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## Racial Antagonism.

[1952-53]

The subject of our discourse tonight is Racial Antagonism, and it is in my <sup>a rather significant thing</sup> opinion, that in this series of addresses on "Christ and the World's Need" this topic should be brought to our attention at the very earliest opportunity. This is a great tribute to Christ in whose life and principles Christians and <sup>non-Christians</sup> ~~others~~ may agree in finding illustrated to a pre-eminent degree the determination to adopt not merely a national or international but a universal, nay an eternal attitude towards all the problems of life, and with amazing success. Moreover ~~this~~ Great Man perceived, as many other great men before and since his time have perceived that the greatest struggles of life, the greatest victories and the most ignominious defeats of man have lain and will always lie, not in the relation of man to his natural environment nor in his relation to the rest of the animal kingdom, but in the field of human relations. Human experience shows abundantly that there is nothing which tests the intrinsic worth of either an individual or a group of individuals as much as encounter with other individuals or other groups of men. And so when we are considering the world's need in the search for the highest principles upon which we ought to base our relationships with one another one ventures to suggest that we shall find it in the pitting of the last resources of human energy and intelligence and faith against the mental and moral disease of racial antagonism. For racial antagonism is an undeniable fact in human relationships, sometimes looming large and alarmingly on the horizon in certain countries, assuming at other times all kinds of subtle and insidious forms in the lives of individuals, ~~and~~ nations and races and so remaining unrecognised, lulling us into a false self-complacency that we are free from it until some crisis reveals it in all its ugliness. Some of us attempt to explain it away, others are simply indifferent to it especially when it does not seem to affect their fortunes in this world, while many live in the fond hope that it will in time disappear. But no rationalisation, no mere indifference and no facile optimism

will be of material assistance to us in facing up to this, nor indeed any other difficult problem.

We hear a great deal in these days about ~~how~~ how race relations are going to be improved, in fact revolutionised by the scientific approach to the problem. The expression 'race relations' ~~is~~ in itself represents a great advance ~~in~~ the direction of the removal of 'racial antagonism'. For instead of the attitude of race prejudice based on ignorance, mutual recriminations and morbid sentimentality, we hope to find a dispassionate, disinterested pursuit of the facts of the case and the building up of a constructive programme based on expert knowledge on the relevant objective data. But lest we become too sanguine in our expectations, let us remember that facts themselves vary in their nature from subject to subject. As someone has said, "the Race Question is not only a scientific one in the sense that it relates to objective facts--health facts, economic facts, facts of political rights and disabilities, facts of social barriers and discriminations; but facts of this sort are indissolubly linked with facts of another "subjective sort--with the feelings and emotions, thoughts and desires of human beings. The student of race relations has to note, e.g. not only ~~that~~ the objective fact that in South Africa, the politically dominant whites impose upon the Blacks, the Coloured and the Indian such and such restrictions and laws, but also what on the one side, those subject to these laws feel about them, and on the other, what convictions, ideals, moral choices, influenced the people who imposed them". It is probably in the latter realm, the realm of ideas and ideals, of standards of value, that the root of racial antagonism lies. Unless our unexpressed assumptions, our conceptions of the meaning and the worth of human personality, the motives by which we are actuated, in a word <sup>our</sup> the ultimate faith--unless this imperceptible foundation on which we stand can bear examination, the superstructure of so-called facts will be of no avail. If faith without works is dead, works without the right faith ~~can~~ be positively pernicious.

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It is not part of my purpose tonight to indicate what that right faith in these matters is. That is a task for greater minds, superior knowledge and wider experience than I can lay claim to. What I do want to emphasise is, as I see it, the danger of going on collecting and collating facts without ever stopping to inquire into the validity of the premises on which we are basing our work. The purpose of a Mission such as this is, I take it, to call our attention to the necessity of the scrutiny of these fundamental philosophies--or the lack of them--by which our lives are guided.

Partly because of my personal limitations and partly in order to give point and a certain amount of concreteness to the discussion of a subject which so readily lends itself to indulgence in meaningless generalities, we shall make the South African situation the basis of our observations. At the outset and as a South African who yields to none in his loyalty to his country I share with other South Africans a deep-seated resentment against the by no means uncommon misapprehension that what that country needs as regards her racial problems is advice from outside and have on at least one occasion been partly responsible for wrecking a scheme by non-whites in the country for procuring outside interference with Union Native Policy. For I believe that just as interested party cannot invariably be a fair judge of his own cause, an entirely disinterested person, if such there be, is not an infallible judge of every situation. But there is an international aspect in the racial tension which exists in that country for it illustrates the kind of thing we are likely to run up against in any new territory that is to be developed either through the economic exploitation of its natural resources or by settlement or both. There are vast tracts of land in Africa and elsewhere which are in the course of being developed on much the same lines as South Africa, and it will naturally be the aim of those concerned in that development to do it in such a way as to produce as little racial friction as possible, and in that connection South African

experience may prove of great value. The problem in each case will be "the construction of a State or a political unit which is not only economically united, but in which responsibility for the backward indigenous peoples is not shirked, a unit which is not afraid to move in step with the great changes which are taking place in the world-view of cultural relationships and the desire to base them on a higher appreciation of human dignity, white as well as black," a unit which is keenly alive to the fact that the reputation of a country is enhanced, not only by Dominion Status, trade agreements with similar political units, threats of neutrality in the event of World Wars, the prompt payment of international debts, but also by the merits of its internal administration.

Population. The population of South Africa is made up as follows:-

White	1,828,175
Bantu	5,519,500
Asiatic	191,400
Coloured	592,400

making a total of somewhat over 8 millions.

There is a tendency on the part of writers and even more so on the part of speakers on the South African situation to regard that country as having only one problem, namely either the White or the Black problem. Reference to the existence of either the Asiatic or the Coloured problem is often conspicuous by its absence. Yet an adequate sketch of the South African picture must include reference to the interrelations and the interactions of the non white groups one upon another as rather different contributory factors to the complexities of the question. The animosities between these groups, albei<sup>t</sup> they are not expressed in definite legislative measures are nevertheless real. Thus there are separate school systems for Indian, Coloured and Bantu in the different provinces where their numbers justify this procedure, and it is <sup>almost</sup> as difficult for a Native child to get into some Coloured or Indian schools as it is to procure admission into a white school; the social circles of these groups are almost completely closed to members of other groups; they conform to different cultural patterns; they regard ~~they~~ their political destiny as different, the Coloureds always hoping for ultimate absorption by the

white group, the Indian reluctant to sever his connection with India completely, as the presence of an Agent-General for India in the country reminds us, the Bantu convinced that their future ~~does~~ does not demand making common cause with the other groups. The attempt of some of the intelligent leaders of all three groups to bring them together in order to present a united front against the white man have been frustrated by the dangling of faint hopes in front of the Coloured, for example, <sup>the hope</sup> of a grant of political freedom in the near future, by the better support of Indian and Coloured education, by the absence of Pass Laws for the Coloured in most of the provinces of the Union.

On the other hand it is common knowledge that the white group, consisting mainly of English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking people is by no means homogeneous as far as cultural background, political, economic and other interests are concerned. Between the two main sections of this group there has been much bitterness in the past as a result of struggles over supremacy in different parts of the country. Even the recent statesmanlike attempt of Generals Hertzog and Smuts to compose their differences in the now famous Fusion Party there will be an uphill fight against the racial animosities of the past. How much this Fusion will result in the material improvement of the lot of all sections of the population remains to be seen. One ventures to hope that the fears which are being expressed in non-white circles that this Fusion means confusion for them ~~will~~ will prove to be unfounded.

Meantime all the different groups are striving strenuously to maintain their separate identity and with the possible exception of certain sections of the Coloured group, there is strong opposition among ~~them~~ them, for absorption ~~among~~ by any other group. It would be true to say that there is no piece of Union legislation over which there is more general agreement in South Africa than the Immorality Act which prohibits sexual relations between black and white, and the strong tacit understanding that white shall marry white and black shall marry black, all sections being

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in favour of race purity whatever it is worth and keeping a watchful eye over tendencies in the opposite direction.

Yet broadly speaking it is true that the major problem with which South Africa is going to be ~~xxxxx~~ occupied for many years to come is that of the relations between the White group and the Bantu group. One of the peculiarities of the situation is that both these dominant groups are strangers to the country, the original inhabitants, namely the Bushmen and the Hottentots having practically died out. The <sup>original</sup> home of the Bantu <sup>in Africa</sup> has not yet been definitely located; what seems certain, however, is that they migrated from it towards the South, driving before them the Bushmen and the Hottentots until they encountered more formidable opponents in the Europeans who had entered the country from the South and were making their way northwards. The ensuing struggle was settled in favour of powder and shot, and so the whites hold the country principally by conquest, although they made their way into some parts by peaceful penetration. The greatest concern of a conquering group after their victory, especially when settlement is one of its primary objectives, is security and consequently all real power in any sphere is concentrated in the hands of the victors and only grudgingly are the advantages of that power extended to members of the subject groups. The situation is accentuated when there is such an obvious thing as difference of race, colour, religion, cultural background or level of civilisation which can be made the pretext for the denial of admission to the rights and privileges of the power-holding group. Thus the problem of racial antagonism in South Africa and in other parts of Africa such as Southern Rhodesia, Kenya, etc. resolves itself into one of the use or the abuse of Power. This will be illustrated by the consideration of a few aspects of South African life in which bad race relationships may be said to exist. To start with the political situation. A perusal of the South Africa Act makes it very clear that the non-whites have a very precarious place in the political arrangements of the country. This conclusion may be based on the following facts:-

- (i) Only people of European descent may become members of Parliament
- (ii) with the exception of those parts of the country, e.g. the Cape Province and to a highly limited degree, Natal where the franchise had already been granted to and exercised by non-whites, only persons of Europeans of European descent are allowed to vote in the election of Members of Parliament.

Even the minor advantage enjoyed by the non-white here becomes of little significance when it is remembered that since Union the Electoral Laws have been altered so as to give adult suffrage to both white men and women, while the educational and property qualifications required from male non-white voters have been retained. At the present moment the non-white electors do not constitute more than about 2% of the total electorate, and when it is remembered that they represent the poorest section of the population and that the educational opportunities which they are accorded are very meagre, their chances of increasing this proportion become all the more remote. Now this position is defensible on the ground that to act in any other way would jeopardise white civilisation in South Africa. White civilisation in South Africa <sup>- and there is a surprising amount of it -</sup> has been built up under great difficulties, in a country of frequent droughts, dried up rivers, locust invasions and other pestilential visitations which make agriculture almost impossible, whose only salvation is its wealth in minerals, cut off from the rest of the world by thousands of miles of ocean. In a situation such as this any pioneering group may well be pardoned for being so preoccupied with working out their own salvation that they remain oblivious that other people also have salvations to work out and cultures to maintain. No native outside ~~xxx~~ a lunatic asylum will refuse to admit that the white man has a perfect right to ~~xxxxxxx~~ defend his civilisation with all the intelligence and power at his command, but everyone claims that white civilisation must not and need not be preserved at the expense of or to the detriment of native development. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ The Native, along with other non-whites, has been dragged, almost against his will, into at least the economic system upon which white civilisation in South Africa has been built up, and however humble his contribution to that development may have been, he will never rest satisfied while he has no effective voice in the bodies that

control the country. Of course the wholesale application of a system of government such as the parliamentary system, evolved elsewhere in countries with fairly homogeneous populations in a land with a mixed population with differing racial and cultural backgrounds might well be viewed with suspicion. But as the white man is himself responsible for transplanting this system of government, the onus is upon him to reform it in such a way as to give effect to the true aim of democratic government, namely to give the governed, all the governed, an effective voice in the sovereign body of the State.

Now it may be further argued that the Native is not entirely without some voice in the country. The Cape Franchise, whittled down though it is, is still of some use; in the preponderantly Native territories such as the Transkei he has his Native Council which affords him a measure of self-government; by the Native Affairs Act of 1926 the government is empowered to convene from time to time a conference of Native representatives to ascertain their views on projected legislation affecting Natives; under the same act has been appointed a Native Affairs Commission designed to advise <sup>the</sup> government on similar matters; the upper house of parliament includes four members nominated by the government in virtue of their acquaintance through official experience or other-wise with the reasonable wants and wishes of the Native population; finally Natives may become members of the Cape Provincial Council. All these channels provide the Native population with some opportunity of ventilating their views, but the crop of restrictive legislation passed since Union, especially within the last ten years, has proved their inadequacy. Native Councils of the kind referred to above are measures of local instead-of self-government much in the same way as Municipal Councils are for the Whites; they cannot be regarded as a substitute for representation ~~in parliament~~ in Parliament. The same argument applies to the annual Government conference, the Native Affairs Commission and the Native Advisory Boards- <sup>in urban areas</sup> they are parts of the administrative machinery which is absolutely indispensable for the proper government of the ~~count~~



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country. But they are not adequate substitutes for representation in the supreme Legislative authority is being increasingly realised in South Africa. General Hertzog has been grappling with that problem for the last ten years and speaking for myself I have some faith in the general principles along which he is endeavouring to find a solution namely to devise a plan which will grant both black and white a measure of representation in parliament which will assure both groups equality of security. How far the details of his proposals will allay the suspicion of the black man that his future is in danger remains to be seen.

The Land Situation. The political situation of the Native affects every aspect of his life, and none more than his rights to land. The land policy of the Union is laid down in the Native Land Act of 1913 which in effect divided the country into two sets of areas, one in which Natives only and another in which non-Natives only would be allowed to acquire rights of purchase, hire or occupation except under certain stringent conditions. The net result of the Act so far has been that over 80 per cent of the country is set aside for non-Native, and the rest for Native, purchase or occupation. Bearing in mind the relative proportion of Black and White populations, the inadequacy of the Native areas will be readily admitted. Against this must be set the following facts:-

- (i) Much of the land in white areas is very poor, although they were in possession of most of it prior to the Act, while a fair proportion of it is in the Cape Province to which the Act does not apply.
- (ii) Much of the land set aside for Natives is good land, but this was also in Native occupation prior to the Act.
- (iii) Europeans with their better knowledge of agriculture can make much better use of land and are therefore on the ground of beneficial occupation entitled to more land than the Native with his backward methods of agriculture and his simple wants.

But although the inadequacy of the land set aside for Native occupation is not seriously questioned by anybody, two attempts to remedy this state on the basis of the Reports of Government Commissions appointed to go into the question of additional native areas have proved abortive, because nobody, even among the ardent supporters of territorial segregation is willing to sacrifice another acre for Native areas. Meantime the years are passing by; every-

everybody is becoming more and more attached to their farms, making more and more impracticable an enlightened form of segregation which might have proved useful. This is a good lesson for those new territories in Africa which are in process of being opened up. It is gratifying to note, for example, that Southern Rhodesia has quite early in the history of responsible government in that area set aside fairly reasonable proportions of land for Black and White before they are so inextricably mixed up as to make a fair allocation impossible.

The ~~XXXXXXXX~~ Native areas are so overcrowded with people and live-stock that they are not able to support the population which they hold at present. This is largely due to Native ignorance of intensive methods of agriculture. But better methods of cultivation require an extensive programme of agricultural education--the value of this has been proved in the Transkei where Native agricultural demonstrators are doing much to improve matters. But better methods of cultivation require the staying of able-bodied men in the Reserves both to undergo the <sup>necessary</sup> education and to carry out farming operations. An extensive agricultural programme will require capital which the Native is too poor and the White too chary to provide. Such an agriculturally educated Native population would tend to be more and more reluctant to seek employment in white industry and on white farms, and that will interfere with vested interests which have depended for many years on the Labour of the Native. As it is the gold mines employ nearly 80 thousand Portuguese Natives, 2000 from north of latitude 22' and a fair proportion from the Protectorates. Almost every good agricultural year in the Native Reserves affects their labour supply and any permanent improvement of the agricultural situation ~~in~~ in the Reserves would damage the labour market of white industry and with proper marketing Native produce would compete with that of the white farmer. Moreover at the moment ~~there~~ over 2 million Natives live outside the Reserves on white farms and rural areas ~~and~~ form the nucleus of the labour supply of the farmer. Increase the land available for Natives, improve their agriculture and you may expect at any rate for

a time that this labour supply of farmer will be seriously affected. Consequently any thoroughgoing programme of agricultural development in increased Native areas would appear to be almost suicidal for the white man. Hence the necessity for such Acts as the Native Service Contract Act of 1932 which tie the Native, together with his children up to the age of 18, as effectively as possible to the white farmer on whose land he resides as a labour tenant, the reason that this done in the interest of parental authority in the Native family not being very convincing.

But not only is the Native impaled between the arduous conditions of labour tenancy on the white farm and the precarious living it is possible for him to make in the overcrowded Native Reserves, but he is faced by another foe in the shape of the white labourer who is succeeding in getting reserved for himself all the skilled occupations in industry as a result of the Colour Bar Act of 1926 which primarily affects the Mines but has had repercussions in other spheres of labour. Thus the Native appears to be deprived of the opportunity of a rise in industry based on merit. But unfortunately not every white labourer is a skilled worker and therefore not satisfied with ousting the black man from his potentialities in skilled work the white labourer invades even unskilled forms of work hitherto done by the Native. Even wage determinations which purport to make no difference between the black and the white worker are made sufficiently high to make it worth the while of the employer to use "civilised" (i.e. non-Native labour). While on the face of it the Native cannot complain about the greater employment of the white, the fact that the whole weight of government machinery and revenue is thrown into this necessary assistance for the white labourer while there is no corresponding attention to the needs of both the skilled and unskilled <sup>Native</sup> workers, the situation cannot escape criticism.

A final word about Native education. The number of Native children of school going age is well over one and a quarter millions, but of these only some three hundred and ninety eight thousand are actually at school in any one year. This means that roughly only about twenty five percent of the children of school going age are being educated.

Native education is financed by means of the proceeds of a special tax imposed on all male Natives <sup>from</sup> between the ages of eighteen <sup>upwards</sup> and sixty unless specially exempted. The total amount spent on Native education is thus dependent upon the increase of adult males rather than upon the educational needs of the people concerned. The amount actually spent according to the latest figures is roughly about seven hundred pounds, <sup>THOUSAND</sup> the rest of the cost of Native education being borne by missions and by the Native parents who have to pay school fees. It is estimated that about four million pounds would have to be spent <sup>annually</sup> by the government if the problem of Native education were adequately attended to. Against this set the fact that white education is compulsory and therefore very largely free; that the government spends approximately sixteen pounds per capita for the education of white children while the corresponding amount is approximately two pounds per Native child; that white education is financed from General Revenue and Native education from the proceeds of a special tax, and you will find it difficult to resist the conclusion that South Africa does not believe in the general value of education.

*Education as a mixed blessing - separate & the big*

One could go on to deal with other aspects of Native disabilities

but time does not permit. Suffice it to say that the reaction of the subject peoples to this policy is the development of a race consciousness and a spirit of nationalism <sup>which</sup> based on bitterness which becomes all the stronger the more hopeless their <sup>of the people concerned</sup> future appears, and which is by no means mitigated by the efforts of those who, observing this rising tide of race consciousness seek to divert <sup>it</sup> into purely cultural or religious channels. Thus in this struggle the subject people in the long run include among their enemies even such apparently altruistic people as the missionary, the anthropologist, the educationist, and scientific students of the race question <sup>may sympathize & console them, but</sup> who seem utterly unable to release them from the strangulation which affects so many aspects of their life.

*It is this limitation of people's contacts*

Slowly but surely in spite of the restrictive laws, against agitation, public meetings, etc. experience - and there is no better school is creating a strong bond between all classes of Natives which spells no good for race relations in South Africa. It is this searing of the soul of a people which makes racial antagonism so pernicious and which demands that men of good will, especially among the rising generations should employ all their intelligence, courage and will in working together for the removal of race prejudice both in themselves and in others.