Ad Hoc Church Committees on Southern Africa
Madison, Wisconsin Third joint meeting
Saturday, February 10, 1973 10 A.M.

Minutes

Present: Dale Heights Presbyterian Church: Josephine Rentz, Rick Green; Covenant Presbyterian Church: Eliza Dressang, Arthur Dodd; Christ Presbyterian Church: Mary Hunt; United Methodist Conference Social Action Committee: Rolland Ferch, Electa Schilling; First Congregational Church: June Forsyth, Fannie Hicklin, Ruth Minter, George Shands, Bob Schacht, Irene Ilgen

9:30 - Irene Ilgen, Bob Schacht began the meeting with a preview of the slide/tape show "Partners in Apartheid" for those who had not seen it. The new tape is completed, done beautifully by Harold and Ruth McCarty. Bob Schacht had prepared and dittoed copies of possible discussion questions which he had prepared in consultation with Daniel Kunene, a local professor who is an African South African. (Copy enclosed) Question number 8 was felt both by Dr. Kunene and our group to be unnecessary. One member of the committee expressed it, why role play when we need to figure out what we can do being who we are--another pointed out the impossibility of a person in America, especially new to the South African situation, trying to do that role-playing and understand the implications of trying to be white in South Africa. Mr. Dodd pointed out that most white South Africans are not trying to find alternatives though the question implied they might be. Ruth Minter pointed out that if the question were used, it would be that much more important for the discussion leader to be thoroughly familiar with the material to be able to show the difference between U.S. and South Africa in terms of what is really possible, what it means to live in a police state.

For the workshop on background to South Africa, Mr. Dodd handed out a map for reference and briefly highlighted some of South African history:

1652 Dutch first settled--largely at Capetown--only a port of call for ships traveling to East Indies--no real permanent settlement

early 19th century - England got interested in the Cape area --the Dutch moved east to Natal--found organized African societies who strongly resisted their intrusion-Dutch descendants (Afrikaaners), mostly farmers moved inland--established Orange Free State (area where Kimberley now is) and the English moved in--gold was found on the rand (area where Johannesburg is) and Witwatersrand) English area interested and moved in--led to Boer War with the British attempting to get control of the mineral wealth found in the areas the Afrikaaners had claimed--Afrikaaners resisted but lost and eventually the Boer republics and the British controlled parts of South Africa joined to form the Union of South Africa, was given self-governing status by Britain and joined the British Commonwealth (by now early 20th century)

1948 although there never was a liberal attitude by the white rulers toward the majority black population, things worsened in 1948 when the Afrikaaner Party was elected to power. Policy towards blacks has been increasingly harsh and restrictive and animosity between the English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking white groups persists. South Africa has become a Republic and withdrawn from the British Commonwealth.

The English-speaking groups are primarily in industry, controlling the wealth, and the Afrikaans-speaking groups are still primarily in farming and also forming a class of poor-whites in the cities--blacks are units of labor to be shuffled about at the whims of those in power.
Mineral wealth is extensive with much still to be developed. Naturally attracts interest of international business.

Dutch Reformed Church largest and teaches the rightness of apartheid in the eyes of God. Afrikaaners see selves as like Old Testament patriots. English-speaking churches have at times spoken against the inhumanities of apartheid but are also part of the system. No great liberalism in South Africa which is after all a police state--can't effect change from within white community.

There followed some discussion of what could be done by people here, with concern that a discussion leader had to feel sincerely what they wanted to see done in order to help a group follow up the learning from the presentation. Ruth Minter was asked to briefly lay out some of the possibilities. (see enclosed page)

No time was set for the next meeting. Summary of who we are is as follows:

Who we are: Ad Hoc Committee on Southern Africa of First Congregational Church (UCC)
Ad Hoc Committee on Southern Africa of West Side Presbyterian Churches

Task we have set ourselves: 9-12 months educating on southern Africa in churches of Wisconsin.
Begin with state and regional meetings and other large groupings.
Expand to the limits of our time and energy to follow-up with smaller groups and local congregations that we discover are interested.
Keep record of interested contacts to use as network for setting up a statewide conference on Southern Africa ca. January 1974

Resources:
Slide/Tape show "Partners in Apartheid"
People working on technical improvement and making copies:
Josephine Rentz - tapes
Irene Ilgen - slides

Booking agent: Irene Ilgen 233-6340 (6006 Old Middleton Road, Madison 53705)

Volunteers to contact and set up whatever possible with larger groups:
(Once a meeting is set up, these persons will locate persons in our group to attend as discussion leaders or whatever needed--if problems arise, call meeting of whole)

Presbyterian: Dennis and Eliza Dresang--trying for presbytery, nothing larger
United Church of Christ: Mary Nack--4 associations, 1 conference April, May, June
United Methodist: Irene Ilgen Conference meeting June 7-10
Unitarian: Josephine Rentz May meetings at First Unitarian and Prairie Society
American Lutheran: Josephine Rentz
American Baptist: Nancy Fowlkes October 12-14
Episcopal: Brian Todd February 13--we're too late for state meeting
Church Women United: June Forsyth Scheduled for March 2 World Day of Prayer--noon
CALA Conference: Irene Ilgen and Brian Todd April
Ecumenical Center, 142 West Johnson Street June Forsyth--scheduled February 22 noon
Core Group to call meetings, prod us, and generally co-ordinate:
Irene Ilgen    233-6340
Brian Todd     274-1697
Mary Nack      233-0729

Additional Educational Opportunity for Members of Group: UW Extension Weekend on Southern Africa (see publicity enclosed in this or last week's minutes)

NEXT MEETING: (if group feels need for more discussion or problems arise, call member of Core Group and discuss and together call meeting of whole--i.e. depends on initiative of persons who feel we need to meet)

Enclosures: Copy mailing list these minutes go to
            Copy questions for discussion prepared by Bob Schacht (without correction to #8--see minutes)
            Copy action possibilities prepared by Ruth Minter

NOTE: PACKETS OF MATERIAL ON U.S. BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA CAME only one is left—if you wanted one and did not get one call Ruth Minter 241-1137—we can order more—and the one I have can be claimed for $1.80.