South Africa and undertakes not to use its UN veto to stop sanctions.
- * act directly to sever any connections you and your fellow trade unionists know about - whether it is a bank account at Barclays, Union investments, employers' links with South Africa, work on orders of military and related equipment for South Africa, purchases of South African goods. There are many other examples.

But there are some specific and immediate things you can do:

- * protest to the South African Embassy at the arrests and detentions of workers in South Africa and urge the government to intervene.
- * press the Government to make South Africa end the illegal occupation of Namibia. The Government should halt the RTZ uranium contract now.
- * support SACTU, the South African Congress of Trade Unions, which has been forced to work underground, the National Union of Namibian Workers, and the liberation movements. Invite a speaker and help to make sure others know what is going on there.
- * support the campaigns of the AAM. Join yourself and get your trade union branch or other body to affiliate. The AAM has three major campaigns at the moment - the campaign to free Nelson Mandela, the consumer boycott of South African goods in British shops, and the campaign against British nuclear links with South Africa. We can provide more details.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Minimum annual fees: Individuals £7.50 (Apprentices £5); local and regional trade union bodies £7.50; national trade unions - sliding scale (details from AAM)

I/we wish to join the Anti-Apartheid Movement and enclose £

Name

(Individual or organisation)

Address

.....

..... Tel No.

(Cheques/POs payable to the Anti-Apartheid Movement)

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