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Statement by Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr., United States Representative, in Plenary, on Civil Rights in South Africa, November 28, 1975.

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The United States Delegation has voted in Plenary as it did in the Special Political Committee on the resolutions before us relating to the discussion of the "Policies of Apartheid of the Government of South Africa".

On October 23, 1975, when speaking on behalf of my Government before the Special Political Committee on the subject of apartheid, I made the following statement:

"The U.S. deplors the detention of persons whose only act is outspoken opposition to the system of apartheid. The South African Government is courting disaster when such repressive measures have the effect of closing off all avenues for peaceful change."

Prime Minister Vorster of South Africa has called the first sentence of that quoted portion of my speech a "downright lie." He has also called for the name of just one individual in South Africa who was arrested and detained only because of his outspoken opposition to apartheid.

If the Prime Minister wants to establish credibility at the U.N. on the matter of repressive laws and policies in his country, he cannot do so by trying to narrow the issue to one point or by calling for the name of one victim. He would be better off if he could give positive assurance that his Government will stop making arrests and holding persons on vague charges. His indignation would seem more plausible if he accompanied it with an announcement of full equality under the laws of his country for all South Africans without regard to race or color.

One useful opportunity emerges from the heated response of the Prime Minister. At last he has shown that he is paying attention to the much deserved criticism being voiced against the racial politics and policies of South Africa. Some of the members of the U.S. Delegation to the U.N. have made extensive studies of South African racial policies and the method of enforcing those policies.

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