STATEMENT BY DENNIS BRUTUS

I am grateful to the A. Philip Randolph Institute and the American Committee on Africa for having arranged this occasion for me. The latter Committee has also sponsored my nationwide lecture tour which has included testimony before the United Nations Special Committee on Apartheid and the House of Representatives Sub-Committee on Africa of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

I have come to the United States and Canada as Director of the Campaign for the Release of Political Prisoners in South Africa, sponsored by the International Defence and Aid Fund, and as President of the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee, and I hope to interest people here in these activities and indicate what they can do to assist. I hope to enlist the support of the people of the U.S. and Canada for vigorous and specific action against the vicious system of racist oppression in my country, South Africa, which is notorious throughout the world for "Apartheid."

The fight for freedom in my country is of concern to people all over the world and the fight against racial discrimination is of the same order as the fight for civil rights in America, so that I am especially pleased to be associated with those who are active in the fight for justice in America.

Wherever I have gone, I have regarded it as my duty to acquaint people here with the extent to which U.S. business interests are involved in and are profiting from the apartheid economy in my country and to warn people of the real danger of a future conflict in which U.S. interests will be ranged on the side of, and will act in defence of apartheid and racism. The American people must make it clear that they are not on the side of, and will not support, racial domination.

I welcome those acts which make it clear that the U.S. does not approve of apartheid - such as the recent order forbidding the FDR (aircraft carrier) to call in Capetown; but there is infinitely more that the U.S. can do to back up its declarations of opposition to apartheid. And I welcome all protests and opposition to U.S. economic involvement,
particular campaigns against banks and firms associated with apartheid in South Africa, such as that recently launched by the American Committee on Africa with A. Philip Randolph as Chairman of the Committee of Conscience Against Apartheid.

There are two special concerns which I wish to emphasize as alluded above:

First: Because of my activity against apartheid in sport, I want to direct a special appeal to the sportsmen and sportsbodies in the U.S. This is one area in which something can be done to fight racism immediately - and which will be readily understood in my country. Coloured sportsmen have always been excluded from the South African Olympic team. This has happened because countries like the U.S. through their Olympic Committees have failed to take a forthright stand. This issue will be debated at a meeting of the International Olympic Committee to be held in Teheran in May. I appeal to the U.S. representatives at this meeting to support action calling for the suspension of the South African team from the 1968 Olympics unless there is a clear policy of non-racialism applied by South Africa in line with Olympic principle.

Second: I call attention to the brutal treatment of opponents of apartheid in South Africa. I have only recently completed serving almost two years in prison in South Africa. I have testified to the United Nations about the deplorable conditions prevailing. I urge the U.S. to support two actions of the United Nations:

First: a Commission of Inquiry into prison conditions in South Africa.

Second: to contribute to the United Nations' Trust Fund for South Africa.

The U.S. voted for this Fund, but in spite of the fact that many countries have contributed, the U.S. has done nothing as yet. The Fund is used to alleviate the suffering of the wives and children of the political prisoners and other victims of apartheid, to pay their rent, assist with school fees for the children, and other necessities of life. I urge a generous contribution to this U.N. Fund from this, the richest nation on earth.