

Simply expressing our disapproval would accomplish little with a regime so entrenched, so convinced, and so fearful that change would cost them everything. Indeed, for twenty-five years, Western countries spoke loudly against apartheid, but carried a small stick, and the system did not change. It was only when nations together began to impose sanctions that the seriousness of the opposition to apartheid became clear. Some Canadians have argued that we should have imposed full sanctions, and totally ended our diplomatic relations. The view of our government has been that a total rupture of that kind should only occur when all else had failed and the avenues to peaceful change had been closed.

Had we ended totally our relationship with South Africa, our influence would have expired with the one burst of emotion. Our ability to assist apartheid's foes inside South Africa would have been sharply diminished if our Embassy had been closed. Our capacity to monitor events would have disappeared. Our influence with our friends to mount joint pressure would have been weakened.

Our aim has been to promote change; it has not been to punish. And those measures we have adopted have had as their goal a change of behaviour. Decades of prejudice cannot be erased overnight, just as the power structure will not transform itself in an instant.

Therefore, we have pursued an approach of consistent and constant pressure designed to induce a process of peaceful change in South Africa.

We have had disagreements with others, notably the United Kingdom, on the effectiveness of sanctions. Their position, described briefly, has been that sanctions do not work and that they hurt those most in need. Our position has been that sanctions are necessary to convince the South African regime that change is necessary. Words won't work, but targetted pressure will, and there is no better target than the pocket book.

However, our policy also recognized that while sanctions were necessary, they were not sufficient. Therefore, we also emphasized positive measures to increase understanding. We have funded the efforts at dialogue, including conferences between moderates on both sides. We have provided assistance to the Front Line States to help them become more independent of South Africa. We have moved to counter the pernicious censorship and propaganda of Pretoria. We will continue to do so.