HAVE YOU HEARD FROM JOHANNESBURG?
Apartheid And The Club of The West *transcript*
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Clarity Films

Allan Boesak: I come from a country where for the last 35 years millions of South Africans have been suffering under a system called apartheid. Apartheid is a cancer on the body politic of the world. A scourge on our society and on all human kind. Apartheid exists only because of economic greed and political oppression maintained by both systemic and physical violence and a false sense of racial superiority. So many have been forced into exile. So many have been thrown into jail. Too many of our children have been shot down mercilessly on the streets of our nation.

Narration: The struggle to overthrow apartheid took half a century. It was a global movement, inspired by the banned and exiled liberation leaders of South Africa who appealed to the world to help bring democracy to their country. One nation in particular was of key importance.

TV Interviewer: What would you like to see the United States do that it is not doing now?

Oliver Tambo: We want the United States to lead the West in action against Pretoria on the side of the victims of the apartheid system.

Beyers Naude: If the United States of America--economically the most powerful nation on Earth--claims not to have the power to terminate the policy of apartheid then there is something drastically wrong either with the nature of that power or with the ability or the willingness of your country and its people to utilize such power in the service of justice.

Narrator: By the beginning of the 1980s the international campaign to isolate South Africa had succeeded in many arenas: sports, consumer boycotts, and a United Nations arms embargo. Under mounting criticism South African Prime Minister P.W. Botha began instituting reforms. Chief among these was the creation of a tri-cameral parliament, with chambers for white, Indian and colored, but not the black majority. It sparked an uprising that would prove unstoppable and placed South Africa on the top of the world's agenda for the rest of the decade. South African anti-apartheid leaders petitioned the outside world to join their struggle by economically sanctioning the South African regime.

Allan Boesak: Sanctions including divestment, these are the things that would make the South African government look anew at the situation in which we find ourselves.

Narrator: Not everybody accepted that view.

Reporter: When French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac was asked about economic sanctions this afternoon he simply backed away from the microphone.

Margaret Thatcher: To add to the present difficulties, to add to those economic sanctions wouldn't help negotiations. It would only make things worse.

Narrator: For more then three decades the United Nations had been trying to pass economic sanctions against South Africa. But together with France and Britain the United States used its veto power on the Security Council to block every single resolution.

US representative to UN : The United States had to vote against the resolution under consideration today, a resolution which places blame solely on South Africa for the escalation of violence.

Howard Wolpe: Those who opposed the effort to impose would use an argument that was really remarkable for its uniqueness. Namely that sanctions were going to hurt the people we most wanted to help, that is the black majority.

Ronald Reagan: America's view of apartheid is simple and straight forward, we believe it's wrong. But our aim can not be to punish South Africa with economic sanctions that would injure the very people we trying to help.

Desmond Tutu: I don't understand people who say sanctions don't work. Especially in, in a country that has applied sanctions against Poland and is applying over a very period of time an embargo on Cuba. Why do you do that?

Howard Wolpe: So there was a really remarkable double standard in the way we thought about and in the way talked about South Africa.

Narrator: But there were those in the federal government who had been pushing for sanctions for years.

Charles Diggs: We're talking about a war of liberation that involves millions of Africans, hundreds of thousands of square miles. And these people are not fighting simply to end a petty apartheid or for some token representation in some little mock parliament.

Narrator: When representative Charles Diggs first came to Washington D.C. in 1955 he was one of the few African-Americans in Congress. This dynamic was about to change.

Walter Fauntroy: The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was pivotal to the movements that followed. The number of black elected officials went from 600 all over the nation to over 7,000 in a matter of ten years.

Narrator: These increased numbers would change the political landscape of the United States.

Ron Dellums: When I first came in 1971 the black members of congress had been meeting with each other. And we came together as a group, deciding that as a group we could speak with a greater authority, greater power, and greater effectiveness if we spoke as one.

Walter Fauntroy: One of the issues of grave concern to all of us was our foreign policy with respect to sub-Saharan Africa, black Africa.

Narrator: They elected Charles Diggs, the first black to serve on the House of Foreign Affairs Committee as their chairman.

Charles Diggs: When it gets down to the bottom line the administration haven't done anything and until such time as they do deal with our relations with South Africa in a meaningful way that will have an impact then it is just so much rhetoric.

Ron Dellums: In February of 1972 I introduced with John Conyers as a co-sponsor the first piece of legislation essentially calling for the disinvestment of American corporations. When I first introduced it it was a Berkeley Commie Pinko plot, because you know, you were challenging corporate America's participation in South Africa and their right to make money. And, and this was not on everybody's big radar screen. It was not a big popular issue. So we started struggling from 1972, to start trying to walk up that mountain.

Narrator: In 1977 Diggs and the Congressional Black Caucus took the next step. They created an independent lobby group, TransAfrica. Diggs handpicked Randall Robinson, a young Harvard educated lawyer and long time anti-apartheid activist to head up this group.

Randall Robinson: America's relationship with South Africa since 1948 has been nothing short of a disgrace. We are American citizens. That means that we all have to take responsibility for American foreign policy as it affects people around the world.

Cecelie Counts: We were trying to follow US foreign policy as it impacted on the black world.

Adwoa Dunn-Mouton: What was going to make a difference is if we could change the way the U.S. looked at what was taking place in South Africa.

Walter Fauntroy: With Carter groups like the TransAfrica Forum began to get an ear. And to get more visibility because we had greater access to the White House. And that was aborted rather quickly when Reagan came in to power.

Ronald Reagan: The Prime Minister of Great Britain has denounced punitive sanctions as immoral and utterly repugnant. Let me tell you why we believe Mrs. Thatcher is right. We do

not believe the way to help the people of South Africa is to cripple the economy upon which they and their families depend for survival.

Sampie Terreblanche: When Reagan became president in the United States and Margaret Thatcher in ‘79 became Prime Minister that was something of a Godsend for P.W. Botha and the National Party. It would not have been possible to maintain the apartheid regime if it was not for Reagan and Thatcher.

Les de Villiers: As long as we could keep South Africa flush with money, as long as we could stave off sanctions, we could continue, and we could try to solve this insoluble problem. He was standing as strong as anyone could on trying to prevent sanctions. All that we needed to have was at least the understanding of leaders, to give us a little bit more time, to give us a little bit. Just give us a little bit of slack.

Pik Botha: There is a new atmosphere. There is greater understanding of South Africa’s dilemma. There is a major difference between prescribing to South Africa to adopt one man one vote and to create havoc and turmoil, and turbulence, and conflict in this country as was the case with the former administration. And the present one who would wish to see stability here, law and order being maintained.

Cecelie Counts: Ronald Reagan understood their situation. He felt their pain. The black people in South Africa, the people who were oppressed were devastated.

Oliver Tambo: To illustrate this new trend of events in Washington I refer to a toast to Foreign Minister Botha when he was here. “Let us make this the new beginning of mutual trust and confidence between the United States and South Africa. Old friends.” They were old friends in the days of slavery. These are the issues that horrify Africa and confront all black peoples all over the world with a new challenge.

Narrator: The Reagan administration introduced a new policy towards South Africa called Constructive Engagement.

Richard Lugar: President Reagan was, through Constructive Engagement, saying that we had a pro feeling toward reform. And that we would attempt to move this politically and business wise.

Ron Dellums: If we continue, you know, human contact with South Africa by example these people will become enlightened and we will march in to the future together based on the enlightened presence of American business, American government. By example we would change things.

Richard Lugar: I felt that the Constructive Engagement idea was, as I say, superior to what had been previous ideas namely indifference or in President Carter's administration, one of protest.

Chester Crocker: We don't believe that the severing of contacts is in itself a terribly creative act of statesmanship if I may put it that way. What South Africa requires is more links with the Western World, not fewer links.

Narrator: And more links there were. Under Constructive Engagement Reagan reversed previous restrictions on the export of military equipment including shock batons used by the South African police and computers used by the South African government to administer apartheid. He also ushered in the return of South African military attachés to the United States, greatly expending diplomatic, military and intelligence cooperation between the two countries.

Randall Robinson: The United States is moving rapidly into a full fledged alliance with South Africa. And we intend to express a great outrage about recent developments in the Reagan policy.

Sylvia Hill: The Reagan administration could identify and feel a kinship with the apartheid leadership.

Sylvia Hill: We want you to understand that our government represents the ruling class of this country. It does not represent the working class of this country and it does not represent black people of this country. Thank you.

Cecelie Counts: Reagan was reelected in a landslide. So we all were terribly depressed. Meanwhile in South Africa there are people being shot at.

Gay McDougall: As a reaction to an internal series of so-called reforms there were explosions that started all over the country. There were street riots in the townships. There was massive resistance throughout the country. There were consumer boycotts, rent strikes, student unrest. And the South African regime then started using much more of their so-called authority to take people in off the street and detain them without any charge.

Les de Villiers: Violence followed. The country looked ungovernable. The headlines came over to the U.S. It was on television almost everyday.

Adwoa Dunn-Mouton: The TV coverage was critical because they put a human face to the situation.

Reporter: In Southern Africa yet another outbreak of violent protest in the black townships around Johannesburg has left 8 more South African blacks dead.

Reporter : Added to the violence which has caused 29 deaths so far in 3 days of racial unrest—

Reporter: Violence and killing which overtook a number of Black townships.

Reporter: Rubber bullets and tear gas were used.

Reporter: Seven minors died.

Reporter: 350 people were arrested.

Reporter: A demonstration of black power.

Reporter: Urban guerrilla warfare.

Reporter: Martin Fletcher, NBC News, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Cecelie Counts: And so Randall called a group of people together to think about what we could do. Various people had talked about civil disobedience. Even though the lawyers advised Randall that, you know, this was crazy. It would make us look desperate. It was undignified. And I'll never forget Randall's response. He said, we are desperate. You know, we've tried everything else, we've done postcards, we've done letters, we've done phone calls. We've done the traditional lobbying bit. And it's not working. I mean it's not working fast enough. So Randall said let's come up with a plan. And the plan was to request a meeting with the South African ambassador. And we knew that in order to get a meeting with the ambassador it would have to be people of stature. The ambassador wasn't going to meet with Joe Blow and his friends, so we needed Congressman Walter Fauntroy to make a request.

Walter Fauntroy: We called in advance for an appointment shortly after the Reagan landslide. And Ambassador Fourie was very gracious and he said, yes come anytime you want. And we said, we would like to come on Thanksgiving Eve, when ABC, NBC, CBS, AP, and UPI had nothing much to report but turkeys.

Cecelie Counts: And low and behold the press arrived and they saw, boom, a picket line.

Walter Fauntroy: We spent a couple of hours talking to him and we simply told him, look you were not been persuasive and unless you call Mr. Botha now on this phone and he tells you he is going to dismantle apartheid we are going to sit in your office. Now if Mr. Fourie had been wise he would have said Mr. Fauntroy it's Thanksgiving eve, my wife is home preparing the turkey. I can almost smell the dressing now. I am going home. Now you can stay here, the carpet is rather soft. You can sleep on the floor. There is a water fountain out on the hall. Here is the key to the toilet. I will see you Tuesday. But he didn't do that. He said, "what? I will have you arrested!"

Cecelie Counts: The ambassador played right into our hands. He called the police. The police came and dragged out Mary Francis Barry, Randall Robinson, and Congressman Walter Fauntroy in handcuffs.

Walter Fauntroy: I will never forget the discomfort of police officers from the District of Columbia who were told to arrest their congressman. And I said don't worry about it. You put those handcuffs on me. Bind my arms behind me. But what you want to do is to make sure that you take me out of here in front of those cameras.

Dan Rather: Three prominent American Blacks are free on their own recognicense today after spending the night in a Washington D.C. jail. They pleaded innocent to charges of unlawfully entering the South Africa embassy. Walter Fauntroy, the D.C. delegate to Congress called it, and I quote, "an act of moral witness" to South Africa's apartheid policy.

Sylvia Hill: When you are in a struggle and you are competing with other forces that also can claim the attention of media, claim the attention of history, really, then as an organizer you have to strategize to overtake that moment in history. And that is what we were trying to do. On behalf of the people of South Africa.

Narrator: Before these demonstrations Congress was not aware that Americans were concerned with events in South Africa. This was going to change. TransAfrica demonstrations continued on a daily basis from Thanksgiving day forward involving people from all over the country and from all from all walks of life. It was christened the Free South Africa Movement.

Ron Dellums: The decision to get arrested at the South African embassy was a stroke of genius. Because it took the issue to another level. Because it's in the newspaper, the front page of Washington Post. There was a lot of coverage here.

Narrator: At 5 o'clock each day after the picket line, a select few would attempt to enter the South African Embassy. And when rebuffed would refuse to leave. They were then arrested, because anyone congregating within 500 feet of an embassy was breaking the law.

Cecelie Counts: One of the first reactions to our protest was from people like Clarence Thomas, saying, there are so many issues in the black community if they really care they'd be doing drug counseling. Or if they really care they would try to prevent teenage pregnancy. They'd be focused on domestic issues. I mean we are talking about an era where Jeanne Kirkpatrick told the Urban League at a convention that the African-American community had too many problems to be bothered with the foreign policy process. We should just stay out of it.

Adwoa Dunn-Mouton: And the response to that, which I think isn't, is that, you know, we really can walk and chew gum at the same time. That changing U.S. foreign policy, if it's done by the African-American community. It empowers our community.

Cecelie Counts: At the very end of November. Just a few days after we started, we got a call saying that Rosa Park was willing to get arrested. And she wanted to get arrested on December 1, which was the anniversary of the day she sat down on the bus.

Narrator: In 1955 Rosa Park refused to give up her seat to a white man and move to the back of a segregated bus in Alabama, an act widely recognized as the beginning of the Civil Rights movement.

Rosa Park: I am very grateful to be here today. And I am lending my support to the end of the South African apartheid policy of government.

Cecelie Counts: Her presence shut a lot of people up and made them feel ashamed.

Adwoa Dunn-Mouton: We exist because of the Civil Rights movement. And we can show that all of the work that we did has some fruit. The fruit is our ability to try to try to impact policy.

Sylvia Hill: Now remember the raison d'être for U.S. foreign policy linkage with the apartheid regime was anti-Communism.

Richard Lugar: We were still involved in the Cold War. And we thought that strategically the United States wanted to make certain that Soviet Union did not gain advantage from whatever was going to occur in South Africa. Nor that we would be denied geographical access. The strategic geopolitical position of South Africa was important.

Ronald Reagan: This is one of most vital regions of the world. Around the cape of good hope passes the oil the Persian Gulf, which is indispensable to the industrial economies of Western Europe. Southern Africa and South Africa are repositories of many of the vital minerals, Vanadium, Manganese, Chromium, Platinum, for which the West has no other secure source of supply. The Soviet Union is not unaware of the stakes.

Sampie Terblanche: P.W. Botha and his generals very cleverly in their propaganda campaign linked up with this anti-Soviet, anti-Communist propaganda. The saying was that this total onslaught was organized, orchestrated and financed out of Moscow.

P.W. Botha (archival): I believe that if Russia could succeed in conquering Southern Africa she will control most of the strategic minerals of the world and she will also be able to dominate Africa.

Les de Villiers: We played that card often and frequently with success. You would have Democrats in Congress who would hate every part of South Africa but say well they're bad but they're our bad guys. You know we should tolerate them and try to influence them.

Ron Dellums: TransAfrica played a big role in the transition of how people perceived South Africa, in moving away from the anti-Communist, geopolitical issue and starting to see the racial aspects of this issue clear and simple and straightforward.

Adwoa Dunn-Mouton: This has nothing to do with the Cold War. This was a struggle about white people controlling black people.

Narrator: The terms of the debate had now been changed. In the long run this would greatly influence U.S. policy makers. At the same time as these demonstrations were taking place the Nobel committee awarded its peace prize to an outspoken South African clergyman who would have a major impact on the United States. Bishop Desmond Tutu.

Desmond Tutu: The system, the system tries all it can to destroy us. It won't succeed because God, God is on our side. And he is a God of liberation.

Desmond Tutu: The world had not forgotten us. And the world was saying your cause is just.

Desmond Tutu: I accept this prestigious award on behalf of the South African Council of Churches, on behalf of all in my motherland, on behalf of those committed to the cause of justice, of peace, and reconciliation everywhere. If God is for us who can be against us? Thank you.

Desmond Tutu: Then suddenly you are an oracle. The things that you said before you got your—the prize you say after you've, and it looks like words of wisdom tumbling out of their mouth. Everybody is all ears.

Howard Wolpe: A trip that Bishop Tutu took to the United States which had great visibility was a very important media event that drew more and more Americans into the debate and the conversation about South Africa.

Howard Wolpe: Bishop Tutu by your presence this morning you've honored both the sub-committee and the institution of the Congress. I thank you.

Desmond Tutu: I used to say to myself that well our people are not going to get many chances of this sort and since I am here I will give it the best shot I have. And, and, and really tell it as it is. Nicely, nicely, nicely, but forthrightly.

Desmond Tutu: Apartheid is as evil, as immoral, as unchristian in my view as Nazism. And in my view the Reagan administration's support and collaboration with it is equally immoral, evil, and totally unchristian.

Narrator: Under mounting pressure from Congress Reagan finally agreed to meet with the Nobel laureate.

Reporter: President Reagan tried to explain his policy of quiet diplomacy to Bishop Tutu who has called that policy totally unchristian because he claims it encourages apartheid.

Desmond Tutu: I sought to do my spiel on South Africa and sanctions and so on. And he was not particularly impressed. Reagan said you know these people supported us in World War 2. I said Mr. President your history is bad. These guys you're talking about, the South African apartheid regime, most of them supported the Nazis.

Reporter: Afterwards Tutu said the meeting was friendly but—

Desmond Tutu: We did say that we believe the this policy had in fact worsened the situation of blacks in South Africa.

Ronald Reagan: I have to disagree with him on the fact the situation has worsened. It has not. We have made sizeable progress.

Desmond Tutu: There has not been a let up on the forced population removals. There has not been a let up of the denationalizing of blacks, turning them into aliens. And we haven't seen as it were the quid pro quo of constructive engagement.

Narrator: Tutu's spectacular visit greatly encouraged the TransAfrica demonstrators. But the organizers were faced with a problem. How could they keep up the number of arrests at the embassy.

Cecelie Counts: It wasn't that people wouldn't demonstrate. But the notion of getting arrested was very frightening to a lot of people. And so we figured we'd better try and find some celebrities. People like Harry Belafonte and Arthur Ashe had the kind of stature to call their peers and say would you do this?

Harry Belafonte: If being arrested is a way to demonstrate to people our seriousness in our involvement and to also encourage them to participate in the ending of the institutions of apartheid and the government of South Africa then I think we should pay that price.

Cecelie Counts: By this time it was about February so we'd been out there three months and we got a call from Stevie Wonder's agent. Stevie Wonder was in town and he wanted to go to the South African embassy. Can he come? Well sure Stevie Wonder can come you know. And he wants to get arrested if that's okay? Well yeah it's okay, these twenty people

can move right over. Stevie can get right in the middle. And sure the press was there and that was critical because once we started to get a pattern of celebrity arrests at the embassy it gave regular people more courage to participate.

Conwell Jones: It was just a good feeling to be up there among people of all races. You had the feeling that there was going to be freedom one of those days and you were going to be a part of that freedom. I was there for the whole year.

Gay McDougall: I was a part of the committee of five lawyers that organized to everyday go down to the police station and gain the release of all of the demonstrators. And I organized Lawyers Against Apartheid Day. It was well over a thousand lawyers. For two-thirds if not more this might have been the first time they'd ever been on a demonstration line in their lives. Maybe the last time. But it was rather comical to see people arriving for the demonstration line in taxis, right, and getting out with their attaché cases. Well they got to be very popular indeed. I mean somebody referred to them as designer arrests you know.

Sylvia Hill: Actually the vast majority of the people who got arrested were everyday working people. And tears still come to my eyes, and this woman came one day, and she was in her sixties. She said to me you know this is so hard for me, I've spent all my life trying to stay out of jail but I just have to do this cause it's the right thing to do.

Sylvia Hill: The thing about this tactic was that it mainstreamed the movement.

Narrator: Over the next two years more than 4,000 people were arrested. It was the longest running act of civil disobedience in U.S. history. And it began to spread beyond the nation's capital.

Sylvia Hill: Every city had a little core group that had been struggling for many years. So when they saw this tactic work in Washington they were very eager to put it together in their towns.

Reporter: Six were arrested at demonstrations in New York and protests against South Africa spread to Houston. In Beverly Hills the Reverend Jesse Jackson crowded into the South African consulate and led a pray-in.

George Bachrach: I think all of us are hoping there is a ripple effect. It is a movement that includes labor leaders, religious organizations, people who are liberal or conservative, Democrats, Republicans. And that's the importance of this. People are willing to say enough is enough.

Randall Robinson: To have our nation on the wrong side of this issue, supporting the most vicious regime on Earth since Nazi Germany, is a shame that we must all bear. There will be

hundreds of pickets, if not thousands, in many American cities. There'll be hundreds of arrests across the country. But this is only the beginning.

Jennifer Davis: Well I think right through the '80's what we were doing was putting together the various forces, and there were many of them, that worked on the divestment and sanctions movement. And what we called the people's sanctions movement because we had to build it at the base in order for it to impact on Congress.

Black speaker: Let us send a message to the rest of this country, to Congress, sanctions have to be imposed, they have to be imposed now. Sanctions now. Sanctions now.

Steve Phillips: The investment of capital within South Africa contributed to the strength of that regime. And we could make a stand on our campus, in our community, and in our country to have the United States stop any level of support. To have corporations that we were connected to stop any level of support for South Africa.

Amanda Kemp: We had tuition dollars that were invested into multi-national corporations that then did business in South Africa. So indirectly we were supporting the white dominating, black exploiting South African economy.

Narrator: The tactic at this local and institutional levels was called divestment.

Steve Phillips: Divestment meant for an institution to sell its stock in any companies that had operations in South Africa.

Jennifer Davis: It was an interesting campaign because people at the very local level actually had a lever to pressure companies.

Amanda Kemp: Divestment was a way for us to take some control of our money, and to pressure those companies to pull out of South Africa. So that the South African government would find itself compelled to negotiate with the liberation movements.

Narrator: This call for divestment spread across the country, from church groups to unions, but especially on college campuses.

Danisa Baloyi: There was no way one could turn away from the struggle in South Africa during that time, during that period because so much was happening and it was in the face. You couldn't ignore it.

Tony Glover: In the media everyday there seemed to be images of tear gas, singing students, bullets flying, people getting injured.

News announcer: This is ABC News Nightline. Reporting from Johannesburg, South Africa Ted Koppel.

Ted Koppel: Today at a place called Uitenhague South African police opened fire on some three to four thousand demonstrators. At least 17 are dead. The number is expected to rise.

Reporter: It started as a funeral procession for three people shot and killed by police last week.

Black witness: The police stay there and they hit him, and they hit him. The police hit him. The police hit him. There's the blood. You can see it yourself. It's the blood of—over there, over there, there's many blood, even here.

Narrator: The Uitenhague massacre came 25 years to the day after Sharpeville when another peaceful demonstration had been cut short by police gunfire. The coincidence did not go unnoticed.

Ted Koppel: Mrs. Mandela and I had just sat down to talk when we got news of the demonstrations and killings. For her on this 25th anniversary of Sharpeville it brought back a flood of memories.

Winnie Mandela: This is what our leaders went to prison for, um, those 23 years ago. This confirms what we've been saying all along. There has been no change in this government.

P.W. Botha: I must be emphatic on this, I'm going to keep order in South Africa and nobody in the world is going to stop me from keeping order.

Danisa Baloyi: We need to convince the board of trustees divest from companies that do business with South Africa.

Tony Glover: Columbia's response to that was to say thank you very much but we're not going to do that.

Michael Sovern: Well the early view on divestment was that it was counterproductive. And there was also concern about the endowment itself. And if divestiture would be damaging to endowment returns tuition would rise, there'd be less money for financial aid and salaries.

Danisa Baloyi: And I said I can't believe all of you. You know people in South Africa are dying. You are justifying supporting apartheid.

Tony Glover: And a majority of their trustees were on boards of these companies who were doing business in South Africa. So there was a real link to Columbia and the companies that were helping to support and institutionalize apartheid. And you have to respond, you have to respond to that. We decided to blockade the entrance the main administration building of Columbia college, which was then called Hamilton Hall. We planned it for the

anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King, April 4th, 1968. So we also made the connection to that movement.

Newscaster: The university has taken a firm position and has gotten a court order barring the demonstrations.

University representative: Violation of the order is punishable by fine or jail or both. It is in your best interests to leave this area.

Danisa Baloyi: And we were adamant, if South Africa is not a Sovern state—and we used Sovern's name—Columbia couldn't be a sovereign university.

Newscaster: Columbia University students say they will defy a court order to end their protest—

Newscaster: The student blockade at Columbia University went into it's tenth day—

Newscaster: Demonstrators at Columbia University are calling for a city wide march on the University tomorrow night.

Steve Phillips: We did have the beginning feeling of a movement. There was something that was happening, and it was around freedom and equality and ending oppression. And it gave this sense of what are we going to do to be part of it.

Carlos Mora: The students at Columbia University have provided us with a lead. A lead we have to follow.

Female student: The outpouring around the country is tremendous. Time after time people have come here to talk to us at Columbia to tell us your struggle has started struggle everywhere else.

Dan Rather: More than 100 students were arrested tonight at Cornell University campus after taking over the school administration building. 200 anti-apartheid protestors resumed that occupation at Cornell today. Police resumed arresting them tonight.

Wellesley student: Do we have to accept everything on your terms?

Wellesley trustee: Do we have to accept everything on your terms?

Wellesley student: No I think there's a—

Wellesley trustee: It sounds that way. No it does sound that way. It sounds very much that way.

Newscaster: Purdue University police arrested 22 people who refused to leave when their protest permit expired early this morning.

Newscaster: At the University of Illinois 60 students were arrested at a meeting of school trustees.

Newscaster: Anti-apartheid protests at the University of California, Berkeley campus, have mobilized thousands of students this spring. Rallies in front of the administration building seemed a throw back to the free speech demonstrations of the 1960's.

Mario Savio: Berkeley students have a tradition of resistance to racism.

Jesse Jackson: South Africa needs the investment of the Western democracies led by America and the prestige of American universities. South Africa needs our investment for oxygen and our markets for carbon dioxide. The character of our nation is on trial. Today we show patriotism by fighting for justice.

Steve Phillips: There was a whole sense of African-American progressive political expression that had strong, unapologetic, courageous leaders who were actually making a difference.

Ron Dellums: How can we wave the flag as Americans based upon our democratic ideals and embrace apartheid?

Amanda Kemp: I felt inspired and reminded of a conscience, that I had a conscience, that I had a role to play. And I also felt a connection with South Africa.

Maxine Waters: I stand here as a proud African woman deeply concerned about my people.

Steve Phillips: We were going to be part of this struggle. And so that's when we setup camp outside the president's office in th quad at Stanford. And people slept out there for weeks making our moral witness around Stanford cutting its ties to any companies that were investing in South Africa.

Reporter: Hundreds of colleges and universities, like Harvard and Yale, refuse to divest.

Roderick McDougall: We believe that the approach we're taking, which is the more difficult one, of one on one dialogue and trying to make our own judgments is more consistent with what we believe the people in South Africa in general would like.

Newscaster: Tonight protestors are getting ready for bed and perhaps a run in with campus police.

Student protestor: But they're going to have to come in with crowbars, you know, they're going to have to untangle people, they're going to have to look like the police in South Africa to get us out of here.

Amanda Kemp: I come from Mississippi. I was raised in the south Bronx. So I come from a background where I've seen a lot of injustice. The movement gave me a chance to do something about it. It was like a vehicle to be part of a progressive cycle of change.

Steve Phillips: We felt a direct connection to the experiences of people in another country. In a country on the other side of the world. So we drew a line from South Africa to Washington D.C. to Stanford.

Desmond Tutu: Thank you for caring so much that you were prepared to jeopardize your grades and good degrees because you are saying that there are things that are perhaps more important.

Narrator: By the summer of 1985 dozens of universities had decided to divest. But Columbia and Stanford were not among them.

Newscaster: The students hoped their tactics would force a showdown at a May 17th regents meeting where divestment was the topic of the day.

UC student: And to those who fear that an American withdrawal would be followed by a chaos that would hurt black South Africans the most one can only ask what they think is happening in South Africa now?

Narrator: Despite the ongoing brutality the rebellion inside South Africa continued. So Prime Minister P.W. Botha declared a state of emergency, giving the government unlimited powers. The police could search any home without warrant, they could detain and interrogate anyone without filing charges, mass funerals--a critical source of unrest—could only be held indoors for one person at a time. Within four days the government had used its new powers to detain almost 700 people. Around the world the evening news showed images of burning black townships. The state of emergency demolished any illusions that conditions in South Africa were improving. It changed minds everywhere.

Danisa Baloyi: Without the media I believe that most people in the U.S. to this day would have seen the issue of South Africa come and go like issues of the world come and go without actually paying attention to it. The media really put some of the nails in the coffin of apartheid.

Michael Sovern: It became increasingly clear in fact that the government was becoming more, not less, oppressive. And I called Desmond Tutu and his position was very clear that divestiture was the course that black South Africans wanted Americans to follow.

Tony Glover: I was getting ready to come back on school, I had moved back on campus, and I was walking down the street and one of the other people who were in the coalition came up to me--I think it was Laird Townsend--and said hey Tony did you hear, did you hear,

did you hear? I said what? He said Columbia divested. I thought it was a joke. I really thought it was a joke. I said no way, no way. Having said that on some days you have this sense that what you can do can change the world and that you actually got an institution to move like that.

Michael Sovern: It did accentuate the pressure on other major universities, and they were not happy about that.

Steve Phillips: An entity of Columbia's stature could actually take that step then it gave less excuse to Stanford to not be able to do something. So I do believe that Columbia's divestment added momentum towards Stanford to do the partial divestment that it ultimately did.

Narrator: The student protests were the biggest the nation had seen since the Viet Nam war protests of the 1960's and succeeded in pulling hundreds of millions of dollars out of corporations doing business in South Africa. But the battle didn't end with the students.

Amanda Kemp: The divestment movement seems to have very narrow goals. But actually in pressing for that demand what we wanted to do was to support the movement for sanctions against South Africa, and for all kinds of organizations and city governments to think about how were their funds being used to maintain the South African regime. The larger goal is to increase a sense of responsibility among people so they could look for ways in which they too were responsible and could act.

Dumisani Kumalo: The involvement of states and cities was very threatening to many companies, because they did a lot of business with the states and cities.

George Houser: The American Committee on Africa perhaps made its greatest impact in initiating the campaigns which then mushroomed.

Jennifer Davis: I traveled endlessly. We didn't have much money and we had very few people on staff. At the very height of the sanctions campaign in the middle of the '80's we had maybe ten people.

Dumisani Kumalo: It was a joy traveling around the country. Today I think about how did I do all these things. And you know how did I travel to all of these places. And I was in awe of these people who'll never see South Africa but believed in what we were trying to do. That is the miracle.

Walter Fauntroy: Certainly the discussion of the linkage between our policies here and South Africa found a ready ear in now 7,000 black elected officials. And, uh, many of our politicians became the movers of resolutions and laws that prevented state governments and city governments from investing in any corporation that was tied to South Africa.

Jennifer Davis: The best legislation, which we used as a model for several years after, was in Massachusetts.

Narrator: In 1979 Massachusetts representative Mel King read a disturbing report. His state had more money invested in companies that did business in South Africa than in companies that did business in Massachusetts. King introduced a bill that would force the state's pension plan to divest. The bill failed. What Mel King needed was an ally, a white one.

Dumisani Kumalo: It wasn't until Senator Jack Backman became interested in the issue of South Africa that we had this breakthrough. We brought him to New York, to ACOA. We sat down with him and educated him about South Africa.

Narrator: In 1980 Backman and King joined with ministers, teachers, union leaders, and professors to form an umbrella coalition; Mass Divest.

Chris Nteta: Mass Divest was created to light up a fire under the legislators in the Mass. House, to do the right thing. And so our role was to call press conferences, to have demonstrations, to promote the public awareness of the issues surrounding this bill.

Mel King: When you're hear you're giving a message, because you're saying we have enough of your involvement with racism in South Africa. We have enough and we don't want this being done in our name.

Narrator: The next year King tried again, this time with Jack Backman.

Dumisani Kumalo: Backman invited me to the Senate and I went up and spoke. The issue was whether a state had the right to interfere in foreign policy. Because by taking an action on divestment from companies doing business in South Africa that was supposed to be treading on the right of the federal government from being involved in foreign policy. But we argued that these were funds that belonged to the state and the state had the responsibility to invest them in a manor that was better for the residents of the state.

Narrator: In late 1982 the Massachusetts legislature approved the bill.

Chris Nteta: We saw it through to the Governor's desk. The Governor at the time was Ed King. He vetoed it. King vetoed it. Why? Because a South African government lobby group had been to Boston, lobbied the Governor, and he wouldn't sign the bill. We then had to go back to the House and get a two-thirds majority to overcome the veto. And that's what we did. And that's how the bill passed. The first in the country.

Narrator: $91 million were pulled out of companies doing business with South Africa. The combination of an African-American representative and a white Senator had performed a legislative miracle.

Dumisani Kumalo: The thing about America that's interesting, I have been involved in probably 40 odd states introducing legislation. Where it was white legislators only it never won, where it was black legislators only it never won. If you go and look at all the states where that legislation won it was always a white legislator and a black legislator co-sponsoring legislation. And this was to me the moral of what South Africa was going to be.

Narrator: Just months after Massachusetts divested its pension plan the divestment movement surfaced in New York City. The struggle there began with pineapples. Cans of pineapples in a homeless shelter.

Martin Fishgold: I had just started as the editor of the union newspaper The Unionist. We represent public service workers. In the shelter one of our workers complained to the supervisor these pineapples were imported from South Africa. And he didn't want to serve imported South African pineapples to the shelter clients. We promoted it through our union newspaper. And we brought the story to the New York Labor Committee. And that's when the bill got started. It wasn't some dry old bill, it was a sort of juicy pineapple.

Harrison Goldin: Then there were people who said no this is not the right area in which for us to manifest our opposition to apartheid. We have other ways in which we should do that. But not by using our economic clout. And Mayor Koch was vocal on that position.

Martin Fishgold: Mayor Koch said in his inimitable style well why don't we do a bill for Poland or why don't we do a bill for the Soviet Union?

Narrator: With the powerful mayor in opposition the pineapple bill began to lose momentum.

Harrison Goldin: During this period of course the coverage of this issue grew exponentially. Every night there was another story about the coming together of the moral forces and the political forces and the economic forces to oppose South Africa's apartheid system. And ultimately I think the American people were roused to the immorality of any complicity by the United States.

Martin Fishgold: The umbrella union that represents city workers, 125,000 members passed a resolution supporting the bill. Other unions passed resolutions. It was brought to New York's state legislature. There was support all over the state for that particular bill. Eventually Koch came around and was one of the people that took credit for it.

Newscaster: The mayor, the police commissioner, and the police union boss said today they've worked out plans to pull out $100 million worth of investments. They say it's part of a larger plan to eventually have all of the city pension funds stop dealing with companies doing business in South Africa.

Jennifer Davis: The next step was—it'd hadn't achieved its goal which was getting the companies out of South Africa—was pushing for cities and states not to purchase from any company that was doing business in South Africa. What we called selective purchasing.

Harrison Goldin: New York City was going to buy walkie-talkies, radios, and ordinarily the police department wanted to buy these instruments from the Motorola corporation. And we said consistent with this new policy we have unless Motorola stops behaving as a lousy corporate citizen we were going to take our business elsewhere.

Harrison Goldin: This demonstrates that we are having a material impact on American corporate policy in South Africa and that in turn is unquestionably having an effect in Pretoria.

Narrator: By April of 1985 thousands of city council members, state legislators, and local officials all over the United States began to work for divestment. Dozens of anti-apartheid bills, resolutions, and ordinances ripped through city councils and state legislatures.

Thomas Flaherty: I don't think that we want to have city investments in a country that is so shaky in a political and a social sense.

Charles Kindle: Apartheid will change if good people in chambers like this all over this country do something now while we have the opportunity.

George Houser: I had a tremendous feeling of fruition as the campaigns which we had helped to get started were being supported so broadly. All of a sudden it became the major campaign in a moment in history. And I said wow what is this?

Newscaster: Through the streets of Newark they marched. Church groups, and union organizations, ordinary citizens. The largest human rights demonstration in New Jersey history.

Newscaster: Well it's the law now. New Jersey is pulling out its pension funds from companies that operate in South Africa.

Newscaster: New Jersey's action is the strongest yet in terms of dollars. Two billion to be phased out over the next three years.

Governor Tom Kean: We are here today because events in South Africa have simply run amuck. And without our action I don't believe that situation shows any sign whatsoever of changing.

Newscaster: The divestment bill was opposed by the New Jersey business and industry association, citing a cost of about $65 million in investment fund losses. Governor Kean says the losses will be minimal if that, and that the unions who stand to take whatever loses there will be asked him to sign the bill.

Newscaster: Last week Kansas became the latest, joining ten other states that have already enacted partial or total divestment.

Dumisani Kumalo: If we had all 50 states we will be getting closer to 20 or maybe even 25 billion dollars. So it's a lot of money that's at stake.

Newscaster: During his visit to California Bishop Tutu addressed a joint session of the California legislature.

Desmond Tutu: You have an enormous responsibility. And we call on the international community, of which you are such an important constituent, please, please for goodness sake help us. Help us exert pressure, political pressure, diplomatic pressure, but above all economic pressure. Help us bring about this tremendous new society.

Narrator: Within a year California would divest, with the state forcing the entire University of California system to follow suit. A total of more than $11 billion.

Danisa Baloyi: One saw one being part of a buildup that finally had to be heard in Washington. So the focus was now on the White House.

Harrison Goldin: This was a period in which the United States government was not acting in a decisive and effective way. It was refusing to use the national leverage of America to force apartheid to end.

Narrator: The Reagan administration held to its position that reforms were proceeding apace in South Africa. But those reforms, like the repeal of the Mixed Marriages Act, were considered mere band-aids by those who were fighting for democracy.

Rev. Allan Boesak: If you have reforms that are designed not to change apartheid fundamentally, but to streamline so as to make it more acceptable, for instance, then you're not talking about reform. And so if you say people can now marry each other and they still can't live together technically because the Group Areas Act is still there, and they will still be classified and their children will still be classified Colored or Cape Colored or

whatever silly thing the government thinks of because the Population Registration Act is still there.

Bishop Desmond Tutu: We don't want reform. That is the point. I mean apartheid does not deserve to be reformed. We want to get rid of apartheid before it destroys South Africa.

Narrator: The wave of unrest did not let up, it would have a decisive impact on the U.S. government. In June 1986, Prime Minister P.W. Botha clamped down even harder on protests.

Reporter: It is fairly clear what the government is worried about. Next Monday is the tenth anniversary of a black uprising in the giant black township of Soweto.

Reporter: This is where it all began ten years ago. The revolt started by black schoolchildren was ended by policeman with guns. More than 500 died in the ensuing months of rioting.

Reporter: The white minority government of South Africa today said in effect to Hell what the rest of the world thinks. It ordered an unprecedented nationwide state of emergency.

Anchor: South Africa is a police state tonight. Hundreds of anti-apartheid activists have been rounded up. Police are cracking down, showing their strength and hardware in the streets, roadblocks have been set up. Witnesses claim many black students and dissidents were rousted from their homes overnight and simply taken away.

Reporter: What we can't show you is the heavy police and army presence in the townships, where the arrests of anti-apartheid organizers continues. Our coverage by law limited to newspaper headlines.

Reporter at press conference: Could you tell the reasons why you will not be divulging the total number of people arrested?

South African government official: No.

Reporter: New restrictions on the foreign press, especially television, amount to total censorship of coverage of the violence that has claimed more than 800 lives in the past year. The authorities seem more concerned that the world believes that all black townships look like this all the time, but in Soweto today, police wounded four mourners at a funeral. There are no pictures. The press was banned.

Randall Robinson: South Africa knows and has known for a long time that this is a television driven country. That in America, if it is not on television, it does not exist. And with that understanding, President Botha of South Africa said, 'We must take what we're doing in our country off the American television screen.'

Reporter: At the White House, meeting with Afghan rebels, the President refused to be drawn into the question.

Reporter: Mr. President, are you planning any actions against the South African government to put pressure on them?

Ronald Reagan: I'm not going to take any questions.

Reporter: But visits like this one by Bishop Tutu, here accepting a letter signed by 1 million Americans, has kept the US media focused on apartheid, despite the South African reporting restrictions. In the space of 3 weeks, Tutu made a score of speeches, not mincing his words when it came to confronting the US administration.

Bishop Desmond Tutu: We are going to be free. We want to be able to say, 'America, Britain, Germany – yes. They were our friends.' But remember when we are free we will remember who helped us to become free.

Reporter: Supporters gathered Arch-Bishop Desmond Tutu on the steps of city hall to announce what will be a rally plan with the city of New York's cooperation. With marches gathering in Dag Hammerskal Plaza and the Harlem State office building, and both contingents meeting on the Great Lawn of Central Park.

Reporter: You think sanctions are really the answer?

Randall Robinson: Sanctions are the only answer. We have to do everything that we can in the West to make clear to South Africa that the US no longer supports that nation and the apartheid system.

Reporter: Do you think these types of demonstrations actually do any good?

Randall Robinson: I think they have an enormous impact. This demonstration comes just before the House votes on the Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986.

Howard Wolpe: Clearly the American people are making the struggle for human dignity in South Africa their struggle. Can we ask anything less of the American government?

Howard Wolpe: We began to develop a lot of support among a lot of the conservative Republicans in Congress who really became very concerned that Reagan had seemed to embrace the apartheid regime, and they were uncomfortable with that.

Rep. Silvio Conte: This is no time for timidity. This is time to get to the jugular vein. This is time to do something to wake up the South Africans before we have bloodshed running rampant all over the streets of South Africa. Thousands and thousands of innocent people dead in that country.

Walter Fauntroy: They were doing it because their consciousness had been raised. They'd been bombarded for a year with pictures and television commentary of people being killed at funerals that were being held for the people who were murdered the week before, as they demonstrated in South Africa. People were fed up with it.

Narrator: Two bills came before the House of Representatives.

Cecelie Counts: We always had this two track thing. We had the Dellums bill, which was our dream, and then we had these other pieces of legislation, which we thought had a better shot of really getting passed. And Bill Gray had the quote reasonable bill.

Bill Gray: I believe every American, from sea to shining sea, from Maine to Texas, from Pennsylvania to California, does not want this nation financing apartheid.

Cecelie Counts: Boom, it was up for a final floor vote and passed with an overwhelming majority, and Ron Dellums stood up and said, 'I offer an amendment.'

Ron Dellums: The major thrust of this bill is to call for immediate divestment and total embargo against the government of South Africa. Comprehensive sanctions against South Africa.

Ron Dellums: I walked on to the floor of Congress with the incredible honor of advocating in legislative terms what millions of people in the country were advocating in the streets of America. Disinvestment was the cry of the movement. The cry of the movement was not a well-crafted compromise, it was not a slow, cautious walk towards ending apartheid. Out there people were saying, 'End it, end it now.'

Ron Dellums: The first reason why I offer these powerful sanctions against South Africa is that we must make this statement, we must cleanse ourselves in this country, and we must assert our role in the international community as a nation committed to the dignity of people, to the freedom of human beings, to the concept of human rights. Not as an abstract ideal, but as a reality. That is our destiny, that's our role, that's our profound obligation.

Ron Dellums: And at the moment that you can transcend your individuality and become the spokesperson for a movement in the Congress, there's no way to lose.

Speaker of the House: All in favor say Aye.

Members of Congress: Aye.

Speaker of House: All opposed will say no. The ayes have it.

Howard Wolpe: So the Ron Dellums amendment passed as the House bill.

Ron Dellums: And I almost died. I mean I almost had a heart attack right there. It was unbelievable. It was beyond my wildest imagination. We actually won, I mean this radical idea won.

Adwoa Dunn-Mouton: You know, it was a maneuver by the Republicans to bring forth the strongest legislation because they were sure that then it would just die in the Senate.

Richard Lugar: They passed legislation, which I characterized at the time as sort of scorched earth – namely get us out, keep us out, really separate on the economic, political situation. They, I feel, did not expect this legislation was going to become law.

Adwoa Dunn-Mouton: But it didn't die. The members of the Senate knew that there was too much happening, too much at stake for it to simply die.

Narrator: The sanctions bill now went to Richard Lugar, the head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Lugar had been instrumental in derailing the sanctions bill that had passed the House the year before in 1985, letting Ronald Reagan sign an executive order instead.

Richard Lugar: The President would say simply, 'This is it, this is my policy. We will move as an administration to do all the things the Congress wants to do with a couple of exceptions.'

Reporter: Mr. President, why did you change your mind on sanctions?

Ronald Reagan: Helen, I haven't. I thought here I tried to explain. We, I'm opposed and could not sign the bill if it came to me containing the economic sanctions, which we have repeatedly said would harm the very people we're trying to help. There were many things in that bill that we could agree with, and many of those are incorporated in this executive order.

Reporter: Those are basic sanctions, aren't they?

Ronald Reagan: Not in the sense of the economic kind of sanctions that the bill called for, and that, as I say, would have hurt the economy there.

Reporter: Won't hurt the economy?

Ronald Reagan: No, I don't believe so.

Richard Lugar: I'm certain President Reagan supported economic sanctions of various sorts, particularly with regard to the Soviet Union or the Soviet Bloc, but I think President Reagan saw South Africa as a friend.

Narrator: Now, the fate of sanctions was in Lugar's hands again.

Ronald Reagan: If post-apartheid South Africa is to remain, the economic locomotive of Southern Africa, its strong, developed economy must not be crippled. And therefore, I urge the Congress to resist this emotional clamor for punitive sanctions.

Richard Lugar: From the time in 1985, when I supported President Reagan, we had not seen change. President Botha over in South Africa, certainly had not indicated the changes that we had anticipated. We were looking at a situation where there was very likely to be racial civil war of a dimension that had been unheard of. Our strategic interests could have been hurt if guerilla warfare had brought about a different government in South Africa that was Communist. And so I indicated I would lead the fight on the floor of the Senate.

Narrator: Knowing that the radical House bill would never pass the Senate, Lugar offered a more moderate bill.

Richard Lugar: We've tried to formulate this bill with the thought of obtaining a very large majority of Senators.

Sen. Edward Kennedy: Make no mistake about it, every dollar that is invested in South Africa is another brick in the wall of apartheid.

Sen. Nancy Kassebaum: Faced with no means to influence events and little hope for progress, the only action left to us is to protest in the strongest terms possible. This is why I say that economic sanctions may now be unavoidable.

Richard Lugar: It was apparent that the country as a whole, at least in my judgment, had a disquiet in regard to apartheid, constructive engagement, South African policy.

Narrator: The Senate agreed and passed Richard Lugar's bill.

Howard Wolpe: What had happened was that the Reagan administration policy of constructive engagement had become literally an embarrassment. Not only to Democrats, but to Republicans as well.

Narrator: House and Senate then met to forge a mutually acceptable bill, and Congressman Gray's version went to the President's desk.

Richard Lugar: Then President Reagan asked me to visit with him. We sat together in the Oval Office. He strongly encouraged us to adopt once again the same strategy as the year before. Namely that President Reagan would once again issue an executive order incorporating most of what we had passed, but I indicated to him that I would not accept that, that we had been down that road before. And I told him how sorry I was that I could not support him on this, but then I tried to argue constructively why he should support and sign in essence the bill that we had.

Cecelie Counts: Anyway, he didn't care, he vetoed the bill.

Ronald Reagan: I am very much opposed to punitive sanctions.

Cecelie Counts: now we had to come up with the two-thirds majority it took to override a veto.

Richard Lugar: The override of a presidential veto in foreign policy is a very grave matter. It had not occurred in his term of office, and not since 1973 with any president.

Howard Wolpe: The Congress does not ever like to challenge the President on a foreign policy issue. You want to have a united foreign policy, the cliché about partisanship should end at the shoreline. So this was really quite unusual.

Cecelie Counts: We thought we could do that in the House, it was a Democratic House, we had people like Ron Dellums, we had the whole Congressional Black Caucus there, so we knew we could do that. But again we're looking at days, it's the countdown until the time that they leave. How are we going to do this in the Senate?

Reporter: This issue so split Republicans that Chairman Lugar of the Foreign Relations Committee found himself lined up against both the President and Senate majority leader Dole.

Sen. Robert Dole: This has become the focal point for the civil rights groups and the President's been at least indicated that he's a racist. I think it's gotten out of hand frankly.

Adwoa Dunn-Mouton: And staff people were spending their time dealing with South Africa.

Congressional staff member: How would like the Senator to vote? Against the President's veto.

Adwoa Dunn-Mouton: People were totally bombarding the offices with calls letters and visits.

Reporter: But the President kept trying, telephoning a number of Senators.

Sen. Frank Murkowski: I've had a telephone call from the Secretary of State, I've had a telephone call from the President and a meeting with the President.

Reporter: But the call that probably had the most impact on the Senate debate came yesterday.

Reporter: The South African government's threat came in a phone call from foreign minister Pik Botha to an ally in the fight against sanctions, Senator Jesse Helms. Helms

subsequently brought 2 farm state Senators, Edward Zorinsky and Charles Grassly, from the Senate floor to speak with Botha.

Edward Zorinsky: He indicated to me that if we overrode the President's veto that South Africa would immediately ban any importation of future grain shipments from the United States.

Roelof (Pik) Botha: I made a point of it that I was not issuing a threat, but I said to him, 'I'm speaking to you as a friend.' I said to him that I believed that the Senate was making a historic mistake and it was my duty as foreign minister to make sure that the Senators know what is at stake.

Reporter : Senator Richard Lugar, author of the sanctions, cried foul.

Richard Lugar: I find this entire activity by a foreign minister of a foreign country calling Senators off the Senate floor to be despicable.

Reporter: The clash between Republicans escalated when Helms defended his actions.

Jesse Helms: I stand with the President of the United States and I don't apologize for talking with Pik Botha because he's been my friend for a long time and I hope he calls me tomorrow.

Narrator: The Senate debate began. If a vote ends in a tie, one more person, according to law, can cast the deciding vote. In anticipation Ronald Reagan sent that one person.

Cecelie Counts: And then George Bush came in, because he was vice-president at the time, and took his seat to break the tie and I remember looking at Randall and just saying, 'Oh my God, here it goes.' We had brought in on our side people like Coretta Scott King to signal that this was an important issue for the African-American community. Congressional Black Caucus members came over and used their right to stand in the Senate chamber.

Walter Fauntroy: And one of his loyal Republican members stood up on the floor of the House and said, 'On most matters I support the President, he's the greatest President we've had. but on this matter of apartheid, I am voting to override, because Reagan ain't running this year, I am.'

Sen. Mitch McConnell: For the first time since I came to the Senate, I break with my President on a major issue. I've been with him on all the major foreign policy initiatives of this administration, but on this one I think he is ill-advised, I think he is wrong.

Les de Villiers: If you are faced with an issue like apartheid, you can only go so far with the argument we don't want to interfere with other people's internal affairs, or the country's important to us economically, etc. Back home you have a constituency that consists of

African-Americans, it consists of people who hate to see oppression in other countries, etc., and you think of the next election. I mean South Africa isn't worth anybody's position in the Congress or the Senate.

Richard Lugar: We're not destroying the government. That government is self-destructing. At this late point, as a friend of that government, we are saying, 'Wake up!' That's what the sanctions are about.

Richard Lugar: We had to break out of the mold. We were in a quiet here that was leading towards disaster and not only did our country need to understand the dimensions of apartheid in South Africa, but so did the rest of the world.

Narrator: The final voting began.

Cecelie Counts: And we were all just holding our breath, we didn't know which way it was going to go. My heart was in my throat.

George Bush: On this vote, the ayes are 78, the nays are 21.

Cecelie Counts: And the tears just rolled down our eyes. It was just absolutely incredible to know that we had defeated, that we had overturned US foreign policy and that we had done without all that money, without corporate support, but with popular pressure on the government to change and go our way, was a tremendous victory.

Walter Fauntroy: I don't know when I have been more proud to be an American and more proud of America than I am on this day, October 2, 1986.

Adwoa Dunn-Mouton: We had actually passed a bill that was going to become law.

Randall Robinson: For those who have sacrificed so much for so long, tonight there is hope. There is clear hope now for democracy in South Africa and because of that our own democracy is stronger. We are a better, stronger and more principled nation than we were one hour ago.

Reporter: Was this a particularly painful decision for you to go against the President and Senate majority leader Dole and the other Republicans on this?

Richard Lugar: Yes it was. Of all Senators now sitting in the Senate, my voting record in support of the President from 1981 to 1985 by Congressional Quarterly records is the highest. I've supported the President more that any other Senator.

Richard Lugar: I remember walking back to my office from the Senate, terribly crestfallen that it had led to this kind of break with Ronald Reagan, for whom I had such regard and still

do. We were very close. He had pled with me in the Oval Office, sitting cheek by jowl not to do this, not to press this.

Kent Durr: Given the fact that even Mr. Reagan wasn't able to protect us brought home to us just how serious the situation was. America's a giant and when they move legislation against you, you have to know that you must listen because this is serious business and we took it very seriously,

Les de Villiers: South Africa was in great trouble. And the clouds were there, the storm clouds were there in '86, and there was nothing that could save South Africa any longer.

P.W. Botha: I still think it's bad, miserable attitude on the part of the United States to apply sanctions against a developing country, one of the best developing countries in Africa.

Pik Botha: And I just hope that now that they have taken their pound of flesh, they will just leave us alone and stop being the moral policeman of the world.

Narrator: The sanctions imposed by the American Congress were far from a major economic blow to apartheid. But the law was a watershed.

Howard Wolpe: This was one of these rare instances in American politics where it was the grassroots mobilizations that really changed the political environment.

Amanda Kemp: My personal tiny bit, our collective contribution to the anti-apartheid movement, had an impact. They made Reagan accountable to people like me.

Ron Dellums: I would say that this was the first time that the African-American community was able to affect foreign policy in a dramatic way. We were not alone, there were other people, non-blacks, involved in the movement all along. But African Americans were in the forefront of that movement, pushed the movement very hard at the grassroots level, organizational level, legislative level, national, state and local.

Narrator: And America's action reverberated throughout the Western world.

Billy Modise: Everybody was playing it safe because you are dealing with a big power. So once that big power took that position through that act it was a big assistance to our struggle.

Peter Sluiter: It was only after the United States imposed sanctions that national parliaments and governments, and the European parliament and the council of ministers--which is the decisive in the European Union--followed suit.

Oystein Gudim: We quoted some of the American legislation when we met politicians in Norway. And said that if America and Reagan can do this why can't you? And this is rather embarrassing to the Norwegian politicians. And we used it for all it was worth.

Narrator: By the end of the critical year, 1986, it could no longer be said that the United States was the great and abiding friend of the apartheid regime.

Adwoa Dunn-Mouton: We had won. We had really won.

THE END