

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Broadway at 120th Street
New York, N. Y. 10027
January 8, 1967

Dear Mr. Irwin and Members of the Board of Directors:

Last spring a series of conversations were initiated by the Union students with the Board of Directors in regard to the community concern over South African apartheid, and the nature of our relation to First National City Bank, which bank has made its funds directly available to the South African government.

The co-chairmen of the Morningside Heights' Committee on South Africa, Mr. Dave Hornback and Mr. Chuck Powers, have graduated from Union; however, the feeling and commitment among the seminary community for this issue has continued and been strengthened over the past months.

In recent months we have been encouraged by several developments. In just the past three months, the issue has been brought to national attention, largely through the substantial coverage given by Time magazine, The New Republic, The New York Times, Christian Century, and Christianity and Crisis, the latter two openly endorsing the concern.

Further, many of the major Protestant denominations are reconsidering their relation to First National City Bank. Meetings have been scheduled between bank officials and denominational treasurers over the next several months and the issue is under review by COEMAR of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church, among other bodies. The latter body may take definite action in its meeting next week.

The student body has attempted to witness to its strong feeling on this matter by: 1) withdrawing personal funds last spring from First National City Bank; 2) supporting the December 9th protest before Chase Manhattan and First National City Bank. This campaign, organized by the Committee of Conscience against Apartheid, (which is headed by A. Phillip Randolph and lists as sponsor, Reinhold Niebuhr, among others), has so far resulted in a most significant indication of the growing public commitment to refuse to support apartheid, as over 22 million dollars have been withdrawn from First National City Bank; 3) making a request (which was granted) that the Seminary Comptroller's office no longer recommend only First National City Bank to incoming students; 4) voting through the student cabinet to withdraw student funds from the Seminary account and to refer the issue to the Board of Directors of Union Theological Seminary, noting the student cabinet action and conviction, for appropriate action.

The seminary community is intimately involved in the whole issue. Last spring twenty-seven members of our faculty registered their concern in a statement which took exception to the bank's policy. Several of our professors also sit on the editorial board of Christianity and Crisis, and while recognizing that "this is a complicated issue," nevertheless registered their conviction that "on balance, we should work toward economic disengagement of American finance from the present Government,.... and therefore we join the movement to withdraw accounts from these banks.... We hope that our action will contribute to the more widespread movement ... toward industrial and financial disengagement from South Africa.... We do not

ascribe evil intentions to American industrial and financial interests in South Africa. They are simply doing business as usual, in a situation that is far from usual. We think the consequences have already been harmful and are potentially disastrous." (Nov. 28, 1966)

We are aware that last spring we requested an action that is not often regarded as one of the functions of a Board of Directors. Our request stemmed from a growing awareness that even religious and educational institutions, by the very fact of their sizable and inescapable involvement in social and economic spheres, must be accountable for the quality and human effects of their involvement. The issue is not whether we will assume a self-righteous position or intervene in the internal affairs of someone else, for we are already involved as Americans very deeply in South Africa, and as a seminary in First National City Bank; the only real question is whether that involvement will be positive or harmful, constructive or indifferent.

We feel that the relation of the Board of Directors to the Seminary is one of acting in the role of trustees for the Seminary. This means that it holds in trust for us and the Seminary corporation the financial assets of the Seminary, and is thus responsible for the proper stewardship of these funds in the light of the Seminary's principles and stated religious convictions. We have both agreed on principle, the Board of Directors and the Seminary community, that apartheid is "evil and dangerous."

Yet the response of the Board of Directors in the spring meeting has left the Union students and community in confusion over precisely how the Board of Directors conceives its function and responsibility as a corporate Board.

We therefore request that the Board state clearly for us whether it does understand itself as having acknowledged responsibility as a corporate entity for the stewardship and moral consequences of its investments; whether it has the responsibility to set limits on the uses of funds, and if so, how the Board interprets the fulfillment of its trusteeship in the present case of our banking policy and apartheid.

We hope to hear from you presently in regard to this matter.

Sincerely,

Mr. Jack Quigley, Chairman
Union Ad Hoc Committee on
South Africa

Mr. Carl D. Schneider, Chairman
Morningside Heights Committee on
South Africa

Mr. Mac Hulslander, Chairman
Social Action Committee on
South Africa

Mr. Peter H. Johnson, President
Student Cabinet

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Broadway at 120th Street
New York 27, N. Y.

Chairman
Board of Directors

January 13, 1967

Messrs. Jack Quigley, Mac Hulslander,
Carl D. Schneider, and Peter H. Johnson
c/o Union Theological Seminary
Broadway at 120th Street
New York, N. Y. 10027

Dear Messrs. Quigley, Hulslander,
Schneider, and Johnson,

Your letter, which I received during the Board of Directors meeting on Tuesday, precipitated a wide-ranging discussion by the Board of its responsibility for its investments. The Board thought it clear that, as the governing body of the Seminary, it had responsibility for the management of its funds and investments, including, as you queried, responsibility for the stewardship and moral consequences of its investments and for such limits as might or might not be set on the use of the Seminary's funds. On the other hand, the Board found the application of moral principles in concrete situations subject to differing judgments.

Some Directors, although recognizing the Board's responsibility for its investment policy, question the extent to which the Board should or can involve itself in public issues, believing that the Board should concentrate on maintaining the independence of the Seminary, its academic excellence, and an atmosphere of academic freedom in which members of the faculty, of the student body, and, indeed, of the Board can feel free, as individuals, to take stands and act with respect to public issues.

On the question of the New York banks and South Africa, individuals on the Board hold various and diverse views, and the Board has not been able to reach a corporate position. There is complete agreement on the evil of apartheid. The differing views arise both on whether the Board should take a corporate stand on the banks' relations with South Africa and on what is the proper application of moral principles to this particular situation.

The Board has requested its Ad Hoc Committee (a list of the Committee as expanded is enclosed) to study further the question of investment policy. The Committee would be happy to have discussions with you and other representative students if you wish to meet with it. I suggest Mr. Johnson make arrangements with Mr. Davison.

Sincerely yours,
John L. Irwin II

Ad Hoc Committee

Dr. John S. Badeau
Mr. R. Manning Brown, Jr.
Rev. Albert B. Buchanan
Mr. E. P. Davison (Chairman)
Mr. Bayard Dominick II
Rev. John R. Everett

Mrs. Horace Havensmeyer, Jr.
Rev. Edler G. Hawkins
Rev. Wm. H. Hudnut, Jr.
Mr. David H. McAlpin
Mr. Thomas McCance
Mr. Robert M. Pennoyer

Rev. Avery D. Post
Rev. Wm. C. Schram
Mr. Fred. A. O. Schwarz
Rev. Thomas P. Stewart
Mr. Weir Stewart, Jr.
Rev. Prince A. Taylor, Jr.