

Introduction by  
Archbishop  
Trevor Huddleston  
Conference  
Convenor

The Harare Conference on Children, Repression and the Law in Apartheid South Africa will, I am sure, prove to have been a milestone in the liberation struggle. I feel myself overwhelmed at the privilege of both convening and presiding at such a gathering. The only difficulty lies in conveying to those who had no such privilege the absolute uniqueness and significance of the conference. For it certainly was unique. Of the 700 or so delegates, nearly 300 came from within South Africa or were in exile outside its immediate frontiers. Forty-five countries were representative of the international community. They came from both sides of the ideological divide: they were drawn from governments, voluntary agencies representing children's rights and from a vast range of professional expertise. So, for the first time on such a massive scale, the authentic voice of the South African people was heard delivering its own message to the world - and doing so not with rhetorical bombast but with well-prepared, well-documented and deeply moving personal experiences of the struggle.

And - miraculously - we had the most significant witnesses of all to speak to us: the children. They knew themselves to be speaking for those thousands of their contemporaries who have been the target of the South African government's assault.

One of the youngest of them, aged only eleven, had been so traumatised by his experience of two months in detention that he could hardly be heard at all. But his presence on the platform said enough. It said, clearly and unmistakably, that a government which can set out deliberately to torture and kill its own children has no place in the world community. It must, as witness after witness declared, be totally excluded by all nations until the source of the evil it embodies - apartheid itself - is totally destroyed. Now comes the challenge to everyone who reads this report! We must convey the message of the conference to the world. We have been universally encouraged by the media coverage, not only in Britain but across Europe and elsewhere. We shall certainly be able to produce the evidence of our work in pamphlets, books and videos. But all depends on the support we get from every individual involved in the anti-apartheid movement in every country. Those who came to Harare from the heart of the struggle came at real risk to themselves and their families. We know that they believed the risk was infinitely worthwhile.

We must not let them down! Amandla!  
Officers of the International Conference  
Honorary Presidents:  
Hon Robert Mugabe, Prime Minister of Zimbabwe and  
Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement  
Oliver Tambo, President of the African National  
Congress  
V Lisbet Palme of Sweden  
President: Archbishop Trevor Huddleston  
Rapporteur: Revd Beyers Naude  
Vice Presidents: Revd Frank Chikane, Advocate Pius  
Langa, Mrs Pauline Moloise, Mrs Caroline Motsoaledl,  
Mrs June Mlangeni

Further copies of this publication and other  
documentation and material concerning the Harare  
Conference are available from BART, 13 Mandela  
Street. London NW1 0OW.

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON  
CHILDREN, REPRESSION AND THE LAW IN APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA  
ACRY FROM  
HARARE, 24/27 SEPTEMBER 1987  
SOUTH AFRICA:  
- F REE THE CHILDREN  
FROM APARTHEID

'x  
Almost 300 South Africans, the majority  
of whom had come from inside the  
country, met with over 200  
representatives of more than 150  
organisations from all over the world.  
There were lawyers, medical practitioners,  
religious and social workers, community  
and political activists and representatives  
of youth, student, and women's  
organisations as well as trade union and  
professional bodies. The delegation from  
inside the country included children,  
along with those whose work and  
experience bring them most directly into  
contact with the effects of the apartheid  
regime's brutal repression of children.  
By bringing us together in Harare, the  
Conference provided the international  
community with a unique opportunity  
to hear from those directly affected, the  
truth about the violent repression  
inflicted by apartheid, including the  
beating, shooting, torture, detention and  
imprisonment of children. It enabled us  
and the whole international community  
to break through the veil of censorship  
and secrecy imposed by the apartheid  
regime's two-year-old state of emergency.  
We heard moving testimony from  
children about their harrowing,  
experiences of torture and injury at the  
hands of the regime's agents. Doctors and  
other professional workers concerned  
with the welfare of children informed us  
about the reality of how children are  
treated under apartheid. Lawyers  
explained the absence of any effective  
legal provisions for the protection of  
Revd Beyers Naude. Photograph by Pieter Boersma

DECLARATION OF CONFERENCE  
children and their vulnerability in the face  
of the apartheid regime's determination  
to maintain the oppression of the  
majority of South Africans.  
- ' Since the occupation of the townships

in September 1984 neither the home, the school nor the streets has been spared. Overwhelming force has been used in town and country. Whole schools have been detained, even children under the age of ten. The declaration of a state of emergency in June 1986 has been followed by the detention of over 30,000 people, of whom at least a third were children. The scale of such detentions and the violence accompanying them is without parallel even in a state of war. , The cruelty and brutality which were exposed induced a profound'seniskebf shock, outrage and anger. The deliberate and systematic targeting of children by the armed agents of the regime puts apartheid South Africa beyond the pale of civilised society. It exposes the political and moral bankruptcy of a system bent on destroying any form of opposition. Such a form of government is totally illegitimate.

We strongly condemn all those who collaborate with the regime in executing ' its policies, in particular the lawyers and judges who lend legitimacy to an inhuman and illegitimate system and the medical " practitioners who conspire in keeping secret the brutality against children. We call upon the international community to sever all relations with professional bodies which fail to condemn these Oliver Tambo, President of the ANC, expresses his appreciation to Archbishop Trevor Huddleston for convening the Conference. On the right, Conference rapporteur, practices.

We commit ourselves to act in a concerted way to keep the world aware of the plight of South Africa,s children. We will continue, and extend, the task of monitoring and exposing the repression and abuse of children.

We urge lawyers, medical practitioners, social and religious workers, and all others whose work involves special responsibilities for children, to play a part in the struggle to protect the children of South Africa and help free them from apartheid.

We appeal to the international community to work for the imposition of sanctions against the regime, and urge all governments to declare their support. Those whom we are at risk to ourselves, are prepared to act in defence of the children of South Africa.

We recognise that the children of South Africa cannot lead a normal life as long as the apartheid system remains. The children themselves, having recognised this fact, have displayed heroic courage in their readiness to engage their ruthless oppressors in daily struggle. Their commitment and determination are an inspiration to us all. We pledge ourselves, collectively and as individuals, to use all our resources to work towards the realisation of a united non-racial and democratic South Africa and thereby ensure a speedy end of the racial tyranny whose violence spares neither

old nor young - in South Africa, Namibia  
and throughout Southern Africa.

President of the ANC,  
Oliver Tambo

WE MEET here today because we want to discuss the unspeakable plight of the black children of South Africa. We meet because there is something that is happening to the hapless and the innocent that should not be allowed to happen. We meet because we recognise that our own lives have meaning only to the extent that they are used to create a social condition which will make the lives of the children happy, full and meaningful. We have gathered ourselves in Harare and on this particular occasion because we know that grievous injustice is being done to all humanity. The peoples have judged that those who uphold the apartheid system are committing a crime against humanity itself. And as this Conference knows, at the core of this crime is the theory and practice of racism. What more man-hating ideology can there be than this which defines black people as less than human! And could we expect any consequence from its practice other than the slaughter of black children! The predator feeds on human blood. That fact defines its being. The endless rows of children's graves, ready prepared for the children whose death by disease and starvation is planned according to defined statistical regularities, mark the true essence of this system. The barefoot child - clothed in a sack that should carry produce - planting, hoeing, reaping is the alter ego of the white farmer who towers above the toddler with a whip in his hand. The orphan is no more than a precise statement that apartheid lives. The mangled remains of the black child who wanted only to play in the sun are the justification for the existence of the largest and most sophisticated machinery of repression that Africa has ever known. The apartheid predator feeds on human blood. That fact defines its being. why they continue thus to aid and abet the commission of a crime against humanity. Let them stand accused as those who, by refusing to impose sanctions, extended a helping hand to the apartheid regime so that it could continue its campaign of terror against the children. So must we also intensify the campaign to save the lives of the tens of activists who have been sentenced to death by the apartheid courts. Already some of these have been hanged and some of them in secret. We must not by our silence and inactivity become unwitting collaborators with the apartheid regime in the commission of judicial murders of men and women who are heroines of our struggle and people. Indeed we could pose the question - how can there be a climate conducive to negotiations when these patriots face and are objects of

execution!

As we discuss the situation of children in apartheid South Africa, we should not forget the similar plight of children in Namibia who, in addition, are forcibly recruited into the army of occupation, corrupted into joining the various terror gangs and forced to serve as prostitutes to satisfy the needs of the army of terror.

Neither should we, overwhelmed by the harrowing stories that describe the abuse of Children in South Africa, ignore the plight of millions of children throughout Southern Africa who are also dying in unimaginable numbers, thanks to the criminal campaign of destabilisation and aggression carried out by Pretoria and its surrogate puppet groups.

All this knowledge should spur us both to act in defence of the children and to intensify the general offensive against the racist system whose evil deeds made this Conference necessary. In this regard, we have the unquestionable obligation to escalate our political and military assault against the apartheid system. Equally we need to press on with even greater vigour for the imposition of mandatory and comprehensive sanctions against racist South Africa.

To our old friend and fellow-combatant, Archbishop Trevor Huddleston, we say thank you very much for taking this important initiative. In you, the children of our country have always found a protector and a second parent. In their name, we wish you good health, being certain that the victory of the cause to which you have dedicated your life is not far.

Revd Frank Chikane, Secretary General  
This terrible desolation defines for us what our struggle must be about. We cannot be true liberators unless the liberation we will achieve guarantees all children the rights to life, health, happiness and free development, respecting the individuality, the inclinations and capabilities of each child. Our liberation would be untrue to itself if it did not, among its first tasks, attend to the welfare of the millions of children whose lives have been stunted and turned into a terrible misery by the violence of the apartheid system.

The world needs to be informed about what is happening to these young lives. Let the truth be told in all its gruesome detail. Let all humanity see the true face of apartheid, mirrored as it is in the glazed and staring eyes of the children it is starving to death and in the sightless eyes of those it has murdered.

Let all those in the West who still treat with this regime as legitimate explain of the South African Council of Churches  
LET US tell the truth and the truth only.

When a regime refuses to release an 11-year-old child on bail because this 11-year-old would be a danger to the security of the State then there must be

something drastically wrong with those adults.

We have come here to share with you our pain and suffering and even death, particularly of children. We just hope, chairperson, that there are still people in the world who still have some moral instinct to be moved by our witness to act decisively and make it impossible for the apartheid regime to live a day longer. We also hope that those who still support or collude with this inhuman regime still have some sense of morality to be ashamed of their action and withdraw their support of this system.

The Children of South Africa, particularly black children, are denied their right to be children. Children in our

country are violently forced by the conditions in the country to be adults before their time. They are put in a situation where they have to make decisions which are normally made by adults. They are forced to make choices which they should not make at their age. They are made to fight battles they should not be fighting as children. They also want to have a chance to be children and develop naturally like other children. They want to play hide and seek games. They want to role play mother and father and play child games like other children rather than do the real thing at that age.

Their normal and natural growth as children has been and is being violently disrupted, forcing them to be adults before their time.

Reports reaching churches and other bodies monitoring repression around the country clearly indicated that after the state of emergency a wide range of people, regardless of their political involvement, were being terrorised by the forces of so-called law and order. What emerges clearly from these reports, though, is that the main target of this terror has been the youth and the children. This is not surprising because since June 16, 1976, the most militant, energetic and courageous fighters against apartheid have been the youth and children. Many of these youth are driven by sheer hatred of apartheid to engage daily in a battle with the security forces and all those they regard as enforcing apartheid.

Hundreds of reports reached us of apparently random assault, harassment and the shooting of youth in the streets, at school, on the way to shops, at funerals and vigils and so on. A pattern emerged which repeated itself in every part of the country. The attacks weren't simply the actions of over-zealous security forces, but were actually part of a deliberate policy of terrorising the youth. To intimidate and demoralise the youth, particularly school kids, they introduced curfews, door-to-door raids,

shows of force at funerals and meetings. Our children came under heavy attack in schools. At one stage in the emergency schools were occupied by the security forces. School children reported that they were terrorised by the security forces. Soldiers and police interfered in the classes, attacked and shot children in the school grounds, whipped them into classes, etc.

Besides being terrorised at school, on the streets and in their houses, many of them were detained and tortured. During the 1985 state of emergency, of the 11,500 people detained, 2,000 were Children under 16. During the 1986 state of emergency, of the 22,000 detainees, 8,800 were children under 18 (most of them between the ages of 13 and 18). Some of them were under the age of 9. On November 3, 1986, there were 407 children in detention.

Many detained children have reported that they were terrorised and assaulted in detention until they tconfessedi to crimes they had not committed. Even the courts have been used as a weapon to terrorise the children. Children themselves who have been victims of security violence are often charged for tpublic violencei If you have been shot, for instance, you are assumed to have been committing a crime. You are detained and brought to justice, as they would say! According to the Minister of Law and Order, over 1,100 people were charged with public violence in 1986 alone. What the Ministers figures do not show, though, are the vast numbers of the children who were convicted on false evidence and those who were acquitted or had their charges dropped for lack of evidence. Occasionally the gross injustice of the whole process is exposed, as in the case this month of the 12-year-old boy who had charges of public violence dropped against him. The boy, a standard two pupil from Parys, had spent 11 months in detention under the emergency regulations. The State alleged that he had confessed to throwing stones at the car of a township superintendent in J une 1986. But the defence lawyer discovered that the said tconfessioni had been written in Afrikaans, a language that the boy did not understand. Charges against him and three others were dropped.

I believe that there is very little that can be done to save and protect the brutalised children of South Africa without necessarily removing the apartheid system. The racist apartheid system is evil and can only survive by murdering hundreds of thousands of the defenceless masses of South Africa. The determination of the people to be free will force this system to unleash all its powers at the expense of countless lives. If nothing is done, we shall soon be talking about millions dead. The Nazi holocaust which cost over 6 million lives



might look like a minor historical event compared to what we might experience.

Honourable Prime

Minister, Comrade R G Mugabe

IT IS A singular honour for us in Zimbabwe that our capital city has been chosen as the venue for this unique Conference on Children, Repression and the Law in Apartheid South Africa. I personally feel Specially honoured and privileged that I have been asked to address the opening session of the Conference.

I hope I can be allowed to extend a special word of welcome to you, Archbishop Huddleston. You are no stranger to Southern Africa, having spent a good part of your life in South Africa and being one of the pioneers and an ally in the anti-apartheid struggle. Your continued fight from Great Britain against the evil apartheid system is greatly encouraging and is appreciated by us in Southern Africa.

I sincerely hope that the deliberations

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of this Conference will enhance international awareness of the terrible plight and situation of the weakest and most vulnerable of the South African population, namely the black children who are, as we know, the most hapless and helpless victims of the evil monster that is apartheid. It is they who are daily malnourished by apartheid. It is they who are daily miseducated by apartheid. It is they who, above all, are daily jailed, maimed and murdered by apartheid.

Yet, international awareness of the suffering of the children in apartheid South Africa is alone not adequate unless it is followed by a resolve, determination and strength to fight and eradicate the heinous system from our civilised world.

The prisons of South Africa are today full of children who, under civilised conditions, should be in schools undergoing preparation for their future roles and responsibilities as citizens of their country. Alas, their prescribed lot is that of being murdered, tortured, brutalised and imprisoned.

You, and most of us from this region, know that the rule of law does not exist in apartheid South Africa. The law, such as exists there, is only for the advancement and protection of the privileges of the few. The law and all the related state institutions have been designed and geared to protect and promote the interests of the white minority by systematically trampling upon even the most basic rights of the black masses.

Should any voice of conscience draw attention to the injustice of the system and criticise the so-called law enforcement agents, such criticism is contemptuously ignored. Recently, the Detaineesi Parents Support Committee published its informative reports or a studies on tortures and detentions in the , V 1980s. The reactions of the racist Minister of Law and Order was characteristic. He accused the Committee of vilifying the police. The cases of child arrest and assault, and the sordid examples of torture in detention were dismissed as mere fabrications. The sleep deprivation to which young detainees were subjected, the suspension in mid-air, the kicking, beating, electric shocking, the stripping and numerous other horrific perpetrations which the youths and children received from their interrogators did not revulse the so-called Minister of Law and Order. How could they?

Revulsion is a response of a person of conscience and morality. Mr Vlok and all the members of his apartheid regime are evidently men to whom conscience and morality are mere trifles. Murder cannot, in such circumstances, any longer revulse the bloody heart of its perpetrator, for each murder committed also destroyed his moral conscience, hardening him more and more to the shedding of blood.

The expression tbloody boeri cannot be without significance. As the report of UNICEF has recently illustrated, the tragedy of the black children and youths in South Africa extends to their brothers and sisters in the front line states. Indeed, many of you from outside the region have heard or read about the effects of South Africa's apartheid policies, the regimes economic disruption and political destabilisation and their destructive effects upon the lives and welfare of the blacks in South Africa and the peoples of the entire region. The statistics are readily available. But may I remind you that behind those figures or statistics are real children, youths and their parents, with names, human feelings of pain, fear, want and hunger.

#### TESTIMONIES OF TORTURE

Mzimkulu Ngamlana tortured by electricity and with gadgets he could not even describe Mzimkulu is eighteen and was a member of the Port Elizabeth Youth Congress. He was arrested in a pre-dawn raid while asleep with his mother, sister and her young children.

8Soldiers came, they kicked me with their boots and punched me on the legs and chest. In the police station two soldiers connected an electric tube on to my leg and switched it on. It was bad, I was shaking. They were asking me questions about my friends. My mother brought me food but the soldiers ate it. In the prison I was in solitary confinement. I was crying and just sitting. After three weeks I was released. My ears were bleeding . and my head hurt?

Mzimkulu explained that following his release

81 could not stand it. Every night I would hear gun shots, you cannot learn or do anything?

Mzimkulu left South Africa in August 1986 and now lives in Tanzania. Buras

Nhlabathi  
interrogated and  
tortured for three  
months

Buras Nhlabathi is  
seventeen and was  
president of the  
Thembisa Student  
Congress. He was not  
living at home at the  
time of his arrest to  
avoid harassment  
from the police.

On 8 October 1986  
was arrested at  
3.30am. I was taken  
from the house I was  
staying at by force  
and beaten with fists,  
kicked and hit with  
the butt of guns. This  
went on for about 45  
minutes.

I was then thrown  
into the back of a van  
with twelve comrades  
arrested at the same  
time. We were taken  
to Kenbasi police  
station and initially  
left outside in the rain.

I was taken into an  
interrogation room  
and questioned about  
posters and leaflets of  
banned organisations.

When I refused to  
answer I was beaten.  
This went on for about  
5 hours, they hit me  
with keys and pipes  
and sjamboks. I had  
no sleep and they  
kept me on my feet.

I was also given  
electric shocks from  
handcuffs. I did not  
answer the questions,  
preferring to die.

On the second day  
I was stripped. and put  
into a rubber suit  
from head to foot. A  
dummy was placed in  
my mouth so I  
couldn't scream.

There was no air.  
They switched the  
plug on. My muscles  
were pumping hard. I  
couldn't see anything.  
When they switched  
the plug off they took  
the dummy out and  
said I should speak.  
When I refused they  
put the dummy back  
and switched on again.  
After a long time  
they switched off. I  
was stripped and put

into a fridge naked. I was left there. I was then brought out again and put into the electric shock suit. Then I was taken into an interrogation room. My hands and feet and my head were tied to a pole and bright search lights turned on. I felt my mind go dead. I couldn't see. I was dizzy. I was beaten again. I have scars on my right hip.

I was then taken to Madupo prison. I was given ice cubes for my face but no medical treatment. I was in prison for three months. I spent two weeks in solitary confinement. I was beaten in prison, just slapped. I was not charged or tried or convicted of any offence.

After my release I was told to report at 7.00am and 7.00pm every day. I didn't. I spent five months in hiding before my escape."

Buras now lives in exile.

William

Tshabalala

interrogated and tortured for over 4 hours

William Tshabalala is eighteen and a former member of the Student Representative Council of Soweto. On 16 June 1986 he was taken into police custody and interrogated for over four hours.

William said he considered his case minor because he had seen and heard of much worse experiences than his. What upset him most, apart from his own torture and assault, was that children as young as eleven were subjected to the same treatment.

William is now

. living in Lusaka, Zambia, and hopes to further his education.

Nthabiseng

Mabusa

Nthabiseng lives in Harare and is aged 13. On 14 June 1986 she was visiting her aunt in Gaborone, the capital of Botswana, when the South African Defence Force attacked Gaborone.

81 went into the bedroom to get something and I heard a bang. I went out and saw a masked man. I turned to run and was shot ;I continued to try and run away but another man stood up in front of me and knocked me down. I was shot in the back as I lay on the ground."

Nthabiseng is now paralysed from the waist down and learning to walk with crutches. Nthabiseng still has nightmares and is frightened even by the bang of a door.

Naude Moitse forced to stand for 12 hours

Naude is aged twenty-two and was brought up in Alexander township. He was involved in COSAS and supported school boycotts; as a result of this activity he was detained several times during 1984. During March and April 1984 the police charged the group of students he was with, using batons, whips and birdshot.

ttThey (the South African Police) caught some of us, they kicked me in the genitals, it was very painful, they handcuffed me and took me to Weinberg where the SAP are in charge. The SAP interrogated us, we were distributing pamphlets that were quite legal ;1 was threatened and kept in the police station for the whole day before being released." During the state of emergency in 1985 he was detained in

solitary confinement  
for three months.  
itSome policemen  
took me to John  
Vorster Square. I was  
made to stand up for  
more than 12 hours.  
When I fell they picked  
me up and kicked me.  
They gave me no food.  
At 2am they took me  
to a cell. I had to sleep  
on a concrete floor  
wearing a T-shirt and  
jeans. At around 8am  
they gave me some  
porridge and bread. I  
kept on telling them  
the same things. He  
(the policeman) came  
again after breakfast.  
He said they would  
keep me in detention  
until they were  
satisfied (with what I  
told them). I was in  
solitary. He said he  
would see me on  
Monday. I was kept in  
the cell. On Monday a  
policeman came at  
about 2. I was made  
to stand for another  
12 hours. No food,  
only water. I was  
exhausted and kicked  
again. I still said no  
more."

Naude left the  
country shortly after  
he was released and  
now lives in Tanzania.  
One of the young people  
giving testimony at  
the Conference. Listening  
are Glenys Kinnock,  
BART Trustee, and  
Jane Coker, a Lawyer.  
William

Modibedi  
eleven years old  
William was detained  
by the South African  
police in October  
1986. He was kept for  
two months and two  
days in a mortuary, a  
dark room and a cell  
around Krugersdorp.  
William gave a very  
brief testimony; he  
said:

ttthey (the police)  
said I burned cars and  
shops."

The police knocked  
all his teeth out during  
this period of  
detention. He is still  
dazed and confused  
by all that he has been

through. His two  
brothers and sister are  
still in detention.  
nmueoa Jazold Aq sqdedioqu



Main extracts  
from Conference  
proceedings

Participants were inspired by the courage, determination and tenacity displayed by great numbers of young South Africans as they resist state violence by rejecting apartheid and join the struggle for its overthrow, notwithstanding the intensification of state violence, including random and indiscriminate killings, the systematic use of torture, and other forms of brutality. Admiration was also expressed for those within South Africa who at great personal sacrifice give all the help they can - legal, medical and financial-to mitigate the suffering of the children and to make known to the outside world the barbarous treatment by the racist regime of its most vulnerable citizens. The Conference acknowledged that it is the solemn duty of mankind to\_ render to children the very best it has to offer. Apartheid South Africa, however, has repudiated this fundamental obligation by amputating black children from their future and'potential, and propelling them prematurely into a perverse form of adulthood through the pain and trauma of deprivation,1'ncarceration and torture. These children are subjected to experiences which cause permanent psychological and physical damage. Apartheid, by its, very nature, cripples the life of the child, but over the past decade apartheid South Africa has specifically targeted children in an extraordinary demonstration of moral and political bankruptcy. Such conduct puts apartheid South Africaibeyond the pale of civilised society. Its gross and persistent violations of human rights, its crimes against humanity, and its practices comparable to genocide - the gravest of international crimes # render it unfit to hold any place in the community of nations.

A special feature of the proceedings was testimony given by a number of very young South African children who described the brutality and systematic torture they had endured at the hands of the South African security forces.

In the course of the proceedings the Conference heard of the indefatigable courage and heroic determination of the children and youth of South Africa. In the face of the Bishop Ambrose Reeves Trust

The Harare Conference was organised under the auspices of the Bishop Ambrose Reeves Trust (BART). The Trustees have prepared this Supplement in order to ensure the widest possible dissemination of the testimonies and other evidence presented to the Conference. The Trust is a registered charity with the following objectives:

- 0 to promote and disseminate knowledge and understanding of the theory and practice of apartheid
- 0 to fund research into different features of apartheid, such as its history and economy
- 0 to make public the results of such research through books, pamphlets, films and other publications.

The Trust is named in memory of Ambrose Reeves who served as Bishop of Johannesburg from 1948 until his deportation from South

Africa following the Sharpeville massacre. He was the president of the British Anti-Apartheid Movement for ten years until his death in 1980. The Trust welcomes donations and covenants in order to enable it to further its work.

To the BART Secretary, 13 Mandela Street,  
London NW1 0DW

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overwhelming military power and political repression of the apartheid regime, they have marched and rallied against apartheid education; they have boycotted classes in protest against the presence of army and police units in schools and universities; they have formed community and national organisations and, when the racist regime has banned those organisations and jailed their leaders, they have risen up again and again under new organisations. The brutality of the regime has been matched by the courage and dignity of those whose protests it seeks to crush. The Conference welcomed the recent formation of the South African Youth Congress (SAYCO), whose aims and objectives are to unite and politicise all sectors of the youth, to encourage the youth to join progressive trade unions, and to strive for the achievement of a non-sexist, free and democratic South Africa. The children and youth of South Africa are at this moment engaged in the active struggle for national liberation and self-determination for all the people of South Africa in an unfragmented democratic society. They are organising community defence units against the state-sponsored vigilante groups with which the regime seeks to terrorise its opponents. They have adopted the principles of the Freedom Charter and declared their solidarity with the United Democratic Front.

The primary focus of the Conference was on the treatment of the children of South Africa since September 1984 when the apartheid regime moved its troops into the black townships in an attempt to crush popular resistance to apartheid. Since the imposition of the state of emergency, South Africa has been effectively ruled under emergency powers. The Conference heard that the permanent legal powers at the disposal of the regime under the Internal Security Act and other repressive legislation covering the right to assembly, censorship and the police are so extensive as to enable the regime to exercise draconian powers at will. The proclamation of the state of emergency therefore licenses what is effectively a state of martial law in the black areas.

In the course of the proceedings it became clear that the nations of the world face a stark choice: either to maintain relations with a ruthless, sinister and criminal regime which has declared war upon its people and placed its security forces above the law and escalated still further the oppression of the black population

under the guise of a state of emergency, or to support the people of South Africa in their struggle for liberation and their aim to establish a democratic, non-racial society, for both children and adults, black and white. Among the considerations which emerged were:

(a) The racist South African regime, through its vile policy of apartheid, repudiates the fundamental human rights of the overwhelming majority of its population. This bears with particular brutality upon black children, the most helpless of South African citizens, who are the special victims of the deprivation apartheid ordains.

(b) The system of apartheid, based as it is on a denial of the political, economic and cultural rights of 87% of the population and determined on the basis of race, constitutes national oppression of the majority and, therefore, a breach of international law; the apartheid regime's implementation of the policy of colonial domination has been pursued through state and institutional violence, reflected in the persistence of massacres and acts of violence since 1910, the forced removal of over three million people in pursuit of racist policies, the denationalisation of South African citizens who live in the bantustans, the separation of children from parents, the attempt to divide and rule through the implementation of the bantustan policy and the application of the racist and Nazi-inspired Population Registration Act.

(c) The state terrorism of apartheid is reflected not only in the racially motivated physical ill-treatment and murder of black children. The harsh reality of apartheid ensures that black childhood is dominated by fear, deprivation and exploitation through the application of laws and practices which produce hunger and malnutrition, high infant mortality rates, chronic disease, and illiteracy. Apartheid has ensured that black children have become the internal refugees of apartheid - deprived of the right to free movement, vulnerable to eviction and removal under apartheid laws, without the security of home and deprived of family life, banished to resettlement camps and consigned to the impoverished homelands which are the dumping grounds for cheap labour for the farms and factories.

(d) Apartheid laws and practices separate children from parents through the migratory system of labour, the continued de facto application of influx control and the absence of adequate housing. It therefore frequently ensures the destruction of the family, generally accepted as the basic unit of society.

(e) Further, the apartheid regime permits and encourages, as part of its economic and social policy, the widespread exploitation of black children in industrial and other employment. On the white farms the use of black children as farm workers is an integral feature of apartheid; there, bondage akin to the practice of slavery flourishes in blatant violation of international law. The colour bar is prevalent in employment; social and child-care services are inadequate and are operated on a racist basis.

(f) Apartheid touches every aspect of the lives and destinies of black children. Its impact on education has been particularly severe and

has drawn a special response from the children themselves over the past decade. tBantui education, a special system for Africans, is inadequate, separate, inferior, neither free nor compulsory, and was developed with the intention of subjugating the blacks and accentuating divisions. Inadequate facilities in the towns and the virtual absence of schools on the white farms have been compounded by overcrowding and inexperienced and underqualified teachers. The racism of the system is reflected in the relative per capita expenditure on school children and in widely differing pupil-teacher ratios. Inevitably, access to university education is limited by the racist nature of the school system.

(g) The rejection by the children in the schools and the students in iethnici colleges of this inferior education is one of the most important features of the resurgence of the idealism and commitment of the black youth in South Africa. The significant new element in the struggle of the children is the fact that an alternative and democratic system is being established by and for the people. Their modest demands for practical changes in the administration of schools - an end to corporal punishment and sexual harassment of girl pupils, free and appropriate textbooks, free and compulsory education - have been pursued by major school boycotts which have been met by the full and brutal force of the apartheid regime. Children in schools have been singled out as special targets of state-sanctioned violence in a deliberate strategy of forcing them back to school through compulsory enrolment, victimisation of pupils, the occupation of schools by troops, police and iinstant, or special constables, abductions and mass arrests and detention, and violence during examinations. Children have been teargassed in the confined spaces of their classrooms and their wire-walled school compounds.

(h) Nor is apartheidis violence limited to the children of South Africa. In Namibia, occupied in breach of international law and against the wishes of the people, the apartheid regime is waging a war where children are, again, special victims and often the main targets. The South African military occupation has brought in its l wake a reign of terror. As in South Africa itself, the military and the police are protected by a wide-ranging indemnity, an extreme censorship shields their actions from criticism and a dusk-to-dawn curfew in the so-called war zone is in operation allowing them to shoot on sight all movement in and out of the area. Ordinary life, especially that of children, is totally disrupted and civilians are tortured, imprisoned without trial, killed and terrorised in an attempt to destroy support for the national liberation struggle of the South West Africa Peopleis Organisation. Thousands of Namibians, mainly women and children, have been forced to become refugees.

(i) Terrorism is being waged by the apartheid regime in the front line and other states of Southern Africa in one of the deadliest wars of destabilisation and destruction in recent history. This has resulted in thousands of children being orphaned, and thousands more being maimed

by the regimes forces and by the armed bandits of MNR and Unita, its surrogates in Mozambique and Angola. Economic and social structures, especially schools, hospitals and clinics, in these countries have been ravaged and millions of people are threatened with starvation. By the end of 1986, an estimated 140,000 children under five have died as a result of this war and destabilisation, and over 8.5 million Angolans and Mozambicans, roughly half the rural population of Angola and Mozambique, have become internal refugees. The total impact on infant and child health and mortality of this aggression cannot be quantified.

(j) The regulations made under the state of emergency have given the security forces (which include the army, the police, railway and administrative board police and ispecial constablesi) a free hand in controlling the townships. Sweeping powers to control the press, bans on public meetings and control over funerals have enabled the regime to transform the townships into war zones where the state security system organised through 500 joint management centres has installed a counter-insurgency strategy against children and, indeed, all township residents. Blanket indemnity provided to the security forces enables the agents of repression to act with impunity.

(k) Children are not granted any special protection under South African security legislation. The Internal Security Act of 1982 and the emergency regulations fail to guarantee any, let alone adequate, protection of the physical, mental or legal rights of children. The courts treat children as if they were adults, regardless of age, and such minimum forms of protection as informing parents of an arrest or detention, or a charge, are consistently denied.

(l) The scale and intensity of the comprehensive, overwhelming and systematic violence and repression against children is such that participants were horrified. Neither the home, the school nor the street has been spared. Overwhelming force has been used in town and country; whole schools have been detained, even children under the age of ten. Child detainees, the hidden victims of political violence in South Africa, are arrested without warrant and held indefinitely. Witnesses testified as to the difficulty of parents assuring their childrens safety and well-being, in the absence of access to family, friend, independent doctor or lawyer without special permission, and it is difficult to challenge such detentions. In addition, young children are often picked up simply because they are in the view of the police and soldiers, and held for a few hours or a few days. Since the proclamation of the full state of emergency in June 1986, more than 30,000 people have been detained, of which about 10,000 have been under the age of 18. Even before the proclamation of the emergency covering the whole of South Africa, an authoritative study estimated that between July 1985 and March 1986, 2,106 children between 8 and 16 were detained, and the general estimate is that one-fifth of all those detained under the Internal Security Act and emergency regulations are children. During the period 1984-86, some 11,000 children were

detained without trial, 18,000 arrested on charges out of protest and no fewer than 173,000 held awaiting trial in police cells.

(In) The scale of such detentions is without parallel even in a state of formal war between states. Although a number of child detainees were released in 1987, it is estimated that more than 1,000 remain in detention, besides the many thousands who are ostensibly awaiting trial in prisons, many of whom are likely never to be brought before a court.

(n) The state violence resulting in the deaths of children is borne out by the official statistics provided by the regime, which state that in a single year, 1985, the police (excluding the defence forces) killed at least 201 children, and over 300 in the period 1984-86, a number of whom were under 10 years old.

(o) Children on release from detention have recounted unspeakable conditions and treatment. In routine but pervasive practices, children have suffered electric shocks, beatings by fists, sjamboks and rifle butts, severe deprivation of food and sleep, sexual abuse and attack, attempted strangulation and suffocation, solitary confinement, and being submerged in sewage water or doused with petrol and threatened with necklacing. The age of a child has not noticeably inhibited the so-called guardians of law and order in South Africa, and a particular refinement has been the use of teargas in enclosed spaces.

(p) Members of the security forces carry out their duties with indiscriminate brutality and insensitivity. The physical integrity of children - even the most basic of all rights, the right to life - is treated with contempt. With the official sanctioning of vigilantes in the townships and the townships, their plight is even more parlous. But even more devastating is the irresistible conclusion that systematic and widespread torture is an integral feature of the detention system.

(q) There have been far-reaching effects on children who have been detained, ill-treated and tortured. The effects of arrest, detention and interrogation are deeply disturbing for any detainee, but acutely traumatic for children. There has been a conspiracy of silence by professionals, especially doctors who have contact with these young people and who are silent witnesses to the manner in which they are abused. Those supposed to visit detainees regularly and provide for their needs bear a personal responsibility for the maltreatment of such vulnerable persons while in custody.

(r) The rehabilitation camps or reorientation centres established during the emergency for children have become a permanent feature of the policy of the apartheid regime. New custom-built centres are provided for the indoctrination and manipulation of young people before their release. This latest attempt at thought-control by the apartheid regime has particularly menacing implications.

(5) There is a profound and considered wish, widely held in South Africa as elsewhere, that the international community has a fundamental role to play if the agony and suffering of children is to be ended. International action against the apartheid regime would inevitably

have effects upon the black population, but such is the present degree of their suffering, and so horrendous are the alternatives to an early end to apartheid, that this is a price which they are prepared to pay.

It was clear to the Conference that by their actions in recent years, the children of South Africa have thrust themselves into a situation where their plight can no longer be ignored. The suffering they endure and the courage they display are indictments of a system which, instead of cherishing them, wages war upon them. But the price they have paid, and continue to pay, in deprivation, in ill-treatment, in racist education and in detention and imprisonment is incalculable. Nor can action to remedy the desperate plight of the children await the day of liberation. The needs are urgent. Action must be taken now.

Proposals for concerted action by the international community were also made by various participants. A list of these proposals is available on request from BART.

STATEMENT OF THE a  
NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS  
ON THE QUESTION OF NEGOTIATIONS  
October 9th, 1987

In the recent period, both the Pretoria regime and various Western powers have been raising the issue of a negotiated resolution of the South African question. Inspired by the deep-seated desire and unwavering commitment to end the apartheid system as as soon as possible and with minimum loss of life and property, the National Executive Committee met and considered this matter with all due seriousness and attention.

We are convinced that the Botha regime has neither the desire nor the intention to engage in any meaningful negotiations. On the contrary, everything this regime does is directed at the destruction of the national liberation movement, the suppression of the democratic movement and the entrenchment and perpetuation of the apartheid system of white minority domination.

The racist regime has raised the issue of negotiations to achieve two major objectives. The first of these is to defuse the struggle inside our country by holding out false hopes of a just political settlement which the Pretoria regime has every intention to block. Secondly, this regime hopes to defeat the continuing campaign for comprehensive and mandatory sanctions by sending out bogus signals that it is ready to talk seriously to the genuine representatives of our people. Fundamental to the understanding of the apartheid regime's concept of negotiations is the notion that it must impose its will on those it is talking to and force them to accept its dictates. In practice, the Botha regime is conducting a determined campaign of repression against the ANC and the mass democratic movement. This includes the assassination of leaders, mass detentions, military occupation of townships and a programme of pacification carried out by the so-called Joint Management Centres (JMCs).

The racists are out to terrorise our people into submission, crush their democratic organisations and force us to surrender.

All these efforts will fail. Rather than create a climate conducive to genuine negotiations, they will only serve further to sharpen the confrontation within our country and bring to the fore the prospect of the bloodiest conflict that our continent has ever seen.

Our struggle will not end until South Africa is transformed into a united, democratic and non-racial country. This is the only solution which would enable all our people, both black and white, to live as equals in conditions of peace and prosperity. The overwhelming majority of our people accept that the Freedom Charter provides a reasonable and viable framework for the construction of a new society.



We wish here to reiterate that the ANC has never been opposed to a negotiated settlement of the South African question. On various occasions in the past we have, in vain, called on the apartheid regime to talk to the genuine leaders of our people. Once more, we would like to reaffirm that the ANC and the masses of our people as a whole are ready and willing to enter into genuine negotiations provided they are aimed at the transformation of our country into a united and non-racial democracy. This, and only this, should be the objective of any negotiating process. Accordingly no meaningful negotiations can take place until all those concerned, and specifically the Pretoria regime, accept this perspective which we share with the whole of humanity.

We further wish to state again that the questions whether or not to negotiate, and on what conditions, should be put to our entire leadership, including those who are imprisoned and who should be released unconditionally. While considering these questions our leadership would have to be free to consult and discuss with the people without let or hindrance.

We reject unequivocally the cynical demand of the Pretoria regime that we should unilaterally abandon or suspend the armed struggle. The source of Violence in our country is the apartheid system. It is that Violence which must end. Any cessation of hostilities would have to be negotiated and entail agreed action by both sides as part of the process of the creation of a democratic South Africa. Equally, we reject all efforts to dictate to us who our allies should or should not be, and how our membership should be composed. Specifically, we will not bow down to pressures intended to drive a wedge between the ANC and the South African Communist Party, a tried and tested ally in the struggle for a democratic South Africa. Neither shall we submit to attempts to divide and weaken our movement by carrying out a witch hunt against various members on the basis of their ideological beliefs. I

The conflict in our country is between the forces of national liberation and democracy on the one hand and those of racism and reaction on the other. Any negotiations would have to be conducted by these two forces as represented by their various organisational formations.

We reject without qualification the proposed National Statutory Council (NSC) which the Botha regime seeks to establish through legislation to be enacted by the apartheid parliament. This can never be a genuine and acceptable mechanism to negotiate a democratic constitution for our country.

In practice, the National Statutory Council can never be anything more than an advisory body which would put its views to the apartheid parliament and the regime itself, which retains the right to accept or reject those views. What the Botha regime proposes as a constitution-making forum - the National Statutory Council - is therefore nothing but a device intended to enmesh all who sit on it in a bogus process of meaningless talk which has nothing to do with any genuine attempt to design a democratic constitution for our country.

In addition, this National Statutory Council seeks to entrench and legitimise

the very structures of apartheid that our struggle, in all its forms, seeks to abolish. The unrepresentative organs of the apartheid structure of repression, such as the racist triecameral parliament and the bantustans, cannot be used as instruments for the liquidation of the very same system they have been established to maintain. An essential part of the apartheid system is the definition and division of our people according to racial and ethnic groups, dominated by the white minority. To end apartheid means, among other things, to define and treat all our people as equal citizens of our country, without regard to race, colour or ethnicity. To guarantee this, the ANC accepts that a new constitution for South Africa could include an entrenched Bill of Rights to safeguard the rights of the individual. We are, however, opposed to any attempt to perpetuate the apartheid system by advancing the concept of so-called group and minority rights.

Our region is fully conversant with the treacherous and deceitful nature of the apartheid regime. There are more than enough examples of agreements which this regime has shamelessly dishonoured. Taking this experience into account, we insist that before any negotiations take place, the apartheid regime would have to demonstrate its seriousness by implementing various measures to create a Climate conducive to such negotiations. .

These would include the unconditional release of all political prisoners, detainees, all captured freedom fighters and prisoners of war as well as the cessation of all political trials. The state of emergency would have to be lifted, the army and the police withdrawn from the townships and confined to their barracks. Similarly, all repressive legislation and all laws empowering the regime to limit freedom of assembly, speech, the press and so on, would have to be repealed. Among these would be the Riotous Assemblies, the Native Administration, the General Laws Amendment, the Unlawful Organisations, the Internal Security and similar Acts and regulations.

We take this opportunity once more to reaffirm that the African National Congress is opposed to any secret negotiations. We firmly believe that the people themselves must participate in shaping their destiny and would therefore have to be involved in any process of negotiations.

Being fully conscious of the way the Pretoria regime has, in the past, deliberately dragged out negotiations to buy time for itself, we maintain that any negotiations would have to take place within a definite time-frame to meet the urgent necessity to end the apartheid system and lift the yoke of tyranny from the masses of our people who have already suffered for too long.

There is, as yet, no prospect for genuine negotiations because the Botha regime continues to believe that it can maintain the apartheid system through force and terror. We therefore have no choice but to intensify the mass political and armed struggle for the overthrow of the illegal apartheid regime and the transfer of power to the people.

We also call on all our people to reject and Spurn Bothals so-called National Statutory Council and make certain that this apartheid council never sees the light

of day.

We reiterate our appeal to the international community to join us in this noble struggle by imposing comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against racist South Africa to end the apartheid system and reduce the amount of blood that will otherwise have to be shed to achieve this goal.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to the Organisation of African Unity which, at its last Summit, adopted a Declaration on Southern Africa pledging Africals support for the positions contained in the statement. We commend that Declaration to the rest of the world community as an important document laying the basis for concerted international action to banish apartheid racism, colonialism and war once and for all.

1912- 1987

ADVANCE TO PEOPLE'S POWER!

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