

THE COMMITTEE FOR RESPONSIBLE INVESTMENT

Organizational Meeting: Sunday evening, April <sup>28</sup>~~24~~ 7:30 ~~8:30~~ pm  
Healy Program Room

To all members;

Last Friday we pulled off our biggest and most successful event since the Committee was formed following Two Weeks of Anti-Apartheid Action in April, 1984. We had 4 undergrads and 2 law students speak about the current situation in South Africa and Georgetown's role in the struggle against apartheid. More importantly, we had 100-150 students demonstrate vocally against apartheid for a full hour. Then, about 30 students presented a petition of 600 signatures calling on the University to divest to the Committee on Investments and Social Responsibility which was meeting at that time.

What did we accomplish? First, we established ourselves as a presence on campus in the mind of the student body. We took the initiative on the issue and presented ourselves as actively taking the issue to the administration, instead of responding to their moves. Second, we demonstrated to the administration that we have broad-based student support on this issue, not just the noise of a few radicals. We demonstrated that we are working actively with the students from the Law Center. Third, we learned more about how to plan an event of this nature. We took advantage of the warm sunshine and used music to spread our message and maintain interest. And we learned to set up earlier in the future to avoid the sort of problem we experienced with the sound system.

Looking to the future, there are still a few things that we can and should do this semester and many possibilities for next year. The Board of Directors will be meeting again in May. We should be prepared in advance to take the issue to them, or to the Main Campus Affairs Committee. If they refuse to meet with us we can give them a show of our support.

We can also lobby on Capitol Hill. Minor sanctions are being proposed in a variety of bills. We must get them passed!!

The legislation is very mild, but it is a step forward. A defeat would be a set-back for our own efforts and for the morale of those struggling within South Africa. The groundwork for legislative action has been laid; we have a list of people willing to volunteer, we will provide transportation on a given day and brief them on where to go and what to do.

By the fall, we will know exactly where we stand with the Administration and the Board and can deal with them directly. Secondly, we can continue to politically educate the student body on the issues of apartheid and university divestment. Thirdly, we can work to expand our committee. We presently have members from NAACP, African Studies, Progressive Students, and the Black Student Alliance. The more student groups we bring in, even conservative groups, the <sup>more</sup> representational we can be. Each group has a contact list of students who can be called upon for support and work, broadening our base.

Now let us examine ourselves as a group. What we are engaging in is politics; campus politics, yes, but there is a national and international dimension to it. Political activity can not be jumped into hastily. It takes time to establish credibility as an authority on the issues and a reputation for being able to deliver. This means consistent and continual action. The process as a learning experience is as important as obtaining the objectives. It means assuming responsibilities, formulating policies and executing objectives. In the university, there is a constant turnover of personnel, so there must be a continuous transfer of ideas and skills. The Administration is perfectly happy to see people graduate and take the issues with them. So it is very important, if we want to maintain momentum from semester to semester, to share the skills and ideas that we gain through our actions. This also creates a larger pool of capable activists to accomplish our goals.

Given the realities of 15 credit-hours per semester along with other extra-curriculars (and occasionally sleep) we need to be efficient and effective. For starters, all members should be familiar with a) ongoing activities in South Africa, b) all sides of the divestment issue, and c) the most recent position of the committee so that we are credible authorities when discussing the issue with friends or faculty. Members should also be aware of how to get things done on campus, ie. reserving rooms and vans, copying facilities, educational resources, etc.

With all of these things in mind, we will meet on Sunday night to discuss our organizational structure for the rest of this academic year and for next semester. There are a variety of ways that we can organize ourselves: select one or two active coordinators to oversee a variety of efforts and to call on the other members as work arises; or, invest certain members or groups of members (2 or 3) with specific duties such as policy formulation, educational outreach, artwork, press, fund-raising, etc.; or, elect leaders who can appoint others to certain tasks, and so on. The one important element is unity of purpose and spirit.

We can also discuss a possible change of name for the Committee. "The Committee for Responsible Investment" is not particularly catchy or memorable and connotes interest in any sort of investments, which we are not. Likewise, it does not say anything about the struggle against apartheid, and suggests that divestment is our only tactic, instead of a multi-faceted approach to the issue.

These are all suggestions. Please come to the meeting with some of your own, and we can look forward to fruitful discussions.

Willy Packard  
Marty Ellington

LOUSY TYPEWRITER, Eh??