

ENTRENCHING APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICAN SPORT, 1948 TO 1980: THE SHAPING OF A SPORTING SOCIETY DURING THE STRIJDOM-, VERWOERD- AND VORSTER ADMINISTRATIONS

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Abstract

The debate on transformation and quotas in South African sport resurfaced just before the South African general elections in May 2014. Transformation has become a contentious, but key issue in post-apartheid South Africa. The formative stage of racial divide in South African sport can be traced back to the implementation of rigid apartheid policies into South African sport during the period 1948 – 1980. Between 1948 and 1956 not much was done to develop a formal sports policy, but under the leadership of Strijdom, Verwoerd and Vorster strong sports policies, based on the principle of apartheid, were initiated and enforced through legislation in South African society. The introduction of apartheid in South African sport dates back to much earlier, but in 1948 it became governed by law, which were strictly adhered to by the different National Party administrations for the next three decades. Key issues, such as the ongoing Maori question, South Africa's exclusion from the Olympic Games and world soccer, Verwoerd's Loskopdam speech, the Basil D'Oliveira debacle and the Gleneagles Agreement, contributed to the destructive influence on sport in the country, which was shaped by the sport apartheid laws. Set against the background of international resistance towards apartheid in sport, the National Party's sports policy changed continually. By the end of the seventies, the interaction between sport, politics and policies had done enough to create a very complex situation, which can be seen as the historical background to the transformation issue in South African sport today.

Keywords: Sport; apartheid; National Party; sports policy; resistance.

Slutelwoorde: Sport; apartheid; Nasionale Party; sportbeleid; protes.

1. INTRODUCTION

The debate on transformation and quotas in South African sport, a contentious issue but a key discussion point in post-apartheid South Africa, resurfaced just before the South African general elections in May 2014. Comments by the Minister of Sport, Fikile Mbalula, on the need for stronger transformation actions to right the wrongs of our sporting past,² highlighted the fact that the South African

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2 Minister Mbalula emphasised that most sporting codes in the country were still dominated by whites and that transformation policies needed to be adapted to correct this. N Manthorp, "Big

sporting community was still suffering the humiliating effects of separate sports development, implemented as a fragment of the apartheid policy by the National Party government.

South African sport, like South African society, had been introduced to the racist structures of apartheid long before 1948.³ By the time the National Party came to power in 1948, racial segregation already developed well-established roots in South Africa, although not captured by law yet. Although the sports policy was not instituted until much later, “petty apartheid” had structured separation in sport for a much longer period before 1948 and the National Party’s first sports policy in 1956.

One of the first signs of foreign opposition to the growing trend of separate development of sport in South Africa came from a close sporting ally - the New Zealand rugby community. The Maori issue, which over time evolved into one of the main concerns in South African rugby history, originated in 1919. Derogatory remarks about the Maori people during the 1921 Springbok tour of New Zealand, and a formal request that no Maoris should be included in the 1928 All Black tour to South Africa, further deepened the problem.⁴ During the 1937 Springbok tour to New Zealand, the Springboks once again did not play against the Maoris, as the Maoris protested the humiliation of 1928.⁵ For years to come, the rugby relations between the two countries remained clouded because of these incidents.

To further complicate matters for South African sport, the decision to award the 1934 Commonwealth (then called the British Empire Games) to the Union of South Africa was recalled. As non-white athletes from other British colonies were not welcome in South Africa, it was decided that the Games would take place in London. By the time the Second World War broke out in Europe, South African sport was already crippled by its interrelationship with politics.

2. THE NATIONAL PARTY TAKES POWER, 1948

The post-World War era saw the rise to power of the Reunited National Party (NP), with a different vision and policy on the colour issue. As early as 1943, the Reunited National Party, under the leadership of Dr DF Malan, started using the term “apartheid”, and by 1948 it was a generally accepted term within the party.⁶

money is already driving transformation – and sports managers are all too well aware of it”. *Mail and Guardian*, 11 April 2014.

3 B Kidd, “The campaign against sport in South Africa”, *International Journal* VLII(4), Autumn 1998, p. 46.

4 R Thompson, *Retreat from apartheid: New Zealand’s sporting contacts with South Africa* (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 1975), p. 14.

5 P van der Schyff, “Sportvriende word vyande”, *De Kat*, February 1988, pp. 98-99 (translated).

6 E Theron and MJ Swart, *Die Kleurlingbevolking van Suid-Afrika. ’n Verslag aan die komitee van die Suid-Afrikaanse Buro vir Rasse-aangeleenthede (SABRA) insake die Kleurlinge*

Based on the recommendations from the Paul Sauer Commission of Inquiry, widely regarded as the “blueprint for apartheid”,⁷ the National Party fought the 1948 general election based on a policy of overall segregation between black and white.

One of the consequences of the implementation of apartheid by the National Party in 1948 was that separate sports participation would, for the first time, be legally enforceable.⁸ Although the National Party had not set a formal sports policy in 1948, the implications of apartheid in sport were already evident.

The first decade under NP rule produced no clear policies on inter-racial sport. With the apartheid legislation as base, separate sporting participation was still strictly enforced. Up to 1948, the sporting bodies in South Africa had made its own provision for the social system of segregation in sport.⁹ This changed after 1948 as the National Party started moving towards separate sports participation in South Africa. The DF Malan administration focused primarily on implementing apartheid as policy to govern the South African society. Therefore, a structured sports policy did not really get much attention during the first eight years of National Party control.

3. THE JG STRIJDOM SPORTS ADMINISTRATION: A BLUEPRINT FOR APARTHEID IN SPORT

The National Party’s first official sports policy, announced on 26 June 1956 by Dr Eben Dönges, the Minister of the Interior in the JG Strijdom administration, was widely regarded as the “blueprint of apartheid in sport”. The policy, which would become the framework for sport in the country for a large part of the National Party’s reign, stated *inter alia* the following:

- International teams travelling to South Africa to play against white teams had to be white - as it was the general practice in the country;
- South African teams touring abroad would act according to the customs of that country, in other words they would play against mixed teams when necessary;
- Non-white participants from overseas visiting South Africa would compete against local non-white teams;
- Non-white sporting bodies seeking international recognition had to do so through the existing white sporting bodies; and

(Stellenbosch: SABRA, 1964), p. 203 (translated).

7 D Posel, “The meaning of apartheid before 1948: conflicting interests and forces within the Afrikaner Nationalist Alliance”, *Journal of South African Studies* 14(1), October 1987, p. 123.

8 G Kotzé, *Sport en politiek* (Pretoria: Makro, 1978), p. 36 (translated).

9 R Lapchick, *The politics of race and international sport: the case of South Africa* (Denver: Greenwood Press, 1975), p. 11.

- The government would not allow passports to white athletes whose intention it was to change the traditional South African separate sporting development through international boycotts of white South African sports people.¹⁰

In his statement, Dönges emphasised the fact that different sporting codes in South Africa were organised in autonomy and not under direct control of the government.¹¹ He asked foreign sports people to respect South Africa's viewpoint on mixed sport and emphasized that non-white sports people were not barred from competition outside the country's borders, but he strongly advocated separate sports development.

With the implementation of the 1956 sports policy of the Strijdom administration, the South African government became even more directly involved in sport. The government's campaign against mixed sport was soon in full swing and clashes between police and anti-apartheid movements¹² became a regular occurrence. Sport became the victim of legislation and it was clear that the government would try to avoid sporting ties across the racial barriers at all costs in order to keep its apartheid policies intact. The politicisation of South African sport resulted in major conflict between the NP and anti-apartheid movements, especially the South African Sports Association (SASA). In return, this intensifying interaction between sport and politics in the country resulted in increased foreign pressure against apartheid in sport.

4. THE VERWOERD ERA: THE INTENSIFICATION OF THE SPORTS-POLITICAL CONFLICT

During the reign of Dr HF Verwoerd, two major changes occurred in the political orientation in South Africa. Firstly, the government committed itself to a certain degree of self-government for the black homelands, in "keeping with the European decolonisation in Africa during the last half of the fifties".¹³ The second major step

10 FJG van der Merwe, *Sportgeskiedenis* (Stellenbosch: FJG Publications, 1994), p. 167 (translated).

11 JPJ Smit, *Die ontwikkeling van die Suid-Afrikaanse sportbeleid en sy politieke implikasies, 1948-1979* (MA, University of the Free State, 1987), p. 18 (translated).

12 The major local anti-apartheid movements during this period were established shortly after the introduction of the 1956 sports policy. *The South African Sport Association (SASA)* was established in 1958. The main aim of SASA was to promote non-racial sport through the establishment and development of non-racial sporting bodies. L Allison (ed.), *The politics of sport* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), p. 122. The role of SASA focused on the opportunities for non-whites to participate internationally, while the *South African Non-Racial Committee (SANROC)* was established in 1962 to confront white sporting organisations in South Africa on apartheid in sport. *The role and importance of the South African Non-Racial Committee (SANROC) in reshaping sport in Africa*, 1981 (British Anti-Apartheid Archives).

13 R Archer and A Bouillon, *The South African game. Sport and racism* (London: Zed Press, 1982), p. 48.

that Verwoerd committed himself to early in his tenure was the conversion of South Africa from a union to a republic.

This meant that South Africa was able to detach itself from British interference, but it also led to South Africa leaving the British Commonwealth.¹⁴ With the termination of South Africa's membership of the Commonwealth, South African athletes were denied the opportunity of future participation in the Commonwealth Games.

The South African government's decision to quit the Commonwealth, in unison with the continued pursuit of the 1956 sports policy, further impacted on the South African sports policy. Newly elected Prime Minister Verwoerd faced many difficulties on the sporting front. In one year - 1959 - a series of sporting decisions emphasized the rising resistance against apartheid in sport. The West Indian cricket tour to South Africa, ironically intended as international competition for non-white cricketers, was cancelled through the intervention of SASA.¹⁵ A planned trip of the Brazilian Football Association to play against an exclusively white team in Cape Town was cancelled and the New Zealand Rugby Union announced that no Maori would be part of the All Black tour to South Africa in 1960.¹⁶ This led to widespread protests in New Zealand and resulted in the formation of the "Citizen's All Black Tour Association" to protest against the proposed exclusion of Maori's from the team. A petition signed by 153 000 New Zealanders opposed to the tour was sent to the New Zealand government. Prime Minister Nash, however, decided that the tour should go ahead without the Maori's, rather than having them (the Maori's), face discrimination in South Africa.¹⁷ Through taking this stance, the New Zealand government further entangled the Maori issue with the apartheid policy and alienated the South African apartheid based sports policy of the day even further.

Towards the end of the 1950s, the South African government became increasingly involved with the issuing and/or refusal of travel documents to international sporting people. The refusal of visas to an Indian boxer, Pancho Bathacaji, and to the Egyptian table tennis team, directly contradicted the 1956 sports policy.¹⁸ Although the 1956 policy stipulated that non-white foreigners could come to South Africa to participate against non-white South Africans on the sporting field, they were now deprived of this right because they could not get visas to participate in South Africa.

In February 1962, the Minister of Home Affairs, Senator Jan de Klerk, confirmed the government's sports policy by saying: "The Government policy

14 TRH Davenport, *South Africa. A modern history* (Hong Kong: Macmillan, 1991), p. 353.

15 This was regarded as SASA's first major test against apartheid in sport. Cf. *The London Times*, 11 March 1959.

16 *Ibid.*, 13 June 1959.

17 Thompson, p. 45.

18 Lapchick, p. 80.

is that no mixed teams will be allowed to take part in sport inside or outside this country.”¹⁹ De Klerk continued to confirm the government’s determination to engage the sports policy in all facets of the South African sports system by reconfirming the National Party’s view on mixed sport as follows,

“It must be understood that all attempts to evade or undermine the South African custom in neighbouring territories by inviting or inducing white and non-white teams to play one another across the border (or by inviting mixed teams from South Africa) in what are clearly not international competitions, will be viewed in an unfavourable light.”²⁰

On the composition of teams for international competitions, De Klerk said,

“As regards to the participation of mixed teams from the Republic in world sports tournaments or competitions, the government cannot approve teams from the Republic being composed of white and non-whites. Conversely foreign teams composed in such a manner cannot be permitted to enter the Republic.”²¹

Minister of Bantu Affairs and Development, De Wet Nel, echoed this viewpoint by saying, “I am against mixed sport meetings in principle ... There is sufficient evidence to prove that such a policy would lead to the most distasteful racial tensions. It is senseless injudiciousness to encourage such a thing.”²²

In March 1963, De Klerk reaffirmed the government’s commitment to its sports policy. He outlined the government’s objectives of separate sports development and practice thereof as charted by Dönges in 1956.²³ Despite the fact that the sporting world was changing to confront inequalities on the sports field, the government stuck to its policy of apartheid in sport. Within the sporting community, the need for change was evident in the way many sports people started to express themselves against apartheid in sport, both in South Africa and abroad. The National Party had not only become completely out of touch with the outside world, but it was also increasingly alienating both black and white sports people in South Africa.

In 1966, the government established a Department of Sport and Recreation, based on the perception that there was a keen interest in sports and recreational activities among all population groups in the country. The plan was that the department would promote sport and recreation in South Africa in order to develop a strong and healthy population. During the first years of existence, the Department of Sport and Recreation primarily focused on the organization of Youth Day (Republic Festival, 1966), the South African Games in 1969 and the biennial National Conferences of the South African Association for Physical Education and

19 *The London Times*, 14 February 1962.

20 M Horrell *et al.*, *A survey of race relations in South Africa, 1962* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1963), p. 213.

21 M Draper, *Sport and race in South Africa* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations, 1963), p. 7. 7.

22 *The Star*, 31 March 1962.

23 Smit, p. 32.

Recreation.²⁴ In sports and political circles outside the National Party, involvement in these projects gave rise to a feeling that the establishment of this department simply occurred to protect the National Party's sports policy and to ensure the growth and development of white sports in South Africa.²⁵

5. VERWOERD'S LOSKOPDAM SPEECH

The 1956 sporting declaration was re-confirmed during the early 1960s and emphasised that no mixed teams would be allowed to tour in South Africa. Against this background, Dr Verwoerd addressed the National Youth League of the Transvaal at Loskop Dam on 4 September 1965; the same day that the Springboks achieved an unexpected test win over the All Blacks in Christchurch, New Zealand.

In his speech, Verwoerd unequivocally reiterated the government's stance on Maori members as part of the 1967 All Black tour to South Africa. "Our position has not changed. As we behave in other countries, we expect that they will behave here based on our customs - and I want to add: and everyone knows what it is."²⁶ Verwoerd's speech followed on a statement in a press interview in New Zealand by Dr Danie Craven, President of the South African Rugby Board, which was interpreted by the press as tacit approval of Maori's coming to South Africa as part of the All Blacks squad in 1967. After this was brought to Verwoerd's attention, he deemed it necessary to reiterate the government's view on this very bluntly.

Verwoerd's Loskopdam statement laid the idea of the inclusion of Maoris in the 1967 All Black squad to rest. His ruling against mixed touring teams to South Africa sank the tour and was the spark that led to the unraveling of the very strong traditional rugby ties with New Zealand. Shortly after Verwoerd's speech, the National Party issued a strongly worded statement to much the same effect as the Verwoerd Loskopdam speech, imposing the position of the government on the Maori issue.

Verwoerd's timing of his speech was widely criticized and even described as, "having the timing and co-ordination of a camel with four left feet".²⁷ The Loskopdam speech, which throughout history has been identified as a watershed in the National Party's sports policy, was very unkind to South African sport - in this case rugby - and only contributed to engaging rugby and sport into a comprehensive struggle against apartheid in South Africa.

24 Pamphlet: *Vrugte van die Nasionale bewind, 1948 – 1970*, p. 30 (translated).

25 Interview with Alan Brooks by Christabel Gurney in London, 23 August 2005 (British Anti-Apartheid Movement Archives).

26 M Bose, *Sporting colours. Sport and politics in South Africa* (London: Robson Books, 1994), p. 28.

27 P Dobson, *Doc. The life of Danie Craven* (Cape Town: Human & Rousseau, 1994), p. 160.

6. GROWING RESISTANCE TOWARDS THE APARTHEID SPORTS POLICY

Strong reaction against apartheid in sport resulted in resistance organisations supporting Dennis Brutus.²⁸ In October 1958, the South African Sports Association (SASA) was established to promote non-racial sporting bodies in South Africa. Four years later the South African Non-Racial Committee (SANROC) was borne out of SASA with the aim of advocating South Africa's expulsion from the Olympic movement.²⁹ In 1973, the South African Council on Sport (SACOS) was banded together from SASA and SANROC with the purpose of amalgamating all the non-racial sporting organisations.³⁰ Various international anti-apartheid movements joined forces with the above-mentioned organisations to advocate equality in South African sport. The objectives of the first non-racial protest groups were equal rights for all South Africans on the sporting field. Sports boycotts were planned with the aim of frustrating and rebelling to bring about changes in the government's apartheid policies.

During a FIFA congress in August 1960, it was decided that the world football governing body would give FASA one year to get its house in order or face the risk of expulsion from FIFA. As nothing of note really changed in South African football during that year, South Africa was suspended from international football in 1961. This decision was confirmed at the next FIFA congress in Chile in 1962.

In 1962, Dennis Brutus was barred from attending any meetings for five years and dismissed from his teaching post in Port Elizabeth.³¹ Due to his position against apartheid in sport, he was also prevented from publishing articles and prohibited from being a member of any cultural organisation. A year later, he was arrested for violating the above-mentioned constraints and imprisoned on Robben Island. This series of events led to greater international recognition for SASA and the *New York Times* reported in detail about the banning of Brutus in terms of the Suppression of Communism.³² In the same year, John Harris, who succeeded Brutus as SANROC chairperson, had his passport confiscated as he was trying to fly to an IOC meeting. He was later banned.³³

28 Dennis Brutus, "A coloured poet, became strongly involved in the struggle against apartheid in sport during the 1950s and 1960s, and played a leading role in SANROC", in S Klein, *African literatures in the 20th Century* (London: Oldcastle Books, 1988), p. 188.

29 P Hain, *Sing the beloved country: the struggle for the new South Africa* (London: Pluto, 1996), p. 46.

30 Archer, p. 50.

31 In terms of the Suppression of Communism Act, Act 50 of 1951, Brutus was prevented from attending any kind of meeting. C Merrett, "In nothing else are the deprivers so deprived: South African sport, apartheid and foreign relations, 1945-1971", *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 13(2), August 1996, p. 150.

32 Dennis Brutus was not a member of the Communist Party. See *New York Times*, 29 January 1962.

33 Hain, p. 47.

7. *THE STATE VS. BRANDSMA AND OTHERS, 1962*

During 1962, the government's policy of separate sports participation encountered another setback. The Group Areas Act (Act 77 of 1957), which legalised separation (apartheid) on all social levels, as well as certain regulations of the Liquor Act, made mixed sport virtually impossible.³⁴ In October 1962, a group of sportsmen from different races were charged for contravening these laws.

The incident stemmed from a football match that took place between an Indian team from Durban and a mixed team from Pietermaritzburg. In the case, *The State against Brandsma and others*, this group of sports people were accused of ignoring certain laws in practicing their sport.³⁵ The two whites and two coloureds, members of the interdisciplinary team, were charged with violating the Group Areas Act by allowing a proclaimed Indian to enter the area without the necessary permits. Two Indians³⁶ were charged as accomplices, as they allowed the other Indians to take part in the match without the mentioned permits.

During the course of the case, reference was made to the fact that the accused did not go to the area to participate in a social function, but were outdoors playing soccer. The magistrate further damaged the case of the State by saying,

“...the accused could not be convicted because the word ‘club’, as used in the Proclamation, could have referred only to a building used or occupied by a club. There was no evidence that the first seven accused had been present in any building on the grounds. The only evidence was that they had played a game of football, on a football ground, on the land in question.”³⁷

The court annulled the matter and made it possible for non-whites to participate in “white” sport tournaments in future, under certain conditions.

The first sports person to make use of this opportunity was Sewsunker (Papwa) Sewgolum. Based on the judgment in this court case, Sewgolum, an Indian golfer from Natal, was allowed to participate in the Natal Open Golf Championships in 1963. This ended in embarrassment for the government's sports policy as Sewgolum defeated 113 white golfers to be crowned the provincial champion.³⁸ According to the Group Areas Act, Sewgolum was not allowed into the clubhouse. Thus the prize giving ceremony took place outside in pouring rain. The following year, Sewgolum played in the Natal Open again and accomplished what few white golfers could ever achieve by beating Gary Player. Once again, Sewgolum received his title and first prize outside the clubhouse.

34 Kotzé, p. 38.

35 *South African Law Reports*, January-March 1963 (*The State vs. Brandsma and others*), p. 262.

36 *Ibid.* Both were officers of the *Durban Indian Sports Ground Association*, which organised football games.

37 *Ibid.*, p. 263.

38 It was the first time a non-white golfer won a big title in competition against white golfers. Lapchick, p. 111.

8. SOUTH AFRICA'S EXCLUSION FROM THE OLYMPIC GAMES

The South African government's "separate sports" policy was in stark contrast to the rest of world and conflict with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) was inevitable. At the IOC meeting in Moscow in 1962, South Africa's expulsion from this body was openly advocated. Reg Honey, South Africa's representative on the IOC did not even regard it necessary to attend the next meeting of the IOC, as the country's existence in the movement was doomed.³⁹ A stern resolution was taken at the 1963 IOC annual meeting in Baden-Baden that "the South African Olympic Committee must make a firm declaration of its acceptance of the spirit of the Olympic Code and change in policy regarding racial discrimination in sport and competitions in its country, failing which the South African National Olympic Committee will be barred from entering its teams into the Olympic Games".⁴⁰

In reaction, the South African government took a strong stance by saying South Africa would not change its policy for the purpose of making it suitable to the IOC, highlighting the fact that separate sports development in South Africa was a *fait accompli* and would not change. The participation of mixed teams as representatives of South Africa was, according to De Klerk, unacceptable and contrary to the sports policy. As a result, South Africa was not invited to the 1964 Olympic Games in Tokyo, or to the 1968 Games in Mexico City. South Africa's total expulsion from the IOC was confirmed at the IOC's annual meeting in Amsterdam in 1970.⁴¹ Ironically, the South African government regarded the decision to exclude South Africa from the 1964 Olympic Games as a politically directed attempt to force South Africa to change its policy of segregation, rather than a decision based on any aspect of sport.⁴² The South African government made it clear that it would not tolerate being dictated to by any national or even international leaders in sport. It remained rigid and uncompromising in this regard. The government's sports policy was law, and it would not succumb to any assessment. What government leaders did not realise was the effect this had on South African sport, and, more specifically, the non-white sporting communities in the country.

39 *Ibid.*, p. 104.

40 "Minutes of the 60th session of the IOC, Baden-Baden, October 1963", *Report of the IOC Commission on South Africa*, p. 21.

41 Smit, p. 41.

42 *Ibid.*

9. THE VORSTER ERA: RENEWED INITIATIVES IN TRYING TO BREAK THE SHACKLES OF SPORTS ISOLATION

Verwoerd's successor, Advocate BJ Vorster, relented somewhat with regard to the sports policy.⁴³ In April 1967, Vorster announced a new sports policy, which showed some form of flexibility. This flexibility was the form of conditional concessions adopted for specific inter-state or country sporting events and would be applied as follows:

- *Olympic sports*: South Africa would henceforth be represented at the Olympic Games by a single, multi-racial team, selected on merit, but no mixed trials would take place to select the team;
- *Golf*: Permission was granted for the multi-racial Canada Cup Golf Tournament to take place in South Africa in the future;
- *Tennis*: South Africa may compete at home or abroad against a team of a different race or a mixed team in the Davis Cup Competition;
- *Rugby*: Any Maori player would be allowed in South Africa as part of an All Blacks touring squad, provided it is not politically exploited to cloud relations between the two countries or to cause domestic trouble in South Africa. A mixed Springbok team was still unacceptable, and;
- *Cricket*: The same conditions as for rugby applied with regard to non-white players in foreign touring teams.⁴⁴

Vorster did not see his sports policy as a deviation from the previous policy, but merely as a fresh approach.⁴⁵ Within the NP, Vorster's sports policy was met with mixed feelings. His decision to allow so-called "non-whites" in foreign teams to play in South Africa was met with resistance from within.⁴⁶ In a speech titled *Racial mixing in sport*, delivered during October 1969, Jaap Marais summarised the NP right-wingers position as follows, "It is clear that some of us are standing in the way of people who would like to see mixed sports teams from overseas visit South Africa. Some of us are standing in the way of people who want to see Maoris in an All Black touring team to South Africa next year. Therefore, we were [sic] now

43 A Grundlingh, *Potent pastimes. Sport and leisure practices in modern Afrikaner history* (Pretoria: Protea, 2013), p. 93.

44 JA du Pisani, *John Vorster en die verlig/verkrampstryd* (Bloemfontein: INCH, 1988), p. 37 (translated).

45 JA du Pisani, "B.J. Vorster se nuwe sportbeleid as faktor in die verdeeldheid binne die Nasionale Party wat gelei het tot die stigting van die Herstigte Nasionale Party", *Journal for Contemporary History* 9(2), December 1984, p. 51 (translated).

46 Grundlingh, p. 94.

facing the threat of being kicked out of the NP.”⁴⁷ According to Marais, it was not his view regarding mixed sport that has changed, but the NP’s sports policy which has changed radically.

In 1967, Vorster’s handling of the IOC fact-finding mission to South Africa further widened the gap with the conservative element within the National Party. The conservatives accused Vorster of conceding to international pressure regarding apartheid because Vorster’s sports policy acknowledged that a multi-racial team, in one uniform, competing under one flag, could represent South Africa at the 1968 Olympic Games.⁴⁸ This would, according to Marais, weaken the NP and the Afrikaners’ power base in South African politics and be counterproductive to the apartheid legislations. Different views regarding, *inter alia*, the handling of sport and the government’s sports policy made an impending split in the NP between the party leadership and the conservative grouping under Dr Albert Hertzog inevitable.

The admission or exclusion of Maori players in the 1970 All Black team to South Africa became a central point in this dispute.⁴⁹ At the Transvaal congress of the NP in September 1969, four motions regarding controversial policy aspects were discussed. One of these motions related to sport and the sports policy. The other three motions were unanimously accepted, but the sports motion resulted in serious differences in opinion.⁵⁰ Out of more than a thousand delegates at the congress, only Hertzog and 17 conservative colleagues did not endorse the sports motion by either voting against it or refraining from voting. Afterwards, they were given the ultimatum of conforming to the majority decision, or facing disciplinary hearings.

A final split in the National Party came when Albert Hertzog, Jaap Marais and Louis Stofberg were suspended by the NP. Soon after, the Reconstituted National Party (HNP) was founded with Hertzog as the first leader.

During the late sixties, two sports related issues brought the ongoing power struggle within government to a head, i.e. the Basil D’Oliveira affair and the persistent Maori issue.

10. THE BASIL D’OLIVEIRA AFFAIR

According to André Odendaal, no single event in South African cricket history can compare with the Basil D’Oliveira case in terms of the intensity of bitterness and controversy surrounding it, and it is still widely regarded as one of the greatest

47 *Rassevermenging in sport*: Speech by Jaap Marais, 2 October 1969, Pretoria (translated).

48 Du Pisani, “BJ Vorster se nuwe sportbeleid”, p. 59.

49 *The Star*, 24 August 1969.

50 The motion stated, “This conference endorses the sports policy of the government as outlined by the Prime Minister in Parliament on 11 April 1967.” *Debates of the House of Assembly*, 11 April 1967, column 4108.

injustices of apartheid in sport.⁵¹ BK Murray added to this, mentioning that the prelude to the D'Oliveira affair was drawn-out over a good few years⁵² and eventually triggered South Africa's exclusion from international cricket.

D'Oliveira, a South African-born Coloured cricketer who moved to England in 1960 to realize his cricketing dreams, almost split the cricketing world in two during the latter part of the 1960s.

In 1967, the South African government declared that D'Oliveira would not be allowed to tour South Africa as a member of the MCC (Marylebone Cricket Club) because of his skin colour. This led to a strongly worded response from England and various political parties called for a boycott of the South African government's sports policy. British parliamentarians even attempted, albeit unsuccessfully, to get the tour cancelled.⁵³ The MCC stated that D'Oliveira would be selected if he continued the good form he showed during the English season.⁵⁴ This led to a strained relationship between the cricket authorities of the two countries, which up to 1967 had been relatively stable.

Vorster's "new" sports policy gave the MCC hope that D'Oliveira could be part of the touring team without much resistance. To everyone's surprise, D'Oliveira's name was not mentioned in the announcement of the team to tour South Africa. This led to fierce criticism by English sports writers and sporting organisations. Nineteen members of the MCC resigned from the organisation in protest against his omission and requested that the tour be cancelled as it became clear that more than just sport was involved here.⁵⁵ The D'Oliveira issue had, according to them, developed a strong political tint.

In South Africa, the announcement of the team was met with elation. This joy was, however, short lived as D'Oliveira was appointed to replace the injured Tom Cartwright, who withdrew from the team a week later because of an "injury".⁵⁶

Vorster responded to this by calling the MCC team a team of the anti-apartheid movement SANROC.⁵⁷ He made it clear that the South African government would not be dictated to and would refuse to host a touring team chosen by people with political intentions. In return, the MCC's response to Vorster's position was clear: if the team chosen was not acceptable to the South African government, the MCC

51 A Odendaal, *Cricket in isolation. The politics of race and cricket in South Africa* (Cape Town: A Odendaal, 1997), p. 6.

52 BK Murray, "Politics and cricket: the D'Oliveira affair of 1968", *Journal of Southern African Studies* 27(4), December 2001, p. 670.

53 B D'Oliveira, *The D'Oliveira affair* (London: Collins, 1969), p. 84.

54 P Hain, *Don't play with apartheid: background to the Stop the Seventy Tour Campaign* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1971), p. 78.

55 Kotzé, p. 68.

56 Odendaal, p. 9.

57 D Geldenhuys, *The diplomacy of isolation. South African foreign policy making* (Johannesburg: MacMillan, 1984), p. 217.

would cancel the tour.⁵⁸ A week after the war of words, SACA representatives, Jack Cheetham and Arthur Coy, flew to London to address a special meeting of the MCC, where they announced that D'Oliveira would not be welcome in South Africa. After the meeting, the MCC president made the following announcement, which could be regarded as the first nail in the coffin of South African participation in international sport.

“The Committee was informed that the side selected to represent the MCC in South Africa is not acceptable for reasons beyond the control of the SACA. The MCC Committee therefore decided unanimously that the tour would not take place.”⁵⁹

The humiliating attitude of the NP towards non-white South African sport reached a climax with this incident and gave more impetus to the struggle against apartheid in South African sport. Ironically, the D'Oliveira affair happened at the end of a decade in which the National Party government consolidated their hegemony within South Africa.⁶⁰ Various resistance movements had been banned, yet strong resistance started mounting against the government from different sporting organisations, both locally and abroad. Through this incident, the South African government once again involved politics in sport⁶¹ and, in years to come, this interaction would continue to ensure that South African sport was condemned to the sporting wilderness.

11. SOUTH AFRICA'S SPORTING ISOLATION DEEPENS

Peter Hain saw the D'Oliveira incident as a platform that created the atmosphere in which public awareness of sporting isolation in South Africa was cultivated.⁶² In September 1969, the *Stop the Seventy Tour* (STST) campaign was launched in Britain to ensure that normal sporting relations with South Africa were not maintained. Against this background of public awareness, together with the structures developed by SANROC and the Anti-Apartheid Movement, the STST campaign gained momentum in Britain and started fighting apartheid in South African sport with great success.

The 1969-70 Springbok rugby tour to Britain was a nightmare from start to finish. Protests, interruptions of matches, clashes between police and protesters, bomb threats and the strong security measures at the Springbok team hotels led to the players' decision, unprecedented in South African rugby history, that they had enough and wanted to go home. However, the management, under political pressure

58 Odendaal, p. 10.

59 *Ibid.*

60 Murray, p. 684.

61 M Procter, *South Africa. The years of isolation and the return to international cricket* (Durban: Queen Anne, 1994), p. 20.

62 Hain, *Don't play with apartheid*, p. 115.

from the South African government, recommended that the tour be completed.⁶³ The rest of the tour was completed under difficult conditions and it would rather be remembered for the actions of the protesters, than for the quality of rugby played.

For the STST, the British Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) and other anti-apartheid movements, this was just the start of successful campaigning against apartheid in South African sport. After fierce protests by anti-apartheid movements, the scheduled South African cricket tour to England was cancelled in May 1970.⁶⁴ In Britain, the period 1969-70 was regarded as the turning point with regard to the resistance against apartheid in South African sport.⁶⁵

The growing command of international opinion against apartheid meant that economic, political and sports isolation became inevitable. After the successful protest and cancellation of the tour to England, the South African cricket tour to Australia, scheduled for the 1971/72 season, was also cancelled.

12. “MULTI-NATIONALISM” AS BASIS FOR THE SPORTS POLICY FOR SOUTH AFRICA

In 1971, the government adopted a new approach towards sport in the country, embodied in the form of so-called “multi-national” sport. Unlike “multi-racial” sports participation, “multi-national” sports participation was based on the premise that teams from different population groups in South Africa were able to compete against each other, but competition between different races at club level, as well as competition between mixed teams, was still unthinkable.⁶⁶ Multi-national sport implied that nations and countries could now compete against each other and not just individuals. In view of this, whites and non-white South Africans could openly compete against each other in certain international events, but it should be in a multi-national context, for example, where individuals were representatives of their respective ethnic groups.⁶⁷ Within South Africa, mixed sport between the different population groups at club, provincial and national level was still prohibited, as it has been the practice since 1948.⁶⁸

The South African multi-national sports policy was based on the following:

- Every ethnic group had the right to retain its identity;

63 Hain, *Sing the beloved country*, p. 54. 54.

64 Hain, *Don't play with apartheid*, p. 181.

65 *Springbok sports tours – Why all the fuss?*, Demonstration leaflet, 1969 (MSS. AAM 1438: British Anti-Apartheid Archives).

66 Davenport, p. 542.

67 *Debates of the House of Assembly*, 22 April 1971, column 5051.

68 “Sportbeleid van die Nasionale Party”, *Skietgoed*, 7 June 1971, p. 2553 (translated).

- Activities should be arranged so that it eliminated and prevented friction and disorder; and
- Every ethnic group in South Africa had full claim to the same maximum opportunities in all spheres of life.⁶⁹

In 1977, Sports Minister, Dr Piet Koornhof, further explained the policy of multi-national sport by summarising it as follows:

- It would be free from discrimination on grounds of race and colour; in other words, a sports dispensation based on equal opportunities for all regardless of colour;
- It implied participation on a national basis where the identity and the differences between the various ethnic groups were recognised, protected and respected, and
- It would not be based on mixed sports teams where the option of one population group could dominate that of another.⁷⁰

Although the National Party implemented multi-nationalism in an attempt to move away from the Verwoerdian sports policy, it made little impression abroad. The fierce reaction from especially SANROC and SACOS resulted in Koornhof branding the campaigners against apartheid in sport as “sport terrorists”.⁷¹

In 1975, Koornhof repeated the government’s sports policy and, in reference to autonomy in sport, said that the government was trying to ensure that the interference in sport was limited to the absolute minimum. The government did not prescribe to the sporting bodies what they should do. “We tell them what the policy of the government is, and then we ask them to act accordingly.”⁷² This statement led to more conflict with South African sports people since the sports administrators in the country wanted to set their own sports policies and manage their sporting codes accordingly.

By the end of 1975, multi-national sport reached its upper limit, and was replaced by the policy of “normalisation”, which also resulted in few real changes. The isolation of South African sport had become so integrated in South African society that it did not make the front pages of newspapers anymore.⁷³ Domestic, as well as international pressure on the government’s apartheid policy, was predominant and the political turmoil in which the government was caught, necessitated strong action.

69 *House of Assembly Debates*, 11 June 1975, column 8236.

70 “Sportbeleid werp vrugte af”, *Skietgoed*, 4 September 1973, p. 3878 (translated).

71 *Riglyne vir sport in Suid-Afrika*, p. 4 (translated).

72 *House of Assembly Debates*, 11 June 1975, column 8237.

73 The South African government’s military operations in South West Africa (Namibia) and Angola started dominating the front pages of newspapers locally and abroad. *Racism and sport, South Africa*, 1976 (British Anti-Apartheid Movement Archives).

The political unrest in the country also added to the great detriment of South African sport. At this stage, apartheid in sport alone was no longer the main focus of anti-apartheid movements, but anything short of political equality in South Africa was unacceptable. In 1976, a policy was adopted whereby the allocation of Springbok colours led to a great predicament in South Africa. In the past, only white sports people could obtain Springbok colours, but, mandated by the new policy, it was now left to the discretion of the different sports governing bodies.⁷⁴ Before the announcement was made, several cabinet members were very outspoken about the issue. “No non-white will ever wear a Springbok blazer”,⁷⁵ Minister MC Botha commented, and a colleague, Dr Connie Mulder, strongly supported this.

In November 1976, the South African Olympic and National Association decided with 48 votes against two to adopt the Springbok emblem for all sporting teams selected on merit to represent South Africa. This was in line with Koornhof’s ruling that all sportsmen who preferred to represent South Africa would receive Springbok colours.⁷⁶ In 1978, Matthews Batswadi, a black long distance runner, became South Africa’s first non-white Springbok. This lay to rest a fierce controversy that had been going on within the NP for some time,⁷⁷ and the white monopoly of being awarded Springbok colours ended.

Although sport started moving in the direction of autonomy,⁷⁸ and equal development in sport did occasionally start taking place, there was still strong apartheid legislation in place that undermined progress towards equal opportunities in sport.

13. THE GLENEAGLES AGREEMENT

By 1977, the international efforts to isolate South African sport had not succeeded in executing this process at government levels.⁷⁹ It was left in the hands of various anti-apartheid movements, SANROC, SACOS and smaller supporting organisations. In June 1977, a meeting of leaders of various Commonwealth countries at the Gleneagles Hotel, Scotland, changed all of this.

74 Smit, p. 140.

75 Kotzé, p. 92.

76 *South African Review*, 26 November 1976, p. 13. 13.

77 Kotzé, p. 91.

78 B Streek, “Illusions and reality in South Africa’s sports policy”, *South Africa International* 16(1), July 1985, p. 38. Streek noticed in this regard that between 1970 and 1985 there was in fact a noticeable decline in the government’s influence on South African sport. However, he regarded the fact that no government influence in South African sport was present during the late seventies as “patent rubbish”.

79 Hain, *Sing the beloved country*, p. 98.

The meeting was necessitated by the impending boycott by African countries of the upcoming 1978 Commonwealth Games - the same group of African countries that boycotted the 1976 Olympics.⁸⁰ The discussions between the various leaders led to the adoption of the so-called Gleneagles Agreement, which resisted sports relations with South Africa. The meeting made a decision, “(to) vigorously combat the evil of apartheid by withholding any form of support for, and by taking every practical step to discourage contact or competition by our nationals with sporting organizations, teams or sportsmen from South Africa [...]”⁸¹

The agreement, officially called the 1977 Commonwealth Statement on Apartheid in Sport, gave expression to their mutual despise of apartheid, especially in sport.⁸² The Gleneagles Agreement reinforced the commitment of Commonwealth governments as embodied in the Singapore Declarations of Commonwealth Principles (1971), to oppose racism. It was also further strengthened by the Declaration on Racism and Racial Prejudice that Commonwealth leaders adopted at their meeting in Lusaka in 1979.⁸³

The champions against apartheid in sport, SANROC and SACOS, were delighted with the new support for their campaign. The United Nations Programme for Action against Apartheid (1976) and the Programme for the International Anti-Apartheid Year (1978) both contained strongly worded statements against sporting links with South Africa.⁸⁴ The struggle against apartheid sport in South Africa clearly intensified and the South African government realised that this threat necessitated action.

The British Anti-Apartheid Movement imposed a further sanction on South African sport by challenging the British government in stating, “The failure of the British Government effectively to implement the Gleneagles Agreement has led to growing skepticism concerning the real objective of British policy and it is increasingly threatening British participation in international sport.”⁸⁵

80 T Koenderman, *Sanctions. The threat to South Africa* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 1982), p. 234. The boycott was done in protest against the New Zealand team's participation in the 1976 Olympic Games in the same year that the All Black rugby team toured South Africa.

81 N Macfarlane, *Sport and politics. A world divided* (London: Collins, 1986), p. 110.

82 *Ibid.*

83 The Commonwealth Agreement on sporting contacts with South Africa, London, 15 June 1977. Commonwealth Secretariat document (British Anti-Apartheid Movement Archives).

84 Koenderman, p. 234.8

85 “British sporting relations with South Africa: The enforcement of the Gleneagles Agreement”. Memorandum from the AAM to the Minister of Sport, July 1982 (British Anti-Apartheid Movement Archives).

14. CONCLUSION: SOUTH AFRICAN SPORT AT THE CROSSROADS

By the end of the 1970s, too little was done in order to drive domestic changes and the international pressure on apartheid in sport intensified by the day. It was clear that sports people, already battered and bruised by the political onslaught that had lasted three decades, would once again have to reflect on the status of sport in South Africa.

To further complicate matters, sport at large did not receive priority treatment from government.⁸⁶ The feeling within the government was that the sports policy was fully deployed, and the only foreseeable enemy for South African sport was the international animosity from political governments and sporting organisations.⁸⁷

The limited success that the NP achieved with its sports policy between 1948 and 1979 only contributed to alienate sports people, communities, and the South African society at large. As an integral part of the segregated South African society, sport ended up in the mainstream of the onslaught against apartheid.⁸⁸ In formulating a sports policy for South Africa during the reign of Strijdom, Verwoerd and Vorster, it was never really appreciated that the undoing of sports apartheid after 1994 would be so complicated.

86 Kotzé, p. 107.

87 *Ibid.*, p. 108.

88 *Apartheid. The facts*, p. 36.