



experiences  
and Facts

# The White Plague

Edouard Bailby

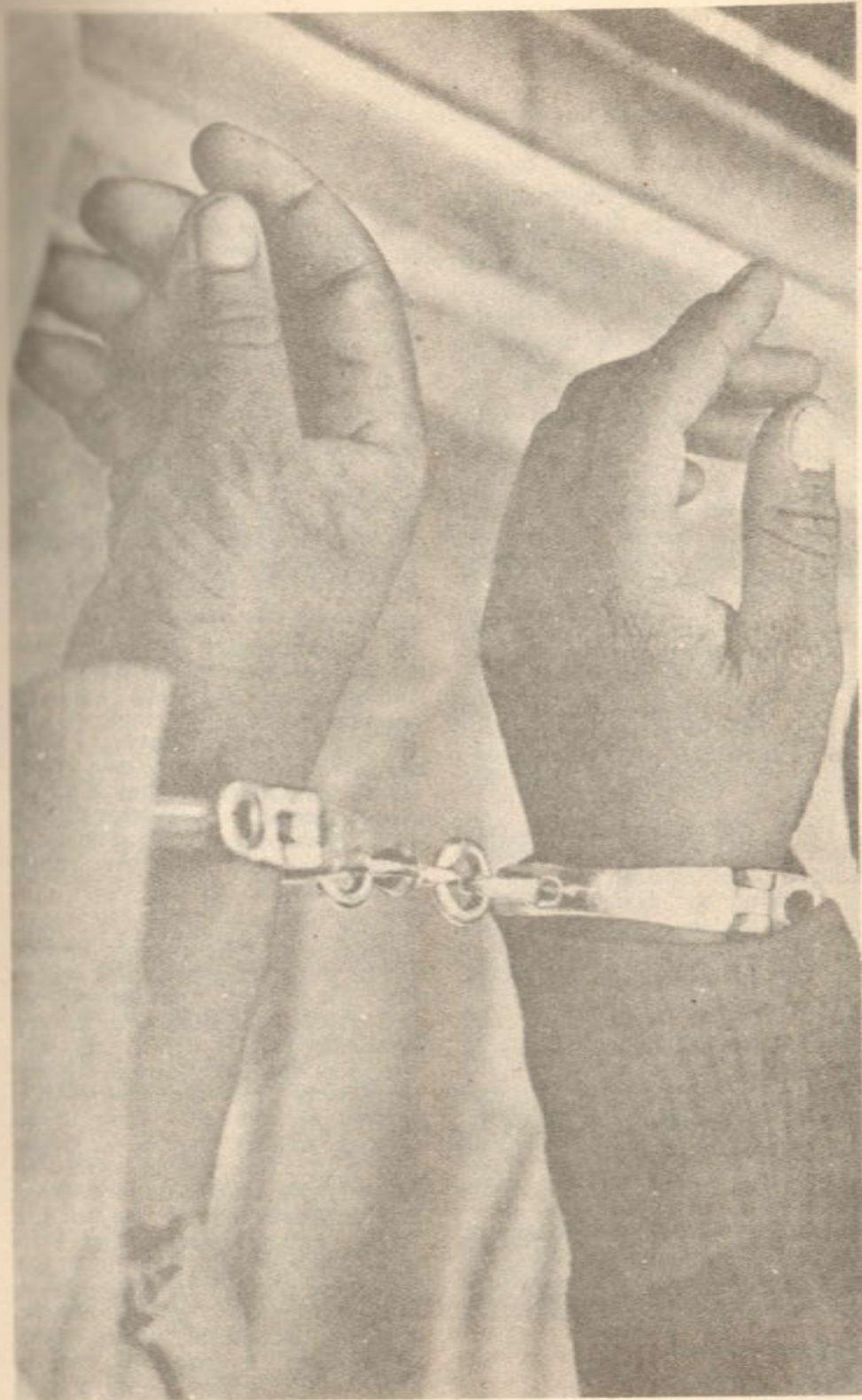
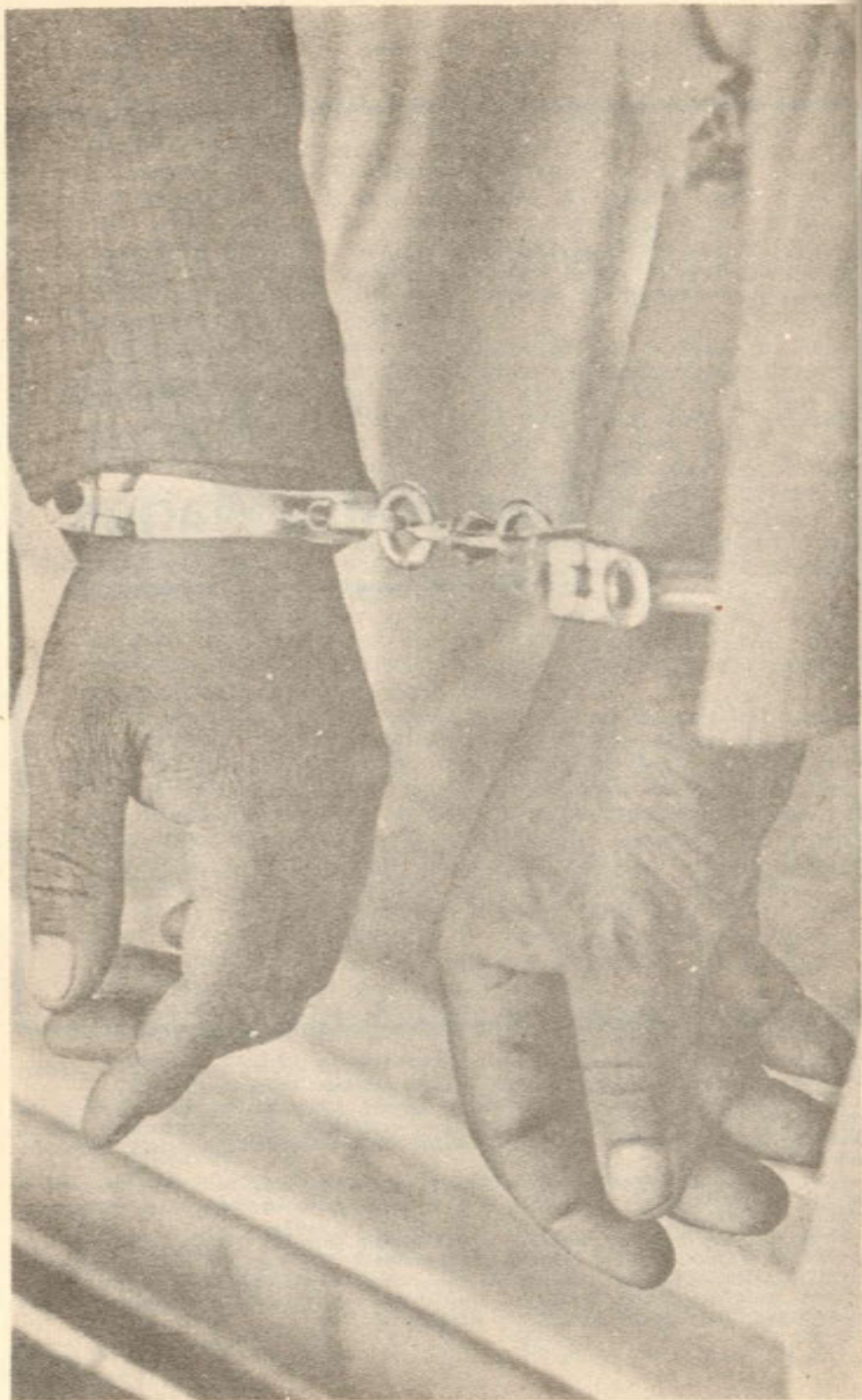
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On the African subcontinent a complex economic-social system that seeks to convert the Union of South Africa into a **white imperial power** is being constructed.

It its expansionist policy, subimperialism in South Africa projects the control of the greatest possible number of countries south of the Sahara, and especially Malawi, Rhodesia, Zambia, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Angola, Mozambique and the bantustans themselves.

And while South African tentacles try to seize neighboring territories, independent or not, internally the racist regime of Pretoria imposes apartheid in an attempt to maintain the status quo.

We reprint the testimony collected by the French journalist Edouard Bailby on the application of the theory of separate development of the races, and its consequences — without digging into the real reasons of economic exploitation — in sex, education, housing, work and sports, that is, in the daily life of the black, colored and Indian inhabitants of the extreme south of the African continent.





THE FIRST colonizers who landed in South Africa more than three centuries ago were the Dutch. They settled in Cape province in the extreme south. In the 19th century they were joined by the British who tried to impose domination over the original colonizers but the latter refused to submit to the crown and left by the thousands for the unknown interior of the country. This exodus — the Great Trek — lasted some ten years, during which time the Dutch fought many fierce battles against the blacks whom they encountered along their march.

The Union of South Africa became a part of the British Commonwealth long before it obtained its independence in 1961. At present it is governed by descendents of the Dutch colonizers, the Afrikaners, whose language, Afrikaans, is very similar to Dutch and who are Methodists.

The Afrikaners control the principal governmental and administrative posts through the Nationalist Party; the demands of apartheid forced their coexistence with the English-speaking descendents of the British colonizers, who represent less than 40% of the total of 4 000 000 whites living in the Union of South Africa, including also some 300 000 descendents of French Huguenots and certain other European groups, compared to 14 000 000 blacks, 2 000 000 mestizos of various races and 650 000 Indians. These groups live in an area twice the size of France.

Officially apartheid is a system designed to stimulate the separate development of the four ethnic communities or, in other words, to pre-

serve the traditions, language and interests of each of them. It is based on one fundamental principle: a nonwhite must never control a white. "We wish to preserve our western and European way of life," the whites say, "and since we are in a minority, we are forced to protect ourselves so the majority doesn't swallow us." As self-justification, they point to the fact that the Union of South Africa is an industrialized country today with an extensive network of ultra-modern highways, skyscrapers, factories, and an exceptional rate of growth in the western world and unique on the African continent.

"As a counterpart of the progress we achieve by means of hard work and discipline," they add, "we give the blacks and other ethnic groups the opportunity to develop within the framework of their own traditions." This is what Prime Minister Vorster says in a very simple formula: South Africa is a multinational state and will never be a multi-racial state.

I saw for myself what this meant.

Landing at Johannesburg airport in the midst of gold mines whose fine dust is piled in parallelepipeds, and hundreds of villas with private swimming pools. I saw in the waiting room the first warning: Europeans only. The others — blacks, colored or Indians — have to go through another door into a separate room. This was my first encounter with apartheid. I was faced with it throughout my stay in the Union of South Africa, and even when I would have liked to forget it, events recalled its existence in the most unusual places. Whites, Blankes, Europeans, these three words mean the same thing. White: I saw, I saw again: I read, I read

again; I listened and listened again, whenever I opened a door to get into a bus. Embarrassing, irritating, offensive, humiliating, like wounds on the landscape. At times this expression of apartheid reaches grotesque extremes. For instance, in Komatipoort, on the Mozambique border, there are six different toilet facilities: one for white men, another for white women; one for black men, another for black women; one for Indian men, another for Indian women; but they've left out the colored. On the Cape peninsula, which extends some 40 miles into the Indian and Atlantic oceans, the tourist bus crosses an animal reserve in which some paths are reserved for whites and others for nonwhites.

The entire Union of South Africa lives under the apartheid slogan. In Johannesburg, as in the rest of the country, there are two types of buses: red for the Europeans and green for the non-Europeans. In the parks, on the avenues, at the bus stops, nonwhites cannot sit on the same benches as whites. The same segregation applies to taxis. Post offices and liquor stores have separate doors, one for whites and the other for nonwhites. Movie houses, theaters, restaurants, bars and night clubs are almost all reserved for whites. Blacks can't use the same elevator as whites; in sports centers, the blacks are shunted into a corner, and in Johannesburg station I saw entire corridors for whites only. In Durban, South Africa's Miami in the Indian Ocean, there are four beaches: one for whites, one for blacks, one for Indians and the other for colored. Nonwhites are absolutely prohibited from entering or staying in a hotel for whites. Apartheid is lax only when it would be too costly to enforce it, as for example in airplanes, where racial segregation is not applied. But once on the ground, the nonwhites take

one road and the whites another.

These are some of the visible signs of apartheid immediately evident to the tourist or traveler. Even foreign sailors stopping over in South African ports are subjected to these regulations. The only public places where racial mixing is permitted are in the churches at Sunday mass, where men and women of all colors pray together. That is, with the exception of the Dutch Reformed Church, which is precisely the church that most Afrikaners belong to and which does practice apartheid. Except on this unique occasion, nonwhites can only appear in the same public places with whites if they are working there. That is, racial segregation is such that it is virtually impossible for whites to have contact with nonwhites outside of work hours unless they invite each other to their homes. For example, it is forbidden for a white and a nonwhite to have a drink together in a public place. In South Africa, people of different colors can't even walk together on the street, because there's no place they can meet.

#### Numbers

"We aren't citizens, we're simply numbers. Slavery was supposed to have been abolished in the 19th century but here we continue to live like slaves." The author of these words is James Mafuna, a black of 30 and some years. For 18 months, he has been working as a journalist for the *Rand Daily Mail*, one of the most important English-language newspapers in the Republic of South Africa and one of the few that has taken a liberal stand. Like all blacks, Mafuna is classified administratively in a category, a specific section, and his identity has



been reduced to a computer card. Everyone who has worked for ten consecutive years in Johannesburg, and for the same boss, belongs to section 10-1-A. If you work for 15 years in the same city with different bosses, you are in section 10-1-B, and so it goes. Any breach, even after 20 or 30 years of work, can put you into an inferior category which means an interminable series of miserable administrative obstacles and job, housing, and travel problems. Mafuna, one of the eight black journalists who works on the *Rand Daily Mail*, receives a relatively "exceptional" salary because they pay him almost as much as his white colleagues for doing the same work. However, as a black, he does not have the right to live where he wants nor to move around freely. "Because I am black," he told me, "I can't even live with my wife." It is a fact that, according to the law, a black citizen born and living in a city or district which is part of the white area — which includes more than 85% of the Union of South Africa — cannot change his place of residence without specific authorization. Since his wife lives on one street and he on another, they have to meet in the home of their in-laws. "When my wife was pregnant, we talked for a long time about where the child should be born. It was a sterile discussion: we quickly reached the conclusion that, no matter what we did, our child would be subjected to the same restrictions and humiliations as we are." Mafuna is a man whose dignity has been trampled on and who cannot hide his rebellion against such injustice. His manner of speaking reflects the emotion of a tormented and morally wounded man. But he still has courage. "I refuse to be reduced to the level of a

vegetable," he said. "I won't let them destroy me." He studies French at night "in order to be able to read the French-speaking African writers"; he studies and submerges himself in reading. When I asked him if I could publish his name, he answered: "For us, blacks, our entire existence is a permanent problem; if I have a few more difficulties, it doesn't matter..."

#### Implacable Laws

Apartheid crystallized as a doctrine in 1948, but in practice it was simply the culmination of three centuries of racism. Each law approved reflects the systematic intention of the white minority to maintain economic and political supremacy over the rest of the population. Certain examples will serve to demonstrate this fact. A black cannot remain within the city for more than 72 hours without special authorization, which can be withdrawn at any moment and on any pretext. Neither are you permitted to have under your roof for more than 72 hours, a married daughter, a son more than 18 years old or any other relative. If declared "surplus" at any moment, he can be forced to leave his house and live some place designated by the government.

Without judicial mandate and at "whatever reasonable hour of the day or night," the police have the right to enter and register any spot in which there is reason to believe that a black man of more than 18 years of age is committing the sin of living with his father without prior authorization. Moreover, a policeman has the right to register every servant's room occupied by a black in a white household.

At any moment it can be a crime for an African to be in the city at night without a written authorization. Every black more than 16 years

old must carry a reference book. This identity card is somewhere between a passport and a police record and gives the complete biography of the bearer. It gives him the right to work within a clearly defined area and no other. If he should have to be away from work more than a year or gets sick and has to leave the area specified for more than six months, his permission would be withdrawn and he would be sent back to the rural zones. If he has the bad luck of losing his identity card he must go from city to city in search of an identity.

Because of a job reservation law, a black cannot hold posts reserved for whites nor receive the same salary for equal work. Employers are also prohibited from replacing white workers with black workers. Through these drastic laws, whites maintain the best jobs and highest salaries. According to available statistics, only 2% of them live below the level of subsistence. As a result of the privileges that apartheid confers on them, whites in the lowest economic categories have a class spirit which is not social but racial. Segregation in the Union of South Africa has reached such proportions that restaurants and cafeterias prefer to hire European tourists as temporary employees before engaging black employees, and don't hesitate to say so in the press.

No school for black children can function without government authorization; this authorization can be denied if the government considers that the school is of little interest to blacks. Worse still, it is an offense for a black resident in the city to teach any of his black friends to read and write; it is also an offense for a white to teach his servants to read.

Ever since 1927, sexual relations between persons of different "races" have been strictly prohibited by law and the infractions are punish-

able with a jail sentence. It must be pointed out, incidentally, that a growing number of white South Africans take weekend excursions to the Swaziland and Mozambique brothels to enjoy the pleasures forbidden in their own country. Interracial marriages have also been prohibited since 1949 although it should be noted that they have not been exactly stimulated by three centuries of racism.

A black teacher cannot give lectures in a white club and a black cannot attend any type of meeting organized by whites. No black can buy land in the Union of South Africa; in certain cases they are permitted at most to be proprietors of small shops. Blacks cannot participate in strikes, organize trade unions or political parties in the white zone, etc.

The same laws, with few differences in detail, are applicable to colored and Indians.

#### Absence of Conflict

"But how can you expect that, with one wave of a magic wand, we could overcome the natural antagonisms among people of different races?" Piet Nel, top official in the Ministry of Information and descendant of French Huguenots, said:

Look just at what is happening in the rest of Africa, where blacks kill each other over tribal questions and coups d'etat occur one after another. With our policy of separate development, the Union of South Africa is politically one of the most stable countries in the world. Economic progress goes ahead without any problem and one practically never hears of racial incidents. It is precisely to avoid them that we maintain the special green



buses for blacks and separate lines at the voting booths.

The same attitude was expressed by the Minister of Sports, Frank Waring, when last September 12 he declared that multiracial sports were unacceptable because they led to "considerable racial conflict."

The strongest argument the whites use on every occasion is that based on economic progress.

In the Union of South Africa, they point out blacks earn triple what they can earn any place else in Africa; they have their own schools, three universities, their own reservations and some day they will even have their own states within the Union of South Africa. So why do the people of Europe hate us so consistently? We aren't criminals.

A horrifying rationalization! The whites are dishonest in their racism.

When I told a young white woman what I thought about all this she commented: "Separate buses and benches are not important, the blacks don't even notice them. What really counts are the schools, hospitals and housing we construct for them."

#### Exploitation

Apartheid or separate development is conceived so that it extracts the maximum profit from the systematic exploitation of the tremendous work force supplied by nonwhites and no amount of housing, schools and hospitals constructed for blacks can alter this fact. The laws are clear: under no circumstances can a black be superior to a white, except in the territories specifically reserved for blacks, however intelligent, industrious and efficient he may be. In the restaurants, the head waiter is invariably

white; in the factories all the engineers and technicians are white and in the hospitals, all surgical operations are performed by white personnel. Nevertheless, according to a study published recently in the South African press, out of a total of 525 white bus drivers on "whites only" buses in Johannesburg, 78% were prepared to accept black drivers "provided they could do the work." This reaction is truly notable in the Union of South Africa and is discussed in the English language press, which is more open to dialogue than the rest.

In the suburbs of Johannesburg, a modern city with 1 300 000 inhabitants, where boredom reigns as soon as night falls, I knew the director — a black man — of a secondary school for black children attended by 500 students. This man, 49 years old, has a university degree and a teaching experience of 26 years; he earns 270 rands a month or approximately \$130. The beginning salary for a white teacher is 295 rands. Why this discrimination? Why is there a scale of values based completely on racial criteria? According to 1967 official statistics, the average monthly salary of a white man in manufacturing was 232 rands compared to 64 for an Indian, 59 for a colored and 43 for a black. In construction, the white earns an average of 237 rands while the black receives scarcely 41 rands. These proportions have not changed significantly in recent years because they are governed by very precise laws. It is also interesting to observe that the government invests 19 rands a year in the education of a black child and 270 rands in that of a white child.

Muriel Horrell has written about this in an extraordinarily useful book: *Introduction to South Africa*, published in Johannesburg by the South African Institute of Race Relations. The difference in income

between whites and nonwhites was so scandalous that last September 16, Harry Oppenheimer, magnate of South African industry and President of the Anglo-American Corporation, demanded equal salary for equal work for all workers, independently of their "races." The entire country shook with indignation; the *Financial Times* of Johannesburg immediately published an editorial stressing that the idea was very generous but that the whites would inevitably feel obliged to reduce their own salaries if it was accepted that those of nonwhites should be raised. In other words, Oppenheimer's idea would be extremely costly to put into practice.

Therefore it seems that, unfortunately, only a few enterprises will continue — illegally — paying equal salaries to whites and nonwhites for the same work.

#### White Opposition

It is Vorster's Nationalist Party government that will remain in power in the Union of South Africa up until the next elections within five years. With 127 seats in the Parliament out of a total of 174, this party holds an absolute majority. The interests of the Afrikaners are very solidly protected.

In his Capetown office, furnished with books and newspapers, de Villiers Graf, — leader of the United Party, the principal opposition group made up chiefly of white English-speaking South Africans — explained his policy in detail. He believes that blacks must have parliamentary representation, which they don't now have, and that they must be allowed to elect eight white members to Parliament to represent their interests. When I asked him if he opposed apartheid he answered me very gravely, playing with his eyeglasses in his right hand: "This depends on what you

mean by apartheid. Let's say I am against the policy of the present government." The only deputy of the Progressive Party, which opposed apartheid, Helen Suzman, put it this way: "There are only hawks and super-hawks in the vanguards of the government party and its legal opposition."

A glance at the daily press confirms this. Chipso Kachingwe, daughter of the Ambassador of Malawi and black, of course, is in a Catholic college for white girls. The question was raised in a ministerial meeting in September when it was asked: "Isn't this an infraction of apartheid?" "Absolutely not," the Minister in charge replied, "because Miss Kachingwe is the daughter of a foreign diplomat." It also created a scandal in the Union of South Africa when Prime Minister Vorster permitted himself to be photographed seated between two blacks at a banquet held during the recent visit of Hastings Banda, President of Malawi. Other scandals were caused by the fact that the government authorized an African diplomat to live in a white section of the Cape; because Prince Pinda Dhalamini, son of the King of Swaziland, was operated on in a hospital for whites in Johannesburg; and because last September 11, for the first time, colored were allowed in the Bloemfontein hippodrome. The slightest exception to the absolute taboos of apartheid, almost invariably causes a wave of protests. If the government practically ignores this, it is simply due to the need for labor or because it has to make a distinction between foreign blacks with diplomatic status and the blacks of South Africa.

There has been tremendous discussion around the question of mul-



tiracial teams. The whites are disgusted by the foreign boycott of their teams and increasingly interested in restricting the application of apartheid in sports. There is a suggestion in the air for authorizing nonwhites to participate on white teams at international meetings held in South Africa; and that an "international" stadium could be constructed for use by all "races." Perhaps nonwhites could be included on teams that compete abroad. These are ideas suggested in the press and over radio. "It is absolutely grotesque," a black man said to me indignantly. "They scorn us, they humiliate us, they keep us out of public life, and when there are international competitions they want to take a few good black athletes to exhibit them among the whites. I decline."

Furious because the white cricket team was recently unable to play in Australia, Vorster gave a hot speech accusing an Australian "minority" of having sabotaged the trip. "That's the joke of the year," a black in Johannesburg told me. "For 300 years a minority has been imposing its laws here."

#### The Homelands

For purposes of "separate development" the whites have divided South Africa into zones and reservations. More than 85% of the territory is the white zone where only whites can be proprietors. Within this zone, there are well defined "black spot" sectors, cities or districts for nonwhites. The inhabitants of these areas make up the work force of the white zone and are therefore authorized to enter the white sector daily to work there. Under apartheid, the colored are grouped together mainly in Cape

province and the Indians in the Durban area, while the blacks remain concentrated around the big industrial cities.

In addition to the "black spots" in the white zones, eight Bantu or native land areas have been created in various regions of the Union of South Africa outside Cape province for the purpose of regrouping blacks of different ethnic origin and thus favoring their separate development. These territories are very arbitrarily defined and are frequently made up of innumerable small properties because they were extended little by little by state purchases of lands owned by whites which were then handed over to blacks. They are now semi-autonomous areas that cover an approximate 13% of the Union of South Africa. The majority were created out of nothing on extremely poor land. In theory, the blacks of the native lands are owners of their individual ground and have their own schools, hospitals and stores; they enjoy a certain grade of autonomy in the management of their own affairs under the vigilant eyes of white "assistants" placed there by Pretoria, of course. Blacks in these areas can only enter the white zone with special authorization; in any case the great majority of them do so only in order to go to work in a city or a specific factory where they are employed under a contract that obliges them to return to their native land after a year. In other words, the whites have created a labor reserve on which they can draw any time they consider it necessary. According to official statements, "when these native lands have stable institutions and a viable economy, they will be able to obtain their independence and become a part of a South African Union with a political and economic common market." In reply to a journalist who asked whether the govern-

ment of Pretoria would permit these future states to be totally independent and possibly to have relations with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, Prime Minister Vorster made a marvelous reply: "We will play fair, but of course we will advise them against this." It is not by chance that the Union of South Africa buys arms from France and Great Britain.

#### The Transkei

The Transkei is the most advanced of the native lands. I took a forty-minute flight in a Piper Comanche from the port of East London to Umtata, capital of Transkei, 140 miles away, preferring this to the alternative of a 17-hour train trip. Buses are extremely scarce and there is no regular airline. In Umtata I saw Hans Abraham, General Commissioner of the white South African government who has therefore been supervising the development of political structures in the territory as well as its economic progress over the past 11 years. With a population of 2 000 000, the Transkei covers approximately an area the size of Denmark; legislative power is in the hands of an assembly of 109 blacks of whom less than half were elected by universal suffrage. The Cabinet selects this assembly by secret ballot and it consists of a Prime Minister (the present Prime Minister is the black conservative leader Kaiser Matanzima) and six ministers, supported by a white Secretary of State. Although Transkei has its own flag, its own national hymn and its own citizenship, its autonomy is nevertheless somewhat limited by the fact that it cannot revise the Constitution given it by the all-white South African Parliament in May 1963.

Abraham is a robust man with ears almost doubled over and a

nose on which are mounted a pair of dark glasses. He is over concerned with his measured words. He speaks frankly:

If we, the whites, weren't there to help the blacks of Transkei — the Xhosas — they would be dying of hunger. They are good people, very peaceful, but lazy and careless without any sense of discipline and organization. The same thing happens with all the blacks. The women work in the field while the men live as beggars. Do you know of any other country where you can rest for four or five years? That's what happens in Transkei.

Abraham doesn't hate blacks but he considers them a permanent loss; nevertheless, like a good white, according to his words, he kills himself working to put them on the right road.

A white government official told me: "Oh, Mr. Bailby, the blacks like Mr. Abraham a lot. He's very good to them, you know, very dedicated..."

Umtata is a city with a provincial air in which the women carry their children around the waist in multicolored blankets. There is very little to indicate that Transkei is the key to "one of the most dynamic political experiments of all times." The gap between employment and population rate increases every year. Such is the present situation that some 300 000 inhabitants of Transkei have to work elsewhere. The average earnings for a black teacher are about 100 rands a month; less than 40% of the children of Transkei attend school and out of every hundred that receive primary education, not more than 30 finish their studies. Van Zyl, an important white official in Umtata, gave me the answer: "All this takes time, as you



know. Maybe there will be work for everyone in the world within 50 years." With an annual budget of 32 000 000 rands, 12 000 000 collected from local taxes and contributions, Transkei lives poorly. Last year 180 000 Xhosas received permission to work for a year in the white zone. "In the Republic," as the whites say.

#### The Zulus

North of Durban with its 690 000 inhabitants of whom 270 000 are Indians, is Zululand, a territory of undulating hills and valleys, conceded to the Zulus by the whites. There are a total of 200 parcels irregularly distributed over 22 000 km<sup>2</sup> on which some 2 500 000 Zulus live. The government of Pretoria has constructed a few dirt roads which permit them to move around within their territory, but the railroad and asphalt roads with good, well-kept restaurants, follow the white corridors that still cross the country.

Some 250 km northwest of Durban, in a small hamlet five km from Mahalbatini, I met Gatsha Buthelezi, Prime Minister of Zululand since his election in June 1970. He has his house, his garden full of flowers in a region where the harvests belong to the tribal community. Buthelezi is a black who is more and more discussed in the Republic of South Africa. Although he is officially accepted by the white authorities, he sometimes says certain disagreeable truths about them. Nevertheless, the Pretoria government is caught in its own trap and finds itself forced to continue the game for the moment.

Buthelezi was born in a Swedish hospital in the Union of South Africa; he is 43 years old and the

father of seven children; his religion is Anglican. At first acquaintance he seems timid and when I visited him we remained standing for several minutes in front of his leopard-skin covered sofa, simply smiling. When our two-hour conversation ended, however, we understood each other perfectly. Buthelezi is a frank man, warm, open and subtle in his replies. He closes his eyes for a long time before answering. The Zulus — and many other blacks as well — are identified with him; when he returned from a visit to the United States, thousands of blacks traveled long distances to welcome him enthusiastically at the Durban airport.

"Do you believe that the cause of the blacks is helped by visits to the Union of South Africa of heads of African states?" I asked him.

That doesn't cause any essential change, but when the President of Malawi was here recently, thousands of blacks went to see him at his hotel. They couldn't believe that a black like themselves could be received with the same equality as a white. They were deeply moved to see that he was really treated with respect and dignity. This stimulated them.

Buthelezi condemns apartheid, but he is a moderate man and was cautious when I asked him what he thought of the movement "Black is beautiful," which is gaining strength among the South African blacks. "No," he said, "the black is also beautiful. I detest racism no matter where it comes from but the fact is that whites create such a situation here that blacks are completely hopeless and are creating more and more children with the idea of taking by force pieces of the bastions of the white empire." Buthelezi does not try to hide the limitations of his power or the fact that the major part of the best lands belong to whites, or that apartheid creates an

impossible situation. In sum, that South Africa is the hottest spot in the world after Viet Nam.

#### Bedroom Cities

Buthelezi is hostile to the idea of separate development on the grounds that "culture can't be preserved in a jar." His chief preoccupation is the future of the townships, the bedroom cities for blacks outside the big cities like Johannesburg.

These people have no executive power; they are completely subjected to the laws of apartheid and live in a horrible state of poverty. They are exploited to the maximum and aren't even given the right to return to their native land if they want to. They are no longer Zulus or Xhosas; they are exiled workers, driven out of the white zone. If something isn't done to improve the lot of these people, there's going to be a revolution in the urban areas that will eat us all up.

With a population of 700 000, Soweto, a black city 20 kilometers from Johannesburg, is the third largest city in the Republic of South Africa. But since it is a black city, it doesn't appear on any map. To go there, you have to have permission from the authorities that is valid for only a few hours. The city is constructed on a circular plan divided into eight neighborhoods in which blacks are distributed according to their ethnic origin; it consists of rows of small houses with three rooms, bath and a garden. A government official showed me the last of the indigent neighborhoods, horrible and miserable, swarming with children. "We have replaced the indigent neighborhoods with these houses," he told me. "You can see for yourself that we aren't oppressors nor pigs." It is a fact that in Soweto the author-

ities have built schools, clinics, houses, stores and service stations. They have even built an attractive restaurant and a tower from which one can admire the panorama of the city. From all appearances, Soweto is a clean, well-designed working-class city.

I went back there later and got to know some well-off blacks who told me just what hell it really was to live there. When the black workers return to their homes with their pay on Friday night, bands of youngsters of undetermined origin, their faces covered with bandannas, attack them with bicycle chains and iron bars. Twenty crimes every weekend. There are 20 000 youths in the streets, half of whom stay all night in the unlighted streets. More than 70% of the inhabitants of the city live below subsistence level and are forbidden to leave the place to try to earn a living elsewhere. The only acceptable reason for a black to leave Soweto is to go to work in the white industrial zones during the day. In theory the black population of Soweto and all the other townships elects a municipal council to administer its affairs. But blacks have no property rights. Mr. Mamponya is the richest businessman in the city and is well known in Johannesburg because he is presented as a brilliant example of the benefits of apartheid, but he isn't allowed to open a supermarket. He is now manager of one or two small food stores but he is only permitted to sell consumer supplies of strictly basic daily need. No black in Soweto is permitted to sell furniture, clothing, household goods, gasoline, automobiles. The sale of these items is confined exclusively to whites, which clearly illustrates the economic use of apartheid. "They treat us as if we were baboons," a 30-



year-old black told me bitterly while he served me a drink in a friend's house. At the same time he told me that a black can serve alcoholic beverages to a white, but a white who serves drinks to a black can be fined for doing so. "One day when I was abroad, I had to go to the Embassy of the Republic of South Africa for a document. The secretary of the Embassy had the effrontery to ask me: 'How are things at home?' What a farce!" The black told me this anecdote to demonstrate the hypocrisy of "these people" but he immediately started to laugh. Despite apartheid, blacks still maintain their sense of humor.

#### The Race of Sirs

Whites only, Europeans only, Whites, Blankes, Whites, Whites... they've kept all the best for themselves. I saw them in Durban, on the avenue that runs along the sea, bowling on their manicured lawns. The women with their white skirts and hats, the men with their short white pants and colonial helmets. They bend lightly, watching each movement of the game, enigmatic, indifferent to the exterior world, presumptuous, and very satisfied to belong to the "white race," the race of sirs.

Above all, Durban is a city of Indians, descendants of slaves brought less than a century ago by the British to work on the sugar plantations. "You should know," a local merchant, white of course, told me, "that the Indians are not discontented with apartheid. They know very well that the blacks would maltreat them just as they are doing in East Africa, if we didn't protect them." For this reason they reserve a certain number of jobs — the worst paid — and certain

urban districts for the Indians, so they can advance by separate development. Nevertheless, although autonomous territories for the blacks are contemplated, nothing has been set aside for the Indians and colored. The solution to this problem is one of the foremost questions of the Union of South Africa at this moment. Disputes have arisen within Prime Minister Vorster's majority party concerning whether native land should also be created for the colored. Where should they be put? Should they be definitively assimilated by the white community? In Capetown, the only white city in the Republic of South Africa where one can sense a growing feeling of liberalism, I met several people who did not reject the idea of including Indians and colored within the white community, possibly excluding blacks, but with a liberalized form of apartheid.

In this gigantic, dynamic and industrialized country, modern in so many respects, where blacks, lions and elephants are separated and placed on their own reservations, are there whites who really and sincerely oppose apartheid? There are, but only a handful. They admit that there aren't more than a few thousand. There are others who would be prepared to join them were it not for the question they ask themselves: "What can we do? We reject racism but we are a linguistic, traditional and cultural minority; how can we avoid disappearing in the mass of Africans?"

#### Organizations Against Apartheid

In Johannesburg I met some of these valiant white fighters who feel profoundly distressed in the face of such incomprehension and injustice. They belong to two organizations: the South African Institute of Race Relations and the Christian Institute of Southern Africa, which are

patiently and modestly forging links among the various communities. They publish some extremely useful pamphlets and organize lectures and meetings. They have to watch their step because of the law against communism which imposes severe penalties on all attempts to introduce social changes. These two private organizations carry out admirable but limited work.

Occasionally individual actions against apartheid take place. In September, a 47-year-old Anglican pastor, Rev. Bernie Wrangmore, started a 40-day hunger strike on a hill overlooking Capetown, in protest against racial segregation and torture in the prisons. He seated himself under an umbrella, among the trees, and was visited by hundreds of South Africans of all colors who came to demonstrate their support. I myself saw them, seated on tree trunks and looking out across the sea to the prison on Robben Island where Nelson Mandela, a 53-year-old black, is sentenced to life imprisonment for having dared to demand an end to apartheid. On the fortieth day of his hunger strike, various tens of thousands of persons — white, black and colored — gathered on the hillside to make their presence felt in support of Rev. Wrangmore. "Each individual must discover the truth anew for himself," he told me, "for the good of all the men and women of this country."

With his actions, Rev. Wrangmore succeeded in bringing together in a public place South Africans of all colors and religions, something never before seen in this country where racism reaches such extremes that, at the farthest point of the Cape of Good Hope, where the oceans come together, at the entrance of a public lavatory the final announcement on the African continent is: White ladies only.

#### The Awakening

"We can hope for nothing more from the whites and so we must fall back on ourselves, we must open our own schools, create our own organizations and develop our own culture and traditions. We have to convert ourselves into a brave and hardworking people and we must be ready to defend our cause to the end."

The young man speaking, like many of his comrades, has become aware of what it is to be black.

"For some months," according to M. Moerane, editor of a daily paper almost exclusively for blacks, with the fourth largest circulation in the Union of South Africa, "an immense movement has been growing among the blacks. 'Black is beautiful,' these are the words that nobody had the courage to utter in public two or three years ago."

Growing numbers of blacks are reaching the conclusion that if whites impose separate development on them, they should follow that line to the letter of the law: "We will see who wins then..." Various more or less clandestine movements are now taking form; Saso, with a racial tendency, has some influence among black students. This group's activities must be added to those of the African National Congress (ANC), which was banned immediately after the Sharpeville massacre in March of 1930 (69 blacks dead and 178 wounded) and which continues to be the major clandestine movement in South Africa. If the white South African community persists in its racist posture, it is very possible that it is preparing the road to future bloodshed and the disintegration of its empire. One's own culture can't be saved by destroying others'.