

Chicago Coalition on Southern Africa
22 East Van Buren
Chicago, Illinois 60605
Phone: 427-2533

Dear Friend:

The Chicago Coalition on Southern Africa, composed of individuals and groups working for full human rights and equality, is participating in a nationwide campaign to stop all bank loans to South Africa and the sale of the South African gold coin known as the Krugerrand. Spearheaded by the American Committee on Africa and the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, the national campaign seeks to prevent American banks from financially supporting the white minority government and its apartheid system in the Republic of South Africa. We in the Midwest can play a significant role in this campaign because two banks which have made major loans to South Africa are located in Chicago.

The white minority of South Africa (approximately 4.2 million, 17% of the population) currently enjoys one of the world's highest standards of living with modern housing, excellent medical care, and plentiful consumer goods. The non-white minority, on the other hand, lives in chronic poverty. Whites benefit from free quality education, whereas non-whites must pay for substandard schooling.

This economic and social disparity is largely a result of the official policy of apartheid (racial separation) which provides for the legalized exploitation of the labor of approximately 24 million people who are non-white. This policy forces non-whites to occupy the most menial jobs. Under South African law, a non-white worker cannot earn more than a white worker or supervise a white worker. The majority of non-white workers earn less than the government-established minimum income necessary for bare subsistence. In addition, many forms of petty apartheid reminiscent of Jim Crow laws from the U. S. South forbid non-whites from using washrooms, drinking fountains, park benches and public transportation at the same time and place as whites.

United States bank loans and corporate investments, by assuring the financial stability of this oppressive system, have played a key role in maintaining apartheid and white minority rule in South Africa. The Continental Bank and First National Bank have provided loans to government and private corporations in South Africa. The First National Bank is now participating, along with several other U. S. banks, in a \$110 million loan direct to the South African government. These loans, other American capital investments, and the sale of South African gold in the United States in the form of the Krugerrand, help the South African government to meet its balance-of-payment obligations and to continue "business as usual." These banks are directly supporting white minority rule in South Africa. Let us support the South African people.

We are asking that your organization support the campaign to stop all bank loans to South Africa and endorse the following demand:

That United States banks make no further loans to the government of South Africa, its agencies, or any private corporation for its investments there, and that United States banks cease the sale of the South African Krugerrand.

We are also asking that your organization endorse and participate in a demonstration to protest the refusal of both First National and Continental banks to comply with this demand. The demonstration will begin at noon on November 1 at the First National Bank Plaza and proceed to the Continental Bank at 1:00 p.m.

To give additional support, you can call and/or write the First National and Continental banks and ask about their failure to halt loans to South Africa. If you have an account at either bank, suggest that you may withdraw your personal or organizational account if the banks continue financially to prop up white minority rule in South Africa.

Thank you for your support. Please let us know if you will endorse the campaign and the demonstration.

Sincerely,

The Chicago Coalition on Southern Africa

Please write or call:

A. R. Abboud, Chairman
First National Bank
1 First National Plaza
Chicago, Il 60670
732-8043

R. Anderson, Chairman
Continental Bank
231 S. LaSalle
Chicago, Il 60693
828-7703

Partial list of local organizations endorsing the campaign:

United Church of Christ, Illinois Conference
Coalition of Black Trade Unionists
Clergy and Laity Concerned
United Methodist Church, Northern Illinois Conference
Operation PUSH
National Assembly of Women Religious
American Friends Service Committee
United Steelworkers, Local 1011
8th Day Center for Justice
Friendship House
Wellington Avenue United Church of Christ
Illinois Prisoners Organization
Jesuit Third World Awareness
Chicago Committee for African Liberation
Campaign for a Democratic Foreign Policy
New World Resource Center
International People's Appeal