

BULLETIN 10

AMERICANS FOR SOUTH AFRICAN RESISTANCE

513 West 166th Street

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Gratitude Expressed for American Contributions

A letter, with receipts for \$1184, has just arrived from a responsible leader of the resistance movement in South Africa. So far approximately \$2000 has come to us for forwarding to South Africa to support the families of resisters. The letter which just arrived reads in part:

"I have just received your letter and cheque. I am replying immediately (enclosing formal receipt) to let you know how greatly we appreciate this generous help you are giving to our cause which, as you will have been told, is a fight for elementary rights and justice for our people in the land of their birth. Many thousands of our men and women have gone to jail for just this. Many more are prepared to do so even at the risk of leaving their own families to starve. It thus becomes the duty of those of us who can to prevent unnecessary suffering of young and aged.

"The funds you send us help us not only in this way but in some cases fines have had to be paid for resisters who have become ill in jail. Treatment in jails has lately become more and more brutal and many of our brave men and women have come out physical wrecks requiring extended treatment.

"Lately new laws have been promulgated, making it an offence, subject to very heavy sentences, for any person 'inciting' others to break laws, etc. No meetings of more than ten persons are allowed in African locations or reserves. Practically all our leaders and spokesmen have been served with letters from the Minister of Justice preventing them from attending 'any gathering'. I am one of those served with such a letter and thus dare not even attend a Church service!

"Such is our plight in our unhappy land. But we are not discouraged but are even more encouraged to fight back when we know that we have the backing of friends all over the world.

"For the present, I would not suggest the collection of clothes and food parcels. Previous experience has taught me that an unsympathetic Government can place all kinds of difficulties (customs, etc.) in the way."

We will continue to send funds as they arrive. We are also trying to find out more about the possibilities for sending clothing and other supplies to South Africa. So far no satisfactory means has been worked out. Word we have received from several sources in South Africa indicates that it is difficult to get certain items into South Africa without the government's intercepting them or charging a prohibitive duty.

Whites Arrested in Campaign

One of the most heartening developments in the Campaign has been the recent participation by white people in it. This is simply another indication of the way in which the Campaign has caught hold and has been growing. Considerable publicity was

given in the United States to the arrest on December 8th of Patrick Duncan, the son of a former Governor-General of the Union, and of Manilal Gandhi, the son of Mohandas K. Gandhi. Along with them six other white people, seventeen other Indians, and fourteen Africans were arrested. In this country the name of Manilal Gandhi is fairly well known, but that of Patrick Duncan is less familiar. A clipping from the November 28th issue of the POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT of Pretoria includes a statement by Mr. Duncan which indicates something of his point of view.

"We are approaching the greatest crisis in our history. It is no longer in the power of White South Africa to impose on Non-White South Africa discriminations based purely on colour, not even by a drastic policy of interments, and within the lifetime of many of us our Non-White fellow citizens will be emancipated.

"All that is in the power of White South Africa is to choose whether the change will come with or without violence. If White South Africa turns today to naked force to preserve the present caste system it will be held responsible by history for the race war that will probably destroy our country.

"The African and Indian political movements are today pledged to the methods of nonviolence. That is to say, they are putting Christianity into practice. They are refusing to consent to oppression; but they in their turn are refusing to injure their opponents.

"Such methods point to a future South Africa which will award equal value to persons of all colours, while at the same time allowing freedom to groups that wish to remain racially or culturally separate.

"I have had the honour to be accepted by the Indian Congress in one of their batches which will defy a law on December 8th.

"I believe that the Congresses are in no way responsible for the recent sad riots. Since I believe in nonviolence, I support the Government in all legitimate action taken to suppress riots and to preserve life and property."

Mr. Duncan (on crutches as a result of a motor accident), Mr. Gandhi, and their companions were arrested for entering a native location near Johannesburg. The RAND DAILY MAIL of December 8th quotes Duncan further:

"The defiance campaign has done what no other African political move has done," he said. "It has brought in the ordinary Native man-in-the-street."

"What the Natives now wanted were new terms and cooperation with the Whites. Mr. Duncan told the Press representatives that he did not see any particular role for himself in South African politics.

"But I look forward to the growth of the African National Congress and the South African Indian Congress as a great responsible non-European movement."

"Dr. Malan's statement that the movement was Communist-inspired was incorrect.

"We know that there are Communists among them; but surely the fact that they have had to adapt themselves to passive resistance shows that they are not calling the tune.

"If I thought this organization was Communist, I would not be prepared to cooperate with it."

"Mr. Swart's comparison of the movement to the movement of Mau Mau was not correct either. In the defiance campaign, not a single word had ever been said against the White man.

He felt that, as an ideal, the old Cape maxim, 'Equal rights for all civilised people', was a good one."

Other indications that the Campaign is being taken extremely seriously by whites are seen in several events. On December 9th, the day after Duncan and Gandhi were arrested, four more white people were arrested. They were picked up on the charge, according to the NEW YORK TIMES, of "causing an obstruction by occupying post office seats marked 'Non-Europeans Only', and refusing to leave when asked to do so." Among those arrested on this occasion was Albert Sachs, the son of E. S. Sachs, a trade union leader and author of the recent book, "The Choice Before South Africa". The total number of resisters who have been arrested to date, according to the NEW YORK TIMES of January 8th, is 8,065. The City Council of Kimberley has been moved by recent events to enter into immediate consultation with representatives of the Africans, something which the Union government has refused to do. This certainly does not mean that any great concessions will be made, but it does reveal that broad sections of the white population are anxious to have some direct contact with the Africans.

Some Reactions of White South Africans

A recent letter from a representative of the South African Institute of Race Relations summarizes in brief points some major observations about the Campaign. These observations are particularly interesting because the Institute is by no means a radical organization, and prior to June 26th urged the African National Congress to hold off on the launching of the Campaign. His more important points follow.

- "1. Support for the Campaign is spreading beyond the Cape urban areas.
- "2. A remarkable and unexpected aspect of it is the remarkable self-control of the resisters. We had expected that a long period of training would have had to be given.
- "3. The Movement gains much of its energy from younger men.
- "4. The campaign is training heroes and martyrs as well as leaders for future work.
- "5. The Port Elizabeth riot was not inspired by the campaigners or the African National Congress.
- "6. The African National Congress will have to be careful to keep control of the resistance movement, for if riots etc. occur, the movement will get out of hand and break up.
- "7. To Europeans the campaign constitutes a great threat and it is likely to provoke strong resistance, particularly as few people will make the distinction between the riots and the campaign."

Two other communications from responsible white people have come in which offer further light on reaction among whites to the Campaign. One letter is from a correspondent in Cape Town:

"I myself am of the opinion that the campaign is growing in dimension. There was scepticism, indifference, or mild annoyance at one time among white South Africans about the campaign; it is still difficult for the whites, who, with few exceptions, have little personal contact with the non-Europeans here, to gauge the depth of resentment felt by the non-Europeans.

"South African Europeans, generally speaking, did not take the campaign seriously until the recent riots in Port Elizabeth, Kimberley, and East London, and Mau Mau trouble in Kenya.

"As far as can be ascertained in the absence of a judicial enquiry, these riots have no connection with the campaign. The African National Congress leaders both before and after the riots denounced categorically violence in any form. And there is no apparent reason to doubt their sincerity. The Government has refused to set up a commission to enquire into the basic causes of the violence, but its spokesmen on public platforms attribute the riots to the resistance campaign. They suggest a Mau Mau parallel as well, apparently to justify the strong measures they intend to take to stamp out the resistance movement. (They also blame Anglican clergymen, the United Nations, the South African Court of Appeals, the South African English press, the political opposition party, and other agencies of that sort, for the disturbances.)

"By international standards, there are not many liberal white people in South Africa. Of those liberals, a few seem to be increasingly sympathetic with the campaign. Others seem to have identified themselves more with their whiteness than with their liberalism since the riots.

"There seems little reason to believe that the Government will agree to meet with the African leaders in order to discuss some of their demands, if by the African leaders you mean the African National Congress. On the contrary, Government spokesmen have indicated that they might possibly be willing to talk to 'moderate' African leaders after they have stamped out disaffection, but that they would not consider talking to rebels, among whom they class African National Congressmen."

Another white woman, from Stutterheim in the Cape Province, wrote:

"Once again nonviolence as a technique seems to be proving its efficacy; and I think you are right when you say that 'the liberal whites, as a result, have been drawn more and more closely to the position that the movement is doing an important and necessary job.' Unfortunately the 'liberal whites' are a small minority. The United Party itself is by no means very liberal, and fears to lose votes if it were to become more so. The Bishop of Natal has recently (a few days ago) made some very practical suggestions, one being the immediate giving of the franchise on the common roll to educated Africans. I think an education qualification is necessary, and the Africans would be satisfied with this.

"What we have to try to do is to educate the white South Africans, many of whom do not even distinguish between Passive Resisters and rioters!

"The attitude of people who have taught for a long time in Mission Schools and perhaps ought to know better is usually that of a schoolmaster to a provoking and unruly class -- they 'know them too well'. However one gets unexpected sympathy from rank-and-file Christians, many of whom are deploring the rush for firearms! There is a good deal of panic among irresponsible people."

Literature

Candid Thoughts on Non-Violence, by Arthur W. Blaxall .10

Reprinted from the NEW REPUBLIC, December 29, 1952. Mr. Blaxall is the Secretary of the Christian Council of South Africa.

Reaction and Revolt in South Africa Today, by Homer A. Jack .15

Reprinted from the CHRISTIAN CENTURY, where it appeared during the fall as a series of six articles. Dr. Jack returned in September from a trip of some months through Africa, spending five weeks in South Africa and meeting most of the leaders in the Campaign.

South Africa Today, by Alan Paton .25

Public Affairs Pamphlet.

Just Out

Nonviolent Revolution in South Africa, by George M. Houser .25

Published by Fellowship of Reconciliation. Written by George M. Houser, FOR staff member who has been serving as Secretary of Americans for South African Resistance, this 32-page pamphlet does a careful job of analyzing the present resistance Campaign and gives essential background material on conditions leading to the rise of the Campaign.

20 cents each in quantities of 10 or more