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EPREUVE ECRITE D'ANGLAIS

Cette épreuve comporte deux (2) pages

Looking at the Supply Side of Corruption

Bribery involves two parties, not one. Criticizing officials in poor countries for their sticky fingers is usually easier (and less open to legal challenge) than investigating those who corrupt them.

But on November 2nd Transparency International, a Berlin-based campaigning group, published an updated version of its Bribe Payers Index. Based on questions to 3,000 businessmen, this ranks 28 countries by the perceived likelihood of their companies paying bribes. Russia and China scored worst by a large margin. Dutch and Swiss companies were seen as the cleanest, with Belgium, Germany and Japan close behind. Construction and industries involving government contracts, unsurprisingly, were the dirtiest.

Disappointingly, the latest version of the index shows no significant change since the previous edition in 2008. That comes despite some big shifts in national legislation and international anti-bribery activity. Recent prosecutions under America's Foreign Corrupt Practices Act have sent culprits to jail for record terms. Britain has introduced a tough anti-bribery law too. Laurence Cockcroft, a British economist who specializes in anti-bribery campaigns, says the dozen recent prosecutions by the serious Fraud Office belie its reputation for feebleness: "it's a huge improvement on five years ago."

Even countries best known as sources and recipients of corrupt payments are trying to meet international standards, at least on paper.

But practical progress has been a lot thinner. Transparency International complains that Germany, Japan and Saudi Arabia have not yet ratified a UN convention on bribery. Twenty one of the thirty eight states that signed the OECD anti-bribery convention, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, South Africa and Turkey, show "little or no enforcement" of it. Attempts to get the G20 group of the world's biggest economies to tighten rules on transparency and bribery have also failed.

Robert Palmer of Global Witness, a London-based campaigning group, says that bribery indices, though welcome, fail to highlight the crucial role of intermediaries: banks that handle corrupt payments and lawyers who advise clients how to get around anti-bribery laws—for example by making "facilitation payments"

which are a common deficiency. He and other campaigners want new rules to make companies record payments to governments publicly and to publish accounts reporting their activity country by country.

But perhaps the biggest pressure is likely to come from shareholder anger. Next year Transparency International will publish an updated ranking of big global companies, highlighting their use of foreign finance and their perceived willingness to pay bribes. A plunging share price may be the biggest disincentive to the corrupters of the weak and greedy.

Adapted from The Economist, November 2012.

A. Guided Commentary

- 1) According to the text, what role does Transparency International play in fighting corruption? (3 points)
- 2) Based on the text, state the effect of strict regulations on corrupt companies in 2008. (3 points)
- 3) According to the text, what are the difficulties linked to denouncing the two sides of corruptions? (4 points)
- 4) What does the text say about the tendency to meet international standards on corruption? (4 points)

B. Essay

Give your views concerning the impact of corruption on your country's economy and suggest solutions to fight it. (6 points)
