

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I was impressed by your Fall 1974 *Issue* in which you had a series of articles on South Africa and Apartheid. While the analysis that all the articles give of support by Western governments for the apartheid system is basically correct, there are some underlying shifts in power and political realities which ought to be noted. These have a lot to do with the sudden changes of the past year such as the removal of American influence in Indochina and the turn-about of Portugal in Africa.

E.S. Reddy's discussion of the growing anti-apartheid movement is excellent over-all. However, I suggest that the same détente which he notes as important for small Western powers has also had its effect on U.S. and U.K. non-state actors. For example, the emergence of a significant and active church-based African constituency in the U.S. which has been the origin of much of the pressure on the corporations and the attempts to repeal the Byrd Amendment is a significant political event. The contribution of the World Council of Churches to liberation movements in Africa has been substantial and catalytic. While Black political pressures have been periodic and varied, one should not discount the significance of this interest group when an Administration comes into power which is more sensitive to the wishes of Blacks than the Nixon and Ford Administrations have been.

The British nongovernmental scene is complex and superficially does not appear to have changed very much. Joan Lester and Frank Judd, both of whom are ministers in the current government, have been closely associated with the anti-apartheid movement though they have had little impact on Southern Africa policy.

Shifting political realities should not be taken to mean that the U.S. and U.K. are on the brink of becoming anti-apartheid. They do, however, mean that the political realities outside South Africa are changing rapidly, and any system such as the South African which is maintained by the financial, military, ethnic and political sympathies of the outside world, is bound to come under new pressures with these shifts.

I, like many of my fellow scholars, feel it is high time government policy reflected more correctly the shifts that are taking place in the political-economic relationships. The United Nations is an excellent forum for letting the supporters of apartheid know how the world has changed. This will in turn put the pressure on them to change while sustaining the revolutionary groups which alone can bring decisive change.

Therefore, the maximum pressure that can be brought to bear should be developed—whether in the form of embargoes on arms, economic boycotts, or the diplomatic withdrawal of recognition.

Sincerely yours,

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