

## *Anti-Apartheid Movement*

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## ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT

The anti-apartheid movement was the first successful transnational social movement in the era of globalization. The movement began after a massive turnout by rural Afrikaners gave Rev. Daniel Malan's Nationalist Party a majority of five seats in the whites-only Parliament of the Union of South Africa on May 26, 1948. The Nationalists won on a racist platform that played on white fears of the "black threat" and promised to establish strict "apartheid" or separate development policies to counter it.

In its transnational scope and eventual success, the anti-apartheid movement can be compared to the abolitionist movement of the nineteenth century. What is unique about the anti-apartheid movement is the extent of support it received from individuals, governments and organizations on all continents. Few social movements in history have garnered anywhere near the international support that was mobilized against the racist apartheid regime in South Africa. Although national liberation and Marxism might both be considered as successful, transnational social movements, neither of these had the global support that the anti-apartheid movement garnered.

There were two main aspects of the anti-apartheid movement: the internal campaign to destabilize the racist apartheid regime in South Africa, and the external campaign for political, economic, and cultural sanctions. At the heart of the movement was the struggle of black Africans to end white supremacy in South Africa. This internal movement was both a catalyst for actions at the international level and the critical link that gave coher-

ence to the movement as a whole. The external effort can be divided into two fronts: (1) regional efforts to provide military bases, material, and diplomatic support for liberation movements; and (2) the diaspora movement, which focused on seeking international sanctions against the regime and providing direct aid to the liberation movements.

The internal struggle within South Africa was the core of the movement, and it served as a catalyst for regional and international support movements. This effort emerged to oppose apartheid legislation imposed after the all-white election of 1948 brought Rev. Daniel Malan's Nationalist Party to power. The regime quickly passed segregationist legislation, including:

1. The Prohibition of Mixed-Marriages Act (1950), which made interracial marriage a criminal act;
2. The Population Registration Act (1949), which required registration and racial classification of all persons above sixteen years of age;
3. The Suppression of Communism Act (1950), which associated anti-apartheid activities with communism;
4. The Group Areas Act (1950), which allowed the government to determine the areas in which people of different races and nationalities could reside and own property;
5. The Bantu Education Act (1953), which brought mission schools under government control and circumscribed the education of Africans.

The resistance movement responded at first with nonviolent direct-action tactics under the leadership of organizations such as the African National Congress (ANC), the South African Communist Party (SACP), the Indian National Congress (INC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). On May 1, 1950, this coalition organized a national strike to oppose the Suppression of Communism Act. When thousands of workers boycotted their jobs, the government responded by sending troops to the townships, and eighteen workers were killed. Nevertheless, the coalition called another strike for June 26, and workers again responded in good numbers.

These strikes were a prelude to the mass civil-disobedience campaigns of 1952-1953 known collectively as the "Campaign of Defiance of Unjust Laws." Between June and December 1952, thousands of activists were arrested for defying petty apartheid laws, such as "whites only" drinking fountains, train compartments, and waiting rooms. The ANC's volunteer-in-chief Nelson Mandela made hundreds of speeches across the country urging black people to defy apartheid laws, and the government responded by shooting demonstrators and arresting movement leaders, including Mandela; Yusuf

Dadoo, president of the INC; and J. B. Marks of the Mineworkers Union.

These internal struggles against apartheid, and the violent response they engendered, galvanized the international movement. The Defiance Campaign, for instance, inspired supporters in India, Africa, and the United States. On September 12, 1952, thirteen African and Asian countries brought the issue of racial discrimination before the Secretary General of the United Nations (UN), calling on the organization to establish a commission to study the issue and report its finding at the next General Assembly. The United States vetoed the resolution, however, beginning a forty-year history of U.S. diplomatic support for apartheid. Yet while this specific campaign failed, the effort to raise the world's consciousness of the plight of black people in South Africa would eventually result in a comprehensive sanctions resolution.

On March 23, 1960, South African police gunned down seventy-two men, women, and children in Sharpeville Township. The demonstrators were protesting against the Natives Act of 1952 (collectively known as the Pass Laws) that required black people to carry identification with them at all times. The laws were designed to restrict the movement of black people into urban areas. The massacre sparked outrage around the world, and photographs of the victims became iconic images of apartheid. Although the original call for international sanctions had come from the ANC in 1959, it was the Sharpeville Massacre that made South Africa a pariah state and precipitated international action. South Africa was expelled from sports, cultural, and academic institutions, and on November 6, 1962, the UN General Assembly voted to sever diplomatic, transportation, and economic relations with South Africa. Although the resolution was voluntary, it was a major victory for the anti-apartheid movement. International organizations such as the International Labor Organization and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) also voted to expel South Africa.

The apartheid regime responded to this pressure by declaring a state of emergency, banning anti-apartheid organizations such as the SACP, ANC, and PAC. In response, the liberation movements went underground and into exile, where they launched the second phase of the movement: the armed struggle. This phase was characterized by the internationalization of the struggle, with regional and broader African support organized by the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The exiles acquired bases of operation, military training, and political education through both the OAU and a coalition of South Africa's neighbors known as the "frontline states." The apartheid regime responded by attacking its neighbors and sponsoring terrorist organizations such as

Renamo and UNITA to disrupt, discredit, and overthrow hostile governments. By the 1970s the southern African region had become a Cold War theater, with the United States and South Africa sponsoring terrorist insurgencies and Cuba and the Soviet Union supporting the governments of Mozambique and Angola. South African forces invaded Angola and attacked Lesotho, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Zambia. Meanwhile, hundreds of youth were killed in police crackdowns in South African townships such as Soweto.

In the 1980s, the movement entered a third stage: massive resistance. The movement reached its climax in this stage, which was characterized by the determination of anti-apartheid activists within South Africa to make the country ungovernable through strikes, boycotts, demonstrations, and acts of sabotage. In 1983 a coalition of the internal organizations and church groups formed the United Democratic Front to lead the new phase of the movement. In an attempt to split the opposition, the regime offered Indians and Coloreds (people of mixed race background) limited franchise in the elections of 1984. The strategy failed, however, and instead galvanized further acts of civil disobedience and sabotage. Moreover, the international anti-apartheid movement had matured, and most countries in the world had imposed military and economic sanctions against South Africa. The exceptions were Britain and the United States, but the movement overcame this hurdle in 1986 when the United States Congress passed the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (CAAA). The bill was written and proposed by Rep. Ron Dellums (D-Calif.), a veteran anti-apartheid activist and member of the Congressional Black Caucus. The CAAA delivered a crippling blow to a South African economy that was already reeling from the withdrawal of U.S. banks the year before. In 1987, 250,000 African mine-workers went on strike, further undermining the economy and the legitimacy of the apartheid state.

Thus, it was the combined pressures of international sanctions and internal strife that led to the demise of the apartheid state. The retreat began with the repealing of the pillars of apartheid legislation, beginning with the repeal of the pass laws in 1986. By 1990 the government had lifted the ban on the SACP, ANC, and PAC and repealed the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts, the Population Registration Act, and the Separate Amenities Act. Nelson Mandela was released in 1991, having spent twenty-seven years in prison. Four years later, on May 10, 1994, Mandela was sworn in as president of South Africa. Mandela and his African National Congress won an overwhelming victory in the elections of 1994, defeating both black and white opposition parties to become the undisputed leader of the new South Africa.



**Nelson Mandela Voting, April 27, 1994.** After spending 27 years in prison, Mandela's anti-apartheid struggle finally succeeded. He is seen here voting in South Africa's first democratic election, which made him the nation's first black president.

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Despite the political defeat, the effects of apartheid are still evident in the early twenty-first century, particularly in the economic sphere. More than ten years after apartheid, the white minority still owns more than 80 percent of agricultural land and is in control of the economy. Further, reports indicate that racial inequality has grown since 1994. The ANC's neoliberal policies have not succeeded in redistributing resources or reducing poverty to any significant degree. Instead, these policies benefit the rich and the new black professional class. In August 2005, religious, civic groups, and the country's largest trade union body (Cosatu) formed a coalition to challenge the ANC government's economic policies. Although a part of the ANC's ruling coalition, Cosatu has opposed the ANC's focus on building a black professional and business class. This federation has campaigned for a broad-based redistribution of resources and for black economic empowerment. As of 2005, however, the ANC has managed to hold together the three-way coalition with Cosatu and the South African Communist Party.

SEE ALSO *Apartheid; Mandela, Nelson; South African Racial Formations.*

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## ANTI-INDIAN MOVEMENT

The U.S. anti-Indian movement was created out of a white backlash against gains made by Native American nations since the 1960s. The modern movement is the heir to the historic hostility exhibited toward Native sovereignty, treaty rights, and cultural and economic autonomy. It originally brought together white reservation residents challenging tribal jurisdiction, white sportsmen opposing Native treaty rights, and resource interests viewing tribal sovereignty as an obstacle to profit and development. In the decades around the turn of the twenty-first century, it has incorporated gaming interests and anti-gambling groups fearing tribal casinos, animal rights groups opposing tribal hunting, and New Age groups demanding unhindered access to exploit tribal spiritual practices.

#### MOTIVATING FACTORS

At least five major factors motivate anti-Indian groups. The first is the call for "equal rights for whites"—the argument