

## APARTHEID AND SPORT

### Introduction:

Sport has always played a significant role in South Africa's search for international respectability. The campaign to exclude South Africa from international sport is equally significant because it affects one of the major outlets for the aggrandisement of apartheid and White supremacy. Apartheid is clearly the cause of the problems facing South Africa and in particular the reason for the existence of different national sports bodies, eg. the non-racial South African Cricket Board-President Krish Mackerdhuji and the apartheid structured South African Cricket Union-President Ali Bacher. We are of the view, that the fragmentation of sporting codes in South Africa is the cause for serious concern and the creation of single non-racial sporting codes needs to be addressed. Any attempts towards sports unity (in this case cricket) must be based on the principle of non-racialism, involving all organisations openly committed to the attainment of this ideal.

### Early manoeuvres to break out of isolation:

Until the early 1970s sport in South Africa was totally segregated. In 1971, when the international campaign for South Africa's sports isolation was beginning to gain momentum, the South African Prime Minister announced that Blacks would be allowed to participate in certain sports events which would be duly termed "multi-national" or open international events. However, the international outcry for South Africa's sports isolation continued. A series of government policy statements and ad hoc adjustments on South African sport followed so as to contain the sports boycott. The government devised a system whereby permits were issued to certain recognised sports fixtures to be held on a mixed basis. Later the permit system was extended to cover a series of fixtures. These adjustments were essentially directed towards appeasing international opinion.



### **Legislative Amendments:**

Protests against apartheid sport continued and several South African sports bodies were either expelled or suspended from international participation. The government again tried to mask the reality of apartheid sport by amending three of its discriminatory laws which affect the daily lives of South Africa's Blacks:

The Liquor Act

The Group Areas Act

The Blacks (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act.

These laws were so amended that they legalised an illegal action for the duration of a sports fixture. However, the linchpin of the sports apartheid legislation, The Separate Amenities Act, remained intact. The Separate Amenities Act determines the use and provision of sports facilities for the various race groups in South Africa. Besides, the government very cleverly shifted the onus of permitting mixed sports events to municipal councils.

### **South Africa's Propaganda Machine:**

Over the years the apartheid regime and its White sports administrators have built up an extensive international propaganda network to evoke sympathy for their sports policy. Inside the country the White establishment sports organisations, with the active support of large employers and sponsors, have conscripted unsuspecting Blacks to help break out of isolation. On the other hand, the mass democratic movement (MDM) have established a structure for unity in Sport, with the founding of the National Sports Congress (NSC). This is part of the escalation of the overall struggle to destroy the apartheid system in its totality. The National Sports Congress (NSC) is striving for democracy in sports and sports administration at all levels. This obviously means that colour, sex or creed should not be an obstacle to any sports person, whether participant, spectator or administrator.



The make up of (NSC) consists of representations by the various non-racial sports codes. It aims to create unity in sports that have been fragmented by the apartheid system over the decades and to establish non-racial sport at all levels in South Africa, be it provincial, club or at school. This by itself is a challenge to the apartheid system. It will mean that to implement this type of structure sports people will have to defy the Group Areas Act and many other policies of the apartheid system. It will also fragment and weaken the present apartheid structured sports codes and in no doubt reinforce the non-racial sports codes.

South Africa and its overseas supporters have emerged with a new slogan that the sports boycott is hurting most the victims of apartheid. It is now being argued that as most of South Africa's top stars are Black it is they who are the real victims of the sports boycott, the boycott which was aimed to alleviate their sufferings.

Although this may be the feeling of the Blacks who have been conscripted into membership of the White establishment sports organisations, the overwhelming majority of the anti-apartheid sports organisations have resolved not to engage in any international sports exchanges until apartheid has been abolished. It is their contention that any representative team from South Africa, irrespective of how "non-racial" its make-up is, will be representing South Africa - apartheid and all. If there is any let up on the sports boycott, the very strong South African sports lobby will exploit it to the fullest. After all, it is largely White South Africa and its extensive overseas lobby which is propagating the myth that it is only Black people who are being deprived of international competition. One only needs to review South Africa's limited international sports exchanges to deduce that the participation is overwhelmingly White. Relaxing the boycott now to accommodate the few Blacks will merely provide apartheid with international acceptability and will seriously retard progress towards democracy and non-racialism.



**Sponsorship:**

Sponsorship by South Africa commerce and industry - including many companies and firms with overseas connections to parents and associates in America, Europe and elsewhere - has always played a major role in the promotion of sport in South Africa. This is one of the aspects of South African sport which helps to illustrate its position within the apartheid system as a whole, and indeed its significance for the regime's continued survival.

Sponsorship has, in recent years, begun to play an extensive role in not only persuading Black South Africans to succumb to the White establishment sports bodies, but also conferring international respectability on the regime by luring top sportsmen and women from overseas to compete in South Africa.

South African sports bodies and promoters have no difficulties in obtaining astronomical amounts of money from sponsors in arranging "rebel" tours to the country. This is not surprising as the government repays the sponsors approximately 90% of the money through tax rebates. In reality sponsors only provide about 10% of the money while the government provides the other approximate 90%.

Sponsors are also willing to outlay huge sums of money to White sports organisations to lure Blacks to join. The funds are donated in the guise of providing coaching and equipment to youths and schoolchildren in Black townships. The consequence of this is that photographs and literature are thereafter distributed around the world as evidence of White South Africa trying to promote sport in the Black townships. Anti-apartheid sports organisations who work on shoe-string budgets receive meagre or in many cases no funds at all for sports development and promotion. This seriously undermines the activities of anti-apartheid bodies. Quite often they are told indirectly that they ought to subscribe to the policies of the white sports bodies before their requests are considered.



**Present position:**

Although there is some mixing in South African sport, especially at national level - White sport, to a large extent is polarised along racial lines. This is inevitable in South Africa as legislation separates groups along racial lines ..... separate residential areas, separate amenities, separate schools all within a national constitution which preserves White domination.

In rugby, for instance, there are four national governing bodies. The South African Rugby Association (for Africans) and the South African Rugby Football Federation (for Coloureds) which are affiliated to the White South African Rugby Board. Then there is the anti-apartheid South African Union. The South African Rugby Union and the South African Rugby Board recently met with the African National Congress with the intention of forming one non-racial body. The aim of the talks was not to seek contact only with rugby administrators but with white rugby players. This initiative now seems doomed.

In cricket, there are two national sporting bodies: The non-racial South African Cricket Board and the apartheid structured South African Union. The African National Congress has already met with the South African Cricket Union and they have indicated the necessity for the establishment of one cricket governing structure. At this stage the likes of Ali Bacher and Joe Permisky (from the South African Cricket Union) have failed to come to the negotiating table.

The South African Cricket Union is fully aware that if they (SACU) seriously want the establishment of non-racial cricket in South Africa they will have to talk with the South African Cricket Board under the leadership of Krish Mackerdhuji. Rather than addressing the internal situation for sports unity and stability they continue to arrange mercenary sporting tours to South Africa.



There are five national governing bodies for amateur boxing in the country - the South African Amateur Boxing Union (for Africans), the South African Amateur Boxing Board (for Coloureds) and the South African Amateur Boxing Association (for Whites). All three are affiliated to the South African Amateur Boxing Federation which organises so-called "open tournaments" and national championships. Then there is the South African Amateur Boxing Council which is overtly anti-apartheid and non-racial in its organisation.

Inadequate provision of facilities for Blacks - one of the cornerstones of apartheid - underlines sports inequality in South Africa. In the province of Natal 330 000 Africans who live in the township of Umlazi and Lamontville share six soccer fields, seven tennis courts and two swimming pools. By contrast the 212 000 Whites living in the neighbouring municipality of Durban have 146 soccer venues and 15 public swimming pools. In Pietermaritzburg, 11 567 White school children share 32 cricket fields and 65 net practice facilities. Some 13 000 Coloured and Indian school children share one field and 5 nets. There are no cricket facilities for African children.

### **UN Register:**

The most potent weapon in the international sports boycott is the UN Register of Sports Contacts with South Africa. Maintained by the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid, the Register contains the names of sportsmen and women, teams and sports administrators who have engaged in sporting activities in South Africa. The Register can have their names removed if they send to the Special Committee a pledge that they will not engage in sports activities in South Africa until the system of apartheid is abolished - but a name can only be removed once.

The Register is not a "black list"; it is not meant to punish individual sportspersons, but to make them conscious of the apartheid issue and to encourage them to join in the international boycott of apartheid sport.



The Special Committee also issues a Register of Cultural Contacts with South Africa, which contains the names of entertainers and actors who engage in cultural activities in South Africa. Many sportspersons, actors and entertainers have submitted pledges and consequently, their names have been removed from the Registers.

### **Conclusion:**

Those countries condemning apartheid sport should now at this juncture implement a program of action to further isolate apartheid sport as represented by either teams or individuals. At the same time we need to strengthen and help to develop the non-racial sports structure, the National Sports Congress. By denying assistance to the democratic non-racial sports organisation, the National Sports Congress will undermine the full implementation of the agenda set by the mass democratic movement.

Apartheid South Africa's apologists point to minor changes in sport and claim that the removal of some of the trappings means that apartheid as a whole has been removed from sport. But we would do well to remember the sobering and professional assessment made recently by the Australian Embassy in Pretoria when it concluded that:

"As long as Black South Africans do not have rough equality of opportunity with Whites in all aspects of life - health, education, housing, employment, welfare, access to leisure time and facilities - including through equitable per capita expenditure by the Government in all these areas, and underpinned by non-discriminatory laws, it will never be possible for them to participate in sport on a fair and equal basis."

**AMANDLA!**

**Terry February**

ANC Australasian & Pacific Regional Conference. September 1989.



The following is a listing of the number of sports people from Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Taiwan, Fiji, Western Samoa and Tonga who have participated in sports events in South Africa and who are currently on the UN Register.

# **AUSTRALIA**

SPORT	MEN	WOMEN
Aeronautics		1 Tracy Tabart
Boardsailing	2	1 Pascale Menage
Boating (Inflatable)	2	
Body building	1 Sammy Ioanides	1 Kathy Illington
Boxing (professional)	3	
Bowls	1 Barry Salter	
Cricket	19	
Cycling	2	
Golf	8	
Gymkana	AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL TEAM	
Gymnastics	1 Phillip Cheetham	
Horse Riding	1 Darren Gauci	
Motor car racing and Grand Prix	1 Alan Jones	
Motorcycling	4	3
Netball	7	5
Polo	2	
Power Boating	4	
Powerlifting	1 Yuris Sterns (manager and coach)	
Rugby	7	
Snooker	1 Eddie Charlton	
Squash	11	9
Surfing	37	
Tennis	22	5
Water-skiing	5	1
Wrestling (professional)	3	

# **FIJI**

Rugby 30

# **JAPAN**

Boxing (professional)	2 Ryoji and Yoshida (judge and referee)
Golf	1 Isao Aoki
Karate	1 Masashiko Tanaka (coach)
Motorcycling	1 Takazumi Ratayama
Tennis	1 B. Veda

# **NEW ZEALAND**

Bodybuilding	1 Donald Stedman	
Bowls	1 Peter Belliss	
Cricket	2	
Cycling	1 Neil Wylie	
Golf	1 Bob Charles	
Lifesaving (surf)	10	
Motorcycling	5	
Paddle-Skiing	1 John Alderman	
Polo	4	
Polocross	3	
Rugby	47	
Squash	4	2
Tennis	4	2
Water Skiing	10	1

# **TONGA**

Rugby 7

# **WESTERN SAMOA**

Rugby 4

# **WESTERN SAMOA/TONGA**

Rugby 6 These players might be either from Western Samoa or from Tonga.

# **TAIWAN**

Athletes	1 Chuan Kwang Yang	
Badminton	4	3
Bridge	1 A. T. Chong	
Golf	8	8