Since the early 1960's the UCC has spoken out against South African apartheid. Prior to 1977 the denomination called for corporations to take an active part in ameliorating the intolerable living conditions of black South Africans, and if unwilling or unable to do so, to withdraw their business from South Africa.

In the 17 years since the Sharpeville massacre called the world's attention to apartheid, repression by the Nationalist government has accelerated. Increasing numbers of black South Africans have been detained indefinitely without charge at undisclosed prison locations. Some of them, like our own United Congregational Church of South Africa minister Alan Hendrickse, subjected to solitary confinement; others, like Steve Biko, interrogated to death. During these same 17 years U.S. commerce in South Africa has approximately tripled, amounting to 1.6 billion dollars in 1976. In 1960 a $40 million loan from Chase Manhattan stabilized the shaky South African economy. In 1976 $2.2 billion flowed to the South African government and its government controlled corporations from American banks.

Yet the expanding American economic presence in South Africa has not brought a corresponding decline in government repression of the black majority, nor has it narrowed the income/standard of living gap between white South Africans (among the world's most affluent) and black South Africans (most of whom live below the poverty-datum line).

The collective wisdom of General Synod 11 determined that the evidence of positive corporate contributions to the lives of black South Africans was not convincing. On July 4th the Synod passed a resolution urging "individuals, congregations, conferences and instrumentalities of the United Church of Christ to exert moral pressure on:

1. United States transnational corporations and businesses to withdraw from South Africa;
2. United States banks and financial institutions to refrain from further investments in and loans to South Africa;
3. the President, Congress, and our United Nations representatives to use diplomatic and economic influence to end apartheid practices."

Our TVs and newspapers have recorded what has been happening within South Africa in the seven months since the General Synod resolution was passed—the arrests of more than 650 black South Africans, the closing of most moderate black community organizations, the bannings and reports of torture.

What has been the response within the United Church of Christ to this accelerated repression and to the withdrawal mandate of last July 4th? This article attempts to answer this question by highlighting one local church, one association, and one conference that have been actively at work "back home" trying to implement the Synod resolution on South Africa.

**Wellington Avenue UCC**

Wellington Avenue UCC on the northside of Chicago is not a newcomer to the anti-apartheid struggle. For several years Eloise Chevrier and others from the congregation have been working with their conference and with community groups to educate Chicagoans to the relationship between
apartheid and U.S. government and corporate policies.

In 1977 the church made two major stewardship decisions which Ms. Chevrier feels made manifest their understanding of the church's mission. First they established a policy that one-third of their benevolence budget would go for liberation and hunger work. They follow this both in their local benevolence giving and in their OOWM, one-third of which they ear-mark for use in the Third World. Their second stewardship decision was to provide rent-free office space of the Coalition for the Liberation of Southern Africa, a two year old nation-wide coalition of student, church, and political groups working for majority rule in Southern Africa.

The liberation struggles of Southern Africa and the difficult post-liberation period of building national unity was personalized for the people of Wellington Avenue Church by the presence among them of an Angolan student who lived for almost two years with a family in the church, receiving some financial aid from the congregation and in return sharing himself and the struggles of his country with them.

Since the General Synod the church has addressed the withdrawal issue by participating in the nation-wide Stop Banking on Racism in South Africa campaign. The bank campaign was organized originally by the American Committee on Africa (founded by Harry Emerson Fosdick). It is supported by individuals and organizations from the churches, the Congress, the unions, the entertainment industry, and universities. The Illinois Conference, and the Potomac Association Board of Directors, are among the UCC sponsors of the campaign.

The church's conviction that bank loans to the South African government provided the government with economic stability and with the capital
for increasingly effective repressive government led them into confrontation with two major Chicago banks. Continental and First National of Chicago are both on the "top ten list" of American banks doing a volume business in South Africa, according to UN document A/AC.115/L.448. When talks with bank officials did not alter the banks' commitment to making these loans, fourteen Wellington Avenue members joined other community groups in demonstrations at both banks November 1. Wellington Avenue people made a novel contribution to those demonstrations by composing two songs to the tunes of the banks' own advertising jingles, sung antiphonally with trumpet accompaniment to the education and amusement of passersby:

"If you're black in South Africa can you vote? NO NO
If you're black in South Africa do you have to carry a passbook? YES YES ETC.
Then why do our banks support apartheid with their loans?
Because the First is apartheid's bank; It's the first National Bank of Apartheid."

For Continental, the words were "They found a way; The Continental makes apartheid pay!"

Potomac Association

On the Association level, Carolyn Long, Chairperson of the Potomac Association's Task Force on Southern Africa, sent letters to each of the Association's 24 churches informing them of the General Synod resolution. The letters asked the churches and their members to contact their banks and any corporations in which they own stock asking for specific information on their dealings with South Africa. The Task Force asked each church to bring the General Synod resolution before their congregation and enclosed a bulletin insert for use Reformation Sunday (October 30) which
provided background information on corporation and bank support to the South African government. Task Force members also gave several programs on South Africa to Association churches during the fall and winter. More than half the Association's churches responded to the Task Force's initiative. The Potomac Association Board of Directors took three significant actions related to the Synod resolution in November, 1977. First, the Board sent letters of inquiry to each national agency, board, and instrumentality of the UCC asking what it was doing relative to the General Synod 11 South Africa resolution. Second, the Board decided to become a sponsor of the national Stop Banking on Racism in South Africa campaign. Third, it authorized its Southern Africa Task Force to write to all Washington area banks which do international business to inquire whether they made any loans to the South African government, government controlled corporations, or to corporations doing business in South Africa.

"The bank campaign is a way individual members can become directly involved in effecting change in South Africa. All of us have bank accounts. We ought to have a say about how banks using our money use it in the world." says Carolyn Long, of the Association's Task Force on Southern Africa.

Massachusetts Conference

The Massachusetts Conference, under the leadership of its Task Force on Southern Africa brought the original withdrawal resolution to General Synod 11. They and the Potomac Association Task Force worked tirelessly at General Synod, meeting with delegates from 22 of the 39 UCC conferences, maintaining an information booth, and bringing in 9 resource people including two Christian leaders from Southern Africa to talk with delegates.

With the resolution now a part of UCC General Synod policy, the Massachusetts Conference Task Force set to work contacting all the churches'
in their conference asking for a rundown of the churches' assets and where they are held (banks, stock holdings, bonds). They offered to meet with the churches' trustees to interpret the General Synod Resolution and to explain why they were asking churches to examine their financial holdings.

Like the Wellington Avenue church and the Potomac Association Board, the Massachusetts Conference Task Force is participating in the nationwide bank campaign, working specifically on First National Bank of Boston. Their work on this campaign has been ecumenical. They arranged meetings of the state heads of a number of church denominations to meet with Mike Clark of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility to discuss the bank loans issue. The Task Force has been invited by the Boston City Missionary Society to go over its investment portfolio and determine which are investments in corporations doing business with South Africa.

Another issue not specifically addressed in the Synod resolution but related to the question of U.S. economic support for South Africa's Nationalist Party government is the Krugerrand campaign. South Africa has been widely advertising the Krugerrand coins. They sell for approximately $179 apiece and contain one ounce of gold. The Doyle Dane and Bernbach advertising agency which handles the Krugerrand account advertises them as "a hedge against inflation." Both the Massachusetts Task Force and the Wellington Avenue Church Liberation Task Force are at work attempting to get radio and television stations to stop advertising these props to the South African economy.

One question frequently asked all three groups concerns the Chase Manhattan pledge to make no further loans which directly contribute to apartheid. David Rockefeller Chairman of the Board of Chase Manhattan has said on several occasions that Chase Manhattan is banning loans which
"in our judgment tend to support the government's apartheid policies or reinforce discriminatory business practices." The UCC Southern Africa groups discussed in this article feel this pledge doesn't go far enough. "You can't assume the South African government is going to behave honorably," says Mary Pottle of the Massachusetts Task Force. Vorster 'promised' South Africa would not develop nuclear weapons; now he claims he made no such promise. For years South Africa has illegally and with elaborate cover-up been supplying Rhodesia with the oil it desperately needed to survive. The government said in November that they would use American plants in South Africa to produce whatever they wanted. "The South African government will use money it acquires from bank loans however it wishes." As long as we loan any money to South Africa we are shoring up the present regime."

November 10th the National Council of Churches called on member denominations to "undertake to withdraw funds and close all accounts in financial institutions which have investments in South Africa of mark loans to the South African government or South African businesses." The NCC position on bank loans to South Africa will no doubt be seriously considered within our national boards and instrumentalities.

The issues raised by the General Synod 11 resolution on Southern Africa are being debated within and without the United States government and within the national media. Economic sanctions? How extensive? Oil embargo? For UCC churchwomen and men working within their own conferences, associations, and local churches on South Africa it is time for active involvement by all levels of the denomination in the decisions being made during 1978 in corporate board rooms and within the State Department.