

LMM/022/0014/13

Confidential
WUS
nd

DRAFT SUBMISSION ON ACADEMIC BOYCOTT OF SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES AND ACADEMICS

The question of the academic boycott has come up as a matter of urgency because two South Africans on sabbatical leave at British Universities have not been allowed to take up their visiting fellowships, and we have been asked to make a submission which we understand will be collated with a number of others from various interested parties.

We do not have a clear idea of what AUT (British Association of University Teachers) policy is, but it seems that in the past academics have been discouraged from visiting here, and from taking up appointments in South African Universities. We hear rumours that some academics who have visited have been pilloried on their return to England, and that there are moves to prevent South Africans who have taught or been trained at South African universities from obtaining posts at British universities.

Visitors to South Africa

The following table is compiled from the list appearing in the February UCT Gazette, and consists of visitors to UCT, RAU, Natal, Stellenbosch, Wits, OFS, UNISA, and Pretoria in the first half of 1986.

	British	Other
Commerce	1	7
Science	3	26
Medicine	31 (16)	138 (113)
Arts & Soc Sci	8	28
Law	1	4
Education	1	5
Engineering	0	10
Architecture	0	1
Total	45	212
UCT	16	39

(The figures in brackets denote visitors to Pretoria alone)

This table suggests:

- that the majority of visitors do not come from Britain, and
- that the overwhelming number of visitors are to Medical faculties (and these are of short duration).

The intention of a boycott on visits to this country is, presumably, to cut South African scholars off from international contact and the international community of scholars, and thus to heighten their awareness to, and stimulate them to do something about, the situation in South Africa.

The table suggests that only an international boycott on visits to South Africa would have any real impact. One confined to Britain alone would mean a rather minor decrease in the quantity of international contact.

Secondly, unless the boycott can be enforced amongst medical academics, the majority of visitors will continue to come. If the boycott is observed mainly by humanities practitioners, this will have an adverse effect on those who are already aware of the issues in this country.

We ~~therefore~~ recommend the imposition of a total block on visits to this country by all academics, as the most desirable scenario. We feel, however, that boycotts should not be open-ended, but should have some clear and finite objective and a timescale within which the objectives are to be achieved.

Failing that, a total ban on all British academics would have some impact. However, if it continues as at present, the fact of the matter is that radical academics, who might make a contribution to our struggle, observe the boycott, and conservative academics, visiting conservative departments, serve to legitimate the present dispensation and do nothing to change it.

South Africans at International Conferences

Overseas travel grants awarded by UCT in 1985, principally for conference attendance were distributed as follows:

Medicine: 37, Science: 15, Humanities: 13, Engineering: 7, and Education: 2.

It is obviously very important to South Africans to be able to travel and maintain contact with people in their fields.

Archaeologists and Psychiatrists seem to have been given the roughest ride so far. The psychiatrists are concerned to put their house in order as far as equal pay for hospital employees and equal facilities for patients are concerned, and pressure for improvement is not unconnected with international pressure. The archaeologists have been compelled to clarify non-racial criteria of membership and practice in their constitution. However, the debacle over their exclusion in 1985 and the movement of the majority of the conference to Germany, where the S Africans did attend, does not impress anybody. When decisions cannot be implemented the point of excluding South Africans is lost, and its efficacy destroyed.

South African trained appointees and sabbatical visitors

As with the other forms of boycott, if uniformly applied and enforced, this could be supported on the grounds that it would bring about increasing pressure for change. We do not, however, support a piecemeal boycott in which our radical colleagues are disallowed from visiting or joining radical departments, and conservatives continue to travel and enjoy international collegial privileges as before.

Signed: Cadurie White.

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

Memorandum

FROM

DR JAMES MOULDER
DIRECTOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS

TO

17 March, 1986

PROFESSOR IAN PHIMISTER

HEAD : ECONOMIC HISTORY

PD UCT

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE ACADEMIC BOYCOTT

1. A MORE SOPHISTICATED ACADEMIC BOYCOTT

- 1.1 I do not have, and I do not think that it is possible to have, any intrinsic objections to an academic or any other kind of boycott. The reason for this is straightforward enough; because a boycott is simply one political weapon amongst many others, and there are no intrinsic objections to political activity, a discussion about boycotts makes sense only if it is about the wisdom or otherwise of a particular boycott. In other words, a debate about a boycott should proceed on extrinsic and instrumental considerations.
- 1.2 The fundamental questions are therefore pragmatic: what does the boycott aim to achieve? What resources are there for its enforcement?, and so on.
- 1.3 If this approach, which I get from Gandhi, is adopted, then it seems to me that an academic boycott should not aim to overthrow or change the South African government because this is a goal that cannot be attained by this means. What an academic boycott should try to achieve instead is an unambiguous opposition to racism, segregation and apartheid either from every South African university or from every South African academic.
- 1.4 This can perhaps be achieved by boycotting those universities which are not prepared (a) to unambiguously integrate all their facilities and (b) to call for the repeal of the Population Classification Act, as well as an acceptance of all the consequences of such a repeal. Alternatively, the boycott could operate at an individual or departmental level; that is, an individual who was not prepared to make a public declaration of this kind would not be welcome at any British University and a department that did not make the declaration would not be allowed to have British academic visitors.
- 1.5 This approach to the problem seems to me to have a number of advantages:
 - 1.5.1. It is not pretentious or pompous because it is not trying to do something that is outside the AUT's power (namely, to overthrow the South African government). What it is trying to do instead is to change either the universities or the individual academics.

1.5.2. It does not punish institutions or individuals who are as opposed to racism, segregation and apartheid as the AUT is.

1.5.3. Because institutions and individuals will know what they have to do to escape being boycotted, it makes it possible for them to change. This is a very important point that I also get from Gandhi: your opponent must be able to change so that he can escape what you are trying to do to him. No university or individual can overthrow the government; every university or individual can call for the repeal of the Population Classification Act, and every university can have a non-racial admissions policy and integrate its residences and other facilities.

2. SOME STATISTICS ON UCT

2.1 The number of students at UCT by population classification according to law

	AFRICAN	ASIAN	COLOURED	WHITE	TOTAL
1981	104	230	959	9 745	11 038
1982	168	274	1 043	9 899	11 384
1983	257	304	1 122	10 466	12 149
1984	316	285	1 167	10 132	11 900
1985	339	282	1 154	10 069	11 844

2.2 The changing proportion of the student body by population classification according to law

	AFRICAN	ASIAN	COLOURED	WHITE
1981	0,9	2,1	8,7	88,3
1982	1,5	2,4	9,2	87,0
1983	2,1	2,5	9,2	86,1
1984	2,7	2,4	9,8	85,1
1985	2,9	2,4	9,7	85,0

2.3 The growth in the number of black students who are admitted to UCT

	AFRICAN	ASIAN	COLOURED	TOTAL
1981	90	120	407	617
1982	171	127	448	746
1983	123	91	388	602
1984	217	125	436	778
1985	233	118	458	809

- 2.4 Please note: the 1986 figures are not available because the official census is on the second Tuesday in June.

3. SOME POLICY STATEMENTS

3.1 AFFIRMATIVE ACTION : THE MAJOR POLICY

UCT admits students to its programmes on academic merit as measured by their performance in the matriculation examinations. Although UCT believes that the various matriculation systems are grossly unequal, for admission purposes it treats all the marks as if they were equivalent. This amounts to an affirmative action in favour of black students because they receive the same number of admission points for their matriculation performance as white students do. In addition, English Second Language and English First Language results are treated as if they were equivalent.

3.2 AFFIRMATIVE ACTION : AN EXPERIMENT

In 1986 UCT is admitting 105 black students who do not meet the regular criteria as an additional attempt to create a fair admission policy which takes into account the inequalities of the education systems. These students are spread across a number of faculties: 50 in Arts and Social Science and Humanities; 5 in Education; 20 in Engineering; and 30 in Science. The attached document on affirmative explanation explains why this is being done.

3.3 INTEGRATED RESIDENCES

Although it was, and still is, illegal to do so in terms of the Group Areas Act, in 1981 UCT decided to integrate all its residences. In addition, all new residence places are reserved for black students although no residence will be reserved exclusively for their use. In addition to this policy the University helps black students find suitable accommodation in a number of other ways; by having the YMCA and the YWCA reserve some of its rooms for UCT students; by hiring a number of hotel rooms for black students; by hiring a block of flats in Guguletu. None of these solutions is as satisfactory as having students in residence and therefore the University has embarked on a campaign to build more residences.

4. SOME DOCUMENTS


The following documents record various dimensions of what UCT is striving to achieve:

- 4.1 NEWSPAPER CUTTINGS: These record UCT's involvement in political issues and its determination to express its unambiguous opposition, both in words and in deeds, to all forms of racism, apartheid and segregation.
- 4.2 THE VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT FOR 1985: This report spells out many of the convictions and policy decisions that give UCT the ability and the will to oppose and resist apartheid as vigorously as it does.

- 4.3 BLACK INTO WHITE AND WHITE INTO BLACK : This lecture is an overview of how UCT is responding to the challenge of becoming a truly open university.

5. CONCLUSION

I hope that this is the kind of information that you wanted. If you still have some questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.



JAMES MOULDER

P.S. The summary of student enrolments at South African Universities in 1984 reveals that the four "open universities" (Cape Town, Natal, Rhodes and Witwatersrand) were educating 8% of all African students, 30% of all Asian students, 22% of all Coloured students and 39% of all White students who were registered at a university in that year.

JM/nh