

## BARCLAYS

AND

## **SOUTH AFRICA**

A Joint Haslemere Group Anti-Apartheid Movement Publication by Martin Bailey Price 20p.

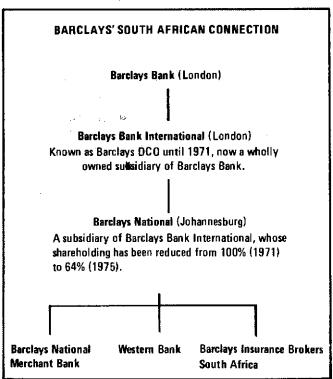
### BARCLAYS AND SOUTH AFRICA

Barclays Bank has come in for more criticism than virtually any other British company operating in South Africa. One out of every five branches of the world-wide banking group is located in the Republic and Barclays, with deposits of more than £1600 million, is the largest bank in South Africa. Barclays has denounced apartheid as an 'evil doctrine' and the company claims to exert a liberalizing influence in South Africa. But is Barclays really helping to reform the apartheid system from within? Or is it, instead, helping to prop up the whole South African system of racial oppression?

#### BANKING IN SOUTH AFRICA

#### **BARCLAYS AND THE NATIONAL**

The history of Barclays' involvement in South Africa dates back fifty years to the establishment of Barclays DCD (Dominion, Colonial and Overseas) in 1925. The first Chairman of DCO, 'believing as he did in the future of the British empire and in the inherent superiority of our banking system,' merged three banks to form a powerful bank with branches over much of Britain's far-flung empire. One of the three components of Barclays DCO was the National Bank of South Africa. This was established back in 1890 and grew rapidly during the early years of this century by acquiring and merging with a number of other banks. At the time when the National was purchased by Barclays DCO it already had a network of 321 offices and it was, after the British-owned Standard Bank, the second largest bank in South Africa. OCO appointed a local board in South Africa and this basic structure was retained for almost 45 years. Then in October 1971 Barclays' interests in South Africa were hived off and a locally incorporated company was established in Johannesburg, It was named Barclays National, recalling the name of the original South African bank which had been one of the three original constituents of Barclays DCO.



At the same time Barclays DCO — renamed Barclays International — became a wholly-owned subsidiary of Barclays Bank (previously Barclays Bank had held only 65% of Barclays DCO shares). Barclays National, which operates in South Africa, was initially a wholly-owned subsidiary of Barclays International. But in March 1973 five million shares in Barclays National were sold on the Johannesburg stock exchange and this reduced Barclays International's stake to 85%. Two years later Barclays National acquired the Western Bank and, when shareholders in Western were given Barclays National stock, Barclays International's share in its South African subsidiary fell to 64%.

A reajority of the shares in the Western Bank were held by the Anglo-American Corporation and Barclays' take-over in March 1975, speculated the Daily Talagraph, 'will give Barclays close ties with the vast Anglo-American Corporation empire (and more say for Anglo in the financial scene).' Anglo-American, despite its name, is a South African firm and its chairman, Harry Dppenheimer, is the country's leading business tycoon. The company, with investments of over £850 million, is the largest single employer in the private sector and dominates the mining industry in South Africa. The exploitation of black labour surely reaches its peak in the mines where African workers, often migrants living in closed camps, receive average wages which are one-twentieth of those paid to white miners.

Even before the Western Bank was acquired, there had been a long history of ties between Barclays and Anglo. 'The resources of the Oppenheimer group of companies, though very large, were not inexhaustible,' pointed out the official history of Barclays DCO, and since 'they were already under heavy strain' during the 1920's, large credits were arranged by Barclays. 3 Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, Anglo's founder, had been a director of Barclays DCO from 1929 to 1949 and the following year his place on the OCO board was taken by his son, Harry Oppenheimer, who remains a director of Barclays International to this day. Sidney Spiro, Chairman of Charter Consolidated (Anglo's overseas arm), also sits on the Barclays International board. Anglo purchased a small share in Barclays National in 1973 and immediately afterwards J. Dgilvie Thompson, an executive director of Anglo, was appointed a director of the bank. The company is now Barclays National's largest customer. Barclays, as bankers, and Anglo, as industrialists, are giants in their respective fields and work hand in hand.

Barclays' decision to establish a separate subsidiary in South Africa, and subsequently to offer a proportion of its shares to South African stockholders, was in line with the proposals of the Franzsen Commission. This official South African commission, whose recommendations were accepted in 1970, proposed that foreign banks operating in South Africa should reduce their shareholdings to 50% within ten years. Barclays International's holding in its South African subsidiary will probably be reduced within the next few years, most likely by the issuing of additional shares, so that 50% ownership should be reached by the early 1980's. Two important points should be noted. First,

Barclays International has a controlling interest in Barclays National and it hopes — if permitted — to retain a majority shareholding. This means that Barclays' head office in London still has ultimate responsibility for the operations of its South African subsidiary. Secondly, Barclays International's stake in South Africa has in no way been reduced by issuing additional shares. Rather Barclays National has been expanded, while the perent bank has retained its existing level of investment.

#### THE BUSINESS OF APARTHEID

Any company operating in South Africa — particularly a financial giant such as Barclays — has little choice but to accept the laws and customs which govern the apartheid system. Average pay of Barclays' white staff, for example, is several times higher than that of its black employees, because whites are generally employed in higher positions. Sometimes apartheid may involve 'petty' restrictions — such as the need to provide eight sets of toilets in large branches (for two sexes and four 'races') — which appear ridiculous. But these are manifestations of a consistent philosophy of separate development, whose function is to exploit the black majority. Barclays has to accept the apartheid system in dealing with both its employees and its customers.

Barclays is now the largest bank in South Africa, followed by the Standard, and together the two British companies control over half of South Africa's banking deposits. Barclays OCO also held a 13% stake (worth £2.3 million) in the Standard Bank until it was sold in 1970. Barclays National now has three major subsidiaries, all wholly-owned;

#### WHAT IS APARTHEID?

Any company operating in South Africa has little choice but to accept the laws and customs of apartheid. But what exactly do these consist of? And why do so many people around the world oppose the system of government in South Africa?

Apartheid is based on the fundamental denial of human rights to the majority of the people of South Africa. The white minority, representing about 18% of the population holds power. The other three 'races' -- Africans, Coloureds and Asians -- have no rights in their own country.

The main object of the repressive system in South Africa is the organised exploitation of a cheap labour force for the benefit of the white minority. Those people who are useful to the white economy — such as miners and servants — may be given permission to reside in 'white' areas in shacks or compounds. Family life has been destroyed by the migrant labour system. The young, the sick, and the old are forced to stay in over-crowded Bantustans where educational and health facilities are almost non-existent.

Pass laws which control the movement of the black population, are enforced by a brutal police force who arrest over 600,000 Africans a year. The basic political rights — to vote and to strike — are denied the majority of the population. South Africa has a huge prison population, where the use of torture has been well documented and the death penalty is widely employed.

Apartheid is not simply a peckage of ludicrous petty regulations — it is an all-embracing system of repression to preserve the economic wealth and political power of the white minority.

these are Barclays National Merchant Bank (formed in November 1973, but already the fourth largest merchant bank), Barclays Insurance Brokers South Africa, and the Western Bank (which had been the sixth largest commercial bank until its take-over in March 1975).

Barclays dominates the South African banking scene and its account-holders, who number close on two million, hold deposits worth over £1600 million. More than half of the top hundred industrial corporations bank with Barclays. Money represents power and the banks influence its use: the banks, by their choice of which companies to help with loans, are partly responsible for the development of the South African economy. Barclays, naturally enough, runs its business on strictly commercial lines and therefore ends up supporting ventures which are likely to prove profitable. Since the South African economy is based on the exploitation of cheap black labour this means supporting the apartheid system.

Barclays backing of the South African government's policy of separate development can be seen in their attitude towards the recent establishment of the African bank. Barclays is participating in the African Bank by subscribing 6% of the capital and seconding one of its most experienced men (Mark Tapping) to train African personnel. Barclays is proud of its association with the project and Anthony Tuke, Chairman of the Group, described it as 'an essential step towards the achievement in the economic sphere by Africans of a true independence.' But the result is a logical extension of the apartheid system: a bank for Africans, perhaps eventually to become African-run, which will be an integral part of a system that will leave the blacks firmly under white domination.

Barclays is also supporting the apartheid system by giving financial backing to the oppressive South African regime. The profitable operation of the bank's South African subsidiary means, of course, that taxes have to be paid to the government and these amounted to nearly £9 million in 1974. This helps to finance the coercive machinery — ranging from the salaries of civil servants involved in regulating the movement of black workers to the purchase of sophisticated defence equipment — which controls the apartheid system.

Even more serious is the fact that Barclays international is involved in making loans to South African government corporations. This fact, which was recently admitted by the bank's Vice-Chairman, once again shows that Barclays has very clearly aligned itself on the side of the white establishment in South Africa. Thuring times of world-wide capital shortages, The Banker commented, 'large foreign banks with interests in South Africa would probably be more inclined to help the country to borrow the large amounts of foreign funds it needs annually from the international and capital markets. British banks — such as Barclays — provide tens of millions of pounds a year in loan capital to support the South African government and its corporations.

Barclays is heavily involved in South Africa and, as the country's largest bank, the company is very influential in the financial sphere. Many of Barclays' main customers — on which the bank's prosperity depends are staunch defendents of the apartheid system because it provides a huge pool of cheap black labour. Barclays by operating in South Africa, is helping these firms and therefore involved in perpetuating white demination.

#### STRENGTHENING THE WHITE SOUTH

#### MOZAMBIQUE

During the late 1960's, the mighty Cabora Bassa dam became a symbol of Portugese colonialism. In Lisbon the project was seen as a means of raising living standards in the desperately poor colony of Mozambique, settling large numbers of Portugese farmers in the Zambesi Valley, and defeating the forces of FRELIMO (the Mozambique Liberation Front). For South Africa the dam was a valuable commercial opportunity for the contractors involved, a cheap source of electric power, and a means of cementing a white-ruled Southern Africa bloc. FRELIMO condemned the project and intensified guerilla activities in the strategically important Tete Province around the site.

During 1969 it became known that Barclays DCO was involved in Cabora Bassa. A subsidiary of the Anglo-American Corporation won a sub-contract on the project, for the construction of a road network at the site, and overdraft facilities to the tune of £1.2 million were provided by Barclays. The bank, after it had been subject to a barrage of criticism from black African states and anti-apartheid groups in Britain, claimed that its involvement in the project was relatively minor. 'Our sole link is through a company customer which, in the normal course of business, has been granted overdraft facilities,' Barclays pointed out, and 'this customer happens to have obtained a small sub-contract on the dam.' But the Chairman of Barclays DCO fully supported the project, whose impact was described as of 'immense value to all races,' at a time when the dam was under fire from opponents of Portugese colonial rule. B

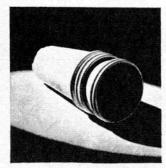
Barclays DCO also operated in Mozambique. But in August 1971, with growing competition from Portugese banks, an arrangement was reached whereby Barclays sold its interests in Mozambique to the Banco Comercial de Angola in return for a holding in the Banco Comercial (which operated in both Angola and Mozambique). Barclays' attitude towards Portugese colonial rule can be guaged from the remarks of the bank's Chairman. 'The Africans seem to be to get on very well,' commented Lord Seebohm after a short visit to Mozambique in 1970, and 'even in the most expensive hotels you will find Africans at the same table. '9 The visiting Chairman, who perhaps met a rather unrepresentative sample of Africans at his restaurant tables, remarked that 'the Africans are scared stiff of FRELIMO' because it is 'a threat to their normal life.' The truth was the reverse: it was Portugese colonialism with its financial backers which represented the real threat to the people of Mozambique, who were living in dire poverty. After nearly 500 years of Portugese rule in Mozambique - and a decade of guerilla warfare - the territory won its independence on 25 June 1975, under FRELIMO rule, and the assets of the Banco Comercial were nationalized.

#### RHODESIA

Barclays International operates in Rhodesia, with a network of more than eighty offices, and the bank is the second largest after the Standard. Shortly after Ian Smith's proclamation of UDI, on 11 November 1965, the United Nations imposed economic sanctions against the rebel regime. Since then Barclays has played a major role in arranging for the transfer of funds between Rhodesia and the outside world and thus helped ensure that sanctions failed to bring down the Rhodesian regime

## Where in the world would you sell 2 million plastic cups?

### Barclays know.



Barclays International found the answer through their global network of Barclay branclies. And helped a local manufacturer import new equipment, double capacity and expand into the herative export market.

Barclays is the world's largest international bank, with over 5000 branches world-was bank bank, with over 5000 branches working for you. Each Barclays branch is part of this network, continually locating and assessing new markets, gathering, sifting and communicating information essential to world trade. Barclays International provides a complete international service from export contacts and letters of introduction to travellers cheques and freight insurance.

Through their association with UDC (Rhodesia) Limited, Barelays can infuse the additional capital required to stimulate growth and potential profits by arranging discounting, specialised forms of lending and the leasing of

When you bank with Barclays, you reach he world.

Barclays Bank International Limited



Barclays proudly advertises its services in Rhodesian publications, such as **Property and Finance**, which spell out the assistance the bank provides: <sup>10</sup>

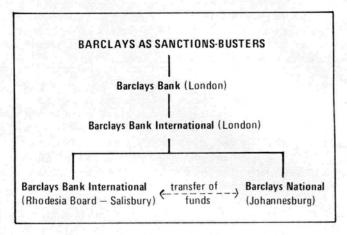
- "As a Rhodesian manufacturer, I am always on the lookout for new outlets. It pays me to study Barclays Bank market reports because it makes sense that a Bank that operates in over 40 countries must have their finger on the pulse of international trade. What is more important, they have the direct contacts too..."
- "As a family, we love travel and once in a while we even manage a trip. overseas. But wherever we go, Barclays have got everything taped. They fix EVERYTHING...."
- "As a business executive who has to make frequent trips outside Rhodesia the fact that Barclays has branches throughout the world makes my job much simpler. The business of exchange control can be a big headache but I leave it to Barclays and they arrange everything. . ."



Barclays has been active in transferring money between Rhodesia and South Africa, in contravention of UN sanctions, and since Barclays controls around a third of bank deposits in the two countries, this has presumably amounted to a huge sum over the last decade. The London head-quarters of Barclays is aware that these transfers are taking place but it appears not to have taken action to prevent its Rhodesian board and South African subsidiary from becoming a major tool of sanctions-busters.

Barclays International when questioned about its involvement in Rhodesia, has claimed that its operations there are independent and 'outside our control.' Yet what efforts has Barclays' headquarters in Lon-

don undertaken to ensure that its branches in Rhodesia comply with UN sanctions? The bank could, for example, issue a statement that following a constitutional settlement, disciplinary measures would be taken against all managerial staff who had been engaged in sanctions-busting. When questioned on this point, at the bank's AGM in April 1975, the Group Chairman refused to consider taking steps against Rhodesian staff who had proclaimed their own UDI from London headquarters.



The official history of Barclays DCO, published by the bank, gives the impression that the bank hardly made any attempt to control its Rhodesian board: 12

"It was hard to say where DCO stood. Legally our offices in Rhodesia, over eighty in number, were and still are part of the bank. When we lost Egypt there was an immediate reflection in the balance sheet of the loss of advances and deposits of that section. No such changes resulted from UDI. Periodical returns and half-yearly balance sheets continued to be submitted and the figures were incorporated in the bank's balance sheet in the usual way. The only difference was that no direct remittances of funds could take place and so profit and loss figures remained on blocked suspense accounts until such time as 'normal' trading conditions returned or sanity prevailed.

Fortunately the Rhodesian section of DCO was already virtually autonomous. . . Thus UDI had in effect been anticipated and made no change in the administration of the bank's affairs save that London could no longer approve or reject proposals put forward by Salisbury. . .

The status of our bank staff in Rhodesia who numbered about eight hundred at the time of UDI was virtually unchanged; all were 'locally employed' although some may have held United Kingdom passports. They lost no pension rights, since their own pension fund had been set up some years previously, and although some of it was invested outside Rhodesia, no obstacles were put in the way of payments. Furthermore the fact that their number had increased to 1,012 by the end of 1971 was a fair indication that even if prosperity could not be expected, the best possible use had been made of six difficult years. "

Barclays has been involved at both ends of the transactions. The company's South African subsidiary has encouraged businessmen to expand economic links with Rhodesia and its quarterly journal, Barclays National Review, carries regular reports on trade and investment opportunities in the rebel colony. Even more serious is the fact that Barclays National arranges the transfer of funds between South Africa and Rhodesia from Johannesburg. The Chairman of the Barclays Group, when asked about these transactions at the 1975 AGM, was for once visibly flustered and was forced to admit that these transfers were taking place. Since Barclays National is a subsidiary of Barclays International, and

hence under the ultimate authority of the London office, there seems no excuse for allowing sanctions busting transfers to take place through South Africa.

The nature of Barclays' potential control over transfers between Jojannesburg and Salisbury can be seen from the role of one of the leading figures in the Barclays Group. Arthur Aiken has been Vice-Chairman of Barclays International from 1950 up to 1975 and hence in close contact with the bank's London office. His relationship with the bank was clearly explained by Lord Seebohm: 'He is in no doubt whatever of our views and his views have always coincided with ours.' Aiken also sits on the Rhodesian board of Barclays International. But, the bank argues, he is a South African citizen and consequently is not breaking the law by being a director of a section of a company engaged in sanctionsbusting. Then why has Barclays International — A British Bank — been willing to employ him in such a senior capacity? Not only is Aiken involved on the Rhodesian side, but he was — until his retirement in 1975 — Chairman of Barclays National in South Africa and he had headed the bank's operations there for twenty-five years.

Barclays International is therefore aware that funds are being transferred between Salisbury and Johannesburg and no attempts appear to have been made to bring this traffic to an end. Yet Barclays in London continues to profit from the activities of its South African subsidiary, which is involved in these transfers, and if a constitutional settlement is reached the profits of Barclays' operations in Rhodesia that have accumulated over the last decade (which are blocked at present) will presumably be forwarded to London. Barclays' management in Britain are acquiescing in — and profiting from—the breaking of sanctions. The actions and inactions of the Barclays board in London have clearly helped keep the Smith regime in power. Thay are thus pertly responsible for any violent struggle that results from the refusal of Rhodesia's whites to accept the principle of majority rule.

#### NAMIBIA

Barclays National's operations extend to Namibia, where the bank has 22 branches and 90 agencies, and the company therefore recognizes the illegal South African administration which has de facto control over the territory. Yet all the main UN organs - including the Ganeral Assembly, the Security Council, and the International Court of Justice — have declared that South Africa's occupation of Namibia (formerly known as South West Africa) is illegal.

Recent developments concerning Namibia — including international pressures for Namibian independence and the growth in the strength of the South West African Peopla's Organisation (SWAPO) — have caused a certain degree of panic among bank depositors. At the end of 1974 the Cheirman of the South West Africa Board of Barclays National issued a statement which attempted to allay these fears. It promised that funds deposited in Namibia would be held for their customers 'whatever constitutional changes might occur', and deposits could be repaid in South Africa itself if required. <sup>14</sup> It is difficult to see how Barclays can make such an undertaking, since it would be up to the government of an independent Namibia to take the decision whether to permit the transfer of funds to South Africa.

In 1971 the UN Security Council passed an additional resolution which stated that all 'franchises, rights, titles or contracts relating to Namibia granted to individuals or companies. . . are not subject to protection or espousal by their states against claims of a future lawful

Government of Namibia.' 15 In other words, once an African government comes to power it will not necessarily have to recognize rights given by the illegal South African authorities to companies operating in Namibia. Many of Barclays' main customers in Namibia face substantial potential losses and this would inevitably affect the bank's operations.

#### SWAPO DENDUNCES BARCLAYS' OPERATIONS IN NAMIBIA

SWAPO regards Barclays Bank as one of the foreign investors in our country whose effect is to shore up the illegal South African occupation of Namibia. The presence of Barclays Bank in our country gives respectability to South Africa's illegal administration.

The relationship of Barclays Bank with other foreign enterprises investing in Namibia facilitates their operations, the transfer of their profits, and the payment of taxes to the South African regime. This involves Barclays Bank directly with the military occupation of Namibia by South Africa. The revenues the illegal regime receives from the foreign enterprises in our country help finance the grossly enlarged South African military occupation of Namibia. The mineral wealth of Namibia is a major factor in the South African retime's continuing efforts to effect a neo-colonial 'solution' in our country.

With Namibia under forcible military and police repression, enterprises like Barclays Bank are colluding with the illegal regime in its efforts to strangle the Namibian resistance and impede the progress of the Namibian people to full freedom and independence. When Namibia is free, the Namibian people will remember clearly who were their friends and who their enemies in the long struggle against the South African occupation.

PETER H. KATJAVIVI
Representative of the
SOUTH WEST AFRICAN PEOPLE'S
ORGANISATION

SWAPO has issued a call for the withdrawal of British companies from Namibia on the grounds that these firms are collaborating with an illegal administration. The bank retorts that South Africa is in 'de facto' control of the territory and the British government has not instructed British companies operating there to withdraw. Nevertheless the fact remains that Barclays' presence in Namibia is supporting the illegal administration of South Africa. SWAPO has spacifically stated that Barclays is considered a collaborator with the illegal South African administration and that its record will be taken into account when a government of independent Namibia assumes power.

#### **SOUTH AFRICA'S DEPENDENTS**

Over the last decade it has been Pretoria's policy to try to create a Southern African bloc that is economically dependent on South Africa. This would provide political benefits — making it more difficult for neighboring states to support the fiberation struggle in South Africa — while at the same time enlarging the market and providing raw materials for South Africa's increasing industrial output. The independence of Mozambique and Angola, as well as the increasingly embarrassing burden of supporting the rebel regime in Rhodesia, have proved to be major satbacks to this policy. But Barclays' promotion of economic links between South Africa and its neighbours, particularly Rhodesia and Namibia, shows once again that the bank — even if not deliberately — is supporting the political and economic interests of the South African establishment.

#### BRITAINS STAKE IN APARTHEID

#### **EMIGRATION, TRADE & INVESTMENT**

Page one of **Doing Business** with **South Africa**, published in Johannesburg by the bank, opens with a section on 'What Barclays Can Do For You'. This outlines the company's services to foreign businessmen and stresses the advantages of the Barclays Group world-wide network: <sup>16</sup>

"Barclays National Bank Limited, the largest commercial bank in South Africa, is a member of the giant Barclays group of banks, renowned for its dynamic, resourceful and friendly approach to international banking and all its different facets. With global assets exceeding R17,000 million, 80,000 employees and well over 5,000 branches worldwide, the Barclays group has won an enviable reputation as an imaginative and innovative international banking organisation.

The strength of Barclays, in the Republic no less than elsewhere, lies in the diversity of its expertise and the availability of speedy advice and assistance from its branches and associates in many quarters of the globe.

In South Africa, Barclays National Bank Limited, has established a special division called the Business Development and International Division, based in Johannesburg, whose primary function is to assist overseas businessmen — customers and non-customers alike — with all the support they need. \*\*

Barclays has been active in promoting economic links—such as migration—between Britain and South Africa. In 1971 Barclays DCO in London published a glossy 88 page booklet on Emigrating to South Africa which was officially distributed by the South African embassy in London to enquirers who wrote up for information on employment opportunities in South Africa. The pamphlet encouraged white emigration—luring British housewives with the prospect of cheap black servants—in order to fill the demand for skilled white labour.

Over the last few years there has been an increasing shortage of skilled manpower in South Africa and importing additional settlers from Europe is the simplest method of filling this gap without training and promoting black labour. British emigration has been running at 18,000 a year during the early 1970's,increasing the size of the British-bom community in South Africa and also creating a pressure group that discourages the British government from reducing its ties with South Africa. Barclays' promotion of emigration to South Africa puts the company firmly on the side of maintaining the 'status quo' in South Africa.

'If you want to sell to South Africa...' reads the headline in a Barclays DCD advertisement, the bank will be happy to assist and 'with over 800 offices in the Republic we are particularly well placed to help British businessmen who are interested in exporting to South Africa.' 18 Barclays has also been a member of the United kingdom-South Africa Trade Association (UKSATA) since the organisation's establishment ten years ago. Britain is South Africa's largest trading partner, with the two-way trade amounting to £1190 million in 1974. Barclays is encouraging an expansion of these links at a time when the South African liberation movements have called for an economic boycott of the apartheid regime.

'The presence of the bank' in Africa, explained the General Manager of Barclays OCO, 'both enables and encourages investment to take place.' 19 Barclays International in London provides regular Country Reports on the economic situation in South Africa. Barclays Unicorn Trusts has £1.9 million invested in South Africa. Doing Business with South Africa,

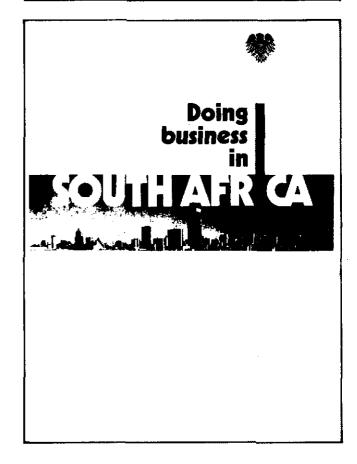
## EMIGRATING TO SOUTH AFRICA

a guide to procedure and an introduction to life in the Republic

COMPILED AND DESIGNED BY

BARCLAYS BANK DCO

FEBRUARY 1978



### If you want to sell to South Africa

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Wish our No office is the Republic as are particularly well placed to help British businessens who are interested in experime to South Africa. But door a line to our latelligence Department.



a detailed 118-page guide published by Barclays National, explains the advantages of investing in the Republic: 'No private sector corporation has ever been nationalised,' it points out, and 'the absence of a socialist-type welfare state' means that taxes are low.<sup>20</sup> Investment in South Africa, states the booklet, pays excellent dividends. Barclays should know—the profitability of its South African subsidiary is considerably higher than its operations in the rest of the world.

In South Africa there are more than 500 companies which are wholly-owned subsidiaries of British firms and around 60% of the estimated £3,500 million of foreign capital invested in South Africa is British. Foreign capital inflow is still of vital importance to the South African economy, although its significance has been diminishing over the last few years, and this cash helps prop up apartheid. Barclays, by encouraging further British investment in South Africa, is increasing Britain's stake in an oppressive system.

#### THE POLITICS OF ECONOMIC LINKS

The promotion of closer economic links between South Africa and Britain — and the financial servicing of foreign trade and investment — has an important political dimension. It is clearly useful to make South Africa appear respectable to the British public and, in particular, to the business community. Barclays' booklet on Emigrating to South Africa, for example, presented the official South African picture of the country. Thoughout it used the word 'Bantu' instead of 'African' and perpetuated the myth that Africans only arrived in South Africa 'at about the same time as the first whites were establishing themselves at the Cape.' The

country is described as a 'parliamentary democracy' (while only the whites, representing 17% of the population, have the vote); it says that 45% of the most fertile land is found in the Bantustans (a 'fact' which has no truth); and it explains that trade unions have been 'rationalized' (blacks are forbidden to form registered unions and strikes are invariably broken up by the police). After strong pressure from antiapartheid groups in Britain, this particular pamphlet was withdrawn by Barclays in 1972.

Trade has important political implications and this was illustrated in 1969 when UKSATA put strong pressure on the British government to permit the resumption of arms sales to South Africa. At this time, the Chairman of Barclays DCO, Lord Seebohm, as well as two other directors of the bank (Sidney Spiro and Colonel W.H.Whitbread) were members of the UKSATA Council. In January 1970 the Zambian government took the unusual step of issuing a formal note of protest to Barclays DCD pointing out that UKSATA was 'politically promoting the cause of South Africa in Britain' and therefore the Zambian government would take the bank's support to UKSATA into consideration when looking at 'the status of the interests of Barclays DCO in the State of Zambia.'<sup>22</sup> Shortly afterwards Lord Seebohm resigned from the UKSATA it does not play an active role in the organisation.

Barclays has also been involved with the South Africa Foundation, an organisation founded by South African businessmen to promote 'good relations between South Africa and the rest of the world'. <sup>23</sup>Barclays DCO advertises in the foundation's publications and on one occasion the bank took a full page advertisement—headed 'Chairman refutes ill-informed critics'—to denounce anti-apartheid protestors who had questioned the company's involvement in Southern Africa. <sup>24</sup>

# **Opportunity** in South Africa



Barclays Bank D.C.O.

The South Africa Foundation's Board of Trustees includes a director of Barcleys International, Harry Oppenheimer, and two directors of Barcleys National (P.W. Sceales and S.C. Smither).

Barclays' promotion of economic links between South Africa and Britain runs counter to the demands of the South African liberation movements — supported by the Organisation of African Unity and the UN — who call for a baycott of South Africa. All international links with apartheid, and especially economic ties, play a supportive role in maintaining the existing order and investors in the South African economy automatically develop a vested interest in preserving that system. An expansion of Britain's economic links with South Africa — fostered by companies like Barclays — represents intervention on the side of the white minority.

# Striking it rich in South Africa

Biveryone knew there was gold in the Rand. It was simply a question of where. Would the strike be made in that shart, or that, or that? Bjecciation san at fivest pinch. Bockers absound their prions like bookins at Bgoom.

Then, in March 1886, the main nest was discovered and Johannesburg was saideday been. It has always been like that is South Africa—greet possibilities if only you know where to look. There are many successful British expures who can be to look. There are many successful British expures who can

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#### **REFORM FROM WITHIN?**

#### BARCLAYS AS EMPLOYERS

Barclays, at least until the last few years, paid its black workers in South Africa wages which were below the subsistence level. Even as recently as 1973, when the Commons' Select Committee carried out its investigation, cleaners working at the bank's rural branches (such as Ladysmith) would normally have had to have been employed for eleven years before reaching the Poverty Datum Line (PDL) and twenty-nine years before attaining the Minimum Effective Level (MEL), which is 50% higher than the PDL.

Since Barclays' operations in South Africa have been so profitable, there is no excuse whatsoever for the company having paid starvation wages for nearly half a century. Over the last few years, however, the bank has proudly announced a series of measures to improve the pay and conditions of its lower paid employees. Barclays has also recently accepted the recommendations of the British government that all workers employed by British subsidiaries in South Africa should be paid above the MEL. These increases, welcome as they have no doubt been to the bank's employees, hardly do anything to narrow the gap between the cleaning staff, who are virtually entirely black, and the predominantly white clerical staff. Indeed — in the South African economy as a whole — a doubling of black wages, if accompanied by a 10% increase in white pay, actually widens the differential between the two groups.

But, according to Barclays, even more important than raising wages of the lowest paid employees, many a: whom are on the brink of starvation, is to gradually promote the more skilled black workers. 'The vital need today is not primarily one of boosting the wage rate of many non-whites, regardless of labour conditions,' Doing Business with South Africa explains, 'but rather the creation of better opportunities for these non-Whites to obtain higher earnings.'<sup>25</sup> And what has Barclays done? It now employs 1164 black clerical workers, which is around 10% of its total clerical staff. Most of the black clerical workers, however, are Asian or Coloured, with only 203 Africans on the bank's payroll in these positions. This means that 1.6% of Barclays' clerical staff are African, in a country where Africans represent over 70% of the population, which is hardly a great achievement for a company that has been operating in South Africa for so many years.

In 1971, almost half a century after Barciays acquired the National Bank of South Africa, the principle of 'equal pay for equal work' was accepted. This 'pioneering' step was, significantly, taken by the two major banks (Barclays and the Standard) simultaneously. The banks had been facing a severe shortage of skilled labour and therefore needed to promote Africans into the lower clerical grades. 'The banks presumably know the difference between a sound investment and an idealistic gesture,' commented the Rand Daily Mail, 'so it is significant that for some years they have had about the best record in South Africa for improving non-white wages. . .it is bound to have a salutary effact on job motivation and productivity.' <sup>26</sup> And — as Barcleys' General Manager admitted — Africans are 'in general the more junior members of our staff' which means the actual costs of paying equal wages has hardly, at least up to now, been a heavy financial burden on the bank. <sup>27</sup>

#### BARCLAYS AS 'REFORMERS'

Over the last few years Barclays has improved the pay and conditions of its black employees. This is partly because the bank has been under attack in Britain. Barclays - probably more than any other single British company — has become a symbol of Britains's economic involvement in apartheid. Thousands of British account-holders, both individuals and organisations, have followed the Anti-Apartheid Movement's call to 'Boycott Barclays' and one newspaper report, several years ago, estimated that by then the bank had lost more than £10 million worth of accounts. Every year the company's AGM is dominated by a minority of angry shareholders criticising the bank's unsavoury activities in Southern Africa. In addition a number of black African governments have also been concerned with Barclays' involvement in the white South and have threatened to take action against the bank's interests in their countries.

Bad publicity is simply bad business. Barclays is a global concern, operating in seventy nations around the world, so it is wary of courting criticism over the activities of just one of its subsidiaries and it became embarrassing to be seen paying starvation wages in South Africa. Barclays also recognized that it would become increasingly dangerous to pay its employees such low wages. 'Remedial action is therefore recognised to be a matter of some urgency,' Doing Business with South Africa delicately explains, 'not only to safeguard stable economic conditions but to generate employee satisfaction.'<sup>29</sup> Or, as Harry Oppenheimer put it, 'we must remember that reform is true conservatism.'<sup>30</sup>

Barclays stepped onto the liberal bandwagon when it proudly proclaimed that it was raising the wages of its African employees. But the company only employs a relatively small number of black workers because of the nature of the banking business in South Africa, and in 1973 the bank had 1621 black employees (94% of whom were cleaners, messengers and tea maids). Even if the wages of all black staff were doubled from the levels being paid when the Commons' Select Committee undertook its investigation, this would only have reduced the profit of Barclays National by around 3%. Announcing a number of pay rises for its lower paid employees was a gesture that the bank could easily afford.

Barclays payroll in South Africa happens to be quite unrepresentative of the population as a whole. Only 15% of the bank's employees are black, while in South Africa a similar proportion of the population is white. The interests of Barclays Bank — as employers — are therefore rather different from those of most commercial enterprises. Many of the bank's major customers, such as the mines, depend on the almost unlimited supply of cheap African labour. But the banks — unlike the majority of South African employers — can substantially raise the wages of their black workers with hardly any effect on profitability.

Barclays true colours are revealed in their policy towards the companies that they do business with. Their customers may employ almost two million blacks and theoretically the bank could decide to refuse to provide loans to those firms with particularly poor employment records. The Commons' Select Committee questioned Barclays on this point and asked the bank about its attitude towards a loan application from a businessman who was making a financial loss through over-paying his workers. Barclays replied that if a customer was running into the red from paying his labour 'too much' — even admitted the bank, if this was below the Poverty Datum Line — then 'we would have to be difficult with him.' In financial terms — the only language that a bank understands — paying employees at the poverty level would be 'too much' if the firm was making a loss.<sup>31</sup>

#### AFRICAN ADVANCEMENT

'Apartheid is an evil doctrine,' Chairman Tuke indignantly explained, 'and the oppressive system in South Africa is both economically and morally wrong.'<sup>32</sup> Yet Barclays continues to operate in South Africa and to draw substantial profits from its subsidiaries there. The bank has tried to resolve the contradiction by claiming that it acts as a 'liberalizing' influence in 'reforming' apartheid from within. This argument is certainly convenient from the bank's viewpoint—enabling it to profit from a system which it condemns—but what validity is there to these reformist claims?

The advocates of the 'peaceful change' theory base their belief on two factors. First of all South African's growing shortage of skilled workers means that blacks will gradually have to be promoted to these posts. And secondly, South Africa's expanding industrial sector needs a larger internal market. Only the blacks, so the argument goes, can supply the solution: Africans must be promoted to higher positions with larger wages. Otherwise,the 'reformists' believe, apartheid will hold back the country's economic growth.

Developments up to now have hardly suggested that there is much validity to the 'reformist' thesis. The gap between black and white wages in the mines has widened considerably this century (it increased from 12 to 1 in 1911 and 20 to 1 in 1971). The period since the end of the Second World War has seen a rapid growth in South Africa's national income and yet this was the time when the apartheid system was institutionalized. Economic growth — at least up until now — has increased the difference in the standard of living between the black and white communities.



#### THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS CONDEMN BARCLAYS' INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH A FRICA

#### **AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS**

The role of institutions such as Barclays must now be evaluated in the context of the new and changing situation in the whole of Southern Africa. The declarations of Anthony Tuke that 'apartheid is an evil doctrine' have not and will not help change the situation in South Africa. Their claims of introducing 'reforms' and of helping to change the conditions from within have proved to be false. The facts prove the contrary. Companies like Barclays are playing a predominant role in creating and sustaining the institutions of apartheid and cheap labour.

The ANC, as the representative of the oppressed people of South Africa, is convinced that with the collapse of Portuguese colonialism in Africa, the intensification of the struggle in Namibia and Zimbabwe, and confrontation between the oppressed and oppressors at its sharpest in a decade in South Africa, conditions are fast emerging for the passage of the initiative into the hands of the liberation movement.

The change in the balance of forces in Southern Africa does not signify a change in the nature of the South African regime. The regime remains fascist, racist and colonialist. Instead, Vorster has been forced to intensify his Bantustan programme of so-called separate development. By this means, he is seeking to legitimize the continued colonial domination of the black people in South Africa.

In this context the African National Congress strongly condemns the involvement of Barclays in South Africa and demands their immediate withdrawal. We demand that Barclays ceases in their super exploitation and the resulting misery of our people.

We reject all spurious arguments that investors in South Africa are there in the interests of the oppressed and that withdrawal would lead to great hardships for our people. Our people's view was clearly put by Chief Albert J. Luthuli, the late President of ANC, to the British people:

We have been victims of suffering long before our boycott and sanctions call to the nations of the world. We are committed to suffering that will lead us to freedom — as it has been the lot of all oppressed people before us from time immemorial. What we are determined not to do, cost what it may, is to acquiasce in a status quo that makes us semislaves in our country.

REG SEPTEMBER
Representative of the
AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

#### PAN AFRICANIST CONGRESS

"It is true that there are blacks working for us. They will continue to work for us for generations, in spite of the ideal that we have to separate them completely....The fact of the matter is this, we use them because they work for us....But the fact that they work for us can never entitle them to claim political rights. Not now, nor in the future...under no circumstances."(Prime Minister Vorster, April 1968).

Even under Vorster's predecessor, Verwoerd (the architect of separate development), there was no illusion that whites in South Africa could do without the labour of the blacks. Ever since Lord Milner proclaimed at the turn of the century that 'the unskilled labour of this country must be black', the basis of white supremacy has been the same. It is in this context that we must look at the role played by foreign investment, which strengthens the country politically as well as economically.

Heckled by shareholders at AGM's, company chairmen argue that they are agents of peaceful change in South Africa. Politicians plead for gradualism, and for critics to be patient. Apartheid will die of attrition, beneath the weight of economic logic. So say the big bosses.

The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (South Africa) will implement affectively the principle of self-determination for the African people:

- 1) To seize state power from the racist apartheid regime and restore it to the rightful people the toiling masses. To save and defend our motherland and to see that the country end the fruits of labour are equitably distributed among its people. We can only fulfill this task through social revolution.
- 2) To retrieve all the land that was stolen from our people by the settlers and restore this land to its rightful owners the toiling masses of the people by means of an armed struggle.
- 3) To restore the means of production to the rightful owners the toiling masses of the people. The means of production will be publicly owned and all the working people will enjoy equality of status in the ownership of the land, factories, mines, machines, and an equal chance of employment in these enterprises.

This is a clear and precise message by the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania to Barclays Bank and all the big battalions of profit-makers.

VUYANI MNGAZA
Representative of the
PAN AFRICANIST CONGRESS

The claim that the development of the South African economy will—by itself—lead to a break-down of the apartheid system is based on a misunderstanding of the processes at work. Racialism, far from being an impediment to economic growth, is an essential factor. The impoverishment of the black wage-earner is a function of white prosperity. Apartheid is not racism for its own sake: it is a system which ensures that the white minority retains its economic wealth and political power. Various contradictions, or disequilibria, will undoubtedly continue to develop—such as the present shortage of skilled manpower and the restricted market for consumer goods. But although apartheid may need certain controlled adjustments, it will not crack from purely economic pressures.

Barclays claims that it favours black advancement. But when one examines the bank's position in more detail, it is clear that the company regards African advancement in terms of the development of black capitalism and the creation of a small African middle class. Senior Barclays' officials have often, for example, drawn attention to the fact that up until now Africans have been forbidden to own (and outside the Bantustans (which comprise only 14% of the country's area). This means that the African population is unable to provide the normal security that is required by a bank when advancing a loan and consequently a profitable line of business is denied to the bank.

The Chairman of the Barclays Group openly laments the opportunities for African businessmen. But the creation of a small black middle-class would not lead to the end of oppression in South Africa. Indeed, the establishment of a numerically tiny black 'elite' might well help entrench white rule by giving a small group of relatively powerful Africans an interest in maintaining the status quo. Apartheid cannot be destroyed by working within the system — either by instituting certain 'reforms' or by allowing natural economic processes to take their course. To end apartheid, it is necessary to change the whole economic system which governs South Africa.

Barclays has no interest in a fundamental alteration to the structure of South Africa's economy. The company would like to see the elimination of 'petty' apartheid — which gets South Africa a bad name abroad—and those specific aspects of the apartheid system which run counter to the interests of the banking world. In addition, the process of economic growth will no doubt bring certain alterations to the way that the apartheid system operates. But neither Barclays' recent 'reforms' nor the general impact of economic changes shows any signs of contributing to the downfall of a system which exploits the vast majority of the South African people.

#### WITHDRAWAL

The two South African liberation movements—the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC)—have both called for the withdrawal of Western investment in South Africa on the grounds that its presence helps to prop up apartheid. Barclays' 'claims of introducing reforms and of helping to change conditions from within have proved to be false,' ANC representative Reg September has stated, and 'companies like Barclays are playing a predominant role in creating and sustaining the institutions of apartheid.'<sup>33</sup> For leaders remaining in South Africa it is potentially an offence under the Terrorism Act to call for an economic boycott. Yet a number of South African organisations—such as the Black People's Convention, the South African Students' Organisation, and the Black Renaissance Convention—have courageously reiterated this stand by the liberation movements.

Barclays claims that 'responsible' Africans have urged the bank to remain in South Africa because it is a 'progressive' force in fighting apartheid. The bank has close contact with Chief Buthelezi, leader of the KwaZulu Bantustan, who has condemned the call for economic boycott as 'a sterile exercise.' <sup>34</sup> There are obviously very small groups within the black community who many benefit from British investment. But the overall effect of foreign investment in South Africa is to strengthen the grip of white power.

Britain's deep economic involvement in apartheid, which is supported by the bank, has also had a negative impact on the attitude of successive British governments towards apartheid. The British government — like Earclays itself — indulges in verbal denunciation of apartheid. But the actual effect of its policies is to help maintain the status quo. Britain — like a bank which does not drop a major customer which is running into difficulties — is effectively backing the South African regime. Withdrawal of investment from South Africa would consequently make it easier for the British government to take a determined stand against apartheid.

If foreign firms pulled out this would not, of course, suddenly lead to the crumbling of apartheid. But removing an external prop would help create the conditions under which a seizure of power by the South African people would be facilitated. Hence the call by the liberation movements for the withdrawal of British capital from South Africa.

Barclays is only one of five hundred major British firms operating in South Africa. So what would be gained by a decision by just one company to pull out? Since Barclays is the largest bank in South Africa its withdrawal would cause some short term disruption to the financial sector. The bank would also presumably cease to actively encourage further British economic links — such as trade and investment — with South Africa. Barclays' withdrawal would, in addition, provide a boost to forces opposing apartheid. Public attention in Britain would again be focussed on the role of Western investment in propping up an oppressive system. The black population of South Africa would be conscious that their cause was backed by supporters abroad.

Of course it may well be naive to expect Barclays to pull out of South Africa. 'How profitable is the South African connection?' asked The Banker. The magazine went on to explain that for political reasons Barclays was reluctant to divulge details of the profitability of its South African subsidiary. 35 But Barclays 'appears to earn relatively higher profits from its South African operation than from other areas, concluded The Banker. The rate of return on shareholders' capital reached the massive figure of 28% in South Africa, compared with 19% on Barclays International's operations in the rest of the world. 'It is no secret that UK profits will be down this year.' Chairman Tuke pointed out in mid 1975, 'though the international side will go some way to redress the balance.'36 And on the international side it is South Africa which generates a good part of the profits. Capital tends to flow to those areas where profits are highest and South Africa - at least in the short term gives one of the highest returns anywhere in the world. Profits speak louder than protestors, and hence Barclays is unlikely to give serious consideration to withdrawing from South Africa.

Like a number of other 'liberal' British companies, Barclays argues that it intends to remain in South Africa and work towards the elimination of apartheid from within. This is a convenient argument for the bank, but apartheid cannot be destroyed by buying a share in it! A deep-

er analysis of Barclays' position suggests that apartheid — and, more specifically, the exploitation of black labour — is very profitable for the bank's customers, and hence for the bank itself.

Barclays continues to operate in Namibia, where it recognises the illegal South African administration, in contravention of a number of UN resolutions. The bank's role in helping sanctions-busters transfer funds to and from Rhodesia is partly responsible for the survival of the rebel regime. Barclays promotion of economic links between Britain and South Africa—including migration, trade and investment—is increasing the British stake in apartheid.

Barclays' claim that it is helping to reform apartheid is a fraud, a smokescreen to hide behind while it makes huge profits. As long as the bank continues to operate in South Africa it is helping to sustain an economic system based on the exploitation of cheap black labour. And the more deeply that Barclays becomes involved in South Africa, the greater its stake in preserving the status quo. So if Barclays was sincere in its condemnation of apartheid, the bank would follow the call of the liberation movements and pull out. The presence of Barclays in South Africa — along with hundreds of other British companies — means that Western firms have become an integral part of the oppressive system of apartheid.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For further details of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa contact the following organisations:

- 1) Hastemere Group, 467 Caledonian Road, London N7 (607 3834).
- 2) Anti-Apartheid Movement, 89 Charlotte Street, London W1 (580 5311).
- 3) End Loans to South Africa Campaign (ELTSA), 134 Wrottesley Road, London NW10 (965 7454).
- 4) African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa, 49 Rathbone Street, London, W1 (580 5303).
- Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) of Azania (South Africa), 35 Long Acre, London WC2 (240 0480).
- 6) South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO), 21/25 Tabernacle Street, London EC2 (588 1878).

#### ACTION

#### **Boycott Barclays!**

Your friendly neighbourhood branch of Barclays Bank is part of the same family that is profiting from apartheid. If you bank with Barclays, withdraw your account in protest. Write to Anthony Tuke, Chairman of Barclays Bank (54 Lombard Street, London EC4) — with a copy to your local manager — explaining your decision. Barclays refuses to reveal the number of accounts it has lost because of its involvement in South Africa, but they are clearly worried by their tarnished image. Keep up the pressure.

#### Buy a Share in Barclays!

By becoming a single shareholder in Barclays Bank you have the right to attend the company's AGM, held in the Spring, and this provides a golden opportunity to question the Chairman on the bank's unsavoury activities in South Africa. To acquire your single share (cost £2.50) or obtain further details of shareholder action, write to the Haslemere Group (467 Caledonian Road, London N7).

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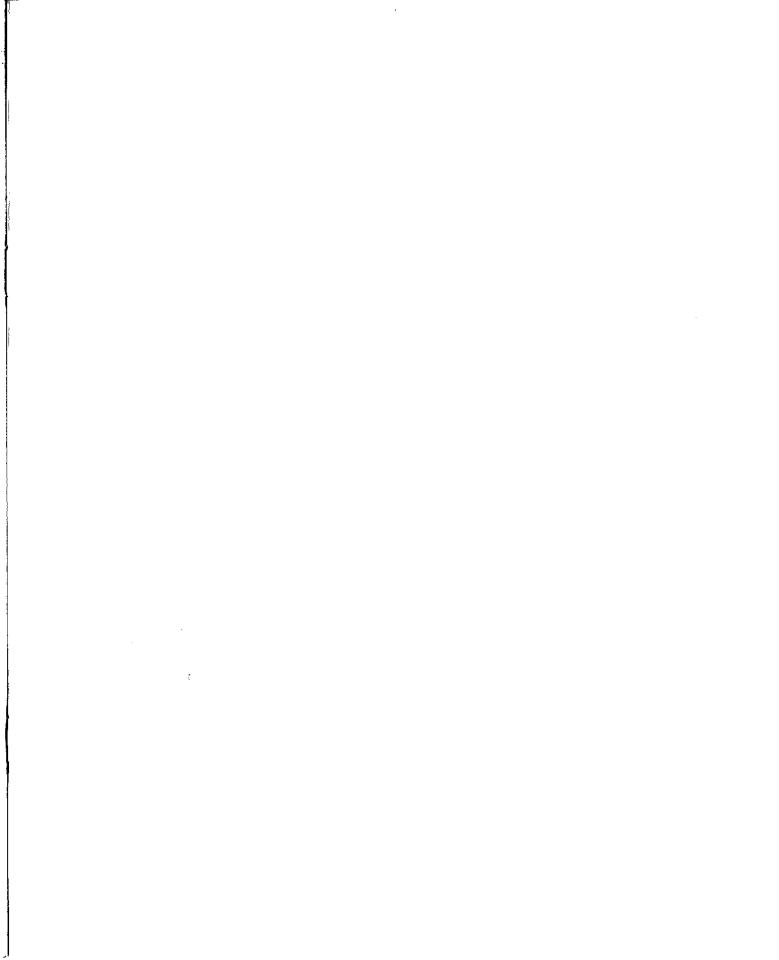
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- 34 Quoted in a factsheet on Barclays' operations in South Africa, published by the bank.
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- 36 Evening News, 17 July 1975.

#### **FURTHER READING**

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Business as Usual: International Banking in South Africa, Counter Information Services, 1974, obtainable from CIS, 9 Poland Street, London W1 for 30 p + postage.

Are You Banking on Apartheid? End Loans to South Africa Campaign, 1975, leaflet obtainable for stamped addressed envelope from ELSTA, 134 Wrottesley Road, London NW10.



#### HASLEMERE GROUP

The Haslemere Group was founded in 1968 to discuss the social and economic crisis facing the developing countries, the failure of the rich industrialized countries such as Britain to recognize their responsibility for this crisis, and the argent need to draw effective public attention to these issues.

The Bases of the ongoing activities of the Group are that we must:

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- --Maintain solidarity with those who are fighting exploitation in our own country and to show how closely the two struggles are related.

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Describes in detail a situation where a formally independent country is in fact largely ruled by, and responsible to, the government of the United States.

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#### Get Off Their Backs by Paul Cavadino

An account of the way in which aid, trade and private investment investment are used by the rich countries to maintain their economic and political domination over countries in the Third World.

1972, 24 pages, 12p plus 9p postage

Barclays and South Africa by Martin Bailey 1975, 12pp., 20p + 9p postage.

#### ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT

THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT CAMPAIGNS IN SUPPORT OF THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM IN SOUTHERN AFRICA.

Join the AAM to receive Anti-Apartheid News and regular information on anti-apartheid activities. Write or phone for further details and literature list.

Membership: £2 p.a., Students £1, OAPs 50p Affiliation: Student Unions £20, National organisations £5 THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT, 89 CHARLOTTE STREET, W1P 2DQ. (01-580-5311)