

House Bill 4553 (South African divestment) is on Third Reading. Agents of the South African government, Ford Motor Company, and a University which will remain nameless, have been visiting many Senators, urging them to adopt a "Sullivan Principles Amendment" to this bill. I want to explain why a "Sullivan Principles Amendment" is totally unacceptable.

First, the Sullivan Principles are the creation of the South African government. There are over 400 U.S. corporations in South Africa. In eight years, only 144 companies have said they would agree to these principles. Only 34 of these companies are "making good progress" according to the South Africa Foundation (which speaks for White South African interests in this country). U.S. corporations in South Africa employ no more than 1% of the Black work force. With less than 10% of U.S. corporations complying with the Sullivan Principles, you can readily see that the Sullivan Principles have no impact.

Second, those who argue for the Sullivan Principles do not address the real issue; in fact, they deliberately obscure the basic issues of human dignity and political freedom in South Africa. Black South Africans are not citizens in their own country. They cannot vote. Millions have been "removed" to "dumping grounds" or "labour reservoirs" where mass malnutrition and infant death occur daily. Husbands and wives are separated by Influx Control Laws. South Africa has the highest imprisonment rate in the world; 226 executions occurred in the last two years -- all but one was black.

The Sullivan Principles make no attempt to redress these wrongs. The Sullivan Principles are directed only at the work conditions of Blacks, are not enforceable, and have been cleared as "acceptable" by the South African government because they are not seen as a threat to the apartheid system.

Furthermore, Black South African leaders continue to be imprisoned, have their passports revoked, and are forced into exile when they speak of divestment in South Africa.

The only peaceful pressure we can exert is divestment. And remember that divestment will not harm our universities. The South African government will take good note of this action, and by this action they will know there are leaders in the United States who will not tolerate their oppressive apartheid system. A divestment policy will have an impact on the South African government and will continue the precedent set by other states and countries around the world. The issue is human rights and political rights in South Africa. Black South Africans like our own early American patriots are not demanding minor concessions; they are demanding political freedom. We must help them.

(Hand out for Senate floor)