

THE TREASON TRIALS DEFENCE FUND

ASKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

- TO HELP TO PAY
THE COSTS OF LEGAL DEFENCE.
- TO BRING RELIEF
TO THE DEPENDANTS OF THE
ACCUSED WHO ARE IN NEED.

The families of the accused are making immense efforts and painful readjustments to manage in the absence of the breadwinner.

These Dependants need your help.

Even although the lawyers engaged are charging far less than their normal scale of fees, and a great deal of legal work is being done entirely without charge, over the months essential legal costs become extremely heavy.

WILL YOU HELP?

The Trustees of the Fund are:

The Rt. Rev. Ambrose Reeves (the Bishop of Johannesburg);
Mr. Justice F. A. W. Lucas;
Dr. Ellen Hellmann;
Mr. Alan Paton.

We will collect donations if you telephone: 33-5901.

SEND DONATIONS TO

The Treason Trials Defence Fund, Box 2864, Johannesburg
or
5, Trades Hall, Kerk Street, Johannesburg.

A NATION-WIDE FUND HAS BEEN OPENED

The Treason Trial Preparatory Examination started in December, 1956.

There are 156 accused. They belong to all four of the main racial groups of the country—104 Africans, 23 Europeans, 21 Indians and 7 Coloured people. Among them are 18 women.

The accused come from all walks of life. Some of them are well-known, but very few have any means.

★

THE OBJECTS OF THE TREASON TRIALS DEFENCE FUND ARE

TO PAY FOR LEGAL DEFENCE

TO PROVIDE RELIEF FOR THE DEPENDANTS
OF THE ACCUSED WHO ARE IN NEED.

★

THE FUND WILL REQUIRE AT LEAST £100,000

★

Of this Fund, the late Archbishop of Cape Town, Dr. Geoffrey Clayton, wrote:—

"I very much hope that the Fund may receive generous and widespread support. I hope and believe that there are many people in all parties, and also among those who, like myself, are not members of any party, who believe that a man is to be regarded as innocent until he is proved guilty . . . It is of the greatest importance that those who are accused should not only have, but be generally seen to have, a fair trial . . .

I cannot believe that there is anyone, whatever his political belief, who is not anxious that justice should be done. The purpose of the Fund is to secure, as far as is possible, that this should happen."

COPY of a letter from the Trustees of the Treason Trials Defence Fund,
Johannesburg, S.Africa, dated 8th March, 1957, to the Editor of
~~The Times, Printing House Square, London, E.C.4.~~

John H.
Dear Sir,

12/3/57
note
We wish, on behalf of the Treason Trials Defence Fund, to express
our sincere thanks to Christian Action for the generous contributions it has
Christian Action
made to the Fund and for its continuing efforts to bring the needs of the Fund
to the attention of the people of the United Kingdom.

We are appreciative not only of this greatly needed material help
to assist in paying the legal costs of defence and in bringing some measure of
relief to the dependants of accused who are in need, but of the spontaneous spirit
which prompted this support.

It is immensely heartening to know that our realization of the signi-
ficance of the impending trials is shared and that, both in the United Kingdom
and South Africa, there is so appreciable a number of people who, in their
affirmation of the principle that every man shall be presumed innocent until
proved guilty in a court of law, are prepared to support this case.

We have also been informed that the Fund will soon be receiving
substantial contributions from the British Labour Party and the Trade Union
Congress. To these organizations, too, the Fund is glad to be able to express
its gratitude in public.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) F.A. Lucas Alan Paton
Ellen Hellmann Ambrose Johannesburg

TRUSTEES.

Dear Sir,

We wish, on behalf of the South Africa Treason Trials Defence Fund, to express our sincere thanks to Christian Action for the generous contributions it has made to the Fund as a result of its special appeal in Britain and for its continuing efforts to bring the needs of those arrested and their dependants to the attention of the people of the United Kingdom.

We are appreciative not only of this greatly needed material help to assist in paying the legal costs of defence and in bringing some measure of relief to the dependants of accused who are in need, but of the spontaneous spirit which has prompted this support.

It is immensely heartening to know that our realization of the significance of the impending trials is shared and that, both in the United Kingdom and South Africa, there is so appreciable a number of people who, in their affirmation of the principle that every man shall be presumed innocent until proved guilty in a court of law, are prepared to support this case.

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Yours sincerely,

(Sga.)

F.A. Lucas

Ellen Hellmann

Alan Eaton

Amberlee Johannesburg

TRUSTEES

To A.P. 2/6

PHONE: 33-5901

P.O. BOX 2864
JOHANNESBURG

TREASON TRIALS DEFENCE FUND

TRUSTEES:

THE HON. F.A.W. LUCAS
THE RIGHT REV. AMBROSE REEVES,
(BISHOP OF JOHANNESBURG)
DR. ELLEN HELLMANN
MR. ALAN PATON

The Editor,
THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN

Dear Sir,

We beg the hospitality of your columns to make an appeal for support for the SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEFENCE FUND, headed by the Very Rev. James Pilo and Mr. John Gunther, and administered by the American Committee on Africa. This Fund is intended to provide adequate legal defence for the 156 persons arrested on charges of High Treason in the Union of South Africa and for some of their dependents. There is already a fund in South Africa, called the Treason Trials Defence Fund, which was sponsored by such outstanding persons as the late Archbishop of Cape Town, the Bishops of Natal and Grahamstown, Judge Footenham, the Rt. Hon. G. Horton-Micholls, Mrs. Ballinger M.P., and the Rev. Dr. J.B. Webb.

The need for such a Fund is very clear. Already it appears that the preliminary trials alone will last almost a year and that the trial itself will not begin until 1958. During this time the accused persons are virtually excluded from any gainful employment, and in many cases their families have suffered considerable hardship. If it had not been for the T.T.D.F., two things would almost certainly have happened, (a) the accused persons would have been unable to secure that quality of legal defence which is essential to their reputations and future careers, and (b) in many cases their families would have been reduced to circumstances of extreme poverty. There is a third very important point to be made. The charges preferred against the accused are so serious, and the trial itself so critical, that it is a matter of the greatest public importance that the Court should be enabled to reach a just decision, based on the best evidence available. At this stage in our history it would be disastrous if this grave matter is disposed of in any but the most thorough manner.

It is a matter of the greatest difficulty to collect funds for these purposes in the Union of South Africa. Many people are afraid of giving any open assistance, or indeed assistance of any kind whatsoever, because they fear that this fact will be discovered and will be noted against them. Many others are frightened by the very word "treason" and will do nothing to help any person who might be suspected of it. In spite of these handicaps, committees have been working in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Durban, Bloemfontein, Pietermaritzburg and Johannesburg, and not inconsiderable sums have been collected.

The issue of adequate legal defence has an importance even greater than that of the rights of the accused persons. In a country which faces the danger of an increasingly authoritarian Government, it is essential to maintain the authority of the Courts, and to make use of every weapon that democracy has given to us. Those of us who have sponsored this fund and who have helped in collecting for it, are deeply grateful for the generous contributions which American people are making to the South African Defence Fund. What we would do without their assistance we dare not think, and we hope they will continue to give it to us so long as the need exists.

Yours faithfully,

Bishop of Johannesburg.

Judge P.A.W. Lucas

Alan Paton

COMMISSION OF THE CHURCHES ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Commission des Eglises pour les Affaires Internationales

Established by

Kommission der Kirchen für Internationale Angelegenheiten

The World Council of Churches and The International Missionary Council

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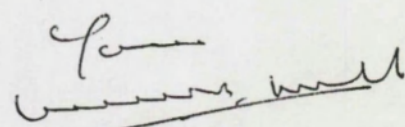
The Rev. Canon. L. John Collins,
2, Amen Court,
LONDON. E.C.4.

15th January, 1957.

My dear Collins,

I enclose a copy of the letter written by Mrs. Hellmann of Johannesburg, whom you probably know, to Dr. van Beyma of the World Council of Churches, Geneva. I thought you would like to see this as towards the end it has some interesting observations on the question of funds for defence in the Treason Trials

Enc.


Kenneth G. Grubb.

COPY OF A LETTER:

from - Mrs. E. Hellmann,
Johannesbury,
South Africa.

Dr. U. H. van Beyma,
W.C.C.,
Geneva.

copy to: Dr Visser 't Hooft (3x
Dr. Cooke.
Mr. House,
Mr. Garrett (not for
publication.)

14, First Avenue,
Houghton,
Johannesburg,
December 29th, 1956.

Dear Dr. van Beyma,

Thank you very much for your letter of the 17th. I am speaking on behalf of a whole group when I tell you that the expression of your interest and concern is very heartening.

As you already doubtlessly know, the first three days of the preparatory examination got no further than the prosecution's opening address. The first day virtually nothing happened, because the proceedings could not be heard by a large number of accused and so there was an adjournment pending the installation of a loud-speaker system. The second morning the prosecutor commenced his address, in the afternoon the question of bail was argued before a judge. The third morning the prosecution's address was completed.

The basis of the high treason charge is that there was incitement to overthrow the existing state by revolutionary methods and to establish a so-called people's democracy on the basis of the communist countries. Up till now, as you will appreciate, no evidence has been led. The prosecution has quoted from numerous pamphlets, the weekly New Age, has referred to a number but by no means all of the accused, and the refrain seems to have been the Freedom Charter (which you no doubt saw when you were here). The preparatory examination will take at least six weeks - some people think twice as long. It will come on again on Jan. 9th. And it is only at the end of that examination that the actual charges will be formulated.

One can only describe the accused as an extremely mixed bag. I know only some of them and my own, strictly personal and quite off the record opinion is that those people have not and never had any thought "treason". I find it difficult to believe that anything in the nature of treason was planned by any. But, then, I don't understand the law at all and what legal definitions of treason are.

cont../..

cont../..

- 2 -

Meanwhile, of course, it is all subjudice. No statements of any kind are being made and it would of course be highly improper to do so. The T. T. Defence Fund (Treason Trials Defence Fund) was set up here - as announced in the Star of Dec. 13th - with what I consider as an imposing list of sponsors and four trustees - The Bishop of Johannesburg, the Hon. Judge Lucas, Mr. Alan Paton and me. The objects are to raise money to pay the legal costs of defence; to offer bail; and to support those dependants of the accused who may be in need.

Committees to raise money have started functioning in Johannesburg, Durban and Capetown. Not much has been done about publicity yet - while the examination was on and particularly when that unfortunate shooting took place, - it would in any case have got little space. So, at the moment, I don't think much over £2,000 has come in yet. We shall of course require very much more. The trial will probably take months. And raising the money will not be easy as many of the people who are at all well off are frightened and many adopt the "there can't be smoke without any fire" attitude. It was possible to get all the accused out on bail on the evening of the second day without using any money from the Fund. Sureties from people with the necessary bank references were accepted. And, as the bail was much lower (£250 for Europeans, £100 for Indians and £50 for Africans) than originally anticipated, we needed fewer people than we had actually prepared for.

I don't know if these rather scrappy comments help you at all. At the moment there are of course many problems to be dealt with: the lines of defence, who will conduct the defence and so on. A liaison committee with members of the Bar and side-bar on it has been set up to advise on these matters.

I do hope you are well.

With kind regards and all good wishes for 1957.

Yours sincerely,

(s.) Ellen Hellmann.

One of the most encouraging features was that the collection, which was taken after a simple appeal, in contrast to the methods used at many meetings today and in deference to those who dislike a 'worked' appeal, produced £1,303.

At a meeting which had many impressive moments, the most moving contribution probably came from a speaker who could not attend - Albert Luthuli, President of the African National Congress of South Africa, and one of the 156 people facing trial. Mr. Luthuli had his message recorded on tape and smuggled through to Canon Collins, who knows him personally. The audience was hushed as Mr. Luthuli sent this message to his fellow-Christians in Britain:

"It is most fitting and encouraging that such a challenging meeting should be convened by a Christian Group; for the Church of Christ, if it is to be true to the mission assigned to it by her Master, must boldly challenge the conscience of the rulers and the peoples to create in their countries conditions that would bring about the realisation of Christ's programme which He enunciated to be to 'preach good news to the poor, proclaim release to the captives and the recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.'

"I speak as one belonging to an oppressed group - the non-whites in the Union of South Africa - where discriminatory, oppressive laws, in growing intensity, are bearing heavily on non-whites. We are witnessing a terrific onslaught by the Apartheid policy of the Nationalist Government on the limited civil liberties more or less enjoyed hitherto by non-whites. This is bringing about unprecedented human suffering on non-whites in the country. The disastrous displacement of people from their long-established homes, and the muzzling and banishment of people who protest against these and other atrocious injustices, are the order of the day.

"But yet we are not despondent. We are encouraged in our struggle for freedom by seeing our stand of opposing Apartheid vindicated by the justice of our cause and the undoubted growth of the freedom front in our country. It is also encouraging to us to find our cause attracting the support of such organisations as yours.

"I wish to say in all sincerity how much we appreciate the support we are getting from Christian Action and other Christian and secular agencies in many lands. Long live justice and fair play! Long live freedom! Long live Africa!"

Canon Collins said he did not propose to enlighten Mr. Strydom about how he managed to obtain this recorded speech despite all the methods of a police-state. Then he sent this warning to the South African Premier:

"Mr. Strydom is a foolish man if he seriously believes that racial bigotry is a domestic affair. On the contrary, racist policies anywhere are a serious threat to world peace. And racialism in South Africa is a serious threat not only to world peace, but also to the integrity of the British Commonwealth: it is a special concern of the family, so to speak. It is our duty, I believe, to show Mr. Strydom and his supporters, and to show them in a practical way, that we do not approve of anyone in the family persistently behaving as a thug in the matter of human relationships.

(4)

"I want to make it clear to South Africans that Christian Action and, I am sure, all of us who are here tonight are not anti-Afrikaner nor anti-South Africa. Many white South Africans share with us in our determination to help non-whites everywhere to a free and full life. We are concerned that oppression wherever it exists to be withstood, and the oppressed, wherever they are, be cared for to the maximum of our ability."

The first speaker at the meeting was Mr. Gerald Gardiner, Q.C., who went to South Africa and attended the opening days of the preliminary hearing on behalf of Christian Action. His detailed account of the constitutional position in South Africa in general, and the legal situation at present, provided an invaluable background to the later speeches.

His factual manner, and his insistence that he could not comment on proceedings which are 'sub judice' (but which did not mean that speakers were not entitled to state what had been said in open court), made even more impressive these concluding words of his speech:

"The Church has always, if I may say so, quite rightly acted with great caution in any matter remotely political. The Bar Council has always acted with great caution in any matter remotely political, particularly where it affects other countries. I do not regard it as accidental that this is the first time in the history of the Church in England that it has organised a Fund to defend men and women charged with high treason in a foreign country (which is a remarkable thing if you come to think of it) and it is the first time in the history of the Bar Council that they have been represented at a foreign trial.

"In the last quarter of a century we have seen Communism and Fascism at work in different countries abroad, and we are well aware of the factors which form such a leading part in states of that kind. And many of these factors are increasingly present in South Africa today. There comes a point at which I think it is immoral to be disinterested when one sees the development of these factors in another country."

Father Trevor Huddleston, C.R., who received a great ovation, declared that the situation in South Africa faced Christians with a particular problem which they could not ignore.

"Here in this treason trial" he said, "we have a supreme opportunity of showing that the conscience of this country is not dead, but that we do desire with all our hearts to be identified with those people who are fellow citizens with us of Her Majesty the Queen, and who are attempting to maintain the standards of decency and liberty which the Commonwealth proclaims.

"And so I would urge with all my heart that the most practical thing that we can do at this moment is to make quite certain that those who are facing this Trial are given a fair Trial; and this we can best do by seeing that they have the best defence that is available; and also we can exercise that rare virtue in these days of compassion for those African people who, owing to their economic poverty, are going to suffer very grave hardship through a prolonged trial which will keep them from their work, and which their wives and children will have to share.



Established 1910

The Fire Brigades Union

GENERAL SECRETARY: JOHN HORNER (REGISTERED NO. 1695 L.L.)

REGISTERED OFFICE: 865 FULHAM ROAD, LONDON, S.W.6

Telephone: READING 2157

Please quote this reference on all replies

JH/VO'C/00

26th March, 1957.

The Reverend
Canon L. John Collins,
2, Amen Court,
London. E.C.4.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter of the 11th March, which I placed before my Executive Council at their last meeting, for their consideration.

It was agreed at this meeting to donate the sum of £5. 5. 0d to your special fund, and I was instructed to say that we would be willing to distribute any literature you may have in connection with the South African Trial, to our membership.

I have pleasure in enclosing herewith our cheque in the above amount.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN HORNER
General Secretary

Forda:
I enclose with
with a special
letter to L. Horner

Frank Acton

26th March, 1957.

Dear Mr. Horner,

Thank you so very much for the cheque which you have sent on behalf of your Union for the Christian Action appeal in connection with the arrests in South Africa.

I am also extremely grateful for your kindness in saying that you will be willing to distribute any literature in connection with the trial to your membership. I hope shortly to have ready a new leaflet which I would much like to let you have: could you, of your kindness, give me an idea of the number of such leaflets you could use?

I still remember with pleasure our meeting together, and your very kindly driving my wife and me back home on that occasion. I have often intended to get in touch with you, particularly when I saw that you had had to make a very difficult decision some little time ago. But, as always in London, it seems that one never meets anyone except on business!

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

John Horner, Esq.,
General Secretary,
Fire Brigades Union.

Approved File

UNITED NATIONS STUDENT ASSOCIATION
of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Member: International Student Movement for the United Nations

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CAROLINE BARBOUR, M.A. (EDINBURGH)

25 Charles Street, London, W.1

Telephone : GROsvenor 2784

Telegrams : Freenat, Audley, London.

16th January, 1957.

Miss Freda Nuell,
Secretary,
Christian Action,
2 Amen Court,
London E.C.4.

Dear Miss Nuell,

Thank you very much for your letter, enclosing duplicated notices about your special funds in connection with the arrests in South Africa. It was most thoughtful of you to send them round by hand, and I hope that this was not of great inconvenience to you.

We are encouraging all our branches to co-operate with other student societies in arranging special appeals, and I am sure that some of them will respond with enthusiasm, but I must add that it is often difficult for the students to organise continual campaigns of this kind, and although UNSA is not a fund-raising body, we have just completed a large-scale Refugee appeal. I know, however, that your cause has the sympathy of all our members, and I hope that we can make some small contribution to the valuable work which you are doing.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Barbour

Caroline Barbour
Secretary

WEST RIDING COUNCIL FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS

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35 Vesper Lane
Leeds 5

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MR. J. REX
25 Kelso Road
Leeds 2

Dear Miss Nuell,

Thankyou for your appeal letters and other literature. I'm afraid that it will not be possible to have a literature stall at Father Huddleston's meeting. I could use some of your appeal leaflets, however. I'd like to send out about 250 with the notice of this council's A.G.M. and could distribute another 200 in connection with the inaugural meeting of the Leeds and District M.C.F., of which I shall be Chairman. I don't know how many you could let us have. Please send as many as you can up to 500,

Yours sincerely,

John Rex

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