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# amnesty international

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT  
1 Easton Street London WC1X 8DJ  
United Kingdom

Our reference: SA ACT 10.1

Direct line:

Mr Tony Hawke  
c/o Østenga 36  
1349 Rykkinn  
Norway

18 April 1988

Dear Tony Hawke,

Re: Dr. Ivan Toms

Thank you for your letter of 8.4.88 and the information enclosed therein.

I am enclosing a copy of a press release which we issued on 4.3.88. As you can see, Dr. Ivan Toms has been adopted as a prisoner of conscience and once the Recommended Actions are completed the case-sheet will be allocated. Are you a group member? If so, we could perhaps arrange for your group to receive this case-sheet therefore I would be grateful for your early reply.

The June Newsletter will include an article on conscientious objector and Ivan Toms will be one of the subjects of this article. We will send you copies to distribute once they are ready.

With best wishes,

*M. Ryan*

Mary Ryan  
Africa Research Department (Southern Africa)

Enc.



## INSTITUTE FOR CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

### POLICY STATEMENT, SEPTEMBER, 1987

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

We, as mental health professionals, feel that we have an ethical duty to the peoples of South Africa and as such we are no longer able to stand by as silent observers.

South Africa has entered into an era of unprecedented social and community turmoil. We owe it to our community to inform them of the deleterious effects, on the mental health of all people living in this country, arising from escalating and ongoing violence and associated psychological distress. We are concerned that the psychological damage to people resulting from the present unrest will impair mental health for generations.

#### 2. AREAS OF CONCERN

The Institute for Clinical Psychology notes the detrimental effects on the mental well being of South Africans caused by:

- Apartheid. The institutionalization of racial prejudice.
- Violence.
- Indefinite detention without trial and solitary confinement.
- Detention of Children.
- Media restriction and the state of emergency.

Specifically, the effects of the above are as follows:

##### 2.1 Apartheid

Apartheid with its inherent racial discrimination, results in the widespread breakdown of communication within and between specific groups of people. This breakdown leads to suspicion, alienation and hostility and is based on prejudice which, in its extreme form, is a recognized psychiatric symptom of paranoia.

The implementation of Apartheid policy has resulted in repression and domination on all levels: inferior education, inequality of job opportunities, Group Areas Acts and the forced removal of families from their homes. Pass laws, the migrant labour system, influx control and the Immorality Act have, in the past, resulted in the dehumanization of the individual and the disintegration of family life. At present the absence of universal suffrage, forced removals and the Group Areas Act are perpetuating this process.

Healthy family life, the basis of socialization and humanization, is threatened, and its traditional functions are disintegrating under existing repression. The breakdown in family life, and the inherent dangers of this to future generations, is an everyday occurrence in South Africa.

##### 2.2 Violence

This Institute abhors violence of all kinds, irrespective of who is the perpetrator. We believe, with good reason that violence begets violence with the ultimate threat of the complete breakdown of the community.

From the psychological point of view violence arises out of a process which begins when certain needs (e.g. security, respect, freedom, personal power, etc.) are not met. When these needs are blocked, they become distorted. The blocks become the focus of attention. In order to remove the blocks the "victim" identifies with the aggressor's methods as the sole

means of removing the blocks. When the aggressor and victim increase their respective efforts, the situation escalates into one of spiralling violence, and the root cause (the unmet needs) are not addressed.

We believe that the South African situation has now reached this stage.

In the absence of sincere negotiation and meaningful reform aimed at addressing the root causes, the continued retaliatory and counter-retaliatory measures are generating a violence which ultimately can only result in an uncontrolled escalation and mutual destruction.

##### 2.3 Indefinite detention without trial and solitary confinement

The rule of law, as enshrined in the Magna Carta, guarantees man in society the safety of trial by peers. Indefinite detention without trial destroys the basic trust in the world and society, and in the idea of justice and of safety. This applies not only to incarcerated individuals, but also to families and to whole communities. Detention without trial often means that families have no access to the incarcerated individual with concomitant anxieties and breakdown in family life.

Indefinite detention without trial and solitary confinement are two kinds of psychological torture. Torture is defined in the Declaration of Tokyo (1975) as:

The deliberate and systematic or wanton infliction of physical or mental suffering by one or more persons acting alone or on the orders of any authority, to force another person to yield information, to make confession, or for any other reason.

Solitary confinement remains an inexcusable form of torture and primitive punishment.



This practice has been allowed to continue in South Africa, despite the massive amount of documented evidence that it is harmful to mental health, and has serious long-lasting effects on individuals who are subjected to this practice. This Institute abhors indefinite detention without trial and solitary confinement.

We are furthermore concerned with the mental state and attitude of the perpetrators of such practices.

The practices of indefinite detention without trial and solitary confinement violate the victims' dignity and humanity.

Clinical psychologists, treating the patient while he or she is a victim of detention without trial are ethically compromised. They may be liable to charges of improper or disgraceful conduct since such treatment may be seen as countenancing conditions of torture and would be in violation of both the Ethical Code and the Declaration of Tokyo.

This Institute believes that the regulations and conditions under which detainees are held makes it impossible for psychologists to treat their patients according to the ethical principles of autonomy, beneficence and non-maleficence.

## 2.4 Detention of Children

The Children and Child Care Act came about through the recognition of the vulnerabilities of children and the affirmation of the family context for the protection and normal development of children in western society.

The Emergency Regulations override the Children and Child Care Act. Children who are detained are deprived of their special protection. They are detained under the same legal and physical conditions as adult detainees.

The detention of children is destructive to family life and results in abnormal levels of separation stress for both children and parents. Children are particularly vulnerable at a psychological, a psychological, emo-

tional and physical level by virtue of their developmental status. The practice of detaining children is a particularly serious form of psychological abuse which will have far reaching traumatic consequences at psychological, social and community levels both now and for future generations.

## 2.5 Media Restrictions and the State of Emergency

The declaration of the fourth state of emergency and the continued imposition of media restrictions do not address the primary issues which underlie the present unrest in South Africa. Rather, they deflect attention from the major problems of Apartheid in South Africa and have damaging consequences for mental health.

Research by social scientists indicates that when communication and information is restricted, people become vulnerable to rumour and distortion. The imposition of the state of emergency and the media restrictions results in increased personal anxiety, alternating with a false sense of security which leads to increased suspicion on the one hand and denial on the other. This ultimately results in decision incompetence.

Media restrictions and the state of emergency encourage the very effects that they are designed to prevent and will continue to polarize the population.

## 3. CONCLUSIONS

We, the Institute for Clinical Psychology, call upon the people of South Africa to be aware of the enormous consequences of these measures and events on the mental health of the society as a whole.

We call upon the State to take cognizance of the effects of its measures and legislations and to be aware of the irrevocable consequences to a society subjected to these psychological pressures.

We call upon the International Community to take cognizance of this situation and not to abandon those who

are working for a just and peaceful society but to assist us in our efforts.

Whether or not they do so, we wish it to be known that, as mental health professionals, we renew our commitment to our ethical and professional code which compels us to:

1. Continue to monitor these effects on our society.
2. Continue to inform the public of the psychological consequences of oppression, violence and increased stress.
3. Offer our professional services to all levels of the society in order to promote communication, conflict resolution and the amelioration of suffering.

The Institute for Clinical Psychology would like to see:

1. The removal without delay of all Apartheid structures in South Africa.
2. The immediate end to the practices of indefinite detention without trial and solitary confinement.
3. The immediate and unconditional cessation of all detentions of children, the release or charge of all children being detained, and the reinstatement of the Children and Child Care Act alone, to process all alleged offences by children.
4. The reinstatement of freedom of speech and the removal of media restrictions.
5. The lifting of the state of emergency and a return to the rule of law.
6. A willingness amongst all leaders to negotiate in peace for a free and equal society.



*Psychological Assoc of South Africa*

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# STAND BY IVAN TOMS!

# STOP APARTHEID WAR!

On 3 March Cape Town doctor Ivan Toms was sentenced to 21 months in jail for refusing to serve in the South African Defence Force. Gay activist, anti-apartheid campaigner of long standing and a committed Anglican his objections to military service are rooted in his religious and political beliefs.

He is one of a group of twenty three young men who in August last year collectively announced they would not serve in the army because it defends apartheid. Their campaign is a courageous one. They face stiff penalties for their opposition.

## Military Service Compulsory

In South Africa military service is compulsory for all white men from the age of eighteen. Only a small group of pacifist religious objectors have been allowed to perform alternative non-military service, and then for a period of six years. People with moral and political objections to apartheid face jail-sentences, calculated at one and-a-half times the period owed to the army. This could mean six years in jail.

Doctor Ivan Toms is the first of 'the Twenty Three' to be charged. He has already done two years initial military service and was due to report for a 20-day 'camp' in mid-November last year. Instead he handed in his uniform and informed the army that he would no longer serve. His trial was remanded until the end of February.

## Long-standing Opponent of the SADF

Ivan Toms is no stranger to confrontation with the SADF. He was first conscripted at the end of 1976, after completing his medical studies at the University of Cape Town. His initial reaction was to leave the country as many others have done. He had already bought a ticket to London, but cancelled it at the last minute, when friends persuaded him to stay.

When he went into the army he refused to handle weapons. As he was a doctor the army accommodated him in a non-combatant role. But it was an ambiguous one.

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*'I thought maybe I could do some good in the situation. But even as a doctor, which is probably the most helping profession, I found myself in a very compromised position. I was a cog in a machine that goes on to murder people in Namibia, attack in Angola and now is actually fighting in the townships,' he said in March 1985.*

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Ivan's opposition to the SADF hardened after he had finished his two years initial service. On leaving the army he helped found a clinic at the Crossroads squatter camp in 1980, working with a local Christian group. For years the squatters, many of whom lived illegally in Cape Town in defiance of apartheid's population controls, had resisted the government's attempts to forcibly remove them.



The police and army raided the settlement on several occasions. In June 1986 it was attacked and partly destroyed by vigilantes, supported by police and troops, and some 30,000 squatters were made homeless. Many were brutally killed and the injured were treated at the clinic in which Toms worked. It was also a refuge for people wounded by the police and army during the anti apartheid protests which gripped Cape Town in 1985 and early 1986. At other hospitals, police were arresting patients with bullet wounds and interrogating them about their involvement in the unrest.

## Fast for a Just Peace

In September 1985, the End Conscription Campaign (ECC), which opposes compulsory military service, launched a campaign to focus on the military occupation of black townships. It organised the *Fast for a Just Peace* to protest at army repression. Ivan Toms was one of three people who fasted continuously for three weeks. Hundreds of others did so for shorter periods. The public meeting held in Cape Town at the end of Ivan's fast was one of the largest ever, attended by four thousand people including many from Crossroads and other townships.

With these experiences behind him it was almost inevitable that Ivan should be one of 'the Twenty Three'. Since making his stand he has suffered unprecedented harassment. As a gay person he has been the target of a vicious smear campaign by the military authorities.

But Ivan's stand is receiving strong support. A campaign has been organised in South Africa which is backed by prominent clergy in the Anglican and Catholic Churches and the End Conscription Campaign. Ivan is supported by a range of progressive medical groupings, including the National Medical and Dental Association (NAMDA) and Lesbians and Gays Against Oppression - a local, non racial organisation which he helped to establish.

We seek support for Dr Ivan Toms because the state has imposed the maximum penalty of 21 months in jail against him to discourage others of 'the Twenty Three' from continuing their stand.

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*Crossroads June 1986: Troops lay down barbed wire to prevent squatters from returning to the site of their destroyed homes.*

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## THE HIGH PRICE OF OPPOSITION

Ivan Toms has suffered a campaign of unremitting harassment since he first contested his call-up orders. He has received hundreds of abusive phone calls; magazine subscriptions have been taken out in his name; pig manure has been delivered to his doorstep; his car has twice been advertised for sale and its tyres have been slashed. His house was daubed with paint. On one occasion a wheelnut on his car was loosened so that the wheel came off while he was driving.

At the same time there has been a well organised poster campaign against him and the End Conscription Campaign. Professionally printed posters and stickers have appeared on the streets of Cape Town, strongly homophobic in character. In December 1987 conscripts serving at the Western Province Command Headquarters in Cape Town were sentenced to 18 months in detention barracks. During the trial the commanding officer of Communication Operations, a propaganda arm of the National Security Management System, admitted that a special propaganda unit within the Command was behind a propaganda campaign aimed at discrediting the ECC and anti conscription activists.

## COSAWR'S CAMPAIGN FOR IVAN TOMS

The Committee on South African War Resistance is an organisation of South Africans who have left South Africa, for exile, rather than serve in the South African Defence Force.

The following resources are available from COSAWR:

- Bulk copies of this pamphlet
- Bulk copies of the poster on Ivan Toms for flyposting
- An information package
- Support Ivan Toms T-shirts
- Videos on Ivan Toms, war resistance and the activities of the SADF
- exhibition of 50 posters on SA war resistance (mounted and framed) - from mid June 1988
- slide-tape show on SA war resistance
- The COSAWR journal *Resister* which documents war resistance and militarism in Southern Africa

COSAWR can also provide speakers for meetings and will write articles for magazines and other media on request.

Individuals and organisations can support our campaign by:

- Sending a message of support to Ivan via M Evans  
c/o Mallinck, Ress, Richmond and Cloenberg, PO Box 3667, Cape Town 8000, South Africa
- Writing letters, supporting Ivan and 'the Twenty Three', to South African newspapers:  
The Editor, *Weekly Mail*, Box 260425, Excom 2023, Johannesburg;  
The Editor, *New Nation*, PO Box 10674, Johannesburg 2000;  
The Editor, *Cape Times*, PO Box 11, Cape Town 8000
- Requesting copies of the poster for flyposting or putting it up on local noticeboards
- Raising the issue in your trade union and other organisations to which you belong
- Organising a service or raising Ivan's stand in your congregation
- Making a donation to COSAWR to support its campaign and work of assisting newly-arrived war resisters.

Letters protesting at the activities of the South African Defence Force and the imprisonment of war resisters can be sent to **South African Embassy**  
**South Africa House Trafalgar Square London SW1**

**Cut out and mail to**  
**COSAWR**  
**BM Box 2190**  
**London WC1N 3XX**

Please send me:  
Pamphlets (quantity) \_\_\_\_\_ @ £1.00 per 100 incl p&p  
Posters (quantity) \_\_\_\_\_ @ £2.00 per 20, incl p&p  
Special rates for flyposting (50 posters or more)  
Support Ivan Toms T-shirts (quantity and size) \_\_\_\_\_  
@ £5.50 each, incl p&p  
Information pack of press clips, pamphlets, poster (quantity) \_\_\_\_\_ free

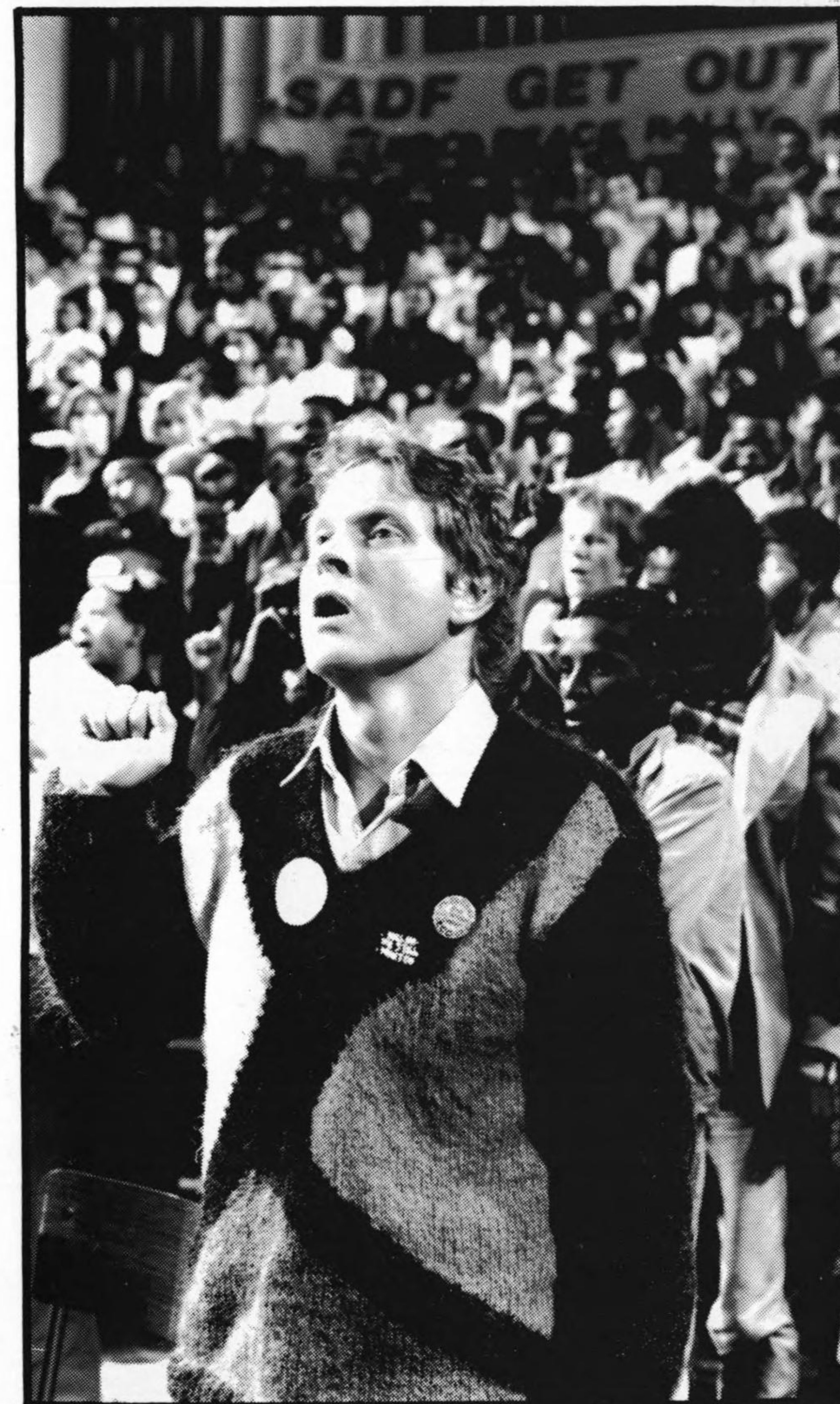
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## STAND BY IVAN TOMS!



## STOP APARTHEID WAR!