Loosing The Bonds: The United States And South Africa In The Apartheid Years

Robert Massie

Loosing the Bonds is popular, narrative history at its best: a consuming, dramatically told David and Goliath story about the moral power of justice triumphing over powerful forces of oppression. Apartheid—the brutal enforcement of racial segregation by South Africa's white government—became official policy in post-World War II South Africa, coinciding with the rise of the civil-rights movement in the United States. From the Kennedy administration on, Washington spoke against apartheid but, pressured by American corporations making big profits in South Africa and the geopolitics of the Cold War, In Loosing the Bonds, Robert Kinloch Massie underscores the contributions of white liberals, particularly the social justice ideology and activism of the Christian left. Francis Nesbitt, in Race for Sanctions, focuses on African Americans as the primary impetus of the anti-apartheid movement. The large majority of anti-apartheid activists in the United States did not visit South Africa. And so Ashe traveled across several borders—both real and imagined—to emerge as a crucial transnational actor within the anti-apartheid movement in the early 1970s. Born in Richmond, Virginia, in 1943, Arthur Ashe excelled at tennis from an early age.
Much has been written about American policy toward South Africa, but no work has so engagingly and authoritatively chronicled the movement by liberal activists to compel American corporations to disinvest during the apartheid era. Massie traces the gradual growth of the campaign to persuade institutional investors (churches, universities, and later state and local governments) to sell stocks of companies doing business in South Africa as a means of pressuring them to disinvest. Some institutions unwilling to divest stock eventually agreed to vote for disinvestment stockholder resolutions -- or His book Loosing The Bonds: The United States and South Africa In The Apartheid Years was completed over the next four years, and published by Doubleday in 1997. It won the Lionel Gelber Prize for the Best Book on International Relations in 1998 and was reviewed favorably across the United States, including the New York Times.[8]. In 1994 he won the statewide primary election and became the Democratic candidate for Lieutenant Governor of Massachusetts.Â Global Codes of Conduct: An Idea Whose Time Has Come (Notre Dame University Press, 2000). Book review of biography of Nelson Mandela, Los Angeles Times Book Review, May 1998. Loosing the Bonds: The United States and South Africa in the Apartheid Years (New York: Doubleday, 1998). Loosing the bonds. The United States and South Africa. in the Apartheid Years. By Robert Kinloch Massie. Illustrated.Â For all his own intense involvement in the anti-apartheid cause, Massie is surely aware of the dangers of moralistic lecturing. Maybe he has been watching recent world developments. Different forms of American scolding have managed to unite in resentment the leaders of Western Europe; the rulers of Communist China; Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel; Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia, who recently blamed Jewish financiers for his country's problems -- and President Nelson Mandela of South Africa, who insisted on going to Libya to embrace Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi despite the vehement objections of the
Resistance to apartheid within South Africa took many forms over the years, from non-violent demonstrations, protests and strikes to political action and eventually to armed resistance. Together with the South Indian National Congress, the ANC organized a mass meeting in 1952, during which attendees burned their pass books. A group calling itself the Congress of the People adopted a Freedom Charter in 1955 asserting that “South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black or white.” In 1985, the United Kingdom and United States imposed economic sanctions on the country. Under pressure from the international community, the National Party government of Pieter Botha sought to institute some reforms, including abolition of the pass laws and the ban on interracial sex and marriage. Much has been written about American policy toward South Africa, but no work has so engagingly and authoritatively chronicled the movement by liberal activists to compel American corporations to disinvest during the apartheid era. Massie traces the gradual growth of the campaign to persuade institutional investors (churches, universities, and later state and local governments) to sell stocks of companies doing business in South Africa as a means of pressuring them to disinvest. Some institutions unwilling to divest stock eventually agreed to vote for disinvestment stockholder resolutions -- or
Apartheid, the Afrikaans name given by the white-ruled South Africa's Nationalist Party in 1948 to the country's harsh, institutionalized system of racial segregation, came to an end in the early 1990s in a series of steps that led to the formation of a democratic government in 1994. Years of violent internal protest, weakening white commitment, international economic and cultural sanctions, economic struggles, and the end of the Cold War brought down white minority rule in Pretoria. Despite supporting a domestic civil rights agenda to further the rights of black people in the United States, the Truman Administration chose not to protest the anti-communist South African government’s system of Apartheid in an effort to maintain an ally against the Soviet Union in southern Africa.