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211

7/4/60

Dear Alan,  
The enclosed memo is  
for your information. I am  
sending another to Harri Pollak  
for the guidance of the Durban  
Committee.

Have you had a chance  
to seek sponsors? I am most  
anxious to get Hurley if someone  
can persuade him.

Hope you are keeping  
well. Kind regards to Mrs. Laton.

Sincerely yours,

Alex.

THE DEFENCE AND AID FUND

This explanatory memorandum is being issued to organisations and individuals interested in the formation of a Fund to meet the needs of the present emergency and has been prepared on the basis of the many questions that have been asked.

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1. Plans for the establishment of a Fund to assist South Africans involved in trials arising from political or racial offences have been in the course of preparation for some time. The necessity for such a Fund became apparent at the time of the mass trials following upon the disturbances in Sekukuniland in 1958 and mass arrests of strikers in other parts of the country.
2. Following upon a suggestion that the Treason Trials Defence Fund should be expanded to cater for such cases, the Annual General Meeting of the T.T.D.F. considered the matter but decided, for several reasons, that this would not be possible and recommended that steps be taken to form a separate Fund.
3. Consequently, a small group studied the question very thoroughly and prepared the necessary framework upon which this separate fund should operate. With legal assistance a draft constitution was drawn up, specifically framed to enable the Fund to aid persons involved in cases affecting human rights and civil liberties. Preparations for the launching of the Fund were in hand when the events of 21st March and the days following made it necessary to bring the Fund into operation sooner than planned. This is the reason why it was not possible to consult groups outside the Transvaal and explain to them the purpose and structure of the Fund.
4. The Constitution of the Fund (which is to be known as "The Defence and Aid Fund") provides for a wide scope of aid and makes it possible for sympathisers to associate themselves with all the causes undertaken by the Fund, or any one particular cause. Membership is open to both organisations and individuals. Applications for assistance from the Fund must be made to the Management Committee which has the sole discretion to decide whether such assistance will be rendered or not. This Management Committee was in the process of formation when events forced the alteration of plans for the launching of the Fund. It included The Most Rev. Joost de Blank (Archbishop of Cape Town), The Rt. Ambrose Reeves (Bishop of Johannesburg), Alan Paton, Chief A.J. Luthuli, Dr. G.M. Naicker, Jean Sinclair and Alex Hepple. Three others have still to be appointed.

5. Where Emergency Relief Funds have already been established, arrangements can be made for them to receive support from the Defence and Aid Fund, provided they are serving causes approved by the D. & A. Fund, and comply with the Constitution of the Fund. Those Emergency Relief Funds which have secured 90 day Magistrate's permits may continue on that basis and apply to the D. & A. Fund for financial assistance to supplement their own <sup>KE</sup>connections. Such applications must be accompanied by a detailed statement showing particulars of relief provided, the number of persons affected, the amount collected by applicants, and the estimated total cost of proposed assistance.

If permanent registration is not obtained at the end of 90 days, emergency relief funds can be converted into branches of the D. & A. Fund, or sub-committees of the D. & A. Fund.

It must be stressed that the D. & A. Fund has not yet launched its Fund Raising drive, so has very little available at present. Assistance schemes should not be too ambitious until we are able to gauge the public response to our appeals for help.

6. An important aspect of our fund-raising drive will be the backing we are able to get from leading citizens. An appeal is now being made for Sponsors and your help is invited in this direction. We are anxious to collect an impressive list of prominent South Africans from all walks of life to (a) Sponsor the D. & A. Fund as a whole and/or (b) Sponsor specific appeals. Your Organisation has been supplied with a suggested list of persons to be canvassed.
7. The D. & A. Fund aims to help as many causes as possible but its activities will be limited to the funds which it has available. In all cases, members of the Fund will be fully informed of the causes which we are supporting. So far, its efforts centre on assistance to detainees and their dependants.
8. The D. & A. Fund is quite independent of the Treason Trials Defence Fund. The latter fund will continue operating until the treason trials have been concluded.
9. It is not the intention to apply for registration of the Defence and Aid Fund under the Welfare Organisations Act but it will be perfectly legal for us to collect money for the objects stated in our Constitution.
10. Please treat this document as strictly confidential. Publicity must not be given to its contents. All public announcements will be made by the Management Committee at the appropriate time.

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