

Students demonstrate in support of College investments practices

by Michael O'Neill & Scott Hildula

A group of students favoring Grinnell College's investment in South Africa assembled alongside the Students to End Apartheid during the trustee meeting Friday. The pro-investment group, headed by Russell Matteson and Ian McLean, opposes the divestment views of the SEA group (formerly the South African Support Group).

Speaking for the group against divestment, McLean asked that Grinnell College continue investing in South Africa in order to "effect real change."

McLean claimed that divestment is the wrong approach to solving the problem or apartheid on two counts. The first is the claim that even a total elimination of international trade with South Africa would not markedly affect the country economically. In fact, McLean stated that such activity "would only give more incentive to South

a productive movement to change by working with South Africa to influence its policies and not to walk away from the problem by divesting completely."

The McLean/Matteson proposal asks that the trustees invest Grinnell money only in corporations that adhere to the Sullivan Accords. The proposal also asks that "annual reports to the Trustees and to the Student Government Association on the progress which such companies have made in implementing the Accords" be submitted with the understanding that Grinnell will divest from any companies which fail to abide by the Accords.

Grinnell's new investments do currently follow the trend outlined by the McLean/Matteson proposal. Annual reports are already submitted to the Trustees. There is also a standing invitation for students to be involved in the

proposal] was to ours," Ragan said. He noted that while the philosophy of capitalism and democracy may not be quite the same as that held by members of the SEA, Ragan sees the goals as pretty much the same.

"It indicates a lack of foresight on the members of the [pro-investment] group . . . that they didn't investigate the issue more thoroughly," Ragan said. "The information is easily accessible. The meetings are every Tuesday night at 8:30 p.m."

For 14 years the SEA under various names has been working in Grinnell on the investment question. The SEA today is working on the very issues pointed to in the McLean/Matteson proposal except to a more sophisticated degree Ragan said.

The SEA is currently working on a re-investment proposal with the trustees and has been working with the Investor Responsibility Research Center.



Trustees encounter protesting students. — Photo by Ben Armstrong.

Africa's regime to increase its oppression of its people."

McLean's second point in criticism of divestment addressed what he termed a "moral double standard" on the part of divestment supporters. McLean asked where is the outcry of protest against the Soviet murdering of millions in Afghanistan, or the Mengitsu regime which has starved hundreds of thousands in Ethiopia.

Finally McLean asked that the U.S. use the economic lever it has established as South Africa's largest trading partner.

"Let's use this lever in a constructive way, leading South Africa to change and improvement. Our Trustees have not gone far enough in this area — we urge them to use Grinnell's South African stock to begin

balloting by proxy that takes place on an annual basis.

According to Leslie Ragan, prominent member of the SEA, the McLean/Matteson proposal indicates that the pro-investment group really doesn't understand the goals of the SEA. The SEA is a forum for ideas on how to end apartheid. "We're not 'students for divestment,'" Ragan said, "we're students to end apartheid. We're working on several different levels."

To the best of Ragan's knowledge, neither Matteson nor McLean have ever been to one of the SEA's meetings. He also doesn't recall having seen a member of the Young Republicans at any of the meetings.

"It was interesting how similar their strategy in the second paragraph [of the

Pfitsch honored

College News Service

John Pfitsch, director of intercollegiate athletics and professor of physical education, was named recipient of the 1984 Greater Grinnell Area Chamber of Commerce Award for Community Service.

The award is given each year to two local teachers, one in the public schools and the other at the college. A plaque honoring Pfitsch's service to the community was presented by the Rev. Harry Lennenbrink, chairman of the Chamber's education committee.

A member of the Grinnell faculty since 1948, Pfitsch was named director of intercollegiate athletics in 1956. Besides his college duties, he has regularly hosted or assisted with high school swimming, track, and other competitions in the college's Physical Education Complex and other facilities.

Pfitsch has conducted baseball, basketball, and soccer programs for local youth through the city's Parks and Recreation Department. Under his guidance the Pioneer soccer team won the 1984 Midwest Conference Championship.

Pfitsch regularly conducts an early-morning "aquatics" program for persons both from the college and the community. Through aquatic exercises, the program promotes physical fitness for both younger and older persons.