

The Anti-Apartheid Movement

After 1960 'anti-apartheid' became a global preoccupation. In the United Kingdom, organized opposition to apartheid would develop into 'Britain's biggest-ever international solidarity movement'.¹ More generally, international anti-apartheid campaigning is acknowledged to have built 'one of the most influential post-war social movements'.² This may have happened anyway, even if the police had not fired their guns at Sharpeville. It seems less likely, though. Perceptions of crisis generated by the shootings at Sharpeville and the accompanying tumult elicited strategic shifts by the state and its most important opponents. These altered the course of South African politics.

As we shall see, a diaspora of socially assertive South African exiles arrived in their host societies in Europe and North America just at a time when a fresh constituency for an idealist 'politics of conscience' was under assembly, itself a product of social change and in particular a consequence of a massive expansion of higher education. If the exiles had arrived later they may well have made less impact, their cause overtaken by others. Moreover, the massacre and in particular the media images that depicted it generated an emotional public response. This was so especially in countries that were connected to South Africa by kinship affinities and political alliances.

Networks of organized activity in four countries constituted the core dynamics of global public opposition to apartheid. The movement was wider as we shall see but these national networks were the most enduring and the best organized. These networks were located in the United Kingdom, Sweden, the Netherlands, and the United States. In each of these countries anti-apartheid movements would succeed in enlisting public sympathy and popular activism on a large scale and from time to time they would help to shape official decision making.

In their national settings anti-apartheid movements constituted themselves more or less independently of each other, each emerging at the end of the 1950s out of earlier efforts to support ANC campaigning in South Africa. In 1952 in Britain, Christian Action, a Christian socialist pressure group founded in 1945 by a former Anglican chaplain in the Royal Air Force, John Collins, raised money to help the families of Defiance Campaign volunteers and would later supply the organizational base for anti-apartheid activity in Britain. In the United States in the same year Americans for South African Resistance undertook a similar role and the following year would rename itself the American Committee on Africa (ACOA). Christian Action would later raise £50,000 for the defendants in the 1956–61 Treason Trial and for this purpose established the Defence and Aid Fund in 1958. A Swedish branch of this organization was set up in 1959. Meanwhile in the Netherlands the *Comite Zuid-Afrika* (CZA) constituted itself in 1957, again with the initial purpose of raising money for the Treason Trial defence. In these settings, early anti-apartheid organization was strongly church-based and nurtured by clerical contacts with black South African leadership that had developed over decades of missionary activity. The influence of churchmen in building the foundations of the international Anti-Apartheid Movement was significant, as Robert Skinner has suggested, in promoting ‘a moral reading of international politics’ and in representing apartheid as a ‘fundamental wrong’, a framing of the issues that made them especially emotive.³

In Britain, missionary traditions would be particularly important in helping to root the Anti-Apartheid Movement in British society. Over the next three decades the movement would find some of its strongest support on Scottish university campuses, and indeed Scottish organized student protest at South African racial discrimination first occurred in 1947, the year of the royal visit to South Africa. Scottish universities had a particular African orientation that they developed through their role in the training of Scottish Presbyterian missionaries, especially at Glasgow and Edinburgh. The Glasgow Mission Society began establishing schools and colleges in South Africa’s Eastern Cape in the 1840s. Elsewhere, both the Norwegian and the Swedish governments supported missionary programmes in Southern Africa from the mid-nineteenth century and a history of contacts between missionaries and black South African leaders helps to explain the presence of senior churchmen in Nordic anti-apartheid groups. Of these, Dean Gunnar Helander, a Church of Sweden missionary posted

to Johannesburg between 1938 and 1956, would assume an authoritative role from the start, helping to establish Defence and Aid.

Canon Collins's decision to transform Christian Action into a South African solidarity project was inspired by meetings with Michael Scott and Trevor Huddleston, both charismatic Anglican priests, who had been sent by their orders to South Africa. Scott had initially worked in London's East End where for a while he had become friendly with Communist Party leaders. In 1946 he participated in the Natal Indian Congress's passive resistance and served a three-month jail term. Trevor Huddleston's politics were initially inspired by 1930s' Christian socialism. Huddleston was a member of the Anglo-Catholic Community of the Resurrection, by 1950 the main agency in training black Anglican priests in South Africa. Until his enforced departure from South Africa in 1956 Huddleston ministered to the African freehold township of Sophiatown in West Johannesburg.

Collins had also recently read Alan Paton's *Cry the Beloved Country*, shortly after its publication in 1949. For Collins the book's effect was 'a call to arms',⁴ its effects accentuated by a meeting with its author, who visited Britain on a speaking tour in 1950, an encounter that rapidly developed into an enthusiastic friendship. Paton's novel, a best seller and book club choice as soon as it appeared helped to animate empathy with black South Africans among millions of international readers through the 1950s. It was adapted into a musical on Broadway in 1949 and filmed with Sidney Poitier in 1951. In Britain, Trevor Huddleston's *Naught for your Comfort* was also very influential, selling out and undergoing reprinting within a month of its publication in March 1956. Its author's well-publicized return to Britain elicited a fresh wave of public interest in South Africa, with Huddleston addressing a series of crowded public meetings and receiving over a hundred letters a week from admirers.⁵ Meanwhile the *Sunday Times* nominated *Naught for your Comfort* as 'The most influential book of the year.'⁶ In Holland, another literary priest would build fresh extensions of anti-apartheid concern. The Dutch *Comite's* founder, J. J. Beukes, was a protestant pastor who visited South Africa in 1955 and who subsequently published a book about his experiences there. Beukes was deeply impressed with Chief Albert Luthuli, and CZA's first undertaking was to attempt to collect endorsements to nominate Luthuli for the Nobel Peace prize.

Across the world public reactions to the Sharpeville massacre were most demonstrably evident in London where a meeting on 27 March organized

in Trafalgar Square by the Labour Party succeeded in drawing a crowd of 15,000, one of the biggest open-air gatherings in the vicinity since VE day in 1945. The assembly included 4,000 people who had marched from Marble Arch behind the banners of the British Boycott Movement committee, the body that on 30 March would re-title itself as the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM). The Boycott Movement had been formed three months earlier, with the support of the Labour Party and representatives of a range of different groups including Christian Action as well as Michael Scott's African Bureau and, most importantly, South African émigré bodies, including the South African Freedom Association, whose adherents were mainly Indian South African students. In anticipation of the South African government's imposition of racial restrictions on admission to the main English language universities, significant numbers of black South Africans began enrolling in British universities, especially in London, towards the end of the 1950s. South Africans joined up with other African ex-patriates in London who were active in anti-colonial pressure groups and the Committee of African Organizations to begin organizing a consumer boycott of South African products in mid-1959. The Boycott Movement was a response to both ANC and South African Liberal Party (SALP) calls for an international trade boycott and the British Boycott Movement committee included Tennyson Makiwane and Patrick van Rensburg as ANC and SALP representatives. The boycott organizers summoned an impressive collection of celebrity patrons and prepared two million leaflets to circulate in a 'Boycott Month' of events planned for March 1960.

The Sharpeville massacre created a receptive political setting for the British Boycott Movement: if it had not happened it is unlikely that so many thousands of people would have attended the Boycott meeting at Trafalgar Square on 30 March. Press commentaries during the months before Sharpeville were hardly encouraging. As the London *Spectator* noted, 'the number of Conservative supporters ... will be small. Nor is it likely that hardcore Labour voters are going to pay any attention to the campaign: most of them supported Suez, and care very little what happens to a bunch of wogs.'⁷ Sharpeville created a fresh mood of public outrage. As the AAM itself conceded, the massacre 'brought about a new consciousness of apartheid'.⁸ A Gallup poll taken shortly afterwards indicated that among its respondents 99 per cent had read about or heard about the killings and 80 per cent were now opposed to apartheid.⁹ The event received front page lead story coverage in the British press and featured conspicuously in

television news. On BBC television, for example, between March and May 1960 there were fifty-six film reports on South Africa, responding almost daily as the crisis unfolded. This extent of coverage compares with an average of about 15 South African focused stories a year through the preceding decade.¹⁰ External media treatment of South Africa changed qualitatively too: for the first time in these reports black South African political leaders appeared speaking directly to the cameras.

Civic outrage, even when expressed through well-orchestrated public demonstrations, only occasionally becomes sustained into long-lasting orchestrated agitation. It was the presence in London of at least several hundred South African exiles that supplied the critical agency in turning momentary public protest into a social movement that would sustain itself over three decades. In most cases, their arrival in London was a consequence of the Sharpeville crisis and the government's subsequent repression of the Congresses. Exiles, though, were present in much smaller numbers in and around the formation of organized anti-apartheid movements in Sweden, the Netherlands, and the United States and even in Britain the presence of South African exiles is insufficient by itself to explain the success of an externally preoccupied solidarity movement in mobilizing public support.

During the 1960s the Anti-Apartheid Movement in Western Europe developed in tandem with a broader family of single-issue-oriented social movements, movements that mobilized significant followings, predominantly drawn from middle-class communities and particularly active on university campuses. They were distinctive because their followers were engaging with rights-based concerns in which they had no direct or material self-interest. In Britain for example, Anti-Apartheid leadership and followers at the time of the movement's inception overlapped to a certain extent with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. In Britain and elsewhere during the later part of the decade, anti-apartheid as a cause was embraced in a wider wave of generational revolt in universities. To take another example, this time outside Europe, in the United States student sympathy with the civil rights movement helped to prompt Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) to instigate the South African divestment campaign in 1966 in New York when students from Columbia University and the Union Theological seminary staged a sit-in outside the Chase Manhattan bank to protest against loans to South Africa. Subsequent protests at shareholders' meetings helped to generate further publicity and account withdrawals worth \$30 million.¹¹

So, why were middle-class radicals and student activists during the 1960s so ready to embrace anti-apartheid as a political cause? One set of explanations focuses on social and cultural changes that made certain groups particularly susceptible to political appeals that emphasized participation in global struggles for emancipation and justice. Higher levels of consumption and welfare in Western industrial countries freed people from material concerns and hence weakened earlier narrow bases of class solidarity while simultaneously broadening the scope of their social empathy. Decolonization, immigration, and the increased provision and accessibility of international air travel each in different ways made it more likely that middle-class political preoccupations would be affected by events in the 'Third World', a term that itself was coined in the 1960s. By 1960, photojournalism and television had helped to create a new 'visualized transnational media space'¹² and new global audiences for political events that this new media projected. Subsequent technological developments in the 1970s helped to enlarge this space, particularly the advent of cheap and rapid photocopying and off-set litho printing. The Sharpeville massacre's visual projection was critically important in the mass media's 'framing' of apartheid as an issue of global political concern.

Expansion of university education—in Britain its provision doubled over the 1950s and it was to rise even faster in the next decade—and the availability of financial support for students—fostered an assertive sense of distinctive social identity among young people more generally. More specifically, with respect to the students themselves, as their numbers increased during the 1960s, there was more and more 'discrepancy between the elitist training offered by the university and the increasingly meagre prospect of attaining elitist roles' after graduation, arguably a major source of campus disaffection.¹³ Even more importantly, through the 1950s and 1960s, young people became the prime target markets for the music and fashion industries. Through their consumption choices teenagers and people in their early 20s began to emphasize their own generational separateness, a separateness accentuated by a growing knowledge gap between them and their parents, the product of post-war acceleration of technological change. Access to much easier and safer contraception underlay new challenges to established sexual conventions, instituting a new set of challenges to adult authority.¹⁴

Meanwhile amongst older adults, growing middle-class predispositions to embrace altruistic or radical politics may have been the effect of changes in

the way the middle class itself was constituted. Its growing proportional size and social weight and a shift in its internal composition as a consequence of the expansion of 'public professions' accompanying the build-up of the welfare state both promoted adherence to egalitarian and socially responsible values.¹⁵ In his study of the middle-class base of CND, Frank Parkin argued that in contrast to the mainly materialist concerns of working-class political movements, middle-class radicalism was 'directed mainly to social reforms which are basically moral in content', in which the main rewards of political success were payoffs of 'an emotional or psychological kind' rather than any sectional benefit.¹⁶ Anti-Apartheid appealed to what certain social scientists characterize as a 'conscience constituency', unaffected by personal grievances.¹⁷

By 1960, then, broad kinds of social and cultural change had fostered a fertile political environment for an anti-authoritarian activist politics that often found its expression in identification with heroically conducted and emotionally captivating struggles for freedom and justice. Amongst a range of such struggles, identification with South African opposition to apartheid was a consequence of the arrival in Europe after 1960 of a cohesive community of middle-class and socially mobile South African political exiles, easy for their host society to assimilate because of their professional qualifications and their cultural familiarity. The evolution of Anti-Apartheid activism into an international community in which participant morale was strengthened by their own perceptions of global camaraderie was also helped by a unique source of institutional support, the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid set up by the General Assembly in November 1962. In particular through its own programmes of sponsored meetings, workshops, and conferences the committee provided the encounters through which national anti-apartheid groups could build connections with each other and inspire each other, functioning as a key agency in the creation of 'an imagined community of solidarity activists'.¹⁸

There were special reasons specific to particular countries, though, why anti-apartheid became one of these causes. In Britain public interest in Africa generally and South Africa specifically had quickened just before Sharpeville as a consequence of press coverage of Macmillan's continental tour and his 'Winds of Change' speech in Cape Town. Also it seems the boycott campaign really did succeed in affecting the everyday behaviour of significant numbers of shoppers. Gallop polls conducted between December 1959 and March 1960 discerned significant and increased support for the

boycott and the effects of the boycott were also evident in a £2 million contraction in trade and falling prices for South African produce. Public interest in South Africa may also have been affected by patterns of emigration, for between 1945 and 1960 South Africa was a major destination for British emigrants. Of course, this trend helped to encourage sympathy and identification with the white minority but it may also have had the more general effect of making South Africa more visible and accessible to British citizens than other parts of the world.

In the Netherlands, Dutch post-war emigration to South Africa, second in volume only to Britain's for much of the 1950s, prompted warm diplomatic relations with Pretoria and even a well publicized royal tour in 1954. As in Britain, a generalized acknowledgement of 'kinship' with the white minority may help to explain the emotional public response to the Sharpeville massacre. Dutch parliamentarians discussed South Africa for the first time and adopted a motion appealing to their South African counterparts to exclude racial domination. Anti-apartheid activism in the Netherlands remained restricted to very small groups, however, until the 1970s when they were invigorated by new arrivals from South Africa, mainly Afrikaans-speaking university students. Institutional and public support for anti-apartheid movements would only really develop during the 1970s, a consequence of the emergence of a 'new left' within the Labour movement, and the build-up of sympathy within the Protestant Reformed churches, especially after Reverend Beyer Nathe's emergence in 1963 as a major critic of apartheid from within the Reformed Ecumenical Synod's South African congregations.

Sweden had no significant flows of migration towards South Africa though quite strong trading and tourist linkages between the two countries developed during the 1950s. Earlier connections forged by the Swedish Lutherans may also have helped to engender a morally critical public awareness of South African events. There were other historical linkages between Sweden and South Africa. In 1900, a pro-Boer movement despatched a group of Swedish volunteers to join the defence of Kruger's republic. In 1960, Swedish trade unionists were assertive in the leadership of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and this may help to explain the comparatively vigorous trade union and cooperative society participation in the boycott movement as well as the initiatives undertaken after 21 March by local trade union branches to hold meetings in factories and building sites to acknowledge the Sharpeville massacre.

Popular journalism instilled public familiarity with South Africa: the novelist Per Wastberg's two books about his experiences while visiting the sub-continent in 1959 were published in 1960, each containing sympathetic profiles of the main African political personalities, including Robert Sobukwe. Their content had appeared earlier in Stockholm's main daily newspaper, *Dagens Nyheter*, and Wastberg's publishers sold 170,000 copies.¹⁹ In 1960 Wastberg was the latest of a series of influential Swedish public commentators who visited South Africa in the 1950s: his editor at the *Dagens Nyheter*, Herbert Tingsten, had himself published a series of twenty articles after travelling to South Africa in 1953.

A very particular anti-colonial orientation within the Swedish student movement also helps to explain public engagement with anti-apartheid at the beginning of the 1960s. This was partly a consequence of successive Swedish social democratic governments maintaining a strategic foreign policy of 'third way' alignment that committed them to active support for decolonization, a choice connected to Swedish efforts to project an international attractive alternative to Cold War ideological polarities.²⁰ The Swedish *Forenade Studentkärer* (SFS) joined forces with the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) in 1950 to gather funding for scholarships for black students at Wits who had just been deprived by the government of their entitlement to state bursaries. In 1957 Nordic students found a fresh African preoccupation in the cause of Algerian self-determination and through an exceptionally well-organized web of youth organizations, the Social Democratic Student Federation managed to achieve a significant shift in official policy with the Swedish government's decision to welcome an official representative of the Algerian insurgency. In a highly consensual political system in which political institutions were organized to facilitate public accessibility, student unions exercised comparatively stronger influence in mainstream politics than in other western democracies: as Thorn acknowledges, 'the allies of the Swedish anti-apartheid movement were closer to state power'.²¹

In the United States through the 1960s and even through most of the 1970s, anti-apartheid remained a cause that was confined to lobbying rather than activist mobilization, though this would change with the entrenchment of the divestment movement on college campuses during the 1980s. One reason for this limitation, as we have seen, was the comparatively sympathetic posture adopted by the Kennedy administration at the opening of the decade as well as the willingness of civil rights leaders to incorporate

opposition to apartheid among their concerns, as was the case with Martin Luther King. The growth after the 1965 civil rights legislation of a Congressional Black Caucus also helped to strengthen the ACOA's lobbying predispositions: it opened a Washington office in 1967. In contrast to Britain, the Netherlands and Sweden, despite the ACOA's efforts, consumer boycotts of South African products were unlikely to prompt much public interest, for South African exports to the United States were negligible and hardly conspicuous in shops.²² Anti-apartheid solidarity networks spread through church groups—especially Methodist and Episcopal congregations, and through these capillaries reached into university campuses, but really until the mid-1970s, American generational rebellion focused mainly on civil rights and opposition to the Vietnam War.

Western European student solidarity with anti-colonial movements during the 1960s was partly guided by doctrinal considerations, at least among leadership groups. Strategists of student rebellion during the 1960s believed that their activism on and off the campuses was not simply a consequence of the stresses and strains that higher education institutions were experiencing because of their expanded intake. Rather, the sharp growth in student numbers in advanced industrial countries during the 1960s reflected a 'colossal transformation of the productive forces'.²³ Students were undergoing training to perform new roles assigned to 'intellectual labour', roles that subjected them to contradictory demands, on the one hand requiring the development of creative and critical capacity and on the other hand confining such skills within narrowly defined vocational disciplines. Accordingly:

... there is a permanent contradiction within the universities and colleges of advanced capitalist countries today. On the one hand, these societies have an absolute functional need of a mass of intellectual workers. On the other hand they cannot tolerate the realization of the critical potential of this mass.²⁴

Widening rifts during the 1950s between student leaders and European Labour and Communist parties strengthened convictions that, for a time at least, campuses were 'red bases' of anti-capitalist insurgency in advanced industrial countries, capable occasionally of disrupting 'the memory repression of organized labour'.²⁵ Increasingly cut off from the mainstream of working-class organization, theorists of student rebellion identified anti-colonial movements as students' natural allies, in the words of Herbert Marcuse, finding the 'class base' for their rebellion in the 'external proletar-

iat' of the Third World.²⁶ In France especially, student support for the Algerian rebellion between 1957 and 1962 helped to isolate students from the conventional left, Socialist and Communist, and strengthen commitments to solidarity activism, commitments that spread from the Sorbonne through the Western European student movement, as we have seen in the way that Nordic students adopted the Algerian revolt as a special concern. In particular national settings, these strategic predispositions influenced students to identify anti-apartheid as a symbolic cause through which they could express a wider repudiation of authority.

This happened in Britain in 1969 and 1970 when the Stop the Seventy Tour (STST) committee mobilized a following of 50,000 people in various forms of direct action that disrupted the programme of the visiting Springbok rugby players and actually succeeded in generating sufficient pressure to compel the authorities to cancel a series of test matches it had arranged for South African cricketers. STST was set up by Young Liberals acting in conjunction with local branches of the Anti-Apartheid Movement. Peter Hain, the son of South African Liberal Party members who had made their home in London from 1964, himself a leading personality in the (British) Young Liberals, was conspicuous as the committee's main public figure. The committee organized marches on twenty-two sports grounds as well as directing pitch invasions and mounting pickets of the hotels used by the Springboks, a programme that lasted over three months and which attracted sufficient support and attention to persuade the government that the impending cricket tour should not take place, not least because Labour Party politicians were worried that opposition to the visitors might prompt racial clashes in British cities.²⁷ Though the STST had succeeded in enlisting support from establishment quarters it very obviously grew out of a student activist milieu, so much so that within the Anti-Apartheid Movement reservations were expressed that the high profile tactics the committee favoured might animate against the movement 'the allegedly widespread prejudice against students'.²⁸

STST success helped to foster stronger commitments to anti-apartheid campaigning within the National Union of Students (NUS) under Jack Straw's presidency and, during the 1970s, the NUS would succeed in mobilizing students over one issue in which they possessed critical leverage, disinvestment in South Africa by British high-street banks. As with the efforts to stop South African sports tourists, student activism during the 1960s and early 1970s could from time to time succeed in mustering

sufficient public commitment to their cause to engender official reactions, however anti-apartheid's encounter with the 1960s student movement was important in another way too. For student leaders like Jack Straw and Peter Hain, who later became members of political elites, anti-apartheid solidarity was a formative experience. Stop the Seventy Tour was not a unique case of anti-apartheid being taken up as a cause in the late-1960s student revolt. In Sweden as well, in May 1968, the University of Lund-based Swedish South Africa Committee broke up the Swedish Davis Cup match with Rhodesia with a sit-in action and the throwing of oil bags into the court. This protest, Hakan Thorn observes, was 'the closest the Swedish student movement would get to 1968-type activism'.²⁹

Anti-Apartheid only from time to time elicited mass participation. At the heart of the movement in each of its national settings was an overlapping cluster of quite small organizations. For example, the British Anti-Apartheid Movement had an office in London, but in the 1960s could only afford one full-time administrator: at the peak of its influence, in the 1980s, it employed twenty-three staff. Its influence partly depended on the presence of organizational representatives on its national committee, many of them delegated by a range of bodies, including the Labour, Liberal, and Communist parties, eleven trade unions, and the British Council of Churches as well as representatives of local anti-apartheid committees, of which there were a fluctuating number: twenty-one in 1965, ninety in 1987. It also acquired social respectability from a formidable line-up of well known sponsors: prominent politicians and other public personalities, a feature bringing the British movement much closer to the mainstream of institutional politics than its counterparts elsewhere.

The organization recruited members individually from 1962 as well as from affiliate organizations. For most of its history, individual membership was modest, around 2,500 through the 1960s and 1970s, rising to nearly 20,000 at the end of the 1980s and at any time active membership, that is people regularly attending monthly local meetings and participating in pickets and other campaigning, was around ten per cent of these totals. AAM published a regular monthly newsletter. Its circulation during the 1960s rose to 7,000 and then remained roughly at that level for the next decade but in the 1980s it rose to around 20,000 and with one issue reached 85,000.³⁰

By the 1980s affiliates included 200 or so constituency Labour parties, 708 trade union branches, and ninety-one student unions. Individual members

were chiefly white and middle class: the British AAM never really succeeded in enlisting enthusiastic support within British black or immigrant communities, South Africans aside, partly because its leaders blocked any efforts to draw the movement into wider anti-racist activities for fear of losing their mainstream appeal. During the 1980s, newspapers directed at London's West Indian community did encourage their readers to engage with the Anti-Apartheid Movement but there was also an assertively racially separatist group of organizations that tended to be more sympathetic to the PAC.³¹ And despite the presence of trade unions in Anti-Apartheid's affiliate structure, trade union support for a long time was half-hearted, largely because of trade unionist concerns about the impact of South African economic sanctions on British jobs. In the 1980s, trade unions gave stronger backing to divestment and together with local Labour Party branches they played a decisive role in persuading local authorities to divest pension fund investments in South African connected companies.³² The Communist-led technicians union, AEUW, was Anti-Apartheid's most reliable British trade union supporter but in the 1980s, NALGO, the local government union, supplied especially critical backing for the divestment campaign. At that time NALGO's hierarchy included former student leaders of the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

One of these was Hugh Bayley, a former vice-president of the National Union of Students who became a district organizer for NALGO after completing a master's programme in South African studies at the University of York. As an NUS official Bayley had assumed responsibility for liaison with the Anti-Apartheid Movement, joining its executive. He had a long-standing interest in Africa, dating back to a childhood curiosity sparked by letters from his godmother who lived in Durban. From the mid-1970s Hugh Bayley helped lead AAM's trade union committee. Persuading trade unions to adopt Anti-Apartheid resolutions at their annual conferences was not so difficult and such actions had a certain merit in promoting general sympathy within their membership but engendering more decisive action was more challenging, he recalls. Bayley represented the NALGO staff on the investment committee of the union's own pension fund. Here he succeeded in persuading the fund's trustees to withdraw its pension investments in companies with South African holdings. With members of the union's executive committee he worked out a protocol that would allow the actuaries to weight the risks of South African investment. In 1980 Bayley succeeded in winning a local council seat in Camden and he then

persuaded the council to adopt a similar disinvestment policy, a pioneering step that would be followed by other local authorities through the decade.

Hugh Bayley's role as a British anti-apartheid activist is very representative of the cross-currents that helped the movement resonate across such a cross-section of British social life. His initial interest in South Africa was a consequence of family connections—an effect of emigration to the sub-continent. He was politically socialized through an increasingly internationalized student politics in an intellectual setting in which universities were themselves diversifying their curricula, adding fresh fields such as African area studies. He joined the labour movement at a time when British trade unions were undergoing profound transformations as they constructed an expanding membership among white-collar workers, traditionally members of a 'middle class'. Later Bayley would become a parliamentarian and a minister.³³

Throughout its history, the British anti-apartheid community was pulled between the competing and potentially conflicting dynamics of influencing policy-making circles through lobbying and the more confrontational and less easily controllable politics of militant action. Between these two tactical repertoires the movement sought to elicit broader public participation: through such undertakings as demonstrations, fundraising, consumer boycotts, and pickets outside high-street banks. Encouraging supporters to write letters to their MPs was another way to engender broader public involvement. For Defence and Aid, its roster of 700 letter-writers supplied it with a critically important channel through which it could send money and other kinds of support to the dependents of political prisoners in South Africa. Shopping boycotts and letter-writing, or even wearing a badge or a T-shirt offered to movement sympathizers emotionally rewarding 'every-day action possibilities'.³⁴ Politicized choices about lifestyle could bind anti-apartheid supporters ever more closely in what Hakan Thorn has identified as the 'individual networks of everyday life' that were so important in sustaining the movement.³⁵ It was these opportunities that helped Anti-Apartheid to transcend the limitations of formal organization to become a social movement, capable as it was in the late 1980s of summoning hundreds of thousands of people to attend rock concerts and demonstrations. Of course these levels of mobilization were not simply the consequence of Anti-Apartheid's preceding activism for they were also affected by the coverage that mass media and especially television assigned to South African events after the onset of the 1984 township insurrection. In this decade too,

when British politics was especially polarized, Anti-Apartheid campaigning became a focus for more generalized antipathy to Margaret Thatcher's government.³⁶

In the United Kingdom, in Sweden, in the Netherlands, and in Ireland, though there were no formal affiliations, the main anti-apartheid organizations tended to align themselves and work closely with the ANC and in doing so, they added significantly to its authority. There are several reasons for this alignment. In Britain, Holland, and Sweden, the churchmen who played such an important role in establishing the early organizational incubators for Anti-Apartheid had developed close friendships with ANC leaders: this was particularly the case with Trevor Huddleston, Canon Collins, and Gunnar Helander. Huddleston in particular was important in this respect for in Johannesburg he had helped to organize ANC opposition to Bantu education. As we have seen, many anti-apartheid movements were led by exile ANC members or people in host countries who were sympathetic to the ANC, and this certainly helped to boost the ANC's international status.

Outside Africa, the Pan-Africanists were much less successful in engendering public or official support. This was partly a consequence of their origins as a sectarian movement that they never altogether succeeded in transcending. It was also true that many of the first 'multiracial' wave of exiles who constituted ANC communities in European countries found it easy to assimilate. They often possessed professional qualifications and benefitted from networks of kinship and friendship. Less socially assured PAC exiles found themselves at a comparative disadvantage. Significantly, the PAC had more standing among African-American anti-apartheid activists than it ever acquired among South African solidarity groups in Europe. It also drew some backing from those British black activists who were disenchanted with the British Anti-Apartheid Movement's reluctance to challenge domestic, that is, British-based, instances of racism. Because of its general success in eliciting sympathy from the political establishment, the British Anti-Apartheid Movement was particularly careful to avoid taking up local political concerns that might have alienated sectors of their support. In the 1980s, this policy would engender internal tensions with the formation of a militant faction within the AAM, the City of London Anti-Apartheid Group, itself linked to the Trotskyite Revolutionary Communists.³⁷

Relations between the PAC's London office and the organization's headquarters in Dar es Salaam were always troubled. The London office through its fundraising enjoyed resources independently of the officials in Dar, and Potlake Leballo in particular viewed London-based Pan-Africanists as a source of potential opposition to his own authority. The question of who should control funding supplied from British sympathizers was a constant source of tension between Pan-Africanists in London and Dar: Mahomo was dismissed because of his insistence on retaining in London the money he raised.⁵¹ After Mahomo's expulsion, the PAC's representation in London would be downgraded. In November 1963, a PAC list of foreign representatives who qualified for national executive membership through their designation included no reference to a London office. It was only in the late 1960s that the PAC re-established a properly functioning office in London.⁵² The Pan-Africanists' presence in other European capitals and in North America through the 1960s and early 1970s was similarly ephemeral: they preferred to concentrate their diplomatic efforts in Africa. From 1980 the PAC appointed a succession of capable London officials. As we have noted, through the 1980s, the PAC-based London representatives tried to remain on friendly terms with the Anti-Apartheid Movement while sponsoring its own supportive networks on the fringes of the British left. The AAM continued to send representatives to PAC-sponsored events when they were invited to do so, to Sharpeville commemorations for example.⁵³

The American movement which became such a potent force in the 1980s as with British anti-apartheid also depended heavily on its campus-based following, but it also established a political base within African-American community organizations, especially churches. As we have noted anti-apartheid was confined generally to lobbying, conferences, and public educational activity by the ACOA and other small groups until the late 1970s. Through the 1960s, the ACOA remained very much a New York-focused organization with no organized connections with grass roots activism elsewhere.⁵⁴ The SDS action at the premises of Chase Manhattan in 1966 was exceptional and through the 1960s and early 1970s militant student activism was almost wholly focussed on opposition to the Vietnam war and civil rights. By the mid-1970s, though, the Vietnam war was over and the civil rights movement had achieved key goals. However for students enrolling at universities in the second half of the decade, the 1976 Soweto

uprising projected a new morally compelling political drama that appeared to offer the prospects for a continuation of earlier student struggles for racial justice and the redirection of American foreign policy.⁵⁵ In 1978 the ACOA began to publish a campus newsletter and it hired a student organizer. Outside the campuses parallels between the struggle to win civil rights and opposition to apartheid were underlined by the emergence of Bishop Desmond Tutu as a familiar personality in American newspapers and television, for here was an culturally accessible hero, eloquent, brave, peaceful, and a man of God. Even before his Peace Prize award, for many African-Americans, Tutu had a special claim to leadership, as Jesse Jackson expressed it, 'the Martin Luther King of South Africa'.⁵⁶

In Washington in 1978 a new pressure group, TransAfrica was formed, with the intention that it should promote African-American concerns in the shaping of African policy making on Capitol Hill. TransAfrica was more than a lobby, though, for it enrolled a membership of around 10,000.⁵⁷ Its director was Randall Robinson who had previously worked in the office of Charles Diggs, one of the leading Representatives in the Congressional Black Caucus after it was formed in 1971 and the first black chair of Congress's sub-committee on Africa. African-American legislator interest in Southern Africa was aroused by the Nixon administration's foreign policy emphasis on creating a closer relationship with the white minority governments from 1970 onwards. The formation of the Polaroid Revolutionary Workers' Movement (PRWM) by black employees at Polaroid's Cambridge, Massachusetts, headquarters signalled wider concern with US-South African connections: the PRWM was formed to stop Polaroid's processing of film for South Africa's passbooks. An 'uneasy' coalition began to evolve between elected African-American politicians and similar locally based community groups.⁵⁸ When it was established, TransAfrica would assume a position at the helm of this alliance. Together with the ACOA, TransAfrica would play a leading role in a campaign directed at corporate divestment of South African financial interests.

Through the late 1970s and early 1980s the divestment campaign directed itself at two principal targets, university shareholdings and pension funds and similar investments undertaken by city governments and state legislatures. From the autumn of 1977, beginning at Amherst and Princeton, on campuses students boycotted classes, occupied administrative buildings, and constructed symbolic shanty settlements in open spaces. Meanwhile public sector unions used their influence to persuade city and state legislatures to

sell their South African interests: here the increase in African-American elected representation was a key factor in persuading more than forty state legislatures to enact divestment laws. The growing presence of black students on campuses—especially at elite colleges—may have been an important consideration as well.⁵⁹ In October 1983, the ACOA organized a National Student Anti-Apartheid Conference in New York at which half of the three hundred or so delegates were African-Americans.⁶⁰ Certain researchers contest this assumption, though. During the shantytown protests of 1985 to 1990, liberal arts colleges with relatively smaller enrolments of black students tended to have a higher rate of participation, and in general white students seem to have predominated in the student wing of the divestment movement.⁶¹

In 1984, Jesse Jackson's bid to win the Democratic presidential nomination supplied an important stimulation for community activism in African-American neighbourhoods. In Washington this supplied the political base for the Free South African Movement, a civil disobedience protest in which volunteers ignored local laws that prohibited gatherings within 500 feet of foreign embassies and participated in sit-ins outside the South African embassy. TransAfrica leaders helped to ensure that prominent personalities were among the picketers and among those arrested. They would include Stevie Wonder, Amy Carter, the former president's daughter, 'a large flock of youthful Kennedys',⁶² as well as Coretta King. Much of the mobilization behind the Free South African Movement was undertaken by the Southern African Support Project. This was a group established by African-Americans who in 1974 had attended the Sixth Pan Congress in Dar es Salaam.

The American movement was less centrally coordinated than European Anti-Apartheid campaigning and depended upon a wider range of organizational initiatives. Religious organizations were especially important in creating a national following for anti-apartheid activism, in particular the Quaker American Friends Service Committee supplied a vital networking infrastructure. Chief Luthuli's daughter, Thandi Luthuli-Gcabashe led the Friends' peace education program, active across the US South. Though South African exiles were less visible in the American movement than in Britain, they, together with Americans with African experience, often supplied critical leadership. Neva Seidman, the daughter of an American economist who had grown up in Ghana and Tanzania where she made friends within the ANC community, arrived in Harvard as a freshman in 1974. Here she would establish a South African Solidarity Movement that

would inspire a summer of unrest through April to June 1978 in which as many as 3,500 students would participate in protests against the university's portfolio holdings. Dumisani Khumalo, a journalist who had left South Africa in 1978, joined the ACOA and in 1981 coordinated a national conference on public investment that assembled all the major anti-apartheid groups as well as trade unionists, city officials, and state legislators.

The American movement was probably unique in the influence it exercised over legislators and shareholders. For African-American politicians during the 1980s, Anti-Apartheid became an extension of the civil rights movement. Largely because of the relative importance of universities as investors—very different from their less-endowed European counterparts—and because of the way in which decisions by these institutions could have a wider impact among stockholders. Among the movement's major achievements was Chase Manhattan's decision in July 1984 not to renew its \$500 million loan to South Africa, a move that precipitated a sharp devaluation of the Rand. Chase Manhattan's chairman, Willard Butcher, denied his bank's decision was motivated by political concerns but in fact Chase Manhattan was facing the threat of divestment by New York City and other major shareholders. The movement's influence was evident in the various sanctions adopted by state legislatures. The Senate's 1986 Comprehensive Sanctions law was enacted after vigorous committee lobbying from members of the Congressional Black Caucus but this was not the whole story. Representatives and senators felt compelled to respond to pressure from within their constituencies. As one senatorial staffer recalled: 'Once the members began to hear about South Africa in their member districts, they began to figure out how to alter their position on sanctions.'⁶³

In Britain, too, by the mid-1980s Anti-Apartheid campaigning had succeeded in establishing sanctions as a major political concern and in 1987 the government, also under pressure from the Commonwealth, would enact token sanctions legislation. In earlier decades, through its Labour Party connections, the Anti-Apartheid Movement had influenced British policy on arms sales in 1964 and 1967 and, of course, it could claim a victory in the cancellation of the 1970 cricket tour. The agitation directed at Barclays bank began to affect bank policy as early as 1972, more than a decade before Barclays' eventual withdrawal from South Africa. Within Sweden, public anti-apartheid sentiment was sufficiently developed by 1969 for Olaf Palmer's Social Democratic administration to begin granting official assistance to the ANC. Swedish government aid allocations to the ANC

between 1977 and 1991 would total around \$200 million.⁶⁴ It was only in 1987, though, that the Swedish authorities ended trade linkages with South Africa.

In the Netherlands, in contrast to the Americans, the British, and the Swedes, the main Dutch anti-apartheid group did not develop such strong connections with mainstream politicians. Within the *Anti-Apartheid Beweging Nederland* the strongest political party connections were with the Dutch Communist Party. Even so, Dutch governments adopted a fairly sympathetic position early on. Under 'New left' leadership a Dutch Labour Party government began awarding grants to the ANC in 1977, a policy that was an outcome of parliamentary lobbying by the Labour Party-linked *Angola Comité*. Anti-Apartheid campaigning around the trade boycott probably helped to generate public acceptance of such transfers: in 1973 Boycott Outspan Action achieved a major impact on public opinion polling. After Angolan independence, the *Angola Comité* reconstituted itself as the *Komitee Zuidelijk Afrika* (KZA). In conjunction with the Reformed Church group, *Kairos*, KZA directed the energies of its national network of local activist groups at halting oil shipments to South Africa, picketing Shell facilities and setting up a Shipping Research Bureau to monitor Rotterdam's discreet oil traffic to South Africa, the main channel for South African supplies from the international spot market after the cessation of South African imports from Iran in 1979. *Anti-Apartheid Beweging Nederland's* (AABN) preference, though was for 'hard action' and more radical kinds of campaigning. Of all the anti-apartheid groups across Europe and America, AABN's adherents were distinctive for their direct engagement with the ANC, engagement that extended to helping the ANC to establish logistical support for its Operation Vula between 1989 and 1991. AABN were not alone in their preference for hard action. Between 1985 and 1988 various clandestine groups began a succession of violent attacks, including the bombing of a prominent oil trader's house, arson assaults on Makro stores, and sabotage at Shell service stations. In contrast to the non-violent civil rights traditions that supplied the moral base for parts of the American movement or the liberal humanist lineage of British Anti-Apartheid, left-wing Dutch anti-apartheid activists seemed to take their historical cues from their parents' wartime resistance against German occupation.⁶⁵

How extensive was the movement elsewhere, outside its four main national bases? Ireland was a notable theatre of anti-apartheid mobilization, though in the absence of really strong strategic and commercial connections

anti-colonial solidarity. There may have been more complicated dynamics at work, though. Just as Peter Hain's Stop the Seventy Tour became a focus for a wider generational rebellion on British student campuses, the cause of IAAM was sustained by and expressed broader kinds of social disaffection. In 1969 opposition to a cricket tour was directed not by the IAAM but rather by a Coordinating Committee Against Racism, a coalition 'of various left wing groups'. It used much more aggressive tactics than the IAAM would have sanctioned: smoke-bombs and pitch occupations.

In 1970, anti-apartheid mobilization was nurtured by an iconoclastic current of Irish radicalism, a brief springtime for an Irish new left, 'when Cuba seemed a reasonable model to Irish intellectuals, and when the Front Square of Trinity College Dublin had been occupied by the Maoist Internationalists setting out their stall'.¹¹⁵ Even the Labour Party contested the 1969 election of a left-wing manifesto predicting that 'the seventies would be socialist'. Disappointing electoral returns and subsequent coalition arrangements with Fine Gael turned the Labour Party rightwards ensuring that for the ensuing decades Irish left-wing politics would have no significant party bases. In this setting activist solidarity movements might have functioned as proxies for domestic radical politics, in the same fashion as happens today in the case of the Irish support for Palestinians. And from time to time such agencies could project an especially compelling appeal to groups whose interests during the 1980s were very likely to be neglected by mainstream political parties. This is what happened in the cases of the Dunnes strikers, mostly young women whose resolve not to handle South African fruit was prompted by their resentment of an especially intrusive managerial style. Their protest challenged existing patriarchal conventions in a society in which women were relatively recent entrants to the industrial labour force and were absent from most leadership echelons in public life. Significantly, the Special Branch officers who warned off Mary Manning called the strikers 'silly little girls'. In other ways too, anti-apartheid solidarity was an expression of and helped to reinforce changes in public conceptions of Irish social identity as the country began to embrace more inclusive and more egalitarian notions of a citizenship based on civic rights rather than ethnic essentialism.

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In 1989, a few months before President de Klerk announced his willingness to un-ban the ANC and negotiate a transition to democracy, the Washington-based Investor Responsibility Research Centre (IRRC) conducted an

assessment of the impact of sanctions. As we have seen, the economic isolation of South Africa was the primary purpose of the international anti-apartheid movement. In North America, the anti-apartheid movement played a critical role in persuading state governments and institutional investors to withdraw from South African financial engagement and without pressure from the movement the Western European and North American governments would probably not have adopted even the symbolic sanctions they enacted in the 1980s. As importantly, though the original British Anti-Apartheid Movement's first efforts to encourage a boycott of South African trade failed to reduce South Africa's foreign trade significantly, it performed an agenda-setting function for policy makers and it certainly prompted the South Africans to direct resources into costly evasive measures.

The IRRC investigation remains one of the most authoritative evaluations of the economic and political effects of sanctions. The economic assessment was based upon analysis of official South African foreign trade statistics. The IRRC's findings suggest that by 1989 sanctions or the threat of sanctions had imposed heavy costs upon the South African economy. From the 1960s onwards, the government had invested heavily to reduce South African dependence upon imported technology and oil, an effort that in the long-term imposed its own penalties, reducing growth significantly from the 1970s onwards. To an extent though, this effort had been successful. South Africa had become increasingly less dependent upon imports and meanwhile its main exports, precious and strategic minerals, were unaffected by sanctions and unlikely to be so. The South African products that were the focus of anti-apartheid trade boycotts—fruit and vegetables—were of minor significance. However through the 1980s it was becoming increasingly evident to South African business elites that the government's strategy of gearing manufacturing to local markets had led to technological stagnation. Moreover in this decade, particularly with the cessation of fresh American investment, replacing outmoded technology was becoming much more difficult. In this respect, therefore, Anti-Apartheid's targeting of divestment as a campaigning issue was decisive. South African heavy industry still depended upon imported machinery to manufacture its products. In 1989, then, the IRRC investigation concluded that sanctions were still a long way from imposing crippling effects on the South African economy—the economy actually grew by 3 per cent per annum in 1987 and 1988. However business leaders were increasingly alarmed about the

future costs of economic isolation. In 1988 a report commissioned by one of the main mining houses noted how sanctions 'were beginning to have an adverse effect'. In particular, 'the expansion of the South African economy is being restricted by the continued absence of substantial capital inflows'.¹¹⁶

Awareness of sanctions' effects extended well beyond mining house boardrooms. The IRRC's opinion polling found that two-thirds of its white South African respondents agreed that sanctions would very likely have harmful effects upon the economy, though a rather larger majority also believed that despite the damage sanctions might inflict, the economy would 'cope'. However, sixty per cent favoured various kinds of reforms if these would result in the lifting of sanctions. Only a minority, it is true, 18 per cent, were ready to embrace the prospect of direct negotiations with the ANC. Nearly half of the white respondents supported power-sharing arrangements in which racial groups could still protect their 'lifestyles'. The IRRC's authors concluded that whites generally recognized the severity of external economic challenges but this recognition did not 'translate directly into a feeling of vulnerability'. How important, then, were sanctions in helping to bring about South Africa's democratization?

In his autobiography, F. W. de Klerk is dismissive about sanctions, conceding they damaged the economy but arguing that the costs they imposed were broadly accepted among whites. Even so, de Klerk distinguishes between the effects of formal sanctions and the consequences of divestment and capital flight and suggests that for his administration regaining access to foreign capital markets had become a priority.¹¹⁷ The views of de Klerk's finance minister, Barend du Plessis, offer corroboration: in 1990 he told journalists that disinvestment played a critical role in the abandonment of apartheid.¹¹⁸ Jan Heunis, a senior civil servant in the office of the presidency in his memoirs believes that the 'major reason' for de Klerk's embrace of transition politics was that 'the country... was about to be brought to its knees by the combined efforts of the international community'.¹¹⁹ This may not have been a view de Klerk shared, though. Positive inducements or incentives for reform may have been more important than sanctions in persuading de Klerk to begin his liberalization. In particular he evidently believed that the fall of the Berlin Wall had weakened his adversaries decisively, enabling the government to negotiate from a position of strength.¹²⁰

Focusing on de Klerk's perceptions might well be taking too foreshortened a view. During the later years of the Botha administration there

was plenty of evidence of the limiting effects of sanctions in various fields. For example, the arms embargo had led to a shortage of spare parts for the airforce's Mirage ground attack fighters, half of which were grounded by the time of the battle of Cuito Cuanavale. In this confrontation in Southern Angola, South Africa's declining air superiority was very evident.¹²¹ With respect to finance, a refusal in 1983 by the International Monetary Fund to grant additional funding to South Africa was a consequence of legislation pushed through Congress by the Black Caucus and the consequent expansion of South African short-term debt probably prompted President Botha's repeal of the pass laws at the beginning of 1986, rewarded one year later with a comparatively lenient debt rescheduling. During the 1980s South Africans were certainly increasingly conscious of the threat posed by American sanctions. As one American observer noted: 'Every grunt, whisper or sneeze of the US Anti-Apartheid Movement is covered breathlessly—and derisively—by the South African media.'¹²² Economic sanctions certainly helped to create domestic incentives for reform, especially when corporations seeking to deflect political pressures set their own terms for amelioration. This was the case with the Sullivan Principles, a code of conduct that many American companies adopted in response to campus protests across the United States in reaction to the Soweto rebellion. Even outside the domains of vital national interests, sports sanctions may have helped to weaken support for official segregationist policies among white South Africans.¹²³

That the government in 1990 recognized that the ANC could exercise an effective veto over any prospects of reform acquiring local and international legitimacy was mainly attributable to its domestic popularity within South Africa and international prestige. The ANC's guerrilla offensive was largely an essentially symbolic or theatrical 'armed struggle', easily contained by the police and army but it was a major source of inspiration for more spontaneous and localized kinds of popular insurgency. On the whole, anti-apartheid movements offered little or no direct support for the ANC's military operations: in this respect the Dutch engagement in Operation Vula was exceptional. Indeed the arguments for sanctions were often projected by anti-apartheid activists in a way that suggested that sanctions might help to avert a large scale military confrontation, as indeed they did. Certain governments as a consequence of anti-apartheid lobbying helped to finance the ANC's welfare and educational activities. In particular the funding the

Swedish authorities supplied was on a scale comparable to the support the ANC received from the Soviet Union.

For those black South African political leaders who were significant beneficiaries of international civic opposition to apartheid, this opposition had significant effects on their own strategic predispositions. The degree to which South African leaders committed themselves to racial reconciliation during the negotiations and the extent to which they have maintained that commitment was very substantially the consequence of international solidarity for their cause. As Robert Price has noted, the sources of the most significant support that South African exiles could tap were mainly countries whose leaders were white Europeans. In such settings, as noted above, the ANC's 'multi-racialism' that it inherited from its alliances in the 1950s was an asset.¹²⁴ Support in western countries for the struggle against apartheid represented a key incentive in the ANC's retention of a secular open 'non-racial' vision of citizenship as well as helping to govern the organization's deployment of violence against civilians. The relatively open societies in which many ANC personalities were to establish new homeplaces may also have shaped their later political predispositions as well. Kader Asmal himself was to play a key role in both Mandela's government and its successor, first as minister for water affairs and later as minister of education. Asmal was also a major contributor to the ANC's acceptance of a liberal constitutionalism, joining the organization's negotiating team shortly after his return to South Africa in 1990. In his second career as a South African politician, Asmal continued to be influenced by his Irish experience, citing Irish constitutional legal precedents and the experience of rural electrification in the 1920s as sources of inspiration. Asmal is not exceptional: in Britain and Ireland, the United States and in Europe, the hospitality offered by anti-apartheid movements helped to nurture a reciprocal political civility that may yet be its most important legacy.