



much financial effect because they are easily avoided by sanctions busting techniques but they are invaluable as vehicles for raising the level of awareness and information in the electorates of other countries.

12. I am opposed to the withdrawal of diplomatic representation because those services are invaluable in getting sound information out of this country but such withdrawal could be of immense im-

portance at the end when we have reached the point where a dramatic thrust could push the whole thing over. I am in favour of the kind of specifically targetted sanctions such as threats by Europe in response to the fund raising legislation earlier this year.

13. As for the findings of different surveys of black opinion on sanctions, I use the Schlemmer and Orkin ones as examples. Professor

Schlemmer and Mark Orkin hold very different views on sanctions. Both of them conducted surveys of opinion in black urban communities countrywide. Both surveys came out with remarkably similar results, within a percentage or two. The results showed 24% entirely in favour of sanctions, 25% against and 51% in the middle in favour of sanctions provided they do not cause a loss of jobs. That just highlights how difficult the subject is. □

A CORRESPONDENCE ON SANCTIONS

The author of the following letter addressed to Mary Burton, National President, has asked to remain anonymous.

I have resigned regretfully from the Black Sash. An inactive supporter, I'll not be missed but I am reluctant to leave without giving reason.

For about six years I have been disenchanted by the lack of protest by Sash against sanctions and the disinvestment campaign. It will be said that Sash has no policy in this matter. In fact some years ago when Sheena Duncan was overseas, she gave tacit approval of the campaign.

Not being an ivory tower academic nor up too close to black hardship like the clergy but, as the wife of an entrepreneur, close to the harsh realities of keeping a business viable, I cannot go along with Sash's attitude. To create and maintain job opportunities for unskilled black people in today's uncertain economic climate is a difficult task. I consider it criminal, indeed, un-Christian for prominent people to call for sanctions or merely to stand by and assist by omission in the destruction of the South African economy. Once destroyed it will take decades to rekindle and will thus deprive (particularly black) people of employment and the power and dignity which that labour could give them.

Sash's stalwart stand against apartheid and all its attendant horrors is undeniable. But this wonderful work is rather like treating the

symptoms and not the cause. The bottom line is a viable economy to absorb our unskilled labour; this is the real machinery to bring about change and upliftment. I had hoped that a strong statement to this effect might be made by Sash; none has been forthcoming and thus it seems that Sash agrees with the campaign.

Please do not trouble to reply to this letter. As far as I am concerned, I had to try to make this point before resigning and do not wish to take it further.

Mary Burton's response:

Thank you for your letter of 1 August giving me your reasons for resigning from the Black Sash. I discussed it with other members of the National Executive and we think it is important to reply.

The questions which you raise are serious ones which have often been considered by the Black Sash. There are many complex issues we face, of which sanctions is only one, and we discuss them often. Sometimes we can reach agreement only on the fact that there are powerful arguments and strongly held views which are valid even when they conflict with one another.

There are those, like you, who wish to see an end to apartheid and believe this could be achieved by a process of evolutionary change which would not destroy the economy but would lead to greater employment and prosperity for all. There are others who believe that

unless the South African government is forced by economic and political pressures to reverse its policies there will be such war and devastation that irreparable harm would be done not only to the economy but to the whole fabric of South African society.

We know that these views are honestly held, and that even while they are at variance they come from a common determination to see apartheid and injustice brought to an end.

Those of us who serve as representatives of the Black Sash do our best to reflect the complexity of such views. We know that we are more fortunate than many other South Africans in that we have the space and the freedom to debate them. Our primary goal remains unchanged: to work for a society in which all will have equal rights to participate in government, in decision-making, and in generating and sharing the wealth that South Africa has to offer.

We are not seeking to persuade you to withdraw your resignation which was clearly prompted by serious thought, but we should like you to know that we do not dismiss your views nor regard these issues lightly. We believe that it is part of our strength to encompass diversity of opinion within our organisation, and that other sections of our society would benefit if they were to encourage similar debate.

Thank you once again for writing to me. □