

THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT

A Protest Against Racial Discrimination

HON. PRESIDENT: MRS. BARBARA CASTLE, M.P.

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ANNUAL REPORT

(A survey of some of the work of the AAM from
July, 1962 to September, 1963)

The decision last July, 1962, of the National Committee to adopt a scheme of individual membership and to intensify our work with the "Boycott Apartheid" campaign in the autumn proved a considerable success. Later sections in this Report will deal with membership, finance, and special areas of work; the following is a brief account of some of our activities during the period.

The National Committee has met 4 times since July, 1962, under the chairmanship of our active President, Mrs. Barbara Castle, M.P. It is comprised of a number of representatives of, or individuals with special connection with, various organisations, such as the Africa Bureau, Christian Action, the Movement for Colonial Freedom, the Society of Friends, the Women's Co-operative Guild, the Labour and Liberal Parties, some of the trade unions, etc., the rest of the Committee being individuals chosen for the work they are doing in AAM. We are also fortunate in having two Members of Parliament as sponsors, Mr. Humphry Berkeley, M.P. and Mr. Jeremy Thorpe, M.P., and members of the National Committee, as well as three more M.P. members of the Committee - Mr. Fenner Brockway, M.P., Mr. Bob Edwards, M.P. and Mr. John Stonehouse, M.P.

The AAM has five officers - Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and Administrative Secretary. Our Chairman, Mr. David Ennals, who like all the officers has been active in AAM from the beginning, is having to resign because of the pressure of commitments, although we hope he will continue as a member of the National and Executive Committees. Our Vice-Chairman, Mr. Keith Lye, who was Deputy Director of the Boycott Movement in 1960 and has been an officer ever since, unfortunately had to resign earlier in the year, and the Executive has not yet appointed a new Vice-Chairman.

Our former Hon. Secretary, Rosalynde Ainslie, had to resign for family reasons last autumn, and Mr. S. Abdul was appointed Hon. Secretary at the end of last year. Together with the Administrative Secretary, Dorothy Robinson, he has been running the Movement during 1963. Our Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Kader Asmal, who has been responsible for the great improvement in our financial position, also had to leave as he is taking up a teaching post in Dublin.

The publication of the "Unholy Alliance" booklet, launched at a well-attended press conference with Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien as the main speaker, was an important impetus for AAM. The booklet received much publicity and focussed attention on the links between the three white supremacies in Southern Africa, so that the phrase 'unholy alliance' now leaves no doubt that it refers to Verwoerd, Salazar and Welensky. Orders poured in from all over the world, and by October we had sold our first 3000 and had to reprint. It provided briefing material for many of the United Nations' delegations, is still selling steadily, and is extremely valuable as an information booklet.

The "Boycott Apartheid" campaign was launched at a public meeting at the Caxton Hall on October 23rd. Our President, Mrs. Barbara Castle, M.P., was in the chair, and speakers included Mr. James Cameron, Mr. John Stonehouse, M.P., Mr. Angus Wilson, Constance Cummings, George Melly and Dr. Dadoo from S. Africa and Mr. J. Kozonguizi from S. West Africa. Very many messages of support from well-known individuals were received for the campaign. Although the crisis over Cuba was at its height on the evening the meeting was held, the hall was crowded and there was a good press attendance. Unfortunately, the intensity of the Cuban situation prevented us from receiving a good press coverage for the meeting. Official support for the campaign came from the Labour and Liberal Parties, and we supplied speakers and publicity material for very many meetings throughout Britain. We also had the support of several trade unions, notably the AEU, and despatched many thousands of "Are We Guilty" leaflets and Boycott Lists to trade unionists all over the country.

Mr. Nelson Mandela, the ANC leader who was underground for 15 months, was arrested by the S. African police during August and was tried during October. AAM organised poster parades, messages of support and protests. These messages reached Mr. Mandela and on the morning he was to be sentenced he wrote a personal note thanking us for these "as they proved that in the struggle for a democratic South Africa we can count on the support of the civilised world". Mr. Mandela was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment and is now in Pretoria prison.

Mr. Potlako Leballo, acting president of PAC gave details at a press conference in London, of the condition of Mr. Robert Sobukwe (the PAC President) who had been in prison since May 1960 on a 3 year sentence, arising from Sharpeville. Mr. Leballo himself had just been released after serving 18 months in prison. The AAM took up this case with the International Commission of Jurists and the International Red Cross. When Mr. Sobukwe was released from prison at the end of his sentence last May, he was immediately sent to Robben Island, where he is now detained under the "No-Trial Act."

Mrs. Helen Joseph was the first person placed under house-arrest in South Africa in October last year, and she was soon followed by a number of other well-known opponents of apartheid. Details of the house-arrestees were distributed widely by AAM and many messages and letters were sent to S. Africa by our members. Later, we appealed for Christmas cards and messages and again there was a magnificent response. Mrs. Barbara Castle, M.P. arranged for a special House of Commons' card, signed by over 180

members of the Parliamentary Labour Party, to be sent to all those under house-arrest. This gesture was enormously appreciated by those who received the messages, and many of them wrote to express their appreciation.

Following a raid by Basutoland police on the offices of Mr. Leballo in Maseru last April, press reports appeared indicating that information had been handed over by the British authorities to the S. African Police, and widespread arrests of over 3,000 people were made suddenly throughout S.A. The AAM arranged a deputation to the Colonial Office to express concern at the implication that the British authorities were collaborating with the S. African police, and the issuing of a warrant for Mr. Leballo's arrest. This warrant has since been withdrawn. This question of the right of S.A. political refugees to take part in political activity in the Protectorates was to be taken up by the AAM on other issues later in the year.

With the resounding victory at the U.N. General Assembly in November, 1962, when a Resolution was passed by a two thirds majority, one stage in AAM's campaigning for a UN vote for sanctions was reached with dramatic suddenness. However, as Britain had, as always in the past, voted against it was still more than ever necessary for us to work for British support of the U.N. stand on apartheid. It was agreed therefore that the build-up of arms and the heavy defence expenditure of the South African Government, with the threat this presented to the people of S. Africa and indeed to the security of Africa as a whole, would be our next major campaigning issue.

We therefore organised the Trafalgar Square rally "No British Arms for Apartheid", on March 17th 1963, and the repercussions of this, with its outspoken attack by Mr. Harold Wilson, M.P., newly elected Leader of the Labour Party, are still being heard. To follow up the impact of the Rally, it was decided to organise a Lobby of Parliament and a special leaflet "No Arms for Apartheid" was published. We also produced a briefing document for the Lobby and for general use. The Lobby itself, on May 20th, gained further publicity, and a group of 100 Labour M.P.s put down a motion for debate in the House. Britain's abstention in August on the Security Council resolution against the sale of arms to South Africa make it clear that this issue is still one on which the greatest pressure must be exerted.

Plans to celebrate June 26th, "South Africa Freedom Day" with a large public meeting could not be finalised because of the difficulty in finding a suitable speaker. A service of intercession was held at St. Martin-in-the-Fields on this date, which was attended by several diplomatic representatives from Afro-Asian countries. June 26th was also marked by wide press coverage of the Playwrights' Declaration, signed by almost 50 well-known names, which stated that they had instructed their agents to insert a clause in all future contracts automatically refusing performing rights in any theatre where discrimination is made on grounds of colour. Further additions to the list are still being received.

South African Freedom Day was also commemorated by a Folk Song Concert entitled "We Sing of Freedom". The concert was an outstanding success, both from a cultural and a financial point of view, and included a special Oration for South Africa Freedom Day, spoken by Peter O'Toole.

In August the question of the rights of political refugees in the Protectorates again came to the fore, when Mr. and Mrs. Jack Hodgson (who had escaped from five years' house arrest in S. Africa) refused to sign a document for the Bechuanaland authorities stating that they would not take part in political activities, and were refused a residence permit. A three-party deputation, with representatives from Amnesty, AAM, MCF and ANCSaw Sir John Martin at the Colonial Office. Further press statements were issued but despite the stand of Mr. and Mrs. Hodgson, who were fined £50 as illegal immigrants, the British authorities have refused to change the conditions. In September Mr. and Mrs. Hodgson were deported from Bechuanaland to Britain, their fares being paid by the British Government. A Press Conference was arranged for them on their arrival at London Airport.

In the same month Dr. Kenneth Abrahams was kidnapped from Bechuanaland and handed over to the S. African authorities. AAM issued press statements, contacted M.P.s, the Colonial Office and the International Commission of Jurists. It was no doubt largely the world wide publicity that convinced Mr. Vorster that it would be wiser to return Dr. Abrahams to Bechuanaland than to proceed with the charges against him.

Subsequent events in the Protectorates, the mysterious explosion which destroyed a plane due to leave with refugees for Tanganyika, Dr. Verwoerd's "take-over" offer,* (which he afterwards said had been misunderstood) and the inconsistency of the British authorities' attitude toward political refugees indicate that there will be great activity required on this subject. The situation is now more urgent than at any time in the past.

The passing of the "No Trial Act" in May increased the powers of the Minister of Justice to such an extent that the International Commission of Jurists stated that "...Anyone who doubts that South Africa has become a police state should examine its laws. The question is then no longer in doubt". In South Africa's jails today over 5,000 political prisoners are held; over 300 of them arrested under the "No Trial Act" and held without charge or trial for recurring periods of 90 days. The torturing and beating up of prisoners is now being used extensively by the Police to secure information from prisoners. In August a group of 17 people were arrested, including Walter Sisulu, and they are in imminent danger of becoming the victims of a trial which will have as its objective the death sentence for the majority of them.

Therefore our new campaign is now being planned as the Movement's most important public activity since 1960. The ANTI-APARTHEID MONTH in November will start with a March against apartheid on November 3rd, which will coincide with the United Nations' debate. The March will end in Trafalgar Square, where a meeting will be held. It will be led by prominent personalities from all walks of British life, and overseas representatives are also being invited. The theme of the campaign is three-fold: an end to the supply of arms to South Africa, complete asylum and protection for South African refugees from apartheid, and the release of all political prisoners in S. Africa. Now leaflets and posters are being produced especially for the campaign, and a new booklet putting the case for economic sanctions will be published in November.

In September a very successful meeting was held for delegates to the Liberal Party Assembly at Brighton, chaired by Mr. Jeremy Thorpe, M.P. The speaker on this occasion being Mr. Joe Slovo, a well-known barrister who has recently escaped from South Africa.

A similar meeting has been arranged for delegates to the Labour Party Conference at Scarborough. This meeting will be chaired by our President, Mrs. Barbara Castle, M.P., and Mr. Arthur Goldreich and Mr. Harold Wolpe will be among the speakers.

INTERNATIONAL SANCTIONS CONFERENCE

A provisional steering committee has been set up with the support of AAM to work on plans for an international conference on sanctions to be held early next year. AAM has two members on the steering committee.

MEMBERSHIP

Our membership at the end of September 1963 stood at 1,132 members, just over one third of these being full-time student members. Since the membership scheme started in August 1962 renewals are now falling due, and these are being received very promptly in the office. As a number of organisations have requested us that they be allowed to affiliate to AAM, the National Committee is recommending a scheme of "organisation members" as a form of affiliation for organisations, at an annual fee of £1.0.0. Our membership has come not from any large-scale effort to recruit a mass membership but is the result of our activities and publicity throughout the past year.

UNITED NATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL

Following the passing of the resolution by the General Assembly, AAM wrote to all countries who abstained or voted against, to ask them to change their vote next time, and also to the countries who voted for the resolution asking them what steps were being taken to implement it. We have sent information to the U.N. Special Committee on Apartheid, and also to the International Commission of Jurists. Several Embassies have approached us for information on S. Africa. In August the Hon. Secretary went to Scandinavia and arranged for closer co-operation between their Anti-Apartheid Committees and our Movement.

TRADE UNIONS

Owing to the pressure of work in the office it has not been possible over the past year to carry out consistent work among trade unions, but the case of the move of the Cyril Lord factory from Lancs. to S. Africa was taken up with the textile unions, and information supplied to show that one of the prime reasons for the decision to move the factory was the advantage of cheap African labour. A special meeting for TUC delegates was arranged for the 1963 TUC at Brighton, which was addressed by Mr. Leon Levy, former President of SACTU. The chairman of the meeting was Mr. Harold Collison, C.B.E., the TUC representative at the I.L.O.,

CONSUMER BOYCOTT

All the local councils and co-operative societies who participated in the Boycott Month of 1960 have been written to, and a number of local councils are in fact boycotting. The Co-operative Societies, with two exceptions (Bristol and Brighton) do not boycott completely, giving a variety of reasons. One of the decisions taken in connection with the ANTI-APARTHEID MONTH campaign is to write to all 500 Co-operative Societies putting the case for a change in their policy.

It is also proposed to re-design the present Boycott List, to enable it to be carried around more easily. An offer has been made to pay for 500 special "Boycott South Africa" badges, and the production of this is under consideration. It is also expected that poster parades and leafletting in shopping areas will form part of the campaign work, to ask shoppers to boycott South African goods, and explain why they should. The 18 months period allowed under the South Africa Act for shops to clear their stocks of South African produce, marked "Empire" will expire at the end of October 1963. Presumably it will then become an offence for South African goods so marked to be sold, and AAM is seeking legal advice on this point.

SPEAKERS

Requests for speakers are being received all the year round from all sorts of organisations. Over 50 meetings have been addressed by AAM speakers during this period. We are fortunate in being able to call on a wide range of informed speakers, all South African, who can tell of conditions in apartheid South Africa from first-hand knowledge. No fees are charged by AAM for this service, although organisations must pay the speaker's travelling expenses, and provide overnight hospitality if necessary.

SPORT

Since October last year we have been extremely active on the sports issue and have successfully called on several sportsmen not to tour South Africa. We have also sent material to 118 national Olympic Committees and other sports bodies about racialism in South African sport. We are hoping that the South African Olympic Committee will be excluded from the International Olympic Committee this year. We are sending a representative to the I.O.C. conference in Baden-Baden in October 1963. We have also taken up the case of Mr. Dennis Brutus, who was handed over to the South African police by the Portuguese authorities in Mozambique, and are at the moment in close touch with the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office, as well as the Central African Office.

PUBLICATIONS

A number of leaflets have been produced during the period under review, the most successful being the four-page "Are We Guilty", used in conjunction with the Boycott List. A special leaflet was prepared for the "No Arms" campaign and special posters and leaflets for the Rally on March 17th. A specially-designed poster and programme was produced for the folk-song concert "We Sing of Freedom". A Members' Newsletter and other information has gone out to members regularly, and a number of background Information Sheets have been prepared on a number of subjects. The I.U.S.Y. have published the text of a speech by our Hon. Secretary to the Summer Camp of the IUSY last year as a booklet - "The Truth about South Africa". This has been well reviewed and is in good demand.

We frequently receive requests from newspapers, journals, TV companies etc. for information on specific subjects, which we are able to supply from our press cuttings files and other sources. Recent programmes for which we have supplied information include those in the Tonight, Panorama and World in Action series.

FINANCE

Our finances are now in a very much healthier position than they were just over a year ago. This has been due to the energy of our Hon. Treasurer and to the work of the Finance Committee, as well as to the efforts of all the other members who help us in arranging fund-raising concerts and parties, etc. and who regularly send in donations. Fund-raising events arranged during the period included two parties and the Folk-Song Concert, the latter being an outstanding financial success.

Our need for money is greater than ever. We have the November campaign to finance in the immediate future and over the next twelve months our efforts will be intensified with the onset of the general election and the deterioration in the situation in South Africa. The Finance Committee have a number of plans in mind for fund-raising events, which are likely to include a recital and a concert. Details will of course be made known to members as soon as plans mature.

The financial account for the period from October 1st, 1962 to August 30th, 1963 will be presented as a separate statement. A verbal statement from the acting Treasurer will outline the financial position as at the end September, 1963.

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