

## II. AREAS OF CONCENTRATION

It seems appropriate for many reasons to focus attention at this conference upon the common factors which facilitate or interfere with effective communal living in areas of race and culture contacts around the world. Analyses thus far completed of the literature available reveal certain common sources of social tension wherever diverse ethnic stocks intermingle; and one of the major functions of the conference will be to examine the nature of these tensions, to determine if possible the universal sequence involved, and to ascertain the most effective means of dealing with them.

The rapidly changing demands for labor and the shifting opportunities for economic advancement have usually set the stage and provided the matrix for race relations in the modern world, and as a consequence, the initial contacts tend to be upon a strictly impersonal basis of economic utility and interdependence. Not always apparent but universally significant under these circumstances is the competition among the ethnic groups for biological survival. At the outset particularly, there is evidence of sharp differences in their reproductive tendencies and in their susceptibilities to disease in the new environment, and the entire pattern of subsequent race relations is frequently governed to a large degree by the nature of this unconscious biological struggle. There is much to be gained for both science and sound administration by a more adequate understanding of what happens at this level of differing racial immunities and fertility. Further case studies of what appears to be the inevitable diminution of differences in the reproduction and biological survival of races within the same environment might assist materially to allay some of the fears and tensions relating to "race suicide" and "population peril."

The widely observed tendency of immigrants to be assigned places in the existing economic structure in accordance with the social status achieved by their ethnic group suggests a second area of interest for the conference. The struggle for economic survival, although assuming an impersonal character at the outset, tends inevitably under the circumstances of modern life to become highly conscious and personal as the process continues. Certainly, one of the major source of racial tension throughout the world is the tendency of the ethnic groups "to get out of place."

The relations of races and people are never for very long merely economic and utilitarian, and no efforts to conceive them in this way have ever been permanently successful. We have imported labor as if it were mere commodity, and sometimes we have been disappointed to find, as we invariably do, that the laborers were human like ourselves. The struggle for existence terminates in a struggle for status, for recognition, for position and prestige. (Robert E. Park, Race and Culture (1950), p. 150.

The barriers of caste or race discrimination which interfere with the free participation in this rivalry for status and position differ markedly, of course, between areas such as Brazil and South Africa and within the same area from time to time. Moreover, the collective frustrations and resentments resulting from the existence of such barriers assume widely different forms. The discovery of such common elements as do exist and the formulation of the more important factors responsible for the varied types of racial cleavages along economic lines might constitute important problems for pre-conference and conference consideration.

Closely associated with the problems just mentioned are the racial stresses and strains in colonial areas arising out of the conflicting values and practices of the self-sufficient native economy on the one hand, and of the invading trading economy of the west on the other. Basic to much of the racial unrest and the associated nationalism in the colonial areas of the world are the conflicts inherent in what Boeke calls economic dualism. Although a number of effective studies of economic dualism have been conducted in separate areas, little has as yet been done to evolve a common body of theory.

At the level of political and administrative relations between racial groups are a number of problems which merit the attention of such a conference. Whether or not all of them should be included depends largely upon the specialists who are available. Because of the complexity and highly sensitive nature of many of the issues here involved, it seems important that the conference avoid over-involvement with administrative detail and concern itself rather with the description of what actually transpires under given conditions and the discovery of principles of effective functioning.

The systems of political sovereignty and of citizenship which have evolved in the critical areas of races and culture contacts are, of course, symptomatic of the type of race relations to be expected. Regardless of the protective powers involved, the nature of the relations between ethnic groups tend to assume a somewhat common pattern in all trusteeships, for example. Similarly in areas more advanced politically, second or third rate citizenship on the part of certain racial elements reflects a disparity in social and economic status which potentially breeds strife. Especially in regions where nominally there is political equality across race lines but political discrimination is widely practiced, the dangers of conflicts are, of course, much greater than if the pretense did not exist. A careful comparison of such areas with reference to the political status of all the ethnic groups involved--of their real positions in contrast to those allegedly conferred by law--might reveal significant and unsuspected points of similarity as well as light upon the points of difference.

The growth of nationalism and the struggle for political self-expression on the part of racial minorities would command considerable attention by the conferring specialists. The comparative effectiveness of contrasted administrative policies--domination, assimilation, and emancipation, to mention only three of the more

general types--might be carried considerably further than has yet been attempted particularly insofar as a few typical cases are presented by well-informed conferees. The importance of a relatively small conference with the possibility of extensive, informal, and off-record discussions among competent specialists is perhaps nowhere more apparent than in this area.

Problems of education and language as affecting race relations become apparent at this point. The policies adopted by the central governments or by the colonizing powers on the racial frontiers with respect to the amount and character of formal education permitted to the minority groups affect very profoundly the attitudes developed within and between the various ethnic groups. Quite apart from official policies, however, the spread of ideas and techniques by the various mass communication media and their effect upon the racial outlook of the so-called colored peoples of the earth has been frequently sensed by scholars but only slightly investigated. The Christian missions have been generally recognized to be among the most influential of the propaganda and educational agencies in colonial areas, but their net effects upon race relations have yet to be determined. The conference might also profitably examine the functioning on the frontier of the various standard languages, as well as of the usual created languages--the plantation creole and the trading pidgin--if only as symbolizing the character of the race relations which exist.

A variety of other social movements and institutions characteristic of the modern ethnic frontiers are known to influence markedly the interaction across racial and cultural lines. The plantation, mine, mission, and trading post--each affords its own unique facilities for interracial contacts and association. The family and tribal organization tend commonly to interfere with interethnic cooperation while labor, religious, and nationalistic movements more commonly facilitate it. Only within the past two decades has any considerable attention been directed to the widespread malaise among colonial people resulting from the detribalization and the atomization of society following contacts with the West. The exotic religious sects and nativistic movements, as well as the more formidable nationalistic movements, represent the collective efforts to reorganize life on a more satisfying basis. The funded knowledge within this field, however, is still surprisingly limited.

Finally, there is much still to be learned about the obliteration of race lines through biological amalgamation. The rate of miscegenation is known to vary strikingly in different parts of the earth, but relatively little has yet been done to formulate precisely the principles governing this phenomenon. The part played by the mixed bloods in facilitating racial crossing and in the total pattern of interracial relations, despite its dramatic and striking character, has still only partially been told.

The striking range of problems available for study by the conference, is of course, both a threat and a challenging promise. Care will need to be rigorously exercised to keep the preliminary research, the prepared papers, and the discussion to the central problems of race relations. The conference cannot--must not attempt to--define the principles affecting all of the topics mentioned in this section. With the proper selection of personnel, adequate preparation, and effective organization and guidance during the sessions, it can, we believe, make significant contributions to both the scientific and the practical knowledge in this critical field.