



# CENTER FOR SOUTH AFRICA MINISTRY

132 N. Euclid Avenue  
Pasadena, CA 91101

**Brian Sellers-Petersen**  
DIRECTOR

818-796-1172 Phone  
818-796-4749 FAX

## SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS' NETWORK

December 29, 1989

Dear Network:

I am pleased to report that Pupu Mgwangqa has been released unconditionally and without further restrictions. Louis Mnguni and Titus Mafolo have been released from detention, but placed under restriction orders that prevents them from taking part in any activities of the UDF, placing them under virtual house arrest and requiring that they report daily to the police authorities. They remain prisoners of conscience.

Robert Jenkins who is the co-ordinator of the Network is off to Oxford University to study at St. Catherine's College for the next six months. He has volunteered to make contact with a number of anti-apartheid groups, exiles, Amnesty International and other groups and persons that can be of future assistance to the Network and our ongoing work.

It is truly exciting to see change afoot in South Africa, the release of certain political prisoners, opening of beaches, the opening of 4 residential areas to all people, etc. etc. But, many things have remained the same and the denial of basic human rights is still the order of the day. Nelson Mandela is still in detention, the state of emergency is still in effect, racial classification laws still divide, and 26 million people cannot vote for their leaders.

Please continue to write! We have been sent clear signals that our letter-writing for Pupu, Titus, and Louis have made a difference, but, Titus and Louis are essentially jailed in their own homes. Let the South African government know how much you appreciate the release of Pupu and that you would like to see the restrictions of Louis and Titus lifted.

Enclosed are information sheets on Charles Bester, a 19 year old, who is serving a 6 year jail term for refusing to serve in the South African Defense Force and Mohammed Valli Moosa, a leader of the United Democratic Front, who is under heavy restrictions. I have also enclosed the basic information sheet on the what's, how's and why's of the Network. If you need additional help or information, please do not hesitate to call or write.

Have a very blessed New Year and Epiphany.

Yours faithfully,

Brian Sellers-Petersen



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TO: South African Political Prisoners' Support Network  
FROM: Brian Sellers-Petersen  
RE: Charles Bester, age 19

Charles Bester, the youngest conscientious objector refusing conscription into the South African Defense Force (SADF), has completed one year of his six year prison term. While I was in South Africa this past October, Dr. Ivan Toms, a conscientious objector who is presently out on bond awaiting a new trial, said that Charles is not doing psychologically and that we should pray and make people aware of this gross injustice. Enclosed is a brochure published by the "Charles Bester Support Group" in both English and Afrikaans, that gives some background information on Charles and why, as a white person in South Africa, he refuses conscription.

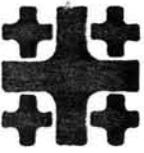
In a recent edition of "Outlook," a newspaper of the Christian organization, African Enterprise, of which Charles uncle, Michael Cassidy, is founder and team leader tells of a petition drive going on in the United Kingdom. "A massive public petition campaign launched by Britain's Parliament Member (MP) David Alton called for Bester's release along with other objectors recently. Referred to as "Jubilee Campaign," nearly 59,000 signatures were amassed, mostly from Christians. The roster included Sir Richard Attenborough, film director of the movie, Cry Freedom, and former South African editor, Donald Woods. Alton, along with five other MP's, submitted "Motion 176: Imprisonment of Charles Bester in South Africa" to Parliament. More than 100 of the 120 signatures need before the House can act on the motion have been gathered."

**ACTION:** Declare your concern about the detention of Charles and other young white males who refuse conscription into the South African Defense Force to State President De Klerk and Ambassador Koornhof. Also write to Charles, there is no guarantee that he will receive mail, but, there have been cases of letters getting through. Tell him that you have written to the State President and Ambassador Koornhof, asking for his release and that you are praying for his well-being. You can write to his family c/o Michael Cassidy.

Charles Bester  
c/o Michael Cassidy/Africa Enterprise  
P.O. Box 647  
Pietermaritzburg 3200  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

State President F.W. De Klerk  
State President's Office  
Private Bag X83  
Pretoria 0001  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Honorable Dr. P. Koornhof  
Ambassador  
Embassy of South Africa  
Massachusetts N.W.  
Washington D.C. 20008



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TO: South African Political Prisoners' Support Network  
FROM: Brian Sellers-Petersen  
  
RE: Mohammed Valli Moosa

Mohammed Valli Moosa, a leader of the anti-apartheid coalition, The United Democratic Front (UDF), was released from detention on September 29, 1989, but placed under a restriction order that prevents him from taking part in any activities of the UDF, as well as placing him under house arrest and preventing him from leaving the magisterial district of Johannesburg. He must report daily to the John Vorster Police Station.

Mohammed Valli Moosa had been detained by security police in Johannesburg on August 18, 1989. This detention was believed to be linked to his role as an organizer of the nationwide campaign of defiance against South Africa's race laws launched by the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM), a loose coalition of anti-apartheid groups. His restriction order appears to be aimed at preventing him from taking any part in either the Defiance Campaign or a conference that took place earlier this month, called by the MDM in order to formulate a platform for negotiations with the government on the questions of majority rule and human rights.

Mohammed Valli Moosa was one of three prisoners who took refuge in the United States consulate in Johannesburg on September 13, 1988, after escaping from a hospital where they were undergoing physical therapy during their time in detention. He had been detained without charge or trial since January 1987. The three, all prisoners of conscience, eventually left the consulate on October 19 after guarantees from the South African government that they would not be re-detained.

**ACTION:** Please send courteous appeals calling on the South African government to remove all restrictions placed upon Mohammed Valli Moosa. Explain that he is a prisoner of conscience deprived of his basic right to freedom of movement and freedom of association as a result of the restriction order imposed on him on September 29, 1989, which appears to have been imposed on account of his peaceful political activities and non-violent expression of his basic human rights. Write to:

State President F.W. De Klerk  
State Presidents Office  
Private Bag X213  
Pretoria 0001  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Honorable P. Koornhof  
Ambassador  
Embassy of South Africa  
3051 Massachusetts N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20008



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## **SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS' NETWORK**

### WHAT IS THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICAL PRISONERS' SUPPORT NETWORK?

In short, it's the product of many long discussions with many anti-apartheid activists in the Cape Town area, former South African political prisoners, their families, and the friends and loved ones of people currently imprisoned in apartheid jails. When asked, "What can a person in the United States do to aid in the fight against apartheid?" time and time again the same response is given: "Write Letters!"

### DO LETTERS WORK?

In the South African context, letter writing is much more than a symbolic show of support. It is a proven and effective non-violent tactic in the struggle against apartheid injustice. Letter writing campaigns on the behalf of specific prisoners often lead to an end to torture, better treatment by warders, and release.

### WHY DO LETTERS WORK?

The South African government is like perhaps no other government in the world in its concern for international public opinion. The Nationalist government finds itself caught in a constant public relations battle. Growing fear in South Africa over increased economic sanctions and further alienation from the international community impels the government to make concessions to foreign critics. However, the network does not only make appeals to the South African government on the behalf of political prisoners. It is a "support network." It provides prisoners and their families with strength when they need it most.

### WHAT DO I DO?

First, you are mailed the names of recent political prisoners or people under restrictions. You write to the people at the bottom of the basic information sheet. Then you make some copies of the addresses and give them to friends. Letters are effective, but they work in numbers. That is why the network is a "network." If every person involved in the network gets more people, the possibilities are endless.

**THE LETTERS:**

1. **Write to the South African Government:** Ask for specifics: why is this prisoner being detained? Under what law is he/she being held? Does he/she have access to proper legal counsel? Access to their family, minister, friends? Request a written response to your questions and politely demand their unconditional release.
2. **Write to the Prisoner:** Prisoners are almost always held in solitary confinement. Prisoners are not always allowed to receive letters but often times letters do get to them. Write them a letter of solidarity and support. Tell them that they are not forgotten. Tell them you have written to the government specifically demanding their release and to their families specifically demanding their release and to their families offering support. Make it personal -- your letter could be the only letter the prisoner receives. Write the letter you would like to receive if you were imprisoned in solitary confinement solely for your beliefs.
3. **Write to the prisoner's family:** The prisoner's family also needs letters of support and encouragement as they attempt to cope with the imprisonment of a loved one. Often they are not allowed any access to the prisoner and sometimes do not even know where she/he is being held. Tell them of the other letters you have written and remind them they are in your thoughts and prayers.
4. **Our government:** If you wish to do more than write just the letters outlined above, write to the United States State Department and your congressional representatives. Demand to know what is being done by our government on behalf of these detainees. Request a written response.

Your Senator  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Your Congressperson  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Secretary Herman Cohen  
Assistant Secretary of State  
(Assistant for Africa)  
United States Department of State  
Washington, D.C. 20510

LETTER FROM  
RECENTLY  
RELEASED  
POLITICAL  
PRISONER,  
TO ROB  
JENKINS

Papa MgwangDA  
P.O. Box 541  
Stutterheim 4930  
6. 12. 89

Dear Mr Rob Jenkins

I am happy to learn that many people support our struggle. I am writing this letter being a free man. Comrades your efforts have forced the apartheid regime to release me without any restrictions.

Detention without trial is a crime. We ask you Comrades to pray with us, to stand with us in our fight against this injustice. We are working for a new South Africa, a non-racial one based on the people's document, the Freedom Charter. We are happy to see that the people of America are also interested in our struggle, in fact are siding with us. This would be more important if Bush and his friends can understand. The term of the former President, George Ronald was quite a sad one to the oppressed masses of South Africa. Sanctions is the only answer.  
Aluta Continua!

P. MgwangDA