

Glasgow Caledonian University Archives, United Kingdom

Finding Aid - Anti-Apartheid Movement Scottish Committee records (AAM)

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Language of description: English

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Anti-Apartheid Movement Scottish Committee records

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Summary information

Repository: Glasgow Caledonian University Archives, United Kingdom

Title: Anti-Apartheid Movement Scottish Committee records

ID: AAM

Date: 1976 - 1994 (date of creation)

Physical description: 40 metres

Language: English

**Dates of creation,
revision and deletion:**

Note
[sourcesDescription]: Anti Apartheid Movement Archive Committee, The Anti Apartheid Movement: a 40 year perspective: South Africa House, London 25-26 June 1999 (London: Anti Apartheid Movement Archive Committee, 2000)

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

On 26 June 1959 a group of South Africans and their British supporters held a public meeting in Holborn Hall, Theobalds Road, London, to call for a boycott of fruit, cigarettes and other goods imported from South Africa. The meeting was organised under the auspices of the Committee of African Organisations (CAO). The main speaker was Julius Nyerere, then President of the Tanganyikan African National Union (TANU), joined by Kanyama Chiume of the banned Nyadaland African National Congress, Tennyson Makiwane and Vella Pillay from South Africa's African and Indian Congresses, Michael Scott and Trevor Huddleston. None of the speakers had a base in British politics. The choice of date for the meeting was 26 June, South Africa Freedom Day, and the choice of tactic, like the date, had wholly South African origins. On 29 December 1959 the Committee met for the first time under its new name the Boycott Movement Committee. This Committee cast its net wide and letters for support were sent to trade unions, co-ops, womens' organisations, constituency labour parties, local liberal parties, conservative associations and churches and religious organisations. The Boycott Movement became the Anti Apartheid Movement after the Sharpsville massacre of 21 March 1960 and this movement not only fought for an end to apartheid in South Africa, but re-orientated its strategy to counter the evolving "unholy alliance" against African freedom in Southern Africa.

As far as the Anti Apartheid Movement in Scotland is concerned, branches supporting the organisation existed in Glasgow and Edinburgh through the 1960's, however the mid 1970's saw the establishment of a Scottish Committee. The Committee was formally established in 1976 as the Scottish Committee of the Anti Apartheid Movement and the minutes begin from 8 May 1976. It had a certain degree of autonomy within the UK structure. Brian Filling remained in the Chair and John Nelson remained Secretary of

this Scottish Committee for its complete existence and went on to hold the same positions in Action for Southern Africa, ACTSA, Scotland. After the elections on 27 April 1994 and the victory of the ANC and Nelson Mandela, apartheid came to an end. The last Annual General Meeting of the Scottish Committee took place on 3 December 1994 when it was dissolved and its assets transferred to the Scottish Committee of Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA).

The first two minuted meetings of the Scottish Committee took place at Dundee University, Dundee and thereafter meetings on the whole alternated between venues in Glasgow and Edinburgh. The first office of the Scottish Committee at 266 Clyde Street, Glasgow was formally opened on 22 August 1987. The lease for these premises ran out in the summer of 1989 and alternative premises were found at 52 St Enoch Square, Glasgow. In 1992 premises were purchased in this building and these premises are still used by ACTSA (Scotland). Prior to having a central office, the Secretary's home address was used for business purposes.

The aims and objectives of the Anti Apartheid Movement included informing the people of Britain and elsewhere about apartheid and what it meant to the people of Southern Africa. It also campaigned for international action to help bring the system of apartheid to an end and to co-operate with and support Southern African organisations campaigning against apartheid. The object of the Scottish Committee was to further the work of the Anti Apartheid Movement, especially in Scotland. This was done through promoting the exchange of information and ideas between anti apartheid groups, through co-ordinating the activities of such groups and where appropriate, through undertaking activities on its own account. The Scottish Committee was responsible for the recognition of local anti apartheid groups in Scotland and therefore for their admission into membership of the Anti Apartheid Movement. Activities in Scotland covered a number of specific areas which were the focus of international campaigning. These included sports, culture, retail and academic boycotts, campaigns against nuclear and military collaboration, loans to South Africa and for oil sanctions. Scotland was also very active in the international campaigns for the release of Nelson Mandela over his 27 years in captivity. The Movement's work was not limited to South Africa. It was one of the first organisations to highlight the "unholy alliance" between apartheid South Africa, the racist regime in Rhodesia, and Portuguese colonial rule in Africa. It was actively involved in promoting independence for the former Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique, as well as for Zimbabwe and Namibia and the Scottish Committee and its local groups played their part. The Scottish Committee for Local Authority Action Against Apartheid was established on 21 March 1985 and the Scottish Women's Sub Committee was launched on 16 June 1987. The position of Youth Officer was created at the Scottish Committee annual general meeting in August 1987, and the Union Sub Committee was formally established in December of the same year. Supporters in Scotland also included church and religious groups and the student population. In local communities it was local anti apartheid groups who carried out the work of the Movement, and while these changed over the years, local areas of activity included Aberdeen, Ayr, Central Region, Clydebank, Cumbernauld, Cunninghame, Dumbarton, Dumfries, Dundee and Tayside, East Kilbride, Edinburgh, Falkirk, Fraserburgh, Fife, Glasgow East, Glasgow North West, Glasgow South, Hamilton, Inverness, Midlothian, Paisley/Renfrew and West Lothian.

The National Committee of the Anti Apartheid Movement, on which the Scottish Committee was represented, was responsible for the interpretation, implementation and development of policy between annual general meetings, and it met a minimum of three times per year. The Executive Committee, which also included one representative from the Scottish Committee, carried on the day to day work of the Movement and normally met monthly. The Scottish Committee was an integral part of the Movement. It was made up of two delegates from each recognised local anti apartheid group in Scotland, one delegate from each student and other anti apartheid groups in Scotland recognised by the Scottish Committee, and one delegate from each of a maximum of ten affiliated Scottish-level organisations. Office bearers

were elected at the Scottish annual general meeting and these were chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, treasurer and other functional officers as found necessary. The Scottish Committee met monthly. Some key events relating to Scotland are listed below. On the 4 August 1981, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, was granted the Freedom of the City of Glasgow. On 16 June 1986 St George's Place, Glasgow was renamed Nelson Mandela Place, Glasgow. On 12 June 1987 the freedom marchers began their march as part of the Nelson Mandela Freedom at 70 Campaign. This was the most ambitious campaign in the Anti Apartheid Movement's history to date and it set off from Glasgow. In 1990 the Scottish Committee organised SECHABA Festival and International Conference in Glasgow and on the 9 October 1993 Nelson Mandela visited the city of Glasgow where he was give the freedom of 9 British cities; Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee, Midlothian, Hull, Sheffield, Greenwich, Islwyn and Newcastle.

Custodial history

Retained by AAM Scotland Chair, Secretary and ACTSA Scotland.

Scope and content

The collection holds the minutes, papers and correspondence of the Anti Apartheid Movement in Scotland from 1975 to 1994. It also holds some Glasgow and Edinburgh branch meeting material and other documentation that predates the establishment of the Scottish Committee. Further to this there is a large collection of national and international material which helps create a full picture of the Movement's activities and gives an indication of other organisations that gave their support. The Archive is also rich in ephemera including, posters, stickers, and postcards.

Committee minutes and papers 1976-1994; correspondence c1970-1994; branch meeting papers 1960's; conference and events papers c1970's-1994; subject based folders c1970-1994; posters/postcards/stickers/fliers/newsletters/newspapers c1970-1994

Bulletins/pamphlets/books/journals/petitions/ephemera c1970 -1994; various publications (part catalogue of published materials)

Notes

Title notes

Physical condition

Some items are fragile and some script has faded.

Immediate source of acquisition

First transfer in 1997 and still being added to.

Arrangement

The archive has not yet been arranged.

Restrictions on access

Open by arrangement with the Archivist.

Conditions governing use

Applications for permission to quote should be sent to University Archivist. Reproduction subject to usual conditions: educational use and condition of documents.

Finding aids

A part handlist is available in the reading room.

Accruals

Accruals expected.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** Published
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Access points

- Anti-Apartheid Movement | Scottish Committee
 - Anti-apartheid movements (subject)
 - Racial discrimination (subject)
 - Racial prejudice (subject)
 - Protest movements (subject)
 - South Africa (subject)
 - Human rights movements (subject)
 - Scotland, United Kingdom (place)
 - South Africa (place)
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Series descriptions
