Religious Leaders in an Open Letter to Congress

Call for Sanctions
Against South Africa

“Constructive engagement has given a bad name to democracy. Constructive engagement is an abomination, an unmitigated disaster.”

Bishop Desmond Tutu, 1984 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, speaking on US policy toward South Africa
Nations, as well as individuals, face moral challenges. When an individual or a nation fails to meet such a challenge, there is a weakening of moral fiber and a loss in the capacity to exercise moral leadership. Slavery posed such a challenge in the 19th century, colonialism and Nazism in our own. These are moral challenges so clear that there is little room for “reasonable people” to differ. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. saw such a challenge in the '60's when he said, “We are in a struggle to save America’s soul.” We write to you, our elected representatives, because our nation faces such a clear moral challenge today in the matter of our government’s policy toward the Republic of South Africa.

South Africa is the only country in the world that constitutionally enshrines white supremacy and racial oppression. Under apartheid, officially implemented as South African government policy in 1948, the Black majority is denied freedom of speech, assembly and travel, access to a fair trial, and the right to choose where they live or work. Blacks are forced by law to carry a passbook which states where they are born, where they work and where they presently live in order to control their movement. All effective political and economic power is in the hands of a white minority. Describing the systematic violence of apartheid, Bishop Desmond Tutu, 1984 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, said, “The primary and provocative violence is the violence of a deliberately inferior educational system... of hunger and malnutrition... of forced population removals of Blacks uprooted from their home and dumped in the poverty stricken bantustans... of the migratory labor system which forces men to live an unnatural existence in single-sex hostels with deleterious consequences for Black family life, the legalized violence of detention without trial... as well as the violence that kills non-violent opponents.”

During the last half of 1984, we witnessed the intensification of mass violence and repression against the Black majority of South Africa by that country’s white minority regime. Nearly 200 people were killed, mostly at the hands of the police, and over 1,000 were injured. More than 3,000 opponents of apartheid were arrested, many under laws that permit indefinite and incommunicado detention. There have been numerous reports of torture. Many of those arrested were children under the age of 18. Some detainees have been released, others charged with “subversion” and “high treason,” while others still languish in prison without charge. The apartheid government has escalated its crackdown on the young independent trade union movement. 6,500 workers at one state-controlled company were summarily dismissed and sent back to the bantustans in retaliation for their participation in the November general strike. In December, the Southern African Catholic Bishops’ Conference issued a report.
condemning police atrocities during the recent unrest. Archbishop Denis Hurley, Chairman of the Bishops' Conference, said that, "A kind of state of war is developing between the police and the people."

The South African government also seeks to silence religious leaders and organizations which are critical of apartheid. Archbishop Hurley is facing charges under the Police Act because of statements he has made regarding South African military atrocities against the people of Namibia, a country South Africa continues to occupy illegally. The government has also threatened to charge Reverend Allan Boesak, President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, for criticizing the police. The South African Council of Churches has been continually harassed and intimidated.

The current wave of repression is only the latest excess of a system of institutional racism that affects the daily lives of the overwhelming majority of South Africans. Despite this harsh reality, the Reagan Administration has followed a policy of what it calls "constructive engagement" toward South Africa for four years, in the belief that "quiet diplomacy" and "friendly persuasion" will convince the white minority regime to abandon apartheid. Given the increased violence and repression to which we have alluded, such a policy is immoral on its face, temporizing as it does with evil. Constructive engagement has not only been disastrous from a moral point of view, but for practical and political reasons as well. The situation has not gotten better, but worse. Blacks continue to die and suffer in virtual slavery. South Africa has been emboldened to step up military aggression against neighboring states and has been able to stall the process of independence for Namibia. This policy has permitted our country to become identified by Black South Africans and independent African states as a supporter of apartheid. In the words of Bishop Tutu, constructive engagement has only "assisted in making the South African government more intransigent." It is past time to recognize this policy as a failure and adopt a new one.

The dramatic growth of the Free South Africa Movement in the United States should send a signal to Congress that the American people are looking to their elected officials to forge a fresh approach to South Africa. Your leadership can help in restoring our nation to a position of moral leadership in the world while promoting long term political and economic stability in the region and furthering the ends of justice and democracy. Such a policy must address the reality that the system of apartheid is strengthened by investments, loans and other assistance, including nuclear cooperation, coming from the United States. Total US investment in South Africa is now $14.6 billion; the US is South Africa's #1 trading partner.

We urge you to co-sponsor and actively support:
- Legislation calling for disinvestment of US corporations from South Africa and an end to US bank loans to that country;
- Legislation ending coal, uranium and steel imports from South Africa into the US as well as the prohibition of the sale of the Krugerrand, the South African gold coin, in the US;
- Legislation ending all military-related and nuclear exports to South Africa including all sales to the South African police; and
- A resolution calling on the Administration to support the independence of Namibia without pre-conditions and to use its voice and vote in the United Nations to oppose apartheid and South African intervention in neighboring countries.

Finally, we wish to emphasize that we speak not only as citizens but primarily as religious leaders. While there is great diversity of faith and doctrine in the religious communities from which we come, there has emerged in the past century a growing religious consensus that every human being is a child of God and therefore sacred. This fundamental religious/ethical principle has profound implications for human and political rights. What makes the case of South Africa so grave is the fact that the principle of the sanctity of human life is denied to the vast majority of its citizens and that this denial is sanctioned by the state, supported by social and some religious institutions, and enforced by a growing police and military apparatus. To temporize with such a system is to be infected by it and to endanger the soul of our nation.
This is a partial list of signers. Organizations are listed for identification purposes only.

**Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches**

Rev. Dr. Will L. Herzfeld  
Presiding Bishop  
Elwyn Ewald  
Executive Secretary

**American Lutheran Church**

Bishop David A. Wolber  
Southeastern District  
Bishop Clifford R. Lunde  
North Pacific District  
Bishop Lowell O. Erdahl  
Minnesota District

**Lutheran Church in America**

Bishop Ralph A. Kemple  
Indiana-Kentucky Synod  
Bishop James A. Grafe  
Metropolitan New York Synod  
Bishop Herman W. Cauble  
South Carolina Synod  
Bishop Philip L. Wahlberg  
Texas-Louisiana Synod  
Bishop Paul M. Weger  
Iowa Synod  
Bishop Raymond A. Heine  
Michigan Synod  
Bishop Howard J. McCarney  
Central Pennsylvania Synod  
Bishop Royall A. Yount  
Florida Synod  
Bishop Thomas L. Blevins  
Pacific Northwest Synod  
Bishop Stanley E. Olson  
Pacific Southwest Synod  
Bishop Lawrence L. Hand  
Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod  
Bishop Herluf M. Jensen  
New Jersey Synod  
Bishop Michael C. D. McDaniel  
North Carolina Synod  
Rev. Massie L. Kennard  
Director for Minority Concerns

**Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod**

Rev. Richard A. Hase  
Past Pres., Baltimore Urban Ministry Coalition

**Episcopal Church**

Rt. Rev. John T. Walker  
Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Washington  
Rt. Rev. Harold B. Robinson  
Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Western New York  
Rt. Rev. James R. Moody  
Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Ohio  
Rt. Rev. Edward W. Jones  
Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis  
Rt. Rev. Matthew Bigiardi  
Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Oregon  
Rt. Rev. William A. Jones, Jr.  
Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Missouri  
Rt. Rev. Francisco Reus-Froylan  
Bishop, Puerto Rican Episcopal Church

**Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.**

Rev. Dr. Marshall Lorenzo Shepard, Jr.  
President  
Rev. C. J. Malloy, Jr.  
Executive Secretary  
Dr. Wyatt Tee Walker  
Senior Min., Canaan Baptist Church, New York  
Rev. Dr. Gardner Taylor  
Senior Pastor, Concord Baptist Church, Brooklyn  
Rev. William A. Jones  
Pastor, Bethany Baptist Church, Brooklyn  
Pastor, Ebenezer Baptist Church, Atlanta

**National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.**

Rev. W. Franklyn Richardson  
General Secretary

**American Baptist Churches USA**

Dr. Robert C. Campbell  
General Secretary  
Rev. Carl E. Flemister  
Executive Minister, Metropolitan New York  
Rev. John A. Sundquist  
Executive Minister, Ohio Baptist Convention  
Rev. Telfer L. Epp  
Executive Minister, Iowa and Minnesota
Rev. Donald M. Clark  
President, National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus

Rev. William M. Boteler, M.M.  
Superior Gen., Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers

Sr. Luise Ahrens, M.M.  
President, Maryknoll Sisters

Sr. Madonna Sweet, SSJ  
President, Congregation of Sisters of St Joseph

Rev. Jerome Ernst  
Dir., National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice

United Church of Christ

Rev. Dr. Avery Post  
President

Rev. Dr. Yvonne V. Delk  
Executive Dir., Office for Church in Society

Rev. Dr. Charles E. Cobb  
Executive Dir., Commission for Racial Justice

Rev. Dr. Charles Shelby Rooks  
Executive Vice President, United Church Bd for Homeland Ministries

Rev. James R. Smucker  
Conference Minister, New York Conference

Rev. Donald C. Armstrong  
Conference Minister, Buffalo and Minister, Metropolitan Mission

Rev. Carole Carlson  
Conference Minister, New Hampshire Conference

Rev. Jacob Wagner  
Executive Minister, Western Reserve Assn.

Rev. Clyde H. Miller, Jr.  
Conference Minister, Rocky Mountains Conference

Rev. David J. Severson  
Conference Minister, Central Pacific Conference

Rev. Curtis R. Claire  
Conference Minister, Central Atlantic Conference

Rev. James Tomasek  
Conference Minister, South Central Conference

Rev. H. Dachler Hayes  
Conference Minister, Rhode Island Conference

Rev. Thomas E. Dipko  
Conference Minister and Executive, Ohio Conference

Rev. Otto Sommer  
Conference Minister, Maine Conference

Rev. Donald J. Severson  
Conference Minister, Central Pacific Conference

Rev. Horace S. Sills  
President, Penn. Central Conference

Rev. Murdock C. Leysath  
Conference Minister, Minnesota Conference

Presbyterian Church USA

Rev. Oscar McCloud  
Gen. Director, Program Agency

Rev. Gary Skinner  
Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of Chicago

Rev. Herbert D. Valentine  
Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of Baltimore

Rev. Robert B. Moore  
Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of Newcastle

Rev. Carroll D. Jenkins  
Executive, Synod of Piedmont Presbytery

Rev. Suzanne Goodrich  
Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of Homestead, Lincoln, Neb.

Rey. Kent M. Organ  
Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of the Western Reserve

Rey. Donald S. Brown  
Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of Western NY

Rey. Dr. Robert L. Lehman  
Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of the Hudson River, Pleasantville, NY

Rey. Clarence Cave  
Associate, Racial Justice/Black Mission Development

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Asia Bennett  
Executive Sec., American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)

Samuel D. Caldwell  
Gen. Sec., Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends

Unitarian Universalist Association

Dr. Eugene Pickett  
President

Dr. Lorettta J. Williams  
Director, Social Responsibility

Robert Z. Alpern  
Director, Washington Office

Rey. Denise Tracey  
District Executive, Central Mid-West District

Rey. Glenn Turner  
District Minister, Northeast District

Muslim

Imam Noah A. A. Seifullah  
American Muslim Mission

Imam Akil K. Rahim  
President, Muslim Charities Institute of Islamic Technology, Baltimore

Church of God in Christ

Bishop Hester D. Bordeaux  
Macedonia, Conn.

Community Church

Rey. J. Ralph Shotwell  
Executive Dir., International Council of Community Churches

National Council of Churches

Bishop Philip R. Cousin  
President

Rey. Willis Logan  
Dir., Africa Office

Rey. William Wipfler  
Dir., Human Rights Office

Lois M. Dauphiny  
Ass. Gen. Sec., Commission on Justice and Liberation

Rey. Joan Brown Campbell  
Ass. Gen. Sec., Regional and Local Ecumenism

Rey. Donald G. Jacobs  
National Dir., Partners in Ecumenism

Other Councils

Rey. James L. Stovall  
Executive Dir., Louisiana Interchurch Conference

Rey. Dr. James A. Nash  
Mass. Council of Churches
Rev. Donald M. Clark  
President, National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus

Rev. William M. Boteler, M.M.  
Superior Gen., Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers

Sr. Luise Ahrens, M.M.  
Superior Gen., Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers

Sr. Madonna Sweet, SSJ  
President, Congregation of Sisters of St Joseph

Rev. Jerome Ernst  
Dir., National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice

United Church of Christ

Rev. Dr. Avery Post  
President

Rev. Dr. Yvonne V. Delk  
Executive Dir., Office for Church in Society

Rev. Dr. Charles E. Cobb  
Executive Dir., Commission for Racial Justice

Rev. Dr. Charles Shelby Rooks  
Executive Vice President, United Church Bd for Homeland Ministries

Rev. James R. Smucker  
Conference Minister, New York Conference

Rev. Donald C. Armstrong  
Conference Minister, Buffalo and Minister, Metropolitan Mission

Rev. Carole Carlson  
Conference Minister, New Hampshire Conference

Rev. Jacob Wagner  
Executive Minister, Western Reserve Assn.

Rev. Clyde H. Miller, Jr.  
Conference Minister, Rocky Mountains Conference

Rev. David J. Sevetsion  
Conference Minister, Central Pacific Conference

Rev. Curtis R. Claire  
Conference Minister, Central Atlantic Conference

Rev. James Tomasek  
Conference Minister, South Central Conference

Rev. H. Dachler Hayes  
Conference Minister, Rhode Island Conference

Rev. Thomas E. Dipko  
Conference Minister and Executive, Ohio Conference

Rev. Otto Sommer  
Conference Minister, Maine Conference

Rev. Donald J. Sevetsion  
Conference Minister, Central Pacific Conference

Rev. Horace S. Sills  
President, Penn. Central Conference

Rev. Murdakle C. Leyshs  
Conference Minister, Minnesota Conference

Presbyterian Church USA

Rev. Oscar McCloud  
Gen. Director, Program Agency

Rev. Gary Skinner  
Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of Chicago

Rev. Herbert D. Valentine  
Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of Baltimore

Rev. Robert B. Moore  
Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of Newcastle

Rev. Carroll D. Jenkins  
Executive, Synod of Piedmont Presbytery

Rev. Suzanne Goodrich  
Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of Homestead, Lincoln, Neb.

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Asia Bennett  
Executive Sec., American Friends Service Committee (AFSC)

Samuel D. Caldwell  
Gen. Sec., Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends

Unitarian Universalist Association

Dr. Eugene Pickett  
President

Dr. Loretta J. Williams  
Director, Social Responsibility

Robert Z. Alpern  
Director, Washington Office

Rev. Denise Tracey  
District Executive, Central Mid-West District

Rev. Glenn Turner  
District Minister, Northeast District

Muslim

Imam Noah A. A. Seifullah  
American Muslim Mission

Imam Akil K. Rahim  
President, Muslim Charities Institute of Islamic Technology, Baltimore

Church of God in Christ

Bishop Hester D. Bordeaux  
Macedonia, Conn.

Community Church

Rev. J. Ralph Shotwell  
Executive Dir., International Council of Community Churches

National Council of Churches

Bishop Philip R. Cousin  
President

Rev. Willis Logan  
Dir., Africa Office

Rev. William Wipfler  
Dir., Human Rights Office

Lois M. Dauway  
Ass. Gen. Sec., Commission on Justice and Liberation

Rev. Joan Brown Campbell  
Ass. Gen. Sec., Regional and Local Ecumenism

Rev. Donald G. Jacobs  
National Dir., Partners in Ecumenism

Other Councils

Rev. James L. Stovall  
Executive Dir., Louisiana Interchurch Conference

Rev. Dr. James A. Nash  
Mass. Council of Churches
Dr. Graydon P. Snyder  
*Dean, Bethany Theological Seminary, Illinois*

Dr. E. Glenn Hinson  
*Professor, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*

Rev. Dr. George W. Webber  
*Past President, New York Theological Seminary*

Dr. Gayraud S. Wilmore  
*Professor, New York Theological Seminary*

Dr. Robert McAfee Brown  
*Professor, Pacific School of Religion*

Dr. Harvey Cox  
*Professor, Harvard University Divinity School*

Dr. Donald W. Shriver, Jr.  
*President, Union Theological Seminary (UTS)*

Dr. Gaylord Noyce  
*Professor, Yale Divinity School (YDS)*

---

On Human Rights Day, December 10, 1962, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King and Chief Albert J. Luthuli issued an appeal for sanctions against South Africa. (Chief Luthuli, then President of the African National Congress, had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1960; Dr. King received Prize in 1964.) The King-Luthuli appeal was never implemented and today, more than twenty years later, it is needed more than ever. We reproduce the appeal in full below not just as an item of historical interest but as a call for action today.

**Appeal for Action Against Apartheid**

“We, therefore, ask all men (and women) of good will to take action against apartheid in the following manner:

**Hold meetings and demonstrations on December 10, Human Rights Day;**

**Urge your church, union, lodge, or club to observe this day as one of protest;**

**Urge your Government to support economic sanctions;**

**Write to your mission to the United Nations urging adoption of a resolution calling for international isolation of South Africa;**

**Don't buy South Africa's products;**

**Don't trade or invest in South Africa;**

**Translate public opinion into public action by explaining facts to all peoples, to groups to which you belong, and to countries of which you are citizens until an effective international quarantine of apartheid is established.”**
What You can do
Support Freedom in South Africa and Namibia

1) Support legislation in Congress that will implement economic sanctions against South Africa. Contact:

Washington Office on Africa
110 Maryland Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Call the 24-hour anti-apartheid action hotline for up-to-date information on the legislation on (202) 546-0408.

2) Support the Free South Africa Movement (FSAM) which is organizing demonstrations at the South African Embassy and consulates around the country. Contact:

FSAM Coordinator
TransAfrica
545 8th Street, SE, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20003

3) Support efforts in your state, county and city to remove public funds from corporations and banks doing business in or with South Africa. For information on the Campaign Against Investment in South Africa contact:

American Committee on Africa
198 Broadway
New York, NY 10038

You can also contact the Committee for information on the Krugerrand, the South African gold coin. Boycott campaigns against the selling of these gold coins are taking place in cities across the country.

4) Boycott US athletes and entertainers who go to South Africa for "blood money." Contact:

Artists and Athletes Against Apartheid
545 8th Street, SE, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20003

Unity in Action Network
251 W. 125th Street, Suite 12
New York NY 10027

For more information (literature and films) on South Africa and Namibia contact:

American Committee on Africa
(address above)
Washington Office on Africa
(address above)

Labor Committee Against Apartheid
C/O Headwear Joint Board—ACTWU
49 W. 37th Street
New York, NY 10018

Southern Africa Support Project
PO Box 50103
Washington, DC 20004

Additional CALC resources on South Africa:

• Forget Not Our Sisters. A slideshow renting for $7.00.
• CALC Report, April 1985 on South Africa and Namibia. 50 cents each.
• Action on Namibia. Free, one per person.
• Boycott South Africa, Not Nicaragua buttons. 25 cents, bulk orders available.

Clergy and Laity Concerned
198 Broadway, Room 302
New York, NY 10038

Additional copies of this brochure:
1-9, 25 cents each, including postage; 10 or more, 15 cents each, plus postage.