One doesn’t have to look any further than the list of members of the MIT Corporation to understand why MIT will never divest of its holdings in South Africa. Although these industrial directors and chairmen of the board may espouse economic or philanthropic motives for involvement in South Africa, their own vested interests are the real reasons for their votes against divestment.

For proof, here’s a listing of some of the members of the MIT Corporation and their background:

- Vernon E. Jordan, Jr., the Executive Director of the University of California statewide system, who taught for two years in South Africa at last count (1972), and has over twenty million invested in Exxon.
- Richard L. Terrell, Life Member, Vice President of General Motors. GM made $95 million in South Africa last year, and GM owns $14.4 million worth of GM stock.
- Frank T. Cary, Chairman of the Board of IBM. IBM holds $197.7 million worth of stock in IBM, which had $163 millions of sales in South Africa in 1977.
- J. Kenneth Jamieson, Life Member, and Former Chairman of Exxon Corporation. Exxon had $107 millions worth of sales in South Africa last year.
- Michael Mellone.

Of course, MIT Corporation to understand why MIT will never divest of its holdings in South Africa may finally soften their resolve, but it will be happier if there really were any way to half the military’s budget, and still maintain an adequate defense system to disrupt the economy. But what he proposes is almost as far away from reality as it is from being believable. It’s not a new idea — one man lost the election in 1972 because of it.

First of all, I’d like to touch upon a few classic fallacies. The "military-industrial complex" is not some sort of giant black hole maw, which money could feed starving people, run schools, and employ people, disappears from the face of the earth. On the contrary. It keeps right on going — to major contractors like Boeing, and General Dynamics, who pass along money to subcontractors, raw material, instruments etc., who further subcontract, ad infinitum. All down the line, money is passed on to employees as wages, who pass it on to other employees as consumers, stimulating local, regional, and even the national economy. While $1 dollars will hire more ditch diggers than engineers, how many secondary jobs do ditch diggers generate as consumers? And what job is more important? National defense is far from a useless task, and military technology is irrevocably tied into commercial products. All the way down, taxes are paid by employers, and employees, which, as all of us know, is less like education and welfare.

It’s also a common notion that weapons can’t be exported, that historically people have always killed each other as long as they have huts built each other, whether armed with sticks and stones, or missiles, technically, the most feared weapon, the nuclear bomb, has never caused war, and has only served to provoke it, if anything. It is absurd to imply that we get into wars just to play upon a few classic fallacies. The military-industrial complex is not some sort of giant black hole maw, which money could feed starving people, run schools, and employ people, disappears from the face of the earth. On the contrary. It keeps right on going — to major contractors like Boeing, and General Dynamics, who pass along money to subcontractors, raw material, instruments etc., who further subcontract, ad infinitum. All down the line, money is passed on to employees as wages, who pass it on to other employees as consumers, stimulating local, regional, and even the national economy. While $1 dollars will hire more ditch diggers than engineers, how many secondary jobs do ditch diggers generate as consumers? And what job is more important? National defense is far from a useless task, and military technology is irrevocably tied into commercial products. All the way down, taxes are paid by employers, and employees, which, as all of us know, is less like education and welfare.

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