

# Labour and South Africa

Apartheid hits all non-white people in South Africa - and none harder than the workers and their trade unions

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Africans, the majority of the country's workers, are forbidden by law to perform most kinds of skilled work. Denied education and training, they are restricted to the hardest and worst paid jobs. It is not surprising that their incomes are a fraction of those of the Whites. For instance, an African miner gets about £5 a month-plus a bunk in a dormitory and 'rations'. A white miner gets about £100 a month

It is a serious crime for African workers to strike. The penalty is imprisonment, plus a fine of up to £500—possibly with flogging as well. If the strike is deemed to have a political motive it can be charged as sabotage, which carries a death penalty. Official government policy regarding African trade unions is to 'bleed them to death'. It is a daily event for trade union offices to be raided and their membership lists seized, for subsequent victimisation, hundreds of trade unionists have been 'banned' by government order, exiled and imprisoned.

Port Elizabeth dockers' leader **Vuyisile Mini** and his fellow trade unionists **Khayingo** and **Mkaba** were victims of judicial murder when hanged in Pretoria on November 6, 1964.

## What can be done?

In the past eight months British trade unions representing over 5 million members have sent cables and protests to the Verwoerd government demanding the release of political prisoners and an end to the persecution of opponents. These protests have not been altogether without effect. They may well have helped to save the lives of Nelson Mandela and his colleagues in the famous Rivonia trial, as well as many others.

But protests 'without teeth' do not have much effect on a cruel regime like that of Dr. Verwoerd and his ex-Nazi Minister of Justice Vorster. What then should be done?

The Trade Union Congress has given the answer. At its recent Blackpool session, on the eve of the General Election, it

called on the British Government to implement a diplomatic, economic and arms boycott of South Africa in accordance with the decisions of the United Nations General Assembly.

Mr. Frank Cousins, transport workers' leader-now Minister of Technology in the Labour Government, said:

"If, immediately after this new Labour Government has taken hold, they introduce economic sanctions against South Africa in fulfilment of the United Nations decision and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions decision, you must not let them down, the dockers will not let you down."

## **Don't let them down!**

The workers and oppressed people of South Africa are looking hopefully towards this country. For a long time they have been disappointed. British spokesmen have hypocritically condemned apartheid, but in practice British arms supply, investments and trade have even increased. The freedom-fighters of South Africa and their supporters all over the world are hoping confidently that British Labour will carry out its undertakings, and stop the supply of arms, and participate in the world sanctions movement which many countries are already pledged to support.

We must not let them down or disappoint those hopes.

## **What you can do?**

■ see that your trade union branch is informed about South Africa (copies of this leaflet may be obtained for 22/- per thousand). Speakers are available from Anti-Apartheid office.

■ see that your local co-op and council boycott South African goods.

■ demand that the Labour government hastens its pledges to stop arms sales to Verwoerd's apartheid regime; supports international sanctions;

■ join the Anti-Apartheid movement personally (details on application) and start a local anti-apartheid committee in your area.

## **Send your appeals:**

Mr. C. R. Swart  
State President  
Pretoria,  
South Africa.

Dr. Carel de Wet  
Ambassador  
South Africa House,  
London, W.C.2.

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