

U.S. Churches Endorse Shell Boycott

The list of U.S. churches joining the boycott of Royal Dutch/Shell has grown significantly in recent months with the addition of endorsements by the United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church and the Episcopal Church.

The first U.S. church to endorse the boycott was the Unitarian Universalist Association by a vote of its Board of Trustees in June 1986. Next in December 1986, the Milwaukee Roman Catholic Archdiocesan Council of Priests endorsed the boycott.

In October 1987 the Executive Council of the United Church of Christ joined the boycott (see excerpts from their statement).

Following the UCC vote were April 1988 endorsements from the General Board of Church and Society and the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church. On April 30, 1988 the General Conference of the United Methodist Church, which speaks for the entire United Methodist Church through decisions made at meetings every four years, passed a boycott endorsement resolution. The resolution was also referred to Judicial Council for review to see that the action followed all the church's regulations for a boycott. (see excerpts from this resolution.)

Perhaps heartened by the powerful statements in support of corporate withdrawal and economic sanctions made by Desmond Tutu, Anglican Archbishop of Johannesburg, during his spring 1988 U.S. visit, the Executive Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. joined the international boycott of Royal Dutch/Shell. Taken at its May 19, 1988 meeting in South Dakota, the vote was the first boycott endorsed by the Episcopal Church.

During his momentous spring 1988 visit, Archbishop Tutu inspired the U.S. antiapartheid movement with his call for economic sanctions against apartheid and for withdrawal of foreign corporations like Royal Dutch/Shell and Mobil Oil.

The Corporate Examiner presents Archbishop Tutu's statement plus excerpts from boycott endorsements by the UCC Executive Council and the UMC General Conference.



Archbishop Desmond Tutu May 3, 1988

As the South African government escalates its brutal campaign to silence the last remaining voices for peaceful change, effective economic pressures are more crucial than ever to hasten the end of apartheid. We urge our friends abroad to enact comprehensive and mandatory sanctions and call on international companies like Royal Dutch/Shell and Mobil Oil to end their economic support for apartheid and leave South Africa.

We applaud actions by the U.S. religious community and

others in support of full sanctions and complete corporate withdrawal from the land of apartheid. Such lobbying, investor initiatives and consumer actions, like the Shell boycott, are sending a clear message to the Congress and those corporations with continuing ties to South Africa.

Such economic pressures may be the international community's last available instruments to help bring Pretoria to its senses and justice to our land—without which there can be no genuine lasting peace.

United Church of Christ Executive Council

The Executive Council urged:

UCC members, congregations, agencies, instrumentalities, national bodies, conferences and associations to abstain whenever possible, from the purchase of products produced or marketed by the Shell Group of companies including Royal Dutch Petroleum, consistent with the strategy of the international Shell campaign.

United Methodist Church General Conference

Introduction

Apartheid is sin and...the moral and theological justification of it is travesty of the gospel and, in its persistent disobedience to the Word of God, a theological heresy.

—General Council, World Alliance of Reformed Churches (1982).

South Africa is a nation without its own supply of oil. Only with the support of international oil corporations can the apartheid regime sur-

continued from page 4

vive. South African law considers oil supplies "munitions of war."

Shell USA is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Shell Group (Royal Dutch Petroleum of the Netherlands and the Shell Transport and Trading Company plc. of the United Kingdom). Shell USA accounts for over 20 percent of the product sales of the parent company. Shell South Africa is included in the Group.

Royal Dutch/Shell co-owns or operates oil refinery facilities in South Africa. It is a primary petroleum interest in South Africa. The oil refined by Shell in South Africa supplies government agencies, including the police and military, which are used to maintain apartheid.

For years, British, Dutch and U.S. churches have been in dialogue with Shell.

The 1984 General Conference of the United Methodist Church, in the resolution "Southern Africa," specifically urged:

- divestment from corporations doing business in South Africa;
- an end to any collaboration with South Africa by opposing expanded participation of corporations in the South African economy;
- support of the United Nations sanctions against South Africa;

The South African Council of Churches states:

The South African Council of Churches joins the majority of the people of South Africa in calling for immediate, comprehensive and mandatory sanctions that are aimed at sapping the energy of the apartheid state. We believe that that imposition of such sanctions is the only way to effect change in South Africa with minimum violence (October 1987).

The Methodist Church of Southern Africa states:

The responsibility for any hardship that may arise from sanctions lies with the South African government and not with the people struggling to free themselves from the snare that is apartheid.



Conditions in South Africa continue to worsen. Organizations devoted to peaceful protest against apartheid have been banned.

Denominations and faith groups boycotting Shell include:

- The American Baptist Churches General Board;
- The Executive Council of the United Church of Christ;
- Various orders of The Roman Catholic Church;
- The Unitarian Universalist Association;
- The General Boards of Church and Society and Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church.

Recommendations and Actions

The United Methodist Church joins the boycott of Royal Dutch/Shell and asks that its units and members refrain from purchasing Shell products so long as the boycott continues. Participation in the boycott will end when Royal Dutch/Shell withdraws from South Africa and terminates all license and franchise agreements with South African entities or when the apartheid system ceases.

Implementation

1. The boycott of Royal Dutch/Shell and its subsidiaries is effective immediately.
2. The General Board of Church and Society is asked to monitor the boycott pursuant to agency and denominational boycott guidelines and to present a report at each regular meeting of the Board.
3. The General Board of Church and Society shall be responsible for preparation and distribution of educational materials about the boycott throughout the church.
4. Communication regarding the boycott decision will be sent to the South African Council of Churches and to the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

Don't Shell Out For Apartheid

Royal Dutch/Shell products sold in the U.S. include:

Gasoline Products: Piba (additive) ● Shell Dieseline ● Shell of the Future ● Shellodyne ● Silver Shell, SU 200 ● Golden Shell (lubricants).

Motor Oils: Mysella ● Aeroshell ● Rimula ● Rotella ● Shell Super X ● Fire and Ice ● Shell X-100.

Automotive Products: Comfort Ride, Shell Radial Ride, Shell Radial II, Shellride, Super Shell Aramid, Super Shell Snowshoe (tires) ● Meridyne (radios) ● Sentinel (batteries, repair service) ● Shell Superlife (batteries).

Home Products: Heritage (furniture polish) ● Shell Flea Collar ● Home Freshener (room deodorizer) ● Child Protector Tops (safety lids) ● Citrus Blossom, Open Air, Wild Flower (solid air fresheners) ● Tegon (roofing).