

Canadian Diplomacy and the 1978 Edmonton Commonwealth Games¹

*Donald Macintosh and Donna Greenhorn
School of Physical and Health Education
and David Black
Centre for International Relations
Queen's University
Kingston, Ontario*

Although a quip attributed to a senior official in the Department of External Affairs that the Department's efforts to avert a Black African nation-led boycott of the 1978 Commonwealth Games in Edmonton generated more telex messages than did the entire Vietnam war may be apocryphal,* it is true that the Department went to considerable ends to prevent such a boycott. Canada's reputation as a leader in the Commonwealth in reconciling differences between developed nations and Third-World member countries was at stake. This reputation had already been tarnished when 22 countries supported the Black African nations' call for a boycott of the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal in protest over New Zealand's participation. New Zealand had drawn the ire of Black African nations over its intransigence about sporting contacts with South Africa. A similar boycott of anywhere near the magnitude of the one in Montreal would not only be disastrous for the Edmonton Games, but would further damage Canada's reputation in the Commonwealth.

In this paper, we examine the steps that Canada took to ensure that the Edmonton Commonwealth Games were, indeed, successful, and attempt to put them into the larger perspective of Canada's relations in the Commonwealth and its policy toward apartheid in South Africa. But first we set the stage by reviewing Canada's foreign policy towards South Africa during the postwar period leading up to the Montreal Olympics, and the accompanying sport sanctions it imposed on South Africa. Next, we provide a background to South Africa's international sport relations, and its encounters with a very determined group of transnational anti-apartheid organizations. Then we review briefly the specific events that caused these organizations to call for the Black African nation boycott of the 1976 Montreal Olympics.

1. This paper is part of a larger study of sport and Canadian foreign policy, carried out under the auspices of a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. We are also grateful for the contributions of research assistant Lisa McDermott, who worked diligently to run down references, and to put the final draft of the paper in proper order.

2. Personal communication with Eric Morse (Head of International Sports Relations in the Department of External Affairs from 1974 to 1986), 24 August 1989.

Canada's South African Foreign Policy: 1945-76

Canada's policy toward South Africa evolved gradually, during the period 1945 to 1976, from a position of relatively close and friendly (although only marginally important) relations to one of increasingly vociferous criticism of South Africa's racist domestic policies of apartheid. This criticism, however, was tempered by a great reluctance by the Canadian government to back up its rhetoric with any concrete social, diplomatic, or economic measures. On those periodic occasions in which South and Southern Africa became major foreign policy concerns, the politics of the Commonwealth were most often paramount. During this period, Canadian policy-makers were deeply committed to the survival of the Commonwealth and this motive was generally the primary force behind Canada's South African foreign policy.

Underpinning these periodic Commonwealth imperatives, of course, was the genuine distaste that many Canadians held for racism. But there were some abiding national interests and priorities that also dictated Canada's policy toward South Africa. One such priority was the desire to preserve and strengthen the multi-racial Commonwealth as a bridge between the "Afro-Asians" and Western industrialized nations. Here, concern for Western interests in the Cold War was a primary, but not an exclusive motive. The government's interest in expanding Canada's role as an international peacebroker during this period was another motive for enhancing its image as a relatively sympathetic and "progressive" Western middle power with Afro-Asian nations. These objectives often conflicted with a desire to maintain economic and social links with South Africa. Canada's economic relations with South Africa, although small in absolute terms, were, nevertheless, lucrative and weighted toward manufactured exports, a sector of the economy that was traditionally weak.³ A parallel confounding factor was the genuine (if naive and misplaced) conviction held by many Canadian policy-makers that economic and social ties were useful in influencing racial policies and strengthening liberal causes in South Africa.⁴

During the immediate post-war period, Commonwealth connections, the recent war-time alliance, and trade relations, in which Canada enjoyed a healthy surplus, all contributed to the maintenance of relatively amicable relations between Canada and South Africa.⁵ In addition, there remained in Canada some nasty elements of racial prejudice, perhaps best manifested in certain "legal disabilities" imposed on Asians in British Columbia. Although these were largely, if not entirely, eliminated in 1947,⁶ residual strains of racial prejudice still lingered in Canada. These had the effect of tempering Canadian criticism of South African policies during this period. But the two countries

3. S. Langdon, "The Canadian Economy and Southern Africa," in *Canada, Scandinavia and Southern Africa*, ed. D. Anglin, T. Shaw and C. Widstrand (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1978).

4. B. Tennyson, *Canadian Relations with South Africa* (Washington: University Press of America, 1982), 185.

5. R. Matthews, and C. Pratt "Canadian Policy Towards Southern Africa," in Anglin, Shaw, and Widstrand, eds., *Canada, Scandinavia and Southern Africa, 165*; Tennyson, *Canadian Relations*, 112.

6. Tennyson, *Canadian Relations*, 121.

gradually diverged as Canada became more internationalist-as reflected in its strong commitments to the United Nations (UN) and the "new (multi-racial) Commonwealth"-while South Africa was becoming increasingly isolated internationally. The election of the National Party in 1948, and the subsequent legal imposition of apartheid structures put South Africa on a collision course with the thrusts toward decolonization in the rest of the world.

Nevertheless, until the early 1960s, the Canadian government maintained that South Africa could best be influenced by quiet, behind-the-scenes approaches from a friendly government. In 1960, however, white South Africa's referendum vote to establish itself as a republic forced Canada out of its "studied aloofness."⁷ Prime Minister John Diefenbaker was confronted at the subsequent 1961 Commonwealth meetings with the prospect that support of South Africa's re-admission as a republic could result in the disintegration of a now predominantly non-white Commonwealth. Diefenbaker played a critical role in forcing Pretoria out of the Commonwealth by taking the position at these meetings that "Commonwealth membership must be tied to the acceptance of certain [non-racial] values."⁸ This stance set the stage for Canada's subsequent policy shift to support UN resolutions condemning apartheid, although it was to continue for many years to oppose economic and other sanctions.

The one area in which Canada adopted sanctions was in the sale of arms. In response to a non-binding UN Security Council resolution in 1963, Canada imposed an arms embargo on South Africa. However, this embargo exempted trade in spare parts. As this was precisely the area in which the Canadian military industry specialized, the embargo had virtually no effect on the small volume of bilateral trade in arms with South Africa.⁹ This glaring loophole was closed in 1970. Another major loophole, however, that of allowing the sale of dual-purpose equipment with civilian or military capabilities, was to remain open.¹⁰

In response to Rhodesia's Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in November 1965, Canada also imposed economic sanctions against that territory. These sanctions, however, were implemented in the context of Prime Minister Lester Pearson's diplomatic efforts to defuse pressure from Third-World members to use force to end UDI, a demand that threatened to cause the breakup of the Commonwealth.¹¹ Canada's sanctions against Rhodesia, then, must be seen in the context of its opposition to the use of force and its continuing commitment to the preservation of the Commonwealth rather than as any precedent for sanctions against South Africa.

The Trudeau government's major foreign policy White Paper, *Foreign Policy*

7. Matthews and Pratt, "Canadian Policy," 165.

8. Tennyson, *Canadian Relations*, 164-70.

9. C. Redekop, "Commerce Over Conscience: The Trudeau Government and South Africa, 1968-1984," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 19 (1984-85):94.

10. *Ibid.*, 95.

11. F. Hayes, "Canada, the Commonwealth, and the Rhodesian Issue," in *An Acceptance of Paradox*, ed. K. Nossal (Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1982), 164-66.

for Canadians,¹² was to articulate a subtle, but important shift in Canada's policy towards Pretoria. Up to this point, Canada's South African policy had adhered to the liberal position that social justice and economic growth were essentially complementary priorities. The White Paper, however, framed the issue in terms of the need to strike a "careful balance" between these two important priorities. Nevertheless, in practice, the Trudeau government's policy toward Pretoria continued to be heavily weighted toward the imperatives of economic growth. The British Preferential Tariff continued to be the basis of trade relations, and the benefits of all government trade promotion programs and activities were still extended to Canadian traders in South Africa. The goal of social justice was pursued in a number of indirect ways: by increasing aid to neighbouring Frontline States; by extending a small program of humanitarian assistance to black victims of minority regimes in the region; and by divesting Polymer's (a Canadian Crown Corporation) minority holding in a South African government-controlled company.¹³ By 1972, Canada's traditionally favourable trade balance with South Africa had become (and has remained) a deficit. The deep resistance of the Canadian government to economic and other sanctions, however, persisted.

Despite Pierre Trudeau's initial skepticism about the usefulness of the Commonwealth, and his disparagement of Canada's post-war role as international "helpful-fixer," he was to fall easily into the diplomatic footsteps of Diefenbaker and Pearson. He played a key mediatory role in the 1971 Commonwealth meetings in Singapore in forging an accommodation concerning the dispute over Great Britain's decision to resume arms sales to South Africa. Canada's opposition to the resumption of British arms sales was partly shaped by its own continued opposition to such sales, as signalled by the recent extension of its own embargo to include spare parts. But the commitment to preserve the Commonwealth "as a viable multiracial organization,"¹⁴ again loomed as a more significant factor in its policy stance.

During the first half of the 1970s, the government's refusal to back up its stated priority of promoting social justice in South Africa with more practical economic, social, and political measures drew increasing domestic criticism, particularly from the relatively small, but active and vociferous "Southern African constituency," based in various non-governmental organizations, churches, and universities.¹⁵ While Canada took no concrete political or economic actions against apartheid in South Africa through most of the 1970s, some initiatives were undertaken by the Fitness and Amateur Sport Branch. In response to threats by anti-apartheid sport organizations and Black African

12. Canada, *Foreign Policy for Canadians* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1970).

13. Redekop, "Commerce Over Conscience," 86-97.

14. C. Redekop, "Trudeau at Singapore: The Commonwealth and Arms Sales to South Africa," in Nossal, ed., *An Acceptance of Paradox*, 176.

15. G. Legge, C. Pratt, R. Williams, and H. Winsor, "The Black Paper: An Alternative Policy for Canada Toward Southern Africa," *Behind the Headlines* 30 (Sept. 1970):1-2.

nations to boycott the 1974 Commonwealth Games if athletes from white Commonwealth countries participated in the South African Games in 1973, Lou Lefaive, Director of Sport Canada, sent a letter in December of 1972 to all national sport organizations. In this letter, Lefaive stated that, although the decision to take part in the South African Games ultimately rested with the sport governing bodies and the individual athlete, the federal government would no longer provide financial assistance for this or any other sporting events hosted by South Africa. Despite this, some 14 Canadian athletes attended the South African Games at their own expense.¹⁶

The government strengthened its position somewhat in 1974, when it announced that it would no longer give either moral or financial support to Canadian sport bodies travelling to competitions in South Africa, or to events staged in Canada at which South African athletes competed.¹⁷ In March 1975, the government announced that, in compliance with the rules of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), South Africa would not be invited to the pre-Olympic trials in Montreal.¹⁸

The government was called upon to enforce its new sport policy on a number of occasions in the next few years. For example, in the summer of 1975, it withdrew its \$24,000 contribution to the Canadian Masters' Association when it learned that this organization had invited South African and Rhodesian athletes to compete in an international track and field meet, to be held in Canada.¹⁹ The next summer, in a similar situation, the government withdrew funds, amounting to some \$500,000, from the Committee for the Olympiad for the Disabled because it invited a racially integrated team from South Africa to compete in an international competition in Etobicoke.²⁰ Meet organizer Roger Jackson had insisted that South Africans should be allowed to participate in the Olympiad, but the Canadian Olympic Association and James Worrall, a member of the IOC from Canada, refused to lend him their support. One country, Kenya, had threatened to boycott the Olympiad if South Africa competed. This might well have had repercussions for the Montreal Olympics.²¹ In both of these cases, the offending organization protested that it had not been informed of the policy.²²

The resolve of the Canadian government to take a tougher stand on sporting contacts with South Africa was doubtless reinforced by actions taken at the UN. The UN's General Assembly had adopted a series of resolutions (in 1971, 1975, and 1976), which were supported by the Canadian government, that called on

16. S. Burrows, "The Growth Pattern of International Sports Boycotts Against South Africa" (M.A. thesis, Carleton University, 1978), 115.

17. I. Campagnolo, letter sent to all national sport governing bodies regarding the issue of sporting contacts with South Africa, 11 May 1977, 1.

18. Burrows, "Growth Pattern," 116.

19. *Ibid.*

20. Canada, House of Commons (HC), *Debates* (11 May 1976):13427.

21. Confidential source. Confidential source in this and all other instances in the text refers to government documents to which we were given access on the condition of non-attribution, or to interviews with central actors who wished their comments to remain anonymous.

22. Burrows, "Growth Pattern," 116-17.

member states to assist in the campaign to eliminate racially discriminatory practices from sport. As well, in 1976 the UN's Special Committee Against Apartheid passed a resolution that called for sanctions to be imposed on national teams competing with South Africa.²³

The Soweto "disturbances" of 1976, which led to the deaths of 176 people and unleashed a wave of unrest that swept across South Africa, increased dramatically the pressure, both at home and abroad, for Canada to take stronger and more substantive measures against South Africa. These events were a contributing factor to the last-minute boycott of the 1976 Montreal Olympics by African nations, a matter which receives more attention in a subsequent section. In January of 1977, Canada began a two-year term on the UN Security Council at a time when international pressure for stronger action against apartheid was becoming increasingly irresistible. This position gave Canada's South African policies a higher international profile.²⁴ These, then, were the larger political, economic, and social determinants that were to set the parameters for Canada's diplomatic efforts to avert a boycott of the 1978 Edmonton Commonwealth Games.

South Africa and International Sport

Sporting contacts with South Africa have been a vexatious issue for sport organizations and governments for many years. As far back as 1934, the British Empire Games, which had been originally awarded to South Africa at the conclusion of the 1930 Games in Hamilton, were relocated to London, England, because of concern raised by South African officials about the "colour question."²⁵

Although racism had been practiced in South Africa since the arrival of white settlers, it was not until the election of the National Party in 1948, when that party introduced laws affirming existing segregation practices, that apartheid became formalized. Because sport was not perceived as a threat to apartheid, and because it was largely organized on racial grounds anyway, it was initially little affected by these new laws. Gradually, however, the government began to take control of sport policy making. In 1956, it released a comprehensive policy about sport, which decreed that sport must be organized along the lines of the "separate development" of other aspects of social life in South Africa.²⁶ By the early 1960s, any pretense of independent sport bodies had been dropped, and all meaningful decisions regarding apartheid in sport, or South Africa's international sport relations, were controlled by the government.²⁷ Because the en-

23. R. Lapchick, "Apartheid Sport: South Africa's Use of Sport in Its Foreign Policy," *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 1(1976):73.

24. G. Blouin, "Canadian Policy Toward Southern Africa: The Decision-making Process," in Angelin, Shaw, and Widstrand, eds. *Canada, Scandinavia and Southern Africa*, 159.

25. D. Hoy, "The Proposed African Boycott of the XI Commonwealth Games" (M.A.thesis, University of Alberta, 1979), iv.

26. A. Guelke, "The Politicisation of South African Sport," in *The Politics of Sport*, ed. L. Allison (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), 119-20.

27. R. Lapchick, *The Politics of Race and International Sport: The Case of South Africa* (London: Greenwood Press, 1975), 203-04.

dorsement of the South African Olympic and National Games Association (SAONGA) was a prerequisite to participation in the Commonwealth and Olympic Games, coloured and black athletes were prevented from participating in these Games. SAONGA was "white-only" and upheld the government's position on segregated sport. Many outstanding non-white athletes were forced to move to other countries in order to compete in such events. Some of these athletes and sport officials found their way to England.

In 1958, in order to mount some kind of protest over racial injustices in sport, a number of these non-white athletes and officials formed the South African Sports Association (SASA) in London, England.²⁸ In May of 1959, this group brought the matter of racial discrimination in South African sport to the attention of the IOC. But at its meeting in Rome in connection with the 1960 Olympics, the IOC evidently was satisfied with the explanations of Reginald Honey, an IOC member from South Africa, about race policies in that country and took no action on the SASA protest.²⁹ The issue was brought to the attention of the IOC again by a member from the Soviet Union, Constantin Andrianov,³⁰ at its Executive Board meeting in 1962, at which time SAONGA was asked to give an explanation of the racial policies in sport in that country.³¹ Later that year, at its General Assembly meeting in Moscow, the IOC threatened to suspend South Africa unless SAONGA could give it assurances that sport discrimination would be ended.

In October 1962, the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (SAN-ROC) was formed at the instigation of SASA, with the ultimate objective of replacing SAONGA as the legitimate Olympic Committee of South Africa.³² But the South African government took immediate steps to suppress this new organization by placing banning orders on all its officers. Refusal to cooperate with apartheid sport policies meant withdrawal of sport facilities and travel documents, which meant, of course, that these officers and athletes were prevented from competing in international sport events.³³ In addition, the South African government commenced to prosecute the SAN-ROC officials. Eventually, SAN-ROC was forced into exile and reconvened in London in 1966, joining its parent organization, SASA.³⁴

But international pressure over South Africa's apartheid sport policies was building. At a meeting in Baden-Baden in October 1963, the IOC made two demands of SAONGA as preconditions for participation in the Tokyo Olympics: first, that it declare that it would abide by the IOC rule banning racial discrimination; and, second, that it obtain from its government a change in its

28. *Ibid.*, xi.

29. Department of External Affairs (DEA) Files, National Archives of Canada (NAC), Record Group (RG) 25, Vol. 3054, File 22. The abbreviation used for future references is DEA Files, NAC, RG, Vol., File.

30. S. Ramsamy, "Apartheid, Boycotts and the Games," in *Five-Ring Circus: Money, Power and Politics at the Olympic Games*, ed. A. Tomlinson and G. Whannel (London: Pluto Press, 1984), 45.

31. DEA Files, NAC, RG 25, Vol. 3054, File 22.

32. Guelke, "Politicisation," 123.

33. Lapchick, *Politics of Race*, 205-06.

34. Lapchick, "Apartheid Sport," 57-58.

racial policies in sport. As a result, changes were made in the way that Olympic representatives were selected so that a few black athletes were declared to be members of the South African 1964 Olympic team. The IOC was so encouraged by this move that it dropped its second condition, i.e., that the government change its policy, but still insisted that the SAONGA publicly denounce the policy of segregated sport.³⁵ The South African government, however, rejected this demand and also announced that it was not going to allow mixed teams to represent South Africa in international sport competitions.³⁶ Consequently, South Africa was banned from the Tokyo Olympics.

But SAONGA continued to lobby its many friends on the IOC to gain recognition for the 1968 Mexico City Games. In the meantime, however, in December 1966, the National Olympic Committees of 32 African nations banded together under the auspices of the Organization for African Unity (OAU) to form the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa (SCSA). This organization was committed to end racial discrimination in South Africa and, along with its associated member, SAN-ROC, was to be a driving force for the eventual expulsion of both South Africa and Rhodesia from the Olympic movement.³⁷ SCSA's first step was to inform the IOC that its members would not participate in the Mexico Olympics if South Africa participated while segregated sport still existed in that country.³⁸

International anti-apartheid sport organizations and Black African nations were confident that the IOC would exclude South Africa at its meetings in Tehran in May 1967. But they were surprised to find that some of the IOC membership was still trying to find some compromise on this issue. The new South African Prime Minister, John Vorster, had made a speech in the House of Assembly in April of 1967 that appeared to represent a marked departure from previous policy toward segregation in sport. South Africa, said Vorster, would select a mixed team for the Mexico City Olympics so that the country could play "its rightful role in world affairs."³⁹ As a result of this speech and further supplication from the SAONGA delegation, the IOC executive decided at its Tehran meeting to send a fact-finding team to South Africa.⁴⁰

This committee was led by Lord Killanin, who was to be the next president of the IOC. Its report conceded that South Africa was not abiding by the IOC's code on racial discrimination, but, according to James Worrall, made no recommendations about South African participation at Mexico. Other sources, however, suggest that the committee did recommend that South Africa be permitted to send a team to Mexico because it would allow a small number of

35. Guelke, "Politicisation," 124-25.

36. DEA Files, NAC, RG 25, Vol. 3054, File 22.

37. P. Hain, "The Politics of Sport and Apartheid," in *Sport, Culture and Ideology*, ed. J. Hargreaves (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Limited, 1982), 242.

38. DEA Files, NAC, RG 25, Vol. 3054, File 22.

39. Guelke, "Politicisation," 127.

40. *Ibid.*, 132.

blacks from South Africa to participate in the Olympics.⁴¹ Be that as it may, the report was enough to carry the day for the pro-South African members of the IOC, and in a mail ballot vote in February of 1968, by a count of 36 to 25, the IOC sanctioned South Africa's participation in the Mexico Games.

An international controversy ensued. The SCSA initiated a campaign to gain support for a boycott of the Mexico City Games. This was to be the first of many successful uses of the boycott by the international anti-apartheid sport movement. As a result, some 50 countries, including many Asian nations, as well as black members of the United States Olympic team, announced that they would withdraw from the Games if South Africa was allowed to participate. In addition, Mexico made it clear that it was opposed to South African participation and would not extend an invitation to that country.⁴² Mexican Olympic and Organizing Committee members flew to Chicago to meet with IOC president, Avery Brundage. At first, Brundage refused to back down and was quoted as saying that the Games would be held even if only he and South Africa attended.⁴³ But the pressure brought to bear on him was too great, and Brundage was forced to call a meeting of the IOC executive in April 1968. The executive voted unanimously to withdraw the invitation to South Africa and this vote was sustained in a mail ballot of the entire membership by a count of 46 to 14.⁴⁴

The anti-apartheid sport organizations and the Black African nations continued their efforts to have South Africa expelled from the IOC. Brundage and other South African supporters were able to resist this pressure at the IOC meetings in Warsaw in 1969. But the following year in Amsterdam, the inevitable happened, and the IOC voted 35 to 28 with 3 abstentions to expel South Africa.⁴⁵ At this meeting, South Africa evidently made no attempt to defend its position; rather, it insisted that the IOC not interfere with its domestic affairs.⁴⁶

The Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) had a much easier time than did the IOC in banning South Africa from its Games. When South Africa withdrew from the Commonwealth and declared itself a republic in 1961, the Federation was able to bar it from the 1962 Games in Perth, Australia, on the grounds that it was no longer a member of the Commonwealth. But expelling South Africa from the Olympics and the Commonwealth Games was not to end the efforts of the international anti-apartheid sport organizations and their allies to use sport to fight apartheid in South Africa. These organizations turned their efforts toward ending all sport contacts with South Africa and these endeavours were ultimately to cause more grief for organizers of the Commonwealth Games than for the Olympics.

The most important of South Africa's sporting contacts were with those white Commonwealth nations that shared a common heritage and passion for

41. See, for example, Guelke, "Politicisation," 132; DEA Piles, NAC, RG 25, Vol. 3054, Pile, 22

42. Guelke, "Politicisation," 132.

43. DEA Piles, NAC, RG 25, Vol. 3054, Pile 22.

44. Guelke, "Politicisation," 132.

45. DEA Files, NAC, RG 25, Vol. 3054, File 22.

46. Ramsamy, "Apartheid," 48.

the same games as did South Africa. Rugby and cricket were white South Africa's most popular sports, with golf and tennis next in line. In rugby and cricket, South Africa had a long history of test matches with Britain, Australia, and New Zealand. These ties were to prove very difficult to break, in part because these sports were not part of the Olympic or Commonwealth Games menu, and, thus, these international sport organizations could not be coerced into putting pressure on offending countries. But another reason was that the governments of some of these white Commonwealth nations were very reluctant to interfere with the "rights" of sport organizations or individuals to travel abroad and compete as they wished. Finally, there was a belief (and still is in some quarters in Great Britain) that "bridge-building" was a more effective way of breaking down apartheid in South Africa than isolation. This belief carried over into sport.⁴⁷

The two leading international anti-apartheid sport organizations, SCSA and SAN-ROC, were to turn to secondary boycotts to stop these sporting contacts with South Africa, and the Commonwealth Games were to become an important battleground in the fight to end apartheid in sport.⁴⁸ If nations such as Great Britain, New Zealand, and Australia did not stop their sporting contacts with South Africa, either they were to be banned from competition or the Black African nations would boycott the event. In 1970, for instance, a proposed cricket tour by South Africa of Great Britain met with massive resistance from the "Stop the Seventy Tour Committee." This organization had used protests and demonstrations against the 1969-70 South African rugby tour of Great Britain as a show of strength. The SCSA, headed by Abraham Ordia, threatened to boycott the 1970 Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh if the rugby tour went ahead as planned.⁴⁹ The British Sports Council, the Race Relations Board, and the Organizing Committee for the 1970 Commonwealth Games all exerted pressure to cancel the tour. In a debate in the British House of Commons on 14 May 1970, members from both sides of the House called for government intervention in cancelling the tour.⁵⁰ When the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) refused, British Home Secretary Callaghan intervened. In asking the MCC to withdraw its invitation to the South African team, Callaghan stated that:

We have particularly in mind the possible impact on relations with other Commonwealth countries, race relations in this country, and the divisive effect on the community. Another matter for concern is the effect on the Commonwealth Games.⁵¹

In 1971, the South African Rugby tour of Australia met with such violent demonstrations that the federal government refused to back a proposed cricket

47. R. Lapchick, "South Africa: Sport and Apartheid Politics," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 445 (1979): 164.

48. B. Kidd, "Boycotts that Worked: The Campaign Against Apartheid in the Commonwealth," *CAHPER Journal* 49(1983):8.

49. Lapchick, "Apartheid Sport," 68-70.

50. *Hansard Parliamentary Debates*, 5th ser., vol. 801 (1930), 1461-1523.

51. *Guardian* [Manchester], 22 May 1970 cited in Lapchick, "Apartheid Sport," 69-70.

tour by South Africa later that year. As a result, the Australian Board of Cricket Control was forced to cancel it.⁵² In 1972, protests over the proposed 1973 South African rugby tour of New Zealand, and threats by the SCSA to boycott the 1974 Commonwealth Games scheduled for New Zealand, prompted the New Zealand Prime Minister, Norman Kirk, to withdraw government support and eventually to cancel the tour.⁵³ This strategy of secondary boycotts by SCSA and SAN-ROC was a most effective one, one that was to cause major disruptions of both future Olympic and Commonwealth Games, and was to become an issue with which the Canadian government would have to wrestle for years to come.

The 1976 Montreal Olympics Boycott

The Black African Nation boycott of the 1976 Montreal Olympics evidently came as a complete surprise to both Department of External Affairs and Canadian Olympic officials.⁵⁴ Attention had been focused on the Taiwan issue, which had occupied External Affairs and Olympic Games organizers right up to the commencement of the Games. But there had been plenty of warnings about the impending boycott. As early as 1973, Dennis Brutus (the founder of SAN-ROC) informed the Department of External Affairs that his organization intended to launch a protest movement against South African and Rhodesian participation in the Montreal Olympics.⁵⁵

The immediate cause of the Montreal boycott was the 1976 New Zealand All-Blacks' (ironically, the name of New Zealand's mostly white national rugby team) tour of South Africa. New Zealand rugby contacts with South Africa had been a major point of contention with those fighting apartheid for some time. In 1971, Prime Minister Vorster's "Outward Policy" had softened South Africa's restrictions on the colour of visiting touring athletes from the countries with which it had traditional sporting ties.⁵⁶ This meant that New Zealand could use Maori (non-white) players on its touring rugby teams. Despite this concession, New Zealand's Labour government continued to express its disapproval of sporting contacts with South Africa.⁵⁷ But New Zealanders were anxious to renew their traditional rugby rivalry with South Africa. Robert Muldoon, the leader of the National Party, took advantage of these sentiments in the general election campaign of 1975 by promising that he would revive sporting contacts with South Africa. When his party won the election, it brought about a return in government policy on sport exchanges to that of non-interference, and a Prime Minister who was, at least initially, quite outspoken about this policy.⁵⁸

In January of 1976, after South Africa had accepted New Zealand's invitation

52. R. Lapchick, "Apartheid and the Politics of Sport," *African Report* 21 (1976):39.

53. Lapchick, *Politics of Race*, 213.

54. Morse communication, 24 August 1989.

55. Confidential source.

56. Lapchick, "Apartheid and Politics," 37-38.

57. R. Thompson, "Sporting Competition with South Africa: New Zealand Policy" (Presented at the International Conference on the History of Sport and Physical Education in the Pacific Region, Dunedin, New Zealand, 1978), 128.

58. *Ibid.*

to participate in the World Softball Championships, Abraham Ordia, the president of the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa (SCSA), called for a world-wide boycott of these championships. When the softball championships went off as scheduled, there were further threats to boycott the 1976 Olympics.⁵⁹ At the same time, Canada's policies also came under criticism from Ordia because a Canadian team participated in these world championships.⁶⁰ Tensions increased in April of 1976, when the New Zealand Prime Minister rejected demands by SCSA to end all sporting contacts with South Africa, and in particular, to cancel a proposed tour of South Africa by the New Zealand All-Blacks rugby team.⁶¹ This precipitated an unanimous vote by SCSA to boycott the Montreal Olympics if the rugby tour went ahead as scheduled. The All-Blacks' departure for South Africa coincided with the Soweto unrest and massacre, and further infuriated anti-apartheid organizations.⁶² At its meetings in Mauritius, the OAU, SCSA's parent body, passed a motion calling on all African nations to boycott the Montreal Olympics to protest New Zealand's presence at the Games.⁶³

But none of the other parties in the dispute was willing to take any action. The New Zealand government refused to withdraw its team from the Montreal Olympics or to change its sport policies, citing the autonomy of New Zealand sport organizations and the absence of rugby from the Olympic program as justifications for its position.⁶⁴ The Canadian government maintained that the boycott threat was a problem that needed to be resolved by the parties directly involved, i.e., the SCSA, New Zealand, and the IOC.⁶⁵ Given the IOC's traditional position that politics had no place in the Olympic movement, it is not surprising that its president, Lord Killanin, denounced the boycott threat, but expressed the view that the African nations would go through various motions to draw attention to their opposition to apartheid in sport, but, in the end, not impose a boycott.⁶⁶

Most of the Black African nation teams did, indeed, arrive at Montreal early in July in preparation for the Games. However, this was a strategy that the anti-apartheid sport organizations had used successfully in 1972 in getting the IOC to back down at the last minute and ban Rhodesia from the Munich Games in that both the Rhodesian and most of the Black African nations' teams were already in residence in Munich in the Olympic village. But on that occasion, the target was Rhodesia, a country that had been forced from the Commonwealth and had few allies championing its cause. In fact, the UN's Committee of Twenty-Four had passed a resolution on 30 April 1971, urging the IOC to

59. Hoy, "Proposed African Boycott," 78-79.

60. DEA Piles, NAC, RG 25, Vol. 3060, Pile 78.

61. T. Newnham, "Some Aspects of the Role of the New Zealand Prime Minister, R.D. Muldoon, in the Apartheid Sports Boycott, 1974-77," *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 2 (1978):32.

62. Ibid.

63. DEA Ales, NAC, RG 25, Vol. 3060, File 78.

64. A. Strenk, "Back to the Very First Day: Eighty Years of Politics in the Olympic Games," *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 2 (1978):25.

65. DEA Ales, NAC, RG 25, Vol. 3060, Pile 78.

66. Ibid.

suspend the membership of the Rhodesian National Olympic Committee, and asking the Munich Organizing Committee to annul the invitation to Rhodesia.⁶⁷ In the case of the Montreal Olympics, New Zealand was a Commonwealth member in good standing with allies in both the Commonwealth and among other nations around the world. To bar New Zealand from the Montreal Games was beyond the reach of the political pressure that the Black African nations could bring to bear on the IOC. In addition, as noted before, the international controversy about Canada's stand on Taiwan's participation in the Montreal Games made it impossible for the Black African nations to get world attention focused on its cause.

Early in July, 16 of the Black African nations sent a letter to IOC president, Lord Killanin, protesting the New Zealand rugby tour and calling on the IOC to bar New Zealand from the Games. Failing this, the "respective National Olympic Committees of Africa reserve the right to reconsider their participation in the Games of the XXIst Olympiad."⁶⁸ The protest was considered at the IOC General Assembly meetings in Montreal immediately preceding the Games. Following a brief discussion, it was decided to take no action on the matter. Lord Killanin wrote to the president of the SCSA, stating that "Rugby is a sport over which the IOC has no control whatsoever . . . the full IOC Session . . . unanimously agree that this is not a matter within its competence."⁶⁹ As a result, on the weekend before the Montreal Games were to commence, Black African nations dropped out, one-by-one, and returned home. By opening day, 22 nations had withdrawn.⁷⁰ The boycott precipitated immediate action in the international sport scene. International sport organizations in athletics, football, and swimming took immediate steps to expel South Africa from their respective associations.⁷¹

Diplomacy and The Commonwealth Games

If government officials were unaware of the potential of a Black African boycott of the Montreal Olympics, they were certainly cognizant of the possibility of a similar occurrence at the 1978 Edmonton Commonwealth Games. Over the summer of 1976, SCSA Secretary-General Jean-Claude Ganga announced to the press on several occasions that the Black African nations would boycott the 1978 Commonwealth Games if New Zealand did not change its policy on sporting contacts with South Africa.⁷² This placed Canada in an extremely awkward position. New Zealand could not be barred from the Commonwealth Games because of its membership in the Commonwealth, but if it did not change its policy on sporting contacts with South Africa, many

67. DEA Files, NAC, RG 25, Vol. 3054, Bile 22.

68. International Olympic Committee (IOC), "Minutes of the Meetings of the 78th Session of the IOC-Montreal," (Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, July 1976), 70.

69. *Ibid.*, 71.

70. International Olympic Committee (IOC), "Minutes of the Meetings of the IOC Executive Board-Barcelona" (Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, October 1976), 45.

71. Ramsamy, "Apartheid," 50.

72. Hoy, "Proposed African Boycott," 83,85.

Canadian Diplomacy and the 1978 Edmonton Commonwealth Games

Commonwealth countries would most likely boycott the Edmonton Games.⁷³ Such a boycott would not only put the Games in financial jeopardy (the federal government had committed some \$12 million to the capital costs of these Games, and goods and services to be at a similar level),⁷⁴ but would be damaging to the future of the Commonwealth Games as an institution and to the harmony of the Commonwealth as a whole.

Canada's reputation as a progressive force within the Commonwealth and as a friend to Third-World countries⁷⁵ would also suffer. Prime Minister Trudeau had managed to win the confidence of Third-World leaders, and to reinforce the image of Canada as a bridge between developed and developing countries.⁷⁶ The government was determined to maintain this image. On the domestic front, there was concern that a failure of the Edmonton Commonwealth Games would create further political problems for the government in Western Canada.⁷⁷ There was also, as noted before, growing pressure on the government from advocacy groups in Canada for some concrete action against apartheid. It is not surprising, then, that Canada took a much stronger position towards apartheid in South Africa in the two years leading up to the 1978 Commonwealth Games than had been the case previously.

Deep divisions existed within the Commonwealth in attitudes toward getting South Africa to change its position on apartheid,⁷⁸ so Canada found itself trying to mediate among these differences. Much of Canadian efforts over the next two years, therefore, would be directed toward bringing New Zealand and the African countries together to reconcile their differences. To this end, a flurry of demarches ensued. Numerous meetings were held during the fall of 1976, in which Canada expressed its concerns over the boycott threats, and explored ways in which Prime Minister Muldoon's position could be changed to increase the chances of African participation in the Edmonton Commonwealth Games.⁷⁹ Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs Allan MacEachen met with New Zealand's Prime Minister Robert Muldoon and members of his cabinet,⁸⁰ as well as a number of other ministers in Malaysia, Indonesia and Australia.⁸¹

MacEachen's successor, Donald Jamieson, conferred with Sir Keith Holyoake (Minister of State and Chairperson of the New Zealand UN General Assembly Delegation) to inquire whether there was any possibility of New Zealand moving toward a sport policy that would be more in line with that of Canada.⁸² Jamieson also sought the assistance of Anthony Crosland, the British

73. Fitness and Amateur Sport (FAS) Files, No. 7112-1, Vol. 1 (Ottawa). The abbreviation used for future references is FAS Files, No., Vol.

74. R. Baka and D. Hoy, "Political Aspects of Canadian Participation in the Commonwealth Games," *CAHPER Journal*, 44 (1978):7-8.

75. Matthews and Pratt, "Canadian Policy," 74.

76. G. Radwanski, *Trudeau* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1978), 353-54.

77. Confidential source.

78. Matthews and Pratt, "Canadian Policy," 170.

79. Hoy, "Proposed African Boycott," 86-92.

80. "Kiwi Policy May Spoil Games," *Edmonton Journal*, 1 September 1976.

81. D. Wederell, "The 1978 Commonwealth Games: Canada Drops Heavy Hints to New Zealand," *Guyana Chronicle*, 25 September 1976.

82. Confidential source.

Foreign Affairs Minister, in relaying the message to New Zealand that it must start acting on its pledges.⁸³

Prime Minister Trudeau also joined in the diplomatic efforts to save the 1978 Commonwealth Games by seeking the assistance of Michael Manley, the Jamaican Prime Minister, to intervene with Third-World Commonwealth nations in the impasse over New Zealand's sporting contacts with South Africa.⁸⁴ By mid-December of 1976, government officials had prepared a list of recommendations for Prime Minister Trudeau, aimed at defusing the boycott threat. These recommendations included: urging the New Zealand High Commissioner to impress upon his government the necessity of meeting with SCSA President Ordia; requesting the personal assistance of leaders of key Commonwealth countries; and sending a special emissary to appropriate countries to seek a solution to the problem.⁸⁵

By January of 1977, Commonwealth Games officials were optimistic enough about the prospects for the Edmonton Games to send out the official invitations.⁸⁶ They had delayed sending these out earlier because of the uncertainty about the boycott. Indeed, there had been a few bright signs. During October 1976, New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs, B.E. Talboys, had released a statement asking all New Zealand sport bodies to consider UN resolutions on apartheid in sport when deciding whether or not to maintain sporting relations with South Africa, and the Minister of State, Sir Keith Holyoake, had announced that the New Zealand government would discourage sporting bodies from going to South Africa.⁸⁷ A public opinion poll released that same month had indicated that the majority of New Zealanders disapproved of sporting contacts with South Africa.** Sir Alexander Ross (Chair of the CGF) had patched a flare-up between himself and SCSA President Ordia at a meeting in November, which, at the time of the confrontation, had prompted Ordia to call a press conference to renew boycott threats by denouncing the Federation and New Zealand.⁸⁹ Ross responded by asking Commonwealth countries to give serious consideration to the matter of sporting contacts with nations that practiced racial discrimination.⁹⁰

In December 1976, the New Zealand Rugby Union had refused an invitation for the Maori team to tour South Africa. Prime Minister Muldoon had congratulated them on this decision, but still denied that his government had changed its non-interference policy.⁹¹ However, there were signs that Muldoon was beginning to adopt a more conciliatory position. He had indicated that all New Zealand sport federations had been advised to consider the wider implications

83. P. Calamai, "British Aid Sought for Games," *Edmonton Journal*, 7 December 1976.

84. "1978 Games Concern to Manley," *Edmonton Journal*, 29 October 1976.

85. Confidential source.

86. D. Powers, "Games Officials Buoyed by Optimism," *Edmonton Journal*, 13 January 1977.

87. "Kiwis Plan to Dissuade Groups from Touring South Africa," *Globe and Mail*, 19 October 1976

88. "Change of Heart by New Zealanders," *Globe and Mail*, 10 November 1976.

89. Confidential source.

90. "New Zealand gets Games Deadline," *Edmonton Journal*, 18 November 1976.

91. D. Ingram, "Future of Commonwealth Games at Stake," *Ottawa Journal*, 26 January 1977

of any sporting contacts with South Africa.⁹² Muldoon also responded to a personal letter from SCSA Secretary-General, Jean-Claude Ganga, by indicating that his government supported the campaign against apartheid, and deploring the selection of any sports team on the basis of racial discrimination. Furthermore, Muldoon stated that he believed that significant contacts with racially-selected teams from South Africa would no longer take place.⁹³

This growing optimism of the Commonwealth Games officials seemed well-founded when, at the end of January, the SCSA executive announced that it had decided against a boycott of the Edmonton Games. But these hopes were dashed shortly after, when the OAU announced that it would advocate a boycott unless New Zealand severed all sporting contacts with South Africa.⁹⁴ This measure by its parent body made the SCSA back down on its previous statement and by early March, there were reports from the SCSA that black African nations would come to Edmonton only if New Zealand were barred.⁹⁵

While these events were taking place, SCSA raised the question of New Zealand's visa practices. This turn of events put Canada in an embarrassing situation because its position on visas for South Africans was a weak one. In order to try to defuse this issue, Canadian officials took the position that the central problem was New Zealand's sport contacts with South Africa, and not the hypothetical application of local immigration laws. But Muldoon's response to the SCSA query essentially put all countries not refusing visas to South Africans in the same boat as New Zealand.⁹⁶

The wide differences that remained between New Zealand and the Black African Commonwealth nations on the issue of sporting contacts with South Africa made it clear that the issue was not going to be resolved in bilateral negotiations between New Zealand and other nations and organizations. It was a matter that would have to be settled collectively by the leaders of the Commonwealth nations - a multi-lateral "end run" around the New Zealand-African stalemate.

The Gleneagles Declaration

By the middle of March 1977, a consensus was developing among Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and Commonwealth Secretary-General Ramphal that a solution would have to be found before the upcoming Commonwealth meetings in June. If the impasse was not resolved by that time, the possibility remained that the Commonwealth Heads of Government might request that the CGF cancel or postpone the Edmonton Games. If the Federation ignored this request, the Canadian government would face the awkward decision of inter-

92. *Edmonton Journal*, "New Zealand Questions South African Sports Links," 10 December 1976.

93. Ingram, "Future of Commonwealth Games."

94. G. Nichols, "Sports Boycott: Edmonton Games Could be Marred Unless Compromise Reached at UN," *Ottawa Journal*, 1 April 1977.

95. Hoy, "Proposed African Boycott," 93-94.

96. Confidential source.

vening itself, with the resulting brouhaha that would ensue, particularly in Western Canada.⁹⁷

Any agreement would have to meet the requirements of Africans, be acceptable to New Zealand, and confirm British, Australian, and Canadian opposition to sport contacts with South Africa. Canada supported the suggestion of British Sport Minister Dennis Howell that a statement of principles acceptable to Commonwealth Heads of Government be developed by the three countries. Such a statement would have to be strong enough to placate the African nations, but still be possible for New Zealand to sign. Because there was not enough time to consult ministers, Canadian officials informed the British government of Canada's endorsement of Howell's proposal, and asked Britain to draft a statement for Canadian and Australian review.⁹⁸

The task of developing this statement, however, was to fall largely on Ramphal, who agreed to produce a draft communique and to do some of the preliminary diplomatic work with different Commonwealth governments. Following a meeting between Trudeau and Ramphal in Ottawa at the end of March, the work of selling the idea to all Commonwealth governments began in earnest. Canadian officials circulated a first draft of the statement. Most Commonwealth countries reacted cautiously, waiting to see how the document would be received by New Zealand.⁹⁹ After his consultations in Canada, Ramphal worked with three Third-World Commonwealth leaders, Michael Manley of Jamaica, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, and Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia to develop further the document to meet the demands of Third-World Commonwealth countries.¹⁰⁰

During April 1977, the Department of External Affairs, in conjunction with Fitness and Amateur Sport, prepared an option document for the Prime Minister's Office. The options included: first, refusing to grant visas to visiting South African athletes as suggested in Article 6 of the UN resolution on sporting contacts with South Africa; second, withholding all funds for some finite time from national sport organizations that invited South African athletes to Canada; and third, public criticism of sport contacts with South Africa.¹⁰¹ The first two were rejected in favour of the third, and as a result, Fitness and Amateur Sport Minister Iona Campagnolo drafted a statement reiterating Canada's position on sporting contacts with South Africa and deploring all such contacts. In order to bolster this rather insipid statement, Campagnolo asserted that "the Government will in the future strongly discourage and, if necessary, take a very critical attitude in public towards any proposed sporting contact between Canadians and South Africans, whether federal funding is involved or not."¹⁰²

At this point, Campagnolo had been lobbying within the Cabinet for parallel "compensatory" action against South Africa on the economic side. In par-

97. Confidential source.

98. Confidential source.

99. Morse (1978) cited in Hoy, "Proposed African Boycott," 96-97.

100. Confidential source.

101. Burrows, "Growth Pattern," 125.

102. *Ibid.*, 121.

ticular, she called for the closing of all trade offices in South Africa to balance the contribution being made by sport in opposition to apartheid. But any type of economic sanction had been consistently opposed by private interest groups doing business in South Africa. These groups had the support of the Department of Industry, Trade, and Commerce, who used its influence with the Department of External Affairs to apply pressure within the Cabinet and the Party Caucus to oppose economic sanctions. This lobby group, according to Campagnolo, was equally, if not more effective than those groups calling for increased sanctions against South Africa.¹⁰³ Allan Gotlieb, who was Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, says the “dominant” view in Trade and Commerce at this time was that Canada should trade with everyone; if you imposed sanctions, then you open the way for others to do the same in different circumstances, i.e., use trade for political purposes.¹⁰⁴ Despite this “trade” lobby within the government, Campagnolo was able to get assurances that the issue of closing down trade offices in South Africa would have a “high priority” at the forthcoming meetings of the Commonwealth Heads of Government.¹⁰⁵

The policy statement deploring sporting contacts with South Africa was sent in early May under Campagnolo’s name to all national sport governing bodies as well as to all Commonwealth governments, every African nation, and to the UN.¹⁰⁶ There was very little in the way of new policy in this statement, but it contained a great deal of rhetoric that served to give a high profile to what little action Canada had taken about sport contacts with South Africa and was timed to make an appropriate impression for the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings in London. Apparently Campagnolo’s statement had no appreciable effect on Prime Minister Muldoon.

The Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings convened in London in early June of 1977, with the possibility of a boycott of the Edmonton Games still paramount in the minds of Canadian officials. Prime Minister Trudeau had said in the House of Commons shortly before leaving for the London meetings that:

of the Commonwealth Games there has been a great deal of preparatory work by myself, by the Minister of External Affairs and our officials. On many occasions we have tried to solve this question. If it is not solved before the London Conference next week, then we must find some way of solving it there.¹⁰⁷

Discussions of the topic of apartheid commenced on the third day of the formal meetings. But it was not until the Prime Ministers retired by themselves on their traditional one-day retreat from these meetings to Gleneagles, Scotland, that serious negotiations about a Commonwealth accord on sporting contacts with

103. Personal communication with Iona Campagnolo (Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sport, 1976-79), 1 December 1990.

104. Personal communication with Allan Gotlieb (Under-secretary of State for External Affairs, 1977-81), 18 February 1991.

105. Campagnolo communication.

106. Morse (1978) cited in Hoy, “Proposed African Boycott,” 98, 100.

107. House of Commons (HC), *Debates*, 31 May 1977 cited in G. Olfason, “The Gleneagles Agreement: Canada’s Influence, Contribution, and Involvement,” (Unpublished manuscript, University of Windsor, 1988), 21.

South Africa got under way. Trudeau was always a dominant figure at these Commonwealth meetings. He loved the informal atmosphere—the give and take of debate—and shone at them,¹⁰⁸ and these attributes stood him in good stead in the private negotiations that followed. Manley was designated by the others to secure Muldoon's cooperation, presumably because he was seen as someone who could provide a link between the developed and Third-World nations in the Commonwealth.¹⁰⁹ Thus, Manley provided the leadership for discussions among Muldoon, Ramphal, Trudeau, and External Affairs Commissioner Brigadier Shehu Yar'Adua of Nigeria. Not present at these meetings, but consulted, were Australian Prime Minister Fraser and President Kaunda of Zambia. The outcome of these negotiations was a draft that followed closely that which had been prepared by Ramphal earlier in the year.¹¹⁰

This document was presented to the Commonwealth leaders when the meetings reconvened in London the following week and was accepted by all the heads of state. The Commonwealth Statement on Apartheid in Sport, which became known as the Gleneagles Declaration, called on all Commonwealth governments to discourage sporting contacts with South Africa.¹¹¹ However, it was drafted in such broad principle that it allowed discretion by individual governments in fulfilling this obligation in accordance with their own laws. As such, it allowed New Zealand to sign and break the impasse between that country and the Black African Commonwealth nations over sporting contacts with South Africa. Trudeau was credited with having played a central role in bringing this agreement to fruition.¹¹²

The next step was to convince the OAU that the Gleneagles Declaration represented a significant step in the fight against apartheid in sport. To this end, Prime Minister Trudeau wrote to several of his Francophone African colleagues to solicit their support at the upcoming OAU meetings. Apparently, Francophone Africans tended to suspect any Commonwealth activity of being “just another colonial ploy.”¹¹³ Despite these sentiments, these efforts apparently were effective because the Gleneagles Declaration was approved by the OAU in Gabon at the end of June.

In July, the New Zealand parliament gave its approval to a resolution supporting the Gleneagles Declaration and Prime Minister Muldoon issued a statement defining government sport policy, calling on all national sport bodies to adhere to the Declaration. These measures caused Canadian officials to be much more optimistic about avoiding a major boycott of the Edmonton Com-

108. Gottlieb communication.

109. Personal communication with Jeremy Pope (Head of Legal Affairs Division, Commonwealth Secretariat), November 1990.

110. Hoy, “Proposed African Boycott,” 102.

111. Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF), *Constitution of the Commonwealth Games Federation* (London, 1988), Appendix B, 54.

112. See, for instance, B. Kidd, “The Campaign Against Sport in South Africa,” *International Journal* 63 (1988):655; N. Macfarlane, with M. Herd, *Sport and Politics: A World Divided* (London: Willow Books, 1986) 110.

113. Confidential source.

monwealth Games. Indeed, there was a belief that the question of sporting contacts with South Africa had been placed “on a more rational footing.”¹¹⁴

Consolidating the Gains

Despite the successful negotiations in London, there was still much to do to ensure that the Gleneagles Declaration did not come apart and jeopardize the success of the 1978 Commonwealth Games. External Affairs and Commonwealth Games officials set about wooing leaders of African Commonwealth nations to ensure their attendance in Edmonton the following summer. Canadian missions in Africa proved to be important in these endeavours. In the first instance, they served as channels of communication between African nations and New Zealand. New Zealand had no diplomatic missions in Africa; nor did most African nations in New Zealand.¹¹⁵ In the spring of 1977, Iona Campagnolo had met with the Canadian Ambassador to Italy, and was able to confirm that he would mobilize support for the Edmonton Games in the six Commonwealth African nations that were also part of his ambassadorial responsibilities.¹¹⁶

Canadian missions were also to provide invaluable services for the African tour of the Edmonton Commonwealth Games Foundation President Maury Van Vliet in the fall of 1977. This promotional and goodwill tour of African Commonwealth nations by Van Wet proved to be an important diplomatic endeavour in saving the 1978 Commonwealth Games. Government officials made arrangements through the Canadian missions in Africa for Van Vliet to meet with representatives from all Commonwealth African countries. The tour provided Van Vliet with the opportunity to discuss the New Zealand problem, and to promote the Gleneagles Declaration as “something more than a piece of paper.”¹¹⁷

This trip also allowed Van Wet a chance to publicize Canada’s offer of air transportation at reduced rates from Algiers to Edmonton at the close of the Pan-African Games (which were being held two weeks before the Commonwealth Games) for all African country team members and officials, and then return them to London after the Commonwealth Games.¹¹⁸ This offer fulfilled the Edmonton Organizing Committee’s promise to provide travel costs that would not exceed those to the site of the rival host, Leeds, England, as well as overcoming the logistical problems created for African Commonwealth nations by the juxtaposition of the Pan-Africa and the Commonwealth Games.¹¹⁹ These incentives were well received by African officials, and Van Vliet returned home, expressing optimism that “there would be no African boycott of the 1978

114. Confidential source.

115. Burrows, “Growth Pattern,” 120.

116. Campagnolo communication

117. Morse (1978) cited in Hoy, “Proposed African Boycott,” 108-10.

118. “Tour Valuable, Says Van Vliet,” *Edmonton Journal*, 24 October 1977.

119. Confidential source.

Commonwealth Games in Edmonton despite continuing controversy over New Zealand's sporting links with South Africa."¹²⁰

One negative reaction to Van Vliet's trip came from SCSA President Abraham Ordia, who accused Canada of not doing enough to force New Zealand to conform to the Gleneagles Declaration.¹²¹ By early November 1977, Ordia was still insisting that Africans would not participate in the Edmonton Games."¹²² With the issue of the boycott on the agenda of the SCSA meetings later that month in mind, Fitness and Amateur Sport Minister Iona Campagnolo wrote a letter of appreciation to all the African authorities who had met with Van Vliet.¹²³ Canada's prodigious efforts paid off when the SCSA adopted a resolution in mid-November, urging all African Commonwealth nations to attend the Commonwealth Games in Edmonton.¹²⁴

In December of 1977, during the first debate about foreign affairs in the House of Commons in seven years, External Affairs Minister Donald Jamieson announced a package of measures designed to demonstrate Canada's disapproval of apartheid. These measures included: the phasing out of all government-sponsored, commercial-support activities in South Africa; the withdrawal of all Export Development Corporation government account support from any transactions relating to South Africa; a commitment to publish a code of conduct and ethics for Canadian companies operating in South Africa (issued on 28 April 1978); and the requirement of non-immigrant visas from all residents of South Africa coming to Canada. Previously, they had been able to enter Canada on the presentation of their passports, the normal requirement for Commonwealth citizens.¹²⁵ Several factors (mentioned previously) led to this symbolically-significant, if substantively-minimal, break with previous Canadian refusals to interfere with normal social and commercial intercourse with South Africa:¹²⁶ the international impact of the 1976 Soweto "disturbances"; Canada's accession to a temporary seat on the Security Council, where the South African issue was pressing; and growing domestic pressure from interest groups opposed to apartheid. However, these measures were also no doubt designed to strengthen Canada's anti-apartheid credentials with other Commonwealth countries in the run-up to the Edmonton Games.

These measures were also precipitated in part by complaints from Iona Campagnolo that sport had been shouldering all the responsibility for Canada's inaction over apartheid in South Africa, and that it was time for Canada to take a stronger economic position. Trudeau had supported Campagnolo's argument in Cabinet for fairness in the broader distribution of sectoral responsibility for opposing apartheid. Campagnolo fought particularly hard, over opposition

120. "Van Vliet Feels Boycott Improbable," *Edmonton Journal*, 14 October 1977, p. A6.

121. Confidential source.

122. "African Countries Renew Boycott Threat Against New Zealand," *Globe and Mail*, 15 November 1977.

123. Confidential source.

124. D. Rowers, "Year Saw Threat to Games of African Boycott Dwindle," *Edmonton Journal*, 31 December 1977.

125. Canada, House of Commons (HC), *Debates* (19 December 1977):2000.

126. T. Keenleyside, "Canada-South Africa Commercial Relations, 1977-1982: Business as Usual?," *The Canadian Journal of African Studies* 17 (1983):449-50.

from Industry, Trade, and Commerce and some quarters in External Affairs, for the closing of Canadian Trade Offices in Capetown and Durban as a “significant signal.”¹²⁷ It was not that Campagnolo was opposed to using sport sanctions; she was strongly committed to the struggle against apartheid, but wanted the government to take stronger actions on all fronts.¹²⁸

The new Canada Immigration Act was implemented on 10 April 1978, requiring non-immigrant visas for all South Africans visiting Canada. At about this same time, Prime Minister Trudeau decided not to take to Cabinet the recommendation that entry visas be denied to South African sportspeople, “in view of the domestic political situation.”¹²⁹ Evidently, there was concern that any revision of the existing South African sport policy to include the denial of entry visas might not increase its effectiveness, given the difficulty in detecting all South African sportspeople trying to enter the country. Also, there were fears that with the Commonwealth Games so close, institution of a new sport policy “might create a worse controversy at home than retention of the present policy with its admitted weaknesses.”¹³⁰ Indeed, tennis and golf lobbies were opposed to any restrictions on visas for South African sportspeople, because some were feature attractions at Canadian professional golf and tennis tournaments. This tennis and golf (and indeed sailing) lobby was particularly strong at this time.¹³¹

Although Uganda had accepted its invitation to the Games in February 1978, it officially withdrew during May 1978 because of alleged Canadian hostility toward the country. This withdrawal was precipitated by media speculation about the possible attendance at the Games of Ugandan President Idi Amin as coach of the boxing team.¹³² In the House of Commons, Conservative M.P. John Diefenbaker demanded that the government refuse Amin entry to Canada because of “diabolical murderous conduct,” asserting that: “We need no coaches for murder and terrorism in this country.”¹³³ These public comments precipitated Uganda’s withdrawal from the Games, with the accusation that “Canada has used Uganda’s intention to participate in the Games to mount a vicious and entirely unwarranted anti-Uganda campaign.”¹³⁴

As a last minute effort to co-ordinate departmental activity on the Edmonton Games and to ensure maximum participation by African nations, External Affairs created a special Task Force for Commonwealth Games in May 1978, and Eric Bergbusch was appointed Special Co-ordinator, Commonwealth Games.¹³⁵ The Department also made the necessary diplomatic arrangements for Ivor Dent and a group of business persons from Edmonton to undertake a goodwill tour of African Commonwealth nations at the end of June and early

127. Campagnolo communication.

128. Personal communication with Eric Morse, 17 October 1990.

129. FAS Files, No. 7112-5-1, Vol. 20.

130. *Ibid.*

131. Campagnolo communication

132. P. Jackson, “Keep Amin out: Dief.,” *Edmonton Journal*, 22 April 1978.

133. P. Jackson, “Idi’s Games Plan a Bluff, Dief. Told,” *Edmonton Journal*, 1 May 1978, p. A8.

134. D. Powers, “No Ugandan Team Will Attend Games,” *Edmonton Journal*, 19 May 1978, p. 84.

135. Confidential source.

July.¹³⁶ Dent had been the Mayor of Edmonton from 1968 to 1974, and during his tenure of office, had been instrumental in gaining African nation support for Edmonton's successful bid for the Commonwealth Games. To this end, he had made a personal tour of African Commonwealth nations in the spring of 1972.¹³⁷ The Dent trip, according to Campagnolo, was a "triumph," and much credit went to Horst Schmidt, Alberta Minister of Culture, Youth and Recreation, who integrated the resources available in Alberta with contacts around the world to provide Dent with the best possible chance for success.¹³⁸

By the end of June 1978, 11 of the 13 African Commonwealth nations had accepted their invitations to the Games.¹³⁹ But diplomatic efforts were still being undertaken to ensure maximum participation at Edmonton. During July of 1978, Prime Minister Trudeau sent a message of greeting to all Commonwealth teams through their respective heads of government. At the same time, Commonwealth Secretary-General Ramphal informed all Commonwealth Heads of State that, in his opinion, all Commonwealth governments had abided by the Gleneagles Declaration.¹⁴⁰

Despite the government's misgivings a few months earlier, Fitness and Amateur Sport Minister Iona Campagnolo announced on 14 July 1978 that the federal government had established specific criteria for the withholding of Canadian visas from South African sportspersons.¹⁴¹ This initiative was evidently precipitated by a memo sent in late June to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for External Affairs that advocated denying entry visas to South African sportspersons who were representative of their country. This memo had come from an ad hoc committee, with representatives from the Games Task Force, External Affairs, and the Privy Council, established to discuss the danger of a boycott, and to determine what further steps might be needed to ensure the success of the Games.¹⁴² To this end, Campagnolo had applied constant pressure to overcome the opposition in Cabinet to this measure, using the importance of a successful Edmonton Games to advantage to finally win her point.¹⁴³

The new criteria disallowed visas for all South African athletes and sports representatives wishing to enter Canada to participate in sports competitions or associated congresses. Campagnolo felt that this new policy would take an "unfair burden" off individual sport governing bodies, by meeting the request of many Canadian sportspersons "that the government take full responsibility for administration of the South Africa Sport Policy."¹⁴⁴ When questioned,

136. Hoy, "Proposed African Boycott," 121.

137. Personal communication with Ivor Dent (a Canadian delegate to the Commonwealth Games Federation, 1978-83), 18 October 1990.

138. Campagnolo communication.

139. Hoy, "Proposed African Boycott," vi.

140. Morse (1978) cited in *ibid.*, 122-23.

141. Minister of State, Fitness and Amateur Sport, "Canada Defines Policy for South African Sportspeople," (News Release, Ottawa, 14 July 1978).

142. Confidential source.

143. Campagnolo communication.

144. Minister of State, Fitness and Amateur Sport, 14 July 1978.

Campagnolo stated that this policy was a follow-up to the Gleneagles Declaration, and was designed “to ensure the success of the Commonwealth Games” by demonstrating Canada’s “good faith” to the other Commonwealth countries.¹⁴⁵

Certainly, this decision, one that effectively reversed the government’s earlier position, must be seen as a final tactical step taken to ensure the attendance of African countries at the Commonwealth Games. Indeed, Commonwealth Secretary-General Ramphal noted that Canada’s refusal to permit visas for South African athletes and sports officials was “very greatly appreciated within the Commonwealth.”¹⁴⁶ In Pretoria, the measure was certainly connected with the Commonwealth Games. One report there quoted Iona Campagnolo as saying, “We could not take any chances that there might be some South African representatives coming to the Games who could precipitate some unpleasantness.”¹⁴⁷ At home, however, this new policy met with strong criticism from the Canadian public. Letters to the *Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star* queried why Canada was adopting such a strong position with South Africa, while taking a “wishy-washy” approach to the Soviet Union.

Success seemed close at hand when the CGF received word on July 23 from the Executive Committee of SCSA that it had authorized African Commonwealth members to participate in the Edmonton Games.¹⁴⁸ However, on July 26, optimism was supplanted by disappointment and shock when Nigeria’s newly-appointed Sports Minister Sylvanus Williams announced that his country (the largest and most powerful nation in black Africa) would boycott the Commonwealth Games.¹⁴⁹ Described as “a very high political decision,”¹⁵⁰ the withdrawal of Nigeria from the Commonwealth Games may well have been influenced by the Nigerian president of the SCSA, Abraham Ordia. Ordia, who was regarded as having a strong influence on decisions made by the Nigerian government, maintained that New Zealand had not severed its sport ties with South Africa.¹⁵¹ At a news conference on his visit to Edmonton in April, Ordia had indicated that he did not believe that the spirit and letter of the Gleneagles Declaration was being carried forward, citing the example of five New Zealand rugby players who had accepted an invitation to compete on an international team in South Africa in August of 1977.¹⁵² Ordia had been brought to Edmonton by the Department of External Affairs, along with the secretary-general of the SCSA, Jean-Claude Ganga, to visit the Games sites and talk with officials because the latter had been unable to meet with Maury Van Vliet on his African trip.¹⁵³

To exacerbate the situation, Ordia was incensed with inflammatory telegrams

145. D. Powers, “Gov’t Bars South Africans,” *Edmonton Journal*, 15 July 1978, p. A1.

146. D. Powers, “Political Trouble Predicted for Future Games,” *Edmonton Journal*, 2 August 1978, p. C1.

147. Confidential source.

148. “Games President ‘shocked,’” *Edmonton Journal*, 26 July 1978.

149. “Nigeria Pulls Out of Games,” *Edmonton Journal*, 26 July 1978.

150. D. Powers, “Nigerian Athletes ‘Furious’ Over Pullout,” *Edmonton Journal*, 31 July 1978, p. B1.

151. D. Powers, “Nigeria Entry in Games Uncertain,” *Edmonton Journal*, 20 April 1978.

152. D. Powers, “African Claims N.Z. Ignoring Pact on Sports,” *Edmonton Journal*, 20 April 1978.

153. FAS Files, No. 7112-5-1, Vol. 20.

he had received from some New Zealanders,¹⁵⁴ and by provocative statements made by officials of the CGF.¹⁵⁵ Furthermore, he had crossed swords with the New Zealand Prime Minister, Robert Muldoon, in an acrimonious meeting prior to the boycott of the 1976 Olympics; the antipathy between these two men probably helped to keep the boycott threat alive.¹⁵⁶ However, Ordia still accepted External Affairs' invitation to fly him to the Edmonton Games and while there, confided to Eric Morse that Nigeria's last minute boycott decision was taken "in the barracks" (i.e., by the military) and without consultation with him.¹⁵⁷ Indeed, he advised Campagnolo (at the time of the Nigerian withdrawal) that she should let Nigeria go its own way, but seek to stop other Commonwealth nations from following suit.¹⁵⁸ Evidently, there was both an "official" and a "personal" persona to Ordia.

Because news of the Nigerian boycott was so unexpected and so late, "there was very little one could do to secure its reversal," according to Commonwealth Secretary-General Ramphal.¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, diplomatic efforts were also made to dissuade other African Commonwealth countries from following Nigeria's lead. These efforts included telephone calls by Donald Jamieson to key African leaders.¹⁶⁰ Sierra Leone was a particularly doubtful participant and Iona Campagnolo made a personal telephone call to its president.¹⁶¹ Prior to the announcement of Nigeria's withdrawal, that country had launched a campaign to recruit support for a wider, last-minute boycott of the Edmonton Games if New Zealand insisted on competing.¹⁶¹

Nigeria was to have one last attempt at disrupting the Games. After making his boycott announcement, Nigerian Sports Minister Sylvanus Williams flew with other government officials to Algeria, where the Pan-African Games were concluding. He was able to convince Algerian Games officials to postpone the closing ceremonies by one day, hoping to disrupt Canada's plans to fly the competing athletes directly to Edmonton, and at the same time, giving him time to dissuade other African nations from attending the Games. However, Eric Bergbusch, newly appointed Games Co-ordinator, and Iona Campagnolo were able to make arrangements with Air Canada to delay its regularly scheduled flight, despite considerable disruption to its overseas schedule. One day late, African athletes were on board and Nigeria's last effort had failed.¹⁶³

By the time of the opening ceremonies of the XI Commonwealth Games on 3 August 1978, the only African Commonwealth nations not in attendance were Nigeria, Uganda, and Botswana. During July, Botswana had indicated that it

154. Powers, "Nigeria Entry."

155. "New Zealand Gets." *Edmonton Journal*, 18 November 1976.

156. J. Ferrabee, "Van Wet Still Lacking a Firm Yes From all Africans," *Edmonton Journal*, 12 October 1977.

157. Morse communication, 17 October 1990.

158. Campagnolo communication.

159. "'No Point' in Taking Action Against Nigerian Pullout," *Edmonton Journal*, 3 August 1978, p. A1.

160. Morse communication, 17 October 1990.

161. Confidential source.

162. Confidential source.

163. Morse communication, 17 October 1990.

would be unable to attend because of other priorities in its national sport program.¹⁶⁴ Following the “diligent two-year efforts of the external affairs department,”¹⁶⁵ 1,900 athletes from 46 Commonwealth countries entered Commonwealth Games Stadium to participate in the Edmonton Games.¹⁶⁶ Not only had Canada’s diplomatic efforts during the previous two years been successful, but Canada was to go on to its most successful ever Commonwealth Games, besting both its traditional rivals, England and Australia, in the unofficial medal count for the first time in the history of the Games. The Games were skillfully televised by the CBC and attracted an unprecedentedly large Canadian audience for this type of non-Olympic event. Thus, the Games also proved to be a vindication of the federal government’s support of high-performance sport in the 1970s, and contributed to the realization of Pierre Trudeau’s vision of sport as an instrument of national unity.¹⁶⁷

Conclusions

Certainly, Canada was successful in its efforts to avert a boycott of the 1978 Commonwealth Games. Its prodigious diplomatic efforts, particularly in the development of the Gleneagles Declaration and the last minute policy of denying visas to South African sportspersons, were key factors in these efforts. This was in spite of skepticism among African nations about New Zealand’s sincerity in living up to the Gleneagles Declaration, and despite apparent violations by that country. The fact that the rest of the white Commonwealth nations were committed to standing behind this agreement was a major step in gaining the confidence of the international anti-apartheid organizations and the Black African Commonwealth nations. The Gleneagles Declaration was also to become the basis for further, more stringent agreements about sporting contacts with South Africa in the years to come. It was certainly a diplomatic triumph for Canada and was to help to set the stage for future Canadian leadership in the Commonwealth in the fight against apartheid in South Africa.

At the same time, these diplomatic measures served to maintain Canada’s reputation and good relations with Third-World countries in the Commonwealth and the UN, and to focus and stabilize international views regarding Canadian attitudes toward apartheid.¹⁶⁸ Sport had become an area in which there was a convergence of views between Western industrialized nations, who objected to South Africa’s violation of the principle of equality in sport, and Black African and other Third-World countries, who saw sport as an instrument that could be used effectively to break down apartheid in South Africa.¹⁶⁹

These efforts by Canada were made easier by the more aggressive stand that

164. D. Powers, “Arrival Ends Boycott Fear,” *Edmonton Journal*, 31 July 1978.

165. “Athletes, Officials Urged to Take Pride in Canada,” *Edmonton Journal*, 1 August 1978, p. D4.

166. Hoy, “Proposed African Boycott,” 128.

167. D. Macintosh, T. Bedeck, and C.E.S. Franks, *Sport and Politics in Canada* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1987), chap. 10.

168. G. Olafson, and C. Brown-John, “The Efficacy of Economic Sanctions: Canadian Sport Policy and South Africa” (Paper presented at the International Society of Comparative Physical Education and Sport Conference, Hong Kong, 1988), 15-16.

169. Guelke, “Politicisation,” 144.

the UN took following the 1976 Montreal Olympic boycott and the Soweto riots in South Africa. The UN reacted to these events with a series of aggressive resolutions aimed at combatting South Africa's apartheid policies. The sport resolution adopted at the 31st session in November 1976 urged states: to refuse any official sponsorship, assistance or encouragement to sport contacts with South Africa; to refuse visas to South African sportspersons; and to deny facilities to teams or sportspersons for visits to South Africa. The most aggressive recommendation, to support projects aimed at the formation of non-racial sports in South Africa, suggested that South Africans did not have the sovereign right to develop their own inter-racial sport structure;¹⁷⁰ thus, it went beyond the international norm of non-interference in the domestic affairs of a sovereign state.

Canada's role in the UN on sport and apartheid is instructive because it points to its traditional disposition toward consensus-seeking in international affairs rather than taking a lead in implementing measures it believed to be desirable. During one of the UN sessions about sport and apartheid in South Africa, a recommendation came forward that a working group be formed to draw up a convention against sports contacts with South Africa. This had been originally suggested to the Special Committee Against Apartheid by the Jamaican Prime Minister, Michael Manley, in a message sent to an International Seminar on the Eradication of Apartheid.¹⁷¹ Such a working group was appointed by the president of the General Assembly, and consisted of the existing members of the Special Committee Against Apartheid, and seven other member-states, including Canada.¹⁷² Of the 24 members of the newly formed Ad Hoc Committee on the Drafting of an International Convention Against Apartheid in Sports,¹⁷³ Canada was the only Western member. The Jamaicans had been anxious that Canada seek a place on the committee, in order to ensure a fair degree of Western support.¹⁷⁴ On the other hand, Canadian officials had hoped that such membership would establish more firmly Canada's credentials as opponents of apartheid before the 1978 Commonwealth Games.¹⁷⁵

During the ensuing deliberations, Canada worked hard to stave off the drafting of a convention, instead advocating a legally weaker "declaration," because it felt that many progressive Western countries would find the precise and enforceable language in a convention difficult, if not impossible, to accede to.¹⁷⁶ Canada stressed that a declaration could form a consensus upon which more binding resolutions could be developed.¹⁷⁷ Subsequently, the UN General Assembly adopted an International Declaration Against Apartheid in Sports in

170. M. Hunter, "The United Nations and the Anti-Apartheid in Sport Movement," *Canadian Journal of History of Sport and Physical Education* 11 (1980):22-23.

171. DEA Files, NAC, RG 25, Vol. 3060, File 78.

172. D. Brutus, "International Declaration Against Apartheid in Sport: Draft Convention Against Apartheid in Sport: United Nations Action," *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 2 (1978): 1.

173. *Ibid.*, 1-2.

174. Confidential source.

175. Confidential source.

176. FAS Files, No. 7037-2, Vol. 1.

177. Burrows, "Growth Pattern," 119.

December 1977, and instructed the Ad Hoc Committee to continue its work by preparing an International Convention Against Apartheid in Sports.¹⁷⁸ The declaration contained 18 articles which elucidated the ways in which states and sport organizations could isolate South Africa from international sport,¹⁷⁹ including, in Article 6, denial of visas to representatives of sports bodies, members of teams or individual sportspersons from any country practicing apartheid.¹⁸⁰

While the technique of refusing entry visas had been employed internationally on 20 known occasions between 1969 and 1978,¹⁸¹ there was still residual resistance among some member states to endorse the withholding of visas or passports, and this point had caused disagreements and difficulties during the preparation of the declaration.¹⁸² Even though Canada had opposed the creation of a binding international convention, and even though the government had refused to deny entry visas to South African sportspersons earlier in 1978, this very measure became official policy during July 1978. The adoption of the UN declaration in late 1977 gave an "aura of legitimacy"¹⁸³ to this practice at a time when Canada felt it needed to adopt some tangible measure to increase its diplomatic credibility with the anti-apartheid sport movement and Black African nations in order to avert a last-minute boycott of the 1978 Commonwealth Games. This change of position also points to another feature of Canadian foreign policy, that of buttressing policy departures in relation to actions of international organizations (in this case, action by the UN).

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that sport bore the brunt of Canada's more aggressive stance toward apartheid in South Africa. Indeed, this is the position that Fitness and Amateur Sport Minister Iona Campagnolo had taken in Cabinet. As a result, Campagnolo played a significant role in the introduction of the economic measures against South Africa that External Affairs Minister Donald Jamieson introduced in parliament in December 1977.¹⁸⁴ But these economic sanctions had a minimal effect on economic activity between Canada and South Africa.¹⁸⁵ The symbolic shift in policy from one of promoting economic relations to one of passivity toward such interchanges fell far short of active government discouragement of Canadian trade and investment in South Africa that many groups had been advocating.¹⁸⁶ However, effective economic measures against South Africa would certainly have run into opposition from the private sector because it would have hurt Canada's trade with that country. In addition, they would have run counter to deeply held official governmental opposition to trade sanctions of any kind. This opposition was based on the view that, as a trade-dependent state, Canada's overriding national interest lay in

178. Brutus, "International Declaration," 1.

179. Hunter, "United Nations," 23.

180. FAS Files, No. 7037-2, Vol. 1.

181. Hunter, "United Nations," 25.

182. Brutus, "International Declaration," 2.

183. Hunter, "United Nations," 28.

184. Burrows, "Growth Patterns," 130-33.

185. Olafson and Brown-John, "Efficacy of Economic Sanctions," 6-7.

186. Langdon, "Canadian Economy," 15.

ensuring that the liberal international trading system should be as free as possible from politically-motivated disturbances.

Even the minor trade concession that Campagnolo was able to win disappeared, at least in part, after the Games were over. Campagnolo recalls that the Canadian Trade Offices in both Durban and Capetown were quietly reopened, much to her disappointment.¹⁸⁷ It is more likely, however, that Campagnolo was thinking of the measure the Canadian government took to hire a South African as a commercial counsellor at its Pretoria Embassy¹⁸⁸—a measure not quite so hypocritical. Campagnolo was to suffer a final disappointment upon Prime Minister Trudeau's return from the G-7 Economic Summit in West Germany. Trudeau made drastic cuts in the federal budget, including Fitness and Amateur Sport, without any consultation with his Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sport. Sport officials in both the government and the national sport organizations reacted bitterly to this measure, seeing it as a betrayal of Canadian sport in the face of the best performance ever at the Commonwealth Games.¹⁸⁹

Campagnolo may take some solace in that the sport boycotts imposed on South Africa were a particular irritant to South Africans, given their strong traditional sport ties with white Commonwealth countries in cricket, rugby, tennis, and golf. In contacts with South Africans while serving on External Affairs's Southern African Task Force in the early 1980s, one Canadian official noted that the sport boycott was by far the most irksome of all the sanctions imposed on them.¹⁹⁰

It is no surprise that, while the Canadian government continued to maintain a low profile on economic sanctions during the 1976-78 period, it pursued a leadership role in the Commonwealth on sports sanctions. This role was far easier for Canada to play than for Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand because Canada had no significant sporting ties with South Africa in that country's most important sports—rugby and cricket. These games had little indigenous following in Canada, and thus, the government did not face the opposition to sport sanctions from strong national sport organizations that was characteristic in those other three Commonwealth nations. One can only conclude, then, that sport was a convenient vehicle with which Canada could show its resolve against apartheid without doing either harm to the economy or running into any significant opposition from special interest groups. At the same time, the government was able to play a leadership role in the Commonwealth and point to some concrete measures against apartheid, albeit in sport, to placate the small but vociferous domestic groups that wanted much stronger anti-apartheid measures.

Many observers have noted that sport boycotts have been far more effective than have other types of measures, particularly economic, designed to isolate

187. Campagnolo communication.

188. Redekop, "Commerce Over Conscience," 98

189. Campagnolo communication.

190. Confidential source.

South Africa and its apartheid policies.¹⁹¹ Kidd has pointed out that the success of sport boycotts lies partly in the fact that there exists in modern sport an “hierarchical governance.”¹⁹² Thus, in contrast to business or other voluntary organizations, sport governing bodies are able to impose the discipline of “powerful and monopolistic associations”¹⁹³ on athletes in a way that is not possible in other spheres of activity in modern society. This characteristic of sport has made it easier for international anti-apartheid sport organizations to isolate South Africa from the international sport scene, because when they have been called upon to make good their threats of boycotts, they have been able to keep Black African athletes away from prestigious international sport events.

191. See, for example, Hain, “Politics of Sport”; Kidd, “Campaign Against”; and Lapchick, “Apartheid Sport.”

192. Kidd, “Campaign Against,” 644.

193. *Ibid.*