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## Trustees oppose apartheid

Mary Ellen Matava  
*University of Maine*

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## Trustees oppose apartheid

by Mary Ellen Matava  
Staff Writer

Four UMaine trustees interviewed said they were against the apartheid practices in South Africa, but only one said he would definitely vote to divest from companies with branches in that country.

"I am strongly opposed to the policies of government in South Africa, and as a trustee of the University of Maine I will vote for total divestment of funds from companies with holdings in that country," said Alan M. Elkins, a trustee from Portland.

The UMO Council of Colleges passed a resolution April 12 calling for the university to divest its holdings in South Africa, a country which practices racial segregation and discrimination. This resolution will go before the board of trustees for consideration.

"I think there is no dispute with the premise that most everyone is opposed to apartheid, including trustees, administration, professors and students. The question is, what to do about it," said Joseph G. Hakanson, a trustee from Westbrook and chairman of the finance committee.

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## Trustees oppose apartheid

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He said the divestment from companies with operations in South Africa would be showing disapproval for what goes on in that country. Another option would be for university officials to meet with the company and verbally express their disapproval.

"What the university does could have little impact or it could be very significant," Hakanson said.

"There isn't a great deal of dispute on the fundamental problem," he said. "What strategy to use is the question."

Richard I. Morin, trustee from Fort Kent, said he hasn't decided how he will vote on the resolution yet. "I have a positive feeling with the move to

divest, but I don't feel I can decide until I receive all the information about it," he said.

"I am very much opposed to the regime in South Africa," said Harrison I. Richardson, trustee from Portland. "There is a general sense on the board not to support a racist country."

"I believe that we as an institution are complying with a special set of guidelines for no direct investment in business activities in South Africa,"

The university may hold investments with companies that have operations in that country, but we are not directly supporting the apartheid policies of the South African government," Richardson said.

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