

SENATOR Edward Kennedy, in his well publicised tour of South Africa in January, made it clear in his speeches that he plans to "offer specific recommendations on divestiture" to the American people and to the Congress of the United States.

In an address to 600 members of various Chambers of Commerce in Johannesburg, he said that neither he nor the American people could accept statements of goodwill as substitutes for concrete actions to achieve fundamental rights in South Africa.

Since his return to America, newspaper reports from there have speculated that the Senator is set to "turn the heat on American businesses operating in South Africa" as a prelude to championing tougher economic measures against South Africa.

It is believed Senator Kennedy is likely to sponsor legislative measures in the United States that will call for "selective disinvestment" or "constructive disengagement" by American companies found to be supporting or entrenching apartheid.

There is doubt whether Senator Kennedy, who has already co-sponsored Bills urging a stop to new American investments in South Africa, will call for total disinvestment immediately.

Kennedy strategists are expected to seek out views in the US on how best to monitor the activities of American companies who have links with South Africa and how others can put pressure on the country.

In an interview with the Johannesburg Sunday Express, Senator Kennedy was asked what measures by the SA Government he would regard as being far-reaching enough to make him review his anti-apartheid campaign.

Senator Kennedy said they would include "expansion of the vote" to people of all races, restoration of South African citizenship to Blacks and a halt to forced removal and resettlement of Blacks.

He told South African businessmen that private communications of concern from corporate leaders in SA to Government officials could "... only be gestures, words spoken on the wind..." if business was also busy implementing pass laws against Black families and accepting and aiding other measures which entrench apartheid.

He said no test was clear for South Africa now, no issue more closely watched in the outside world, than the fate of the union movement.

"To have unions is not enough; to respect their rights is essential," he

Kennedy



Senator Edward Kennedy in South Africa.

said.

Senator Kennedy added that to fire workers for striking made a mockery of any claim to free collective bargaining.

The state of South Africa's unions was also inextricably related to the status of Black people in the rest of the legal system.

On his return to America, Senator Kennedy said he had found that "only Whites in South Africa oppose disinvestment ..."

This statement was slammed by various Black leaders and academics who said they were "astounded" that Senator Kennedy had programmed his memory so selectively.

In an editorial headlined "Amazing forgetfulness," the Durban Daily News pointed out that Senator Kennedy could hardly have missed the central point made at a prayer breakfast he attended — hosted by Chief M G Buthelezi.

It said the "... leader of the country's largest national group" had told him that not only the Zulus but many ordinary working Blacks opposed disinvestment.

Hundreds of demonstrators lined up to greet him in Durban with pro-investment banners and Black businessmen have also spoken personally to him, pressing their opposition to disinvestment.

The Director of the Centre for Applied Social Studies at the University of Natal, Professor Lawrence Schlemmer, says research among working class Blacks has shown that they are generally against disinvestment.

Research among more politically polarised Blacks might conclude, he said, that they supported disinvestment.

"It therefore depends on which Blacks you are talking about," Professor Schlemmer added.

and Buthelezi ... what they said.

DURING his meeting with Senator Edward Kennedy in Durban, Chief M G Buthelezi, Chief Minister of KwaZulu and President of Inkatha, made it clear that he believed that the problems of South Africa would be resolved within South Africa by South Africans.

He said that if there was one message which the United States Government and other Western Governments needed to hear was that Black South Africans were "... ordinary people who behave as human beings behave the world over."

South Africa was in a situation of flux and change in which opinion was deeply divided about what to do and what not to do and about the goals which Blacks should be striving for.

The history of the Black struggle for liberation could be written as one Black failure after another to bring about radical change. Failure after failure had produced one new attempt after the other and Black politics was characterised by raging disputes about what next should be done and how it should be done.

It was not surprising that Black groups in South Africa were at loggerheads with each other about both aims and objectives and about tactics and strategies to achieve them.

Chief Buthelezi went on to say that what has become known as the Black Consciousness grouping tended to look towards a socialist future. This rejection of the free enterprise system and capitalism as a philosophy was not surprising.

What little free enterprise that had emerged in South Africa had not benefited Blacks — capitalism had been misused.

Black experience was one of political subjugation supported by economic oppression and the experience of seeing successive governments siding with big business to maintain the status quo.

The step beyond the call for socialism was the step into the armed struggle.

"Those who reject the country's existing institutions and its political and economic order must necessarily tend towards revolutionary approaches using revolutionary tactics and strategies," he said.

Like every other Black leader Chief Buthelezi said he had to consider carefully revolutionary options "... and I did so while the fires of deep anger burnt in my breast ..."

Black South Africans would be, he added, the last people on the continent of Africa to triumph over racist-inspired social, economic and political oppression.

However, the victory of Africa had taught him that the political victories in struggles for liberation were "but first steps" into a tortuous future.

Chief Buthelezi assured Senator Kennedy that "my views have not changed one bit" since he had discussed the South African situation with his late brother, Senator Robert Kennedy.

"In short, I am and have always been an opponent of the National Party Government which rules us without consent in South Africa..."



At his most recent rally at the Jabulani Stadium in Soweto, 30 000 people turned out to welcome Chief Buthelezi.