

*Peaceful
transition
from British
colonialism*

In the end, because of two world wars, and the fact that Communism allied itself to "freedom", the change from direct rule had to be made faster than one would have wished.

Democracy is a complicated matter of checks and balances, and of minority rights, and the African countries in particular had not absorbed the tolerances that are necessary to make the system work at the time when the transfer of power had to be made.

Agitation for independence had created a situation in which the colonizing powers had to choose between continuing rule by force and the risk of giving home rule that was premature. In the event, the actual physical transition in the case of Britain was peaceful. The Union Jack was hauled down, and the national flags were substituted with honour and with rejoicing.

There was one feature in the process that was common to each individual transfer of power. With only one exception, we handed over our authority to governments that were drawn from the majority of the population. The single case to the contrary was South Africa at an earlier date. It was a natural thing to do at the time. The white population, composed of people of Dutch and British descent, had pioneered the development of the country and had made it rich and influential. They had also, in a sense, won the right to self-government and independence from the British by their conduct of the Boer War.

It is true that the population, black and white, had grown up side by side in separate communities but, under a liberal-minded man like General Smuts, the system did not attract serious criticism, for it was assumed that it would in time draw Africans into business and into government. A constitution was therefore drawn up with all the necessary provisions for human rights and the protection of minorities which goes with democracy.

Apartheid

It was not until Dr. Malan and Dr. Verwoerd began to preach the positive virtues of *apartheid*, and to thrust it down people's throats so that none could ignore its cruelties and injustice, that international opinion was stirred to indignation and Africans to boycott. It was on this issue that South Africa had to leave the Commonwealth. On this issue the United Nations has constantly passed resolutions urging reform of the system; while it is this issue upon which the U.S.S.R. continues to play in order to pose as the champion of the oppressed Africans.

Africa, but no credit for it will be given so long as the *apartheid* laws are as dis-

There is much that is good in South Africa, but it is discriminatory and offensive to the dignity of man as they are at present.

The early African settlers, aided and abetted by the Dutch Reformed Church, looked upon the African as "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for the master race. Mr. Vorster, the present Prime Minister, has made some progress towards diluting the worst features of the creed, and for this he is finding increasing support. But, until measures of a much more far-reaching character are taken, South Africa will not be a harmonious country, and will not be fully accepted by international opinion.

This has unhappy consequences in other fields, for South Africa ought to be one of the bastions of the security of the free world. Capetown and Simonstown are ideally placed for joint naval policing of the Indian Ocean and the South Atlantic.

Rhodesia is a very different case. Unlike the settlement of South Africa by Europeans, who met the Zulus in fierce battle before they gained possession of their land, the European penetration of Rhodesia was a peaceful progress. The country was sparsely populated, and although the Mashonas and the Matabeles were recognized and cohesive tribes they were wandering populations moving about to hunt and to find their food.

When Cecil Rhodes arrived, the land lay open for development, and its fertility for certain crops was proved — in particular, tobacco. The white pioneers used the Africans as labourers to create their farms, and established a fixed agricultural tenure. They were paternal, and when the Church came into the growing communities, it was the Christian Church (predominantly the Church of Scotland), which preached the equality of man in the sight of God. In terms of race relations, Rhodesia got off to a far better start than its larger and richer southern neighbour.

Such confidence had Britain in Southern Rhodesia that, although it did not qualify for Dominion status like Australia, New Zealand, Canada or South Africa, it nevertheless had so much autonomy that from 1923 there was virtually no intervention in its internal affairs. When Sir Godfrey Huggins (later Lord Malvern) and Sir Roy Welensky were Prime Ministers, they used to attend as a courtesy the meetings of the Commonwealth prime ministers.

The economy of Rhodesia, then, was essentially agricultural, and the African was the farm labourer, though there were