

There is interest in you JCB

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the separation of the world into two "camps." It has failed to take the kind of generous view of world problems which one finds for example in Stringfellow Barr's Citizens of the World. It has blocked trade with Communist countries. It has acted in fear rather than in faith.

Now it is obvious that one cannot expect much from the Kremlin or from the Chinese Communists, but the point of emphasis is that in our vast military preparation and in our legislation (e.g. the McCarran-Walter Bill) we not only fail to penetrate the iron curtain; we make the division of the world into two camps more definite. The Voice of America may tell what freedom means; but it only strengthens the Soviet leaders in their isolation. To free the satellite nations is a worthy goal; but Mr. Kennan spoke the truth about it. The unlearned observer cannot but remember that although we need a sufficiency of military strength, the armed forces are not likely ever to say "enough!" The big faith in freedom needs the courage to turn, to make its purpose not defense; not victory; but the continuing effort to realize the U.N. goal of one world.

In all this there is also a warning to Christians.

That is the second comment. There must be many millions of professed Christians who have accepted the guilt by association heresy. They have forgotten their faith. Obviously no sensible Christian will want to make himself part of a Communist conspiracy. But does not his very faith say to him that in his personal relations with Communists he has an opportunity to show something of the meaning of that faith. Converting Communists is probably not a very fruitful missionary endeavor; but a Christian can at least make clear that his religion is as concerned as that of any Communist in human welfare and that for him welfare means freedom of the spirit as well as plenty of food. It is high time Christians should wake up to the fact that guilt by association is heresy in those who have committed themselves to Christ. It is their business as loyal Americans as well as loyal Christians to use their heads to help both at home and abroad in driving out the great fear by the great faith; and one might add that seems to mean in foreign policy not only support of the United Nations as an organization but a determination to take every possible step to make the "one world" a reality—foolish? Perhaps; but we might try it.

E. L. P.

A First Glimpse of South Africa

HENRY P. VAN DUSEN

ON this rapid round-the-world flight, I did not intend to visit South Africa. Indeed, if the whole truth be told, I did not very much want to visit South Africa. And for at least two reasons. On the one hand, while recognizing that it is never possible really to understand a situation or people without personal contact, I felt that, through *Cry, The Beloved Country* and countless first-hand accounts, one had a reasonably clear and reliable picture of South Africa which observation could only confirm. On the other hand, what could a visit to South Africa possibly lead to? What can any of us do about it? With such limited time available and the whole of the African continent inviting investigation, far better give every moment to areas where a friendly Christian initiative might hope to gain a leverage toward helpful results.

Only a ceaseless bombardment by letters and wires from friends overcame this reluctance and persuaded me, most unwillingly, to forego a respite at Victoria Falls and hop south between Rhodesia and the Congo for four days in Johannesburg.

They have been among the four most enlightening and valuable days of my life. I fully appreciate the unreliability of first and quick impressions, especially in a situation as complex and tense as this one. But I have had the advantage of the constant com-

panionship and shepherding of probably the ablest and wisest Christian leader of South Africa, of a carefully planned program of first-hand visitation, inspection and conferences, and of a very considerable number of frank and intimate conversations with persons of almost every group and shade of opinion. Certain impressions requiring radical modification of one's over all view of the problem which is South Africa are set down for whatever they may be worth.

The present state of the native Africans.

I have spent many hours visiting residence-areas of every type inhabited by "non-Europeans" — the mining company compounds into which native laborers recruited up-country virtually on an indentured basis are herded for nine-month terms and then shipped back home; the unnumbered communities of one-family homes, many of them quite new, some sponsored by government, others privately owned and operated, which seem to ring Johannesburg; some of the worst of the "shanty towns" pictured in Alan Paton's book and film; the independent towns owned and operated wholly by Africans outside the municipal limits.

In any ideal community, the "company compounds" and the system of labor-employment which

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creates them should not exist. Their worst feature is not the living conditions provided but the uprooting of young men from their communal existence in the rural "reserves" and their transplantation into the demoralizations and dissipations of a great metropolis. Even this is not without its parallels in the life of migrant labor in the United States. The most hopeful feature of this thoroughly bad system is not the provisions for health, recreation and education by some of the more enlightened mining companies, but the fact that here, as elsewhere throughout Africa, increasingly family migration is replacing individual indenture and the increasing provision of family dwellings to make this possible. In Northern Rhodesia, I was told that close to fifty per cent of the migration from native communities to industrial centers is now by families.

Some of the communities of one-family homes for native Africans are among the most attractive "garden villages" which I have seen anywhere in the world—well-built two or three room dwellings with plenty of open space between and acres of open ground round about, many of them with well-cultivated flower and truck gardens, adequately supplied with school and recreation facilities. By comparison, the sweltering tenements of our large cities are festering by incubators of physical and moral disease. Even the "shanty towns" struck me as far less unhealthy and undesirable living places than the tumble-down Negro shacks on the outskirts of almost any city in the deep South.

By all odds, the most disturbing type of residence situation is the independent communities outside the metropolitan boundaries which are entirely owned, operated, governed and policed by the Africans themselves. Not primarily because of crowded and unsanitary living conditions, but because of the absence of minimal structures of law and order. These must be the principal breeding grounds of lawlessness and immorality.

Scattered through the native residence areas are schools, playgrounds, and community centers, very largely church-sponsored, which, while far less plentiful and well-equipped than the ideal, are less inadequate than corresponding facilities in many American cities. Even this present government with its futile cry of *apartheid* and vicious doctrine of race superiority is doing vastly more for its native population by way of health, educational and recreational facilities than I would have supposed; vastly more, be it confessed, than all too many American communities with congested Negro districts.

What of the persons who inhabit these varied communities? I can only report that they give every appearance of being markedly healthier, happier and better contented than their brothers of black skin, in any corresponding Negro community with which I am familiar, north or south, in the United States.

Nor are these comparisons applicable only to

South Africa. For the past two weeks, I have been travelling steadily through East, Central and South Africa—Uganda, Kenya, Tankanyika, the Rhodesias, as well as the Union. I have seen tens of thousands of Africans, on country roads and city streets, on farms and in shops; and I have talked with some scores of them. I have yet to see a body as ill-nourished or a face as tense and discontented as meet me by the dozens daily in New York subways and streets. I have yet to pass through an African residence area which has stirred within me that vague apprehension and mood of hopelessness which overwhelm me every time I stray two hundred yards from my own home into Harlem.

This is not for one moment to say that the situation is idyllic or anything like what it should and could be. It is to say two other things. On the one hand, that basic human conditions are, as of today, less depressing and less alarming than parallels at home; in consequence, the problem, vast and intractable as it appears, is not *intrinsicly* insoluble. On the other hand, it is to focus attention on the real heart of that problem — the attitudes and policies of the white population. The future hangs on that. Whether today's possibilities deteriorate into hopeless conflict and chaos depends wholly on the "Europeans."

The present political situation.

In the States, we hear almost altogether of Dr. Malan and his Nationalist advocates of *apartheid*. Their grip upon South Africa today is far less secure than often supposed; their dominance over South Africa tomorrow is almost certainly doomed.

No one will venture a confident prediction of the outcome of the forthcoming general election, scheduled for April. Many believe the Nationalists will be crowded out by the Union Party (moderates) by a small margin. One of the leaders of the latter was quoted to me as saying he hoped his party would *not* come to power; their margin of control might be too slim to permit effective reversal of present policies.

The severest and most unqualified indictments of the Nationalists and *apartheid* are not being framed in Europe or America but in South Africa. Johannesburg is a center of British rather than Afrikaans influence. I have been reading every word of its two excellent daily papers. Their condemnation of Malan and all his works make Pittsburg's hatred of Truman and the New-Fair Deal seem, by comparison, mild approbation.

In any event, two facts about the future appear beyond challenge. *First*, the extremists *within* the Nationalist Party are gaining control of it. Whether they win or lose the next election, Malan will shortly retire and be replaced by a far more violent and irrational leader. Therefore, a Nationalist victory portends worse days for South Africa and the world

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in the immediate future. But, *second*, in the long run and probably not too long, the Nationalist extremism is doomed. Not only is the determined opposition of more moderate counsels and policies strong and steadily gaining strength. Extreme Nationalism is pitting itself against inexorable forces in the very nature of the situation which can be temporarily retarded but which cannot ultimately be halted. These forces are economic as well as political and humanitarian. Economic power lies largely with the non-Afrikaan elements of the population, indissolubly linked by tradition and by self-interest with foreign capital and overseas trade. Through these channels, the judgment and conscience of the world may make its influence most effectively felt within South Africa. The extremists, in the familiar Dutch figure, are desperate men, sticking their fingers into the ever more numerous and ever enlarging holes in the dyke. Many believe that, at least subconsciously, they sense this inevitability of history. The "wave of the future" bears the cause not of Nationalism but of moderation.

Indeed, in the longer view, the most ominous current development on the African continent may be, not the temporary triumph of reaction in South Africa, but the pending Federation in Central Africa, which may impose on Northern Rhodesia and Tanganyika the scheme of white supremacy dominant in Southern Rhodesia, which is itself a projection of South African attitudes and policies northward.

Even the Afrikaaners leadership is by no means without its elements of light and vision. Certainly the most exciting and possibly the most promising conference I have had was with the Commission on the Socio-Economic Development of the Native Areas within the Union of South Africa. The Commission was appointed by the present Government. Its nine members are all, or almost all, Afrikaaners. But they are scholars of competence and wide knowledge, several of whom have studied at first hand the race problem in the United States and elsewhere. They are engaged in a three year inquiry, and expect to present their findings and recommendations by the end of 1953. Their assignment is to develop a comprehensive, long-range and inclusive policy for the "reserved areas," the vast and potentially rich tracts of land mostly along the east coast which are reserved exclusively for native residence and use where five-eighths of the native Africans still live.

I have seldom met a more competent or enlightened group of highly trained and informed social scientists. They have taken as the base-line, determinative of all their recommendations, "the human factor," that is the welfare of the peoples concerned. And their guiding principle is that all proposals must hold in view and be devised to further the *total* advance of the population, not merely economic progress but economic, educational, social, cultural and spiritual factors in their organic unity (perhaps

an echo of General Smuts' "Holism"?). The fact that the focus of their attention is upon the "native areas" and presupposes the continuing residence of a majority of the Africans within these "reserved" territories opens their proposals to the suspicion of being "enlightened apartheidism." This they fully recognize and emphatically disavow. Their work-rooms are crowded with maps, charts and data on every aspect of the African people, their potentialities and their problems. For example, they have detailed evidence of the well nigh limitless economic potential of the "reserved areas." And they have great and soundly conceived plans for their progressive transformation from recommendations they will sponsor. And we know only too well the long step between formulation by experts and implementation by politicians. Nevertheless, this Commission is a heartening evidence that *some* Afrikaaners are seeking to conceive a worthy future for the Africans, and may hold promise that, once the curse of white superiority dogma is surrendered, the best elements of "Dutch" and "British" ancestry might join hands in constructive measures. In any event, their forthcoming report is worth watching for.

The role of the Churches.

The uniqueness of the South African problem lies in two facts. On the one hand, the complicated and tragic racial situation with which we are well familiar. On the other hand, the less widely recognized influence of the Churches. While there are some Catholics and not a few Jews (the present mayor of Johannesburg is an able and delightful orthodox Jew), the religion of South Africa is predominantly Protestant, largely Dutch Reformed. It might be held that South Africa is the most nearly "Protestant Country" on earth. As is well known, Dutch Reformed theologians have developed a Scriptural justification, based largely on isolated Old Testament passages and a tortured perversion of the great Pauline vision of the transcendence in Christ of all racial discriminations, for the separation of the races and even for white superiority. This has furnished religious sanction for the worst features of Afrikaans' nationalism and apartheid.

Dr. Visser 't Hooft, in his brilliant and informative "Report of a Visit to South Africa" has advanced the thesis that the fulcrum of South Africa's future lies within the Dutch Reformed Churches. And there were those at the recent Lucknow meeting of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches who would have used this consideration to silence any forthright declaration on racial discrimination which might offend the Afrikaaners. Only yesterday, the able Director of the South African Institute of Race Relations, Mr. Quinton White, declared to the Institute meeting, "I believe the Dutch Reformed Church is the key to the situation in South Africa."

Far be it for a casual visitor after a few days' observation to challenge such authority. But I cannot stifle doubts. Of course, the key to the problem is in the hands of the Dutch Reformed Churches in somewhat the same sense that the key to the race problem in the American South has always been in the hands of the white southern Protestant Churches, if they could bring themselves to use their power. Our recent history shows all too tragically that, in fact, the southern churches as such have *not* been a decisive factor for radical and adequate racial advance. Nothing I have seen in these few days here has encouraged the hope that the South African Dutch Reformed Churches will rise to their Christian opportunity and duty.

There are two other great Protestant forces in South Africa. One is the so-called "free churches"—Methodist, Presbyterian, Anglican, Congregationalist, etc., most of them with very sizable African as well as "European" memberships. Within their leaderships are many men of crystal-clear insight and forthright courage; for example, the great Methodist Church of South Africa with over 1,000,000 Africans and 130,000 "Europeans," mostly of British stock. Second is the group of native African Churches, in addition to the large African numbers within the Free Churches. Among these two groups are most of those who see the present tragedy of South Africa in a truly Christian perspective and who have constructive proposals for its resolution. Moreover, they look out into an uncertain and painful future, not with despair but with hope born of a sound appraisal of the historic realities and sustained by Christian faith. I suspect that it is a counsel, not only of Christian brotherhood but also of shrewd statesmanship, to fasten our attention and our hopes upon them. Certainly nothing would more strengthen their hands than the understanding sympathy and support of fellow-Christians elsewhere in their struggle for a truly Christian South Africa.

A Man and His Idea

JUSTIN WROE NIXON

THERE are times when those who work with a leader in any worthy field of activity become unusually aware of what they owe to him both as a person and as a symbol of the task in which he has been engaged.

Such a time has come to the friends and associates of Dr. F. Ernest Johnson who retired at the beginning of this year as Secretary of the Central Department of Research and Survey of the National Council of Churches. Because Dr. Johnson has been a member of the Editorial Board of *Christianity and Crisis* from its beginning, and because it has been his peculiar vocational responsibility to deal with "crises" in public affairs, it seems appropriate to put

down here some reflections on the significance of his work. There is promise for the future in his work. If the churches can see what that promise is, it may help them to determine priorities in the development of their policies and programs in these fateful days.

Ernest Johnson's work can be seen in adequate perspective only against the background of the report of the Interchurch World Movement on the steel strike of 1919-20, issued more than thirty years ago. The strike began in September 1919. The investigation of the steel strike by churchmen was authorized at a conference called by Interchurch leaders in New York the following month. The strike failed, and it came to an end in January 1920, but the committee of churchmen under the leadership of Bishop McConnell continued their investigation and released their report in June 1920. Shortly thereafter the Interchurch World Movement collapsed.

Those who had been interested in this effort of churchmen to get at the facts in a situation of industrial conflict wondered what to do next. Someone recalled that at the conference when the investigation of the steel strike was authorized, the Interchurch leaders had distributed to each person present a little book entitled "The New Spirit in Industry" written by F. Ernest Johnson, a young minister who had made a study of the strike in the textile mills of Lawrence, Massachusetts. The Interchurch Movement was gone, but Mr. Johnson remained. He had become the Secretary of the newly established Research Department of the Social Service Commission of the Federal Council of Churches. Why not encourage the development of research into industrial and other social conditions through the Federal Council and Mr. Johnson? The suggestion took hold. The leaders of the Federal Council were favorable. Ernest Johnson, accordingly, entered upon what was to be the main part of his life work.

From 1920 on, the Research Department of the Social Service Commission (which became in 1924 an independent department of the Federal Council) pursued the task of making special studies of critical social situations. In the earlier work of the Department, studies of situations characterized by economic tension predominated. As the years passed other types of problems also came into the picture.

The most controversial of the studies made by Dr. Johnson and his Department was that on "The Prohibition Situation," issued in 1925. It was published in full in the *Herald Tribune* and it made front page news for a week in the *New York Times*. It was the subject of more than five hundred editorials in the nation's press. It was a sensation because it took a far more objective view of the workings of Prohibition than people were accustomed to find in church circles.

The most immediately influential of these studies was that on "The Twelve Hour Day in the Steel