

APARTHEID

Statements and actions of
The American Lutheran Church
dealing with the apartheid
system and justice for all
peoples in South Africa
and Namibia: 1980-1985



- "Goals for Combating Apartheid" (1985)
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I. Goals for Combating Apartheid (1985)

Adopted by the Church Council, The American Lutheran Church, 3-7 June 1985, as a supplement to "Goals for Combating Apartheid" (adopted by the Church Council June 1981). The 1981 recommendations were a "first-phase response" to the request of the 1980 ALC general convention (GC80.4.58) for a "strategy . . . which will more effectively support the non-white population in southern Africa in its struggle for justice and representation, and which will lead to the reconciliation of all people in southern Africa." The 1985 supplementary recommendations were adopted by a vote of: Yes—34; No—3; Abstain—1.

In order to continue its support for the people of South Africa and Namibia who suffer oppression in those lands, to maintain its solidarity

with the fellow believers who ask for our assistance, and to respond faithfully to our understanding of God's call to love mercy and seek justice, The American Lutheran Church endorses the following objectives and urgently asks the respective entities to implement them speedily:

1. We ask the South African government:

- a. Repeal all apartheid laws and explicitly reject separate development as national policy.
- b. Convene a constitutional convention for the purpose of providing full and equal citizenship rights for all South Africans within a united South African state, without distinction as to race or economic class.
- c. Release political prisoners from jail or from banning orders and readmit political exiles.
- d. Acquiesce to United Nations Security Council Resolution 435, providing for free elections and independence for Namibia without preconditions.

2. We ask the United States government:

- a. Show serious commitment to ending of apartheid by publicly supporting the above-listed proposals to the South African government.
- b. Insist that South Africa allow implementation, without preconditions, of UN Security Council Resolution 435 for the independence of Namibia.
- c. Until such time as South Africa takes unequivocal steps on the dismantling of apartheid, support economic sanctions against South Africa, including:
 - 1) prohibit any *new* investment by U.S. companies in South Africa;*
 - 2) prohibit all U.S. businesses from operating in Namibia until such time as the Namibian people are independent;
 - 3) prohibit loans from U.S. banks to South Africa's government or government-owned entities;
 - 4) prohibit the sale of Kruggerand gold coins in the United States;
 - 5) oppose loans to the South African government or its related agencies by multilateral lending institutions in which the United States participates;
 - 6) support the principle of economic sanctions against South Africa through the United Nations.

*using the definition of the Study Commission on U.S. Policy Toward Southern Africa (1981), *Time Running Out*: limiting new investment to amounts necessary to maintain a company's market share and foregoing diversification into new lines of business.

3. We ask U.S. companies operating in South Africa:

- a. Sign the amplified (1984) Sullivan Code provisions, which commit signatories to:
 - 1) support the rescinding of all apartheid laws;
 - 2) support freedom of mobility of Black workers to seek employment opportunities wherever they exist and provide adequate housing for families of employees within proximity of the workplace;
 - 3) support unrestricted rights of Black businesses to locate in all urban areas;
 - 4) influence other companies in South Africa to follow standards of equal rights for all employees.
- b. Agree to a policy of non-expansion in South Africa until the apartheid system is dismantled.
- c. Make the American Chamber of Commerce in South Africa a vehicle for public and forthright advocacy for elimination of apartheid.
- d. Cooperate with the South Africa Council of Churches in its quest for a just society for all South Africans.
- e. Recognize that, because apartheid is essentially a political and psychological system with devastating effects on all victims, meaningful opposition to apartheid requires more than improving the lot of Black workers employed by U.S. companies.

4. We ask the members of our congregations:

- a. Pray that justice for all people of South Africa and Namibia may come without further delay, suffering, and bloodshed.
- b. Become informed about South Africa and Namibia and the evils of apartheid, and continue to give support to churches in those countries in their struggle to bring about justice.
- c. Call upon the president of the United States to replace this Administration's policy of "constructive engagement" with a more aggressive policy, and urge your members of Congress to pursue such a policy vigorously.
- d. Withhold consumer support of South Africa's economy by refraining from purchase of South African gold or diamonds, from travel to South Africa in conventional tourism,* and from patronage of South African sports and entertainment groups in the United States.
- e. Withdraw personal investments from companies doing business in South Africa or Namibia.

*Study trips for the purpose of gaining better understanding of the situation in South Africa or Namibia are not discouraged.

- f. Conduct no business with U.S. banks which refuse to adopt a policy of no loans to the government of South Africa or its related entities.
- g. Seek ways to relate to other coalitions and institutions which are addressing apartheid issues, in ways consistent with the goals adopted by The ALC.

5. We ask ALC congregations and related institutions and agencies:

- a. Adopt the policy of the ALC Board of Trustees concerning investments in companies operating in South Africa.**
- b. Conduct no business with U.S. banks which refuse to adopt a policy of no loans to the government of South Africa or its related entities.

**In response to a request from the 1980 general convention of The American Lutheran Church, its Board of Trustees in May 1981 voted:

Resolved, That in the buying and selling of securities, where, in the judgment of the Board of Trustees, the economic considerations are equal as between two or more securities issues under study, the Board of Trustees will, where applicable, choose in favor of the company not doing business in South Africa (or choose against the company doing business in South Africa).

The 1984 ALC general convention voted (GC 84.22.104) "To commend the Board of Trustees for the progress they have made in divestment; and that January 1, 1988, become the target date for total divestment."

**Several hundred Lutherans
took part in a
"Day of Lutheran Witness"
against apartheid
at the South African embassy
in Washington, DC,
early in 1985.**

II. Goals for Combating Apartheid (1981)

Adopted by the ALC Church Council, 25 June 1981, as a first-phase response to the Tenth General Convention (1980) request for a "strategy . . . which will more effectively support the non-White population in southern Africa in its struggle for justice and representation, and which will lead to the reconciliation of all people in southern Africa" (GC 80.4.58). Vote tally: Yes—40; No—0. CC 81.6.127.

In order to combat the evils of the apartheid system in South Africa and Namibia, to stand in solidarity with fellow believers and all people who suffer oppression in those lands, and to respond faithfully to our understanding of God's call to love mercy and seek justice, The American Lutheran Church promises:

1. To continue and seek to increase our support of all phases of the work done by the churches and agencies to which we are related in South Africa and Namibia, with prayer, personnel, and finances, according to the needs and requests identified by our fellow believers in those countries. Among such current needs we understand to be crucial the need to



increase exchange visits, scholarship aid, and other educational support for developing leadership in South Africa and Namibia.

2. To develop a system for maintaining dialogue with U.S. Lutherans who are at work (through our governmental and business presence) in South Africa and Namibia. The purposes of such dialogue are (1) to help these expatriates to know the church's ministries where they work, and (2) to help the U.S. and South African/Namibian churches to benefit from their vocational experience.

3. To identify and develop resources for ALC congregational life in worship, education, and action pertinent to the need for justice and reconciliation in South Africa and Namibia. We ask that appropriate responses be made through determination by the Social Concerns Coordinating Committee of the national offices.

4. To repent of our complicity in the perpetuation of racism in U.S. society, to link the struggle for justice in southern Africa to comparable elements of racism at home, and to combat racism in all its forms everywhere. We accept our share of responsibility for both the internal racism of this nation and for the acceptance by our governmental and our economic institutions, present in South Africa and Namibia, of that form of racism known as apartheid. We pledge renewed efforts to implement aggressively the anti-racism actions of the ALC, including the recommendations of the ALC Committee on Racism.

5. To advocate with our own government that a variety of pressures toward elimination of the apartheid system be brought upon the government of South Africa. We particularly urge U.S. support for and implementation of economic sanctions as developed through the United Nations, in the quest for an end to the apartheid system and an end to South Africa's illegal rule of Namibia. We further recommend the following actions by our government in reference to South Africa, Namibia, and other parts of the region:

a. to appoint a Black American as ambassador and to increase the number of Black American staff among our diplomatic corps in South Africa

b. to insist that South Africa's visa policy be put on a genuinely reciprocal basis, reversing the present situation in which South Africans are free to travel in the U.S. while U.S. congresspersons, journalists, church leaders, academics, and Black Americans are regularly denied visas or are given restricted permits to visit in South Africa

c. to explore denial of foreign tax credits to U.S. firms operating in Namibia, as long as South Africa continues illegally to administer Namibia and to benefit economically from that illegal occupation

d. to provide humanitarian and educational assistance to liberation movements in southern Africa, such as the South-West Africa People's Organization and the African National Congress

e. to fulfill our government's commitments (including financial aid) to the new nation of Zimbabwe and to increase economic support of other front-line states (e.g., Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Angola) which are affected negatively by their proximity to the conflicts in South Africa and Namibia

6. To encourage economic behavior by U.S. consumers and by U.S. business/financial entities which will reduce support for the apartheid system. We particularly support the following actions:

a. that the Board of Trustees be commended for its policy of withdrawing investments from companies doing business in South Africa when, in the buying and selling of securities, "the economic considerations are equal as between two or more securities issues under study" (Board of Trustees action 81M78, 14-15 May 1981)

b. that the ALC increase the sharing of information among our members concerning the response of U.S. corporations to requests by the ALC and other groups related to practices in South Africa and Namibia

c. that the ALC continue to discourage transactions by its agencies and members with U.S. banks that make loans to South African government or para-statal corporations

d. that ALC members be encouraged to refrain from purchase of South African imports, including Krugerrand gold coins or any form of South African gold and diamonds

e. that ALC members be encouraged to support the sports and entertainment boycotts of South Africa

f. that ALC members refrain from travel to South Africa in conventional tourism

III. Apartheid in Southern Africa— Is It Any of Our Business? (1981)

Commended by the ALC Church Council, 25 June 1981, as background information for study in the church. CC 81.6.127.

There are several commonly asked questions concerning South Africa's apartheid system, its rule of the territory called Namibia, the special involvement of The American Lutheran Church with the region, the matter of armed resistance to oppression, and the reasons for giving special focus to a part of the world which is so distant from the United States.

This background paper seeks to address such major questions . . . and to show why apartheid in South Africa and Namibia (here referred to as "southern Africa") is a part of the business of Christians elsewhere, particularly Lutheran Christians in the U.S. It accompanies a statement of "Goals for Combating Apartheid Through The American Lutheran Church and Its Members," adopted by the ALC Church Council, June 1981.

I. APARTHEID AND BIBLICAL FAITH

"Apartheid" is the term for apartness or separateness in the Afrikaans language of South Africa. It is the name given by the Afrikaner National Party to a detailed set of policies that govern relations between the country's 4,500,000 Whites and its 23,500,000 Black, Coloured (mixed blood), and Asian inhabitants.* Its objective is the complete domination of South African society by the White (European-descended) population.

It has been the official policy of national government in South Africa since the Afrikaner National Party took power in 1948. Practices and customs dating from the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910 have been extended, tightened, and increasingly translated into law during the decades since 1948. In economics, a vast range of occupations is reserved exclusively for White workers. In politics, only White citizens have access to power. In social behavior, the freedoms of Blacks, Coloureds, and Asians are greatly limited, as is their legal right to advocate change in the system. Marriage between Whites and Non-Whites is forbidden. The framework of legal segregation touches all aspects of life, including the mission and ministry of the churches.

Apartheid has been condemned by many of the churches in South Africa, and the South African Council of Churches (including churches of all

*1979 estimates (including Black "homelands" not recognized as separate nations by international community): 4.5 million Whites, 20 million Blacks, 2.7 million Coloureds, 0.75 million Asians; Namibia's one million are roughly 10% White, 90% Black and Coloured. In each country, approximately 500,000 (mostly Black and Coloured) are members of Lutheran churches.



Pretoria and Windhoek are government centers. Ondangua is center of Ovamboland and Evangelical Lutheran Ovambokavango Church.

racial groups) has led in maintaining a vigorous witness against the apartheid system and for human inclusiveness in both church and society. Theological support for apartheid has come, however, from the (White) Dutch Reformed Church, which is closely identified with the political ruling party.

Lutheran churches in South Africa have joined other Christians in decrying apartheid on biblical grounds: that apartheid illegitimately destroys the unity of human beings on a basis of race or skin color, that apartheid unjustly subordinates certain groups and gives a position of privilege to others, that apartheid is against the will of God for human unity and opportunity.

The entire weight of biblical witness, regarding the unity of human creation, of equal opportunity for development of gifts divinely given, of justice for all peoples, is cited in support of opposition to apartheid. Specifically, biblical summary statements such as these are appropriate:

"From one single stock [God] . . . created the whole human race" (Acts 17:26a, Jerusalem Bible)

"For Christ himself has brought us peace by making Jews and Gentiles one people . . . with his own body he broke down the wall that sepa-

rated them, . . . in order to create out of the two races one new people in union with himself" (Eph. 2:14-15 TEV).

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28 RSV).

2. "STATUS CONFESSIOINIS"

The American Lutheran Church has declared its opposition to the apartheid system in the strongest of terms. Its 1980 General Convention voted unanimously to "express its unequivocal rejection of apartheid and all other forms of racial discrimination in our own society as well as in other nations, and [to] declare apartheid to be a matter of 'status confessionis.'"

The term means "a state of confession." It was applied to the situation of Lutheran churches in southern Africa, White and Black, by the Sixth Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation, meeting in Tanzania in June 1977. That gathering of the worldwide Lutheran family was determined to say that the apartheid system is so oppressive and so contrary to the Lutheran understanding of the unity of believers in Christ and the equality of the entire human family that it must be rejected as a matter of the faith itself:

"On the basis of faith and in order to manifest the unity of the church," said the Sixth Assembly, "churches [should] publicly and unequivocally reject the existing apartheid system."

Apartheid is not simply a typical political question, about which Christians may hold differing opinions. It must be viewed from much the same theological perspective that the Confessing Church in Germany adopted in opposing the Hitler regime 40 some years ago. Apartheid is to be rejected because it violates a central belief of the church as expressed in the Augsburg Confession. The immediate context for the LWF Sixth Assembly action was the separation of Black and White Lutherans in South Africa. As long as that cultural pattern (reinforced by South African law) was followed by the churches, an unbiblical criterion for unity—racial identity—was being used. And since that criterion goes beyond Augsburg's requirement (unity exists when there is agreement on the proclamation of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments), the racial test of unity is not valid and must be rejected.

Apartheid, therefore, presents the church with a "state of confession" because it attacks, in its impact on both church and society, the very heart of the church's confession of faith. By its 1980 convention action, the ALC is affirming the same position. It means that, for the ALC corporately, there can be no argument over whether apartheid is acceptable or reformable. It means that apartheid is viewed by us as simply and starkly in conflict with the biblical faith we hold. It is not a political

ideology with which believers may compromise, but must be opposed by whatever means are at hand.

The ALC action of 1980 goes on to say that there are many legitimate strategies for opposing apartheid. One of them, withdrawing the church's investments from business corporations that are active in South Africa, received particular attention prior to and during the 1980 convention. The language adopted by delegates said two things about the strategy of disinvesting:

a. Withdrawing investments is "not a necessary consequence of a declaration of 'status confessionis.'" In other words, people who agree that apartheid is a central matter of the faith and must be opposed may *disagree* on the strategy of disinvestment (or divestiture).

b. However, the ALC makes the judgment that, "at this moment in history in South Africa, divestiture is the most legitimate strategy in opposing apartheid and the most effective consequence of a declaration of 'status confessionis.'"

The 1980 convention action also supported a "call for withdrawal of investment by United States corporations from South Africa if in the judgment of the Board of Trustees that investment on balance strengthens the apartheid system."

The strategies in "Goals for Combating Apartheid" do not concentrate on corporate investment policy, either ALC withdrawal of holdings in companies or the withdrawal from South Africa of companies which are U.S.-based. Investment policy is, however, a part of the broader concern with economic factors, dealt with in Goal Six, and continues to be a part of the ALC's total strategy for dealing with apartheid.*

3. HISTORY OF ALC INVOLVEMENT

The American Lutheran Church and its European predecessors have been involved with southern Africa for nearly 140 years, from the arrival in Natal (1844) of the first Norwegian Lutheran missionary. Our concern for justice and freedom among all the population has been a part of our total activity in mission with people in southern Africa from the beginning.

The focus on political oppression and the evils of apartheid has emerged prominently in the past few decades, as the movements for change in southern Africa have gained momentum. Lutheran churches in both South Africa and Namibia have appealed to their sisters and brothers in

*See "South Africa—Divestment," the May 1981 action by the ALC Board of Trustees in response to the 1980 ALC convention, page 20.

the global Christian family for support, prayer, and advocacy with institutions of political and economic power that have influence over their lives in southern Africa. Namibia, the territory formerly known as South-West Africa, has been of particular concern since the United Nations voted in 1966 to end the South African administration of the territory under UN trusteeship and to move toward independence for the Namibian people. South Africa continues to resist the decisions of the United Nations and the International Court of Justice and occupies Namibia illegally.

Justice for all peoples in South Africa and Namibia has become a regular agenda item for The American Lutheran Church during the past decade—in its congregations, at district conventions, and at meetings of the national Church Council and the General Convention. At the 1980 convention, delegates took two sets of actions. One, "Human Rights of the People of Namibia," reaffirmed long-standing ALC opposition to South Africa's unlawful continuing occupation of that land. It urged South Africa to cooperate in internationally supervised elections, urged the United States government to bring pressure on South Africa toward compliance (including application of "economic or other sanctions"), and urged congregations "to sponsor and organize an intensive lobbying campaign" with members of Congress on the Namibian independence issue.

The second ALC convention action in 1980 was titled "Opposition to Apartheid" and dealt with the system of legal oppression that is practiced in South Africa and also characterizes the South African administration of Namibia. Delegates voted to condemn the system, to work for elimination of the "abhorrent evils" perpetuated by that system, and "to support those who suffer under such oppression through unremitting prayer and deliberate action." The convention also voted to:

- a. reject "all other forms of racial discrimination in our own society as well as in other nations"
- b. declare apartheid to be a matter of "status confessionis" (see discussion above)
- c. request the ALC Board of Trustees (on a 447-331 vote) "to totally divest from all corporations doing business in South Africa . . . in a prudent manner that is consistent with legal requirements and does not place undue risk upon the ALC investment portfolio"
- d. "urge the government of the United States to implement economic sanctions against the Republic of South Africa" as part of the church's total anti-apartheid campaign
- e. ask the Office of Church in Society to "develop a strategy for the ALC which will more effectively support the [Black, Coloured, and Asian] population in its struggle for justice and representation, and

which will lead to the reconciliation of all people in southern Africa"

The Office of Church in Society prepared goals and recommendations for such a strategy, and the Church Council adopted them in June 1981. This paper provides background for that strategy.

4. WHY SOUTHERN AFRICA?

Why should the churches, and the ALC in particular, become so exercised about oppression in South Africa and Namibia? There are certainly nations other than South Africa and Namibia in which people are systematically and because of ethnic identity denied political participation, economic opportunity, and social freedoms.

But there are *no other nations* in which those conditions are supported by a system of law, in which an interpretation of the biblical faith is used to justify that system.

And there are *no other nations* with oppressing systems in which the United States has such influence and presence, through governmental relationships and economic relationships (\$3.5 billion in trade annually, \$2-plus billion in investment), and from which U.S. citizens and consumers draw such benefits.

And there are *no other nations* with oppressing systems in which there are Lutheran churches of such numerical strength and in which the ALC has such close and long-standing ties with vital Christian communities, which have repeatedly called on their partner churches around the world for support and actions with those churches' own governments and economic institutions.

Such statements indicate the major reasons why the Western nations and the United States in general, and the ALC in particular, have cause to give special attention to supporting movements of change toward greater justice, freedom, and reconciliation.

Our national citizenship calls us to do so, because our opportunities as U.S. citizens have special power in international relations.

Our fellowship in the faith with suffering Christians calls us to do so, because our unity in Christ transcends national and ethnic boundaries.

And, supremely, our understanding of the biblical witness calls us to do so, because not to do so would be a denial of the faith God has given us.

5. VIOLENCE AND NON-VIOLENCE

Part of the debate over changes in southern Africa revolves around attitudes toward the role of violence in maintaining a status quo or in precip-

itating change. The churches in southern Africa have continually called for change through *non-violent* means. We join them in that call and that hope. We also believe these additional observations are in order:

a. The present choice for those who suffer oppression in southern Africa is *not* between violence and non-violence. Their daily existence—and that of the oppressors as well—is marked by violence of a structured and systematic nature. The present situation deals violently with the victims, year after year, generation after generation. The oppressors in return reap a measure of violence also. It is understandable that many among the oppressed would willingly substitute the violence of armed resistance to bring about change for the existing violence of no-change and despair.

b. In our own ethical tradition as Lutherans, there is no necessary rejection of armed resistance *as a last resort in a just cause*. We are not, as a church, part of the pacifist ethical tradition (though some of our members are). We have historically viewed the use of violence always to be an evil, a participation in sin, but one which is sometimes justified because not to use violence would be to perpetuate a greater evil, a more damaging sinfulness. Since we have consistently justified the use of armed force in seeking the freedom and defense of our own nation, it is hardly appropriate for us to condemn others who turn to it in desperation, after generations of seeking their own freedom through non-violent means.

c. Nevertheless, we continue to pray and hope and work for non-violent solutions in southern Africa. Our proposals for action are *all* in the non-violent category. The existence of violence in southern Africa today and the threat of escalating violence in the days to come make it urgent that we do what can be done, by us and our institutions, without delay and with deep commitment. To paraphrase President John Kennedy: Those who do not work to end injustice by non-violent means are insuring that change will come by violent means.

6. COMMUNIST INFLUENCE

The South African government regularly labels any challenge to the apartheid system "Communist-inspired." On the other hand, the Whitesupremacy government of South Africa is sometimes referred to as "a bastion of the Free World at the tip of Africa."

The latter designation strikes the non-Whites of South Africa and Namibia as particularly inappropriate. About the "Communist-inspired" label, several points can be made:

a. African liberation movements have accepted military weapons and aid from any sources that would give help in their struggle, without accepting control by the Soviets, the Chinese, or the West.

b. What the oppressed Black majorities of South Africa and Namibia want is freedom and self-determination, not the replacement of one form of tyranny by another.

c. The Eastern bloc countries can exploit the southern Africa situation only when the Western nations give them opportunity by appearing to side with the White-supremacy system.

d. Some of the liberation leaders are attracted to various forms of socialism; often it is associated with a vibrant Christian faith. Many of the leaders of the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) in Namibia, for instance, are sons and daughters of the Lutheran Church, and they do not necessarily see socialism and Christianity as incompatible. But they are also fiercely determined to stay free of outside domination, whether by South Africa, the Soviet Union, or the United States.

7. THE CONNECTION WITH U.S. RACISM

The 1980 ALC Convention resolution expresses the ALC's "unequivocal rejection of apartheid and *all other forms of racial discrimination in our own society* as well as other nations."

In our legitimate desire to combat apartheid in southern Africa, there is a temptation to both think and act as though the problem of racial oppression is located solely or even primarily in one region of one continent. American Christians need always to recall the parallels in the histories of racial injustice in South Africa and the United States. In both countries:

- European invaders battled indigenous (non-White) peoples for possession of the land.
- Harsh systems of control established a pattern of economic oppression by European immigrants over darker-skinned peoples.
- Racial segregation, in law and custom, continued for decades as the vehicle for maintaining White supremacy.

(See *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American and South African History* by George M. Fredrickson, Oxford, 1981.)

While there are clear differences between the two societies (proportions of Black and White, recent changes in the *legal* structure for U.S. segregation) there remain impressive similarities. The ALC needs to continue giving as much energy to combating racism in our own churches and communities and nation as it gives to combating the apartheid form of racism in southern Africa. Indeed, we need to see always that our histories and our current forms of racism are part of a single world-wide phenomenon—the systematic and deliberate effort to make race or color a qualification for acceptance into a social, political, and economic order.

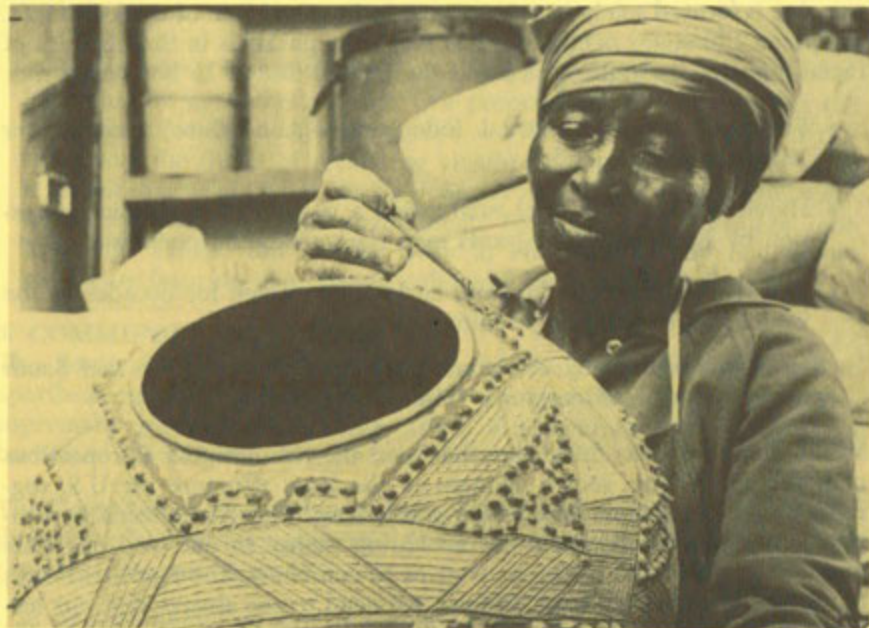
Such an ideology of racism is evil, a sin under God, in whatever form it appears and in whatever society it determines relationships. It requires the church and all Christians to be "in a state of confession" over against it . . . in the United States, in southern Africa, in any part of the planetary family where it gains acceptance.

8. THE ALC'S COMMITMENT CONCERNING APARTHEID

With particular reference to southern Africa, the ALC is committed to doing what it can to end the apartheid system. We are specifically committed to a political arrangement in the Republic of South Africa through which *all* people may share fully in governance and in economic and social opportunity, with justice and reconciliation for all parts of the population. We are specifically committed to independence for Namibia, brought about through internationally supervised and free elections.

We believe that to stand in solidarity with fellow Christians who are suffering, to oppose an evil system with all non-violent means available to us, and to give witness by words and works to God-ordained human oneness is to be faithful disciples in our time. It is to be in a state of confession.

We make it our business to be about these tasks because we believe it is part of God's business.



Dinah Molefe, national prize-winning potter, at Lutheran Art and Craft Centre, Rorkes Drift, Natal, South Africa.

IV. Human Rights of the People of Namibia (1980)

A resolution adopted by the Tenth General Convention of The American Lutheran Church, 1-7 October 1980 (GC 80.6.120).

Whereas, the Republic of South Africa, entrusted with a mandate after World War I for the administration of Namibia under the League of Nations, has for many years refused to honor the findings of the International Court of Justice at the Hague as to the status of that country, and has deliberately ignored all appeal for free and open elections, including a United Nations plan of transition set forth in U.N. Security Council resolution 439*, and has brought about the installation of a puppet government through "elections" conducted in December 1978, under military occupation and duress, with a large proportion of the population effectively outlawed and disenfranchised; and

Whereas, the population of Namibia is being governed under "emergency powers" which involve continuous deprivation of the most elementary human rights, and is daily subjected to continual harassment, arbitrary detentions, torture, brutalities, degradations and extortions, and politically motivated and protected homicide; and

Whereas, the issue of economic sanctions against the Republic of South Africa will be debated in the United Nations within the next two months, and therefore urgent action is required; therefore be it

Resolved, that The American Lutheran Church:

- a. urge the Republic of South Africa immediately to agree to the proposals of UNSC resolution 439*, and cooperate in the organization of internationally supervised elections in Namibia;
- b. urge the President and Congress of these United States of America to cooperate with the UN in bringing pressure to bear on the Republic of South Africa, without further delay, for compliance with UNSC resolution 439*, including the application of whatever economic or other sanctions may be necessary; and
- c. urge all congregations of The American Lutheran Church, through their councils and social action committees, and by every other possible means, to sponsor and organize an intensive lobbying campaign with their congressmen and congresswomen to "conscientize" both our President and our Congress on this matter.

*Comparable to UN Resolution 435 (1978).

V. Opposition to Apartheid (1980)

A resolution adopted by the Tenth General Convention of The American Lutheran Church, 1-7 October 1980 (GC80.4.58). Points a and b were adopted as policy and practice on a standing vote, no negative votes being observed. Points d and e were adopted on a hand vote with tally of: Yes—447 (57.5%); No—331.

Whereas, The American Lutheran Church through resolutions of the Church Council and General Conventions and a variety of other actions, has publicly and unequivocally opposed apartheid during the past decade;¹ and

Whereas, ten districts have this year submitted memorials to The ALC on apartheid as a matter of "status confessionis" and on divestiture; and

Whereas, we hold the church's attitude toward apartheid to be a matter of "status confessionis"; and

Whereas, the Black Lutheran churches in Africa have specifically asked the global Lutheran community to support them and their fellow sufferers through intercession and other strong action; and

Whereas, the particular issue of divestiture is a difficult and complicated one, not only for us but for the Black Lutheran churches whose opinion is divided on the question; and

Whereas, the Board of Trustees and the Investment Committee of The ALC have diligently sought to fulfill the mandate of the 1978 General Convention regarding investments in corporations doing business in South Africa; and

Whereas, the Board of Trustees has utilized all of the options in its policy statement on investments in such firms, determining its appropriate tactic in each case individually;² and

Whereas, continuing study and discussion in the church on divestiture as well as other options will help to develop even stronger opposition to apartheid in the church and the wider society; therefore be it

- a. *Resolved*, that The ALC again express its unequivocal rejection of apartheid and all other forms of racial discrimination in our own society as well as in other nations, and declare apartheid to be a matter of "status confessionis"; and be it further
- b. *Resolved*, that The ALC again declare its strong commitment to work for the elimination of these abhorrent evils and to support those who

¹See 1980 ALC Reports and Actions, page 692

²See 1980 ALC Reports and Actions, page 693

suffer under such oppression through unremitting prayer and deliberate action; and be it further

- c. *Resolved*, that The ALC declare its judgment that divestiture is one of a number of legitimate strategies in opposing apartheid but not a necessary consequence of a declaration of "status confessionis"; and be it further
- d. *Resolved*, that The ALC declare its judgment that at this moment in history in South Africa, divestiture is the most legitimate strategy in opposing apartheid and the most effective consequence of a declaration of "status confessionis"; and be it further
- e. *Resolved*, that The ALC acknowledge with gratitude the difficult and diligent work of the Board of Trustees and its investment committee, and request them to totally divest from all corporations doing business in South Africa, and that this disinvestment take place in a prudent manner that is consistent with legal requirements, and does not place undue risk upon The ALC investment portfolio; and be it further
- f. *Resolved*, that The ALC reaffirm its past positions calling for:
 - 1) an end to future bank loans to the Republic of South Africa;
 - 2) an end to any sales to the South African police and military;
 - 3) a moratorium on any significant expansion efforts by United States corporations in South Africa; and be it further
- g. *Resolved*, that The ALC support the call for withdrawal of investment by United States corporations from South Africa if in the judgment of the Board of Trustees that investment on balance strengthens the apartheid system; and be it further
- h. *Resolved*, that The ALC call upon all divisions, units, districts, institutions, congregations, and members of the church to utilize all possible resources for the elimination of apartheid and other expressions of racial discrimination; and be it further
- i. *Resolved*, that the Office of Church in Society, if established, or a task force appointed by the general president, develop a strategy for The American Lutheran Church which will more effectively support the non-White population in Southern Africa in its struggle for justice and representation, and which will lead to the reconciliation of all people in southern Africa, prepare recommendations to implement the strategy and report to the 1981 Church Council; and be it further
- j. *Resolved*, that The ALC urge the government of the United States to implement economic sanctions against the Republic of South Africa.

VI. South Africa—Divestment (1981)

Adopted by The ALC Board of Trustees, 14-15 May 1981, on a unanimous vote.

Whereas, the Board of Trustees is in total agreement, sympathy, and support of The American Lutheran Church's condemnation of apartheid and fully committed to the cause of justice and wholeness for the South African Black majority; and

Whereas, the 1980 General Convention of The American Lutheran Church declared its judgment that divestiture is the most effective strategy against apartheid and requested the Board of Trustees to divest of all companies doing business in South Africa; and

Whereas, the Convention requested that this divestment take place in a prudent manner that is consistent with legal requirements and does not place undue risk upon The American Lutheran Church portfolio; and

Whereas, legal counsel has advised the church that "only in those cases where economic considerations are equal as between two or more securities issues under study may the investment decision be based on social considerations"; therefore be it

Resolved, That in the buying and selling of securities, where, in the judgment of the Board of Trustees, the economic considerations are equal as between two or more securities issues under study, the Board of Trustees will, where applicable, choose in favor of the company not doing business in South Africa (or choose against the company doing business in South Africa).



The printing and distribution of this statement by the:

Office of Church in Society
The American Lutheran Church
422 South Fifth Street
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415

have been authorized by the General Secretary of the American Lutheran Church.

Additional copies are available from
AUGSBURG PUBLISHING HOUSE

30¢ per copy; \$2.40 per doz.; \$18.00 per 100

Printed in U.S.A.

8-85-15M