AREA FIRMS PLAY IMPORTANT ROLE IN SOUTH AFRICA, GROUP SAYS

Two Oak Brook firms, CBI Industries and Nalco Chemical Corporation, are among 31 Illinois firms doing business in South Africa, according to Clergy and Laity Concerned (CALC), which just released a report critical of the firms.

"We have learned from our study that Illinois-based firms account for a tenth of United States business in South Africa, with a quarter-billion dollars invested there! That is significant support to a system we all condemn," said CALC spokesman Rev. Martin Deppe, pastor of the Hinsdale United Methodist Church.

"It is time our locally based firms review those operations with the goal of demanding the South African government take steps to end apartheid or have these firms take their business elsewhere. It is high time business to take a strong moral stand regarding South Africa," he said.

CBI contracts for construction at SASOL, South Africa's coal-to-oil conversion complex, while Nalco's South Africa affiliate produces water treatment chemicals for heavy industry. Both have several million dollars in annual receipts from these operations, according to the new Clergy and Laity Concerned report, "Profits and Prejudice." The report is available from the CALC office, 899-1800.

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