FOR RELEASE MONDAY A.M. AUGUST 2

AMERICAN COMMITTEE ON AFRICA CONDEMNSS TWO "TERRORISM" TRIALS IN SOUTH AFRICA -

POINTS TO GROWING RESISTANCE OF OPPRESSED PEOPLE

In a statement issued today, the American Committee on Africa, called the events preceding the two latest political trials in South Africa which begin on August 2 as giving "lie to the boast of the racist regime that they have destroyed all resistance by the oppressed people of South Africa." (statement attached)

One trial being held in the Natal Prov. city of Pietermaritzburg involves 14 African, Asian and Coloured members of the Non-European Unity Movement of South Africa, 8 of whom were held in detention and solitary confinement for six months after a police swoop in February. The 14 are charged under four counts of the Terrorism Act (see attached list) which carries the maximum death penalty and minimum 5 yrs. in jail.

The other trial, that of the 59 year old British citizen, the Very Rev. Gonville A. ffrench-Beytagh, Anglican Dean of Johannesburg, to take place in Pretoria, followed raids on a number of church and student organizations to gather evidence leading to the 38 page indictment against the Dean under the Terrorism Act, including efforts to give defense and welfare assistance to political prisoners' families.

The Terrorism Act was enacted in 1967 as legislation, which, because of its retroactive clauses plus other elements which defy the "rule of Law", was aimed at destroying the liberation struggle in Namibia (S.W. Africa). In the same vein, South Africa, while trying to lure the critics of apartheid into "dialogue" and "communication", proceeds to attempt to destroy all opposition and undermine change inside. The failure of the police state's efforts is evident in its own steady use of the draconian Terrorism Act and the terror tactics utilized against continuing resistance.
NEW "TERROR TRIALS" IN SOUTH AFRICA

On August 2nd the South African Government, in yet another show of force, will begin two summary trials under the notorious Terrorism Act. In Pietermaritzburg, Natal, 14 members of the Non-European Unity Movement of South Africa, and its affiliated organizations, will face four charges under the Act, including organizing for the violent overthrow of the Government, holding secret meetings and collecting funds for that purpose, and recruiting people in South Africa to undergo military and political training. All charges carry a potential death penalty and a minimum of five years imprisonment.

The second trial is in Johannesburg. The Anglican Dean, the Very Reverend Gonville Aubrey ffrench-Beytagh will face charges contained in a 38-page indictment, including allegations that he advocated violent overthrow of the State, and that in order to assist in the achievement of such aims he continued to assist in the administering and distribution of funds received from Defence and Aid (a banned organization).

Dean ffrench-Beytagh

The charges against the Dean under the Terrorism Act replace previous charges under the Suppression of Communism Act and follow widespread raids on church, welfare and student organizations, made with the avowed purpose of developing further evidence after the Dean's original arrest and arraignment. Significant among the charges against the Dean are those concerning efforts to provide defense and welfare assistance to political prisoners. British and South African press reports say that the Government's immediate aim is to stop financial aid to African relatives of political prisoners for food, clothing, housing, education, rare visits to their men in prisons. There seems also to be a determined attempt to make legal defense assistance impossible, thus preventing political prisoners from obtaining even such limited support.

The Dean, 59 years old and a British citizen, was arrested January 20th, detained under the Terrorism Act, and held incommunicado except for two visits by a British consular official. The Dean's detention created a storm of protest from church, press, university, and legal and opposition political elements in South Africa. Held for eight days, he was brought to Court on January 28th and charged with unlawful activities under the Suppression of Communism Act; he was released on bail, and the charges were subsequently withdrawn in Court on July the 2nd when the new charges under the Terrorism Act were brought against him.

The Terrorism Act which was first used against 37 Namibians in 1967, has subsequently been frequently used to attack the liberation movements, most recently in the trial of Winnie Mandela and 18 other members of the African National Congress.

The Non-European Unity Movement Trial

The Unity Movement of South Africa, a federal organization which seeks to unite all sections and organizations of the disenfranchised black people of South Africa, was established in 1943 with a Ten-Point program of full democratic rights. Its leaders and supporters have been victims of the severe political persecution which the South African Government uses against all opponents of its racist white rule. Many have been jailed or have escaped into exile. Others live under banning and house arrest. Later in 1970 and the first two months of 1971, there were widespread arrests of Unity Movement adherents under the Terrorism Act, and also under Procla-
nation 400 of 1960, an indefinite detention provision used in the Transkei, a Bantu- stan in the East Cape province.

The total number of people so detained is not known, but at least 25 names have appeared in the South African press reports of arrests. On June 16, 1971, 14 men were formally remanded in the Magistrate's Court on charges under the Terrorism Act, some after at least 130 days of detention in solitary confinement: Kader Hassim (Maritzburg Attorney), Joseph Braneby Yusani (Johannesburg Attorney), Mogami Josiah Moenq, Mfolwane Mbela, Pindiso Zimambane, Dam Gideon Mahanjane, Ncikwa Nagi Vimba, Max Bantwini Tabata, Frank Anthony (Capetown Teacher), Robert Cedric Wilcox (Capetown Accountant), Albert Kwenzi Takengena, Montford Nzoli Mabuto, Joseph Tabukudz Maleka, and Surinareyan Kala Venketratnam.

Of those 14, only 8 had been known to be in detention. This illustrates again the horror of the Terrorism Act, under which people can be detained indefinitely, without the right of access to any person, including lawyer, doctor, family or friend, or to the Courts. Only the authorities know how many people are being held in detention, and the law does not require them to release this information even to the families of those held. It is known that interrogation of detainees is often accompanied by the most brutal torture, and at least 14 people are admitted by the Government to have died in detention. It is certain that the new trial will reveal further evidence of torture and death in detention.

The arrests highlight the continued resistance of the black people of South Africa to the racist regime, and in particular to the pressure of land dispossession involved in the Bantustan system. A statement by the Vice-President of the Unity Movement, W.M. Taotsi, and the President of the affiliated All African Convention, Mr. N. Honono, described the growing conflict in South Africa and the context within which these arrests must be seen. The statement recalls that in 1960 resistance by the people of Pondoland led to armed attacks by the Government, many deaths and the declaration of a State of Emergency, still in force in 1971. Since 1960 the authorities, anticipating further resistance, have set up a network of police posts in the villages at strategic points, and have established a permanent army camp in Pondoland. In February of this year, a growing wave of resistance to forcible removals from the land was met by bloody reprisals from the police. In order to hide this reign of police terror unleashed on the people, the police released accounts of "inter-tribal clashes" involving one thousand men. The press was not allowed to make an on the spot investigation to verify the facts, or the causes of the conflict. The emergency regulations impose severe censorship on the press and any critical comment. The savage nature of the police attacks is indicated by a report which was carried in the Rand Daily Mail of an interview with the assistant District Surgeon, Dr. Margaret Barlow: "Not a soul is left in an area that is usually densely populated.....not a kraal (home) is left standing. There are no wounded, there are only dead."

These events and the recent arrests give the lie to the boast of the racist regime that they have destroyed all resistance by the oppressed people of South Africa. On the contrary, the resistance is gaining momentum. In an appeal for assistance the Unity Movement has issued the following call:

"The arrest and trial of leading members of the Unity Movement is a desperate attempt to crush increasing political activity and contain the deepening ferment in the country. The vain hope of the fascist rulers is that with this fresh wave of repression they will be able to put down the mounting resistance to the tyranny of government.

"We must defend these men whose only crime is their implacable opposition to oppression and exploitation, their fight for LIBERTY.... Demand their release as well as the release of ALL political prisoners in South Africa's jails."
THE CHARGES UNDER THE TERRORISM ACT

14 MEN, all members of the Unity Movement of South Africa and its affiliate APDUSA (African Peoples' Democratic Union of Southern Africa), were formally remanded in custody on Wednesday June 16, 1971 in the Pietermaritzburg Magistrate's Court where they were charged on four counts under the Terrorism Act.

The men were indicted but were not asked to plead and the case was postponed to August 2, 1971 for summary trial in the Supreme Court, Pietermaritzburg. No defence counsel appeared for the accused.

The charges allege that the men participated in terrorist activities on various occasions from 1963 to 1970. According to the "Daily News" (Durban, 16 June 1971):

"Count one deals with the period from April to June 1970 in South Africa and Zambia. It is alleged that the 14 men were members of active supporters of APDUSA and of the Non-European Unity Movement, also known as the Unity Movement... They endangered the maintenance of law and order in South Africa and, in furtherance of a common purpose with APDUSA and NEUM, sought to overthrow the Government by force of arms and with foreign assistance.

"It is also alleged that they conspired with members of the Unity Movement in exile in Zambia to receive, collect, solicit and hold funds available to finance a campaign to recruit people in South Africa to undergo political and military training and to persuade and assist people to leave the country secretly, and also to assist people to evade the police.

"Count two refers again to APDUSA and NEUM and that the accused conspired with E. Ncalu, D. Lande, L. Nikani and E. Jama (Unity Movement members in Zambia) to recruit people in South Africa to undergo military and political training.

"Various other accused are alleged to have committed similar offences at Johannesburg.

"Of the accused six more are alleged to have made their kraals or homes available for secret meetings at Bizana, Zeerust, Cape Town and Botswana... Some of them are also alleged to have addressed these secret meetings.

"Allegations concern also the collection and distribution of money and the receiving and forwarding of code messages from Cape Town.

"Count three: Eight of the accused are alleged to have incited, instigated, commanded, aided, advised, encouraged or procured at least 32 people to undergo military training which could have been of use to anybody intending to endanger the maintenance of law and order, namely, APDUSA and NEUM and the members and active supporters of these organizations.

"Count four: Allegations in this count refer to unlawfully harbouring, concealing, or directly or indirectly rendering assistance to people who teh accused had reason to believe to be terrorists. Nine of the accused are mentioned, and the offences are alleged to have been committed last year in Johannesburg, Bizana and Cape Town. It is also alleged that four people named in the indictment were provided with board and lodging, and that they were provided with transport and an escort."