

Why demonstrate against the Davis Cup tennis match?

1. Playing South Africa in a tennis match at this time has enormous publicity value since it serves to give South African sport important links to the outside world. South Africa has been isolated in virtually every other sport and tennis is one of the few sports in which South Africa can compete internationally on a team level.
2. Tennis is a sport in which South African sportsmen have had above average success. By severing our ties with South Africa in that sport, we would have inordinate leverage in reforming South Africa's sport policy since there are few remaining outlets for their sportsmen. It would be another reminder that they could not retreat to their dream world.
3. South Africa has altered its sporting policies only after tremendous external pressure, not through the policy of communication. If the United States were to isolate South Africa in sports such as tennis, that would be a terrible blow to the South African psyche and force them to make further change. The small cosmetic changes which have been implemented with the assistance of individuals like Arthur Ashe were made possible by the international boycotts of South African sport.
4. South Africa has made a few halting advances in trying to end discrimination in sport, but the government has given no indication that she will go any further than the unusual concept of 'multinational' sport. This policy states that the population groups of South Africa can compete against each other when international sportsmen or teams are competing in events or matches. Thus national teams theoretically will be multi-racial. But in most sports, blacks do not have adequate sporting facilities in their own areas so that it will be a rarity when a black makes a national team. Thus multinationalism extends white superiority instead of breaking it down. Moreover, multinationalism mirrors the Bantustan philosophy by breaking non-white groups into Coloureds, Asians, and Africans, who are divided even further into 'tribal' groups. Speaking out against multinationalism signifies that this concept is not acceptable and that you see through the smokescreen for what it is.
5. Although the Davis Cup is a private competition, the United States team does proudly represent our country, and it should not play teams which represents countries whose national sports policies are avowedly discriminatory.

6. Some argue that politics should be kept out of sport, but in South Africa, sports is part and parcel of the political situation. Sports policy is determined at cabinet level (they have a Minister of Sport), and any attempt to fight sports policy has to be done at a political level.
7. Speaking out against the Davis Cup match has symbolic value much like the repeal of the Byrd Amendment. It would restore a certain amount of credibility in the eyes of African nations, and it can only help in whatever negotiations we become involved in. Ping-pong was used to open channels with China; now it appears baseball will signal change in our policy towards Cuba. Why can't the opposite be done? Calling for teams not to play South Africa would express our disapproval of their system of discrimination.
8. The United States should place more stock in its sporting ties with Africa than with South Africa.
9. Condemning the match sends signals to the White House that the American public is very aware of developments in Southern Africa and that there would be disapproval of establishing closer links with that country on any level. It also helps those in Congress and the State Department who want to change American policy since they will know that they can rely on a vocal constituency to support their moves.
10. National figures should speak out against apartheid in sports since its philosophy runs counter to our own.
11. A protest should be raised not only against South African sport policies but against the killings of innocent demonstrators in Soweto and other townships last year. The South African tennis team since they represent that country has to be criticized to let South Africans know that we ~~we~~ have not forgotten the brutal repression of the African students.