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CANADIAN AID FOR SOUTHERN AFRICAN REFUGEES

(CASAR)

P.O. Box 24865, STATION C, VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA V5T 4G3

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NEWSLETTER #4

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Dear Friends:

We are writing to you as members, supporters, or previous donors to Canadian Aid for Southern African Refugees (CASAR) to give you a report of our activities, and to make our annual 1980 appeal for funds. Some of you may be hearing of us for the first time.

The enclosed brochure describes CASAR's aims. We have been working for 3 years now, and are a broadly based Canadian organization devoted to providing humanitarian aid to the victims of the racist regime that governs South Africa and Namibia. CASAR has so far distributed \$14,400.00 for practical relief purposes in Africa. Only 10% of contributions made to us have been used for administrative expenses, chiefly mailing costs and legal fees for incorporation and securing of tax exemption for donors. Most of our donations have been channeled through Canadian University Services Overseas (CUSO), and have qualified for matching Canadian government grants through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

\$8,500.00 of CASAR funds were contributed to help refugees from the former racist Ian Smith regime in Rhodesia. The victory in the February 1980 election of the two Patriotic Front parties, and the establishment in April of an independent Zimbabwe with Robert Mugabe as Prime Minister, has been the most encouraging international development this year. Donors to CASAR can rightly feel that they made a small contribution to this victory by their support of Zimbabwean refugees in the last three years of their bitter struggle for freedom. CASAR will continue funding projects in Zimbabwe that can help correct the malnutrition, lack of housing and dislocations of people that are a legacy of the long guerilla war there.

CASAR's main attention now needs to be directed towards helping the victims of South Africa's apartheid system to win their freedom in South Africa and Namibia. We plan to send a major portion of the funds we raise during the next year to help in constructing the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College at Mazimbu, Tanzania. We have already contributed \$5,400.00 to the College (referred to in our last Newsletter as the Morogoru Secondary School). The Freedom College is named after Solomon Mahlangu, a patriot who was executed by the racist government of South Africa for his stand against oppression and exploitation. For several years, it has provided continued education for about 150 courageous teenagers who protested against the inferior "Bantu Education" offered blacks in Soweto, and who had to flee for their lives after the June 1976 riots there.

Now the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College is being expanded to accommodate 1,000 students. Classrooms, dormitories, laboratories and workshops are now under construction on a site of 350 acres donated by the government of Tanzania. The purpose of the Freedom College is to provide high quality secondary and post-secondary education to South African young people. Students in Grades 7 to 12 will sit both Tanzanian and Cambridge examinations with the aim of allowing the best students to enter international universities. The intent is both to train students to take their place in the struggle against apartheid and to prepare them for later skilled participation in the reconstruction of a liberated and non-racist South Africa. All students carry out useful manual work while they study (growing on a farm the food they eat), and emphasis is placed on avoiding intellectual elitism and an artificial separation between mental and physical work.

The total cost of constructing the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College is estimated at \$6,500,000.00. Major contributors so far have been the United Nations Development Programme, and the governments of Sweden, Norway and the Netherlands. Unfortunately, the government of Canada has not contributed, due to its maintenance of diplomatic ties and commercial relations with racist South Africa. CASAR now offers individual Canadians an opportunity to correct this injustice.

We hope you will feel moved to make a generous donation to CASAR at this time. Donations are tax deductible, and you will receive an income tax receipt by mail. Your gift may seem small to you, but it means a great deal in Africa. Your support will give strong moral encouragement to Africans of all races who are struggling for the elementary justice which we take for granted in Canada. Besides making a donation yourself, would you kindly send this letter on to a friend who might be interested? Alternatively, CASAR will gladly mail out letters to your friends, if you will supply us with their names and addresses. Periodic newsletters are the main way in which CASAR raises funds for aid in Africa. The larger our mailing list, the more help we can give!

With many thanks for your help,

Yours sincerely,

Thomas L. Perry

Thomas L. Perry, M.D.,
President, CASAR

P.S. For your interest, we append part of a recent press release issued by Rev. Thomas M. Anthony of the Anglican Church of Canada, which gives a vivid and up-to-date picture of the real situation inside South Africa. On May 26th, 1980, Rev. Anthony took part in a religious service and peaceful march in Braamfontein, South Africa. The march protested the detention without charges by the South African police of Rev. John F. Thorne, a courageous supporter of equal rights and good education for blacks, and a former President of the South African Council of Churches. Rev. Anthony was promptly arrested for participating in the protest march, and he was soon thereafter expelled from South Africa. On June 9th, 1980, shortly after returning to Canada, Rev. Anthony issued a press release, part of which we reproduce here because it gives a succinct account of what conditions are like in South Africa today.

"The time has long passed for believing that the Nationalist Party regime in South Africa intends to dismantle its hideous apartheid system of human oppression and exploitation....."

Today there is no change in the policies and under this so-called "independent Homelands" and "African Urban Area" policies, Blacks systematically continue to be gathered into concentration camps from which they may emerge only if their labour is required.

"Within the "homelands" there are totally inadequate amounts of land to sustain this population. In addition millions of Black South Africans are being declared no longer citizens of their own land but of an arbitrarily designated "homeland". More than two million people have been permanently "relocated", many in "African Urban Areas" or "Townships", often many miles from the nearest White population centre and any employment opportunity. There are no means for economic survival in these areas - no land, no jobs. They are totally dependent on the migratory labour system which requires the males to travel to a mine or other industrial site and live in the massive hostels.

"It is this "separate development" system rooted in economic and political dispossession based on race which is at the heart of the South African regime's policies. It is this system which has produced the wealthiest per capita White elite in the world which controls more than 70% of the income while being less than 17% of the population. It is to complete and perpetuate this system and to rob most Black South Africans of their citizenship and any right to a share in the rich resources of that land that the current policies are directed,

"For far too long British, American and Canadian government, business and industrial leaders have ignored the growing evidence of the drastic implications of these policies. During the past decade countless stories about change and improvements for Blacks have been promulgated, many by the South African regime's own covert Information Department activities. For short term economic gain, and "to keep the peace in Southern Africa", little or no real economic and political pressure has been brought to bear on the South African regime to insist that the apartheid system and its economic exploitation on the basis of race must end.

"Reformist measures such as codes of conduct, improved wages for those Blacks who are employed, and some cosmetic attempts at removing petty apartheid have made no significant differences to the vast majority of the Black population. Attempts by children, youth and adults to articulate and mobilize Black opinion in rural and urban communities, in the mines and industrial work places continue to be brutally repressed. Leaders are detained without charges for months, tortured, and then either jailed or "banned", i.e. denied any right of association or communication.

"This system cannot produce development for Blacks - it produces only destruction. It has sown the seeds of its own destruction, however, for the truth about the human cost can no longer be hidden, rationalized nor defended. Most importantly, the Black peoples of Southern Africa have recognized their moral and spiritual power in confronting the evil apartheid system and resistance is growing."

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