

7. In general, the South African trade and business has become more discrete and it has now become even more difficult than before to gather informations.

To obtain informations remains one of the big difficulties for anticapartheid movements . Swiss statistics are poor, the obligation of information of the Swiss economy limited. one of the essential part in the political discussion remains the duty of publication regarding trade relations with South Africa. Investigations are very complicated since we depend on informations coming from abroad. There is also a lack of financial means for processing the received information.

Up to now we have concentrated our attention on the banking sector. It is however clear that. in addition to the banks, we have to pay more attention to the mail-box companies and the Brown Boveri Company (BBC) which merged recently with the Swedish company ASEA and which, by doing so, has also taken over ASEA's South African business (which has been transferred to Switzerland 1).

There have hardly been any activities in Switzerland in the field of sports or cultural boycotts. neither on the level of scientificâ\200\224economic cooperation or the export of technology.

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3. Switzerland is important for the marketing (not the consumption) of South African products. and particularly its gold. According to insider reports. 2/3 to 3/4 of South Africa's gold is marketed through Switzerland, not to forget the diamonds and the platinum.

An estimation made in 1985 showed that 1/3 of the exports (including gold bullions) were marketed through Switzerland. But only 2 - 5 % of this trade appears in Swiss statistics on trade with South Africa.

Over the last years. Switzerland - or better the Swiss economy - has proved very helpful for the apartheid regime. when the latter was stuck in politically and economically critical situations (after Soweto, with gold swaps. enriched uranium for Koeberg in 1981 [Namibian negotiations]. neoociaâ\200\224 tions for debt rescheduling led by Leutwiler in 1985/86. and quite certainly short term loans and gold swaps in 1986). Until now it has not been possible. in such decisive moments, to prevent successfully the interventions in favour of the apartheid regime. The economical power, the international prestige and the international connections of the Swiss economy are important enough to enable it to take important. short term and punctual steps in favour of the apartheid regime. This of course enables the apartheid regime to gain time. Other countries. banks or transnationals will then take over part of Switzerland's role. This is one of Switzerland's international key functions : Switzerland takes over rapidly what other countries can't afford to do in periods of crises. even if they wished to.

An internationally orientated anti-apartheid strategy should seriously deal with this aspect of international and political worksharing and Switzerland's specific role.

5. Until now, the Swiss government and the parliament have always refused any sort of sanctions against South Africa. - There are still double taxation agreements with South Africa. state credits to cover export risks. a Swiss military attaché stays in South Africa. and South African tourists are exempt from V visa duty for entering Switzerland. Until now, the Swiss government has been opposed to the exclusion of South Africa from international bodies.

In the meantime, a policy of "positive measures" has been formulated by the Department for Foreign Affairs. this instead of "punitive actions". These "positive measures" include the promotion of dialogue between the regime and its opponents. more scholarships for South Africans inside the country; and more assistance to the Frontline States.

The co-financing of the Dakar meeting was the Swiss government's first active and official move to support a political action the apartheid regime did not agree with. But meanwhile, the Swiss government has declared that this action was exceptional.

A parliamentary commission has examined the sanction busting transactions by Switzerland, with the conclusion that no measures had to be taken. A kind of observation commission has been instituted. whose observations however remain secret. Its task consists mainly in observing the foreign and transit trades.

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Certain questions, how for instance mailbox companies or companies like Marc Rich (Oil trade with South Africa) could be prevented from organizing sanction busting trades, are not taken into consideration neither by the Swiss government nor the Parliament.

6. Recent developments :

The calls for sanctions are inscreasing in Switzerland. Generally, anti-apartheid activities also intensify, but they advance slowly. The Council of Evangelical Churches has in 1986 at 1987 made careful and diplomatic recommendations for sanctions as a possible political means of pressure. Trade Unions and the Socialist Party call for sanctions in the banking sector and the foreign trade. Their position is, however, unclear about the withdrawal of direct investments and about the gold market. The parliament has seen the creation of a group of AWEPAAs (1/3 of the parliamentarians, including a few from the bourgeois wing). This constitutes an unusual situation for Switzerland and also highlights that the South African question starts to worry even conservative circles.

The most criticized big banks generally try to create the impression that their financial involvement in South Africa is decreasing (even on behalf of their very incomplete statistics). The Swiss multinationals with agencies in South Africa declare that they will remain in South Africa and continue to invest, but that they would not buy any companies which are for sale. Until now we know only about a few cases where companies which withdrew from South Africa have been bought up. Nevertheless, many incidents show that in Switzerland nearly everything is still possible in what regards the collaboration with South Africa : A wine exhibition with South Africa as a main exhibitor (October 1986), the opening of a third flight of South African Airways (April 1987); the participation of a Swiss scientist as the key speaker in a nuclear conference in South Africa (1985). the transfer of an international world conference of the International Police Association (IPA) to Switzerland (October 1987), which made possible the participation of a delegation of South African policemen. etc. etc.

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REFLEXIONS 0' THE SWISS - SOUTH AFRICAN COOPERATION

1. The main part of South Africa's foreign economical relations

is covered by six countries : the United States, Great Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, France and Switzerland.

Switzerland is a small country, very important as a discreet money market, and which stands in the shadow of the international public opinion. Although Switzerland has been playing a most important part in the apartheid state's financial relations since the beginning of the 70s, it has hardly been denounced on the international scene yet.

Switzerland being a small country (6.6 million inhabitants), its national market is not very important for the marketing of South African products like steel, iron or coal: neither are Switzerland's direct investments in or exports to South Africa very important, compared with those of other countries like the United States, Great Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany or Japan. But Switzerland plays a key role as a major financial market and for marketing of South African products on an international level.

2. Switzerland's biggest banks (mainly Union Bank of Switzerland,

Swiss Credit and Swiss Bank Society) are most important for the apartheid state and the banking sector, as financial backers. Switzerland's main banks (as well as the former

President of the National Bank and the present president of the Brown Boveri Company's board of directors, Fritz Leutwiler) flatly reject any idea of political pressures in relation with South Africa's debt rescheduling. There are indications that in 1986 the main banks intervened very quickly with gold swaps and other credits, similarly to what they did after the Soweto uprisings in 1976.