

# SOUTH AFRICA REVISITED

## The European View

### EDITOR'S NOTE

In a recent issue of the Gazette, there appeared an article by Mark Acuff concerning the present state of affairs in the Republic of South Africa. Mr. Acuff took a very critical view of the policies of the present South African Government, intimating that all the reprehensible policies of the Hitler regime in Germany were being reproduced in the Republic at present, and left the impression that a revolution in South Africa is not far off, and the sooner it comes, the better, always assuming, of course, that it will be successful.

### A KNOWLEDGEABLE WITNESS

The Gazette now presents an interview with a man who is intimately acquainted with matters in that part of the world, and who, moreover has been a constant and highly competent contributor to the Gazette in past years. Our interviewee this week is none other than Mr. Alan Abbott, a post-graduate student in Political Science, and a citizen of Southern Rhodesia. Mr. Abbott has also spent considerable time in the Republic of South Africa, and is by reason of his studies, intimately aware of the situation as it presently exists in that country.

Q. In your opinion, is the system known as "apartheid" morally justified?

A. The political philosophy of apartheid is not put forward, nor practised, on the basis of morality, but on the basis of what the South African Govt. considers to be necessity. Morality is a relative concept. The situation in South Africa, as the majority of white South Africans see it, is that their civilization and their culture would be extinguished if they were to adopt a policy of integration or multi-racialism. This is not to say that they are right or wrong in this assessment; I am merely stating what most South Africans consider to be the case.

### WHITE MAN BUILT COUNTRY

Yet it is true, I think, that almost anything of value in South Africa is a consequence of the white man's having put it there, and, therefore, there is some justification to the white South African's claim that the modern South Africa of today is his to arrange or dispose of as he sees fit. Whether "apartheid" - that is, the enforced separation of the races - (not the domination of one by the other) is morally justified in an absolute sense, I am not prepared to say, but I would say that the whole elaborate structure of apartheid is undertaken by South Africans with a view to ensuring that the cultural and moral standards which they embrace are not supplanted by the values of an alien culture. This desire on the part of white South Africans is reasonable enough of itself, and they would claim that apartheid is the only means of effecting it.

### IS APARTHEID RACISM?

Q. Does not apartheid, as practised today, or the system, at least, which is at present to be found in the Republic of South Africa entail, in fact, the domination of one race by the other? If so, what is your view on this point?



A. One has to distinguish between theory and practice. In terms of theory, the political doctrine of apartheid does not envisage the domination of one race by another. If I may borrow an expression from American constitutional history, apartheid suggests the formula of "separate but equal". This in itself, represents a change from the earlier Afrikaaner concept of "baaskap". However, there is little doubt in my mind that, in the event, the white race as a whole does dominate the others. But in view of the relative states of development of the white and black races, and in view of the relative contribution that each is able to make to the public good in South Africa, it is a moot point whether this is not a natural, if not reasonable, situation for the present, at any rate.

### EVERYONE MUST CARRY A PASS

Q. Much is made of the pass laws in the Republic. Would you care to comment on this?

A. I do not actually know very much about the "pass laws", beyond the fact that everyone is required to carry some form of identification with them. It is claimed by the Government that this is a matter of administrative necessity where you have such a high incidence of illiteracy, not to mention the co-existence of a number of different languages in the country.

Q. So far, Mr. Abbott, you have been answering these questions in a rather formal manner. In fact, you have been explaining, rather than justifying or condemning, the situation in South Africa. I would now like to ask you your own private and personal views concerning the situation in South Africa.

A. Since I am not a South African, I am reluctant either to justify or condemn the state of affairs in that country. However, I recognize that it is far more difficult to effect an equitable, as well as practical, solution to the very difficult problems which confront that country, than it is to make high-sounding moral judgements from an armchair in Canada. If I may refer to Southern Rhodesia for a moment, a country with which I am more familiar than South Africa, I should point out that Rhodesia has always advocated and practised a system which is liberal within the bounds of what is possible. Rhodesia does not have total democracy, that is to say, there is no universal adult suffrage. The attain-

ment of a certain basic educational standard is required of the citizen before he is allowed to vote. The same standard applies to people of all races. The object of this requirement is to ensure that the political process is restricted to those who have some idea of what it is all about. Where you have a large number of illiterate and superstitious people, there is always a danger that an unscrupulous demagogue will, by playing upon the ignorance and emotion of backward people, sway the masses in furtherance of totally evil ends. There are masses of examples throughout Africa of how this has happened. Rhodesia is concerned to see that government remains in the hands of civilised men, although it is a matter of indifference to most people whether the hands happen to be white or black.

### RHODESIANS DETERMINED TO PERSERVE GOVERNMENT

Let me emphasize, however, that educated Rhodesians are determined to preserve responsible Government, and I mean responsible in the sense of being opposite to irresponsible. I think the idea of a limited franchise at this stage of Rhodesia's development is an entirely justifiable thing. Undoubtedly, the introduction of that rather sterile formula "one man, one vote" would lead to the same sort of dictatorial chaos which reigns in almost all the other independent states of Africa. Democracy is nowhere an end in itself. The only virtue of democracy is that it can provide, in a country which has attained a reasonably high standard of education, the condition of freedom which most civilised people value so highly.

### SOUTH AFRICAN NEGROES - UNCIVILIZED

In Rhodesia, as in South Africa, the stark fact is that the majority of the African population is not in any way civilized, in the accepted sense of that term. In saying this I do not wish to appear slighting or arrogant. I am simply summoning enough courage to state what I know to be a fact. It appears to me, therefore, that Rhodesia is entirely justified in its insistence upon maintaining a limited franchise for the present.

Q. What is your attitude toward the Mixed Marriage and Immorality Act (This act outlaws interracial marriages) of the South African Government?

### MARRIAGE A MATTER OF LOVE

A. Marriage is, or should be, the happy outcome of two people finding themselves in love. Love itself is a mystery which is simply not susceptible to being governed by rules or formulae. Frankly, I concede it to be highly improbable that a white man and a black woman would ever be genuinely in love. But I am not going to dogmatise on this, and I concede that the situation is possible. From my personal point of view, then, I would say that to forbid the marriage of any two people on any grounds whatever is wholly unjustified. I am saying this as a private person and not as spokesman of government. Now most people in the South African Government, in

their capacities as private citizens, would most likely agree with me. However, the South African Government has set itself the task of maintaining the separation of the races, for reasons which we have already gone into, and clearly this policy cannot be effectively maintained if marriage between the races is allowed.

Q. What are your feelings on the recent Zanzibar revolution?

A. Since Mr. MacMillan took office, as Prime Minister, the British Government has consistently pursued an expedient, supine, craven, policy of abdicating its responsibilities throughout Africa. This policy has been effected with total disregard for the welfare of the peoples in Africa. The thoroughly irresponsible, and indeed, cowardly withdrawal from Kenya before the rulers of that country were competent to run a kindergarten has The Communists, who have no inhibitions about Colonialism, have filled the vacuum created by Britain's premature departure. The present British Government, which seems to be content to act as a lackey to the American Government has followed a disastrous policy of bowing to public opinion in the U.S. One of the few points upon which the American and Russian Governments have always agreed is that the British Empire must come speedily to an end. The Americans have wished this through mixed motives of jealousy, misguided sentimentalism and largely on account of ignorance; while the Russians have abetted in the withdrawal of British influence from Africa with a view to supplanting it with their own. The logic of this has worked itself out in Zanzibar, with the result that yet another satellite has been added to the Communist Block.

One of the points of this interview would definitely seem to be that it ill behooves a group of self-styled idealists to make frenzied attacks against the government, nay, even the way of life, of a friendly country (or countries), particularly when the support of Communist regimes lies behind the detractors of these lands.

Before we criticise the governments of countries like Southern Rhodesia and South Africa, it would be a very good idea indeed to take a long hard second, third, or even a fourth look just to make sure that we have even half an idea of what we are talking about. It is doubtful, as far as this country is concerned, judging by some of the pronouncements of people from the very highest of positions on down whether this is, in fact, the case.

If people would confine their talk to subjects that are profitable, that which St. John informs us took place once in heaven, would happen very frequently on earth, -- silence for the space of half an hour.

— Mary Baker Eddy

ows but in the light, believing that there is a freedom beyond circumstance, derived from the direct intuition, that the great aspects of life truly remain changeless, even amid great change.

### TEXT OFF INAUGURATION SPEECH (continued from page 5)

reasonably expect to enjoy the pleasures of liberty while denying it to others. Not only do our consciences forbid this attitude, but the human situation today makes it impracticable. Thus, our society is constructed on the proposition that all men should be free. Accordingly, we must also desire that all men have the opportunity for education. By enslaving one man, all mankind loses something of its dignity, and by educating one man all mankind is enriched to a degree. I do not believe there is any acceptable intermediate stage between the slave and the free, educated man. To educate a slave is to leave him still devoid of his rights — less than a man. To ensure freedom to a man and leave him uneducated is still to leave him less than the man he might have been.

In practice, I believe in the necessity for better education and training to maintain a free democratic society; but in theory also this seems to me to be necessary, for we boast too soon if we boast of a free democratic society and are not convinced that we must continue along the path to an ever widening freedom, through the liberalizing effects of education. The empire we would thus build would not be a limited instrument of aggression but would embrace the concept of brotherhood for all mankind.

As I walk each day through the hall of the Arts and Administration Building to my office, I see written in bronze the words on the great seal of Dalhousie "doctrina vim promeuet insitam" — learning enhances our latent powers. Our society does not require the labor of the slave. However, our times do need the talents of every man, developed to the full, and let me repeat, learning enhances our latent powers.

### ON RUSKIN

Consider also Ruskin's observation that:

"Education does not mean teaching people to know what they do not know; it means teaching them to behave as they do not behave."

Thus in our society where the individual assumes so much responsibility for his own behavior, the process of education assumes more and more importance. It is for this reason that I feel the modern university must not withdraw itself from contemporary society. We have duties of a real, immediate, and sometimes even of a practical nature to perform in relation to politics and government, to the professions, to business and labor and to the many other elements and agencies that constitute the wonderful world in which we live.

### TWO-WAY COOPERATION NEEDED

On the other hand, in performing these tasks let us not forget that the university needs the support of the Church, of government, of business and labor and other institutions in our society, and of all those who concern themselves with the great responsibilities attached to citizenship in a free society.

Now let me express most sincerely my thanks to all those who have participated in today's ceremonies. The representation here of our sister universities from these provinces and far beyond is in itself a kind of exemplification of the community of universities and community of scholars to which I have already referred. This, of course, is not a compliment to me personally but to Dalhousie University, which I seek to serve. Nevertheless, I must thank you personally, as well as on behalf of the University.

Finally, let me remind you, and particularly let me remind the students of this University and my colleagues, that the motto of Dalhousie is Ora et Labora — pray and work — and so let us go forward, seeking truth; and if there may be times when we cannot do so joyfully, let us at least walk hopefully, not in the shad-