New York, N.Y., October 3, 1975 --- The FBI is investigating an organization which for ten years has published a monthly magazine focusing on the countries of Africa still under colonial or white minority rule.

Gail Morlan, president of the Southern Africa Committee, today released the text of letters between herself and Clarence M. Kelley, director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In his letter, Mr. Kelley confirmed that "an investigation concerning this organization is currently being conducted" but claimed "I am not in a position to advise you of the reason for this investigation at this time."

Ms. Morlan earlier wrote the FBI requesting copies of "any and all materials, documents, and other information collected on our organization" by the FBI pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act recently adopted by the Congress.

Mr. Kelley denied the request, claiming that the act "allows withholding investigatory records compiled for law enforcement purposes, the disclosure of which would interfere with enforcement proceedings."

"We believe this investigation by the FBI is illegal" Ms. Morlan stated. "It constitutes yet one more sorry chapter in the history of FBI harassment of organizations who have a constitutional right to dissent from government policy."

Southern Africa magazine, published by the Committee, analyzes the complex political and economic events in Angola, Mozambique, Rhodesia, Namibia and South Africa. Editorially, the magazine opposes the role of the U.S. government and American corporations in aiding the racist regimes there. The 36 page monthly also extensively covers the role of the African liberation movements seeking independence and majority rule. The magazine has been "banned" by the government of South Africa.

The Committee has retained the Center for Constitutional Rights as legal counsel in this matter. Center's lawyers Peter Weiss and Michael Davis have appealed the FBI's refusal to release any information being compiled on the Committee in a letter to the U.S. Attorney General. The Committee contemplates legal proceedings against the FBI should the appeal be rejected.

The Center's letter to the Attorney General notes that "On its face" FBI director Kelley's letter to the Committee does not comply with the Freedom of Information Act, since it "fails to list the individual files and records which it (the FBI) has compiled". Nor did Mr. Kelley identify which portion of each file 'he contends to be
"exempt" from the act's disclosure provisions, the lawyers state.

"It is inconceivable that every record and document gathered by the FBI on the Southern Africa Committee constitutes an investigatory record compiled for law enforcement procedures," the two lawyers state.

The Southern Africa Committee "conducts all of its operations in plain public view" making Mr. Kelley's statement that disclosure of the FBI's files could interfere with enforcement proceedings peculiarly inappropriate."

The Committee's lawyers conclude: "There is good reason to believe that the investigation of the Southern Africa Committee is part of a dragnet investigation of a broad spectrum of anti-apartheid groups in the United States." Center for Constitutional Rights called for release of all documents, and an immediate termination of the investigation.

Southern Africa Committee has also brought the FBI's investigation to the attention of the Senate and House committees investigating the FBI, Senator Richard Clark, chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Africa; Congressman Charles Diggs, chairman of the (former) House Subcommittee on Africa; and other members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Copies of the Committee's letter to the FBI, and Mr. Kelley's response are enclosed. Additional documentation is available upon request.
May 5, 1975

Director of Freedom of Information Office
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington, D.C. 20535

Dear Madam/Sir:

We have good reason to believe that the F.B.I. is conducting an investigation of the Southern Africa Committee. Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, we hereby request a copy of any and all materials, documents, and other information collected on our organization.

Should you refuse to release any of the requested information, we would like to know which exemption(s) you believe covers the material you are not releasing. We would also like to know for what reason the investigation is being conducted.

As provided in the amended Act, we expect a reply on this request within ten working days.

Sincerely,

Gail J. Moran
President
Southern Africa Committee
July 17, 1975

Miss Gail J. Morlan
President
Southern Africa Committee
244 West 27th Street
Fifth Floor
New York, New York 10001

Dear Miss Morlan:

Please reference my letter dated May 30th.

This is to advise you that I must deny your request for information from our files concerning the Southern Africa Committee inasmuch as an investigation concerning this organization is currently being conducted by this Bureau. This information is exempt from disclosure pursuant to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, Title 5, United States Code, Section 552 (b)(7)(A) which allows withholding of investigatory records compiled for law enforcement purposes, the disclosure of which would interfere with enforcement proceedings.

In response to your other inquiry, I am not in a position to advise you of the reason for this investigation at this time.

You have thirty days from receipt of this letter to appeal to the Attorney General from any denial contained herein. Appeals should be directed in writing to the Attorney General (Attention: Freedom of Information Appeals Unit), Washington, D.C. 20530. The envelope and the letter should be clearly marked "Freedom of Information Appeal" or "Information Appeal." Following the Attorney General's decision, judicial review is available in the district of your residence or principal place of business, or in the District of Columbia, where the records are situated.

Sincerely yours,

Clarence M. Kelley
Director