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POLITICAL ARTICLES & STATEMENTS
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1952-53

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It is my pleasant duty this afternoon to say at the outset how keenly sensible and appreciative I am of the honour conferred upon me by the Directors and Faculty of this famous seat of learning when they invited me to occupy for the academic year 1952-53 the Henry M. Luke Visiting Professorship of World Christianity. The President will recall that in my reply to his first letter to me about the matter I expressed considerable misgiving as to whether I should prove equal to the unmerited confidence reposed in me by those who issued the invitation. This diffidence was induced not only by due deference and solicitude for the internationally respected standards of Union Theological Seminary but also to an appreciation of the high calibre of the previous incumbent of this position. From China had come one of the most illustrious sons of a country which has made no mean contribution to human civilization, especially in matters spiritual, in the person of Dr. Francis Wei, President of Hu Chung College, China; next came India, cradle of world famous systems of religion and philosophy with Dr. Paul David Devanandan, Professor of Philosophy and the History of Religions, United Theological College, Bangalore, India. The Middle East, crossroads of mighty civilizations, ancient and modern, provided Professor Lootfy, Dean of the Near East School of Theology, Beirut; then from the New World which archaeologists have taught us can also boast a glorious past in the history of civilizations came my immediate predecessor, Professor Gonzalo Baez-Camargo, of the Theological Seminary, Mexico City. These were one and all worthy incumbents of a Chair whose is---I quote from the President’s letter to me---"to bring to the Seminary foremost leaders from the so-called Younger Churches to take a position on our Faculty for periods of one year each to interpret to us the most important developments in the Christian movement in their own lands". Whence would a representative of the Cinderella of the continents---Africa---derive the courage to join such an illustrious band? In all humility may I say that the consideration which helped to screw my courage to the sticking place, once I had decided to accept, was a sense of a double obligation. In the first place I felt that by coming I might, in spite of my limitations, both overt and covert, in however small a measure, the incalculable debt the world, including Africa, owes to that long line of men and women who impelled by a sense of the missionary of the Church have gone to distant lands and there proclaimed to strange faces, other minds, the saving power of the Gospel of their Master. To that glorious company of the ‘blessed missionaries’, as they were once described by an irascible Governor of the Cape Colony, belonged the one in whose memory this Chair was established. Secondly I felt that in these days when the voices of so many lands are struggling to catch the ears of the world---the voice of Britain, the
Voices of America, the Voice of Russia, etc., etc.—it might perhaps not be out of place for the Voice of Africa to be added to the chorus. Although it might not be heard or distinguished in the general din, its continued absence would always vitiate any harmony that the united voices of nations might attempt to produce.

The title of this address can quite rightly be questioned both on the ground of what it includes and on the ground of what it excludes. How can one deal adequately within the compass of one short address with the whole of Africa? Or with present-day Africa without going fully into the historical antecedents which alone can explain the contemporary situation? Or whence the temerity to attempt to delineate the shape of things to come in so vast an area subject to such diverse forces and influences? Let me put your minds at rest at once by saying that nothing so ambitious or so pretentious is intended, to say nothing of the fact that I possess neither the knowledge nor the powers of prevision for such a task. It is my humble submission, however, that Africa must be considered as a whole if its problems are to be seen in their proper perspective. Partial approaches can only result in partial insights, leading to distorted views of an area which is much more of a unity than is indicated by the balkanization to which it has been subjected by foreign rule. The time factor here is considered not from the point of one dimension suggested by phrases such as 'time longer than ropes' or 'time as an ever rolling stream' or the 'corridors of time', but as involving depth and width as well as length, as requiring not only a lengthening of our ropes but also a deepening of our stakes if we are to face the facts of reality with confidence. In Africa as in other parts of the world human experience suggests that what is happening in the field of human relations today is the result and that what is going to happen tomorrow will very largely depend upon what is being planned and done by those who wield power and influence there today. Of a truth God is not mocked: what a man sows that he shall surely reap which applies to continents and peoples no less than in the life of individuals.

What is the challenge of Africa today?
A recent book on the subject of the nature and significance of contemporary problems in Africa opens with with the arresting sentence: "Africa staggered the imagination". The reasons are not far to seek why our minds are assailed by a 'mass of conflicting conjectures' when we consider Africa as it is today or as it is likely to be tomorrow. If we look at it from the point of view of its geographical extent and the problems which its environmental condition present to the scientist or the industrialist interested in the exploitation
of its natural resources either for the benefit of its inhabitants or for
the benefit of the world, it does not take long to see that we are con-
fronted here with problems which will tax the ingenuity, the capacity for
sustained effort and the ability of men and women to work together for the
common good, to the utmost. The tsetse-fly and the locust alone have thus
far proved almost more than a match even for modern science and technology.
Nor is the challenge of Africa less formidable when, turning aside
from the purely physical aspect of the matter, we consider the problems of
human relations posed by this vast land mass and its inhabitants: by the
stresses and strains arising out of the close juxtaposition of peoples of
different racial stocks, with varying cultural backgrounds, at different
levels of social development, living under different economic and political
systems, to say nothing of the conflicting faiths and ideologies to which they
subscribe or which are striving for the mastery among them. Indeed, so
imposing do the problems of modern Africa appear that many people, both
among its inhabitants and elsewhere, have become despondent and doubt
whether we will be able to find a happy issue out of its numerous afflictions.
Hence some have developed or adopted a defeatist attitude with regard to its
future, while others live in mortal dread of the impending disaster whose
inevitability they feel powerless to avert and in which the hand of everyone
will be lifted up against that of his neighbour. Tension, conflict, frustration,
aggression—these are the words which have the widest currency among those
who are giving serious thought to the present situation in Africa.

But as Professor Macmillan has reminded the faint-hearted and the
fearful, "Africa is too difficult a continent, its physical conditions are
too intractable, its human relationships far too complex to give any hope
of a good issue to the efforts of those who set to work with a spirit of
fear and distrust or of mere prejudice."

In other words the greatest demand of Africa today is for calm reflection,
patient study and research and resolute action by men and women of courage
and vision, of faith and work, who are unwilling to be overawed by the situation
and will steadfastly resist the temptation to take refuge in facile solutions
based on popular slogans of the market-place or the negative application of
brute force or the sacrifice of principle on the altar of expediency, who
will bear in mind the oft unheeded yet undisproved lesson of human history
that moral issues which are inseparable from the problems of human relations
can never be permanently settled by resort to immoral or so-called moral
means.

Fortunately the signs seem to indicate that the number is increasing
of those who are unwilling to adopt the defeatist attitude of resignation
towards the difficulties presented and are determined to search for a way out.
Governments, industrialists, scientists, churchmen and others are vying with one another in improving their knowledge of the continent and its possibilities as far as natural and human resources are concerned, and in the search for a path of maximum understanding and mutual helpfulness between its peoples in the development of Africa.

In this last stronghold of colonialism, Colonial Powers—Britain, France, Belgium, Portugal—represent the most powerful agencies whose policies, economic, political or social, may make or mar the future of the peoples of Africa. With the general collapse of colonialism in other parts of the world—within the last ten years—the number of peoples subject to colonialism in its crudest form has been reduced from 700 million to a slightly over two-sevenths of that number, of which latter the vast majority are in Africa—Colonial Powers have become more interested in their imperium previously neglected 'patrimony' in Africa. They have discovered that colonial territories ought to be developed and that perhaps metropolitan countries do have some responsibilities towards these vast 'distressed areas' even if they are not in their backyards but conveniently out of sight thousands of miles away. It is only within the last decade that colonial powers have at last accepted the principle of providing funds from the metropolitan countries themselves not for expeditions of conquest but for economic and social development of colonial territories.

Hence the establishment of agencies such as the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund and the Overseas Development Corporation by the United Kingdom, the adoption of a Ten-Year Plan for the Belgian Congo by Belgium, the combination of private, metropolitan and colonial funds for colonial development by France, and the use by all these powers of facilities offered by the Economic Co-operation Administration for colonial development schemes as well.

As a result of widespread criticism of the colonial system, both at home and abroad, colonial powers are being compelled to approach their so-called 'mission' in Africa in a new spirit, with a greater awareness of the fact that the 'good old days' when they could do just what they jolly well liked with their colonies have gone for good. Nowadays the pseudo-justifications and rationalisations with which the colonial system was bolstered up in days gone by must undergo the scrutiny of world publicity, and colonial powers have to endeavour to live up to the Declaration regarding non-self-governing territories to which they subscribed in Chapter XI of the United Nations Charter, which reads, "That Colonial Powers recognize the principle that the interests of the inhabitants of their Colonies are paramount, and accept as a sacred trust of the obligation to promote to the utmost, within the system of international peace and established by the present Charter, the well-being of the inhabitants of these territories".
The information regarding their activities in the non-self-governing territories supplied by the Colonial Powers to the United Nations in terms of this Chapter, though its value is limited by a somewhat rigorous adherence to the letter rather than to the spirit of the Charter—that last refuge of the uneasy conscience—constitutes for those who can read between the lines a fairly substantial contribution to our stock of up-to-date data in respect of educational, social and economic conditions in the areas concerned.

The further development of the principle of international accountability through the setting up of the Trusteeship System of the United Nations under Chapter XII of the Charter provides a measuring rod by which the achievements of powers responsible for Trust territories can be examined, both in the Trusteeship Council and in the debates of the General Assembly of the United Nations. It is not without significance that the one Power which has thus far refused a territory for which it is responsible under the Trusteeship system of the United Nations is the one whose policies can least bear examination by international standards. I refer to the Union of South Africa which has not consented to place South West-Africa, a former Mandate of the League of Nations, under United Nations Trusteeship.

Inter-Territorial Co-operation. Not only are Colonial Powers refurbishing their policies and endeavouring to make a better job of tackling the urgent tasks confronting them in their separate territories, but they are seeking to co-operate in dealing with some of the problems which are of more than merely regional or territorial significance. Inter-governmental conferences held to discuss matters of common interest and have led to the establishment of permanent inter-territorial centres for the handling of problems such as transport and communications, labour, education, food and nutrition and others. "An important development in this connection has been the setting up in 1950, with the co-operation of Belgium, France, Portugal, Southern Rhodesia, the Union of South Africa and the United Kingdom, of a Commission for Technical Co-operation for Africa south of the Sahara. "The principal functions of this Commission include co-ordination of the various international offices, implementation of the conclusions of technical conferences and organization of future conferences. Moreover the Commission is expected to prepare joint requests to the specialised agencies (of the United Nations) for technical assistance on the basis of the proposals put up by the permanent organizations for co-operation among African countries and to note individual requests which governments address to the specialised agencies. The Commission is assisted by a Permanent Secretariat. Four technical information services operate under the aegis of the Commission: the bureau on tsetse and trypanomiasis at Leopoldville, Belgian Congo; the bureau on
soil conservation and utilization in Paris, France; the bureau on epizootic diseases in Nairobi, Kenya; and an Inter-African Labour Institute. Under the auspices of this Commission a statistical conference was held at Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia in 1951 to discuss agricultural statistics, methods of measuring and estimating annual population increase and the establishment of a permanent international bureau in Africa for the exchange of statistical information. It is perhaps symptomatic of the change in the climate of opinion which has forced upon metropolitan powers that words such as 'empire', colony' are falling into disuse in official literature and are being superseded by words such as non-self-governing or dependent territories which have less emotive connotations associated with colonialism.

This wave of interest in things African is not confined to government or official circles. Voluntary or non-official or private agencies are also engaged in the endeavour to know Africa as well as to make the colonial continent par excellence better known in the modern world. Conferences of various kinds are being held by experts in different fields of knowledge to examine various aspects of the problems of Africa. A case in point is the African Regional Scientific Conference held in Johannesburg, South Africa in 1949 which led to the organization in 1950 of a consultative and advisory Scientific Council for Africa south of the Sahara. The Council has as its function "the task of suggesting technical conferences and new subjects for research and of maintaining close relations with scientific offices and individual research workers". An organisation which has done yeoman service in the matter of making the peoples of Africa and their cultures better known, understood and appreciated is the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures. Through its fellowships and scholarships the Institute has encouraged social anthropologists, linguists and other sociologists to enter the African field, and their labours have resulted in the publication of ethnographic and other studies which have proved of great value to governments, missionaries, scholars and others interested in the welfare of the African peoples. Universities and other centres of learning in different parts of the world but especially in the metropolitan countries with colonial territories in Africa are beginning to take account of Africa in planning their study and research programmes. In this connection it is a matter of regret that in the United States, one of the leading countries in the field of international relations today, universities and other centres of higher education are not yet paying sufficient attention to studies on the 'continents of the future'. This is no doubt due to the fact that until recently the United States has regarded herself as a country having no direct responsibilities in Africa. It is not often remembered that America
played part in establishing one of the few Independent states in Africa - Liberia, nor that she was a signatory to the first instrument which established the principle of international accountability in colonial administration in Africa, namely, the Berlin Treaty of 1884. Since World War II, of course, American interest in Africa has increased not only because of the importance of the area through its possession of raw materials of strategic importance such as uranium or its significance relative to communications in times of both peace and war, but also because of the possibilities of technical assistance under the Point Four Programme for underdeveloped areas of which it is perhaps the chief in the world today. The stream of African students coming to study in America is getting broader every year, and so is that of American investments in different parts of the continent. In the circumstances it would appear appropriate that universities and other centres of higher education should include African Studies in the courses they offer. Already a few American scholars have done distinguished work in the African field, but the second largest continent in the world with its vast potentialities for the future of the world, with its intriguing experiments in forms of government in different areas, with the emergence of societies and nations whose ultimate shape it is as yet difficult to discern—such an area deserves more than the incidental attention which it has thus far received from American universities.

I have so far dealt with the wave of interest in Africa from the point of view of the so-called Western countries of the world. It should never be forgotten, however, that there are influences and ideologies from other points of the compass which are also making a bid for Africa. A recent review of major problems of United States Foreign Policy dealing with Africa contains the comment that Communism has for various reasons made little progress in Africa, but political and social tensions in many territories are mounting and that therefore the Cominform may in future be expected to give more attention to campaigns of subversion in this hitherto untouched region. The commentator goes on to draw the obvious conclusion that it is important (I quote) "to develop in the African peoples the determination to resist the blandishments of communism and to help them to do so while there is time. This can be done by the creation of more stable economic, political and social institutions" (unquote). After noting the issues with which the United State may be confronted in Africa such as the establishment of a stable world order, the progressive development of dependent peoples towards self-government and eventual independence, assistance to underprivileged peoples to raise their standards of living and education, the commentator makes these observations:
"On the hand the United States itself has no direct responsibilities in Africa, and its activities have to be examined for the effect they might have on the European powers, four of which are associated with the United States in the North Atlantic Treaty. If an African policy for the United States presents any problem, therefore, it appears to be the avoidance of action that either jeopardise American hopes for the welfare and the increasingly nationalistic aspirations of the African peoples or disrupt the relations between the United States and its Western allies who are also colonial powers in Africa. (See "Major Problems of U.S. Foreign Policy" 1951-52--Inter. Studies Group of Brookings Institution, 1951, p. 296.)

In steering between the Charybdis of European colonialism and the Sycilla of African nationalism, the pilot of American foreign policy will have to take care not to play into the hands of their principal foe--communism. Ideas do not only have legs, but possess wings with which they can scale the highest walls and the most opaque curtains, and these best allies of communism are not the victims but the perpetrators and the defenders of the humiliating racial policies of political, economic and social inequalities which undermine dignity and vitiate harmonious relations between man and man.

The Peoples of Africa. For in considering the problems of Africa the point cannot be overemphasised that the most important aspect of the matter is that of human relations. The peoples of Africa are of greater significance than its natural resources, a fact which can easily be overlooked in a materialistic age such as the one in which we live. A characteristic of modern Africa is that its inhabitants include not only Africans who constitute the vast majority, but also a significant number of immigrants, whites from Europe and Asians from Asia, who have made Africa their permanent home. The close juxtaposition of these racial groups has also led to the emergence of a group generally termed Coloured, signifying persons of mixed descent who form a distinct group of their own. The crux of the African problem is how these different groups can be welded together into societies or nations with common ideals dedicated to the pursuit of the common objectives of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.

In most areas in Africa, with minor exceptions, the whites constitute the dominant group and the non-whites constitute underprivileged 'sociological' minority groups in spite of their overwhelming numerical superiority. Racial harmony in Africa obviously depends upon the manner in which the dominant whites use their present position of special privilege and authority. It is common knowledge that one of the marked characteristics of white inhabitants of Africa today is their determination not only to make a permanent home for themselves and their children, but to do so on the basis of a policy of white supremacy. Impelled by the twin fears of political subjugation and physical absorption, and led by white South Africa, the enclaves of Europeans found in different parts of the continent, are developing a common outlook on this issue.
In the past Africans were inclined to believe that there were significant differences in the policies pursued by different Colonial powers, that British policy differed from French or Belgian from Portuguese. But, increasingly among those subject to them, the common thread that runs through all--namely, the monopoly of political power by the white man, tends to overshadow all avowed differences in the objectives of colonial policy. 'Colonization is a fact of power' in the hands of colonial powers, and it would appear that the only peoples with whom metropolitan powers are prepared to share this power are the white inhabitants of African territories. This is inducing among the non-white inhabitants who are rapidly despairing of getting a fair deal either from the metropolitan powers or from the local dominant whites, an attitude of disillusionment and a sense of frustration which bodes ill for the future of the continent.

To understand this attitude which has already borne bitter fruit in areas such as Tunisia and Morrocco, and in North Africa, Kenya in East Africa, riots of the commoners in Uganda, the unsettled state of the Wa-Meru in Tanganyika, the widespread distrust evoked by British proposals for Central African federation, the civil disobedience campaign provoked by the apartheid policy of the Union of South Africa, we must ask ourselves the question what has the advent of the white man meant to the other peoples of Africa?

What Toynbee has said with regard to the impact of western civilization on the world in general applies with particular force to Africa. Says Toynbee:

"Future historians will say, I think, that the peak event of the twentieth century was the impact of western civilization upon all the other living societies of the world of that day. They will say much of the impact that it was so powerful and so pervasive that it turned the lives of all its victims upside down and inside out--affecting the behaviour, outlook, feelings and beliefs of individual men, women and children in an intimate way, touching chords in human souls that are not touched by mere external forces--however ponderous and terrifying."

It would obviously be impossible in the time at our disposal to deal fully with the extent of this impact upon African societies. Reference to one or two aspects must suffice.

It is common knowledge that the invasion of Africa by western European peoples and their cultures has meant the partition of the continent among various colonial powers--Great Britain, France, Portugal, Belgium, Spain, Italy, the Union of South Africa which is no less a colonial power albeit its subjects subjects and citizens live within the same territory. Political divisions of varying sizes generally indicated on the map of Africa by means of different colours for different Colonial powers making a pattern whose superficial beauty belies the ugliness of much that lies beneath the surface, have meant the arbitrary separation of peoples of the same cultural background and the
arbitrary combination of peoples of diverse usages and customs. Africans in a
territory have to adjust themselves to the language, the culture and the poli
c and the methods of administration of their rulers while their fellow tribesmen
in a neighbouring territory grapple with entirely different usages and custom.
e.g. African in the Belgian Congo and in Northern Rhodesia, in French Cameroons
and in British Cameroons, in French Togoland and in British Togoland, in Portu-
guese East Africa, and in the Union of South Africa. In some areas they may
have to cope with two European languages and traditions at one and the same
time as in the Union of South Africa with its English-speaking and Dutch-
speaking white rulers, in addition to the numerous languages developed by
themselves and which are not necessarily mutually intelligible. Wars fought and
for reasons about which they know nothing and into which they may be dragged
without consultation may in a matter of a few years bring about a radical
transformation of the whole position with little regard to the difficulties
imposed on those who have to unlearn what they had learned before the war, as
happened when German Colonies were divided among the Allied and Associated
Powers at the end of World War I under the Mandates System of the League of
Nations. Great travellers as they were before, as indicated by their migrations,
the movements of Africans across the continent have increased a hundredfold
under the impact of western civilization. The improvement of means of transport
and communication by road, rail, sea and air, makes it possible for them to cover
vast distances in a much shorter time than was possible in earlier generations.
Consequently Africans of diverse tongues and origins have been thrown together
much more. Former sworn enemies have become fellow-subjects of the same rulers,
and have been compelled to abandon their former conflicts and to live together
under the same strange laws. Gradually they have come to learn that they are
common sufferers under the same foreign yoke of white colonization, and ideas
of internecine strife have been replaced by an urge towards nationalism and
self-determination. The slogan "Africa for the Africans" which a generation
ago when it was put forward by Marcus Garvey and his followers in the United
States was laughed out of court by the Africans themselves has become a
rallying cry that is taken for granted in different parts of Africa today. It
is fair to add that the modern African interprets the slogan to mean not 'Africa
for the Africans only' but 'Africa for the Africans too'. Although the political
divisions which have been established by European powers differ in international
status as indicated by terms such as dominions, independent countries, protector-
ates, trust territories, to the subject peoples these distinctions are largely
meaningless. All they know is that the shoe pinces, whatever its size, quality or
status.

The economic system which western peoples have brought with them has
proved no less disruptive. When Livingstone called upon Europeans to abandon
the traffic in human beings and concentrate rather on exploiting the natural
resources of Africa, he no doubt believed that the economic development of the
continent would automatically contribute towards the healing of the 'open sore'
of Africa. As he said after his journey across Central Africa,

"As far as I am concerned, the opening up of the new central
country is a matter for congratulation only in so far as it opens
opens up a prospect for the elevation of the inhabitants. As I have
elsewhere remarked, I view the end of geographical feat as the
beginning of the missionary enterprise. I take the latter
term in its most extended significance, and include every effort
made for the amelioration of our race."

Subsequent events have proved that it is not as easy as Livingstone imagined
to maintain the association of what he called the "two pioneers of civilization-
Christianity and Commerce." It has been found impossible ever far to exploit
the natural resources of Africa without at the same time exploiting the peoples
of Africa. To facilitate the exploitation of natural resources it has been
considered necessary to deprive Africans of land rights either through the
concession system or through the Reserve of Reservation system under which
African land rights may be limited to rights of bare occupancy. Africans have
in various ways been pressed into the European economic system as cheap
labourers in order to make the conditions of capital investment in Africa as
attractive as possible; the economic life of the continent has been directed
towards those natural resources like gold, diamonds, copper and other minerals
which make possible getting rich quickly but are in fact wasting assets which
do not necessarily contribute to the development of an all-round and wholesome
economic life. The demands of Europe and other foreign countries rather than
the welfare of the inhabitants of Africa have determined the direction and
the volume of economic development. The social consequences of the impact of
the western economic system have been equally devastating. Thousands of African
especially males have been drawn into the vortex of European industry with
great social consequences to African tribal society. Up and down the continent
will be found 'almost continuous processions of migrants' who have left their
homes to find a living for their families left at home. The social effects
of the phenomenon of migrant labour have described in various reports of
government commissions and in anthropological monographs.

In the industrial centres to which Africans have been drawn by the
meretricious glitter of the white man's civilization from the representatives
economically areas they are compelled to live under conditions conducive to the development
of a healthy or wholesome social life. Regarded as 'birds of passage' without
residential or domiciliary rights in the industrial centres unless they are
necessary to the labour requirements of the area, they live in 'locations' or
"compounds" or "shanty towns" which constitute the "slums" of Africa. The conditions of overcrowding, squalor and delapidation existing in some of these areas beggar description. With the industrialization of the continent proceeding at an accelerated pace and the demands for African labour becoming greater and greater, the shortage of housing is becoming more and more acute. These unplanned and uncontrolled 'hives' for the African working bees, for they cannot be described as 'homes' fit for human beings, are developing into breeding places for crime, disease, illicit liquor dealing and all the evils associated with unplanned and undirected social living. Thousands of African children are reared here under conditions in which tribal sanctions have broken down and no others have been substituted. Africans living under these abnormal conditions especially among the youth develop anti-social tendencies which make life a nightmare for urban dwellers both inside and outside the 'locations'. Gone are the days when people could sleep with open windows and unlocked doors. Burglar-proof windows and unpickable locks are in increasing demand. Some areas cannot cope with the demand for increased police protection, and private citizen are compelled to form unofficial civic guards for their own protection. With no civic rights in the areas which their labour has made possible nor indeed any adequate share in the administration of the locations in which they are temporarily allowed to reside, these vast aggregates of human beings torn from their moorings and thrust into the—for them—uncharted seas of the western way of life, the indigenous peoples of Africa, are becoming apprehensive about is happening to them and their societies. They are puzzled by the conflicts and contradictions inherent in the present situation. Thus whereas in the 19th century and in the early part of the 20th, as the result of the efforts of explorers, missionaries and other connected with the opening up of Africa, it appeared as if its peoples, both white and black, would increasingly be drawn together closer and closer towards one another in mutual understanding and tolerance, today the walls of prejudice and intolerance are threatening to divide its inhabitants in every territory into watertight compartments which favour the breeding of the germs of suspicion, distrust and resentment. Barriers which seemed well on the way towards being broken down are being propped up or resurrected again, and isolationism is spreading its tentacles over the continent at a time when there is far less reason for it than there was even a generation ago. Now that the indigenous peoples of Africa far from being opposed to western civilization are almost embarrassingly eager to learn of the West and to share its privileges and its obligations, that is the time they are being made to realise that western civilizations and western democracy are not for them. In these days of economic interdependence in the rest of the world
responsible white leaders in some parts of Africa are propagating ideas concerning the setting-up of self-contained and self-sufficient socio-economic units on the basis of separation or apartheid (separatist) in terms of racial or ethnic affiliation. As one of advocates of separation has said:

"The choice of our time is between co-operation and apartheid (separatist) We may choose the easy way of temporary welfare through co-operation and let ourselves be slowly swallowed by our internal native proletariat or if this is already too late, go under in a powerless struggle. The other alternative and the challenge in front of us is, however great and impossible the task may appear to be, whatever visible unbearable sacrifice may be required, to build for our posterity, a self-contained, self-standing white popular State".

The writer was of course referring to South Africa, but that he considered this philosophy appropriate for other parts of Africa appears from his further statement:

"I have the audacity to say that the time is ripe for approaching this problem on an Africa-perspective. The occasion is there. What must now come is the statesman who....will tackle the division not only of South Africa, but also, at least of the whole of Southern Africa, with a view to providing and securing for both White and Native reasonable 'lebensraum'.

This is the anachronistic doctrine which is preached in some circles in Africa today.

What is the response of the indigenous peoples of Africa to this trend of events? They themselves are awakening to a new realisation of the necessity for them to take a vital share in shaping the destiny of the continent. They are beginning to re-examine the history of their relations with the white man. That history shows that the penetration of Africa was brought about not only by the superior military weapons or strategy of the Europeans but was in so small a measure due to the fact that in practically every conflict between black and white, there were always some blacks who stood on the side of the whites or who at least did not make common cause with their fellow blacks against the whites. These were the blacks who thought they saw in the white man the bearer of a superior civilization inspired by higher spiritual values as well as better material standards than that of their forefathers. These were the blacks who described in history as "friendly tribes", who were sometimes rewarded for their 'loyalty' with grants of portions of the lands wrested from the "hostile" tribe when conquered. These are the Africans who sometimes individually and sometimes collectively took vows to embrace this superior civilization and to transfer to its representatives the loyalty which they formerly gave to their own traditional leaders. The gradual pacification of the continent saw more and more Africans, without taking any formal vows, nevertheless abandon their pristine hostility to the white man and endeavour to adjust themselves to the new civilization in the hope that in time they would be welded into one nation with the European, subject to common citizenship, with common rights and privileges, common oppor-
opportunities and common responsibilities. In this fond hope the African embraced European Christianity, sent his children to schools giving a European type of education, entered the service of the white man in various capacities and in varying degrees adopted his material culture. In many of these direction he proved an apt pupil. He believed that he would be able, slowly but surely, to demonstrate by his patience and loyalty to the white man that he harboured no ill-will against him and desired no more from him than to be allowed an equal opportunity with other sections of the population to live the life of a normal human being in return for which he was prepared to bear his legitimate share of the responsibilities of citizenship.

With the passage of time, however, it appears to him, that try as he might, he is unable to convince the white man of his essential friendship towards him. Instead of being regarded more and more as a member of the same community or nation, he finds himself looked upon as a menace to the welfare of the white man; he finds responsible white leaders demanding that he should be treated literally as a thing apart; he finds his rights as an individual being whittled down until his hope of ever being counted among the citizens of his country fades into nothingness. The cumulative effect of these experiences has induced in the African the widespread disillusionment and sense of frustration which we find in his circles today, leading to the conviction among many that the road of friendship and co-operation with the white man leads to the cul-de-sac in which their forefathers have been cribbed and confined since the advent of the white man to Africa. Thus white separation leads to black separatism.

In different territories under the impetus of rising nationalisms, and stirred into action by the dynamic movements and ideologies which are abroad in the modern world, Africans are abandoning the old attitude of merely passively permitting things to be done for them or to them and are showing signs of positive reaction, explosive or otherwise, to the forces at work in the societies to which they belong. Moreover, with the development of means of transport and communication, isolation between the indigenous peoples of Africa is rapidly breaking down, and views are being exchanged and a keen interest shown in events and developments in different parts of the continent to an extent which renders illusory the multi-coloured divisions of current political maps of Africa, or the fanciful, if entertaining, pictures of impenetrable jungles and drum-language-speaking naked savages to which credulous film-goers are exposed. In the Africa of 1952 the repercussions and reverberations of what happens in one corner of the continent are felt and heard, analysed and commented upon in territories far removed from the original scene of action. Political developments in West Africa, the fate of a single individual like Seretse Khama of the Bamangwato, the British Government's handling of the problem of Central
African Federation, the relations between France and Tunisia and Morocco or Madagascar, the apartheid policy of the Malanite South African Government—all these, to the African, are matters of common concern which cannot be suppressed or hidden, not even by the international fig-leaf of domestic jurisdiction. In this connection it may be pointed that the attitude of the United States and the role she is likely to play in Africa in the second half of the 20th century are being watched throughout the continent with mixed feelings of hope and fear, hope that this country which claims to have dedicated itself to the principles of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all might work for the extension of the benefits of democracy even to peoples of colour, and fear that she might succumb to the blandishments of colonialism and so barter her birthright for a mess of imperialistic pottage. At all events whether the white domination of Africa is buttressed by America and Europe, it is clear that in different parts of the continent have resolved to work for a future—and that no distant future—in which they will be free from domination and subject to no disability based upon their race or colour. "Self-government Now" and "Self-government is better than good government"—These are the slogans of the New Africa. The attempt to give colonialism a new lease of life by dressing old policies in new look garments such as trusteeship or partnership or the paramountcy of the inhabitants the inhabitants will not easily satisfy the African of today or tomorrow.

In the dynamic changes which are taking place in Africa and which are likely to affect the destiny of her inhabitants of all colours, the Christian Church has a unique roll to fulfil. As the only institution which acknowledges an authority and a guidance greater than that of man, and armed with a faith at once the most convicting and the most redemptive, the Church is the chief 'guardian of the ultimate values upon which alone men can securely build in faith. Already the record of the Church in Africa is impressive. Her work has borne in fruit to the extent that there are now over 21 professing Christians among the peoples of Africa, probably the largest body of Christians outside Europe and the Americas. The Christian Mission in Africa, like every other institution in this iconoclastic age has been subjected to much adverse criticism, some constructive and some the reverse. Attention is often rightly drawn to the numerous mistakes made by missionaries past and present—their misunderstanding and misinterpretation of indigenous usages and customs coupled with sincere but ill-advised attempts to foist customs upon their converts, their failure to appreciate or to apply the social implications of their Master's Gospel, their conscious or unconscious indentification of their objectives with those of the secular imperialistic governments in whose areas
they laboured, their not infrequent failure to practise the brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of which they preach, their denominational rivalries. All these, and more, are errors of judgment and defects in practice which would the Churches working in Africa would themselves be prepared to acknowledge either in wholly or in part. But the slightest acquaintance with the facts will show that the Missions are unsurpassed in the positive contribution which they have made or are making to the development of Africa. They have made mistakes in the field of education because for many years they were the only agencies which did anything about the matter, and even today when Colonial governments are beginning to pay more attention to the educational needs of the inhabitants of the areas under their control, the Missions and the people themselves are still carrying more than their fair share of the burden of establishing, building up, managing and financing schools for African children. In the field of health the greater part of the meagre facilities existing in many African territories have been provided by Missions. In tackling the problems of social welfare both in the rural and in the urban areas the Missions have been either the pioneers or in some case the sole workers in the field. In the field of government and administration individual Church leaders have been among the greatest shame champions of the rights of Africans. Not only were they leaders against the struggle against evils such as the slave traffic, but they have also helped to defend African land rights, assisted Chiefs in the drawing of treaties with foreign governments and have been in the forefront in protecting them against the grosser abuses of colonialism. It is their work in this latter field which sometimes earned them the bitter censure of both colonial administrators and white settlers, and has led some of their successors to fight any of the roles of "Kaffirboetie (nigger-lover) which their predecessors played. Not only has the Church been a pioneer in many fields of endeavour on behalf of the African people, but it has, broadly speaking, kept abreast of all the most constructive developments in different parts of the continent. It has achieved a nobler aim than that—it has recognised and fostered in the African that dignity, and self-respect, that essential humanity which others with less lofty motives have sought to deny or destroy.

But the Christian Church cannot afford to rest on its laurels any more than it can do so elsewhere. The simpler and more elemental tasks of evangelisation have been done and have borne fruit to an appreciable extent. The foundations of secular education have been laid. Schools, hospitals, welfare centres, printing presses, sacred and secular literature in both African and foreign languages—it is impossible to give an account of any of these institutions without having to record or to acknowledge the indescribability of Africa to the Christian Church and Mission.
But the challenge of modern Africa to the Church is greater than ever. Here again it would be impossible to indicate more than one or two directions in which more is expected of the Church of the future than that of the past or the present, and in this connection I should like, for obvious reasons, to confine myself to the expectations of the African rather than those of other groups.

One of these is the hope that the Church might capture a fresh vision of its essential Mission as an instrument for the expression of obedience to the Will of God for mankind and for the world. Rightly or wrongly, to the African it appears that the Church in Africa, like so many other institutions, has grown to such an extent that the organisational side of it is concerned that the functional side of it is in danger of suffering eclipse. The modern missionary is so busy managing schools, filling in government returns, attending to the fabric of church buildings, signing religious knowledge certificates for Sunday school children, --- all very vital tasks --- that he runs the risk of forgetting the purpose for which these things exist, of coming to regard them as ends in themselves and not merely as means to a great end. Moreover the multifarious activities with which he is engaged, although intended for their benefit, may become a barrier between him and the people to whom he has brought the Gospel message. Especially in these days of the automobile, which enable the missionary to cover much more ground in a much shorter time, opportunities for personal contact between the representative of the Church and the members of the Church are becoming fewer and fewer, or are confined to committee meetings or official business, leading to a lack of that mutual knowledge and mutual confidence which is essential for successful mission work.

Another hope is that the Church might recapture a sense of the universality of its message both in regard to its incidence, i.e. the persons for whom it is intended, and in respect of its ramifications, i.e. the extent to which it applies to the whole of life. The impression is gaining ground among Africans that the Gospel which is supposed to be preached to all nations appears to be intended for them more than for other sections of the population. It seems to them that the same Church which fearlessly denounces pagan standards of private and public morality amongst them closes its eyes to the paganism which is rampant, as far as they can see, among whites in Africa. They are looking for a Church which from its position of relative detachment, because it acknowledges an authority greater than that of man, will be impartial in its rebuke of evil or in justice, wherever it may show its head, and preach repentance to all. Moreover they are looking for a Church which will enter into all phases of their life and will concern itself with the graver issues which are agitating their minds, and not take refuge in slogans such as 'the Church must keep out of politics', when politics are not keeping away from the people.
Racism, secularism, communism, nationalism and all the other 'isms' to which modern man is heir--on all these they expect the Church to speak out without fear or favour.

Perhaps their greatest wish is that the Church might achieve a greater measure of unity in the future than in the past. There is probably nothing which makes such a mockery of the work of the Christian Church than its unhappy divisions, both foreign and indigenous. Readers of Sundkler's brilliant study of the separatist or independent church movement in Africa will recall the extent to which Africans have already assimilated the western idea of the disunited church. The body of Christ has been torn into so many pieces that that it is difficult, if not impossible, to identify Him in some of them. Some of these churches are handed down from father to son like so much personal property, a veritable 'parting of His garments, casting lots over them, what each man should take'. Is it too much that from the increasing cooperation between the various denominations operating in the continent, and from the evident desire of Africans for indigenous African churches, may emerge in the second half of the 20th, a United Church of Africa in which all may truly be one.

Perhaps it may be said the African is too optimistic in expecting so much from the Church which many contend is but a human institution with all the defects and the frailties associated with human nature, but one wonders whether the African is not wiser in continuing to believe, as he does, that "with God all things are possible"? It is in that spirit alone that Christianity can meet the challenge of modern Africa Today and Tomorrow.
References


Some major studies of African problems during the last quarter of a century have included: