

## Defence and Aid Fund Proscribed

by Elizabeth Franklin

After many threats, the South African Defence and Aid Fund, contributed to over the years by many Americans, has finally been banned by the Minister of Justice, B. J. Vorster.

The move came as no great surprise, since the Minister had begun attacks upon the Fund in 1964, warning its officials and employees of possible house arrest, and later banning or deporting many of its most prominent officers.

The hostility of the Verwoerd Government has stemmed from the Fund's dual functions: to secure legal defense for people accused of political "crimes", and to provide at least minimum subsistence for the families of those imprisoned. The Fund has defended thousands of apartheid-fighters since its inception in 1960; it has prevented the eviction of hundreds of families from their homes and has at least kept starvation from their doors.

### COURT ACTIONS BROUGHT

Since the banning, two court actions have been brought to challenge it: one on a technicality of name, and the other alleging the ban to be "unreasonable", and asking the Minister to produce evidence to back his action. The Minister, in reply, has requested that the application be dismissed, stating that he does not wish to disclose the evidence — "in the interests of justice".

### PURPOSE OF THE BAN

The intent behind this banning seems to be that the hundreds of people now awaiting trial for offences bound up with their struggle against racism should be left completely without defense, since hardly any of them can afford to engage a lawyer. It also would seem that the South African Government is not concerned with the plight of hundreds of families unable to pay their rent or buy food for their children, if deprived of the accustomed — though minimal — assistance from the Fund. (Government welfare aid is specifically withheld from the families of political prisoners.)

### BUT — ON WITH THE WORK!

Our work here in the U.S. for these courageous "resisters" has been made more difficult, but by no means impossible by the banning of the Fund in South Africa. *Ways will be found* to continue to send the desperately needed assistance! (See page 3 for details of trials now pending.) The American Committee on Africa urgently asks you for continued — and increased — contributions to its Africa Defence and Aid Fund (New York), for the benefit of those who struggle against apartheid.

## Senator Kennedy's South African Visit

On emerging from his visit to Chief Lutuli, at whose lonely farm he arrived by helicopter (White House style), Kennedy confessed he had just met with one of the world's great men.

To many observers it seemed clear that Kennedy meant it when he later said, on arriving in Dar es Salaam, that he meant to take a permanent interest in South African affairs. He had already accepted an invitation to return, next year,



"Playground"—to an Indian child in South Africa

this time made by the apartheid-apologist South African Foundation. We wonder if the Government will make the same mistake twice by granting him a visa again.

The banning of Ian Robertson, President of the National Union of South African Students, provoked many demonstrations in South Africa and abroad. Robertson had invited Kennedy to address his organization. In Johannesburg, 3,000 students marched in protest — the largest such demonstration since the one that led to the Sharpeville Massacre.

In New York, the American Committee on Africa, together with the National Student Christian Federation and the National Union of Students organized picketing at the South African Consulate. Officials refused to accept the letter of protest and told the small delegation to mind its own business.

### KENNEDY'S IMPACT

The impact of Senator Robert Kennedy's visit to South Africa in early June is yet to be measured. One thing is certain, however: It will not benefit apartheid. In just three days, the Senator managed to:

- Tell 18,000 people at the University of Cape Town that "the enlargement of liberty for human beings must be the

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(Kennedy, continued)

supreme goal and the abiding practice of any Western society;"

- Hold an hour private conversation with seldom-seen, seldom-heard Nobel-Prize winner Albert Lutuli;
- Meet with the banned National Union of South African President Ian Robertson, placed in quarantine for inviting Kennedy to South Africa;
- Address another overflow crowd made up largely of students, and later singing with them "We Shall Overcome;"
- Meet with a multiracial group of opponents to apartheid including Alan Paton, Roman Catholic Archbishop Dennis Hurley, Dr. Arthur Lazarus representing the Natal Indian community, and K. Guzana, the anti-Matanzima leader from the Transkei.

South African Government officials, looking sourly on this whirlwind tour, refused to meet with Kennedy. One fanatical editor of the important newspaper, *Die Transvaaler*, refused to meet the Senator on a Sunday on the grounds that he, being a Protestant, could do no work on the Lord's Day.

Kennedy's major speech at the University of Cape Town was an orchestrated appeal to the young not to despair, to work together for justice, reminding them that to the north in Africa young people in formerly oppressed and exploited societies have not estranged themselves from the broad traditions of the West. Thus South Africa must also "cleanse itself of hate and fear and artificial barriers . . ."

#### AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON AFRICA LAUNCHES ANTI-APARTHEID DECLARATION

Frederick O'Neal, President of Actors Equity, hosted a party for the A.C.O.A. on June 7th to launch a *Declaration of American Artists: "WE SAY NO TO APARTHEID."* Mr. and Mrs. Carl Schaeffer opened their Park Avenue penthouse to the party.

Henry Fonda, one of the 65 signatories to the Declaration, read the pledge of the artists: "We pledge . . . to refuse any personal or professional association with the present Republic of South Africa: this until all its people—black and white—shall *equally enjoy* the educational and cultural advantages of this rich and lovely land."

The 65 signatories of the Declaration are: Conrad Aiken, Lou Antonio, Joan C. Baez, Bil and Cora Baird, Tallulah Bankhead, Harry Belafonte, Saul Bellow, Leonard Bernstein, Leon Bibb, E. Power Biggs, Theodore Bikel, Victor Borge, Oscar Brand, Dave Brubeck, Carol Burnett, Paul Cadmus, Godfrey Cambridge, Carl Carmer, Diahanne Carroll, Paddy Chayefsky, Jerome Chodorov, John Ciardi, Marc Connelly, Ossie Davis, Sammy Davis, Jr., Ruby Dee, Leon Fleisher, Martha Z. Flowers, Henry Fonda, John Forsythe, James S. Garner, William Gibson, E. Y. Harburg, Julie Harris, Van Heflin, Granville Hicks, Jerome Hines, Carmen de L. Holder, Lena Horne, Langston Hughes, Eartha Kitt, Miriam Makeba, Marya Mannes, Johnny Mathis, Karl A. Menninger, Burgess Meredith, Arthur Miller, Warren Miller, Ashley Montagu, Henry Morgan, Patrice Munsel, Julie Neumar, Edmond O'Brien, Frederick O'Neal, Odetta, Sidney Poitier,

John Raitt, Jerome Robbins, Paul Robeson, Peter Seeger, George Shirley, Nina Simone, Ed Sullivan, Eli Wallach and Poppy Cannon White.

#### LIFE IMPRISONMENT FOR FISCHER

Abram Fischer, distinguished Afrikaner, former chairman of the South African Bar Council, and leading legal defender of the oppressed non-White people, was sentenced to life imprisonment in May. He was convicted of fifteen charges, nine of them under the Suppression of Communism Act and the Sabotage Act.

Bram Fischer came from an old Afrikaner family, and as a youth he had all the prejudices of his people against Africans. As he grew up, however, he began to realize that color prejudice was irrational, and resulted in privation and humiliation for the vast majority of the people of his country. He joined the Communist Party as a young man, he has stated, because of the glaring injustices done to the African people, against which the Party crusaded. His involvement in the struggle against apartheid was always intensely personal, and related to the suffering of the non-Whites. He defended those politically accused for next to nothing; he gave of himself and of his fortune unstintingly, over the years.

His own explanation of the conduct which led to his arrest was simply and poignantly given in his final address to the Court which sentenced him:

"All the conduct with which I have been charged has been directed towards maintaining contact and understanding between the races of this country. If one day it may help to establish a bridge across which white leaders and the real leaders of the non-Whites can meet—I shall be able to bear with fortitude any sentence."

#### THE 180 DAY LAW—ITS PURPOSE

The character of the "180 Day Law" was described in an earlier Bulletin: arrest without charge, and imprisonment in solitary confinement, without access to lawyers, for a period of up to 6 months at a time.

The purpose of this iniquitous law has now become clear: to apply pressure on detainees—often the wives or children of those politically accused—to testify for the State against relatives and friends.

Take one case as example, that of Mrs. Leslie Schermbrucker, wife of a political prisoner. Arrested under the 180 Day Law, after being detained for a while she was required to testify for the State against Harold Strachan, subsequently convicted in the most sensational of the Rand Daily Mail "prison scandal" cases.

Mrs. Schermbrucker, herself not charged with any offense, refused to testify against her friend. She was then ordered jailed for 300 days, which sentence she is now serving. There have been several other cases of sentences of a year imposed upon people refusing to yield to "180 Day" pressure and testify against their friends.

Physical and mental torture by the police in order to obtain statements has been repeatedly alleged by detainees. The most common seems to be the "Portuguese statue torture", which keeps the prisoner standing for days on a chalked space until he collapses, while interrogation goes on continuously.

# The Purge of the Eastern Cape

by Paseka E. Khabele

A series of shocking events is taking place these days in the Cape Province, South Africa. Under the guise of legality the racist government is relentlessly carrying out what has become known as the "purge of the African National Congress" in the Eastern Cape.

In the first seven months of 1965, 918 people were arrested; 452 of them have already been sentenced to a total of 2,339 years behind bars. And out of a prison population of 70,000 in South Africa, estimates are that some 8,500 are political prisoners. The incidence of the death penalty for political crimes is rising; in 1963, 40 people were sentenced to death, and by 1964 the number had risen to 45.

## TRIALS

The Verwoerd regime has established a pattern of monotonously similar trials: arrest, interrogation (which may be accompanied by torture), incarceration for many months, the formality of a trial, a savage sentence, and then to Robben Island, the nightmare prison for "politicals".

## ARRESTS

The arrest is often made in the most degrading way. In the small hours of the morning people have been dragged from their beds and taken to the police station half naked or in their night wear, even in winter. Men have frequently alleged brutal handling during arrest or subsequent interrogation, but few dare to make a formal charge. Arrested women often leave behind babies and small children. In some cases, both parents have been taken at the same time.

Detainees often have to wait from five to 22 months while the police are trying to frame a charge. Mr. Tommy Charlieman, for example, was kept in prison for 19 months without charge, severely injuring his health. After his release he claimed damages against the Minister of Justice for loss of health and wages. Vorster's reply was to have him re-arrested, charged, and sentenced to eight years more.

## CHARGES

Charges in these cases are usually framed under the *Suppression of Communism Act*, a "catch-all" which can be made applicable to any Government opponent. Fervent anti-communists have been charged under it, together with liberals, devoted Christians, a few genuine communists, and, in the main, ex-members of the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress. As a result, although as a rule the cases have nothing to do with communism, newspaper headlines frequently label them as such: "28 charged under Red Act", for example.

In Eastern Cape cases, those charged are designated for mass trials and the dispensation of mass "justice". Standard mimeographed forms set out standard charges, with occasional gaps for the name of the accused and the date of the alleged offense. The charges themselves are often so vaguely drawn as to make a proper defense impossible. Most of the cases have been heard "in camera", and in remote villages, to make attendance of legal counsel more difficult.

## WITNESSES

Two kinds of state witnesses are increasingly found in these mass trials: the intimidated and reluctant witness, and the "travelling" witness.

The first — and larger — group consists of people, themselves detained for long periods, who are "persuaded" to testify by psychological or physical abuse. This fact has recently been baldly stated by Supreme Court Justice Viljoen, who said in court that he accepts that torture in solitary confinement is the fate of political prisoners held without trial.

The "travelling witness" is one who goes from court to court, testifying in various cases as his evidence is needed by the State. The reliability of such witnesses, needless to say, is seriously questioned by defense lawyers, and sometimes by judges.

## RE-TRIALS

A recent development in the Eastern Cape is the *re-trial*. 41 political trials began in March, involving 161 persons already sentenced and jailed in 1963 or '64 for membership in the banned A.N.C. New accusations have been framed, usually relating to "furthering the aims of the African National Congress". As the original sentences expire, the accused are re-charged and re-imprisoned for much longer periods. Take Dixon Fuyoni, for example: On the day on which he was to be released after completing a two year sentence, he was condemned to seven years more in prison — on substantially the original charge!



MASABALA B. YENGWA  
"House arrested" African leader  
recently escaped to Swaziland.

By now, all "politicals" sentenced to less than "life" must wonder whether they will ever be permitted to go home. And what of the wives and children, who have been waiting for years to settle down to a normal family life? For them the pain of disappointment is cruelly added to the bitterness of poverty, hunger and loneliness.

At least 500 such families with more than 2,000 children live in the Port Elizabeth area. What this "purge" means to them in terms of the separation of parents and children, husbands and wives, the destruction of family life, cannot be measured. We fear that the wanton disregard of even basic humanity shown by the South African Government is storing up for itself a hatred that will prove in the future as inexorable as the cruel policies of the present regime are now.

## On the U.S. Scene

### NATIONAL CITY BANK CAMPAIGN

Students from Union and Jewish Theological Seminaries in April fired the first shot in a New York offensive against First National City Bank. National City boasts three branches in South Africa, and through its repeated loans and extension of credit has long been one of the chief American props of that apartheid economy.

A campaign to get depositors to withdraw their funds in protest against National City's involvement in South African racism was conducted by the students in their seminaries and in nearby Columbia and Barnard Colleges. In addition, the National Council of Churches and the Boards of several Protestant denominations were contacted and asked to examine the morality of their banking connections. Several of the groups have since appointed study commissions, and may yet be heard from.

On April 20th, several hundred people marched to the First National City Bank at 111th St. and Broadway and presented letters of protest; 80 of them withdrew their accounts, making the reason known. More will certainly follow suit.

### STOCKHOLDERS SPEAK OUT

The question of the personal responsibility of stockholders in U.S. companies which operate in South Africa is a matter which is only beginning to be pondered in this country. Occasionally an individual protest is voiced at a stockholders meeting. Recently, however, the May General Motors' Annual Meeting heard a searching question on the company's racial policies in South Africa asked, not by a lone protester, but by the official representative of the Society for Cultural and Racial Unity of the powerful Episcopal Church. The demand presented by the Rev. Joseph A. Pelham was either adoption of American employment standards at General Motors' South African plants—or consideration of the withdrawal of operations.

The Executive Director of the Episcopal society pre-

dicted: "that this will only be the beginning of pressure on U.S. industry to cease and desist from its partnership with racism in South Africa."

### ROBERT RESHA'S U.S. TOUR

Robert Resha, Chief Overseas Representative of the African National Congress of South Africa, has just completed a six week speaking tour for the American Committee on Africa. Mr. Resha filled 43 major engagements across the U.S. and Eastern Canada.

Although definitely not happy about the official U.S. Government position towards apartheid, Mr. Resha expressed satisfaction with the "grass-roots" contacts on his tour. However, "much, much more education on South Africa is needed", he commented on leaving.

It was for exactly this reason that the ACOA organized the tour, and also to swell its Defense and Aid Fund for victims of apartheid.

### PARTNERS IN APARTHEID

#### U.S. CAPITAL INVESTMENT GROWS

American expansion during 1965 in its South African automotive industry included new engine plants in Port Elizabeth by both **Ford** and **General Motors**. These, it was stated, were financed by "local profits"—which average between 22 and 27% on American investment in South Africa, due to the scandalously low wages paid to non-Whites. **Chrysler Corporation** on the other hand, made a new capital investment of \$35,000,000 in apartheid, building a new plant near Pretoria. This in spite of President Johnson's appeal to cut back on U.S. capital outflow abroad.

The **FARRELL STEAMSHIP LINE**, another "stalwart" of apartheid support, recently invested over \$42,000,000 in additional ships for the South Africa-U.S. run. Mr. James Farrell, chairman of the company, in April remarked in Johannesburg that he believes "the U.S. will never boycott South Africa".

## How You Can Help

1. Send a gift for the expenses of the *South Africa Bulletin*
2. Subscribe to the *Anti-Apartheid News*, London

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