

An insider's view of South Africa The divestment question

Rutendo Mantiziba

I found last week's article "Corporate involvement is best alternative" by David Molhe very upsetting and highly naive.

U.S. investments in South Africa are in very strategic positions. For example, Ford manufactures military cars; I.B.M. supplies the government with computers used to keep track of blacks; U.S. Steel is vital for mineral mining and transportation. The fact that these companies are in strategic positions is evidenced by the recent advertisements placed in the Wall Street Journal by the South Africa government in an ongoing campaign to persuade U.S. companies not to divest.

So Ford is doing a little window dressing here and there by promoting a handful of blacks. The real effects of Ford's presence in South Africa are demonstrated where Ford-supplied military vans and equipment are used in such endeavors as the killings in Soweto in 1976 and in 1981, the ongoing raids to keep black women and children in the Bantustans and black men alone in the city and the recent raids in Angola which left more than 1,000 blacks dead. The handful of blacks promoted by Ford is surely nothing compared to the lives this company has helped the South African government destroy.

Mr. Molho criticizes Polaroid's divestment but I am glad it divested. Passbooks are one of the most

dehumanizing inventions of South Africa's apartheid regime and Polaroid was manufacturing these passbooks. It was wrong for Polaroid to dehumanize the black South Africans on behalf of the white supremacist South African government. The companies are helping a few thousand blacks and at the same time destroying 20 million others. Divestment will mean short-term suffering for South Africa's blacks but will lead to long-term freedom.

I am from Zimbabwe, a country which in 1980 gained its independence and rid itself of apartheid. U.S. companies divested and economic sanctions were imposed on Zimbabwe. We suffered for a few years but the suffering after divestment was nothing compared to the freedom we have now. The South African blacks have called for divestment through the voices of Steve Biko, Bishop Tutu and the ANC leader Oliver Tambo, to name a few. They know best what's good for them.

Divestment is the only humane and socially sound way to go. Mr. Molho claims that divestment would neatly be ridding ourselves of the problem. I disagree because divestment will help to get the South African government on the bargaining table. It is the only way to help South Africa to change without as much bloodshed as I saw in Zimbabwe.

Steve Burnett

Some majors just can't be shortened, like French or Art or Philosophy. I include Philosophy because one certainly cannot expect a Philosophy major to abbreviate.

"Hi!"
"Hi, how're ya doin'?" (or "How's it goin'?" etc.)
"OK, I guess." (or "Pretty good." etc.)
Boy, that gets awfully boring awfully fast.

Note: That Jam-ba-lee-o stuff is a song by I don't know who but I'd like to thank Maria Castiglione and Brian Pesman for remembering the lyrics.

Letters: Haas notes corrections

To the Editor:

Allow me to offer the following corrections to your interesting front page article, "Is another Great Awakening occurring?" (Sept. 25, 1981, issue):

1. In the late 1960s, attendance at the Sunday chapel worship services in Herrick totaled almost 500. By the mid-70s attendance dropped to its lowest level of 20-30 students each Sunday.

2. The college today maintains ties with

the United Church of Christ (formerly the Congregational Christian churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church).

3. The Rev. Daniel Ogata is minister of the Presbyterian Church. Father Robert Towner is minister of the Episcopal Church. Dennis W. Haas, Chaplain.

Editor's Note: The S&B apologizes for the errors.

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Scarlet & Black

is now accepting poems, short fiction, line drawings, and creative prose for a fall literary supplement.

Submissions may be sent to the S&B through the campus mail. The deadline for submissions is Friday, October 16, 1981.

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