

There is no parallel to the situation in South Africa anywhere else in the world. In no other country is a major segment of the population, and in this case the great majority, denied by law any participation in the national policies of the society, solely on the basis of race. In South Africa, laws made by the white minority alone establish the social and economic structure of the country. An individual's rights and possibilities are defined in relation to his racial origin and the colour of his skin.

The South African Government has contended that apartheid's network of racially discriminatory laws promote stability, racial harmony and economic prosperity for all. These contentions do not stand up to even the most cursory examination. The deprivation of non-whites of political participation is designed to a sole end and as it was put in a recent New York Times editorial, the relegation of non-whites to the status of mere economic instruments effectively deprives them of sovereignty over their own destiny.

The central objective of the apartheid system is evident. It is the preservation by means of law of a privileged economic and social status for the white minority in an economy which depends for its prosperity on the maintenance of cheap non-white labour. In support of this objective, South Africa has evolved a theory of society and government which is based on the negation of fundamental human values and flies in the face of general world evolution. How can the leaders of that country expect other governments to see it as more than what it is, a theory of despair feeding a system of oppression?

Despite the repression and personal danger, leaders such as Mandela, Sobukwe and Biko have struggled for peaceful change. They have been eloquent advocates of dialogue among the racial communities of South Africa. They have demanded simply equal rights and opportunities for all without regard to racial origins. But they, and others like them, have been repressed, have had key elements of their press silenced, and have had their peaceful organizations suppressed, while sympathizers, including school children, have been arrested, banned, detained and subjected to cruelty and violence.

The perpetuation of a racially discriminatory system of law in South Africa is a historical anomaly. Apartheid does not differ greatly in practice from the systems of exploitation which prevailed elsewhere on the African continent during the colonial period. While that colonial era has virtually come to an end, the attitudes of that era persist in South Africa. But nevertheless, South Africa is not a colonial situation. It is an African country of great racial diversity, whose people have come over the course of 300 years from Europe, from Africa and from Asia.

The maintenance of the policies of apartheid by the Government of South Africa has serious implications for the peace and security of Southern Africa as a whole. That region will not achieve long-lasting stability until the issues of Southern Rhodesia and of Namibia have been resolved in an internationally acceptable manner, and indeed until South Africa itself has evolved a system of full political participation and economic equity. It is the determination of the South African Government to maintain its racially discriminatory policies which lies at the core of the problems of Southern Africa. Its policies in respect of Rhodesia and Namibia, and its attitude and