

THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT

An All-Party Protest Against Racial Discrimination

15 Endsleigh Street,
London, W.C.1
Telephone: EUSton 5786

Hon. President : Mrs. Barbara Castle, M.P.

August 14, 1962

PRESS STATEMENT

15 AUG 1962

The Anti-Apartheid Movement is calling upon British sympathisers with the South African people's struggle against apartheid to send messages of support to Nelson Mandela when he appears in the Johannesburg Magistrates' Court on Thursday, August 16.

Banned since 1953 from taking part in the activities of the African National Congress and its supporting organisations, for the rest of his life, Mandela was chosen, with Lutuli's approval, to be the main speaker and leader at the All-In African Conference at Pietermaritzburg early in 1961. This was his first public appearance since 1952, the ban on his addressing gatherings having just expired. He was elected leader of the National Action Council which emerged from this Conference, and proceeded to call for a three-day general strike at the end of May 1961 in protest at South Africa's becoming an apartheid Republic.

With the general strike imminent, the Government threw all its forces into suppressing it, and many thousands of Africans were arrested and imprisoned without trial for 12 days. Mandela was among those who went underground and continued to issue statements to the press and to travel the country. Despite many Police searches he evaded arrest for 15 months.

His arrest, together with that of Walter Sisulu, the ex-Secretary-General of the African National Congress, means the beginning of a renewed onslaught by the Government against the South African people. It is by no means the end of the struggle but merely the beginning of a new phase of it. Messages of support to the South African people from overseas at this time will be particularly meaningful.

The Anti-Apartheid Movement has today sent the following message to Nelson Mandela:

"The Anti-Apartheid Movement appreciates your courageous fight against apartheid and expresses its determination to continue its support of the struggle to bring apartheid to an end. "

With the passing of the General Law Amendment Act (the 'Sabotage' Act) no statement made by Mandela or by Walter Sisulu in Court (or anywhere else) will be allowed to be published in the South African press - but messages from overseas may be published and will break this silence.

Telegrams should be sent to Nelson Mandela, c/o The Chief Magistrate, Magistrates Court, Johannesburg, S. Africa, to arrive on Thursday morning, August 16th. The Anti-Apartheid Movement would appreciate knowing what messages have been sent so that the information can be made generally known. If you cannot send a message to reach Mandela on August 16th send it c/o the Anti-Apartheid Movement, 15 Endsleigh Street, W.C.1., who will forward them to South Africa.

* * * *

Mandela

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Hon. President: Mrs. Barbara Castle, M.P.

14th November, 1962.

PRESS STATEMENT

In response to a message of support sent by the Anti-Apartheid Movement to Nelson Mandela, we have received the following reply; written in Pretoria the day before he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment:-

14 NOV 1962

NELSON MANDELA,
19476/62.
6/11/1962.

THE SECRETARY,
ANTI-APARTHEID COMMITTEE,
LONDON.

DEAR SIR,

WE ARE MOST GRATEFUL FOR THE DYNAMIC MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY AND SUPPORT SENT THROUGH THE CHIEF MAGISTRATE OF JOHANNESBURG.

IT GAVE US A LOT OF INSPIRATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT. YOUR MESSAGE, AS WELL AS MANY OTHERS WE RECEIVED FROM ABROAD, FURNISHED YET ANOTHER PROOF THAT IN THE STRUGGLE FOR A DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA, WE CAN COUNT ON THE SUPPORT OF THE CIVILISED WORLD.

IN THANKING YOU I MUST AT THE SAME TIME ASK YOU TO ACCEPT THIS NOTE AS A VERY FIRM, WARM AND HEARTY HANDSHAKE FROM US.

YOURS VERY SINCERELY,

NELSON.

It will be seen that messages of support from outside South Africa to those suffering because of their opposition to apartheid are very much appreciated.

News today of two further house arrests, bringing the total up to ten, has led the Anti-Apartheid Movement to decide to conduct a campaign of support for all political prisoners and to demand their release.

It has sent a protest in the strongest possible terms to the South African Minister of Justice, and asks other organisations and individuals to protest also.

In view of the wave of house arrests now taking place, the Anti-Apartheid Movement is prepared to put individuals or organisations in touch with those under house arrest in South Africa so they may break through the isolation imposed on them, not only by sending messages of support but by corresponding directly with them.

Rosalyn de Ainslie
Rosalyn de Ainslie
Hon. Secretary.

Not for release till 6.30 p.m. - November 26th 1962

At the Annual General Meeting of Christian Action, Canon L. John Collins made his Chairman's report

He said: 1) My annual task of reporting on the year's work is made a great deal easier - I am tempted to say, almost superfluous - now that our News Letter, under my wife's able and energetic editorship, gives such excellent and regular reports of our activities. Nevertheless, I realise that it is expected of a Chairman that he shall have something to say on these occasions and, indeed, I would not have it otherwise.

2) A quick glance through the pages of our recent News Letters show that there are still two main spheres of action - race relations and peace.

3) The Defence and Aid Fund remains the bulwark of our race relations work: the withdrawal of South Africa from the Commonwealth has in no way lessened the need for legal defence and aid to the families of those who come before the courts and are sometimes kept without trial and without bail for weeks on end. The high percentage of cases which are discharged where legal aid is made available is immensely encouraging and more than justifies the work we try to do through the Fund. Besides the spectacular cases, such as that of Nelson Mandela,, there are a large number where the provision of a lawyer by the Defence and Aid Fund has meant that prosecutions has not been sustained and men have been set free. For example, in the Cape Town area alone, during 1961 of 83 serious charges brought (with the possibility of heavy sentences if the accused were to be convicted) 5 only were convicted, 78 being acquitted. Of less serious charges 94 persons had been found guilty (or the State had withdrawn the charges) and 32 convicted. Not only did the Fund provide defence, but in many cases bail for the accused -without which many of them would have spent weeks in prison, and many more might have been convicted if they had had no representation.

The betrayal of Nelson Mandela - that remarkable "Black Pimpernel" of the African National Congress, was a further tragic blow to moderate African leadership. One of my pleasant recollections of the past year is of meeting Nelson Mandela when he had lunch with my wife and me in our home, some months ago. It is now, alas, an open secret that he came to England. Christian Action, on hearing of his arrest last August and that of Walter Sisulu, sent an immediate promise to pay for their legal aid. And when Mandela finally stood his trial last month we paid for Mr. Louis Blom Cooper to go out as an observer of the trial. I would like to read you a letter I had from Nelson Mandela a few days ago:

We were greatly inspired by the dynamic message contained in your telegram sent through the Chief Magistrate of Johannesburg. We were also informed of your very kind offer of assistance in other directions, for which we are most grateful.

A few years ago, you launched a massive campaign in Britain to mobilise assistance for South African freedom fighters who were facing a charge of treason. In the course of that campaign, Christian Action emerged as one of our strongest and most reliable allies in the fight for a democratic South Africa; a South Africa free from the evils of racial discrimination and oppression.

Your stand in connection with the present trial is in conformity with belief in democratic values with which Christian Action is associated.

Finally, I ask you to accept this note as a very firm, warm and hearty handshake from me.

- 4) I am glad to be able to tell you that Defence and Aid Fund Committees are now being established in other countries: in particular in Denmark, where a public appeal was launched last week; and also other Scandinavian countries, in France and in Australia, where negotiations are well in hand.
 - 5) Our pastoral work among African students and other coloured people in this country, I shall mention only in passing. It takes a great deal of our time and is, I believe, important and worthwhile. And it saves us, perhaps, from becoming too concerned with what I might call empire building - a temptation of almost any successful organisation!
 - 6) Closely allied to this side of our work is an undertaking I have recently given that Christian Action shall sponsor the raising of an emergency fund for Kenya students who are at present in this country without any financial sponsorship from their own Government. The scheme is, as yet, in embryo. If, as I hope, it comes to full flower, it should be a valuable contribution not only to race relations in this country, but also to the waging of war on want, of which we all hear and speak so much nowadays. It is, I believe, of paramount importance that the developing countries of the world shall have adequate opportunities for education and technical training. Without this, all efforts at feeding the hungry and healing the sick can be no more than 'ambulance' work, for education is the keynote to independence for every African country.
 - 7) Mention of underdeveloped countries, prompts me to tell you that we have recently undertaken to sponsor a Christian Action worker in Korea: he is on his way there at the moment (accompanied by his wife, who is sponsored by S.P.G). He will be writing a comprehensive report on community development work in many parts of the world, having already travelled extensively in the Far and Middle East, and in Africa. And at the same time will be involved in the development of the Institute of Community Education at the Christian University of Yousei, Seoul.
 - 8) Of our activities for peace, I shall not speak in detail. It has been a year of conferences, and you will have read comprehensive reports of some of these in the last issue of the News Letter. Next year promises others of equal interest and importance. I would like, particularly, to draw your attention to a conference in January which Christian Action, in conjunction with the Friends Peace Committee, is arranging at Elfinsward, Haywards Heath. We shall aim to discuss, in the light of our Christian faith and conviction, the military, political, psychological and religious factors in the present world situation, with a final session on what next steps can be taken. The date is January 22nd to the 24th. I very much hope you may be able to come.
- In February, my wife and I are undertaking a lecture tour in America, under the auspices of S.A.N.E. Although much of my peace work is more obviously and closely allied to my position as Chairman of C.N.D. I would like to feel - indeed I am sure - that we shall have the goodwill and prayers of Christian Action with us as we undertake this tour.
- 9) During the year our Council has decided to introduce a minimum subscription of £1, for membership of Christian Action. We intend in 1963 to make a drive for membership. We have some new leaflets ready for this purpose, and they are available in the hall tonight. I would like to ask each one of you to try to bring in at least two or three - and better still ten or twelve - new members before our next A.G.M. The effectiveness of an organisation is not wholly allied to its size: but the time comes - and the Council of Christian Action believes that time has now come for us - when one must count heads.

19) During the past year a local group of Christian Action has got under the inspiration of George Hamilton; with all the work he does for us as Honorary Treasurer - and I really do not know how we would ever keep our books straight, without his tireless efforts - I cannot imagine how he has found the time and energy to do this. There are also plans afoot for a local venture in Nottingham where we hope shortly to have a shot at running a 'nearly new' shop which some of our members there have suggested. We would like to see a considerable extension of such local activities as these; we would welcome further initiatives and suggestions for action.

To sum up: There is as great a need today as ever before for Christian Action. Recent displays of racial prejudice here in Britain, as well as the increasingly stringent measures being taken in South Africa to overcome any kind of resistance to apartheid, and the displays of racialism by both black and white in other parts of the world, show that the lead we gave ten years ago to public opinion on racial discrimination, still needs an energetic follow-up.

But racialist is not the only contemporary issue about which there is need to stir up the conscience of the nation and to which it is necessary to apply Christian insights; relations between East and West; War on Want; the plight of millions of refugees; care of old people; safety on the roads; the operation of censorship of plays and films and books and television programmes; these and many other issues need for their proper treatment a "ginger group" like Christian Action to stimulate action in accordance with liberal Christian insights.

Christian Action, as you know, calls upon all who respect the life and teaching of Jesus to apply their insights arising out of this respect to the affairs of everyday life with all its political, social and economic problems and responsibilities, as well as its more personal aspects. We try to illustrate this general proposition by taking action as an organisation in particulars as they arise, realising that we can only tackle a limited number of projects. What matters most is not what the organisation as such is doing; but the response of individual supporters, each finding an outlet for Christian action in his or her own way.

26th November 1962

....., 1963.

The Prime Minister,

The arrest and subsequent harsh sentence of imprisonment imposed upon NELSON MANDELA, whose courage and leadership has been a source of great inspiration to the oppressed peoples of South Africa in their struggle against apartheid tyranny and for freedom, is a shame which democracy-loving people the world over cannot tolerate.

We can only see the drastic legislation being passed by the South African Government as arbitrary and aimed at sentencing to death or long terms of imprisonment those who oppose your racial policies.

WE DEMAND THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF THIS GREAT AFRICAN LEADER TOGETHER WITH OTHER VARIOUS POLITICAL PRISONERS, HOUSE-ARRESTEES AND THOSE IN BANISHMENT.

.....

Reverend
Maj. Benzer
S12 2311



TO:

Dr. H. F. VERWOERD,

Prime Minister,

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY,

CAPE TOWN,

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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