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The letters and their ensuing publicity are all part of a campaign being mounted by the churches to increase the pressure on the government before the Commonwealth conference in October.

On Oct. 14, just before Mr. Mulroney and Mr. Clark leave for the Commonwealth conference in Malaysia, the churches plan a protest in Ottawa to raise awareness of Canada's position and actions on South Africa.

"It will be a very public event that will focus attention on what Canada is doing or not doing," said Mr. Hodgson.

The message that the Canadian churches are receiving from their South African counterparts is one that increased pressure is needed.

"We're getting the same signals from everybody," said Mr. Kirkwood, adding that he does not think the pressure on the Canadian government is going to make or break the situation, but can help.

And Mr. Kenny said that the information he receives back from South Africa shows the need for continued pressure.

"The consensus is overwhelmingly that things are getting worse — not better" under the new apartheid reforms, he said.

Mr. Kenny, who describes the Africa Coalition as primarily an educational group, said that there large amounts of information come in from overseas and go out to the churches, but that he thinks they could be doing more.

The churches need to be "much more forthright, strong in our communication" with the government, he said.

Mr. Kenny said he feels that the Canadian government has backed off its strong stand on South Africa under pressure from the other members of the Group of Seven industrialized nations. He feels that the government is not only dragging its feet, but is looking for a way to remove itself from any overt actions about South Africa.

Mr. Levan said that while the churches may not have the impact that their numbers would often suggest because government often feels that head office could not back up its position with any real show of support, they do have a certain effectiveness because of their staying-power to outlast apartheid.

Mr. Kirkwood would agree that the churches' experience and dedication will be the key to their success.

"We've been doing it for the long-haul and we'll be pressing until the day that majority rule comes to South Africa," said Mr. Kirkwood.

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