The fact that some of the first rumblings of anti-apartheid activity came from Columbia, Berkeley, and other "prestigous" universities affirms the role that already established student activists have played in the Spring actions. It is these campuses that have a higher percentage of progressive organizations agitating for social change. It's not as though the Spring upswell of activity was a spontaneous outbreak amidst an unblemished sea of yuppie-yearning tranquility, wholly dependent upon conditions outside the campuses. It is the interplay between students who busy themselves in on-going progressive work and events of the world at large, that account for this latest swell of anti-apartheid acitivity.

Divestment

The central demand of students, which links the different active campus bodies together, is total divestment of University funds: the withdrawal of money from corporations that do business in South Africa. This strategy is perhaps the natural answer to the question posed to students: "what are you going to do about the racist regime in South Africa, which is supported by your university's investments? Students have answered, "not with our money!"

Divestment is an international strategy to force Pretoria to abandon its apartheid policies. Foreign investment is key to the perpetuation of the apartheid system. As one African leader states, "How can a population of 22 million Blacks be kept in subjugation by 4 million whites? They can't unless there is collaboration with the economies of wealthy nations." Foreign investment supports over 80% of private industry in South Africa.

Students have reached a virtual consensus on divestment demands. Whether they are new to the issue and are morally outraged that their college is supporting a racist regime, or they are more politically sophisticated and understand how divestment will aid the liberation struggles of South Africans, divestment stands as common ground for the mass movement and conscious anti-imperialists.

Divestment hasn't always been the rallying cry of students in the past. The issue of American support of South Africa began to surface in 1960 as a reaction to the Sharpsville massacre. South African police opened fire on unarmed demonstrators killing 69 and wounding 178. Student groups such as the National Student Association (NSA) started to discuss and research the ties between U.S. corporations and South Africa.

In 1964, ten American banks were about to renew loans they had made to Pretoria in the wake of Sharpsville four years earlier. It was these loans that precipitated the Chase-Manhattan action and other support activities around the country. The stated objective of the demonstration was to "1) put the issue of corporate investment in apartheid on the agenda of the American left, including civil rights and church groups, and 2) to reveal, for a broader public, the tarnish on the liberal image of the Rockefeller's bank." Many of the students participating in the Chase-Manhattan demonstration were also involved in the Civil Rights movement. The link between institutionalized racism in this country and of that in South Africa was perhaps a natural extension from their on-going work in the South. The work around South Africa, however, was short lived; Chase-Manhattan was the beginning and end. The escalating war in Vietnam began to occupy increasing amounts of student attention. The Chase-Manhattan action was the first official act of civil disobedience by the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). SDS went on to become the pre-eminent voice of student opposition to the Vietnam war, and prominent force in changing our society during the 1960's.

Throughout the remainder of the 60's and into the 70's, research continued, and awareness grew, about the U.S.-South African connection. Eventually, the link was made between the public sectors investment in private corporations and those corporation's business dealings in South Africa. Of particular interest to students was their universities' holdings in companies that aid and abet the South African government.

In 1976, reaction to the Soweto uprisings, in which hundreds of South Africans lost their lives, sparked another round of anti-apartheid action on campuses. National student coalitions arose to coordinate the scores of campuses involved. Not only did students begin pressing for divestment of their college funds, but city and state governments followed suit. There has been on-going divestment campaigns ever since.

The adoption of the "Sullivan Principles" by many U.S. corporations eight years ago, helped still student activity in the late 70's. The Sullivan Principles are an equal-rights code for U.S. corporate conduct in South Africa. It has been the failure of this moderate approach, however, that has propelled total divestment to the forefront this year. Bishop Tutu states that "the Sullivan Principles have been exposed as an attempt to help make apartheid more acceptable." Even the author of the principles, the Reverend Leon Sullivan, claims that "...some companies are using the principles as camouflage and are doing business as usual."

If the Sullivan Principles ever had a chance to help reform the South African government, the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 derailed the process. According to Bishop Tutu, "the South African government has become more conservative since a sympathetic occupant has entered the White House..." Reverend Sullivan has become frustrated with Reagan and has recently called on him to "set aside 'constructive engagement' and start using 'direct diplomacy'."

Tactics of 1985

The tactic that surfaced this spring on college campuses, and one which has proven very effective, is the live-in: the peaceful, non-confrontational occupation of an area of campus at which students sleep, work, study, eat, meet, organize and play. Activists at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), "liberated" the balcony of the newly renamed Winnie Mandela Library, (formerly the Humanities Library). Between one hundred and two hundred students camped out there for three weeks, preceding the meeting of the U.C. Board of Regents, who will make the decision on divestment of University funds. Such live-ins occurred at three other U.C. campuses, as well as at scores of other colleges across the nation.

The occupation at UCSD was potent in three ways. First of all, activists were able to maintain a continual public face to the University community. This was accomplished by daily teach-ins, the dispersion and display of printed educational material, and personal interaction with fellow community members. The students kept the issue alive in the minds, and on the tongues, of everyone passing by.

Secondly, the live-in sustained the internal cohesion and organization of the group by creating a shared living space and "command headquarters." Their ability to work and make decisions together was enhanced by the experience. There was a constant interchange of ideas through almost twenty-four hours a day of information sharing.

Thirdly, the students illustrated their resolve by their continued presence. The pressure that the vigils placed upon the University administration was considerably more than an occassional rally would have produced. But it's not only what the students illustrated to others; they had provided themselves with a support system where they, in effect, said, "we are all still here working together on this issue."

Civil disobedience also played a role during the Spring actions. Of the 3,000 students arrested this year, a majority have been non-violent and "controlled." The high degree of cooperation between students and authorities has even, at times, provided a target for social satirist Gary Trudeau's "Doonsebury" comic strip. What has been responsible for this non-confrontational attitude? Students merely employed the tactic initiated last fall by the FSM, in their demonstrations. It is also in keeping with the non-violent civil-disobedience that has been occurring within this nation's anti-nuclear movement for the past decade. The arrests are not intended to be violent clashes with the police, but symbolic gestures of moral outrage. The "news worthiness" of arrests has no doubt influenced and motivated activists in their attempts to reach out to the general public through the mass media.

At other times this year, relations between activists and police have been less than cordial, and arrests have taken on a more militant nature. In many cases the responsibility has been with the University administrators who have over-reacted to student activities. However, there are some student agitators who play a role also. They see an elevation of tension as necessary for the evolution of protest.

Possibilities of Success

What are the possibilities of students winning their divestment demands, and how will the University divestment effect American corporations? Public funds such as college, state and city investment portfolios account for roughly five percent of capital invested in corporations engaged in South African business. Seven state, twenty-five cities, and over forty colleges had either partially or totally divested before the '85 student activity began and many more have started the process since. The chain reaction they have precipitated—the cumulative dumping of stocks of companies that deal with South Africa—has and will continue to have a growing affect on the South African economy.

Here in California, the Regents of the University of California control the largest public portfolio of tainted investments in the country, totaling $2.4 billion. At their May 20th meeting, they agreed to halt further investments, a partial victory, but on June 20th they decided not to divest further. The

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the Draft—continued

essential that all of us join in that effort as indictments begin again. On a national level, the task is all the more important. As indictments come down in communities where the anti-draft movement has not been strong, we must ensure that resisters are not left to face the government alone.

Signs of Draft Resumption

At the same time, we must give more thought these days to the underlying issue of the draft. While we have focused attention on registration and prosecutions in the past several years, the government has made every effort to downplay the possibility of a draft. For some time, Washington sources spoke about the draft only to deny the possibility of one. But those pronouncements are less common now, and a number of signs show that Congress and the Pentagon are giving serious consideration to resumption of the draft.

Pentagon representatives speak more frequently now about declining "manpower" pools, the quality of recruits, and the need for a draft. A number of Congressional representatives, including some with significant influence and at least one former opponent of the draft, have begun to consider new legislation permitting resumption of conscription. Less visible, but perhaps more important, Selective Service has completed the preparations it needs for the draft. Draft board personnel selected during the last few years have been trained and re-trained. Regulations and procedural manuals governing every aspect of induction and classification have been revised, refined and published. The printed forms needed to run local Selective Service area offices and draft boards have been printed in bulk. MEPS centers (formerly AFEES, the headquarters for physical examination of enlistees and inductees) have been allotted potential personnel for a draft. And SSS has conducted "readiness" exercises to evaluate its preparedness for a draft—despite minor problems, they have declared themselves ready.

Given the low level of public awareness about the draft, we have a considerable job ahead of us in preparing people for efforts to prevent resumption of a draft and, if necessary, to protest its functioning once it begins. Those of us involved in anti-militarist, anti-interventionist and anti-nuclear work, in particular, need to consider ways to take up this issue, since the draft is a critical element in many of the military scenarios the government is now considering. We must also consider ways to raise the issue of the draft in all areas of our community, and particularly among high school aged people, who will be the first victims of a new draft.

It would be nice to think that, with the end of the first round of draft cases, we could take a rest for a while, and concentrate on other issue. Unfortunately, the problem of the draft is growing more, rather than less, important; and while no one can make accurate predictions about the timing of a new draft, it is important that we be prepared for the possibility of one in the next year.

The Draft Resisters Defense Fund is encouraging people to send letters of support to Ben Sasway. Mail can be sent to:

Ben Sasway
58318-098
Federal Prison Camp
3600 Guard Rd.
Lompoc, CA 93436

To get involved in local support work for resisters or anti-draft work, contact:

Draft Resisters Defense Fund
P. O. Box 33544
San Diego, CA 92103
(619) 753-7518