



of the black businessmen of Nafcoc (National African Federated Chambers of Commerce), trade unions and political groups, especially the ANC. Much-quoted has been her assertion that 'frequently the public utterances of participants in this debate differ from their private, off-the-record assessments, because many people feel constrained from saying publicly what they think'.

How are sanctions meant to impact on politics? How have they affected the South African economy until now, and can we calculate their future impact?

These questions permeate the Lipton book. In Chapter 6 ('Politics, Propaganda and the Aims of Isolation') she examines the claims of pro-sanctions authors, for example, that sanctions will 'reinforce black bargaining power': like other claims by special pleaders on both sides, this one is 'neither absurd nor self-evident'. Discussion is complicated, she points out, not only by the extravagance of propagandists but also by the conflicting assessments of sober analysts. In two more chapters she looks at the economic and then the political impact, ending with the verdict already mentioned (see above).

Readers should consult a number of the articles in Leadership but the big gun is Ronald Bethlehem's 'High Stakes'. His theme is that 'hope' for 'South Africa's Third World population', which is largely black, lies in 'continued economic growth' and this 'depends on capital accumulation', i.e. precisely what is threatened by the sanctioneers. A host of other questions may bewilder readers who still need to be convinced that substantial investment will empower blacks, encourage redistributive trends, and so forth. Read also here: 'The Art of Empowerment' by John Kane-Berman; 'Hackles Rising' by Robert Schrire; Raymond Parsons' 'A Rising Tide' - articles which also help in answering the next question.

Could 'business' do more to influence government policy, promote reform, and stem the sanctions tide?

Lipton briefly explores 'The Attitudes and Power of Business', concluding that 'capitalists have less influence than is assumed'. Referring to the disinvestment side of sanctions, she alludes to the fact that loss of confidence has prompted sizable investment outflows [NB: Erwin, p.24]. In an interesting aside she cites a business leader's view that the tendency of nervous investors to avoid the risks which 'entrepreneurship and job creating activities' generally involve means that 'Internal disinvestment poses a greater danger at present [1986] than external disinvestment'.

In Leadership, the Parsons, Schrire and Kane-Berman articles apply. See also 'Seizing the Moment', an interview with Gavin Relly, chairman of the Anglo American Corporation - although what enlightened business needs and wants comes out more clearly than any advice as to what this sector can and ought to do. In 'Pack up your Troubles' Duncan Innes provides an interesting evaluation of the way in which the disinvestors have actually behaved. 'Although the local white business sector has undoubtedly been the major beneficiary of disinvestment so far, it could turn out to be something of a pyrrhic victory over the longer term', he says. 'Drifting down to Zero' by Sheryl Raine details the winding down of corporate social responsibility programmes since sanctions and disinvestment began to bite.

Is there a gap between the theory and practice of sanctions in effecting change? Whatever the answer to this and other pertinent questions may be, have sanctions a momentum of their own?

Some answers may be found in Lipton and Leadership. Lipton names additional sources for readers with the stomach for more. □

The Sanctions Debate and the Black Sash

Ordinary South Africans cannot travel overseas without being questioned about their views on sanctions and disinvestment. For Sheena Duncan, who is a Vice-president of the South African Council of Churches and widely identified as a former National President of the Black Sash, it has been imperative to present a reasoned and consistent response. Abbreviated (and sometimes inaccurate) accounts of her views have caused some debate at home and so we publish them here. She makes the following points:

1. The South African Council of Churches has called for comprehensive sanctions.
2. The Black Sash has not made any statement on sanctions because we have no common mind on the issue which is an indication of how difficult the subject is.
3. I personally would support the call for comprehensive mandatory sanctions if I thought they were politically possible in the foreseeable future. If South Africa were to be totally isolated by every country in the world simultaneously, apartheid would probably not last a fortnight but I do not think that this is possible. I am not thinking of the West here. We have all kinds of trading partners outside the Commonwealth, the European Community, and the United States.

4. Because I do not think comprehensive mandatory sanctions are immediately possible I have urged people to think strategically about the sanctions they can apply. I believe they must be carefully chosen to have the maximum and most rapid impact on the South African government in the first place and on the white electorate in the second place. After a sanction is imposed it must be carefully monitored to see if it is achieving the desired effect.

5. I believe the disinvestment campaign has not achieved any perceivable political effect and I have used the Coca Cola example to point out that the really effective sanction would have been if Coke was withdrawn from the South African market. I have said that the withdrawal of the company had no more than a one night news effect and I think it a pity if people expend resources of energy on such campaigns when there is so much else they could focus on.

6. Financial sanctions seem to produce the most rapid and long term results. When the banks refused to roll over the South African loans in 1985 it was only a matter of ten days before the State President announced that the pass laws would be repealed and that citizenship would be restored to those from whom it had been taken. The first has been done and the second has been partially done, and the process is still ongoing. I believe that the South African withdrawal from Angola and our apparent sincerity in letting the Namibian 435 process go ahead is caused by our severe balance of payments problems. In other words, the transfer of foreign money to South Africa should be a major focus.

7. I think the sports boycott has been one hundred percent successful in that it has changed white attitudes in a way which makes thousands of white South Africans more receptive to political change and that it is now

beginning to have political effects in the travels of Danie Craven and others. However I have doubts about the cultural and academic boycotts because they seem to me to be messy, and to cut us off from new thoughts which could open our minds while they allow in the dregs of 'western civilisation', such as Frank Sinatra et al coming to Sun City.

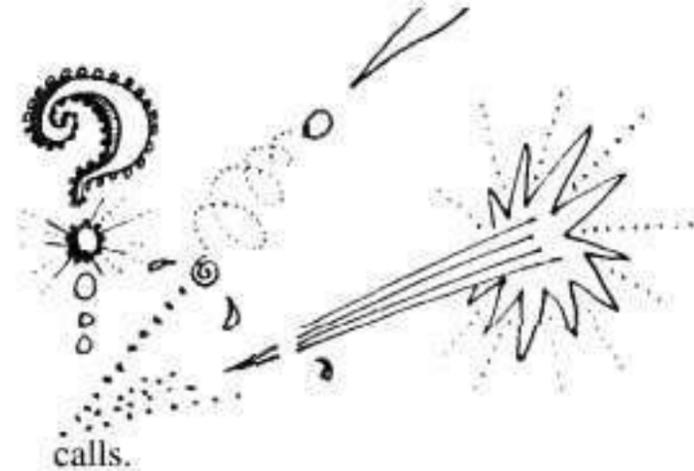
8. I have been against the coal embargo because of the Mozambique mineworkers who are the first to be laid off when the old labour intensive mines are closed and who, because they are foreign migrants, have no



Plantu in *Human Rights: Questions and Answers* © UNESCO 1981.

right of residence in South Africa, however long they have worked here, so they are deported back into that hopeless situation in Mozambique and do not even have the very limited Unemployment Insurance Fund benefits because they are foreign migrants who are excluded from the UIF Act.

However, after a good conversation with Eddie Funde, the ANC representative in Australia, I acknowledge the point that coal is one of our major earners of foreign currency and that the embargo is consistent with the attempt to reduce foreign earnings. This is an example of the dilemma in which we find ourselves when we are convinced of the efficacy of sanctions as a non-violent weapon for forcing change but have to face our responsibility for those who will really suffer, immediately and personally, because of our



calls.

In this regard, when someone challenged me about a mythical black mother whose fourteen-year-old is in detention, asking if her suffering could be made worse by sanctions, I said it could be if her three-year-old were to die of a malnutrition-related disease because the breadwinner had lost his job. Suffering cannot be quantified. It is absolute in the loss of a child whether through detention or through hunger and only people who have not experienced it can talk about its degree.

9. I challenge the right of South African businessmen to go around the world opposing sanctions because they will cause black unemployment. They were the ones who caused our structural unemployment in the first place which had reached a level of 25% before sanctions were imposed. In the last century mine-owners devised the homelands policy when they created the reserves in order to deprive black people of their land and force them to work on the mines by the imposition of taxes. If they are now so concerned about black unemployment, why are they investing their money in other countries all over the world? I suggest that this is a worthwhile focus wherever South African businesses are establishing themselves in other places. It should be prevented, and this also implies the necessary element of sacrifice for the country refusing their investment, which ought to be a part of all non-violent commitment.

10. However it is not true that all the opponents of sanctions are pro-apartheid. Some of those who most vehemently oppose sanctions have also opposed apartheid in a committed and sacrificial way for years and years.

11. I think the ban on landing rights for airways is excellent and I think the people's sanctions such as the boycotts of South African fruit are very good. They do not have



much financial effect because they are easily avoided by sanctions busting techniques but they are invaluable as vehicles for raising the level of awareness and information in the electorates of other countries.

12. I am opposed to the withdrawal of diplomatic representation because those services are invaluable in getting sound information out of this country but such withdrawal could be of immense im-

portance at the end when we have reached the point where a dramatic thrust could push the whole thing over. I am in favour of the kind of specifically targetted sanctions such as threats by Europe in response to the fund raising legislation earlier this year.

13. As for the findings of different surveys of black opinion on sanctions, I use the Schlemmer and Orkin ones as examples. Professor

Schlemmer and Mark Orkin hold very different views on sanctions. Both of them conducted surveys of opinion in black urban communities countrywide. Both surveys came out with remarkably similar results, within a percentage or two. The results showed 24% entirely in favour of sanctions, 25% against and 51% in the middle in favour of sanctions provided they do not cause a loss of jobs. That just highlights how difficult the subject is. □

A CORRESPONDENCE ON SANCTIONS

The author of the following letter addressed to Mary Burton, National President, has asked to remain anonymous.

I have resigned regretfully from the Black Sash. An inactive supporter, I'll not be missed but I am reluctant to leave without giving reason.

For about six years I have been disenchanted by the lack of protest by Sash against sanctions and the disinvestment campaign. It will be said that Sash has no policy in this matter. In fact some years ago when Sheena Duncan was overseas, she gave tacit approval of the campaign.

Not being an ivory tower academic nor up too close to black hardship like the clergy but, as the wife of an entrepreneur, close to the harsh realities of keeping a business viable, I cannot go along with Sash's attitude. To create and maintain job opportunities for unskilled black people in today's uncertain economic climate is a difficult task. I consider it criminal, indeed, un-Christian for prominent people to call for sanctions or merely to stand by and assist by omission in the destruction of the South African economy. Once destroyed it will take decades to rekindle and will thus deprive (particularly black) people of employment and the power and dignity which that labour could give them.

Sash's stalwart stand against apartheid and all its attendant horrors is undeniable. But this wonderful work is rather like treating the

symptoms and not the cause. The bottom line is a viable economy to absorb our unskilled labour; this is the real machinery to bring about change and upliftment. I had hoped that a strong statement to this effect might be made by Sash; none has been forthcoming and thus it seems that Sash agrees with the campaign.

Please do not trouble to reply to this letter. As far as I am concerned, I had to try to make this point before resigning and do not wish to take it further.

Mary Burton's response:

Thank you for your letter of 1 August giving me your reasons for resigning from the Black Sash. I discussed it with other members of the National Executive and we think it is important to reply.

The questions which you raise are serious ones which have often been considered by the Black Sash. There are many complex issues we face, of which sanctions is only one, and we discuss them often. Sometimes we can reach agreement only on the fact that there are powerful arguments and strongly held views which are valid even when they conflict with one another.

There are those, like you, who wish to see an end to apartheid and believe this could be achieved by a process of evolutionary change which would not destroy the economy but would lead to greater employment and prosperity for all. There are others who believe that

unless the South African government is forced by economic and political pressures to reverse its policies there will be such war and devastation that irreparable harm would be done not only to the economy but to the whole fabric of South African society.

We know that these views are honestly held, and that even while they are at variance they come from a common determination to see apartheid and injustice brought to an end.

Those of us who serve as representatives of the Black Sash do our best to reflect the complexity of such views. We know that we are more fortunate than many other South Africans in that we have the space and the freedom to debate them. Our primary goal remains unchanged: to work for a society in which all will have equal rights to participate in government, in decision-making, and in generating and sharing the wealth that South Africa has to offer.

We are not seeking to persuade you to withdraw your resignation which was clearly prompted by serious thought, but we should like you to know that we do not dismiss your views nor regard these issues lightly. We believe that it is part of our strength to encompass diversity of opinion within our organisation, and that other sections of our society would benefit if they were to encourage similar debate.

Thank you once again for writing to me. □