

# South Africa Emergency Campaign

## *A Call to Action*

*"The Afrikaner Nationalist . . . will change only when the pressure inside and outside the country becomes unendurable."*—ALAN PATON

The 72 Africans killed by police action at Sharpeville, in the Union of South Africa on March 21, and the thousands who have been arrested since are symbolic of the conflict and tragedy in the Union. The struggle will continue until equal rights are established for the 80 per cent non-white majority in the population, until the franchise is open to all, until the hated pass laws are revoked, until equal pay for equal work is established, until African political organizations and their leaders are not banned or imprisoned—until South Africa, in fact, becomes a democratic country.

The Union of South Africa is the only nation in the world which, as a matter of official policy, has incorporated "white supremacy" (*apartheid*) into law. Only disaster lies ahead for the Union if this policy is not changed. An aroused world opinion can supplement the efforts and the sacrifices of those carrying on the struggle within the country to bring about change. Africans, Coloreds, Indians, and liberal whites in South Africa are appealing for our support and action.



# *What You Can Do*

- 1 Raise funds for legal defense and welfare. Dozens of Africans have been killed and wounded by police action since the Sharpeville massacre in March. Thousands have been arrested. Families are without wage earners. Hospital bills, court costs, and food and clothing needs are tremendous for those who suffer because they oppose *apartheid*. The South African Emergency Appeal of the Africa Defense and Aid Fund is raising \$100,000 to meet these desperate needs. You can help.
- 2 Join the international boycott of South African goods. Millions of people in Great Britain participated in a boycott during March. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions launched a two-month boycott on May 1, backed in the U.S. by the AFL-CIO. United States imports \$100 million of goods from South Africa, including lobster tails, metals, wool, precious stones, furs, blazers, sports jackets, etc. Set up a committee to check what South African goods are sold in your community or fabricated by your industries. Bring this list to the attention of consumers, labor unions, and industrialists in your community. Write the Emergency Campaign for detailed information on the boycott.
- 3 Organize public protest meetings or invite a qualified speaker to your club, church, synagogue, union, or other group in order to present the facts of the South African problem. Write the Speakers' Bureau of the Emergency Campaign for assistance in obtaining speakers.
- 4 Protest against the inclusion of an all-white South African team in the 1960 Olympic games in Rome during August and September. No Africans are permitted even to try out for the South African team in violation of Olympic rules. Write to Avery Brundage, President, International Olympic Committee, 10 N. La Salle Street, Chicago 1, Illinois.
- 5 Protest the policy of those American firms which do business in South Africa and allow second-class treatment of their non-white employees. Urge U.S. business to refuse to bolster South Africa's economy by not investing new capital in a society based on exploitive *apartheid*. Write the Emergency Campaign for a list of the U.S. firms with large investments in South Africa.
- 6 Urge the U.S. government to maintain a firm position—both in the U.N. and in its diplomatic relations with South Africa—against *apartheid*. Commend the government for its statement deploring the massacre at Sharpeville. Write Secretary of State Christian A. Herter, Department of State, Washington 25, D. C.
- 7 Make your views on *apartheid* known to the South Africa government. Write South African Ambassador Wentzel du Plessis, 3101 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington 8, D. C.

# 'As Blind as Samson Was'

That phrase, says Paton, describes the South African advocate of apartheid. If his eyes are not opened for him, he threatens to destroy himself and others.

By ALAN PATON

Kloof, Natal, South Africa.

In this article I am attempting to depict the white South African who unreservedly supports apartheid, his life, his beliefs, his behavior, his thoughts of the future. It is written under the shadow of the terrible happenings at Sharpeville, Transvaal, where more than seventy African demonstrators were shot dead by the police, and of the turbulence that has followed—a tragic series of events that has been the direct consequence of the apartheid legislation known as the Pass Laws. For this tragedy the Afrikaner Nationalist blames agitators—Communists, liberals, the English press and the savagery of the African people. He blames anybody, everybody, but himself. If he does not change, and quickly, the catastrophic end is near.

I distinguish in this article between the Afrikaner and the Afrikaner Nationalist; but I do not intend this to conceal the truth that the great majority of Afrikaners are Nationalists who support apartheid. Nor do I wish to conceal the truth that most English-speaking South Africans support apartheid in one form or another, and that therefore they are unable to offer South Africa any alternative. If the white voter wants apartheid, who can give it to him better than the Afrikaner Nationalist?

I ought to be able to write about the Afrikaner Nationalist and his apartheid policies. He is my boss. He tells me where I may live, to what parts of South Africa I may travel, to what schools and universities my children may go, with what kind of person I may eat or drink in any public place.

He tells me what books I may not keep in my house, and what kind of people may not live with me; he tells me what kind of persons I may not marry, and what kind of children I may not adopt. He is now considering what kind of beaches I may or may not visit, what picnic places I may or may not frequent; and he may soon tell me, although he has so far shrunk from it, what kind of guests I may have in my home.

If I should break any of his laws by way of protest, I am subject to a fine of £500 (\$840) or imprisonment for three years or a thrashing of ten lashes, or any two of these (though I personally would not be lashed, having reached the age of 50). If I should incite others to break these laws by way of protest, I am subject to a fine of £500 (\$1,400) or imprisonment for five years or a thrashing of ten lashes, or any two of these.

So long as I do not incite, however, I can still write freely and publish freely, though few of us think this liberty will last. However any writing which is critical of the Government and of apartheid is frowned upon, especially if it is published abroad. The Afrikaner Nationalist regards it as treasonery to South Africa, and by South Africa he means, simply and unequivocally, the South Africa of which he is the boss. He knows no other.

The extent of his control over me is disguised because he lets me vote; he lets me, if I wish and am able to, send one of my own group, the one-million white, English-speaking group, to Parliament. But his control over other South Africans is absolute. He allows the one and a half million "colored"

people to have only four white representatives in Parliament, though his own Nationalist group of one and a half million has more than a hundred. But, beginning in June 1960, he will not allow any representation in Parliament for the ten million Africans. He argues that Africans have their own territories, and there they may have their own self-government under tribal authority. And that is true, too, just as it is true that any representative of tribal authority would lose his job in five minutes if he failed to carry out apartheid policy.

The Indian group of half a million also has no representation in Parliament. If the Indians were given communal representation, they would probably abstain from using it on a spectacular scale. Quite apart from that, the Afrikaner Nationalist does not want Indian representatives in Parliament. He just cannot forgive the Indians for having come here, or the British sugar farmers for having brought them.

This Afrikaner ruler of mine is, to all outward appearances, made of steel. He goes on his way in the face of mounting world disapproval. Only three governments in the world think that apartheid is his own business. All the new African nations have condemned it. At this very moment, ordinary consumers in many Western countries are boycotting South African goods. Apartheid is, without rival, the best known, the most hated, of all the national policies of the world. Yet the Nationalist goes on. He shows no signs of trimming his sails.

Why does he behave like this? What sort of man is he?

WHAT does the Afrikaner Nationalist believe? He believes that God made separate peoples, and that He wants them to stay separate. He often blames visiting sailors for the existence of a million and a half colored people. But we never had that many visiting sailors. In any case, white men still break the fierce Immorality Act. Hardly a day passes but that some white man—some white man's family—is ruined because he has been caught breaking this iron law.

The Afrikaner Nationalist believes that God sent the Afrikaner to Africa, and gave him a civilizing mission. The great Voortrekker Monument at Pretoria—so coldly regarded by all non-Nationalists—commemorates the triumph of civilization over barbarism.

The Afrikaner Nationalist believes that God has called him to guide and control the destinies of all the people of southern Africa. He will make the laws and others will obey them. Nevertheless, he wants all the other groups in the country to develop harmoniously along their own lines. There is, however, one condition. All must accept apartheid as the rule of life.

The Afrikaner Nationalist has an exalted view of the state. Afrikaner churchmen regard with distaste those Christians who speak of the possibility

of disobedience to the state. They regard it as lamentable to think of God and the state as in opposition. God is over the state, and the state is, by divine appointment, over man. Our Prime Minister, Dr. Hendrik Verwoerd, has publicly stated his belief that it is by God's will he rules.

The Afrikaner Nationalist has, therefore, an exaggerated view of what can be done by law. He thinks a new heaven and a new earth can be built by law, and by a new earth he means an earth where racial mixture is forbidden. He does not hesitate to use his power to crush any person who stands in his way, and he does not think this improper, for his authority is derived from God.

Man, being human, fierce beliefs are seldom held in purity. These certainly are not. Afrikaner Nationalists are not just people doing God's will. Being human, their moral aspirations are remarkably compatible with their human wishes. They like to be boss. In the past, they liked to be boss because it brought great material advantages. For the same reason, they want to stay boss, but now is added a more terrible incentive—the fear that if they don't stay boss, Africa will spew them out.

It doesn't help—yet—to talk to a Nationalist about sharing power; sharing power means the same to him as killing it. He thinks in racial groups, he thinks in terms of racial power; that is his whole philosophy and politics. To him, the sharing of power means death.

In a way, he is a tragic figure. He is the African who is afraid of Africa. He is the African who never identified himself with Africa. If Africa ever rejects him, it will be because he rejected Africa.

This is doubly tragic because he actually called himself the "Afrikaner," the "man of Africa." He never called himself a "European," as did almost all other white people in Africa. But today he is reminding Europe that he is the sole bastion of European civilization in Africa.

He even refuses to grant the black African the use of the word "African." The black African used to be a "kaffir," today he is a "native" or a "Bantu." But he, like the Afrikaner, wants to be called a "man of Africa."

Even the majority of the English-language newspapers refuse to use the word "African"; they always refer to "natives." They do this partly because our rulers don't like the word "African," partly because the newspapers don't like it themselves. The word "native" sounds calm and peaceful, and conjures up a picture of dusky bellies in tropical glades; the word "African" is masculine and vast and continental and a bit frightening.

APARTHEID is changing in character. It had to, because of the pressure of the outside world. A few years ago, apartheid was simply and plainly being boss. Our late Prime Minister, Mr. J. G. Strijdom, always called it by its simple Afrikaans name, *bevoegdheid*, which means "boss-ship." But Dr. Verwoerd, calls it "separate development."

In other words, apartheid is the way to give everyone a chance; one uses *bevoegdheid* to separate utterly every white group from every non-white group, in trains, buses, cinemas, restaurants, offices, factories, residential areas, schools, universities; and even to separate white English children from white Afrikaner children in the schools; even to separate black Zulu from black Mosotho and black Xhosa in schools and urban townships.

When people are properly separated, friction will cease; that is the great theory. Black people will not be humiliated by white power; white people will not be terrified by black power, and will therefore act more justly. Each group will develop its separate institutions. There will be peace and cooperation, whereas now there is only fear and discord.

Let us recognize honestly that there are idealistic Afrikaner Nationalists who have turned with relief to the goal of "separate development." It is something positive to work toward. It is a goal infinitely more virtuous than that of boss-ship.

Yet let us recognize also that it is a fantasy. That veteran Afrikaner theologian, Professor B. B. Keet, calls it a pipe dream. And so it is, not only because it is a fantasy, but because one seeks refuge in the pipe when reality is too hard for one. You can argue with an idealistic Nationalist, and almost get him to the point of seeing that "separate development" is a dream, and that for better or for worse we all have a common destiny, and he will grow more and more cornered, until he says with desperate intensity, he whose goal and end and passion is his people's survival, "We would rather die."

And will he die? And who will die with him? These are the questions I am pondering.

OF all the racial groups in the world, the Afrikaner Nationalist group is the most closed to others, the most turned-in upon itself, the most powerful in group opinion. It is willing to absorb any white person, but only on one condition—namely, that the Nationalist doctrines—above all, apartheid—are accepted. It does not readily accept Jews, Roman Catholics, or Freemasons; it rejects absolutely liberals, internationalists, universalists, integrationists and any person of color. It ostrac-

\*By "Colored" people we mean those of mixed white and other blood. The Afrikaner forms a separate group.

†There are two million Afrikaners, and it is estimated that at least three-quarters of them are Afrikaner Nationalists. By various electoral devices, not all free to the Nationalists, this Nationalist group controls two-thirds of the seats in the lower house of Parliament and 50 per cent of the seats in the Senate.

cises any Afrikaner who has deviated. Therefore, it is regarded coldly by almost 90 per cent of the people of South Africa. And, God help us, it is hated by many.

But its isolation is more terrible than that, for its doctrines are hated by the overwhelming majority of the people of the earth. Money is poured out like water to prove to the world that apartheid is noble, but no one believes, except in sad places like Algeria, Mississippi and Notting Hill. Many Nationalists hate to travel abroad; they would rather travel in the Rhodesias, Kenya, Mozambique, the Congo. But each year their own continent grows more and more closed to them.

The Nationalist does not like this isolation, but he seems powerless to do anything about it. He would like world approval—who would not?—but the world seems to be demanding his very soul. So he stands with his back to the wall.

**T**HERE is one thing about him that I am totally unable to comprehend, and that is that he does not appear to see the havoc he inflicts on others in his headlong journey to a goal that isn't there.

A colored man commits suicide because he is ordered to move out of his house, not to make room for a bridge or a highway, but because of his color. A white man commits suicide because he cannot face prosecution under the Immorality Act. A white family goes to Europe because otherwise they could not keep their adopted colored child. A white wife and her children flee from the husband and father who has been declared to be colored, but, bitterest of ironies, the fleeing children are now colored, too. An African student wins a fine scholarship overseas but is not allowed to go; sometimes, not always, it is because he is known to be against apartheid.

So it goes on and on and on, until the heart could break. But the Nationalist's heart doesn't break. Why can't he see what he is doing? Or does he just not care? And if he doesn't care, can't he see how it looks to the outside world?

Like many others, I cannot comprehend it at all. I can only suppose that if one is a Nationalist, collective man overwhelms individual man. The Nationalist is not a man in the individual sense, he is group man, collective man. He has no meaning apart from his group. On the one hand, he despises individualism; on the other, he despises interracialism and internationalism. Any passion for human rights he regards as sentimentalism.

When he talks of freedom, it is his own that he means. Therefore, as an individual, he is known only to individuals of his own group, or to those rare strangers who can enter the gate. These testify to his warmth, his hospitality, his generosity, his thoughtfulness, his care for others. Alas, these are not his virtues as collective man.

**W**HAT made him thus? What so turned him in upon himself? My own forefathers, the British, must bear some of the responsibility. When the Afrikaners trekked north to escape British rule, it was the British who followed after them, especially when the world's richest gold deposits were found in Johannesburg. It was the British who conquered the two Afrikaner Republics in 1902 in the tragic Boer War. It was the British who entertained the foolish plan of Anglicizing the Afrikaners.

It was the British who, above all others, took the divergent elements of Afrikanerdom and fused them into a lonely and narcissistic people. Not even Britain's magnificent restoration of self-government after the Boer War, not even Boshoff's and Smuts' magnanimous acceptance of it, were able to undo what had been done. The Nationalist remains obsessed with his past.

But there was another great factor also—the Africans, the other men of Africa. The Afrikaner loved Africa, but he could never come to terms with its people. Its people were not his fellow-Africans; they were the "black danger," the "black sea." They outnumbered him and, though he conquered them, he never ceased to fear them. His fear of them is the determinant of all his policies. This fact one must always remember.

All of us are determined by our past, but, if we are to grow up, there comes a time when we must take responsibility for ourselves. Today the world says to the Afrikaner, "We no longer want to hear about the past and what others did to you; we want to hear about the future and what you will do to others."

And the world is outraged by the answer.

**I**T sometimes happens when some new edict of the Nationalists is published, that their opponents are not so much angry as baffled. The Minister of Bantu Education, Mr. Willie Maree, has just issued a public edict that his white officials must not shake hands with African teachers. They must bow to each other

or clasp their own hands to each other, or do something equally absurd.

Why does a Minister do such a stupid thing? Why does he do it at the same time as his Government pours out money to prove to the world that apartheid is only brotherhood in disguise? One is forced to the conclusion that something is operating in this particular Minister against which he seems powerless. This particular white man of Africa fears other men of Africa so much that he fears to touch their hands, and he will not let other white men touch them, either. And he is a leader of Afrikaner Nationalism.

This triviality is not really trivial. It shows the true nature of apartheid, which in its essence is a rejection of one's fellow man. The Nationalist has rewritten the second great Commandment, and because his world is in two parts, the commandment is in two parts also:

*Thou shalt love thy white neighbor as thyself, provided he accepts apartheid.*

*Thou shalt love thy non-white neighbor as thyself, provided he does not live next door.*

The Nationalist believes in justice for black men, but it must be over there. He believes in opportunity for black men, but it must be over there. The people of the earth are learning fast that there is only one world, but he still thinks there are two. And if there are not two, he will make a law.

**W**HAT does the Nationalist think of the future? He looks at it with foreboding, but then, he always did. Yet the foreboding has never been so great as now, because the future, so to speak, has never been so near. It has been standing out there for three centuries; but now it is knocking at the door.

The Nationalist comforts himself that the Afrikaner has always had to struggle, that the new crisis is nothing new. But in his heart he knows that this crisis is the last of all.

The Nationalist fanatic says, "God made us, and if He will destroy us, His will be done." Some observers think all Nationalists are like that, and that, like blind Samson, they will pull down the house upon themselves and their enemies.

In crisis, there is only one refuge for the group man. That is to call the group together and bar the doors and load the guns. That is what the Prime Minister, Dr. Verwoerd, is doing now. That is what every Nationalist Prime Minister did before him.

The Nationalist knows no other politics. The Nationalist will never be able to come to terms with Africa; he understands Africa only so long as he is boss. His love for South Africa is deep and fierce, but how he would hate it if he were not the boss.

There is one hope, and one hope only, for the future of the white people of South Africa, and especially for the Afrikaner, and that is to come to some kind of terms with the other thirteen million; to negotiate; to discuss; to increase, not to decrease, representation; to open the door, to unload the guns; to stop these stupidities, like not shaking hands; to renounce the evil laws that result in violence and death, to forewear apartheid.

Can the Nationalist do it? Can he give up being boss? Is there some terrible and irrational compulsion in him that is leading him to death? We are all asking these questions.

If he cannot change, if he cannot become a true man of Africa, then there cannot be any orderly solution of our problems. One thing is certain: he won't change just by persuasion, or out of the goodness of his heart. He will change only when the pressure inside and outside the country becomes unendurable.

Yet one must also take into account the terrible possibility that it is now irrelevant whether he changes or not, that his end as a people is near, that Africa will reject him as he rejected it.

In that event, only the intervention of the outside world can save us from starvation, chaos and death. Of nations, it is Britain that has the greatest responsibility, for out of her magnanimity she set us on the road to disaster, and gave us a Constitution that allowed our rulers to do what they liked with our liberties. Of authorities, it is the United Nations that may need to come to our aid, and to give support to those who are concerned with building a nation and not with racial revenge.

**I** AM not convinced that the Afrikaner Nationalist, like Samson, will consent to his own death. Yet he is as blind as Samson was. Events like the recent tragedies help to open his eyes, but what he needs to bring him out of the pipe dream is a decisive order from the outside world.

It must be an order to bring to an end the second greatest Christian apostasy of the twentieth century, or to take the consequences.

Many of us pray that such an order will soon be heard.

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