

Lapchick, Richard E., *The Politics of Race and International Sport: The Case of South Africa*, (Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, 1975).

The 1968 Olympic Games dramatically illustrated the Third World's view of the presence of the Republic of South Africa in international sport. The demonstration was a reaction against South Africa's racial segregationist policy of *apartheid*. Since that time many significant gains have been made by the anti-*apartheid* sport group, such as the expulsion of South Africa from

the Olympic movement. In Richard Lapchick's book, *The Politics of Race and International Sport: The Case of South Africa*, the story of *apartheid* sport and the struggle against it is extensively portrayed. Beginning with the 1946 "questioning" of South Africa's racial composition of sport, Lapchick moves forward, year by year, sport by sport, blow by blow.

From the outset, the reader had the impression that Lapchick had a preconceived judgment as to the "evilness" of the South Africans, instead of presenting a more careful analysis with cultural balance. The study would have been more accurately titled *The Case Against South Africa* rather than *The Case of South Africa*, which seemed to infer that both sides of the issue would be presented. Unfortunately, his study analyzed the entire South African problem from the point of view of those that are set on destroying the system of *apartheid*.

However, it should be kept in mind that this point of view—that the racial situation in South Africa was vile and presented a threat to international peace and order — was not his own private fanaticism. This same attitude runs rampant in the rhetoric of African politicians. The ideology of *apartheid* has also been scorned in theory (but not always in practice) by most of the other nations in both the East and West.

Although it is difficult to find fault with the factual content concerning South Africa's sport situation, the text, besides being an emotionally-structured value judgment, suffers from superficiality and confusion. Several criticisms come to mind:

First, the theme regarding the importance of the politics of race in international sport is quite hazy. To establish the importance of the racial factor in sport, Lapchick (p. xxii) gives reference to a United States survey which indicated that 54% of the blacks questioned tended to feel that race was a factor in sport, while only 42% of the whites did. He follows by stating that the case of South Africa would show that race was a determining factor in international sport. All that Lapchick establishes is that race as a sport factor, was only a factor to one minority racial group, the blacks. To establish a theme of the importance of race in international sport, more examples should have been cited. If there were no other examples, then it would appear that race at the international sport level was only a factor to only one racial group, the blacks. But as mentioned earlier, it was never really clear what his actual theme was.

It also seemed as if Lapchick tried to convince the reader that the racial issue in sport was beyond political concerns. He fails to mention that the question of race is now a hot issue on the international level. He also fails to mention that the newly-developed African nations, who have helped in the fight against sport's *apartheid*, have as their primary aim the break-

down of the remaining colonial nations, and the Republic of South Africa has been one of their primary targets. This situation has also added fuel to the East-West Cold War. To embarrass the West, the Communist countries have often supported the African states (at least philosophically) in their verbal condemnation of South Africa. Moreover, the Africans, in an effort to gain further international support, agreed to back the Arabs' struggle against Israel, as well as their oil embargo, if the Arabs would in turn support their case against South Africa. Lastly, the Africans through U.N. resolutions have tried to establish economic and weapon embargos against South Africa. For the most part these have failed. But within these resolutions, a sport "embargo" was also included. In this area the Africans have had success. Why? It appears that countries will placate the Africans by agreeing to boycott South Africa in sport, but in more far-reaching matters, they tend to do what is economically and militarily beneficial. For example, Japan recently prohibited South African teams from playing in Japan, but ignored the African condemnation of its trading ties with South Africa. It's almost as if international sport has become an international pacifier.

Third, the historical background of South Africa is ignored. To understand the South African's point of view, such influences as the "laager" attitude, geographical isolation, 13th century Calvinism, and English-Dutch antagonism, should have been presented.

Fourth, in an effort to establish the historical theme of race in international sport, Lapchick compared South Africa with Nazi Germany. Do two highly-ethnocentric countries really indicate the total effect of race in international sport? Also, the use of the Nazi in these types of writings is becoming quite tiresome. Isn't there anything else?

Lastly, all South Africans were cast as immovable races. This was quite unfair to all those South Africans that have been trying to bring social and political reform through legitimate channels. To add further to this situation, the only South African actually interviewed was Dennis Brutus, a leader in the fight against *apartheid* sport. The other side did not receive equal personal consideration.

In today's society with its emphasis on both civil as well as human rights, South Africa is an anachronism. With its stringent racial laws that control mobility and land ownership, as well as personal matters such as marriage, South Africa does not always receive objective consideration from writers. Such is the case with Lapchick. His text will, however, benefit those that desire to understand the thinking of the *anti-apartheid* in sport groups, but for a view of the total picture another

study is needed.

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