

Students debate apartheid

by Jennifer Miller

The South African Consciousness Week activities ended with a debate between Les Ragan speaking in favor of immediate divestment of U.S. interests in the Republic of South Africa and Ian Mclean, speaking in favor of continued U.S. investment and the use of that investment as a pressure weapon against the apartheid regime.

Ragan, beginning the debate, suggested that there are two options available for ending apartheid — internal pressure or economic disengagement. The former he characterized as reform while the latter he defined as revolution. Arguing against reform, Ragan stated that since the policies of constructive engagement began, the South African government has not changed its racist policies, while actual reform has been slight. Ragan called reform policies "over-simplistic" and added that constructive means of changing the economic system has led to two problems, first, the South African government has not changed and they have stated that they would not, and a second, deeper problem, reform policies assume that a program is acceptable. "Apartheid is not o.k.," stated Ragan. The system cannot be reformed, he emphasized, it must be dismantled. Thus, Ragan continued revolution is inevitable. Ragan asserted that full and immediate divestment would shorten this revolution by weakening the South African Government that the Revolutionaries seek to topple. He made an analogy between divestment and the situation of a heroin addict, stating that withdrawal is at first difficult and painful but the final result is a cleansed, pure body. In concluding his opening statement supporting immediate divestment from South Africa, Les Ragan stated, "recent developments indicate that the [inevitable] revolution has already begun."

McLean began his statement asserting his position that divestment is not the means to the end of the apartheid situation in South Africa. He noted that the United States' investment is significantly slighter than European and Asian investment in South African firms. Therefore, he continued, divestment would not significantly affect the South African economy as a whole, rather, he said, it would leave over 100,000 Black South Africans jobless. The European and Asian powers would purchase the stocks and capital that the United States relinquished, stated McLean. Secondly McLean maintained, in divesting completely from South African firms and corporations, the United States would lose any leverage it

currently holds with the South African government, and thus make future reforms impossible.

Refuting the view that revolution would be the outcome of divestment, Mclean focused on the necessity of further reforms within the government to end apartheid practices. Such reforms would be for those found under the Sullivan Accords, as well as social and domestic reforms in the areas of housing, taxes and trade unions. He restated his standpoint that divestment would make the United States incapable of pursuing such reforms.

Mclean concluded his remarks with the statement that reforms are not the only answer to the "complex and discouraging problem" of apartheid. He agreed that many corporations side-step the issue, that the Sullivan Accords are not sufficient, and that clearly the white minority does not favor equality, Mclean supports a "peaceful solution to apartheid", noting that it is a severe problem "not to be eliminated by an easy one-shot answer."

Each debater limited his rebuttal to few brief statements. Ragan mentioned that Americans cannot see the South African situation from the South African perspective. He maintained that the South Africans are disenchanting with the entire economic system and they make little distinction between American and South African corporations. He contended that the South Africans are dissatisfied with the entire situation. Ragan's implication was that they will turn to revolutionary tactics.

Mclean, in his rebuttal, asserted that the large number immigrants, legal and illegal, as well as refugees, indicated that many people do not find the situation in South Africa unbearable. He referred to Ragan's earlier heroin addict analogy, agreeing with the perception and adding that he considered apartheid to be a "a mental aberration [whose] followers are crazed fanatics", but he added, divestment amounts to quitting "cold turkey" Mclean concluded, "I would like to remind people the result is [often] that they die."

Following the rebuttals, Mclean and Ragan accepted questions from the floor, the answers to which reasserted each of their basic views. Ragan maintained that revolution is inevitable and divestment would weaken the South African government and thus shorten the revolution, while Mclean contended that divesting would cause the United States to relinquish all influence in South Africa, allowing apartheid practices to continue and perhaps worsen.

A positive look on life

by Lorelei Kelly

When she was 18 years old, Marilyn Ferguson made a promise to herself that has greatly influenced her life. She promised to "never pass up chances because if you're alive, you should make it count for something."

This philosophy has guided Ferguson ever since and is embodied in her recent book, *The Aquarian Conspiracy*. Ferguson, who delivered Thursday's convocation lecture on the "Visionary Factor," advocates an aggressive approach to everyday living. She does not want to grow old.

"Whether the risk taken is a success or a flop, it is the people who continually take risks who eventually have the most success," she said.

Her liberal perspective of life led her to an interesting and innovative career. While attending college in Colorado, Ferguson dropped out and moved to Los Angeles.

There she became involved in the career which she continues to pursue. She now edits two newsletters, "Leading Edge" and "Brain/Mind," which report on new developments in psychology.

Released in 1980, *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, has been highly successful with 400,000 copies in print. The term "Aquarian" is a positive word for a new beginning, Ferguson said. It signifies a new age and a new way of thinking.

In the book's title, the word conspiracy is not meant to be interpreted with its usual shady connotations, she said. It simply implies action towards a result.

Before writing the book, Ferguson traveled extensively and conducted interviews with people who were working on improving their lives and relationships.

Ferguson's latest work — to be released next year — is a book entitled *Visionary Factor: A guide to Remembering the Future*.

The book is about a new way of thinking and the methods a person uses to learn it, she said. The book focuses on a new approach to education through which people learn to trust their own intuition and to learn how to be comfortable with change.

"People must become their own teachers, because life is an education," she said.

Through accepting change, people can enjoy their lives more fully because they will be able to drop something when it no longer works, Ferguson said.

In her new book, Ferguson classifies