



a time to choose

SOUTH AFRICA

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FOREWORD

THE recent meeting of the General Committee of the World Student Christian Federation in the Argentine called on all member Movements to take action to persuade their governments to enforce economic sanctions against South Africa. This was done because the General Committee believed that it is only through universal, total and swift sanctions that the calling of a National Convention attended by representatives of all the ethnic groups would become practicable. Such a conference would have to consider the constitutional, economic, social and educative matters which must be faced if a non-racial society is to be established in South Africa. In calling for sanctions the General Committee was anxious that member Movements should recognise their continuing responsibility for the people of all races in South Africa, stating that "we align ourselves with those working for a non-racial society, seeking the well-being of all. Only in such a way can our action keep open the possibility of reconciliation—our ultimate goal".

On September 17th the General Council of the Student Christian Movement of Great Britain and Ireland declared that it was "deeply concerned with the situation in South Africa", believing that it is "a crucial one for the whole of humanity", and called its membership to study and action on this issue. The Council went on to "strongly urge branches to take immediate action to persuade and influence all relevant political groups and parties to support economic sanctions against South Africa", and decided to send the following resolution to Her Majesty's Government:

"The General Council of the Student Christian Movement of Great Britain and Ireland calls upon the Governments of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland to support a resolution in the Security Council of the U.N. in favour of economic sanctions against South Africa, provided that the Expert Committee at present examining the logistics of sanctions recommends such action,

with the goal of establishing a National Convention of all relevant groups in South Africa to draw up a new constitution for a non-racial society".

This matter was again considered by the Political Commission at its meeting on November 8th. The decision was taken at this meeting to publish a pamphlet which would set out the case for sanctions, summarising much that has appeared in other publications on this subject, notably the report of the International Sanctions Conference held in London in April, 1964. This report has now been published as a Penguin Special. Also much use has been made of Colin and Margaret Legum's *South Africa: Crisis for the West*, and the study report of the British Council of Churches *The future of South Africa*.

All who read *A Time to Choose* will I am sure be grateful to Christopher Holmes for the care he has taken in providing this useful synopsis of the arguments in favour of sanctions. Both individuals and groups should find this pamphlet of considerable help as they come to make their choice on sanctions.

December, 1964.

AMBROSE REEVES

I THE MEANING OF APARTHEID

"Kaiser M . . . is a married man with a worry—one which non-Africans should know about. Kaiser has been married for 8 years and has never lived with his wife, never had a home. The law has not allowed it. That is the literal truth, and it applies to the vast majority of African marriages, as family life is normally lawful only under the starvation conditions offered by the reserves. Kaiser goes home from Capetown to the Transkei on unpaid leave for 3 months every few years, and occasionally Patience, his wife, visits him in the location. But they don't live together, they have no *right* to live together . . . If they want another baby, they must arrange a visit".¹

Anyone who has ever attempted to put the case for international action against South Africa must have been exasperated time and time again by opposition from one particular quarter—the objections of well-intentioned people who just do not know what is being done in that country. So we must begin with an attempt to outline, very briefly and inadequately, what apartheid means, in personal terms, in terms of every-day human suffering, for the non-white in South Africa.

The Government claims that apartheid is a respectable theory of separate development: the Africans have their own reserves, the Bantustans. But these comprise a mere 13 per cent of the total area—for 70 per cent of the population. A small minority of the population retain 87 per cent of the land, including all mineral resources, and industrial capital, and the best of the agricultural land. In 10 years only £3½m. has been allocated to aid industrial development in the reserves. Consequently 7 million Africans (60 per cent of the total) are forced to live and work in the white areas.

Separate development is at worst hypocrisy, at best an idealistic dream—it has not been and will not be implemented. For the industrial structure of the nation is dependent upon unskilled African labour. If it were withdrawn, the farms, the mines and the manufacturing industry would grind to a halt. But the African in the white areas is treated not as an essential resident, but as a temporary migrant. He is allowed no freehold tenure in the townships; he has no voting rights; he is compelled to carry a pass wherever he goes;

1. "The Black Sash" October 1963, quoted by Colin and Margaret Legum "South Africa: Crisis for the West" p.159

except in a minority of cases, and under increasingly stringent conditions, a man is not allowed to have his wife and family live with him; under the ironically named "Civilised Labour Policy" certain categories of jobs are reserved for whites only—and their number is liable to be suddenly increased in response to the pressure of white Trade Unions; if an African is unemployed for a month he is automatically "endorsed out" of the area, even though he may have lived there all his life; he has no right to form unions or organise protests; he is a migrant on sufferance—with many duties, but no rights. And there will be no attempt to integrate the African into the life of society, for in Dr. Verwoerd's words:

"The Bantu Labour force is not to be integrated. One does not integrate one's ox or one's ass".

But it is not only power which is concentrated in the hands of the whites; it is also wealth and health. The average white income is £991 per annum; for the African it is £177. During the period 1946-61 white wages rose by 35 per cent; non-white wages rose 11 per cent—less than the rise in the cost of living. It is often argued that this discrepancy can be attributed to the low productivity of unskilled African labour. And there is no doubt that the gross inequality of educational opportunity has denied many Africans the chance to acquire technical skills, and has thus limited their efficiency. But this is not the only reason. A comparison of relative wages in the mines of South Africa and Zambia reveals that the wage in the former are £80 per annum (plus rations); in the latter they are £300 per annum. Actual output of the workers is similar in both areas; but wages are not similar because in South Africa labour is exploited—it is not given a wage equal to the value of its marginal product. Since South Africa is the richest nation in the continent in terms of natural resources, and the most developed industrially, African wages ought to be considerably higher than elsewhere. Their actual low level is the result of misappropriation by the white minority.

As a consequence of this poverty the Africans are very vulnerable to the ravages of fatal disease. The life expectancy of the average white is 70; for the non-white it is 40. Over 50 per cent of African children die before the age of 5; the rate for whites is 5 per cent. Not only incomes, but housing, health facilities and public amenities are all biased in favour of the white élite. It is not surprising that the victims of apartheid become scornful and angry when they are exhorted to be patient. It is not easy to be patient when one's children are dying.

POLICE BRUTALITY AND TORTURE

In March 1960 world opinion was outraged when the police opened fire on a peaceful African demonstration at Sharpeville, killing 67 and wounding 182—almost all shot in the back. But that was no isolated incident: it has been estimated that over 500 unnatural deaths have been caused by apartheid. At a recent trial a white police constable admitted that physical torture is

common, and stated: "I don't think there is a police station in the country which does not use violence during questioning".

Recent allegations of torture include incidents where detainees have been compelled to stand for periods ranging from 38 to 80 hours without respite; electric shock treatment; assault by police officials: suffocation by plastic bags; and long periods of solitary confinement—23 hours per day in a small cell. It is not surprising that 3 men have recently committed suicide under the mental breakdown caused by interrogation and torture.

One affidavit just available is that of a 23-year white Liberal physiotherapist, Miss Stephanie Kemp, who relates how she was interrogated—with no food and only a short break to go to the lavatory—from 11 a.m. to 1 a.m. the following day. For most of the time she was forced to stand straight. Then Sergeant V... stood in front of her and "started hitting me on both sides of the head—several blows. He then grabbed me by the hair and pulled me down to the floor and started banging my head on the floor while holding my hair... I then started saying 'I'll talk', but he did not stop, and he still went on banging my head to the floor. I felt as though I was falling a long distance and everything was turning in my head and going black, and I imagined I was becoming unconscious". Even more shocking accounts concern the treatment of a pregnant woman detained in solitary confinement for 3 months; and of a married woman, with a baby still breast-fed and 2 other children, who was kept for interrogation in isolation for 2½ months during the Rivonia trial, where her husband was one of the accused.

The Suppression of Communism Act; the Sabotage Bill; the 90 Days detention clause—giving the Minister the absolute right to detain anyone, incommunicado, and without charge, for renewable periods of 90 days—these are the weapons of a police state. Dr. Verwoerd has said that his policy is "like granite"; and his Government has shown that it is determined to uphold white supremacy, by whatever means are necessary. The increasingly repressive legislation, the persistent violation of the rule of law, the police brutality, torture and violence are inevitable concomitants of such a policy.

THE AFRICANS' RESTRAINT

In the face of this almost unbearable provocation the African nationalist parties have displayed a dignified restraint which puts the whites to shame. For 37 years, from its formation in 1912 until 1949, the Africa National Congress adhered strictly to constitutional methods of protest—resolutions, demonstrations and delegations to the Government. After 1949, when the result of all this pressure was simply a reduction in the rights of the Africans and the election of a Nationalist Government committed to the extension of white domination, the ANC resorted to civil disobedience, and latterly sabotage. But despite the violence perpetrated by the whites the ANC is still committed to avoid violence to persons. And again and again its leaders

have reiterated their desire to create a non-racial society. As Lutuli declared in his Nobel lecture in 1961:

"The true patriots of South Africa will be satisfied with nothing less than full democratic rights. In government, we will not be satisfied with anything less than direct individual adult suffrage and the right to stand for and be elected to all organs of Government. In economic matters, we will be satisfied with nothing less than equality of opportunity in every sphere. In culture we will be satisfied with nothing less than the opening of all doors of learning to non-segregatory institutions on the sole criterion of ability. In the social sphere we will be satisfied with nothing less than the abolition of all racial bars. *We do not demand these things for the people of African descent alone. We demand them for all South Africans, white and black*".

The struggle in South Africa is not between proponents of white supremacy and black supremacy. It is between the advocates of white domination and those of all races who seek racial equality—men like Albert Lutuli, Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and Alan Paton. The Nationalist leaders have degraded themselves and their country by their callousness and inhumanity: they have made nonsense of their claim to be the "civilised race" in South Africa. The future lies with those truly "civilised" people, who have endured discrimination, and imprisonment, and years of hardship for their ideal of a non-racial society. It is *their* conviction that change can only be achieved through the enforcement of massive international pressure—economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations. The remainder of this pamphlet will consider the logistics of such an operation.

2 THE LEGAL BASIS

One of the most frequent arguments used by those who oppose economic sanctions against South Africa is that they would be illegal. This case is based on 2 Articles within the U.N. Charter. Article 2(7), which lays down that:

"Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorise the U.N. to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state . . . , but this principle shall not prejudice the enforcement of measures under Chapter VII."

and Article 39 (in Chapter VII), which states that:

"The Security Council¹ shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression, and shall make recommendations, or decide what measures shall be taken in accordance with Articles 41 or 42², to maintain or restore international peace and security."

The debate rages over the question as to whether or not the policy and actions of the South African Government constitute a "threat to the peace". For several years the British Government has argued that, even though South Africa has employed armed suppression to enforce entrenched white minority rule and overt racial discrimination, thereby violating the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, nevertheless the actual threat to the peace comes from opposition groups within South Africa, and from other African States. The Government may, it is argued, have acted in such a way as to provoke a violent reaction, but it is a misuse of language to say that they are actually threatening the peace. At this point the U.K. representatives at the U.N. have come perilously close to double-talk. They have supported resolutions stating that the situation in South Africa "seriously disturbs international peace and security", but have simultaneously denied the existence of a "threat to the peace".

In fact, as Colin and Margaret Legum have pointed out,³ British law assigns full guilt to someone who acts in such a way as to provoke a breach of the peace. The primary threat comes from the upholders of apartheid through their use of violence against the majority of their country; the role of those who respond by sabotage or preparation for military intervention is a *secondary response*—it does not constitute the original provocation. Such protests, or gestures of solidarity, are surely a justifiable reaction to the treatment of their oppressed brethren.

But a British Council of Churches working party report contains another, and equally convincing, argument for intervention. It claims that the real issue is less that of a threat to the peace than of basic human rights. Article 55(c) of the Charter states the intention of the U.N. to:

"promote universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedom for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion".

But "promote" involves no binding obligation. Even though under Article 56:

"All members pledge themselves to take joint and separate action in co-operation with the Organisation for the achievement of the purposes set forth in Article 55," no sanctions are laid down for a breach. These Articles in Chapter IX are not subject to the exclusion clause relating to the permissibility of intervention in the domestic affairs of a member nation under Chapter VII, where there exists a "breach of the peace".

1. It should be noted that under Article 25, decisions of the Security Council are binding: "The Members of the UN agree to accept and carry out the decision of the Security Council".
2. These Articles provide for the "interruption of economic relations" and "such action by land, sea or air forces as may be necessary to restore international peace and security".
3. op cit. p.241

But it is a serious situation when the supreme international organisation is powerless to enforce one of the fundamental clauses of the Charter, leaving it impotent in the face of flagrant violation of human rights. The International Court of Justice, however, has stated that:

"When the Organisation takes action which warrants the assertion that it was appropriate for the fulfilment of one of the stated purposes of the U.N., the presumption is that such action is not ultra vires the Organisation".

This certainly is relevant to the situation in South Africa. Professor Johnson, who quoted this in his expert paper to the International Sanctions Conference, deduces from this that:

"When the U.N. organs take decisions by prescribed majorities there is a presumption that they act legally. The presumption is not absolutely irrebuttable, but it is sufficiently strong to ensure that U.N. need not tremble to act through fear of exceeding their powers".¹

To put it in a nutshell: if human rights are being violated in South Africa, then even though the Charter provides no enforcement measures the U.N. would be within its rights in taking action to remedy the situation. A heavy responsibility rests on the U.N. to act with caution; intervention must not become capricious or indiscriminate; it must be preceded by all possible means of persuasion; but it must not be shirked. The decline of autonomous nation-states requires that the U.N. should be empowered to intervene in order to safeguard elementary human rights. The policies of apartheid constitute a justification for the extension of the international rule of law in those terms.

3 THE APPLICATION OF SANCTIONS

Since 1946 the United Nations has repeatedly expressed its concern about events in South Africa. 28 General Assembly and 4 Security Council resolutions have been passed condemning apartheid. It is often asserted that South Africa is "victimised" in the U.N. by the Afro-Asian bloc; but in 1946, when the protests began, there were only 3 African and 8 Asian members. The U.N. was opposed to apartheid long before the rapid influx of newly independent states. Nevertheless their influence has certainly strengthened the pressure for action.

1. "Sanctions against South Africa" p.77—the Report of the International Conference on Sanctions held in London, April 1964.

In November 1962 the General Assembly passed by 67 votes to 16, with 23 abstentions, a resolution calling on all member States to sever economic relations with South Africa.¹ In August 1963 the Security Council also went beyond mere condemnation—requesting member nations to stop the sale of arms to South Africa and demanding the release of political prisoners² (this resolution was not mandatory).

On December 4th, 1963, the Security Council became more constructive: it passed unanimously a resolution requesting the Secretary-General to establish a group of experts “to examine methods of resolving the present situation in South Africa through full, peaceful and orderly application of human rights and fundamental freedoms to all inhabitants of the territory, regardless of race, colour or creed, and to consider what part the U.N. might play in the achievement of that end”. The Expert Committee (which included Sir Hugh Foot, now Lord Caradon, as Rapporteur) reported³ in April 1964, recommending that every effort should be directed towards the formation of a National Convention, fully representative of all groups in South Africa. But if the South African Government does not accede to the request by the stipulated date, then, *“the Security Council would be left with no effective peaceful means of resolving the situation, except to apply economic sanctions.”* And they suggested that the interval before a final reply is required from the South African Government should be used to carry out an expert examination of the economic and strategic aspects of sanctions. This Committee has since been established, with a mandate to report to the Security Council not later than February 28th 1965.

EFFECTIVE APPLICATION

If the Security Council does decide to enforce sanctions, then the question of effective application arises. There is now widespread agreement that economic sanctions should be total, not limited to certain key products; and to be effective they would require a naval blockade. This would mean a major operation: the coast-line of South Africa is 1600 miles long, and 40 vessels enter her ports every day. Moreover since goods could be re-exported through Angola and Mozambique the blockade would need to cover another 1500 miles of sea. 5 to 7 fleet carriers, equipped with planes using advanced radar, and about 50 patrol vessels would be necessary. Only the Western powers could mount such a blockade—the U.S.A. has 26 fleet carriers, U.K. 4, France 3, Australia, Canada, India and the Netherlands 1 each. The Soviet Union has none. And it is estimated that the operation might cost £60 million per month.

But, given the will, sanctions could be effectively applied. As William

1. The U.K. representative voted against this resolution. 2. The U.K. representative abstained.
3. The Report is published as “A New Course for South Africa” (United Nations)

Gutteridge wrote in his paper to the Sanctions Conference:

"If there were full co-operation on the part of all members of the U.N., then the task is relatively simple from the military point of view . . . It is to some extent a question whether the long-term strategic and immediate political concerns of the major powers of the West are seen to co-incide sufficiently to engage them in a project which in all other respects is bound to be unpalatable. *Given such participation the necessary blockade would be a matter of organisation*".¹

It has also been argued that the success of the operation depends upon the assent of the Soviet Union. And since Russia stands to gain from the spread of Communism consequent upon widespread violence and chaos in Southern Africa, it is in her interests to frustrate U.N. intervention and wait for the inevitable explosion. If it is true, as *The Observer* has said that:

"If we do nothing we are virtually ensuring that the Russians and Chinese will be pushed into the job themselves, and will become the heroes for three decades to come of three continents—Africa,² Asia and Latin America",² then Russia must be hoping against hope for a policy of appeasement from the West. Maybe she is. But dare she veto a Security Council resolution to enforce a naval blockade? When the proposal to impose sanctions comes before the Security Council, this will be a critical "moment of truth" for all the major powers. The decision of Britain in that vote will reveal, with unmistakable clarity, to all the countries of Africa and Asia, whether we are, or are not, sincere in our claims to care deeply for racial justice and a strong United Nations.

Just the same, however, applies to Russia. If the future of Communism depends upon the choice of the emergent nations, then she, no more than Britain or the United States, can afford to disregard the claims of justice for the sake of ruthless Cold War power politics. Russia might *want* to veto the resolution; if it were enforced she might *want* to frustrate it by provoking a crisis and diverting American forces. But she could never dare to do so; or be seen to think so.

To sum up, economic sanctions could be effectively enforced by a universal naval blockade of South Africa. The operation would be complicated, expensive, and in many ways uncongenial to the Western powers. Given the will, however, it is perfectly feasible. As in so many issues the major requirement is determination, and the readiness to bear the cost. It is urgently necessary for all who support a policy of sanctions to indicate their convictions as forcefully and clearly as possible.

1. op. cit. pp.108, 115.

2. 19th April, 1964.

4 BRITAIN'S STAKE IN SOUTH AFRICA

During recent years apartheid has been harshly denounced by the British Government. Mr. Patrick Wall, for example, then the U.K. representative to the Fourth Committee of the United Nations described it as "morally abominable, intellectually grotesque and spiritually indefensible". Yet Britain continues to benefit from investment and trade with South Africa. £1000 million of British capital¹ is invested there. 28 per cent of South African exports come to the U.K., and 30 per cent of their imports (worth £150m. per annum) come from here. The annual dividend income of British investors totals £60m.

This includes returns on ventures like Cyril Lord's textile factory just outside Transkei—part of the iniquitous "border industries", located purposely on the edge of the Bantustans in order to take advantage of the cheap labour forces, yet maintain white control. For capital is attracted to South Africa by those very policies which are morally unacceptable. Taxation rates are low *because* African welfare services are inadequate; wages are low *because* the Africans are denied bargaining rights, and are liable to be "endorsed out" of an area if they cause any trouble; labour is cheap *because* there is a supply of surplus manpower, and this is the direct result of the Job Reservation Act and other legislation which has left 500,000 urban workers (14 per cent of the labour force) unemployed. And it is these light tax rates and artificially cheap labour which attract capital to South Africa rather than India. This is the logic of the market economy.

Those who argue that politics must be kept out of economics have failed to grasp this basic point: it is the political policy of the South African Government which makes investment so profitable. Capital does not flow to South Africa *despite* apartheid, but *because* of apartheid. Ideology and trade cannot be divorced. So long as Britain refuses to interfere with trading relationships with South Africa the citizens of this country will continue to benefit from policies which the Government has denounced.

THE EFFECT ON THE BRITISH ECONOMY

The corollary of this argument that Britain gains most from investment and trade with South Africa, is, of course, that we stand to lose most if sanctions are imposed. The most thorough study of the impact of sanctions on the

1. For a fuller account of British investment in South Africa, see "The Collaborators" by Rosalynde Ainslie and Dorothy Robinson.

British economy is the paper presented by G. D. N. Worswick of Oxford University to the International Sanctions Conference.¹ The imposition of a blockade would mean that the goods exported to Britain by South Africa would immediately cease. Thus if no alternative markets, domestic or foreign,² were found, the loss would be £150m. per annum. This would not, of course, be evenly spread throughout the community, but would affect certain firms—causing lower profits, lower earnings and some unemployment. To this must be added the higher cost of imports from alternative (and presumably less, efficient) suppliers, and the loss of investment income, shipping and banking revenue. The total could amount to £210 million per annum.

But this is the most pessimistic view. If the blockade were enforced through the Security Council, then arrangements could be made to offer International Development Association loans to the developing nations “tied” to exports previously sent to South Africa. Moreover, alternative supplies of imports are often only slightly, if at all, inferior. The channels of international trade are very often more the result of history than present market forces. There is really not much difference between Californian and South African oranges. To quote Worswick's own conclusion:

“If Britain acted unilaterally, and then proceeded to cope with the consequential balance of payments problems by the wrong means, the outcome might mean a sacrifice of 2½ per cent of national product. But if an optimal policy were followed, a combined operation of all the nations, the overall loss would be imperceptible, especially in economies which are growing at a reasonable rate”.

5 THE EFFECT OF SANCTIONS ON SOUTH AFRICA

An understanding of the likely consequences of a naval blockade on South Africa requires some appreciation of the country's power structure. Since 1948 the political power has rested in the hands of the Afrikaaner Nationalist Party. The economic power of the community still belongs to the English-speaking community: 99 per cent of mining capital, 88 per cent of finance

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1. “Sanctions against South Africa” (ed. Ronald Segal) pp.167-185.
 2. Even if domestic markets for the goods were found this would still mean a loss of foreign exchange. The dearer imports, and loss of dividends and invisibles would also affect our already delicate foreign exchange position. If sanctions made the balance of payments situation critical, then it might be necessary to employ deflationary measures over the whole economy, thus trebling the total loss of national income; it should be noted, however, that the present Government is pledged not to employ deflationary methods.

capital and 75 per cent of commercial capital. It is important to realise that the vast majority of the English-speaking whites have no ideological commitments to apartheid—their support of white supremacy derives from the fact that it offers them economic prosperity. Politically they are mostly supporters of the United Party, whose main disagreement with the Government concerns the industrial colour bar, which undermines economic efficiency.

Thus the white population possesses no monolithic unity. And it is even less widely recognised that there are sharp divisions within the Afrikaaner community. During the past decade many of the more thoughtful and intelligent leaders have realised and stressed the need for re-assessment of policy. This has been particularly true of prominent intellectuals, in the Press, the universities and the Government, as well as in the Church and even the Broederbond.¹ For example Dr. Scholtz, the editor of *Die Transvaler* (a newspaper formerly edited by Dr. Verwoerd), and an influential Nationalist, wrote in 1961:

"Many Afrikaners say the outside world has no say over us and that we are boss here. This sounds all very well. Everyone likes to be boss in his own country, but we cannot be boss over the non-whites. We have not yet come to realise what is happening in the world . . . It would be foolish in the extreme to surrender to the pressures of the outside world, but it would be equally foolish to expect that the present position can remain as it is to the end of time".²

The Bantustan "separate development" policy enunciated in 1958, was precisely such an attempt to assuage and pacify Western criticism. It failed even within its own limited framework because the solid block of industrial workers and farmers, on whose support the Government depends, were not prepared for the sacrifice involved in developing African reserves. The Nationalist Party can only retain power so long as it maintains the privileged position of the white manual workers, urban and rural, who stand most to lose by the abolition of apartheid. In the final analysis the support of the majority of both English-speaking *and* Afrikaner whites is based on economic self-interest. Religion, nationalism, ideology are the buttresses, rather than the pillars of apartheid.

THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH

This, incidentally, demonstrates the invalidity of one argument often used by Christians—namely that the unique relationship between the Dutch Reformed Churches and the Nationalist Party offer an opportunity to influence the thinking of the latter. If only, so the argument runs, we could convince our fellow-Christians that apartheid is a denial of the Gospel, then we would almost have converted the Government.

1. The highly powerful Afrikaaner secret society, dedicated to the maintenance of white supremacy.

2. Quoted by the Legums. op. cit. p.298.

There are two flaws in this argument. In fact the first place, a minority of Christians within the D.R.C. have already challenged apartheid. And invariably their own Church has disowned them. For example, the World Council of Churches Consultation at Cottesloe in 1961 accepted an agreed statement containing criticism of apartheid—the D.R.C. promptly repudiated its representatives. A more recent instance concerns the Reverend Byers Naudé, who left his pulpit in 1963 to become the Director of the multi-racial Christian Institute. The Legums have commented on his experience:

"The fate of the Rev. Byers Naudé and his family is the fate of every dissenter in the Church: social ostracism re-inforced by public attack. As he sadly admitted. 'The Afrikaner who deviates is likely to be labelled a traitor, to be accused of "falling for the bribes of the English", a sell-out of his people and a political renegade'.¹ Even if it were possible to alter the views of many Afrikaan Christians they would be branded as heretics rather than heralded as prophets.

But the second objection is even stronger: namely that even if the D.R.C. and the Government wanted a change — whether it was to make separate development a reality or to develop a non-racial society with majority rule—they would be powerless to achieve it. For as we have shown above, the hub of influence is the reactionary solid block of Afrikan manual and clerical workers, who fear desperately the competition of Africans. No Government can retain power unless it obeys their wishes.

THE WHITE REACTION

We must now answer the crucial question: what would be the effect of sanctions on the white people of South Africa. There is little doubt that the *initial* reaction would be violent anger, a uniting of white opinion, a reinforcement of the "laager" (stronghold) mentality, and a determination to fight to the bitter end. This has been the response to United Nations criticism, the threat of boycotts, the demand for the release of political prisoners, the decision of various countries (and now Britain) to end the supply of arms. It seems inevitable that it would be even stronger if the Security Council imposed economic sanctions.

But when the original flame of indignation at such interference has died down, it is likely to be replaced by a radical, and agonising, re-appraisal. First it will affect the more thoughtful elements in the community, who realise the impossibility of fighting the whole world—3 million versus 2000 million. Moreover, who do you fight? The Africans? But they aren't doing anything. The blockading ships? But they are only a policing patrol force. Economic sanctions are an infuriatingly non-violent means of coercion.

1. op. cit. p.31.

Then, as industry is dislocated and unemployment grows, even the most reactionary groups will be compelled to re-examine the position, as they have no incentive to do when profits are rising and prosperity booming. Psychologically, effectively enforced sanctions would be most dramatic, for they hit everybody where it hurts most—in the pocket. If it is true, as we have shown, that apartheid depends on the economic self-interest of both English-speaking and Afrikaan whites, then once that same self-interest indicates change, they are likely to at least consider other possibilities. The situation will at last become fluid.

In such circumstances one can imagine the considerations which will occur to the white community. We assume that the blockade will have been enforced with the goal of establishing a National Convention of all relevant groups to draw up a new constitution for a non-racial society. If the whites accept this, then economic prosperity will be restored. Admittedly, it will mean majority rule, probably nationalisation of industry and the mines; the end of segregated housing etc., and job reservation. But the African leaders have declared they want the participation of all racial groups; and the white settlers seem to have fared reasonably in several other independent African States. With their superior education they could still play a leading part in society. Anyway it is worth trying if the alternative is economic ruin and almost certain revolution.

It seems plausible that confronted with the *reality*, as opposed to the mere threat, of sanctions, the white minority will radically re-assess the future of South Africa. As the boycott begins to affect the nation's material welfare, then the Government will very likely give way to a new coalition party (or possibly a United Party Government) prepared to accept the terms of the Security Council. The operation could well achieve its object inside 6 months.

THE PESSIMISTIC PREDICTION

Now it may be that this analysis is altogether too optimistic. Apartheid runs deep in South African society, affecting even the lay-out of the cemeteries. Their opposition to change might be absolute. As the B.C.C. Report says:

"To them this would represent a reversal of their history, an abandonment of their most cherished belief, a revolution in their present way of life, and the end of Afrikaner nationalism . . . It is for this reason that Government spokesmen have declared that the practice of white supremacy can be defeated only by violent revolution . . . They would brandish the *ultimate* goal of an integrated society as the immediate aim of foreign intervention, and the apparently innocuous proposal for a conference as the opening of the flood-gates. To this the Afrikaner volk would rally as a man. They are not settlers, but a people; they may break, but they will not bend".¹

1. It must be pointed out that the Report is here stating a position, not declaring the views of the Working Party who prepared the Report.

It is possible that this is an accurate prediction. A blockade in those circumstances would be lengthy and expensive, and in the end a U.N. expeditionary force would be required to avert greater bloodshed and violence. But if it is true that only a bloody and violent revolution could overthrow the Government, then all measures short of a full-scale economic blockade, backed up by military force, are useless. All lesser measures, whether diplomatic pressure, a ban on the sale of arms, taxation on repatriated dividends or a unilateral boycott on trade, may have value as moral gestures, nothing more.

It may be that justice can only be restored in South Africa by the forcible removal of those who maintain a racial tyranny. In that case, and in the interests of the *whole* community, they must be forcibly removed. This is the justification for the use of force to avert a greater evil, the basis for prophylactic violence—violence “to cure the disease”. Those who take seriously the realities of the world situation must be prepared for the United Nations, as the supreme international authority, to use force as the instrument of justice. For “without coercion there is no rule of law. The only rule of law is the law of the jungle, the law of unfettered force”.¹ This power must be used sparingly; it must only be used when all else has failed; but in the last analysis used it must be.

Thus it is somewhat disturbing when those who for years have rejected pacifism as impractical and unrealistic, suddenly eschew violence as unchristian. Realism demands tough, decisive action. Reconciliation is not possible when one group stands as master, the other as slave. It cannot be based on injustice. Force must not be employed against one racial group to place another over them, but to bring about the conditions of equality in which reconciliation can take place. Sanctions are proposed *for* the white people of South Africa, since apartheid destroys the humanity and freedom of the oppressor even more than the humanity of the oppressed. Our concern for *all* races leads to the conviction that only the disciplined and determined use of coercive measures can create the necessary conditions for racial harmony and co-operation.

1. Lord Caradon, in a speech to a U.N. conference on Africa.

6 THE CHALLENGE TO ACT

Sir Alec Douglas-Home, in his first speech as Prime Minister expressed his belief that the greatest danger confronting humanity is that of a race war on a world scale. There is strong evidence to support that opinion. Outside intervention is inevitable in South Africa—the question is whether it will be disciplined, limited intervention by the United Nations, or an open war between black and white, creating havoc and bloodshed which could not be healed for generations.

The African States are determined to relieve their black brothers—they have already begun to arm. Their “Summit Conference” at Addis Ababa in 1963 “informed the allies of the colonial powers that they must choose between their friendship for the African peoples, and their support of powers that oppress African peoples”. Soon Britain will have to make that choice.

The challenge to act in South Africa arises from the attempt of the white minority to maintain a racial autocracy. By repressive legislation and police brutality they pursue with ruthless determination a policy of apartheid which is an offence to the brotherhood of man and the dignity of God’s children.

PERSUASION HAS FAILED

For 50 years the white minority have ignored the claims of the African and coloured people for social, political and economic rights. They have ignored the appeals of the U.N., of Governments, of Trade Unions, of Churches, of groups of individuals both within and without. As Chief Lutuli has said:

“Who will deny that 30 years of my life have been spent knocking in vain, patiently, moderately and modestly, at a closed and barred door. What have been the fruits of moderation? The past 30 years have seen the greatest number of laws restricting our rights and progress, until today we have reached a stage where we have no rights at all”.

The only type of action which will compel change is that which strikes at the pillars of apartheid. The initial reaction to concerted sanctions would be a retreat into a “laager” mentality. But this has been the response to all outside criticism. Moreover it is in the interests of the whites to convince the West that a blockade would simply re-inforce their collective determination—they hope to dissuade us from action (and usually succeed). In fact economic sanctions would shake their unity and determination in a way that mere gestures of disapproval never would, for they would attack the root foundation of white supremacy—their privileged economic prosperity.

THE VICTIMS OF APARTHEID WANT SANCTIONS

The most recent call for U.N. intervention came from Chief Lutuli on the occasion of the sentences at the Rivonia trial:

"I appeal to all Governments throughout the world, to people everywhere, to organisations and institutions in every land and at every level to act now to impose such sanctions on South Africa that will bring about the vital, necessary change and avert what can become the greatest African tragedy of our times".

Years of fruitless struggle have convinced them that only outside intervention can overthrow the apartheid regime. Opponents of action sometimes suggest that sanctions would hurt Africans most. But *they* must be allowed to decide that, and the Annual Conference of the South African Congress of Trades Union did when they said:

"It is sometimes stated, even by well-meaning people abroad, that if the world boycotts South Africa, we, the working people, will suffer most. Even if this were true—and we do not believe it—*let us assure our well-wishers that we do not shrink from any hardship in the cause of freedom. As it is we are starving and our children dying from hunger*".

These are the people who have experienced the evils of apartheid, who for years have fought against it. Their judgement is that the essentially non-violent means of collective international action is the best method of struggle—we must surely view our responsibility in the light of their opinion. It is those who ignore that judgment and assume they know the best answer who are guilty of patronising the Africans. As Oliver Tambo has said:

"There is a kind of pity and paternalism that hurts us even more than sanctions".

This surely is the answer too to those who argue that we ought to solve our own racial problems first, before meddling in the affairs of other countries. We are being called to act by those who are victims of apartheid. There can be no doubt that in many parts of Britain we are confronted with a grave racial crisis in race relations. But it is clear too that those who are actively working in the field are amongst those who are most concerned about our responsibilities for South Africa. Very often I suspect the argument is just an excuse for doing nothing at all! Besides the objection betrays a narrow nationalism in outlook. As citizens of one world we are concerned with racialism wherever it occurs, despite our own personal and corporate shortcomings. The World Student Christian Federation summed it up when it wrote:

"We all share in the sin of a broken humanity. There can be no self-righteousness in our actions, *but neither can we be indifferent to circumstances which demand from us responsible political decision.*"¹

1. "Letter to member Movements" July 1964.

THE CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY

Finally, there is a particular Christian responsibility in this situation. For not only does the Christian believe that "the unity of the Body of Christ is broken by racial discrimination and injustice", and that the humanity of all races, white even more than black, is degraded by apartheid.¹ But the policy of apartheid is pursued in the name of the Christian God. The Constitution of the Republic begins with the words:

"The people of the Republic of South Africa acknowledge the sovereignty and guidance of God".²

There are 12 Elders of the Dutch Reformed Church in the Government. The U.N. Expert Committee summed up the position very clearly:

"There are many in the Christian Churches and amongst those who claim to speak for civilisation who can expect to feel an exceptional responsibility in regard to developments in South Africa. *Their influence in many ways and through many channels might be more effectively deployed.*

For too long the Christian Church has been blind to the revolutionary nature of its faith; far too often it has been more "loyal to its whiteness than to the Cross;" and still it counsels patience and moderation. when the need is for decision and action. Martin Luther King, in his famous "Letter from Prison" has cried out bitterly against the complacency of the white moderate, with his tragic misconception of time:

"It is the strangely irrational notion that there is something in the very flow of time that will inevitably cure all ills. Actually time is neutral. It can be used either destructively or constructively. *I am coming to feel that the people of ill-will have used time much more effectively than the people of good-will. We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the vitriolic words and actions of the bad people, but for the appalling silence of the good people.*"

It is not ill-will that allows Britain to go on benefiting from and condoning apartheid—it is ignorance and apathy. Nothing is more urgent than the need for the British people to affirm their responsibility for situations which are too remote for them to be felt or experienced emotionally, and yet where our response is crucial. It may be that U.N. action might be frustrated by the United States or the Soviet Union, or hindered by military difficulties. But that should not affect *our* determination to persuade the British Government to work for sanctions.

There are prophetic voices calling us to action today: the voices such as those of Albert Lutuli and Martin Luther King, Trevor Huddleston and Nelson Mandela. Can we forget Mandela's challenge in his final Defence speech at the Rivonia Trial:

"During my life-time I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the

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1. As Bishop Reeves has pointed out, there is in fact no "black" problem, only a "white" problem.
 2. This Constitution was, of course, approved in a referendum of purely white voters. As Oliver Tambo has pointed out, the non-white are not considered as "people".

African people. I have fought against white domination and I have fought against black dominations. I have cherished the ideal of a free and democratic society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal rights. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

We have shown that the rule of law is flagrantly violated by repressive legislation and persistent police violence; years of political campaigning and diplomatic pressure have proved fruitless; if no change occurs in the near future there will be armed insurrection from within South Africa or intervention from without by other African States. Moreover the U.N. Expert Committee has advocated a clear and limited goal—the formation of a National Convention to draw up a new constitution; and it has been demonstrated that although a naval blockade would be an expensive naval operation it could be effectively enforced and achieve the intended purpose. This is the case for sanctions—*now is the time to choose*.

In the closing words of Bishop Reeves to the U.N. Political Committee on the 18th October 1963:

"If the struggle in South Africa becomes a bitter racial struggle then it will be in large measure the fault of those nations who act while there is time to act. *In common with civilised men everywhere, the victims of apartheid ask that the United Nations should take effective action both to end the present intolerable situation in South Africa, and also help to plan some better way of life for those of all races in that great country. Pray God that they will not ask in vain. Pray God that action will be taken before it is too late*".

Resolution of the S.C.M. General Council on South Africa

The General Council of the S.C.M. is deeply concerned with the ultimate good of all communities in South Africa, and seeks a more just non-racial society. We believe this issue is a crucial one for the whole of humanity, and, therefore, as British students we must involve ourselves in both study and action on it.

In the light of this we make the following proposals:

- (1) We accept and endorse the letter on South Africa from the World Student Christian Federation;
- (2) We ask Branches to make a full and detailed study of the South African situation;
- (3) We strongly urge Branches to take immediate action to persuade and influence all relevant political groups and parties to support economic sanctions against South Africa. This might include deputations and letters to M.P.s and constituent parties, public meetings and demonstrations and joint action with other interested groups, (e.g. anti-apartheid, political clubs, church groups). Maximum publicity should be gained from Press and Television;
- (4) We ask Branches to investigate the means of implementing at a local level an economic boycott of South African goods;
- (5) We suggest the Branches should support the educational work of World University Service in South Africa, and help South African refugees in this country;
- (6) We draw the attention of Branches to recommendation 5 in the World Student Christian Federation's letter of suggestions for action urging that strenuous efforts be made to develop and maintain personal contacts with expatriate South Africans of all political persuasions and to make it obvious that whatever their views they are still accepted as people;

We recommend that branches look into the possibilities of promoting racial integration both in their own college or university and in their neighbourhood if appreciable racial minorities exist. In the light of the discrimination in both housing and employment in many cities, we suggest they study the situation and take the appropriate action. This might involve visits to M.P.s and local councillors, demonstrations or deputations in relation to discriminating firms or bodies and social work for those in need.

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*Available from S.C.M., Annandale, North End Road, N.W.11.

†Available from Anti-Apartheid Movement, 89 Charlotte Street, W.1.

Addresses: Christian Action, 2 Amen Court, E.C.4.

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In South Africa there exists a white minority which attempts to maintain, by means of repressive legislation and police brutality, a policy of racial domination which is an offence to the brotherhood of man and the dignity of God's children. The ruthlessness of this regime is matched, only by the determination of the new African nations to liberate their oppressed brothers. Outside intervention is now inevitable in South Africa—the question is whether it will be disciplined, limited intervention, or an open war between black and white, creating havoc and bloodshed which could not be healed for generations. It is the argument of this pamphlet that the only remaining realistic and just course of action is economic sanctions enforced collectively by the United Nations.

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