

Hold for release:
Wednesday
October 15, 1986
5:00 pm

Contact:
Philip Katz (617) 497 4881
John Carlos Correa (617) 868 1111

MIT Endowment for Divestiture

Will hold a press conference and signing ceremony Wednesday, October 15, 1986 at the West Lounge of the MIT Student Center, Massachusetts Avenue in Cambridge, MA.

Announcing the formation of an escrow fund for alumni contributions to MIT which is designed to pressure MIT into South African divestiture.

Trustees of the fund and speakers include:

Professor Mel King, former Eighth Congressional District Candidate

Congressman Bruce Morrison (D-CT), MIT Alumni ('65)

Congressman Howard Wolpe (D-MI), MIT Alumni (PhD '62)

Professor Willard Johnson, former President of the Boston chapter of Trans-Africa

(See attached press release for details)

MIT Endowment for Divestiture

c/o Professor Willard Johnson
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Room E53-429
Cambridge, MA 02139

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(Cambridge, MA). Alumni and professors at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) today announced the formation of the MIT Endowment for Divestiture, a trust fund designed to pressure MIT into selling its shares of corporations doing business in South Africa. At a formal signing ceremony at MIT former Eighth District Congressional candidate and MIT professor Mel King and MIT professor Willard Johnson spoke on behalf of a ten-member Board of Trustees which includes U.S. Congressman Howard Wolpe (D-MI) (MIT Ph.D. '62) and Bruce Morrison (D-CT) (MIT '65), 5 MIT Professors and 6 MIT alumni.

King said that "MIT must take a stand against the moral disgrace of apartheid and for the fundamental human values of equality, liberty and dignity. Economic actions, not words of sympathy, are needed now by the majority in South Africa."

Professor Johnson, the former President of the Boston chapter of Trans-Africa, added that "alumni can contribute to the Endowment as an expression of loyalty to MIT" while showing "concern for the moral and ethical standards of the Institute." He said that "contributions to the Endowment convey to MIT a notion of what the Institute should be."

In his statement Congressman Morrison said that "pious pronouncements are not enough. Economic sanctions give credibility to our moral condemnation of apartheid."

The Endowment is a charitable trust that will accept alumni contributions to MIT but withhold them from the Institute until the MIT portfolio is free of South Africa-related investments. Upon divestiture, these contributions will go to MIT. If MIT does not divest by 1994, the contributions will go instead to

Amnesty International and the United Negro College Fund. In the meantime the Endowment for Divestiture will be invested in the Calvert Fund, a money-market account free of South African investments. According to MIT, \$160 million of MIT's endowment and other investments are in U.S. corporations with assets in South Africa. Representatives from the United Negro College Fund attended the ceremony to announce their divestiture of South Africa-related investments.

Investment and fund-raising activities of the Endowment will be directed by the Board of Trustees, which includes Congressman Morrison, Congressman Wolpe, MIT professors King (Urban Studies and Planning), Johnson (Political Science), Joseph Weizenbaum (Electrical Engineering and Computer Science), John Parsons (Sloan School of Management), and Gretchen Kalonji (MIT '80, Ph.D. '82) (Materials Science and Engineering). Other trustees are John Carlos Correa (MIT '81), Philip Katz (MIT '82), and Dr. Marc Miller (MIT '69).

Formation of the Endowment follows a year of protests at MIT. In December of 1985, the full MIT faculty recommended divestiture by a 3-to-1 margin. In February 1986, students constructed a mock shantytown in front of the Student Center. It was torn down in March by campus administrators and eight students were arrested. Undergraduate and graduate student referenda called for immediate divestment. However, MIT President Paul Gray has said that divestment is "symbolically important but practically irrelevant" and that MIT's investment policies will not change.

Since 1983, Endowments for Divestiture have been started on other college campuses, including Harvard, Yale, Oberlin, Occidental, Wesleyan and Princeton. The MIT Endowment for Divestiture says it will reach potential alumni donors through direct mail and telephone solicitation as well as by establishing a presence at MIT alumni gatherings.

MIT alumni wishing to contribute to the new fund should send contributions to:

MIT Endowment for Divestiture
c/o Professor Willard Johnson
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Room E53-429
Cambridge, MA 02139