



Bron
nr.
0 0 8 6

Datum
9 7 1 1 1 3 3 1 7

Onderwerp
nr.
1 1 5

Knipsel
24 6 62

The Daily News

Jg..... Nr..... P. 3 Dat. 1 3 NOV 1997

TRC examines role of big business

We opposed apartheid, say white bosses

The focus of the TRC yesterday was whether business profited from apartheid, writes Daily News Correspondent ROBERT BRAND from Johannesburg.

WITH few exceptions, white business institutions who have testified before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's business hearing have argued that apartheid was inimical to economic growth and that they had actively opposed it.

But whether business profited from apartheid and what should be done to redress injustices of the past remained the main focus on the second day of the hearing yesterday.

The Black Management Forum said claims that business did not profit from apartheid but contributed to its downfall should be rejected "with contempt".

Presenting the BMF's submission, the organisation's president Lot Ndlovu said government co-opted white business, resulting in an "overt and covert" alliance between business and government.

Business leaders who voiced opposition to apartheid "were

quickly brought in line with their colleagues" while most business "oppressed and exploited blacks", the BMF said. The BMF submission detailed specific instances of racial discrimination in the business environment as well as the exclusion of black business from the marketplace.

The Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry said business under apartheid had benefited from cheap labour, an absence of competition from black business, discrimination in job opportunities and political power in white hands.

Exploitation

"We believe that the corporate sector was an active party in the exploitation of the black population. The corporate sector must play a proactive role in redressing past imbalances," ICCI president Ebrahim Kharsany said.

Earlier, Rembrandt chief executive Johann Rupert branded apartheid as "immoral, foolish, wasteful of meagre resources and based on a denial of facts".

Submitting a report on his company's activities during apartheid, Mr Rupert said: "We did not participate in the system because we knew it was

immoral and that it squandered the country's resources leaving our children in debt."

White businessmen in South Africa during apartheid were faced with three limited options in their operations. "Either you agreed with the system or (you) emigrated if you did not. If you did not agree but still wanted to stay, then it was imperative for you to oppose it from within."

Mr Rupert said his company chose the last option. "For 40 years we chose to operate in an unjust system. It is true that we did not do enough but we have treated our employees loyally and fairly."

The Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut expanded on its proposal that part of the R9-billion SASRIA fund be used to pay for reparations for victims of apartheid, and apologised for its role in the maintenance of the system.

The institute's former president Theo van Wyk said there was no doubt that white business benefited from apartheid relative to black business, but denied that Afrikaner businesses benefited inordinately from state patronage.

He rejected professor Sampie Terreblanche's proposal that a wealth tax should be levied on individuals.

TREFWOORDE

1. *Antelini*

2. *getuines*

3. *Kommissie in*
Waarheid

4. *Apartheid*

5. *Wetenskap*
en ontwikkeling

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.