The Ethics of Apartheid

by

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THE SOUTH AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS

THE THIRTEENTH HOERNLÉ MEMORIAL LECTURE

THE ETHICS OF APARTHEID

Delivered under the auspices of
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by

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A LECTURE entitled the Hoernlé Memorial Lecture (in memory of the late Professor R. F. Alfred Hoernlé, President of the Institute from 1934 to 1943), will be delivered once a year under the auspices of the South African Institute of Race Relations. An invitation to deliver the lecture will be extended each year to some person having special knowledge and experience of racial problems in Africa or elsewhere.

It is hoped that the Hoernlé Memorial Lecture will provide a platform for constructive and helpful contributions to thought and action. While the lecturers will be entirely free to express their own views, which may not be those of the Institute as expressed in its formal decisions, it is hoped that lecturers will be guided by the Institue's declaration of policy that "scientific study and research must be allied with the fullest recognition of the human reactions to changing racial situations; that respectful regard must be paid to the traditions and usages of various national, racial and tribal groups which comprise the population; and that due account must be taken of opposing views earnestly held."

Previous lecturers have been the Rt Hon. J. H. Hofmeyr (*Christian Principles and Race Problems*), Dr E. G. Malherbe (*Race Attitudes and Education*), Prof. W. M. Macmillan (*Africa Beyond the Union*), Sn. Dr the Hon. E. H. Brookes (*We Come of Age*), Prof. I. D. MacCrone (*Group Conflicts and Race Prejudices*), Mrs. A. W. Hoernlé (*Penal-Reform and Race Relations*), Dr H. J. van Eck (*Some Aspects of the Industrial Revolution*), Prof. S. Herbert Frankel (*Some Reflections on Civilization in Africa*), Prof. A. R. Radcliffe-Brown (*Outlook for Africa*), Dr Emory Ross (*Colour and Christian Community*), Vice-Chancellor T. B. Davie (*Education and Race Relations in South Africa*), and Prof. Gordon W. Allport (*Prejudice in Modern Perspective*).

Mr. President,

I want to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation for the privilege the Institute of Race Relations has granted me by inviting me to give the thirteenth lecture in the series which honours the name of one for whom I have always had a profound admiration, Prof. R. F. A. Hoernlé, and whom I personally knew as a man of the keenest intellect and greatest integrity.

By conferring this distinction upon me, you have included me in a line of illustrious men, beginning with Jan H. Hofmeyr and continuing with men like Edgar H. Brookes, T. E. Davie, Emory Ross and other scholars from oversea, not forgetting Winifred Hoernlé and a number of others not less distinguished, in comparison with whom I can only describe myself as a very humble musketeer who has no other claim to be heard than that I am intensely interested in the greatest of all the problems of our sorely-tested country, a country for which I would gladly sacrifice myself if that would bring about the hope of a better future.

Believing as I do that the colour problem is basically a moral one I have confined myself to this approach in an attempt to analyse the policy of apartheid.

THE ETHICS OF APARTHEID

BEFORE we venture to examine the ethics of apartheid we shall have to come to some sort of agreement on the sense in which we use the term, apartheid.

The general use of this term in the hurly-burly of political controversy does not contribute to a clear understanding of its meaning: it has so many and varied connotations that it will be necessary to confine ourselves to its most obvious meaning. In point of fact the term is of quite recent date and, in spite of the degrees and kinds of meaning that accompany its application, its general import is, I think, quite clear. In the situation that we find in South Africa today, apartheid stands for a government policy which seeks by means of legislation to segregate politically, economically and socially the different racial groups comprising the population of the country. This segregation may be regarded as partial or total, temporary or permanent, but logically it can only mean that the final aim is complete separation, that is to say if, in its own terms, the full development of the Non-Europeans is to be realized under this policy.

The motivation for such a policy is sought in the assertion that only in this way will each group of our multi-racial population be able to develop along its own lines, unhampered by the prejudices and oppression that under present conditions retard their advancement. Whether the separation is to be effected in a short or a long time does not seem to be relevant; the goal remains the same: complete segregation. I believe, therefore, that we shall do no injustice to the case of apartheid if we define it as that policy which has for its final aim the complete separation of our multi-racial population into independent groups, whether it requires a shorter or a longer time for its execution.

To complete the picture, however, it must be stated that segregation will only affect relations beween Europeans and Non-Europeans, although it seems that the policy regards a similar partition among the Non-Europeans as necessary too. Here apartheid reveals one of its many inconsistencies since separation is not considered desirable in the case of European groups. If independent separate existence is essential for the sound development of Non-European groups, why should it halt at the colour line? Brought to its logical conclusion apartheid would require the separation of Afrikaans-speaking and English-speaking South

Africans as well, not to mention the many other groups that make up the South African community.

Meanwhile, in the concrete situation of today, the difference between the policy of apartheid and any other policy does not so much reflect a difference of actual conditions, largely inherited from the past, but rather a difference of attitude or direction in which the future relations between Europeans and Non-Europeans are planned to move. So that our enquiry on the ethics of apartheid resolves itself into the simple question: Is this attitude ethically defensible or must it be condemned as ethically untenable?

I use the term 'ethical' in the sense of Christian humanitarian ethics. Whether it is labelled as simply humanitarian or liberal or even communistic is not relevant. My approach is quite frankly the Christian approach.

In order to answer this question we shall have to begin by briefly describing the present situation. South Africa is a multi-racial country in which the numerical preponderance of the Non-Europeans, comprising a ratio of 4 to 1, makes the situation here, in comparison with other (not colonial) countries almost unique. That, in itself, would not present such a grave problem, but when it is remembered that the majority of Non-Europeans consists of those who are only just emerging from a state of barbarism it is understandable that there should be doubts as to the best way in which the fruits of our western civilisation can be preserved and advanced. Unlike colonial countries on our border, Europeans and Non-Europeans have been living together for more than three centuries, and together these groups, each in its own way, and according to the measure of its ability, has contributed to the development of this country. Moreover these groups both "belong' here. They have no other home-land and must somehow find a way to live together and work together.

Until recent times the coloured races were accepted as part of the nation, and means were devised gradually to enable them to pull their weight in the common task of serving the country to the best of their ability. Since the advent of apartheid, however, they are no longer regarded as part of the nation, but as strangers who are tolerated for a time and for a purpose, but who can never, while they remain here, be granted the same rights and privileges as the Europeans. Their position can only be one of permanent subordination. Hence the endeavour of apartheid to divide or

partition the country so as to grant the Non-Europeans some kind of existence in which they may exercise their human faculties to the full in the service of their own people. Should they remain among the Whites such a concession, it is said, could only mean the end of White civilisation in South Africa.

From all this it appears that the protagonists of apartheid do not really accept the fact that this *is* a multi-racial country. At any rate their avowed intention is to destroy its multi-racial character, replacing it by a society in which the Non-Europeans are tolerated as long as they are isolated or ultimately removed to the territories set aside for them.

In all this planning no account is taken of the standard of development or enlightenment which they have reached. The mere fact that they are coloured is the standard by which their present and future fate is determined. Our Prime Minister has very frankly admitted that the policy of apartheid is squarely based on colour.

This is not the time nor the place to enter upon an exhaustive study of the origin of our colour prejudice. Elsewhere I have tried to trace its genesis (*Whither South Africa*", Ch. I). But whatever its origin may be, the hard facts of its existence cannot be denied. Actually it is so strongly felt by many Europeans that it assumes the character of a natural phenomenon, something like original sin, a thing to be deprecated but about which nothing much can be done. It is accepted as a necessary condition for the regulation of our race relations. By a process of rationalising it then becomes a virtue; hence the amazing statement that colour prejudice is a good thing because it protects the white man from becoming too familiar with the coloured races and so being degraded to the level of their development. At the same time there is a recurrent cry of alarm when it is proposed to relax the harsh measures of apartheid, as that would lead to social integration!

With equal inconsistency, while there is in certain quarters an unwillingness to admit the evil of colour prejudice, apartheid maintains that its policy offers the only escape from the evil consequences of this ingrained feeling of racial prejudice. One could enlarge on the unethical character of this convenient capacity for having it both ways. But for the moment my aim is not to judge but merely to describe the position arising from a refusal to face the facts.

If we accept the real facts we shall be able to arrive at a correct appreciation of the attitude we ought to take in relation to those facts. Therefore the first requirement is that we see colour prejudice for the irrational thing it is, for then we must condemn it as unethical and immoral; and the only way to get rid of it is to repent and change our whole attitude to the coloured races.

Now, it is quite evident that apartheid seeks the solution of the problem not in subjective repentance but in the objective manipulation of those who are the victims of our racial prejudice. It represents the attitude of the guilty conscience which does not seek the cause of its guilt in itself but in the proximiy of those who occasion the feeling of guilt. Such an attitude can never be regarded as a fair and honest attempt to deal with the problem itself. It is nothing more or less than a way of escape. Particularly from the point of view of Christian ethics it falls far short of the attitude of the good Samaritan who did not pass by or remove the object of his pity to a distance but "set him on his own beast and brought him to an inn and took care of him."

Accordingly the very first requisite in our approach to the problem of race relations is that we examine ourselves and get rid of our arrogant feeling of superiority, as if we are fundamentally so much better than these benighted heathen with their dark skins and coarse features and poverty-stricken living conditions. Without a change of heart on our part the best planned policy will fail, for mere change of environment cannot bring about a change of disposition, and without a change of disposition the sting of our unsatisfactory race relations will remain.

On the other hand it is equally true that a mere change of heart will not effect a miraculous solution of the problem; all the circumstances of the actual situation in which the new disposition has to find its application, have to be thoroughly examined and evaluated. That is the only way in which ethical principles have meaning. They are not meant to be enunciated as creeds and then left in suspension. They must be implemented and applied in the every-day, practical life we lead. But (let me emphasize again) the disposition, the will to act must be there and can only be there when we regard the whole problem as a personal one. We all need to repent and not to excuse ourselves by appealing to tradition. We shall have to revolutionize our thought before the stress of events makes even this unavailing because it comes too late.

TRUSTEESHIP

In its ideal form apartheid does claim to justify its policy ethically by pointing to the duty of the white man to act as guardian of the undeveloped, coloured races of the country. Indeed it cannot be denied that it is the plain duty of the superior white races to educate and lead the inferior black races on the road to advancement. In their primitive state they cannot be left to themselves; they need to be nursed and prepared for the future by their natural guardians.

This idea of trusteeship, we concede, is a sound one in so far as it concerns the relationship between civilised and uncivilised people. But then it must never be forgotten that the ward cannot be expected to remain a permanent minor; some day he will come of age and then the authority which the guardian exercised over him will come to an end. The whole purpose of guardianship is to prepare the ward for an independent responsible life. Other relationships may later be entered upon, but the authority of the guardian cannot persist after the ward has attained his majority. In other words, guardianship is not a permanent thing. It only lasts as long as the ward is a minor. The time must come when he fends for himself and leads his own life.

In the current declarations of apartheid one gains the impression that it makes no provision for this eventuality but assumes the permanent subordination of the coloured races. Hence the almost total disregard of the rapidly growing numbers of those who have emerged from their primitive state.

Again, the duty of guardianship is not fulfilled merely by providing for the material needs of the ward but includes the intellectual and spiritual preparation for a full life, worthy of a human being. This important and necessary labour cannot be performed by delegation or, worse still, by sending the ward packing and leaving him to his own devices.

How to help the up and coming nations to share in the industrial revolution of recent times is a problem which exercises the minds of many thinkers, and in the education of the submerged races nothing is of so much importance as a little human sympathy. We so often forget that we have to do with human beings, personalities who need all our help and guidance in their extreme perplexity when they have to adjust their primitive culture to the complexities of modern industrial civilisation. How can we

give them the service which they so sorely need if we are seldom if ever to come into contact with them?

The plain intent of apartheid, as the pattern gradually unfolds, is progressively to diminish all points of contact with the coloured races, even to the extent of closing the church doors of the European community to them, lest the European churches become "blacker and blacker".

How shall we be able to assist them in the confused state of mind which necessarily accompanies their adjustment to modern civilisation, an adjustment which in the case of the Europeans went through an age-long process but in their case overwhelms them with a suddenness against which they stand defenceless? Dr de Kiewiet in his *"Anatomy of South African Misery"*, p. 55, says: "On the face of the earth there are few non-western peoples who depend more than the African upon the west for everything that can be called advancement and progress." Apartheid on its own premises has no satisfactory answer to this question.

Incidentally it has been something of a poser to find the correct expression in English for apartheid's pet phrase: "self-standige, eiesoortige ontwikkeling." In a translated report of the Department of Native Affairs it is rendered: "autogenous development." One of the meanings which the Oxford Dictionary gives to this phrase is: "spontaneous generation." Perhaps that is just what it means!

The objection will, of course, be heard that apartheid does envisage the necessity of a development of the Non-European races to the limit of their capabilities along their own lines. To achieve that purpose we are willing to help them to the utmost of our powers, but we cannot treat them as equals before they have reached maturity. What lies beyond that is the concern of future generations. For ourselves we do not begrudge the coloured races their own way of life; indeed we are anxious that they should be themselves and not be transformed into imitation Europeans. And when they have actualized their potentialities, as we expect they will, the time will have arrived to determine our new relation to them. That, however, will be the task of the future. In reply a simple question may be asked: how are we to determine the point of time when a whole society comes to maturity and so qualifies for the privilege of being treated as our equals? And who will be the arbiter in this matter?

The fact is that it cannot be done. It is difficult enough when the qualifications of the individual have to be determined; in the case of the group it is impossible. At the root of any attempt at such an appraisal lies the supreme fallacy of apartheid-thinking in which the group is regarded as an entity with a personality of it own — the personification of the group, the nation, the race. All this leads to a cynical disregard of the individual and the chain of unfortunate consequences that result from this line of thought.

It is sometimes said, erroneously, that Christian ethics over-emphasize the value of the individual and neglect the social aspect of human existence. One can only point out that in the teaching of Jesus the kingdom and the church occupy a very prominent place, even if He stresses the supreme worth of a single soul ("What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life? Or what shall a man give in return for his life?" —Parable of the Lost Sheep.)

It would be wrong, therefore, to accuse Christianity of individualism. The social side of man's existence receives no less emphasis than the individual aspect. But what does characterize Christian ethics is the emphasis laid on the worth of the individual, his personality and his freedom which are essential to responsbility. Accordingly, any view which regards the group as of preponderating importance, even to the suppression of the individual, must be condemned as unethical from the Christian standpoint. It is just here that apartheid proves to be fundamentally wrong because it sacrifices the individual to the generalisations of group-thinking. Let me elaborate this point because it is of such vital importance.

GROUP THINKING

In human relationships there are natural groups some of which are more closely related to us than others. Beginning with the group into which everyone of us is born and from which all others proceed (the family), it is evident that the difference between this and other groups — the clan, the tribe, the nation, the race, humanity as a whole — is simply one of the degrees of intercourse; all are associations binding us to our fellow-men and contributing to the formation of our personality. They are associations without which there can be no development or personality. It is also evident that the more circumscribed such an association is the

greater the spiritual poverty of its members will be, after the fashion of that caricature of a prayer:

'Dear Lord, bless me and my wife,
Son John and his wife,
Us four and no more!'

The point I wish to make, however, is that whatever influence the group has upon the individual (and it is considerable) moral judgment cannot be passed on the group as such but only on the individual. It is always the individual in the group who is responsible. To treat the group as a magnified individual, apart from its constituent members, is an abstraction that leads to the most disastrous consequences, as is so manifestly proved by the inhumanities of fascism and communism, anti-semitism and colour-prejudice. The plain fact is that group responsibility cannot be defended on an ethical basis unless membership of the group is voluntary, for in the latter case it is not only possible for the individual to dissociate himself from the group, but the group itself can be changed in character and conduct. Even in times of war the practice of holding a community responsible for the outrages of a few cannot be defended on the grounds of retributive justice. At best it can only be regarded as a punishment designed to act as a deterrent.

In our South African situation we have all the injustices of group-thinking aggravated by the absurd group-formation according to the colour of one's skin. For this difference of pigmentation the individual is held responsible together with his group, as if he had chosen his own ancestors. As a consequence we have developed a caste system which surpasses all others of its kind; because in others it may be possible to advance to a higher caste, but here there is no possibility of change — the coloured man stays coloured even if he becomes the most exemplary citizen of the country. He is one of a group, a mere cipher without any personal attributes or claims.

Halford E. Luccock tells of an incident in the 1950 federal census of America. A census-taker called at a flat in a crowded section of a city. A woman with four or five children clinging closely to her came to the door. The man taking the census began his questions, including one which asked: How many children have you? The woman answered: "Well, let's see. There's Agatha and Jonathan and Cleopatra . . ." The man was a bit irritated and said: "Never mind the names. Give me the number." The

woman drew up to the full height of her dignity and said: "In our family, sir, children have no numbers; they have names." Is that not the core of the Christian ethic which must be proclaimed in a world that is becoming increasingly impersonal?

A prerequisite of all our thinking on race relations is to abandon the habit of a group-thinking which ignores the claims of the individual and exposes him to "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune" just because he happens to belong to a certain class of colour. Colour prejudice is probably the greatest single factor in the creation of black nationalism where groups of widely divergent interests are driven together to form a solid front wholly hostile to the whites.

The outcome might not prove so disastrous if the group were judged by the highest to which it can attain, the best examples it is able to produce. But apartheid takes the least common denominator, the less advanced individuals as normative of the whole. And so it tends to reverse the process of western civilisation in which nations are continually developing towards a casteless society, in which not even the meanest is a slave or an outcast or a proletarian, where all feel that they are part of the nation.

For the European group in South Africa in particular it is suicidal to adhere to these artificial colour-divisions, for it is just this approach that treats the whole problem as an arithmetical one, based on the calculations of numbers, so as to prevent the domination of the one group over the other. Along these lines the prospects for the survival of White South Africa are indeed bleak.

A striking corroboration of this view appeared recently in an article by Elias M. Mtepuka, an African journalist, in the "British Weekly". Discussing the proposed plans to obtain a better balance of the population in Central Africa by means of large-scale immigration he writes: 'It is the policy that is endangering the future, not of the Africans, but of the Europeans themselves. From it comes the force behind black nationalism in Central Africa.' And he concludes: 'A renunciation of white nationalism and racial exclusiveness now will lead to a similar renunciation of nationalism among Africans and will pave the way to the growth of a truly multi-racial nation based on human values.'

From the ethical standpoint group-thinking must necessarily result in the disappearance of the individual in the group and so in the suppression of personality, whereas the function of the group, as the environment in which personality develops, is

destroyed. Moreover, a statesmanlike policy will not discriminate against nor subordinate one group to another, but will grant to all the liberty to develop according to their aptitudes and capabilities so as to make their contribution to the common good worth while.

THE POLITICAL ASPECT

The advocates of apartheid are constantly telling us that there is only one alternative in regard to the choice we have to make for the future development of South Africa: it lies between apartheid or integration. For my part I would prefer to say that it is the choice between racial domination and racial co-operation. Even if the dreams of apartheid could be realized it would leave such a legacy of resentment and rancour that the price paid would be far too high.

There remains nothing else but an acceptance of the fact that we must live together and work together. A way must be found to enable the Non-Europeans to share in the great task of building the nation. In some way or another they must take a responsible part in the government of the country.

Apartheid denies any such right to these races in the body politic. True, there is still a measure of participation through group representation in Parliament, but even this is at variance with the real object about which there have been definite hints — the complete elimination of all coloured representation in Parliament. In their own territories there will pesumably be a measure of local self-government, but the right of legislation belongs exclusively to the whites.

For the moment I am ignoring the fact that no provision is made in this policy for a separate territory in the case of the coloured people as distinct from the Africans. Logically it seems an unavoidable conclusion that the same will eventually apply to them too.

The harshness of this stipulation is offset to a certain extent by the assurance that the same will apply to Europeans living in the African reserves; but obviously the disabilities of the one group bear no comparison to those of the other. Numbers alone are sufficient to bear this out when it is remembered that according to the Tomlinson Report apartheid as a territorial concept will, under certain conditions, divide the population of white South Africa into approximately equal numbers of Europeans and

Non-Europeans at the end of this century. And when one may reasonably suggest that, failing the implementation of these conditions, as is already evident, it may require another half-century or more to reach the goal, the whole idea becomes a fantastic dream, one impossible of fulfilment. The ethical significance of such a policy is self-evident.

But the ethical objection goes deeper. Apartheid maintains that its ultimate aim is the creation of an independent state or states in which the Non-Europeans can realize themselves without any limitation to their political and cultural development. For the present, however, they will have to remain under the tutelage of the Europeans, and for the good of the body politic it will be necessary to deny them a share of political power, which is the prerogative of the whites. For the preservation of those values which have been acquired by centuries of evolution and which will eventually be gained by the coloured races, too, it is essential that the power of legislation remains in the hands of the whites.

Meanwhile, until that happy event occurs when they shall have reached the promised land, they are submitted to all kinds of hardships and indignities.

It is becoming increasingly evident that the implementation of the apartheid-policy is marked by an ever greater curtailment of the limited privileges they still enjoy. That is true in the fields of economics, education, free-hold tenure and a host of other rights to which they had access, though in a limited degree, in the past. The extreme frustration to which all this leads in the present situation can be imagined — the difficulty, nay impossibility, of unravelling the tangled skeins of the so-called borderline cases, the uprooting and breaking-up of family-life, the dispossession of property and the destruction of goodwill, public and private, that has been built up through generations of unhampered practice, for no other reason than that the policy demands it — these and other disservices must be laid at the door of enforced apartheid.

That is the natural result when the State arrogates to itself the regimentation of society and fails to honour the liberty of its subjects; the unhappy consequences have been all too apparent in the tragic examples of totalitarian states for us to have any doubts on this score. Reduced to its simplest ethical terms it boils down to the perilous doctrine that the end justifies the means, at best a purely utilitarian creed which is beset with insuperable

difficulties. When morality becomes a matter of calculation we may be sure that it is near to extinction, for then its normative value disappears and it becomes a mere rule of expediency.

And that is precisely the way apartheid is going. Over against the disabilities suffered by the Non-Europeans it places their great advantages when compared with other parts of the continent. "Why is it," one is asked, "that they come to us in such large numbers if it is true that they are badly treated? Has White South Africa not a better record of achievements in the uplift of the coloured races than any other government of Africa?"

One can readily admit all this; yet it cannot be denied that with every advantage they may have in this respect, the most important is withheld: the rights to which their service entitles them. They have no rights to claim, only duties to perform.

Now it is quite conceivable that under these conditions apartheid may claim to be kindly disposed towards the coloured races, provided they remain in their appointed place, as servants of their masters. So far is it removed from any idea of suppression that one can be genuinely interested in their advancement, physically, intellectually, spiritually. I do not doubt that many would even claim to fulfil the law of love to one's neighbour when considering the pros and cons of apartheid. But in all these considerations the greatest of all is forgotten: the fundamental rights that belong to man, the gifts of liberty and responsibility.

Love can only be based upon justice without which it is merely maudlin sentiment. It is always difficult to detect and fight injustice in oneself; it is infinitely more difficult when you have to fight injustice structured, as it were, into society. It is so much easier to love the African "in his place" in a condescending, patronising way. It is much more difficult to love him to such an extent that you find a more equitable place for him. That, at any rate, would make your love more genuine, a love founded on justice and not one that violates all the rules of equity.

It is not difficult to imagine the response of the African when he is reminded of all that the white man has done for him. He could very well say: "I am duly grateful, but I don't want your charity if it deprives me of my human rights and dignity." Look at it from whatever angle you will, the withholding of political rights from even the most educated and advanced Non-Europeans constitutes an accusation against us that they are treated not as

responsible persons but as minors who have nothing to say in the government of the country.

Meanwhile there are thousands among them who are better equipped to exercise the vote or to sit in the council chambers of state than most of their European fellow-citizens. Just because they are coloured they are doomed to perpetual inferiority. That is a discrimination that cannot be justified on any sort of ethical ground. The only equitable basis would be to grant them the same rights as the whites claim for themselves.

I am not ignoring the very real practical difficulties that are part of the South African situation; I am merely stating the principle, which surely cannot be called in question by any normal human being. If anywhere it is here, on the political level, that the injustice of apartheid is most apparent in that the exercise of political power is made dependent on the accident of belonging to a group whatever one's claims may be on the grounds of ability and service.

In the practical application of democratic principles it may be true that the only way to govern is by the formation of groups representing certain interests. But these groups are voluntary, based on common interests and not on natural diversities such as nationality or colour. Moreover, a sound democratic government will make no discrimination between groups of citizens who are joined together for a common purpose, provided, of course, that such purpose is not subversive of the social order. On the cntrary, all good government will guarantee its constituent groups freedom of action and development according to their own nature. These are not the direct concern of government, they will develop naturally and in proportion to the effort and dedication of their members.

It will be pointed out that in actual fact the theory does not work in this way. One is reminded of the divisions in our own country, finding their counterpart in practically all other countries, which are so often based on national and racial differences. But that is only true because the liberty of the group has been hampered or suppressed. It stands to reason that the political struggle is then confined to the one object of achieving that liberty. When this has been assured the political battle moves on to other fields.

It is in this light, I think, that the struggle of the Afrikaner (and indeed of all nationalistic political action) must be seen, where his politics have almost constantly been linked with his

struggle for national (cultural) freedom. When once the certainty of that freedom has been established, it can be assumed that in the political sense he will seek and find a home in new alignments based on interests he has in common with members of other groups.

Apartheid demands the prerogative to determine the character of groups that can only exist and develop in freedom, and thereby assumes a role that is foreign to democracy and at variance with the object it has in view, viz. the service which the individual is expected to render to his own group. This, to be sure, is the only context in which it takes note of the African intelligentsia — they must serve their own people in their own territories. But the sense of vocation is lost when the state decides what your vocation will be. In totalitarian states there is no vocational guidance, only vocational selection. It follows that the Non-European who is supposed to serve his own people may justifiably retort: "That is what I would like to do, provided it does not mean the loss of my liberty to choose, and the permanent subjection of the group to which I belong." When that guarantee is not forthcoming it follows naturally that he will find his political salvation in his own natural group — a black nationalism which can find its only outlet in hostility to the whites who deny him his liberty.

The sum-total of what we have been saying can now be stated in this simple thesis: apartheid with its slogan ('separate but equal') fails precisely at this point because it does not deal with the Non-Europeans on a just and equitable basis. Territorially there can be no just partition and politically there are no equal rights. Contrariwise, if one accepts the alternative of collaboration, it must be clearly recognised that there are certain fundamental human rights that cannot be withheld from any man whatever his status may be. That is the only just principle which cannot be changed or lowered, however great the practical difficulties may be. On the methods employed in applying the principle we may differ, but it is not possible to deny the principle when we accept the standards of western democracy.

The political problem centres in the franchise, the right to choose or to be chosen, by means of which political power is exercised. Given the actual situation as it is in this country, it is plain that the granting of equal rights without any discrimination can only result in the loss of all that has been acquired throughout the years of the development of western civilisation. It can be

reasonably maintained that the granting of universal suffrage must inevitably lead to the overthrow of democracy and the revival of primitive barbarism or semi-barbarism.

But that would only be true if the present form of democratic rule, as expressed in the universal right to vote, were to continue as before.

Now it would not be feasible to enter here upon an exhaustive discussion on the various forms of democracy, but I take it that on this one point we can agree, viz. that democracy succeeds in proportion to the standard of enlightenment of the electorate; in accordance with its intelligence or lack of intelligence one may expect that the result will be a true democracy or an unenlightened demagogy which easily degenerates into autocracy. The obvious way to prevent the latter eventuality surely, is not to employ repressive measures by which the inequitable distinctions of class or colour are perpetuated, but to raise the standard of qualifications for the exercise of the vote to such an extent that the possibility of the rule of the uncivilised demos is excluded. Call that a loaded franchise if you will, but it is a loading that applies to Europeans as well as to Non-Europeans.

It will mean the sacrifice, on the part of the Europeans, of universal suffrage, and in so far a retrogression in the evolution of democratic practice, but surely our peculiar circumstances warrant such a sacrifice. Democracy, after all, is not a static idea but changes continually as the circumstances change. On the above premises we shall have one of the most enlightened electorates in the world, which is the fitting concomitant to one of the most complex constituencies in the world. What is more, we shall have a franchise that makes no distinction between black and white.

Leaving the ethical question aside for a moment, the patent objection on practical grounds will certainly be that even so the survival of White South Africa will be placed in jeopardy. To this one can only reply that a sane appreciation of the probable outcome of it all is that for many generations to come there will be no marked diminution in the superiority of the European, but it will at least be a superiority based on merit rather than accident. And if in the distant future the Non-Europeans shall have proved their superiority and taken over the leadership, the Europeans can have no grievance if they are unable with a start of three hundred years to retain their advantage. By that time, of course, one may expect that this whole antithesis (Black vs. White) will

have lost its meaning since the cause of the antithesis will have been removed.

The other objection, commonly heard, that a limited franchise inevitably leads to more insistent demands for the universal vote, can be passed by, since those demands are there already. The only difference is whether they must be met at once or gradually as the circumstances permit.

In any case a door will have been opened for the Non-European gradually to participate in the government of the country and to bear his part of the responsibility in the framing of legislation in a multi-racial land. In his own communities he should be given the opportunity of developing his powers of government which at the appropriate time can be given to the country as a whole.

The most effective way to determine the standard of qualifications for the right to vote, whether by an educational and/or a means test and/or by services rendered to the commonweal, is not for the moralist to decide. That is the business of the statesman. At least one may venture to state that along these lines a more practicable contribution to a solution of the problem will have been made than to wait for a whole community to arrive at a stage of development where it would be safe to entrust them with political power. What is more, a method will have been applied which opens the way for co-operation on the basis of common interests instead of the fatuous antagonism of racial differences.

THE SOCIAL ASPECT

"All roads lead to Rome," or, to change the metaphor, the trump card of apartheid which recurs with monotonous regularity in all its arguments is that co-operation would inevitably lead to social equality, intermarriage and miscegenation. It is the mentality that finds its expression in the query: "Would you like your daughter to marry a native?" Or, as a city councillor expressed it not so long ago: "I have a great respect for my stable-boy but I wouldn't like to sleep in the same bed with him."

The answer to that one can only be: "That goes for anybody, Black or White." One can have a great deal of respect for many white people without having to drape oneself around their necks. Apartheid seeks to establish by legislation what can only grow in an atmosphere of liberty and mutual understanding. Human social

relations can never be enforced from above, but can only grow out of a free association of individuals who are spontaneously drawn to those who have certain common characteristics. And this has always been the form that apartheid in its traditional sense has assumed in South Africa.

Quite naturally both Europeans and Non-Europeans have gravitated to their own communities and, when the houses were provided, chosen to reside in those localities where they find congenial company.

It is an arbitary assumption to expect that there will be a promiscuous mixing of black and white unless the enforced measures of apartheid are applied. Not that the mixing of colour is in itself the evil thing that it is made out to be (for then one would have to condemn the existence of our coloured population as a continued existence in sin), but simply because the differences are too great and will remain so for the forseeable future. For myself, I would never accept the responsibility of passing judgment on so large and so respectable a part of the people of South Africa, just because they are of mixed colour.

It is particularly in this connection that the irresponsibility of apartheid reaches its climax when it enforces the separation of those who for a very long time have been closely associated and find themselves compelled to start all over again. It does not hesitate to disrupt families and societies, so long as it has its way.

On the other hand apartheid questions the honesty of the supporters of mixed universities where social distinctions are maintained. The absence of immediate social equality is advanced as an argument against the continuance of such universities. In both cases it is forgotten that social relations cannot be forced but must develop in a free atmosphere of mutual respect and mutual esteem. With the enjoyment of common academic facilities it may be hoped that such contacts will eventually lead to the disappearance of social discrimination, and I do not believe that even the most rabid supporter of apartheid will accept social separation for all time. At the same time apartheid would put an end to all contact except on the master-servant level. Ethical comment is superflous!

CONCLUSION

In attempting to describe the ethics of apartheid I have largely refrained from drawing obvious practical conclusions in the con-

viction that he who defines the principles correctly follows a much safer course than he who ignores the fundamentals and reasons from the purely practical, utilitarian standpoint. In view, however, of the oft-repeated assertion that academicians take no account of reality but move in an idealistic world which can have no meaning for the harsh existence in which men live and move and have their being, I hope you will allow me to indulge in a little practical speculation as an off-set to the speculations of apartheid.

Weighing the probable outcome of collaboration and apartheid, it can hardly be denied that the latter vizualises a future that is far removed from the present trend of world politics. It is assumed that South Africa, with its current policy of race relations, can form a link between Africa and the West; with the growing sense of independence giving rise to the emergence in Africa of one national state after another, the idea of apartheid may be able to anticipate this development by granting the Native territories and reserves the opportunity to develop their own form of government and so serve as models for the African states of the future.

It is supposed that we can impress the rest of Africa to such an extent that they will accept our policy when rightly understood. Only when it is regarded as suppression, apartheid ceases to be attractive, but when it is seen as an opportunity for Non-Europeans to realize themselves and grow to adult nationhood, unhampered by the trammels of western civilisation and culture, they will be ready to admit that it is all to their good. These are, more or less, the lines on which apartheid justifies its standpoint.

Now it requires no great imagination to detect the unreality of such reasoning. With the situation that exists in the world today, in which there is the hottest competition between East and West to gain the co-operation and loyalty of the growing nationalisms of Africa, it seems the height of folly to believe that South Africa, with its policy of apartheid, can have any hope of success, when a characteristic of those nationalisms is a common hatred of white domination or ascendancy, the very mentality that is encouraged and fostered by our policy.

It is becoming clearer every day that we have only one choice here, and that is to work together or prepare ourselves for the inevitable conflict in which the one or the other will be destroyed.

Apartheid claims that its policy is the only one calculated to preserve white civilisation in South Africa. The contrary it true.

there can be no hope for White South Africa if black nationalism is to be combatted by forceful measures. And it cannot be denied that, in the case of those Non-Europeans who are capable of forming a responsible judgment, the implementation of apartheid can only be effected by the employment of force.

If there were any doubt that our choice lies between these alternatives, that doubt has been dispelled by the voice of those who are most affected, the Africans of South Africa. At a most representative gathering, held in Bloemfontein towards the end of last year on the initiative of the Inter-denominational African Ministers' Federation, "when 394 men and women, qualified to express the authentic voice of the African people, asked themselves the question: 'Where does real salvation lie for the African from this moment in time continued adherence to the ideal of co-operation or in working for the expulsion of the white man from South Africa?' the answer was: 'The African people would continue to see hope for themselves and the other races in racial co-operation based on mutual acceptance of the races' interdependence . . . The acceptance of co-operation necessitated the total rejection of what would destroy that co-operation." (*J. K. Ngubane.*)

Place over against this declaration the dictum of a responsible Minister of the Crown: 'We will fight to the last breath to ensure that political power remains in the hands of the Europeans' — and there remains no doubt as to which is the better way. On the one hand you have all the considerations based on power politics, such as: 'Who have the first claim on South Africa as their native land?' or: 'How can we gain and preserve a numerical superiority?' or: 'What must be done to guarantee the continued domination and leadership of the white man?'

On the other hand you have the expressed desire not to dominate but to participate in the task of preserving all that is valuable in our Western way of life.

For my part I believe that the latter is the human and the normal course, and I agree with Dr de Kiewiet ("*The Anatomy of South African Misery,*" p. 67) when he writes: "The extension of political freedom and economic opportunity is possible without the bloody settlement of insoluble contradiction as predicted by Mark and Engels."

The supreme tragedy is that not the slightest notice has been taken in responsible quarters of this remarkable gesture. It is

airily dismissed as of no account. We are told that when Bantu leaders speak for their own people they are no more than the mouthpieces of European liberalistic thought, mere puppets who are used in the service of liberalistic propaganda.

South Africa stands at the cross-roads. Will it grasp the opportunity to give the world a shining example of racial co-operation in a multi-racial country or will it persist in a policy that has failure writ large on the very first steps taken to ensure its implementation? Nobody cherishes the illusion that it will be an easy task. It will claim the best brains, the deepest devotion and the greatest sacrifice. Right at the beginning of this task (and here I come back to our point of departure) the one essential condition is that a change of heart must take place, that the Europeans' approach to this greatest of all our problems must be radically altered.

The road to a real change of heart may be a long one, leading through great trials and tribulations, but it must be taken at any cost and it is a road to be taken by each one of us personally. If you say that it is impossible, then there is nothing else to do but await the day of reckoning. But I have faith enough to believe that man is not so unchangeably depraved that, given the correct insight into the realities of the situation, he cannot shed his prejudices and mend his ways.

That, at least, is what one would expect from a nation which is proud to be called Christian.