

# ICARIS

## International Campaign Against Racism in Sport

UPDATE

Dennis Brutus  
Chairman  
Robert David Baker  
Executive Secretary

Executive  
Kader Asmal, Ire.  
Louise Asmal, Ire.  
Robert Edgar, U.S.A.  
Ian Lind, U.S.A.  
Ellen Mark, U.S.A.  
Winston Nagan, U.S.A.  
Tom Neunham, NZ.  
Håkan Nordlund, Sweden  
Trevor Richards, NZ.

Dennis Brutus  
Chairman  
624 Clark  
Evanston, Ill.  
60201

Robert Baker  
Secretary  
741 Franklin St.  
Santa Clara, CA.  
95050

**GOLF:** From November 17th thru December 3rd, ICARIS members and other supporting organizations protested the World Cup and International Trophy Tournament, both at the site of the tournament in Princeville-at Hanalei, on the island of Kauai, Hawaii, and at other world-wide sites housing the corporate offices of the tournament's sponsors. The focus of the protest revolved around the invitation extended by the International Golf Association (IGA) to members of the South African *apartheid* team: Bobby Verwey and Nicky Proce. Among the most prominent of the corporate sponsors of the tournament were Pan-American Airlines and American Express, two of the prime violators of the international proscriptions against corporate investments in the South African economy.

ICARIS became involved in the move to expel the racist team from the tournament through the efforts of the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement, which successfully expelled the tournament from its initial site in Ireland after the IGA refused to sanction the involvement of the south africans. The tournament was then moved to the island of Kauai with the obvious intent that such a move to that exclusive resort in the pacific would deter any further protest. They were wrong. Supporters, led by Ian Lind of the Honolulu-based chapter of the American Friends Service Committee (now an ICARIS member), picked up the banner of anti-*apartheid* sport and sought to gain the expulsion of the racist team. Although contacted late in the protest, the Hawaiiin activists created a substantial debate over the propriety of allowing the south africans to participate in the tournament. This controversy was reported up widely in the Honolulu Advertiser and the Star-Bulletin.

On the day of the tournament, the protesters were joined by ICARIS Chairman Dennis Brutus. This group was able to gain entry to the green itself in pursuing their opposition to the tournament as it was finally composed. Two weeks prior, support came to the cause from a resolution introduced in the Kauai County Council by councilwoman Jo Ann Yukimura, asking that the tournament sponsors and organizers not allow the south african team to participate in the play. South Africa's policy of *apartheid* was labeled by the resolution as *an insult to the aloha spirit*. The resolution passed with one dissenting vote, yet the tournament continued to its completion with the participation of the south africans.

In New York City, demonstrators from ICARIS, the American Coordination Committee for Equality in Sports and Society (ACCESS), and the NorthEast Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa, struck the Pan-American headquarters in a challenge to that corporation's sponsorship of the World Cup.

Anti-apartheid pickets were also conducted by the Citizens Association for Racial Equality (CARE) outside the Pan-American headquarters in Auckland Aotearoa, New Zealand. In addition to protesting the inclusion of the south african players in the tournament, the New Zealanders challenged the legitimacy of the presence of the team from New Zealand as in contravention of the Gleneagles Agreement signed by member countries of the Commonwealth, and which admonishes member countries to refrain from sporting contacts with South Africa.

The international protests were endorsed by Leslie O. Harriman (Nigeria), Chairman of the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid as being *in harmony with United Nations resolutions and demonstrate(s) solidarity with the oppressed people of South Africa.*

\*\*\* In spite of the international protests against the inclusion of the south africans in the World Cup competition, the IGA remains adamant in its isolated support among international sporting bodies to support the continued participation of South Africa teams and players in its tournaments. John M. Ross, executive director of the IGA, anticipated *no change* in that organization's policies re South Africa, and indicated the the World Cup would be played in a European country in 1979. With equal tenacity, ICARIS will continue to fight for the total expulsion of south african racist teams from world sport.

**BOXING:** Muhammad Ali's proposed bid to go to South Africa in December, 1978 suffered a knockout blow at the hands of anti-apartheid activist groups and civil rights organizations. Ali was to have been the guest of the Islamic Council of South Africa through an offer extended by Farook Khan of the *Post*, who was in New Orleans for the last Ali-Spinks fight. The invitation extended by Khan is a turnabout of an earlier position on the whether Ali should make a visit to South Africa. Reliable sources have reported that Khan approached them in Chicago in 1977, attempted to arrange an interview with Ali. At that time, it is reported, Khan felt that any visit to South Africa by the Champion would be unwise since the implication would be to lend credibility to the *apartheid*, since any visit must be approved by the ruling Nationalist Party. In a letter to Ali, Mr. M.N. Pather, Secretary of the South African Council of Sport (SACOS) wrote:

*Over the years the name of Muhammad Ali, formerly Cassius Clay, not only dominated the boxing world but wrote new chapters in boxing history and boxers all over the world have given all they had, to witness your ability to put down your opponent. In South Africa thousands of sportsmen are yearning to witness a bout in which you could figure as their number one idol. Regrettably the time is not opportune for all of us to witness that bout. Nonracial sportmen of this country, follow a code of principle, and have accepted a moratorium which calls on all sportsmen outside South Africa not to*

visit this country until such a time laws preventing all sportsmen from assembling together without any restriction are removed from the Statute books. Your visit, therefore, with respect, is not welcome.

In another arena of boxing, south african boxer Kallie Knoetze's bout with american heavyweight Bill Sharkey was allowed to be staged in Miami despite intensive protests and legal *demarches* in opposition. Many telegrams were sent to the White House and to the promoters of the bout in an attempt to head off the match. Madison Square Garden did pull out of its promotional role as a result of the uproar. And at the instigation of Operation Push and ACCESS, the U.S. State Department originally revoked the south african's visa for his admitted shooting of a black south african youth in both legs while he was a constable in Pretoria. Another factor in the visa revocation was a conviction of the felony charge of tampering with witness which was levied against Knoetze during the trial of a fellow white policeman who was on trial for police brutality. It is also relevant that the shooting by Knoetze was during a political demonstrations, and the black youth was subsequently found innocent of any wrongdoing. Unfortunately, a Florida district court judge entered an injunction against the visa action long enough to let the bout be staged. However, the government won its visa suspension against Knoetze in court action following the bout, thus killing any hope that promoters had lined up for a Knoetze-Leon Spinks bout in the U.S. Promoters however said that the fight may still be staged in South Africa.

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It is the feeling of many activists in the field of anti-*apartheid* sports that there is a need for a body that is devoted to gathering and dissemination information to other organizations working within the sports area. The need arises out of fact that international sport protests must be coordinated and information must be sent out to the concerned bodies if the continued isolation of South Africa from world sport is to function properly. It is only through this type of activity that effective counters can be devised to offset the obviously superior finances and resources that the South African government is putting into the international arena to ensure that it remains active through the mirror of international sports. The effectiveness of this strategy has been borne out in the past, and more recently by the activities of the Irish Anti Apartheid Movement in the World Cup competition. That protest began by the activities of the Irish group, and was continued through the alert that group gave to ICARIS, thereby allowing ICARIS time to seek allies in Hawaii. The campaign to isolate South Africa from the arenas of the world is far from over, and special attention needs to be given to those third party countries which are carrying out sporting exchanges in violation of the United Nations Declaration Against *Apartheid* Sport and the Gleneagles Agreement. In this context ICARIS is attempting to fill the need for an international body which will be devoted to gathering and dissemination information on violations of the above two agreements. Toward this end, periodical newsletters of this sort will attempt to keep out supporters current on the international status of the campaign.

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