This Bulletin consists of two documents. One is from a personal letter from South Africa dated November 13th. The second is from another highly responsible man who has had occasion to investigate professionally the recent riots, and who writes under the nom de plume of Harry S. Warner.

For the relief of the resisters in South Africa we sent in November $209.90, and yesterday we sent $274.12. May we remind you again that funds are desperately needed to carry on the Campaign.

We now have copies of the reprint of Dr. Homer A. Jack's series of six articles that appeared in THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY, entitled "Reaction and Revolt in South Africa Today". The reprints are 15 cents each.

In answer to a number of requests, here is a brief list of recommended books with authors and publishers (which we unfortunately do not carry in the office):

- Handbook on Race Relations in South Africa
- The Dilemma of South Africa
- Racial Separation in South Africa
- The Peoples and Policies of South Africa
- The Choice Before South Africa
- Report on Southern Africa

Hellman
John Hatch
Eugene P. Dvorin
Leo Marquard
E. S. Sachs
Basil Davidson
Oxford Univ. Press
Roy Publishers (N.Y.)
Univ. of Chicago
Oxford Univ. Press
Philosophical Library
Jonathan Cape, London

A South African Correspondent Reviews the State of the Campaign

I must tell you something about the terrible riots that have taken place during the past few weeks, one in Port Elizabeth, followed by two big ones at Kimberley and East London. The cause of all these riots is the trigger-happy policemen who provoke the people. Whilst we have taught the people in our volunteer corps to avoid trouble with the police, the masses outside the volunteer corps are not as wise. Every one of these riots has started off with the shooting of some African, and that one death inflames the people to such an extent that they retaliate. There is no evidence that they are inspired by agent-provocateurs who are aiming at discrediting the Defiance Campaign. They are spontaneous, and I think from a political point of view they are a symptom that we are not keeping pace with the feelings of the people. The people are sick and tired of the Malanites and like all people naturally want what they think is a short cut. Our duty is to direct this feeling along channels that will aid us in the fight.

The Kimberley riot started from a fight between Africans in a beer-hall, and by the time the police arrived it had become an anti-police movement. The rioters burnt out the Bantu-Batho Hall, the municipal offices, the creche, etc., in No. 2 Location. The Executive Committee members of the local branch of the African National Congress were placed under arrest and charged under the Suppression of Communism Act. Dr. Letele and others are now also under arrest.

In East London some Africans had gone to the District Commandant of Police to ask for permission to hold a meeting. Prior to this, Swart, the Minister of Justice, had invoked the Riotous Assemblies Act and banned all meetings in the districts of Port Elizabeth, Peddie, East London, King Williams Town, Uitenhage, and later on Kimberley. Now the East London people sought and obtained permission to hold
the meeting. At some stage during the proceedings, police arrived in trucks and rushed up to the man conducting the service and snatched the Bible from his hand. They looked at it and left apparently satisfied. A few minutes later they returned and the African police accompanying them started a baton charge after the people had been given five minutes in which to disperse. In the course of the scuffle three people received wounds from bayonets which the European police, who by now had joined the charge, carried. The Africans ran away and police got on their trucks and there followed a few minutes of terror. The police as they drove through the location were just firing wildly into houses and at any people on the streets, and killed a number of Africans. This meeting took place at the Bantu Square at Tsolo, but the shooting went on right through the other locations not involved in the affair up to Duncan Village. The people decided to retaliate and they did so, wounding three policemen and killing two European civilians. Then they turned on the municipal buildings and on churches which had not supported the campaign, etc. It is of course not possible to stop this kind of thing because the only people who could do so - the leaders - are banned from attending meetings and the meetings themselves are banned.

In Port Elizabeth the strike called to protest against the imposition of the ban on meetings and the curfew was one hundred percent successful. The whites are mad and Port Elizabeth resembles a city during war time, with police, armoured cars, patrols, searchlights, aeroplanes, etc. But we refuse to be intimidated. The whites are getting themselves into a state of panic. Shopkeepers in the (African) Reserves are leaving for the towns in order to create this atmosphere of a South Africa on the verge of revolution. The intention is to enable the government to proclaim a state of emergency and then to take drastic action against the ANC. It is being subtly suggested by liberals and openly by the Nats that we are responsible for the riots. And it is argued that to restore the position we must call off the campaign. But to call off the campaign would rob us of all bargaining power and would be a tacit admission of complicity in the riots. Why should the riots which were caused by the police exercise a moral compulsion on the ANC to call off the Campaign for the Defiance of Unjust Laws? These riots mean the Campaign must go on. It is the Government which must call off its campaign of apartheid and race hatred against the Africans and their allies. We will intensify the Campaign and not call it off. We are defending all those people who have been arrested in connection with the riots. Those people are having a raw deal and the whites are actually suggesting that because the ANC is taking up the legal defence of those arrested, they must be connected with the riots. We have discussed this matter and our attitude is that wherever Africans are in difficulties, the ANC must be with them. We feel the wrong people have been arrested for causing the riots and that the police and Swart who is egging them on are the guilty parties. Anyway the situation is tense, with the Africans calm and confident under their clear-headed leadership and the Whites jittery, panicky, and race mad. Our organisation is powerful enough and our beliefs and ideology strong enough to sustain our people through any crisis.

The latest action of Minister Swart is that he has issued an order on 52 leaders in the Cape not to attend any gathering. These orders were served last Saturday. It is not clear what is a gathering and as far as the Communism Act is concerned the persons involved are now not entitled to be with their families. "Gathering" in terms of the Act means "any gathering, concourse, or procession in, through, or along any place, of any number of persons having a common purpose, whether such purpose be lawful or unlawful". You can see what a ridiculous situation this is. Anyway the movement will go on. The number of volunteers who have gone into action since June 26 is now nearer 8,000. The riots are not worrying us at all. As long as the Campaign organised by Congress is nonviolent and its army of volunteers is carrying on the fight in the proper manner, we are satisfied. There seems to be a feeling that the death of six Europeans is the most vital political event that has occurred in South Africa. The death of many more Africans is not regarded with so much concern. Well, to us the lives of our people are important and to render their sacrifice a worthy one, we must fight for a society in which riots of this type will be a thing of the past. The need is for money and still more money. The movement has become so big now and expenses are heavy...
That the defiance of unjust laws campaign in the Union of South Africa was peaceful, disciplined, and non-racial in character is beyond argument. In less than six months it spread to most large towns, and caught the imagination of the non-European peoples as no previous political movement had done, but not a single violent incident could be attributed to it.

During the trials of the African and Indian leaders of the Campaign (twenty leaders are on trial in Johannesburg and fifteen in Port Elizabeth) the Crown witnesses have admitted under cross examination that the Campaign was conducted in a well disciplined manner, that it was not aimed at the Europeans but at unjust laws, that it was a peaceful protest against grievances without any encouragement or suggestion of violence.

Most of these witnesses were detectives from the Special Political Branch of the C.I.D., who had attended numerous public meetings held to further the Campaign and had reported the speeches of the leaders and organizers. There was evidence of large groups of volunteers being arrested by a single policeman. There was evidence that where witnesses were ill-treated, they remained calm and refused to be provoked.

At the end of the Preparatory Examination in Port Elizabeth (where the campaign had its greatest success) the Magistrate refused to indict the accused persons on a charge of incitement to public violence, even in the highly technical sense of that term in South African Law. He said he was satisfied from the evidence that the Campaign was peaceful and nonviolent.

Then suddenly, between October 18th and November 9th, at the point where the Campaign was threatening to become a mass movement in the towns, and was beginning to spread to the countryside, violent clashes with the Police took place in four towns, widely separated. The first occurred on October 18th in New Brighton Location, Port Elizabeth, where eleven people were killed and at least twenty-seven were injured by gunfire, most of them seriously. The second occurred on November 3rd at the Denver Hostel, Johannesburg, where three Africans were killed and five injured. All had been shot by the police. The third occurred on November 8th at No. 2 Location, Kimberley, where thirteen Africans were killed and at least seventy-eight injured, again all as a result of shooting by the police. The fourth occurred on November 9th at East London where thirteen people were killed and at least fifty injured. Here again all the Africans who had been killed or injured had been fired on by the police. Actually the number injured is far greater than stated here. In each case the first action of the police, after "quiet" had been restored, was to go around the hospitals and arrest all those they had shot, on the theory apparently that the receipt of a bullet wound was proof that the victim had been rioting. The result is that numerous families are concealing their wounded even to the extent of not calling medical assistance.

Three Europeans who were in the New Brighton Location, and two who were in the East London Location at the time of the events, were killed by rioting Africans. Those killed in New Brighton were the owner of a cinema, his son, and a man who was taking some of his workers home on his lorry. Those killed in East London were a Catholic Nun, who had been working as a medical practitioner in the location, and an insurance representative. The murders of these people, some of them people who were in a real sense friends of the Africans, has dismayed responsible opinion in South Africa, African as well as European. They have alienated much sympathy which many Europeans felt towards the Defiance Campaign. Among the more irresponsible Europeans they have created something near to panic and hysteria, and the entire Union Cabinet have used the events to unloose a campaign of anti-African and anti-Indian race hatred and terrorism such as even South Africa has seldom seen.
There has been a rush by European civilians to buy arms; women's organisations have called meetings to demand more police protection; farmers are offering the services of themselves and their rifles to help "handle" the situation; there is pressure to call out the Skiet Kommandos, the armed pro-Malan, civilian auxiliary of the Defence Force.

But the facts about the riots, particularly the immediate causes, have not been made available to the public. Although urged by large sections of the public and press to hold an enquiry, the Government refuses to do so. The facts cannot be discussed in the newspaper now, because they are sub judice, while the Police carry out leisurely investigations with a view to criminal prosecution sometime hence. All the public are left with are the Police reports which are suspect because the Police were participants in the riots, and the statements of Cabinet Ministers which are even more so because the Cabinet Ministers are making the most unashamed and reckless political capital out of the events. Mr. Swart, Minister for Justice, has given an immediate and all too ready explanation - the riots are the direct result of incitement by the leaders of the Defiance Campaign. He has stated that the riots were simply anti-White. He and other Ministers have said that they are an extension of the Mau Mau movement to South Africa. Dr. Verwoerd, Minister for Native Affairs, has blamed the New Brighton riot on the "liberal" policies of the Port Elizabeth City Council, the inference being that anything resembling decent treatment of the African population must lead to riot and murder. Other Ministers have blamed the English language press for supporting the Defiance Campaign, the United Nations and the Overseas press for its hostility to the Malan Government and hence encouragement to the African population. (With a General Election coming off next April, there is a clear purpose in all this.) This wild and contradictory clamour is intended to stampede European voters away from the United Party, and gain their support for the strong-arm Native policy of the Nationalist Government. Now the true facts about the riots are beginning to be known, mainly as the result of investigations by lawyers engaged in the defence of persons arrested and facing charges arising out of the riots. They reveal an appalling state of affairs; that the police on the direct instigation of Mr. Swart, their Minister of Justice, have been firing on the slightest provocation, and in some cases without provocation, killing innocent people, stirring up riots by indiscriminate shooting, then justifying the shooting as being necessary to put down the riots. These are grave accusations but they are made with a realization of their gravity; the evidence leaves little doubt that they are true.

Let us deal firstly with the charge against Mr. Swart: that he deliberately instigated the shootings. Well, on this we have Mr. Swart's own admissions. On the 2nd November at Klipkoppies he stated:

"The Police have instructions to take drastic action where there is a threat of a clash between Europeans and Non-Europeans. They will strike when necessary and they will shoot when necessary. So called innocent bystanders should get out of the way when there are signs of trouble. If they are so innocent what are they doing at trouble spots? The Police have instructions to act and to act swiftly and they have my support. The organisers of the Defiance Campaign should heed this warning."

Note that this order requires the police to shoot, not in defence of lives (the only time a policeman or anyone is legally permitted to shoot) but when there is a threat of a clash between Europeans and Non-Europeans. Not even a clash but the threat of one. What amounts to such a threat is a question for the Police Officer to decide, and his decision will of course depend on how frightened or how trigger happy he happens to feel. If he thinks angry looks amount to a threat he is entitled to shoot, and he would have Mr. Swart's support for his action.

On the 15th November, 1952, at a Nationalist Party meeting in the Free State, he again admitted that he had given these orders to the police.
"I have instructed Police Officers not to wait until their men are killed or wounded in riots before they fire. They have been told to shoot first. The Government will deal with the unruly elements with all the force at its disposal." This conception of a shoot-first-and-talk-afterwards Police Force is in line with Mr. Swart's way of thinking. On the 30th April, he complained that the police "are sometimes a little too soft."

On the 6th August he said:
"If the Police go beyond their powers in isolated cases, they should not be condemned in view of their difficult task. It is just too bad if people get hurt."

On the 19th September, he said:
"Only the police can save South Africa from chaos," thus leaving no doubt that in Swart's mind South Africa will in future be ruled by the police.

After such persistent and unambiguous incitement to shoot is it any wonder that the police soon found occasions to do so? Is it any surprise that if there were no occasions they soon started manufacturing them?

In East London the trouble started when the police came to break up an open air prayer meeting. Although there was a ban on all meetings in the Location, special permission had been granted by the Chief Magistrate to hold this one. While the preacher was reading from the Bible to a crowd of about two hundred, two lorry-loads of armed police drove up. The preacher was reading about the oppression of the Israelites. The policeman in charge, a junior officer, decided that he could not permit such subversive theology, permission or no permission, and he ordered the crowd to disperse within five minutes. The meeting immediately broke up. In less than two minutes and while people were walking away, the police officer ordered the African constables to make a baton charge which was immediately followed by a bayonet charge by the European constables. Before the crowd was driven off the square, shots were fired and a man was killed. Almost everyone injured on the square whether by batons, bayonets, or bullets, had been attacked from behind. The police then climbed into their lorries and drove up and down the main streets of the Location firing at anybody and into houses. One man was killed while sitting in his kitchen reading a newspaper. One man was killed and two wounded while having a beer party in a house. Dozens were injured. A woman belonging to one of the religious sects, wearing a red robe and carrying a cross, came round a corner unaware that there was trouble. A policeman jumped off the lorry, ran up, and bayoneted her, severely injuring her leg. Then the police returned to the police station. Nobody had attacked the police in any way - it would have been suicide to do so.

Mr. Gwentshe, the Chairman of the African National Congress in East London, went to the police station and asked to be allowed to drive through the Location in a car with a loud-speaker to calm the people. Permission was granted. Mr. Gwentshe returned to his house and was fitting the loud-speaker to his car when he saw that the police had followed him in their lorries. He saw a policeman taking aim at him with a rifle; the shot killed a man standing next to him.

Then the police again drove through the Location firing into the houses. There are bullet holes in houses all over the Location, many several miles from the scene of any rioting. Now rioting started, first with stone throwing, and later with the burning of buildings. It is believed that at this stage the Europeans were killed. The police did not stay to put down the riot which they had stirred up. They picked off a few more people at random, fired into some more houses, and then drove back to the police station. They were not on hand to stop the burning of buildings, the Municipal offices, a welfare centre, and church, which they certainly
knew about because they could see the flame and smoke. By then it was evening. That night they stayed at the police station, which is on the edge of the Location, with guns propped on the window-sills firing into the houses.

At Denver, Johannesburg, the police sniped at Africans standing on the balconies of the Hostel at a time when there was quiet and no threat of disturbances. Earlier there had been some trouble in which stones were thrown and windows broken, but nobody injured. Feelings were high in the Hostel on that day, because the Municipality had raised the rents by 80%, and the tenants had decided not to pay the increased rental until they had made representations to the Native Affairs Department. One man did not abide by the decision and went to pay the increased amount. A crowd tried to mob him and he ran for safety into the Superintendent's office. Then a crowd of tenants joined by some people from a nearby beer-hall began throwing stones, breaking windows outside the Hostel. Several lorry loads of armed police arrived, and the stone throwing immediately stopped. Most of the people in the Hostel had taken no part in the stone throwing. As the police gathered at the gate, the Hostel tenants stood on the balconies, which surround a quadrangle, watching the police gathering at the gate below. For half an hour nothing happened. Then someone must have remembered Mr. Swart's orders, because suddenly there was a burst of firing by the police. A man on the first balcony was killed, and one on the second balcony injured. People disappeared from the balconies into the rooms behind. The firing stopped, and the people thought that it was safe to come out. As they did so the police began picking them off. Again they disappeared and waited for some ten minutes before coming out again to attend to the dead and wounded. Again the police waited and sniped at them as they came out. All those killed were shot through the head. Of those injured two were shot in the head and one through the chest.

Then to round off the day, the police arrested the three wounded men and the three leading figures on the Tenants Committee. They are being charged with public violence. Two of the three committee men were not even at the Hostel that afternoon. They were discussing the new rents at a meeting with the Tenants Committee of a neighboring Hostel, and they arrived back only when the shooting was over. And this, more or less, is the pattern of the other riots.

At Kimberley there had been dissatisfaction about the management of the Municipal beer-hall, and a boycott had been organised. In enforcing the boycott, an argument took place with some Africans who wanted to enter the beer-hall. A policeman assaulted a woman by hitting her on the head with his handcuffs. This infuriated the bystanders and they began throwing stones; then they overturned and burnt a Municipal lorry parked nearby. A bus-load of police armed with rifles and stenguns arrived and although their arrival put an end to all disturbances, they fired point blank into the crowd of Africans gathered around the beer-hall. Then, as in East London, they drove through the streets of the location firing at anyone they saw and into the houses. Among those killed was a woman carrying a six-months-old baby on her back. Then, having stirred up the entire location, they returned to the police station. After that furious mobs set fire to the location offices, the beer hall, and other evidences of the white man's administration.

At Port Elizabeth, a Railway policeman had tried to arrest an African for failing to pay an extra charge for a tin of paint he was carrying with him on the train. An argument started and a friend of the man came to his assistance. There was a scuffle and the Railway policeman pulled out his revolver and shot and killed the friend. This was witnessed by a crowd, mainly women, on the Railway platform. They ran screaming into the location and spread the story. After a while several hundred Africans came out of the location to the Railway station, some of them throwing stones. Police reinforcements arrived and again they fired point blank into the crowd. Again, they drove through the location firing into the houses. When they
left, a furious mob ran through the location, burning down the cinema and killing the owner and his son; they burnt the post office and other buildings and they killed a European bringing his workers home on a lorry.

There is one thing the police have learnt from these events - how to stir up a riot. There is in all the locations and townships a feeling of dumb frustration and subdued anger which requires only a spark to set it off. In addition to this there is a criminal element known as Tsotsis. This element, consisting of mainly young gangsters, has been produced by slum conditions, by poverty, and most of all by the workings of the Pass laws, which make it difficult for many youngsters to obtain work. They give up the attempt to work and live by crime. They prey on their own people by robberies and assaults and many of them rob and assault the Europeans. When there are shootings and the people's anger is aroused, the conditions for the Tsotsis to take control are created. They do so, leading the violent outbursts of burning and killing. One would think that if the Government genuinely wished to stop riots they would permit responsible African leaders, such as Mr. Gwentshe, to remain at the leadership of their communities, particularly when events of this sort take place. But this is not the policy of the Government. Throughout the Eastern Province all the wellknown leaders have been prohibited from attending "any gathering". What this means is not quite clear, that is whether they are prohibited from standing in bus queues or attending cinemas or sitting down to eat with their families. It is clear, however, that they may not address any public meetings. As one of these leaders has said:

"The Government are putting the Tsotsis in the leadership of the African people."

This is not as far-fetched as it sounds. There are other signs that the Government do not wish a responsible leadership to develop. In the Western Native areas of Johannesburg, where a gang of hooligans have dispossessed two hundred law abiding families of their houses, forcing them to live on an open square, no action whatever has been taken against the hooligans. It is the Government's policy to create as much unrest as possible and then to shoot down all signs of it. There is no other explanation for the events described in this article.

The Passive Resistance Campaign, peaceful, disciplined, and non-racial, was something it could not handle by ordinary means. It has decided to convert it from a passive into a violent campaign.