

Sports, Race, and Politics: The Olympic Boycott of Apartheid Sport

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In the article “Hitting Apartheid for Six? The Politics of the South African Boycott,” Douglas Booth writes that during the second half of the twentieth century, the international community regarded the South African government as a “pariah” due to its racially restrictive apartheid laws that denied equal economic, political, and social rights to the nation’s nonwhite majority. According to Booth, “foreign governments, multinational corporations, churches, the media, campaign groups, and individuals” increasingly condemned apartheid and joined international actions against the South African government through organized boycotts, sanctions, and embargoes.<sup>1</sup> One specific form of international solidarity was the movement against apartheid sport which resulted in South Africa’s suspension from the 1964 and 1968 Olympic Games and its eventual expulsion from the premier international athletic competition in 1970. As a result of its commitment to racial segregation in sport and the exclusion of blacks from international competition, South Africa was not allowed to participate at the Olympics until 1992.<sup>2</sup> Through the historical examination of the relationship between sports, politics, and race, it is evident that the boycott of South African sports, specifically the ban levied by the International Olympic Committee, had significant political and social ramifications.

### **Sports, Politics, and Race**

Despite countless attempts to separate the two fields, sports and politics have been linked since ancient times.<sup>3</sup> Barrie Houlihan finds the “the interweaving of sport and politics” at the international, national, and regional/local levels.<sup>4</sup> According to Roger I. Abrams, sports not only offered politicians opportunities to appeal to broad audiences but also provided athletes with a

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<sup>1</sup> Douglas Booth, “Hitting Apartheid for Six? The Politics of the South African Sports Boycott,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 38, no. 3 (July 2003): 477.

<sup>2</sup> Rob Nixon, “Apartheid on the Run: The South African Sports Boycott,” *Transition* 58 (1992): 77-8, 82.

<sup>3</sup> Roger I. Abrams, *Playing Tough: The World of Sports and Politics* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2013), xi.

<sup>4</sup> Barrie Houlihan, *The Government of Politics and Sport* (London: Routledge, 1991), 7.

platform from which they could express their own political views. While most athletes remain apolitical during competition, there are numerous sports figures “who were able to raise fundamental issues of fairness and politics because of their athletic success.”<sup>5</sup> By transforming their respective playing fields into a public stage where they could advocate for political and social change, athletes such as Muhammad Ali, Joe Louis, and Jesse Owens “became important symbols for an oppressed minority, providing hope along with a full measure of pride and self-esteem.”<sup>6</sup> In another example that demonstrates how athletes from dominant racial or ethnic groups similarly used sport as a political platform, at the urging of team owner Robert Sarver, members of the Phoenix Suns, an American basketball franchise, voted unanimously to wear “Los Suns” uniforms during the 2010 season in order to protest the state of Arizona’s newly introduced anti-immigration laws.<sup>7</sup>

After an 1894 tour of Europe and the United States, in which he increasingly viewed sport as the central method for furthering global unity, Pierre de Coubertin founded the International Olympic Committee (I.O.C.). Just two years later, the I.O.C. famously revived the ancient Olympic Games with the hope that sport would influence world politics and lead to the formation of diplomatic linkages, international cooperation, and—ultimately—peace. Yet, Andrew Strenk argues that what members of the I.O.C. failed to realize was “that they had further politicized sport. If sport was going to influence politics then the interaction would not remain one-way street.”<sup>8</sup> The I.O.C.’s decisions to incorporate national flags and anthems into Olympic ceremonies and to “designate competitors according to their country” not only undermined the organization’s claims of internationalism but also promoted both politics and

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<sup>5</sup> Abrams, 1, 4

<sup>6</sup> Abrams, 226.

<sup>7</sup> Abrams, 4.

<sup>8</sup> Andrew Strenk, “What Price Victory? The World of International Sports and Politics,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 445 (September 1979): 138-9.

nationalism.<sup>9</sup> According to Abrams, the modern Olympic Games provided the nations of the world with the unique opportunity of measuring their prominence on the global stage. Nations customarily have attributed their athletic achievements at the Games to the superiority of their political, social, and sometimes racial ideologies. For example, Hitler regarded Nazi Germany's success at the 1936 Olympic Games, a competition in which the German team amassed more medals than any other participating country, as the triumph of Aryan and National Socialist ideologies.<sup>10</sup>

In the decades following its reestablishment during the late nineteenth century, the modern Olympic Games has emerged as the premier international sporting event. While only fourteen countries attended the first modern Games in Athens, participation in the quadrennial competition dramatically increased throughout the twentieth century.<sup>11</sup> Over two hundred nations from across the world now send teams to compete in the Games.<sup>12</sup> In order to make the Games available to a global audience and not just the spectators in the stadium, Trevor Taylor writes that the I.O.C. relied on the media, specifically television, to promote Olympic events and athletes. The development and introduction of satellites during the 1960's resulted in the broadcasting of Olympic events to over half of the world's population.<sup>13</sup> John Hoberman further notes that the modern "Olympic movement has entertained billions by staging world-class athletic competition."<sup>14</sup>

Both Abrams and Houlihan argue that the relationship between sports and politics has been most visible, historically, at the international level. Abrams indicates that, throughout

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<sup>9</sup> Strenk, 139.

<sup>10</sup> Abrams, 69, 144-5, 149.

<sup>11</sup> Abrams, 53, 55.

<sup>12</sup> John Nauright, "Global Games: Culture, Political Economy, and Sport in the Globalised World of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 7 (2004): 132.

<sup>13</sup> Trevor Taylor, "Politics and the Olympic Spirit," in *The Politics of Sport*, ed. Lincoln Allison (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), 231.

<sup>14</sup> John Hoberman, "Think Again: The Olympics," *Foreign Policy* 167 (2008): 22.

modern history, nations customarily have used sports as a “soft weapon” in diplomatic relations. By competing internationally, nations across the world use sports to not only promote national unity but also gain worldwide recognition for the quality of their athletes and teams—and, by extension, societies.<sup>15</sup> Even though the Olympics are regarded widely as the event that best exemplifies the pure ideals of sports, this global competition frequently has been used “as a forum for government propaganda or as an arena for international politics.” In fact, Houlihan notes “there have been few Olympic Games this century which have not been the source or focus of political controversy.” At the 1976 Olympics in Montreal, over twenty African nations boycotted the Games to protest the inclusion and participation of New Zealand, which recently had allowed its national rugby team to compete against the racially segregated South African Springboks.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, as Strenk notes, at the international level sports serve “as a means of diplomatic recognition or isolation.”<sup>17</sup>

Although sports and politics commonly intersect in a multitude of ways, Abrams claims that at certain moments throughout history, the two spheres have combined to bring about fundamental social change. He calls attention to the achievements of famous African American athletes, such as Jack Johnson and Jackie Robinson, which symbolized the gradual social and political transformation of the United States into a less segregated society. Furthermore, Nelson Mandela, the first president of a multiracial South Africa, utilized the 1995 Rugby World Cup as a means of reconciling and unifying a South African nation that, until recently, had been racially divided for decades.<sup>18</sup> Abrams asserts that sports represent much more than a simple game; they also “catalyze change, engage individuals in group activities, and, ultimately, provide salvation

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<sup>15</sup> Abrams, 6, 9.

<sup>16</sup> Houlihan, 6-8.

<sup>17</sup> Strenk, 129.

<sup>18</sup> Abrams, 99, 190-1.

for societies otherwise divided by race, economics and heritage.” The American and South African case studies demonstrate that sports can serve as a path for both political equality and racial integration.<sup>19</sup>

Similar to politics, the concept of race also shares a profound connection with the modern sporting world. Richard Thompson asserts there is a multitude of evidence demonstrating how “sport can be a powerful force in uniting diverse sections of communities whether the divisions are tribal, social or racial.”<sup>20</sup> Modern sport, for instance, has proved effective at undermining systems of social stratification based on race. The gradual commercialization of sports as entertainment that placed an “emphasis on performance” regardless of an athlete’s color accelerated racial integration and equality on the playing field.<sup>21</sup> Thompson emphasizes that “Race discrimination in sport is almost universally repudiated as incompatible with the ethic of sportsmanship.”<sup>22</sup> This study will demonstrate, however, that Thompson’s assertion that sports represent one of the most effective methods of racial inclusion did not apply to South Africa where all sports remained racially segregated during the second-half of the twentieth century.<sup>23</sup>

When further examining Thompson’s analysis of the relationship between race and sports, it is evident that his arguments are comparable to the claims made by Abrams. Both authors argue that members of racial minority groups have used their athletic successes to advocate for political and societal change. These observations thus demonstrate an increased understanding of the inherently political nature of modern sport. According to Thompson, the athletic achievements of racial minorities are “not only a source of pride and self-confidence for their fellows, but also gives the stars the national prestige which enables them to influence the

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<sup>19</sup> Abrams, 19.

<sup>20</sup> Richard Thompson, *Race and Sport* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 9. 11.

<sup>21</sup> Thompson, 3-4.

<sup>22</sup> Thompson, 15.

<sup>23</sup> Thompson, 15.

pattern of segregation directly.” During the summer of 1963, Floyd Patterson, a former heavyweight boxing champion, traveled with Jackie Robinson to Birmingham, Alabama where the two African American sports icons encouraged the city’s black community “not to let up in their fight for integration.” The racial inclusiveness of sport “discourages any pattern of segregation” because it presents minority sportsmen an opportunity to be seen as athletically talented individuals rather than members of a perceived subordinate race.<sup>24</sup>

### **Sports Boycotts as a Political Tool**

Perhaps one of the most prominent methods of using sports as a platform to advocate for political and social change is through the organization and implementation of a sports boycott. According to Marlene Goldsmith, the history of using sporting boycotts as political instruments can be traced as far back as 420 B.C. when members of the ancient Olympic Games barred Sparta from competing due to the Greek city state’s failure to pay a fine after breaking the Olympiad’s customary truce. Of the seventeen Olympic Games held between the years 1920 and 1992, “there have been boycotts against, or exclusion of athletes from, all 17.”<sup>25</sup> Although the modern Games sought the universal participation of the world’s greatest athletes and the inclusion of all nations, Abrams writes “many Olympic Games experienced boycotts of some sort.”<sup>26</sup>

In a comprehensive overview of sports boycotts, Goldsmith describes multiple instances in recent history in which nations either boycotted the Olympics or were banned from the most significant international sporting competition altogether. He claims “perhaps the boycotts that have been most written about” took place during the 1980 and 1984 Summer Games.<sup>27</sup> For

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<sup>24</sup> Thompson, 12-3.

<sup>25</sup> Marlene Goldsmith, “Sporting Boycotts as a Political Tool,” *The Australian Quarterly* 67, no. 1 (1995): 11.

<sup>26</sup> Abrams, 145-6.

<sup>27</sup> Goldsmith, 11.

Abrams, the American boycott of the 1980 Moscow Games and subsequent Soviet boycott of the Los Angeles Olympics four years later represented the “lingering distrust and ideological animosity” between the two global superpowers during the latter stages of the Cold War.<sup>28</sup> Despite an improving relationship, both the American and Soviet governments continued to use international competitions such as the Olympics as instruments of foreign policy.<sup>29</sup> While the American and Soviet Olympic boycotts serve as noteworthy examples of how sporting boycotts are primarily used to make political statements, Goldsmith argues that other movements, such as the international boycott of South African apartheid sport during the late twentieth century “extended far beyond the Olympic Games, and is one that was imposed by member countries of the United Nations.”<sup>30</sup>

Goldsmith subsequently attempts to discover the reasons why sporting boycotts have become so common throughout modern Olympic history. While sporting boycotts are usually only part of an “overall package” of economic sanctions levied against a country, the results of a sports boycott are more immediate and clear. “The targeting of sport,” Goldsmith argues, “is the targeting of a nation’s right to participate in the international community, in the area most immediately visible to the citizens of that nation.”<sup>31</sup> A form of non-aggressive and nonviolent protest, sports boycotts primarily are used to attack the national morale of a country by excluding it from international competition. In a recent example of how the international community used sporting boycotts as a political weapon, both the United Nations and the I.O.C. expelled South

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<sup>28</sup> Abrams, 150.

<sup>29</sup> Abrams, 171.

<sup>30</sup> Goldsmith, 11-2.

<sup>31</sup> Goldsmith, 13-14.

Africa and Rhodesia from international sport in response to human rights violations, specifically state-sanctioned racism against each country's black majority population.<sup>32</sup>

### **Historiography**

In the article "Sport, Politics, and the Engaged Historian," Allen Guttman writes that the intersection of sports and politics is an integral feature of modern sports historiography.<sup>33</sup> In examining sports historiography, John Nauright indicates that the historical study of international sport and its political impact has received increased attention during the past thirty years.<sup>34</sup> The historical analysis of the relationship between sports and politics is a relatively recent phenomenon largely ignored during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when "historians seldom commented on the political implications of sport or on the political controversies that it engendered." By the late twentieth century, however, sports historians became far more aware of the connection between sports and politics than their predecessors who tended to record only the rules of sport and the notable athletic achievements of famous sportsmen. Although some contemporary sports historians regard the two fields of study as separate and incompatible, most "now acknowledge the political implications of sport and many emphasize the political controversies that have occurred within and around the domain of sport."<sup>35</sup>

Despite being a relatively new field of historiography, there are several areas within the overall study of the relationship between sports and politics that have received considerable attention. Guttman points out "Many politically engaged historians have dealt with sport and

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<sup>32</sup> Goldsmith, 14-5.

<sup>33</sup> Allen Guttman, "Sport, Politics, and the Engaged Historian," *Journal of Contemporary History* 38, no. 3 (July 2003): 363.

<sup>34</sup> John Nauright, *Long Run to Freedom: Sport, Culture, and Identities in South Africa* (Morgantown: Fitness Information Technology, 2010), 17.

<sup>35</sup> Guttman, 363.

the politics of race and ethnicity (especially, but not exclusively, in South Africa, the USA, Australia, and Ireland.)” The politicization of international sporting competitions such as the Olympics also has been a central subject of historical evaluation. Although sports journalists at the Olympic Games of the early twentieth century mostly ignored the political controversies surrounding the premier international sporting event, contemporary sports historians analyze these political disputes in great detail.<sup>36</sup> Nauright further claims there are numerous historical works that place international sport within a social, cultural, and political framework. He notes, “while we are beginning to get a fuller picture of sport and society in North America, Britain, and Australasia, in South Africa sports studies is in its infancy.”<sup>37</sup>

Even though there are few social histories that specifically examine black and non-racial sport in South Africa, as a result of the campaign to boycott apartheid sport during the late twentieth century, a substantial amount of historical scholarship regarding racially exclusive sport in South African has developed.<sup>38</sup> Guttmann also asserts, “research into the role of sport within the racial politics of South Africa has been especially intensive.” Historical works, such as Richard Lapchick’s narrative of South Africa’s exclusion from the Olympic Games, provide much-needed insight into the international campaign against South African apartheid sport that took place during the late twentieth century.<sup>39</sup> In addition, Nauright writes that the works of Douglas Booth, Bruce Kidd, and Richard Thompson each offer transnational historiographical perspectives of the South African sports boycott and serve as “invaluable historical documents as well as sources of information about sport and society in South Africa.”<sup>40</sup> When further analyzing existing historical scholarship of the international sports boycott, Rob Nixon indicates

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<sup>36</sup> Guttmann, 363-4, 372.

<sup>37</sup> Nauright, 19.

<sup>38</sup> Nauright, 18.

<sup>39</sup> Guttmann, 368.

<sup>40</sup> Nauright, 18.

that most transnational works primarily examine the boycott's significance in nations such as Britain, Australia, and New Zealand—where the leading sports overlapped with those played by South Africa. Most of these histories, however, do not specifically evaluate the boycott's impact in the United States where the differences in premier national sports “deprived the American anti-apartheid movement of a powerful populist focus for its actions.”<sup>41</sup>

### **Overview of the Global Anti-Apartheid Movement**

The South African sports boycott constituted just one of many aspects of the global movement that imposed harsh economic, political, military, and academic sanctions against the South African apartheid government during the second-half of the twentieth century. According to Gregory Houston, the activities conducted by the global anti-apartheid movement are divided into three specific categories. They included protests aimed at isolating and boycotting the apartheid state, movements that offered assistance to both the liberation movement and to the many victims of apartheid, and a campaign “focused on providing publicity to inform and mobilise world public opinion against apartheid and in support of the liberation struggle.”<sup>42</sup> Houston asserts there is little doubt that the global anti-apartheid movement significantly contributed to the eventual collapse of the racially discriminatory institution in the 1990s.<sup>43</sup>

The origins of international solidarity against the South African government's oppressive system of racial segregation and discrimination can be traced back to the late 1940s. Soon after the National Party formally introduced apartheid legislation, the newly independent nations of Asia and Africa began to criticize the South African government for refusing to grant its black populace the same rights and privileges that South African whites were guaranteed. According to

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<sup>41</sup> Nixon, 70.

<sup>42</sup> Gregory Houston, *The Road to Democracy in South Africa*, vol. 3: *International Solidarity*, Part 1. South African Democracy Education Trust. (Pretoria: Unisa Press, 2008), 5.

<sup>43</sup> Houston, 39.

Nancy Clark and William Worger, the growing movement against apartheid gained more international recognition in 1952 when the representatives of thirteen Asian and African countries attempted to convince fellow members of the United Nations (U.N.) that South African apartheid was “both a threat to international peace and a flagrant violation of the basic principles and fundamental freedoms which are enshrined” in the U.N. charter.<sup>44</sup>

International criticism of apartheid increased exponentially during the 1960s and 1970s as the South African government enforced its apartheid policies in a particularly brutal fashion, symbolized especially by the police killing in 1960 of sixty-nine Africans at Sharpeville.<sup>45</sup> The Sharpeville massacre “put the [global] spotlight on the apartheid regime, exposing its brutality sharper than ever before.”<sup>46</sup> In 1966, the U.N. General Assembly officially condemned South African apartheid as a “crime against humanity.” In the immediate aftermath of the 1976 Soweto uprising, in which the apartheid regime once again used harsh force to repress nonviolent black protests, the U.N. unanimously voted to introduce a mandatory trade embargo that forbade all member nations from exporting arms and military equipment to South Africa.<sup>47</sup>

While the anti-apartheid movement gradually gained international prominence during the 1960s and 1970s, Clark and Worger argue that global solidarity against the South African government peaked in the 1980s. During the late 1970s and 1980s, it became increasingly apparent to many across the world that apartheid was “an extraordinarily oppressive system of white rule over blacks.” As South Africa descended into “a form of civil war” between the white minority government and black opponents of apartheid, “most of the rest of world joined in the near universal condemnation of the South African government and supported international steps

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<sup>44</sup> Nancy L. Clark and William H. Worger, *South Africa: The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*, (Harlow, England: Pearson Education Limited, 2011), 4-5.

<sup>45</sup> Clark and Worger, 5.

<sup>46</sup> Houston, 4.

<sup>47</sup> Clark and Worger, 5.

to bring apartheid to an end, especially by enforcing” political, economic, and sporting boycotts.<sup>48</sup> Houston further notes that, as a result of sanctions such as the sports boycott, South Africa became widely regarded as a “pariah” state during the 1980s and was virtually exiled from the international community. As increasing numbers of white South Africans “began to feel unwelcome the world over,” support for the apartheid regime waned.<sup>49</sup> By 1990, the South African government, finally succumbed to international pressure, repealed apartheid laws, and vowed that all South Africans, regardless of color, would be ensured the same rights.<sup>50</sup>

### **Apartheid Sport in South Africa**

Although the white minority government did not introduce apartheid legislation that specifically authorized the racial segregation of the playing field, state policy and social practice structured race relations in every facet of South African society including sport.<sup>51</sup> According to Richard Lapchick, the national sports organizations themselves enacted and enforced racially-restrictive sports policies thus eliminating the need for an official state law.<sup>52</sup> When it came to participating in international competitions such as the Olympics, while South African whites were allowed to compete, the South African government and the South African Olympic Committee both forbid black athletes from representing their country on the global sporting stage.<sup>53</sup> Paul Martin further claims that the implied application of apartheid legislation to South African sport dictated that foreign teams touring South Africa not include any nonwhite players.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Clark and Worger, 5.

<sup>49</sup> Houston, 38.

<sup>50</sup> Clark and Worger, 6.

<sup>51</sup> Douglas Booth, *The Race Game: Sport and Politics in South Africa* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 1998), 86.

<sup>52</sup> Richard E. Lapchick, *The Politics of Race and International Sport: The Case of South Africa* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1975), 8.

<sup>53</sup> Nauright, 126

<sup>54</sup> Paul Martin, “South African Sport: Apartheid’s Achilles Heel?” *The World Today* 40, no. 6 (June 1994): 235.

In a first-hand account of the racial divisions in South African sport, Dennis Brutus, one of the leading figures of the South African sports boycott, recalls that during his childhood a white man mockingly called Brutus and his friends “future Springboks.” Brutus further records in his memoirs, “So I’m twelve or thirteen, listening to this. And it strikes me, this guy’s saying that coloreds, blacks, won’t ever get onto the team.” This moment of his early life stuck with Brutus in later years as he attempted to challenge the racial barriers that prevented blacks from competing on national teams such as the Springboks, South Africa’s renowned rugby team.<sup>55</sup> In his historical analysis of South African apartheid sport, Richard Lapchick compares the racially restrictive controls on the South African playing field to the restrictions made by Nazi Germany that forbade German Jews from competing internationally. The segregationist sports policies of Nazi Germany and the South African apartheid regime that divided athletes along racial and ethnic lines also encompassed both sports administrators and spectators.<sup>56</sup> According to Martin, the entrenchment of apartheid within all aspects of South African society “made racial mixing on the sports field and amongst spectators not merely socially unacceptable but illegal.”<sup>57</sup> As a result of the collective oppressiveness of segregationist apartheid laws, the black side of South African stadiums routinely cheered for the opponents of South Africa’s all-white sports teams.<sup>58</sup>

### **Early Movements against Apartheid Sport**

The introduction and development of the South African sports boycott directly coincided with the growth of the larger, global anti-apartheid movement. In a 1971 paper presented to the United Nations Units on Apartheid, Mary Corrigan notes that international solidarity against racially-exclusive sports was, first, a domestic movement launched by South Africa’s non-white

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<sup>55</sup> Dennis Brutus, *Poetry and Protest*, ed. Lee Sustar and Aisha Karim (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2006), 25.

<sup>56</sup> Lapchick, 2, 10.

<sup>57</sup> Martin, 235

<sup>58</sup> Nixon, 58.

athletes and the representatives of the South African Sports Association during the 1950s. This movement sought to “dispute the international membership of apartheid bodies which apply racial principles to national sport.” To the early proponents of multiracial sport in South Africa, “it was not enough to merely ensure that recognition was not accorded to racial bodies; their place must be taken by non-racial sporting organisations.”<sup>59</sup>

The first of many victories against apartheid sport occurred in 1956, when the International Table Tennis Federation (I.T.T.F.) rescinded the membership of the all-white South African Table Tennis Union (S.A.T.T.U.) and formally recognized the non-racial South African Table Tennis Board (S.A.T.T.B.) as the “sole controlling body.”<sup>60</sup> According to Dennis Brutus, a leading advocate for the international recognition of the S.A.T.T.B., the struggle to incorporate South Africa’s multiracial sports bodies into the international sporting community directly coincided with the formation of the I.T.T.F. during the early 1950s. Under the leadership of Ivor Montagu, “an enlightened and left-wing president,” Brutus argues that the newly organized I.T.T.F. responded favorably to the issue of racially-exclusive South African sport “in the sense that in many other sports the world bodies had been established a long time before that. Here the issue was a fresh one.”<sup>61</sup>

Although the South African government ultimately prohibited the S.A.T.T.B. from competing internationally by revoking the passports of its athletes, Corrigan writes that the precedent set in the field of table tennis encouraged other non-racial sports organizations in South Africa to pursue international recognition.<sup>62</sup> Following the accomplishment of the S.A.T.T.B., the South African Cricket Board of Control “applied, without success,” for

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<sup>59</sup> Mary Corrigan, “International Boycott of South African Sport,” (Paper prepared for the United Nations Unit on Apartheid, 1971), South African History Online, 1-9; Lapchick, 28.

<sup>60</sup> Corrigan, 2.

<sup>61</sup> Lapchick, 24.

<sup>62</sup> Corrigan, 2.

membership in the Imperial Cricket Conference while the non-racial South African Weight-Lifting and Body-Building Federation sought admittance into the I.O.C. so that its athletes could participate in the 1960 Olympic Games.<sup>63</sup> Even at the earliest stages of the struggle against apartheid sport, increasing pressure from South Africa's non-racial sports federations forced several all-white sports bodies to compromise and grant concessions. After the S.A.T.T.U.'s expulsion from international competition, the South African Amateur Cycling Federation declared that "it would be willing to assist the non-white bodies and would consider sending qualified nonwhite cyclists overseas to compete."<sup>64</sup> Writing during the height of the sports boycott, Corrigall argues that the threat of isolation from the international sporting community forced many white South Africans, especially athletes, to reconsider their support and tolerance of racial discrimination in sport.<sup>65</sup>

While the movement against racially-exclusive sports in South Africa achieved a degree of recognition domestically and abroad during the mid-1950s, Booth writes that the international sporting community as a whole still exhibited little interest towards protesting apartheid sport. When Dennis Brutus, the chairman of the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee, wrote to various members of the I.O.C. "asking them to join the struggle against racist sport," his appeals were largely dismissed.<sup>66</sup> Although "the struggle over the extension of apartheid into sports" failed to gain substantial international recognition in the 1950s, pressure against the South African apartheid regime gradually grew during the 1960s as a result of the Sharpeville massacre and the increased police suppression of South African blacks that followed.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Lapchick, 25.

<sup>64</sup> Lapchick, 25.

<sup>65</sup> Corrigall, 2.

<sup>66</sup> Douglas Booth, "The South African Council on Sport and the Political Antinomies of the Sports Boycott," *Journal of Southern Africa Studies* 23, no. 1 (March 1997): 53.

<sup>67</sup> Lapchick, 32.

According to Nixon, the Sharpeville massacre not only accelerated the determination of the anti-apartheid movement but also provoked strong international responses against apartheid sports teams “at the 1960 Olympics Games and, that same year, against New Zealand rugby players departing for South Africa and South African cricketers arriving in England.”<sup>68</sup>

In 1961, just a year after the atrocities in Sharpeville, three different international sports federations changed South Africa’s membership due to continued racial discrimination on the playing field. Following the International Football Federation’s decision to ban the Football Association of South Africa from all F.I.F.A. (International Federation of Association Football) sponsored competitions, Brutus and other representatives of the South African Sports Association, or S.A.S.A., appealed to the Commonwealth Games Federation to exclude the apartheid state. After hearing the S.A.S.A.’s petition, the C.F.G’s advisory committee voted in October to ban South Africa from the upcoming Commonwealth Games in Perth. While the S.A.S.A. similarly requested that the International Cricket Council (I.C.C.) suspend the apartheid state’s membership, the international cricket body ultimately decided to make all “test matches,” important matches that determined international standing, with South Africa’s all-white cricket team “unofficial.”<sup>69</sup>

In addition to domestic factors that escalated international solidarity against apartheid sport, during the 1960’s the complexion and structure of the international sporting community transformed when Eastern bloc and Third World nations began to use sport as a political weapon against racism.<sup>70</sup> Addressing the issue of racially segregated sport in 1968, the United Nations requested “all states to suspend cultural, education, sporting, and other exchanges, with the racism regime and with other organizations or institutions in South Africa which practice

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<sup>68</sup> Nixon, 77.

<sup>69</sup> Lapchick, 37.

<sup>70</sup> Booth, “The Politics of the South African Sports Boycott,” 480.

apartheid.”<sup>71</sup> By the end of the 1960s, the I.O.C. along with the leading federations of over twenty sports worldwide had expelled South Africa from international competition.<sup>72</sup>

### **Olympic Sports Boycott of South Africa**

One of the most notable aspects of the South African sports boycott of the late twentieth century was the movement spearheaded by Dennis Brutus and the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (S.A.N.R.O.C.) that eventually led to the expulsion of South African apartheid sports teams from the Olympic Games. According to Lapchick, “The 1950’s and 1960’s brought the issue of racism and the Olympic Movement to the foreground again with the emergence of South Africa’s apartheid policy.”<sup>73</sup> Despite valid claims from non-racial sports organizations that South Africa’s selection of all-white Olympic teams violated the I.O.C.’s fundamental principles of universal inclusion, the I.O.C. initially “turned a blind eye to South African selection as long as serious international protest was not readily evident.”<sup>74</sup> In 1959, the I.O.C. ignored the S.A.S.A.’s appeals to suspend South Africa from the upcoming Olympic Games in Rome unless the South African Olympic Committee (S.A.O.C.) reformed its selection process to include blacks.<sup>75</sup> Following its failure to secure South Africa’s suspension from the 1960 Games, the S.A.S.A organized the S.A.N.R.O.C. in 1962 with the hopes that this non-racial sports body would eventually replace the discriminatory S.A.O.C. as “the truly representative Olympic Committee in South Africa.”<sup>76</sup>

Under the leadership of Dennis Brutus, S.A.N.R.O.C not only sought international assistance for multiracial sport in South Africa but also the isolation of all South African

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<sup>71</sup> Michael Beaulin, “International Sports Boycott,” *Southern Africa: A Monthly Survey of News and Opinion*, July/August 1979. Northwestern University Libraries. African Activist Archive Project.

<sup>72</sup> Nixon, 77.

<sup>73</sup> Lapchick, “The Olympic Movement and Racism: An Analysis in Historical Perspective,” *Africa Today* 17, no. 6 (1970): 14.

<sup>74</sup> Nauright, 136.

<sup>75</sup> Nauright, 136.

<sup>76</sup> Lapchick “The Politics of Race in International Sport,” 48.

apartheid sports from international competition.<sup>77</sup> From its headquarters in Durban, Bruce Kidd writes that S.A.N.R.O.C. quickly made its presence known and immediately began to lobby sports federations, governments, and media outlets across the world to take action against apartheid sport.<sup>78</sup> According to Booth, S.A.N.R.O.C. launched an intense campaign to destroy the segregationist structures in South African sport and to replace them with those that adhered to Olympic principles of inclusivity. S.A.N.R.O.C. additionally called for an international boycott of apartheid sport and urged both the I.O.C. and other international sporting federations to expel white South African sports bodies.<sup>79</sup> Nixon asserts that members of S.A.N.R.O.C. believed that “leverage gained from pressure at the most illustrious and conspicuous level of sport” could be used to overturn apartheid laws regarding education, housing, and access to public amenities, which all denied South African blacks a fair and equal opportunity to compete with whites on the playing field.<sup>80</sup>

While recognized as an accomplished poet, teacher, and journalist, Dennis Brutus is also regarded as a prominent anti-apartheid activist who played a central role in the movement to expel the South African apartheid state from the Olympic Games.<sup>81</sup> In his autobiography, Brutus, “an international symbol of the struggle for nonracial sport in South Africa,” writes that his work in sport “has been one of the most useful areas for me and one that give me great satisfaction.”<sup>82</sup> Born in Salisbury, Rhodesia on November 28, 1924, Brutus’s affinity for sport started at an early age, an interest that remained with him throughout his life. From his athletic experiences as a college student at Fort Hare University College, the only black university in all of Southern

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<sup>77</sup> Bruce Kidd, “The Campaign Against Sport in South Africa,” *International Journal* 43, no. 4 (1988): 652-3.

<sup>78</sup> Thompson, 19; Kidd, 653.

<sup>79</sup> Booth, *The Race Game*, 78.

<sup>80</sup> Nixon, 77.

<sup>81</sup> Douglas Martin, “Dennis Brutus Dies at 85; Fought Apartheid with Sports,” *New York Times*, Jan 2, 2010.

<sup>82</sup> Lapchick, 48; Dennis Brutus, *The Dennis Brutus Tapes: Essays at Autobiography*, ed. Bernth Lindfors (Rochester, NY: Boydell and Brewer Inc.), 121.

Africa, during the 1940s, Brutus discovered that he had competed with and against “some absolutely brilliant black athletes whose performances were better than those of the South Africans who were being selected to go to the Olympic Games and everywhere else, but because the blacks were black they couldn’t get on the team.” According to Brutus, his personal observations of the racial injustices in South African apartheid sport ultimately led to his involvement in forming organizations that sought to racially-integrate sports at all levels in South Africa<sup>83</sup>

During the late 1950s, Brutus co-founded the S.A.S.A., a non-racial alternative to the all-white sports bodies of the apartheid state and the predecessor to S.A.N.R.O.C. As the organization’s secretary, Brutus played an instrumental role in the cancellation of the West Indies cricket team’s proposed tour of South Africa in 1959.<sup>84</sup> Lapchick indicates that the S.A.S.A.’s campaign to stop the West Indian tour of South Africa marked the organization’s first chance to openly oppose apartheid sport. Responding to the South African government’s announcement that the West Indian cricket team would only be allowed to compete against other nonwhites, the S.A.S.A. “manifested its opposition by petitioning government leaders in South Africa and in the West Indies as well as by public statements by its own leaders, especially Dennis Brutus.”<sup>85</sup> According to Brutus, the 1959 movement against the West Indian cricket tour cemented the S.A.S.A.’s role as the “campaigning body on racism in sports.”<sup>86</sup>

Even though the South African government had issued a series of orders between 1961 and 1962 that banned Brutus from writing and prevented him from leaving Johannesburg, Brutus, the president of the S.A.N.R.O.C, emerged as a “decisive figure” of the struggle against

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<sup>83</sup> Dennis Brutus,” South Africa History Online, last modified February 17, 2011. Accessed April 23, 2017; Brutus, *Dennis Brutus Tapes*, 136-7; Brutus, *Poetry and Protest*, 27.

<sup>84</sup>“Dennis Brutus,” South African History Online, last modified February 17, 2011.

<sup>85</sup> Lapchick, 29.

<sup>86</sup> Lapchick, 29.

apartheid sport during the 1960s.<sup>87</sup> In his memoirs, Brutus writes that S.A.N.R.O.C. was specifically founded in 1962 to be the driving force of the international effort to expel the apartheid state from Olympic competition.<sup>88</sup> According to Lapchick, South Africa's nonracial Olympic body "was destined not only to lead but also to become the very symbol of the struggle for nonracial sport in South Africa."<sup>89</sup> In their appeals to Avery Brundage, the president of the I.O.C., Brutus and other representatives of S.A.N.R.O.C. asserted that Olympic recognition of the South African apartheid regime represented a direct contradiction to the I.O.C.'s charter that specifically made it illegal for any participating nation "to discriminate on the grounds of race."<sup>90</sup>

As S.A.N.R.O.C. leaders such as Brutus, Sam Ramsamy, and John Harris increasingly demanded the expulsion of the apartheid regime from the Olympic Games, the South African government took additional measures to restrict Brutus's political influence. Although the apartheid state declined to take action against S.A.N.R.O.C. due to the fact that it "initially did not see S.A.N.R.O.C. as a major threat," the South African government introduced a series of bans in 1963 that prohibited Brutus from teaching, belonging to any organization, or attending any meeting of more than two people.<sup>91</sup> During a 1963 meeting with a Swiss journalist tasked with reporting the conditions of South African sport to the I.O.C., Johannesburg police arrested Brutus "allegedly for violating the terms of his banning order."<sup>92</sup> Upon his release, Brutus, in an effort to testify at the upcoming I.O.C. meeting in Germany where its member states would debate the issue of South Africa's participation at the 1964 Olympics, violated his bail agreement and left South Africa.<sup>93</sup> Brutus's attempt to travel to Germany, however, proved futile as

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<sup>87</sup> Brutus, *The Dennis Brutus Tapes*, 17; Nixon, 77.

<sup>88</sup> Brutus, *Poetry and Protest*, 38.

<sup>89</sup> Lapchick, 48.

<sup>90</sup> Brutus, 38.

<sup>91</sup> Nixon, 77; Lapchick, 51; Nauright, 129.

<sup>92</sup> Corrigan, 5; Brutus, *The Dennis Brutus Tapes*, 17.

<sup>93</sup> Nixon, 77.

Portuguese authorities detained Brutus in Mozambique and covertly handed him over to the South African government.<sup>94</sup> When Brutus attempted to escape from a Johannesburg detention center after receiving an eighteen-month prison sentence, South African authorities shot the prominent anti-apartheid activist in the back.<sup>95</sup> While Brutus ultimately survived his gunshot wounds, Corrigan argues, “the case of Dennis Brutus is just one example of Government action to intimidate and silence sportsmen who work for non-racial sport.”<sup>96</sup> According to Nauright, the arrest and shooting of Brutus brought greater international attention to racist sport in South Africa.<sup>97</sup> Occurring just three weeks before the pivotal I.O.C. meeting in Germany, the publicity over the Brutus incident “undoubtedly had a marked effect” on the I.O.C.’s eventual decision to deliver an ultimatum to the South African apartheid regime.<sup>98</sup>

As previously mentioned, the issue of South Africa’s participation in the Olympic Movement resurfaced at a 1963 I.O.C. meeting in Germany. Due to the combination of increased international protest against the apartheid government, in the aftermath of the Sharpeville massacre, and the growing influence of Eastern Bloc and Third World sporting bodies, Nauright writes that the I.O.C. changed its earlier stance on the apartheid state’s status for the Olympics. The I.O.C. demanded that, if South Africa wanted to participate in the 1964 Games at Tokyo, it would have to “abide by the I.O.C.’s policy of non-discrimination in selection” and change its racial policies in sport.<sup>99</sup> In the event that the apartheid regime and the S.A.O.C. failed to adequately address the racial segregation and discrimination permeating in South African sport, the I.O.C. announced that South Africa would be “de-barred from entering its teams in the

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<sup>94</sup> Corrigan, 5.

<sup>95</sup> Nixon, 78.

<sup>96</sup> Corrigan, 6.

<sup>97</sup> Nauright, 137.

<sup>98</sup> Lapchick, 51-2.

<sup>99</sup> Nauright, 136-7.

Olympic Games.”<sup>100</sup> While the S.A.O.C. favorably responded to the I.O.C.’s demands by selecting several black athletes for the upcoming Games, the South African government refused to comply and announced that it would not allow multiracial teams to represent South Africa in international competition.<sup>101</sup> In lieu of the apartheid regime’s reluctance to change racially discriminatory sports policies, the I.O.C., thus, banned South Africa from the upcoming Tokyo Games.<sup>102</sup>

As a result of the relentless campaign directed by Brutus and the leaders of S.A.N.R.O.C. along with the South African government’s refusal to change its position regarding apartheid sport, the I.O.C. voted to suspend South Africa from the 1964 Olympics. For Booth, the “most important strategy” of the movement to isolate South Africa from the Olympic community was Brutus’s ability to “draw the attention of the international sports federations, and in particular the I.O.C., to clauses in their constitutions that prohibited racial discrimination.”<sup>103</sup> Although the exclusion of South Africa from the 1964 Games marked a major triumph for Brutus and the representatives of South Africa’s leading non-racial sporting body, the apartheid regime immediately struck back by outlawing the organization. By the middle of 1964, S.A.N.R.O.C.’s leaders were “in prison, under house arrest, in exile, or underground, all in the name of a government policy of ‘keeping politics out of sport.’”<sup>104</sup>

In the aftermath of the I.O.C.’s decision to suspend South Africa from the 1964 Olympic Games and the retaliatory governmental crackdowns against S.A.N.R.O.C. that soon followed, Lapchick writes that the issue of South African apartheid sport seemed to diminish in 1965. Due to the apartheid regime’s persecution of S.A.N.R.O.C.’s leaders, the non-racial sports

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<sup>100</sup> Lapchick, 52.

<sup>101</sup> Nauright 136-7.

<sup>102</sup> Nauright, 136-7.

<sup>103</sup> Lapchick, 72; Booth, 111.

<sup>104</sup> Nixon, 77.

organization's ability to function within South Africa "had been reduced to zero."<sup>105</sup> Later that year, S.A.N.R.O.C. formally suspended all of its activities in South Africa.<sup>106</sup> After serving an eighteen-month prison sentence on the infamous Robben Island and his subsequent forced exile from South Africa upon release, Brutus immigrated to London where he, Chris de Broglio, and Reg Hlongwane, two leading S.A.N.R.O.C. figures that were also in exile, reestablished the organization in 1966.<sup>107</sup> According to Lapchick, the rebirth of South Africa's leading nonracial Olympic body "meant trouble for South African sports."<sup>108</sup> As president of the revitalized S.A.N.R.O.C., Brutus stressed that he had "the opportunity to pull the whole continent of Africa together on the question of boycotting the Mexico Olympics" if the South African apartheid regime participated.<sup>109</sup> Nauright argues that S.A.N.R.O.C.'s primary objective of convincing the I.O.C. to exclude South Africa from the 1968 Olympic Games was aided by the formation of another important non-racial sports organization, the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa, in Mali later that year.<sup>110</sup>

The S.C.S.A., a sporting coalition of thirty-two African nations, utilized the athletic feats of black Africans as a political tool to attack racially-exclusive sport in South African and Rhodesia.<sup>111</sup> Organized under a constitution written by Brutus himself, Kidd writes that the S.C.S.A. asserted, "it wanted the international federations and national sports bodies to stop sporting contacts with South Africa" and threatened to boycott all major competitions to which South Africa was invited.<sup>112</sup> The S.C.S.A.'s determination to isolate the apartheid regime from international competitions such as the Olympics is most evident in an organizational resolution

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<sup>105</sup> Lapchick, 72.

<sup>106</sup> Booth, 79.

<sup>107</sup> Nixon, 78; Lapchick, 73.

<sup>108</sup> Lapchick, 73.

<sup>109</sup> Brutus, *Poetry and Protest*, 133.

<sup>110</sup> Nauright, 137.

<sup>111</sup> Nauright, 137.

<sup>112</sup> Brutus, 133; Kidd, 653.

in which the non-racial sports body specifically states that it will attempt “to use every means to obtain the expulsion of South African sports organizations from the Olympic movement and from International Federations.”<sup>113</sup> In his memoirs, Brutus acknowledges that S.C.S.A.’s formation in 1966 represented a pivotal moment in the struggle to exclude South Africa from the international sporting community in that “there was a united body for sports in Africa that could take unified action. This was to be important in the next Olympic year, 1968.”<sup>114</sup>

During a February 1968 meeting in Grenoble, France, representatives of the I.O.C. voted to allow South Africa to compete in the upcoming Mexico City Games.<sup>115</sup> The I.O.C.’s decision to reinstate South Africa into the Olympic movement was made shortly after the conclusion of a fact-finding mission, which dubiously reported significant progress in the racial integration of South African sport.<sup>116</sup> In addition to the release of the I.O.C. report, Frank Braun, the President of the S.A.O.C., had met with I.O.C. executives in Tehran in May 1967 to announce a series of concessions that South Africa was willing to make in order to compete in Mexico City. While these concessions included the assurance that South Africa would send a multiracial team to the Games, Braun admitted that the pre-Olympic trials in South Africa “still will be on a segregated basis because law prohibits mixing of races in sports.”<sup>117</sup> Although the movement against apartheid sport was on the verge of securing the limited goal of a racially integrated Olympic team, the African National Congress declared that “it was a cynical act of hypocrisy even to suggest that they will march under the same flag and sing the same National Anthem when they

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<sup>113</sup> Supreme Council for Sport in Africa, “Resolution Concerning South Africa,” (Bamako, December 1966), SCSA Collection.

<sup>114</sup> Brutus, 133-4.

<sup>115</sup> Lapchick, 202.

<sup>116</sup> Nauright, 137.

<sup>117</sup> Lapchick, 93; Associated Press, “Africa Verdict Roils Olympics,” *Chicago Tribune*, February 17, 1968, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Chicago Tribune.

are prohibited from doing so inside South Africa.”<sup>118</sup> According to Lapchick, both S.A.N.R.O.C. and the S.C.S.A. were similarly “not willing to accept the compromises offered as anything more than tokenism.”<sup>119</sup>

In response to the I.O.C.’s decision to reinstate South Africa, Brutus and the S.C.S.A. met in Brazzaville to organize the strategy for the exclusion of South Africa from the upcoming Olympic Games.<sup>120</sup> In his memoirs, Brutus writes that he appealed to countries in the Caribbean, South America, Asia and Eastern Europe to join S.C.S.A. nations in boycotting the Olympics. By the spring of 1968, S.A.N.R.O.C. and the S.C.S.A. persuaded almost sixty countries to boycott the 1968 Olympics if the I.O.C. allowed South Africa to compete.<sup>121</sup> Faced with boycott threats from the Soviet Union, member nations of the S.C.S.A., and famous African American athletes such as Lew Alcindor, Tommy Smith, and John Carlos, the I.O.C., fearing “racial tension throughout the world” would lead to demonstrations and physical violence against the South African team in Mexico City, voted in late April to withdraw South Africa’s invitation to 1968 Games.<sup>122</sup> According to Kidd, the I.O.C.’s fear that “such a long list of absentees” would lead to significant losses in both revenue and prestige also factored in the committee’s vote to reverse the Grenoble decision.<sup>123</sup>

Just two years after the I.O.C.’s suspension of South Africa from the Mexico City Olympics, the S.C.S.A. gathered in Cairo and drafted a resolution demanding the apartheid state’s expulsion from the Olympics entirely rather than merely being suspended from individual Games. If the I.O.C. failed to accept these demands, the S.C.S.A. threatened that its member

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<sup>118</sup> African National Congress, *Commentary #12*, January 26, 1968, SAN-ROC Collection.

<sup>119</sup> Lapchick, 135.

<sup>120</sup> Brutus, *The Dennis Brutus Tapes*, 21.

<sup>121</sup> Brutus, *Poetry and Protest*, 134.

<sup>122</sup> Associated Press, “S. Africa Out of Olympics;” *Chicago Tribune*, April 24, 1968, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Chicago Tribune; Frank Litsky, “65 Athletes Support Boycott of Olympics on S. Africa Issue,” *New York Times*, April 12, 1968, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times.

<sup>123</sup> Kidd, 654.

states would boycott the 1972 Games in Munich, a notion supported by nations in Third World and the Socialist Bloc. Faced with boycott threats from more than fifty countries worldwide, I.O.C. officials met in Amsterdam to discuss the apartheid state's Olympic future. In March 1970, I.O.C. representatives officially voted to expel South African apartheid sport from Olympic competition. By the end of May, Lapchick notes that South Africa was on the verge of total isolation from the international sporting community. In addition to its exclusion from the Olympic Games, South Africa "was either expelled or suspended in the following sports; table tennis, football (soccer), basketball, fencing, judo, volleyball, boxing, weightlifting, tennis (Davis Cup), gymnastics, big game fishing, cycling, and netball."<sup>124</sup> Nixon further asserts that the unprecedented decision to expel South Africa from the Games resulted in a "domino effect" in which African, Asian, and Caribbean nations expanded the scope of the sports boycott by refusing to play not just against South Africa but also against countries who maintained sporting ties with the apartheid state.<sup>125</sup>

In a 1991 *New York Times* article, Youssef Ibrahim points out that the twenty-one year expulsion of South Africa from Olympic competition was by far the longest international boycott against the apartheid regime, preceding other economic and political boycotts levied by the international community during the late twentieth century. Satisfied with South Africa's gradual commitment to abolishing racial discrimination in sport, in 1991 the I.O.C. finally lifted the ban against South Africa thus allowing the nation to compete at the 1992 Summer Games in Barcelona. Ibrahim further notes that the I.O.C.'s decision cleared the way for the renewal of

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<sup>124</sup> Lapchick, "The Olympic Movement and Racism," 16; Lapchick, "Politics of Race and International Sport," 197, 203.

<sup>125</sup> Nixon, 78.

South Africa's international participation in non-Olympic sports such as rugby and cricket, from which the apartheid state had also been banned.<sup>126</sup>

Due to the combination of South Africa's expulsion from the Olympic movement and its near total isolation from the international sporting community later that year, increasing numbers of white South Africans began to question the overall benefits of apartheid sport.<sup>127</sup> According to Houston, South Africa's exclusion from international sport had a tremendous psychological impact on the country's white minority population.<sup>128</sup> Lapchick further notes, "South Africans have made sport so important in their country that they have allowed themselves to become quite vulnerable to domestic and international pressure."<sup>129</sup> A July 1970 *New York Times* article indicates that isolation from competitions such as the Olympics "has hurt the sports-mad white South Africans."<sup>130</sup> During the mid-1970s, a majority of South African's whites regarded the nation's exclusion from international competition as one of the three most damaging consequences of apartheid.<sup>131</sup> Dennis Brutus further asserts that when South Africa is denied the opportunity to compete on the international stage, its white minority population will "look at the country beyond the sportsfield: then apartheid South Africa will go down the drain."<sup>132</sup>

## Conclusion

The transnational movement to expel the South African apartheid state from the Olympic Games symbolizes just one of countless historical examples of how sports, particularly at the international level, intersected with both race and politics. As a result of the South African

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<sup>126</sup> Youssef M. Ibrahim, "Olympics; Olympic Committee Ends Its Ban on Participation by South Africa," *New York Times*, July 10, 1991.

<sup>127</sup> Lapchick, 203.

<sup>128</sup> Houston, 38.

<sup>129</sup> Lapchick, 205.

<sup>130</sup> "Sports-Loving South Africans Feel Pressure of World Boycotts," *New York Times*, July 25, 1970, ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times.

<sup>131</sup> Nixon, 75.

<sup>132</sup> Dennis Brutus, "Sport: Threat to the Security of the State," *Fighting Talk* (December 1961, January 1962): 18. South African History Online.

government's persistent refusal to comply with I.O.C.'s standards of universal inclusion, South African apartheid sport indefinitely was banned from the premier international sporting competition for almost three decades. Spearheaded by Dennis Brutus and S.A.N.R.O.C., the Olympic boycott had a devastating political and social impact on South Africa's white minority government, which had traditionally used international sport to demonstrate and reinforce ideals of racial superiority.

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