

If we discern a need for management skills we pay for the entrepreneur's training; if the bottleneck lies in the obtaining of finance we negotiate with the banks on his behalf. Our objective is to oil the wheels to enable the entrepreneurial wagon to move ahead smoothly.

The important thing to remember when buying from Black businesses is that they are essentially Third World, and the term is not used in a derogatory sense. What we mean is that companies purchasing from Black suppliers need to show an appreciation of their historical disadvantages. Company buyers should refrain from insisting on first world standards when dealing in a largely third world situation. They need to understand that a Black supplier may sometimes not be in a position to deliver on time due to a variety of problems peculiar to his environment. Some Black suppliers might not be able to handle large orders due to inadequate financing, and this could require the buyer to pay in advance to ensure the requisite cash flow. This is what I mean when I call for a better understanding of the Third World. One needs to be more flexible, and accommodating, without necessarily sacrificing standards and quality.

CABBSA certainly does not go along with the advocates of sanctions and disinvestment, who seem to want to go on penalising already disadvantaged Blacks.

Sanctions and disinvestment can only prolong, and exacerbate, these disadvantages. Surely the best way of reversing the damage of apartheid is for foreign companies to invest more, not less, in Black upliftment programmes.