

SOLIDARITY WITH WILLIAMS  
COLLEGE STUDENTS

On January 21 three Williams College undergraduates, members of Williams Anti-Apartheid Coalition, went on a hunger strike to protest the College's failure to withdraw its investments in companies that do business in South Africa. Several members of ASAPFA went to Williamstown on January 27 to show our interest and support. We spoke with Derede Arthur, one of the hunger-strikers, about the group's aims. The demands of the students were that the College: divest from fifteen companies which have been cited for non-compliance with the Sullivan Principles (guidelines for non-discrimination in employment in the companies' workplaces in South Africa); withdraw all short-term deposits from banks which loan money to South Africa; and include student-elected members on the Advisory Committee on Shareholder Responsibility. The College agreed to make efforts to comply and to meet with WAAC in three months to review progress. Many students and many faculty members signed statements of support. The demonstration ended with a rally on January 28. ASAPFA's Boji Jordan was one of the speakers and remained two days to assist.

ASAPFA met with Assemblyman Roger Green at the Albany Public Library on January 26 and talked about divestment. It is now state policy in Massachusetts and Connecticut to disinvest in companies that do business in South Africa (for example, IBM, which supplied the equipment to computerize the hated "pass system")

# ASAPFA

## NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY, 1983



Disinvestment could be an effective tool to pressure the South African government. How about New York State? Many companies with large investments in South Africa are headquartered in New York, as is the banking industry which has made billions of dollars of loans. So, the goal must be kept in sight. We salute the Williams College students and hope they'll be copied many times in many places.

-Rezsina Adams

### INTRODUCING A.S.A.P.F.A.

ASAPFA was initiated in 1982 as a direct people-to-people friendship association welcoming as members all people interested in building links of friendship and assistance between American and South African peoples. Albany, New York the location of the large anti-rugby, anti-apartheid protest in 1981 became both the national and the pilot chapter with other chapters opening at the local level elsewhere in the United States. All chapters are resolved to fight apartheid with each becoming involved in ways appropriate for the local area. Some of the major goals of ASAPFA are: 1) to inform and educate people all over the United States of the nature of apartheid with its intractable, unjust social, political, and economic order; 2) to offer friendship to South African exiles and refugees who have had to flee from their homeland; and 3) to aid in relieving the South African people from the oppressive apartheid system in South Africa, tackling such contingencies as the dire starvation of adults and children, the almost complete lack of educational facilities for millions of Black children, the need for medical supplies by the masses of people, the denial of the right of self-determination for the vast majority of people, and the abrogation of all human rights.

As ASAPFA President and South African exile, Bojana Jordan states, "We call upon all Americans of good will to join us in carrying out the objectives of the Association and extending friendship to the oppressed of South Africa. 'Tell me who your friends are, and I'll tell you who you are' said one philosopher. Our friends are the 24 million down-trodden South Africans and not the government who created the horrendous conditions of apartheid. Enclosed is a statement of our pledge with a membership form. We hope you join us!"

## ANSWERS ABOUT APARTHEID

Each month the ASAPFA Newsletter will answer questions about apartheid sent in by readers, members, and/or interested persons. All answers will be taken from United Nations sources. Two questions submitted this month from Dale Getto, a new member, are in today's column.

*What is apartheid?*

"Apartheid is an Afrikaans word which literally means separateness. It is the name given by the Government of South Africa in 1948 to its policy relating to the various racial communities living in South Africa.

Apartheid repudiates the concept of coexistence of the various racial groups. Its goal is not only to maintain, as before, non-whites in an inferior status, but to eliminate them totally from any kind of participation in the political, social, economic and cultural life of the country, and ultimately achieve complete territorial separation."

The United Nations has, on numerous occasions, declared that "a policy of 'racial segregation' (apartheid) is necessarily based on doctrines of racial discrimination". Recently, in a number of resolutions, it

stated that it considered that the continued existence of apartheid, racial discrimination and colonialism in Southern Africa "constitutes a crime against humanity and poses a grave threat to peace and security, not only in Southern Africa but also in other areas of the world outside the African continent".

*Is there any scientific basis for apartheid?*

A statement on race and racial prejudice drawn up by geneticists, anthropologists, ethnologists, sociologists, historians and jurists—expressed the belief that: "Racism stultifies the development of those who suffer from it, perverts those who apply it, divides nations within themselves, aggravates international conflict and threatens world peace".

The statement of the experts also contained the following observation: "Racism grossly falsifies the knowledge of human biology."

All men living today belong to the same species and descend from the same stock.

against racism. Once apartheid is gone, we may find ourselves the most racist country in the world. We will have no one to hide behind. We will have to address de facto segregation. We will have to change!

## MEET THE MEMBERS

WHY DID YOU JOIN A.S.A.P.F.A.? Gordon Molyneux

I first attended an organizational meeting of the American-South African Peoples' Friendship Association (ASAPFA) because, like many of you reading this newsletter, I abhorred apartheid and wanted to play some small part in helping eradicate it. After several meetings I had agreed to hold office and to spend much time (which, like many of you, I am very short of) working to get the organization going. At the next meeting I volunteered to take care of the incorporation, the not-for-profit mailing, and tax exempt status. All at once I found myself very committed to a cause which I must admit had never motivated me much beyond a demonstration or two in the past. Why? What was the motivation? After all, I have never been to Africa, probably never will. I do not know many Africans, only one South African prior to joining ASAPFA. Why did I suddenly get so involved in a cause about which I know very little, when there are so many other causes crying for assistance, causes about which I have some knowledge and causes which deeply concern me?

After some reflection, I realized that my motive for becoming active in ASAPFA was not really international altruism, nor was it as remote as I had earlier thought. Instead my motive was very national and personal. It was racism in the United States! Apartheid in South Africa has stopped the civil rights movement in the United States dead in its tracks!!! Next to South Africa the United States looks downright bi-racial. As long as the world has South Africa's blatant racist policies to see and resist, America's more subtle, but just as real, racism is ignored. As a matter of fact, it is the U.S. government's best interest to support the South African government's racist policy so we can voice mild condemnation while at the same time masking our own oppression of minorities. South Africa's de jure segregation camouflages U.S. de facto segregation. South Africa's treatment of black South Africans makes it easier for every other oppressor in the world, no matter whether they are oppressing religions, ethnic groups, races, or women. Who notices the poisonous snake when an alligator is attacking?

As we begin in the United States to take the steps necessary for real equality, Apartheid must go. The more publicity without action the white regime gets, the more difficult it will be to convince people that we still have a race problem here. So by joining ASAPFA, I am taking part in educating people about the evils of apartheid, and in some small way helping to destroy that particular form of racist oppression. Thus, I am really helping to pave the way for a renewed effort in the United States,