

BULLETIN

AMERICANS FOR SOUTH AFRICAN RESISTANCE

513 West 166th Street

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It is now clear that the nonviolent civil disobedience campaign in South Africa is being taken very seriously by all sides concerned. At first both friends and foes of the campaign questioned how effective it could be and how long it could last. Some questioned whether enough volunteers could be found to carry out the non-cooperation with the unjust laws. With more than 4,000 people already under arrest for violating certain of these laws, it is now apparent that the movement is gaining strength. Other persons questioned whether the campaign could remain nonviolent. They felt it would issue in race riots or sporadic localized violence here and there. Manilal Gandhi, the son of Mahatma Gandhi, was one who feared an outbreak of violence. Therefore it is all the more striking that in a letter which came just a few days ago from him he said: "I am simply amazed at the non-violent spirit and the discipline the Africans in the present struggle are showing. No one had dreamt that they could keep so calm, cool, and collected. Father's spirit seems to be watching over and guiding them."

It is very fortunate for those deeply concerned about this South African resistance movement that Professor Z. K. Matthews, president of the Cape Province African National Congress, is to be in this country this year. He is a constant source of information for us. A letter from W. M. Sisulu, the Secretary-General of the African National Congress in Johannesburg, indicated that the government is so constantly raiding their offices and is so hostile toward their movement that it is increasingly difficult to get information out to us. However, we shall continue to pass on all the information we can on the issue.

The newest development which should be of interest to us here in the United States has to do with the forthcoming session of the UN Assembly, opening in New York October 14th. India has taken the lead in sending a memorandum to the Secretariat of the UN asking that the whole race conflict in South Africa be considered as a major agenda item at the forthcoming Assembly. Countries of the Asia-Africa bloc have joined India in its memorandum. These countries include the Philippine Islands, Indonesia, Burma, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Saudi-Arabia, Jordan, Yemen, and Lebanon. That the South African government is taking this discussion before the UN as important is indicated by the fact that Dr. T. E. Donges, the Minister of the Interior, is coming to the Assembly meeting for the discussion. It is hoped that we will be able to help create a public opinion which will urge our United States representatives to face the issue squarely in the UN. More will be reported on this in later bulletins.

The complete memorandum as distributed by the Asia-Africa countries follows:

MEMORANDUM

The race conflict in the Union of South Africa resulting from the policies of Apartheid of the Union Government is creating a dangerous and explosive situation, which constitutes both a threat to international peace and a flagrant violation of the basic principles of human rights and fundamental freedoms which are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Although Africa's importance in world affairs is increasing rapidly, many parts of that continent still remain subject to racial discrimination and exploitation. The founding of the United Nations and the acceptance by the Member States of the obligations embodied in the Charter have given to the peoples of these areas new hope and encouragement in their efforts to acquire basic human rights. But in direct opposition to the trend of world opinion, the policy of the Government of the Union of South Africa is designed to establish and to perpetuate every form of racial discrimination which must inevitably result in intense and bitter racial conflict. Apartheid, which is the declared objective of the Government of the Union, implies a permanent white superiority over the non-whites, who constitute the great majority of the Union's population. To achieve Apartheid, the following measures are being taken:

- (a) Under the notorious Group Areas Act, non-whites are compelled to abandon their present lands and premises and to move to new and usually inferior reserved areas without compensation, or provisional alternative accommodation.
- (b) Complete segregation is enforced in public services, such as railways, buses, and post offices.
- (c) The Suppression of Communism Act is being used to suppress democratic movements, especially of the non-whites; for example, those which advocate racial equality or urge opposition to Apartheid.
- (d) Non-whites are debarred from combat service in the armed forces.
- (e) No voting or other political rights whatsoever are enjoyed by non-whites, except in Cape Province, where Africans and the "coloured" inhabitants have a limited franchise.
- (f) Africans are confined to Reserves, and their movements are restricted to certain places after specified hours under certain restrictive laws. The inter-provincial movements of non-whites are also restricted.
- (g) Non-whites are excluded under the Mines Works Amendment Act of 1926 from certain classes of skilled work and a systematic drive is in progress to replace them even in the lower grades of public services, by whites.
- (h) The education of non-whites and their housing and living conditions are deplorable. Such facilities of this type as are available to non-whites are vastly inferior to those offered to the white population.

As a result of these measures, a social system is being evolved under which the non-whites, who constitute 80% of the Union's population, will be kept in a permanently inferior state to the white minority. Such a policy challenges all that the United Nations stands for and clearly violates the basic and fundamental objectives of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Preamble and Articles 1(3) and 55(c) of the Charter proclaim universal respect for, and the due observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms, without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion. Under Article 56 all Members have pledged themselves to take joint and separate action in cooperation with the United Nations Organization for the achievement of these purposes.

Under Resolution 103(I) adopted unanimously by the General Assembly in 1946, the United Nations called on Governments to put an end to racial persecution and discrimination. Resolution 217(III) proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Article 2 of the Declaration affirms the equal application of these rights without distinction of colour, race or religion. Under Resolution 395(V), the United Nations held that the policy of Apartheid was necessarily based on doctrines of racial discrimination and therefore called upon the Union Government not to implement or enforce the provisions of the Group Areas Act. These findings and this recommendation were repeated in Resolution 511(VI) passed at the Sixth Session of the General Assembly.

It is recognized in all countries, as well as among liberal South African Europeans, that the solution of South Africa's racial problem lies not in any domination of one race by another, but in a partnership of races on a basis of equality and freedom.

Thus the Apartheid policy of the Government of the Union of South Africa is contrary not only to the basic premises of the United Nations and to its specific and repeated recommendations, but also to the trend of opinion all over the world.

Because they have been unable to secure redress by Constitutional methods and because the Union Government have turned a deaf ear to the repeated appeals of the United Nations not to embark on a policy of racial discrimination, the non-whites of the Union have been compelled to launch a completely nonviolent resistance movement against the Government's unjust and inhuman racial policies. In their efforts to destroy this movement, the Government have so far arrested over 4,000 persons. Despite the nonviolent character of the campaign, physical violence such as flogging is being used to suppress it. The Union Government's reaction to a movement of peaceful resistance against legislation which world opinion and the United Nations have repeatedly and emphatically condemned, is having wide repercussions. We are convinced that the continuance of such repression will only aggravate race conflict throughout Africa and arouse indignation elsewhere. A new tension is thus being created which is no less serious than others affecting world peace.

It is therefore imperative that the General Assembly give this question its urgent consideration in order to prevent an already dangerous situation from deteriorating further and to bring about a settlement in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

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Any contributions to help defray expenses of this Bulletin will be gratefully received. Also if there are sums of money which you would like to have directed to the resistance movement itself we will be glad to send it for you or to give you the name of the proper officer in South Africa to whom it can be sent.

George M. Houser
Secretary