

# Racism vs. Modernity

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Contrary to many optimistic expectations, the relative position of the nonwhite in the Republic of South Africa has not improved over the past several decades. To lay observers the existence of a state committed to racial exclusion and oppression seems an anachronism in our age of modernity. There is a naive belief that explicit racism is somewhere incompatible with futuristic office buildings, double-knit business suits, teaching machines or a degree in sociology. Yet these and other trappings of the modern age coexist in South Africa with absolute racial division.

Less naively perhaps, but equally inaccurately, social scientific thought leads one to expect that the "modernization" of South Africa will ameliorate racial oppression. Social theorists from Weber through Parsons have pointed to the rationalizing impact of industrialization upon societal organization and orientations. Others, such as Alex Inkeles, have drawn psychological and attitudinal portraits of the "modern" man, which include among his psychic attributes an "orientation towards equality" and "tolerance of ethnic diversity." Still other social scientists have argued that the inherent functional needs of a "modern" polity must result in a progressive extension of legal and political rights to subordinated groups.

Such theories and hopes notwithstanding, the relative position of the nonwhite in South Africa has deteriorated over the past thirty years. Despite steady gains in real income, which have made South African nonwhites the highest paid in Africa, both their economic position *relative* to the white population and their *absolute* political-legal status have changed for the worse. Until the early 1960's, for example, the Colored population of the Cape Province had the franchise—but only to elect white representatives.

Yet this last vestige of nonwhite political participation was taken from them shortly after South Africa achieved republican status in 1960. Residential freedoms and legal rights to real property have also been progressively curtailed over the past ten years. This has been a particular problem for the many Indian merchants who have been forced to sell their commercial holdings in white areas at ruinous prices and relocate in nonwhite areas. The infamous "pass laws," which make it illegal for most Bantu workers to keep their families in the city, are mostly things of recent creation.

It is a sad irony that the legal system that justified and even compelled nonwhites to be stripped of their few remaining legal, political and economic rights is, within the South African context, a "liberal" solution to the racial dilemma. The philosophy and theory of apartheid were evolved by the National Party during the 1940's, under the leadership of D. F. Malan, and represent an effort to meet several contradictory demands in the area of racial relations. Immediately following the Second World War there was a wave of international protest against South Africa's racial policies. This protest was ignited in part by the full revelation of Nazi atrocities; the parallels between Nazi and traditional Afrikaner doctrines of racial purity and superiority were uncomfortably close. Furthermore, the National Party was widely perceived as sympathetic to the Nazi cause. Several affiliated Afrikaner organizations, most particularly the Ossewa Brandwag, were openly imitative of the Nazis. Numerous leaders of the National Party, including all three of the currently highest governmental officials, were interned as Nazi supporters.

The National Party was also faced with domestic trends which were subtly blurring the lines between white and nonwhite, including higher education for nonwhites within white institutions, the service of nonwhites in the military, inclusion of nonwhites in

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certain trade unions and the movement of nonwhites into industrial occupations of some skill. These trends had raised the specter of eventual full inclusion of the nonwhite, provoking a powerful grass roots reaction on the part of the Afrikaner working class. Finally, a relatively large and influential segment of white society was becoming uncomfortable with the arrogant assumption of white racial superiority that underlay South African racial relations.

As a result of these pressures the National Party concluded that some system must be evolved which would preserve the power and prerequisites of the white man as well as did traditional doctrines of *baasskap* (bossism), but which would also answer world and domestic objections to the inhumanity and hopelessness of *baasskap*. The solution was apartheid, or, as the government now prefers, "separate development."

The public rationale of apartheid is cultural rather than racial, and stresses the need for each cultural group to preserve and follow its own tradition. Following from this generalized *herrenvolk* principle, apartheid proposes the division of South Africa into regions, within which distinctive cultural groups will exercise self-governance and autonomy, excepting only in foreign policy. Nonwhites will still be allowed to work in white areas, but while in these areas will be viewed as temporarily resident aliens to whom civil privileges can be denied, a policy well established in international law.

In light of the constraints of the South African situation, most particularly white fears and attitudes, the *philosophy* of apartheid is plausible. Indeed, many enlightened and humane thinkers in Europe and the United States feel that full implementation of separate development holds the only realistic hope for a solution to the racial problem. The difficulty is that apartheid has been only partially implemented, and in such a fashion that nonwhites suffer all of its detriments and virtually none of its potential rewards. To put the matter simply, nonwhites are officially treated as if separate development were an already accomplished fact, while it remains largely in the planning stages. They are denied legal existence in white areas on the basis of citizenship in "homelands" that do not yet exist. For a variety of reasons—including, most importantly, objections from the white electorate—the Transkei remains the only homeland actually established. In the Transkei, the Xhosa and a scattering of other ethnic groupings have a modicum of self-government and the beginnings of an autonomous economic infrastructure. Even the Transkei, however, is a homeland for the majority of Xhosa only in the legal sense; most have never seen the Transkei and, given current conditions, never will. Homelands for the other Bantu groups exist only on paper and seem likely to remain at that point.

In the meantime, South Africa's nonwhites suffer

both the erosion of their structural position in white society and also the daily indignities of "petty apartheid." Petty apartheid is the highly visible and ubiquitous segregation of the races within white society. All public amenities, such as park benches, drinking fountains, bathrooms and waiting rooms, bear prominent racial labels. Nonwhite customers in commercial establishments wait until after whites have been served. In office buildings with a single elevator whites ride and nonwhite messengers use the stairs. Night searches with dogs and spotlights are made in the servants' quarters of hotels, looking for wives and families that have illegally joined their husbands in the city. When a nonwhite is required to take an oath in court, the nonwhite Bible is brought out. Nonwhites address whites as *baas*. The catalogue is endless.

In spite of, and perhaps because of, the incomplete implementation of apartheid, at least two of the government's hopes for apartheid have been realized. First, fears among the Afrikaner working class of the *swaart gewaar* (black danger) have been calmed, and this group is firmly committed to the National Party. Second, and paradoxically, the more enlightened white population has been provided with a hopeful and relatively humane prognosis of South Africa's racial future. I noticed during my stay in



Photos by Jo Stokes

*Small town in Orange Free State*

South Africa an eagerness on the part of academics, other members of the intelligentsia and the business élite to accept the hope held out by separate development and a marked reluctance to come to grips with the fact that only the "separateness" has thus far been achieved. Apartheid has, to use Weber's term, provided this potentially dissenting group with a theodicy that explains oppression and makes it palatable.

The pressing question for persons interested in South Africa's future is why South African white society is so adamantly opposed not only to any lessening of distance between the races, but also to real separate development. The obvious answer is simply that South African whites are racist, but this is really no answer. Racism is a cultural trait, rather than an individual one, and itself needs explanation. Furthermore, a large and influential segment of white society is not racist, by any usual definition of that term. A great many conversations with members of the government, the business élite and the intelligentsia convinced me that most of these persons do not differ significantly in their racial prejudices or attitudes from their counterparts in the United States.

Another common explanation is rooted in vulgar Marxism, and holds that the existing system of racial dominance is maintained because it confers direct economic benefits upon the white population. There is an element of truth in this explanation. It cannot be denied that at least the mineral wealth of the Republic rests on masses of poorly paid Bantu workers. It is also true that the prosperity of the white worker is partly due to his monopolization of middle and upper-level positions in the economy. Yet there are also widely recognized economic costs entailed in the apartheid system. Industrial growth is hampered by a shortage of skilled workers, a gap which existing laws prevent nonwhites from filling, and the relative poverty of the nonwhite population makes it a poor market for manufactured goods. South African racial policy has also been a cause of international boycott of the Republic's products and of difficulties in obtaining development capital from abroad. Viewed from this broader perspective, therefore, apartheid is economically irrational.

A third explanation concerns the great threat represented by the size of the nonwhite population relative to the white population; whites are outnumbered by a ratio of nearly five to one. In such a context, it has been argued, whites are apt to see any concession as the crack in the dike that must surely be followed by total defeat of the white man. There is again an element of truth in this explanation; the overjustifications given by politicians for the Republic's racial policies very often take this form. Yet here too there are flaws. The 2.5 million Asians and Coloreds are clearly not a threat to white

supremacy. Virtually all of them are Westernized and regard themselves as far closer to the whites than to the Bantu. To any outside observer these groups seem to be the natural allies of the white population, and the failure to include them is inexplicable. And, although the threat of Bantu dominance may be a plausible explanation for the policy of separate development, it does not account for petty apartheid. For a Bantu to take an oath on the same Bible used by whites surely does not constitute a political threat. Even in the case of political privileges, there are many "detrIALIZED" and Westernized Bantu who could be gradually included within the white system without danger of black "take-over."

The real explanation of white racial policies must be sought in the culture and history of the Afrikaner people. Because of the numerical superiority of Afrikaners among the white groups and also because of their high degree of political cohesion, South Africa is firmly in their hands. Specifically, a broadly based Afrikaner nationalist movement exercises political, social and, increasingly, economic hegemony over the Republic. Both the explanation of current racial practice and any predictions about the future must rest on an understanding of this group.

The Afrikaners originated in the mid-seventeenth century, when the Dutch East India Company established a provisioning station on the tip of the Cape. Within a short time settlers wandered into the interior, away from the direct control of the company, and began to evolve a distinctive traditional culture. Dutch language, religion and life-styles were progressively modified as the settlers struggled to cope with the African environment. From approximately 1710 to 1830 the Afrikaners, as they came to be called, lived largely isolated from Western influence.

Racial relations during this period took several forms. Initially there was slavery of the indigenous coastal people, the Hottentots. After the British take-over of the Cape in the early nineteenth century, slavery was abolished, and Afrikaner racial relations entered a new phase. In place of slavery the Afrikaner evolved an informal system of indentured servitude, with Hottentot and Bantu taken as lifelong "apprentices."

At the same time indentured servitude was developing, there emerged a series of paramilitary conflicts with well-organized Bantu groups who were migrating southward while the Afrikaners were moving toward the north in search of grazing lands. For a number of years the Fish River in the northeastern Cape was the boundary between Afrikaner and Bantu. Although the British (after 1814) attempted to maintain this boundary peacefully, numerous raids and an occasional full-scale war broke out, for the most part over cattle-stealing by one side or the other. Both the dominance and conflict patterns of

race relations established during this period were to have long-term significance.

The turning point of Afrikaner history was the "Great Trek" of 1836. Because of the failure of British authorities to provide the Afrikaner with security from Bantu raids, and also because of British efforts to soften Afrikaner treatment of the nonwhites, the majority of the Afrikaner population packed their belongings and moved into the far interior, away from British control. An additional major factor behind this exodus was efforts by the British to anglicize the Afrikaner through such means as importing English-speaking *predicants* (ministers) and making English the single official language of the Cape. In a general sense, the Great Trek was made in the effort to preserve unchanged the traditional culture which had evolved during the past century and a half. Much of subsequent Afrikaner history, most significantly including current racial relations, reflects this same struggle and resolve.

Several elements of traditional Afrikaner culture and character are particularly crucial to understanding the current situation. The most important of these is the collective sense of special destiny which emerged out of the interaction between the Calvinist faith the earliest settlers brought with them and the contingencies of African existence.

The Afrikaners came to see themselves as a people chosen of God, unique and set apart from all others, and as *collectively* elect. How this came about has been a matter of much historical speculation. One explanatory theme stresses the identification the Afrikaners made between themselves and the Israelites of the Old Testament. The Afrikaners saw their own lives reflected in the *Chronicles* and *Exodus* of the Old Testament and, as was the case for the Hebrew tribes, came to feel that theirs was a special destiny. Like the ancient Israelites, the Afrikaners were patriarchal and seminomadic pastoralists, wandering with their flocks and servants in a hostile environment. Also like the Israelites, they felt a sense of mission as representatives of the true faith in confrontation with hostile unbelievers. Indicative of this identification, John M'Carter, a missionary of the period, noted that the Old Testament was a virtual manual of behavior for the Afrikaners: "... [it] has been to them not only a means of Grace, but in a sense what it was to the Israelites of Old, the means, in times of social dilapidation, of preserving and keeping them alive as a people. It has been their bond of union, their code of manners, their motive to educate their children when none other existed."

A poignant illustration of the depth of the Afrikaners' sense of identity with the Israelites is their belief that they were literally retracing the path of the Exodus as they made their Great Trek in the 1830's. A small river in the Transvaal was thought to be

the Nile, and certain prehistoric ruins were believed to have been left by the Israelites; hence, the Nylstroom and Israelitsche Kloof of today.

A second, and ultimately more fundamental, influence was the Afrikaners' long series of confrontations with the Bantu nations and other indigenous peoples. These confrontations provided a kind of proof that they were a Chosen People and, more specifically, a basis for their belief in collective election. The Afrikaners were small in number, highly homogeneous and surrounded by great numbers of non-Christian Africans. It seems likely, in such a context, that the belief in Afrikaner collective ascendancy was given experiential confirmation. In effect, their spiritual and cultural superiority was witnessed by the apparent inferiority of the nonwhites.



*Bantu boys  
drumming for  
dancing youths  
in Pretoria*

There is also an inherent tendency in Calvinist doctrine toward making invidious social distinctions of peculiar psychological significance. According to the doctrine of predestination, God has divided mankind into two irreconcilable categories, the damned and the saved. It seems plausible, as Weber has contended, that such a belief would lead its adherents to look for some earthly evidence of their ultimate fate, despite theological cautions that one's election is beyond knowing. In an age of simple faith, when damnation and salvation have undeniable reality, it is intolerable to remain passive in the face of such uncertainty. Some effort to lessen anxiety and attain at least a degree of psychological peace is a necessary correlate of a literal belief in predestination.

In Europe we find that Calvinists often sought evidence in worldly economic success, various degrees of which came to serve as clues and assurances of God's favor. In South Africa sharp racial and cultural distinctions provided a far stronger and more certain basis for such inference. Surely, the Afrikaner must have reasoned, if only some are saved, they must be white Christians and not pagan black

men. It is of great significance that, aside from the radical dichotomy between black and white, there was no major axis of differentiation within Afrikaner society. Because the Afrikaners were collectively so much alike and collectively so different from the obviously damned nonwhites, the identification of Afrikaner and Elect became complete. The crucial difference between Europe and South Africa is that the presence of a single overwhelming cleavage in South Africa made the seeking of invidious distinction and the subsequent affirmation of ascendancy a *collective* matter rather than an individualistic one. Furthermore, the ontological certainty derived from invidious comparison was greater in South Africa, due to its stark clarity, the total absence of cross-cutting affiliations and the ascribed basis of differentiation.

The Afrikaners' traditional view of themselves as Chosen and Elect has had massive repercussions in contemporary South African society. It is the underlying sacred foundation of, to use Robert Bellah's apt term, a civil religion of surpassing strength and coherence. Two specific consequences are worth special notice in this context. First, there is an extremely high level of individual commitment to the collectivity. The successful transfer of this commitment from the more diffuse *volk* to the nationalist movement has provided Afrikaner leaders with the means to shape South African history. Second is the notion that "sanctified" Afrikaner traditions must be preserved at any cost. While mass commitment to the nationalist movement has provided the means of collective action, this injunction has provided the *direction* of such action. As I will argue, much of South African history, particularly in the area of racial relations, has been shaped by a continued and symbolically inflated response to this overriding imperative.

Both the high levels of individual commitment and the perceived urgency of preserving the collectivity were augmented by the nearly overwhelming military and cultural threats faced by the Afrikaners during and since the Great Trek. The evolution of traditional loyalties into a modern and organized nationalist movement is a direct response to such threats. Among these were a series of bloody conflicts with the well-organized and militaristic Zulu and Matabele nations lasting from the 1830's almost to the turn of the century. In contrast to many other conflicts between European and indigenous peoples, such as those in the American West, the outcome of the so-called "Kaffir Wars" remained uncertain for many years. The Afrikaners were dealt several crushing and nearly fatal defeats during this period, the result of which has been to lend a sense of immediacy to the "Bantu threat."

The British also constituted a continuing military and cultural threat. Most of the trekkers of 1836 went

first to what is now Natal, only to have this land annexed by the British in 1843. Many of the Natal Afrikaners then packed up and moved again over the coastal mountains into the Transvaal and Orange Free State regions. It is, incidentally, a testament to the tenacity of Afrikaner commitments to their traditional life-style that they would leave settled and secure land twice in so short a period in order to avoid any "outside" influence. Even after this move and the creation of the two Boer Republics, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, the British remained a threat. Each of the Republics was briefly annexed by Great Britain prior to final annexation following the Boer War.

The British threat was most directly responsible for the full emergence of Afrikaner nationalism. Under the persistent military and cultural pressure of the British, particularly following the Boer War, long-existing notions of cultural superiority began to be formalized and given organizational expression.

The roots of the Boer War, like the Great Trek, are to be found in the fanatical adherence of the Afrikaners to traditional culture and their willingness to resist any interference at any cost. After the discoveries of gold and diamonds in the Boer Republics in the latter quarter of the nineteenth century, tens of thousands of *uitlanders* (foreigners), most of whom were English-speaking, flooded the Republics in search of mineral wealth. The government of the Transvaal, under the firm leadership of Paul Kruger, engaged in constant legal and political harassment of the *uitlanders*, with the avowed intention of ensuring that these people did not contaminate Afrikaner culture. Britain's intervention by force, which initiated the Boer War, was made in response to appeals by the *uitlanders*. The war itself was long and bitter. Greatly outnumbered and under-equipped, the Afrikaners adopted guerrilla tactics, leaving their families and farms to live off the land. Recognizing that the families of the Boers were a major source of supply, the British interned most of them in concentration camps. For reasons difficult now to understand, the Boer women and children were not given sufficient food or medicine, and thousands died. Among current Afrikaner nationalists this is viewed as deliberate on the part of the British, and continues to be a rallying point of Afrikaner cohesion.

The defeat by the British marks the beginning of modern Afrikanerdom. Traditional notions of themselves as Chosen People, the bitterness of defeat and the humiliation of English dominance combined to provide Afrikaner nationalism with an energy and fanaticism which continue to this day. Direction for the movement was provided by English efforts once again to assimilate the Afrikaners and to ameliorate the harshness of Afrikaner racism. The preeminent goals of the movement, therefore, became cultural presentation and the maintenance of white dominance.

Initial efforts of the movement were directed at preserving the Afrikaans language. Building on numerous small and scattered organizations which already existed for this purpose, nationalist leaders established nationwide associations for the preservation of Afrikaans. Among their activities was the creation of privately supported Afrikaans language schools, which later became the basis for the Christian-National Education movement. It was soon apparent, however, that preserving Afrikaner culture demanded political power. Toward this end, groups with specifically political goals were formed. One of these, Hertzog's Orange Union, became the major seed for the current National Party, although Hertzog himself eventually was rejected because of his relative moderation.

From the end of the Boer War to the present day Afrikanerdom has had an unbroken string of success in achieving its ends. Several intermeshed trends during this long period are of greatest importance in understanding the success of the nationalist movement and, thus, the current situation. Chief among these are steady increases in extremism, emotional unity and organizational coherence. Immediately following the Boer War, Afrikanerdom was in disarray. Although virtually all Afrikaners were cultural nationalists and committed to such things as preserving Afrikaans, the political movement was fragmented, with several major leaders taking different positions. The main axis of differentiation was the stance taken toward the English-speaking population. Smuts and several lesser known Afrikaner leaders urged a moderate position, in which the English were to be viewed as allies. Others, including Hertzog, were more chauvinist in their attitudes. The outcome of such division in this case, and in every case up to the present time, has been the victory of the more extreme faction. Every prime minister since the Union Act provided for domestic self-government has been outflanked from the right. From Smuts through Verwoerd, each new prime minister has been more adamantly Afrikaner in sentiment and policy.

This "rightward" movement proceeded in a vicious spiral with the chauvinist and racist sentiments of the Afrikaner masses. The key to a mass following and subsequent assumption of political power became the twin specters of *swaart gevaar* (black danger) and English domination. Elections were won and lost on the basis of who could most eloquently evoke the bitter memories of the British concentration camps or the terror of a black population run wild. The outcome of this struggle was the inflammation of what has been called the *laager* mentality (in reference to the traditional Afrikaner practice of making a defensive circle of wagons when under attack) on the part of the Afrikaner masses. As the nationalist leadership became more extreme, so did



*A Bantle area just north of Pretoria*

their constituency. Preservation of Afrikanerdom came to be the single end, to which all other ends were subordinate, and in service of which any means were acceptable.

Concomitant with the growth of nationalist fervor, the nationalist movement began to evolve a complex and integrated organizational framework. Cultural, political, religious and economic organizations came into being and were gradually welded into a single united front. A main instrument of this structural unification has been the Afrikaanse Broederbond, a secret and highly influential association of Afrikaner élites. Although its power seems to have waned in recent years, perhaps because the totality of Afrikaner dominance eliminates the need for secrecy, the A.B. was the central coordinating body during the formative years of Afrikaner nationalism.

The leadership of the A.B. has been historically composed of leading Afrikaner figures in politics, education, religion, trade unions and business. It is a general assumption, for example, that all prime ministers since Malan have been members. One central feat of the A.B. was the creation of the Federation of Afrikaner Cultural Organizations (FAK). Within the FAK are hundreds of different associations, ranging from church congregations to the Afrikaner equivalent of the Boy Scouts, the Voortrekkers. The A.B. was also instrumental in creating the modern Afrikaner economy. Organiza-

tions to promote Afrikaner business and industry and also a number of actual economic enterprises were established under the guidance of the A.B. in the years after the Second World War.

The monolithic nature of Afrikaner social organization is directly responsible for the failure of "modernization" to soften Afrikaner nationalism. As many scholars have noted, an established urban and industrial society generally provides an infertile setting for enthusiastic movements. Urban workers tend to become caught up in consumption and managers in the ethos of economic rationality; both, in the process, progressively substitute private for public concerns. The overlapping and integrated nature of Afrikaner institutions, at both formal and informal levels, however, has provided a buttress to nationalist fervor which offsets such "alienating" tendencies.

An Afrikaner is required by law to attend mother-language primary and secondary schools, in which there is explicit instruction in Christian-National principles. He is apt to join the Voortrekkers, where his ideological education is continued. If he goes to university, it will most likely be an Afrikaans institution. While there he will join a student association founded on nationalist principles. During all this time he will be attending one of the Dutch Reformed churches, as over 90 per cent of Afrikaners do, where his Afrikanerism is given sacred grounding. He will, if he is of the working class, join an Afrikaner union, also nationalist in principle. If he should be of the managerial class, he will join an Afrikaner business association. He will spend his leisure hours at an exclusively Afrikaner country club or other interest group. He will read Afrikaans newspapers full of nationalist zeal, while his other reading matter is censored. In short, Afrikaners are insulated within a culture which consistently reinforces traditional values and orientations. There are also informal sanctions against those who cross cultural lines. An Afrikaner who associates overly much with the "English" is suspect, and one who marries an English-speaking person is apt to encounter familial and occupational difficulties. The consequence of such radical cultural pluralism is to preserve Afrikaner civil religion undiminished.

Another major consequence of the monolithic nature of Afrikaner social organization has been to eliminate dissent from governmental policy on the part of groups or institutions that might otherwise have played a leading role in the softening of Afrikaner racial policy. Up to now, the imperative of preserving Afrikanerdom has been effective in preventing such division. Two examples are worth noting in this context. The first concerns the relationship between the Afrikaans-speaking churches and the National Party. Almost as much as the National Party, the Afrikaner churches have the ear and heart

of the Afrikaner. For this reason they have the potential for being a powerful source of change. Yet on every occasion the churches have supported Nationalist ideology and practice. The churches have provided, for example, religious sanction for the policy of apartheid; committees of theologians have sought and found biblical justifications for the notion of racial separateness. In addition to such sentimental affinities there are strong organizational ties between the Church and Party. Many Afrikaner ministers have attained elective and appointed offices within the Party, and often these have been the result of explicit behind-the-scenes bargaining.

The Dr. Wassenaar controversy is a case in point. Wassenaar publicly resigned from the National Party because of his refusal to ratify a secret agreement between Party officials and ministers of the Afrikaner churches to nominate certain of their fellows for election to local school boards. A more far-reaching illustration is found in the famous Church Clause of the Native Laws Amendment Act, which gave power to the Minister of Native Affairs to exclude nonwhites from attending church with white persons. After months of outcry from the English churches, the Council of Afrikaner churches met to consider the issue and decided on a rather timid objection. Prior to publishing their manifesto, however, the Council met with the Minister of Native Affairs, the outcome of which was a retraction by the Council of their objection. On the basis of appeals to Afrikaner unity, the Council was persuaded to delete all items in their statement of principles which contradicted the Church Clause.

The Afrikaner business community provides a second illustration. As many writers have noted, the economy has historically been a force for change, particularly through the introduction of canons of economic rationality into governmental policy-making. Afrikaner business has failed to exert such a force in South Africa. To the contrary, the Afrikaner business community appears perfectly willing to sacrifice economic rationality in the interest of Afrikanerdom. The roots of this coordination lie in the origins of the Afrikaner business community. Prior to the 1930's most Afrikaners were either rural or part of an urban proletariat; extremely few were in the managerial or entrepreneurial classes. The English-speaking population maintained rigid control of the economy and tended to exclude Afrikaners. Afrikaners finally began to enter the modern economy in the 1940's on a wave of economic nationalism, organized and guided by the broader Nationalist movement. As a continuation of their struggle with the English, the conquest of the city—the "second Trek"—became the dominant concern of the National Party and the A.B. Numerous organizations were created to plan and implement economic modernization. Their activities included financial and other encouragement of entrepreneurs, the direct creation

of enterprises, and the use of existing governmental agencies in a selective manner.

Perhaps most significant in the long run, Afrikaners were encouraged to give up traditional occupations and move into business as a duty to *die volk*. The success of this altruistic appeal was directly reflected in my own study of leading Afrikaner businessmen. I found that most of the highly successful entrepreneurs came out of a traditional and nationalist background, as indicated by their education, their choice of affiliates and associates, their family backgrounds and so on. More interestingly, the bulk of these persons indicated that a concern for the well-being of *die volk* was an explicit motivation for their establishment of economic enterprises. In effect, their economic actions were political actions in another guise. With such origins and sentiments, it is not surprising that the Afrikaner business community has failed to exert a rationalizing influence on the government.

The "Afrikanerness" of Afrikaner business and its links to the government have been sustained by organization as well as ideology. The boards of directors of the major Afrikaner corporations read like a "Who's Who" of business, religious, cultural and governmental circles. As of 1969, for example, the board of a major Afrikaner bank included representation from fourteen other Afrikaner corporations, two government cabinet ministers, the director of the FAK and a moderator of the Dutch Reformed Church. All of these affiliations, moreover, were maintained by only seven persons, a dramatic demonstration of the overlapping nature of Afrikaner social organization. In addition to the cohesion provided by emotion and interlocking directorates, it is a relatively common practice for Afrikaner corporations that are nominally in competition to trade large blocks of stock amongst themselves, in order to insure that outside interests cannot gain a toehold in Afrikaner business.

The consequence of the integration of Afrikaner business into the other dominant institutions has been, as noted earlier, to prevent the business community from becoming a force for change. A dramatic illustration is found in a series of events following the Sharpsville Massacre of 1960, in which South African police fired on a crowd of demonstrating nonwhites, killing seventy Africans. The major Afrikaner business association joined the major English association in issuing a statement that deplored the Sharpsville "incident" and asked the government for a more economically minded stance toward nonwhites. Within a few days of its issuance the Afrikaner association, once again in response to governmental appeals to unity, repudiated the statement.

**I**mplicit in the foregoing discussion is my belief that South African racial relations must be seen as a reflection of broader currents in

African history and culture. The insistence on separation of the races is a continued and symbolically inflated response to perceived threat by a people whose heritage teaches them that they are of unique and special value. Dominance and oppression of the nonwhites is the price Afrikaners are ready and willing to pay for what they feel to be their survival as a people. It should be kept in mind, in support of this thesis, that Afrikaner attitudes toward the English-speaking population are not different in quality from those toward the nonwhites. There is the same perception of threat and the same effort to isolate Afrikaner culture and institutions from contamination. Were it not for the relative power of the English, and the Afrikaners' desperate need of them, it is likely that Afrikaner treatment of this group would be far more discriminatory.

As for the future, there seems little hope for either inclusion of the nonwhites or for genuine implementation of separate development. The Nationalist government's racial policies are irresistibly sustained by the very sentiments which were used to put the government into Nationalist hands. The racial and cultural chauvinism aroused among the Afrikaner masses by Nationalist leaders in their search for dominance and cohesion has become an ideological prison from which there is no visible escape. White dominance has come to be the central symbol of Afrikaner culture. As urbanism has increasingly made other attributes of tradition inappropriate as foci for solidarity, racial division and dominance have been made to bear the full symbolic weight for the cohesion of Afrikaner society. White dominance and survival are absolutely equated in the Afrikaner mind. This symbolic equation, furthermore, is sustained by a highly integrated institutional structure, which has an inertia and power beyond the control of nationalist leaders.

Nationalist leaders who might wish to moderate racial policy—and private conversations have convinced me that there are some—fully realize that making this opinion public is tantamount to political suicide. At the present time the *Verkrampte* (cramped, or unenlightened) wing of the National Party waits impatiently off-stage right for any flicker of irresolution on the part of current Nationalist leaders. A softening of apartheid or any white sacrifice in order to carry out separate development would create an instant constituency for this faction.

To hazard a long-term prognosis, I think there will be no substantial change in South Africa's racial policy until such time as the black nations to the north achieve sufficient stability and prosperity to constitute a real threat. At that point South African leaders will be forced to make some effort to engage the allegiance of the Bantu masses. The several additional decades of coercion that are likely in the meantime, however, seem destined to make that effort too little and far too late.