

# SOMEWHERE SOUTH OF SUEZ

by

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*To*

H.M.S. *AMETHYST*

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# PART ONE

## NEW LANDS FOR OLD

## Chapter One

### LONDON LEAVETAKING

I could find nothing more to pack or throw away. At last the house was bare of all trace of us, unless, in some cupboard-corner, still lay the fragment of a broken toy, or, in the miry little backyard, the sodden shell of a Roman Candle. The stillness of London in the small hours was intolerable. I would have given much suddenly to hear again the clatter-patter of feet and the uproar of voices which so often distracted me from my work when the house was full.

I had toiled all day, clearing up forgotten odds and ends, and now stood in the empty house among my bags packed for Africa, while a northbound train carried the others from me. Big Ben had long chimed midnight. It was time to go. I looked round the deserted rooms, thinking that to leave a home still warm with family life is to die a little. It was not right to go away from a place that liked us, and that we liked, so well. I went once more through the house, where now only the dust and shadow of a happy year remained.

It was one of the years that followed the second of the twentieth-century wars. London all around was unkempt, cheerless and underfed. My native city was not allowed to revive freely after its long ordeal, but was held by official decrees in an artificial twilight of troubled frustration. Our Chelsea year was therefore one of present discomfort and ominous prospect, yet for the family in that tiny house it was an unforgettably happy time, because its members were happy in each other and because London, in this purgatory, was so lovely.

God disposes, no matter what man may ordain. The enforced dilapidation of old London only enhanced its grace and beauty. Wren's churches, once hemmed in by the thrusting, elbowing, tiptoeing buildings of the City, now, as ruined shells, rode free and high like fine frigates in the razed area round St. Paul's. Bumbles might dim the very lights of London, but this gave greater brilliance to the red, amber and green disks at the street-crossings; these made carnival in the blue dusk and enchanted the homeward walks of a London family from Hyde Park, through Sloane Street, to the little house. The drab drapes of privation and disrepair lent fresh colour and importance to small human things that spoke of London's brave past, of its strength and endurance, and of the hope of a brighter future. We loved them all, during our Chelsea year: the artists who sold pictures in the King's Road and the pleasant cafés with striped awnings which men back from the war opened there; the Guardsmen who on summer afternoons played cricket by the great barracks, where anti-aircraft guns pointed minatory fingers at dangers past or to come: the Chelsea Pensioners, in red or black frock-coats, who contentedly watched the game while the bomb-holes in their historic home, next door, were slowly mended. Beyond, tugs and barges plied on the Thames, and children played in Battersea Park in the shadow of the great power-station which the bombers never could destroy. If ever we had a little petrol the five of us, packed into an aged two-seater, drove to old Putney Bridge, and Wimbledon and Richmond, turning again towards London Town in that jewelled twilight which made it, so battered and tattered, a fairy city still.

I was enchanted by this beauty of grey London in 1947. I felt a sadness in it and wondered if this were born of suffering endured and would pass, or if it were premonitory. I sometimes think that cities *do* become fey and, unless this was only in the eye of the beholder, I believed I saw in the Nineteen-Thirties a wistful, twilight loveliness in ancient cities over which great tribulation hung, like Vienna, Dresden and Cologne; today they are razed or sunken in sad oblivion, captive or half-free. I felt it in Prague and in Paris before the German invasions. To me the very stones of those cities, the air in their streets, the looks and voices of their people, joined in a symphony of presentiment.

With such memories in mind I looked at the loveliness of London, as the decisive second half of the fateful twentieth century approached, and hoped that when the final balance of this stupendous hundred years was struck it might still stand, sturdy as ever, while the hopes of men revived around it; it has a simple faith and a rocklike staunchness which may outlast the century's concluding storms. Under the spell of its beauty we passed as happy a year as five people were ever likely to know and from empty rooms I now looked back on this twelvemonth and scanned its ups and downs. Laughter around the table at Christmas, on birthdays, on Guy Fawkes Day. Dire anxiety for a baby and heartfelt gratitude when the danger passed. Great delight in unexpected parcels from Canada and Australia, New Zealand and South Africa; had we not been kept short of food we could not have known the joy of those feasts. The cruellest winter in memory, when Londoners were forbidden to warm themselves, and the loveliest summer we ever knew. The joy of finding a sitter-in who enabled us to have a rare evening out, and the added zest this lent to a modest dinner at the little club near Hyde Park Corner, to a new play by Noel Coward, and to the homeward stroll together beneath the trees of St. James's Park to Knightsbridge, the last look at sleeping babes, the footsteps in the quiet street as we fell asleep....

Now the lovely year was gone as wine from a pitcher. I felt the life fading from the house, like the light from a failing lamp. I wondered how I could have been foolish enough to disperse a happy family. Could I by incantation have resummoned them all, restored babes to cots, hubbub to quiet rooms, books to shelves, clothes to pegs, I would have done this. But there was no turning back now.

A man is usually two men. One of his selves belongs to his family and the other to his calling. If he is a sailor, or a roving journalist in this Gadarene century, that is bad for him and for his family. Before 1939, when I returned to England because the new war was at hand, my life was one of constant movement. Now my writer's blood was stagnant from eight years pent in my native island, and the gyves of this inaction had eaten deep grooves of impatience into my soul. In eight years I felt traveller's air against my face only during five brief escapes, or escapades: a journey to Paris before the German invasion, a cruise along the Channel with a naval convoy, a mad excursion to the Isle of Man (which I made to feel a ship's planks beneath my feet again, and because it was the only place outside his shores which an islander might reach in wartime), a visit to Normandy and a dash to Dublin.

Now one of my two selves longed to stay and the other desperately needed to get out into the great world-again, to see what was going on and who was behind what was going on. I thought that the great Plan, of imprisoning all men, everywhere, within their lands or islands, would continue during the coming half-century, and that the next decade or two might offer the last respite before the final showdown, when freedom would either return to the world or be banished for a long and dark time. This might be my last chance to sniff the air of liberty, to go like a freeman about the lovely world. Eight years of energy were stored in me like a compressed spring. Now it was released, and I was off like a bullet.

I opened the front door, put my baggage on the top step, and with a heavy heart closed the door; behind it lay a happy year and in front of it the future stretched as obscure as the night itself, which was pitch dark. I am not often abroad after midnight and did not know, until this moment, that the street lights of London were actually put out at that hour. I expected little light, in a time of such lunatic edicts, but not no light at all. The street could never have been darker during the war's blackout. This was a blow, for I had to find my way, afoot and laden with baggage, to the Airways Terminus at Victoria.

The baggage consisted of a large and a small suitcase, my typewriter, a briefcase and a fifth item typical of the traveller who stood on that doorstep and felt for the street with his foot. At the last

moment of clearing-up, I found in a drawer, to my great remorse, a file of papers about Palestine lent to me for perusal by a neighbour who spent many years in that country. I could not think how to restore these to their owner at such a time: my aeroplane was to leave in two hours. Finally I resolved, as the only possible way of delivering them, to leave them on his doorstep in a parcel. The ransacked house contained neither string nor paper, but after long search I found a derelict baby's cot-cover and a mysterious dressing-gown girdle, of unknown ownership. I wrapped the papers in the plush cot-cover and tied the bundle with the silken cord.

Now I gathered all these belongings, carrying some in my hands and clutching others to me with my upper arms, while the heavy bundle dangled from a free finger by a loop in the cord. Thus laden, I set out on my first major journey in the Nineteen-Forties (it was to take me to many parts of Africa and of North America, and to I do not yet know where). I wished as I toiled blindly along that the watching world might by some device of television see how an English traveller set out on far travels in the third year of his first Socialist Government.

The night was damp and foggy, and so dark that I could hardly find my neighbour's house, though it lay near and round a corner. When I did discover it, by touch, I groped until I discovered the door-handle, to which I tied the odd-looking parcel. Much later I learned that it was still there when my surprised neighbour opened his door next morning. He disapproves of the Zionist invasion of Palestine and of the complicity of great powers in it, for he clings to old-fashioned notions about the wrongness of unprovoked aggression on weak and harmless peoples. He has often stated these opinions publicly. When he saw, attached to his door-handle, something wrapped in blue plush and tied with a white cord, he suspected a visit of vengeance from the Stern Gang, and sent for the police. The ceremony of opening my parcel was performed with respect.

Little thinking what excitement I was bequeathing, I staggered on, groping for another door, for I had a second call to pay in these difficult circumstances: I wished to drop the key of our bereaved house through the letter-box of a house-agent in Sloane Street. In the governmental gloom I could not be sure of the door, and eventually chose the wrong one. I still wonder what the maiden lady thought who found a strange key on her doormat in the morning, with a note implicitly inviting her to call and let herself in at a given address.

I never looked forward to carrying my baggage to Victoria in the small hours, but did not foresee just how arduous this would prove. For some reason, heavy suitcases are heavier and more awkward to carry in darkness than in light, and by the time I reached what I thought must be an open place, and probably Sloane Square, I feared I should miss my aeroplane. Then, suddenly, the usual heaven-sent London taxicab appeared and stopped; the driver saw my bowed and laden form in his headlights and invited me to jump in if I were going to the Airways Terminus.

Thankfully I entered a gloomy interior containing two invisible beings who seemed to be cursing each other in Polish and enjoying it. In this way I came once more, after many years, to a journey's beginning, and reflected that much was changed for the worse in the lot of an English traveller since I passed that way before, in 1939.

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## Chapter Two

### ‘PASSENGERS FOR JOHANNESBURG ...’

The airways bus rolled out to Northolt, along the great new road which we five often took, in our old two-seater, so that the children might watch the silver airliners land from Cairo or leave for New York until bedtime called them homeward, through the begemmed dusk, to Chelsea. A chill November dawn is a comfortless time for a man who is about to put half the world between him and his family and as I jumped from the bus I longed to be on my further way.

For the last time for many a day I ate the food of the British islander at this period. Paste sandwich, tomato sandwich, lettuce sandwich: the much-lampooned railway-station sandwich of yore was a feast compared with these poor morsels, which under glass cupolas waited sadly for the coming and the parting guest. Those sandwiches, the few starved-looking publications in the bookstall, the slabs of chocolate (only to be had against ‘points’), the dreary morning and the thought of my family, and English folk everywhere, leading this bread-and-skilly existence, exasperated me, and I was glad when a voice called ‘Passengers for Johannesburg’.

There was still one delay before embarkation. Those about to fly had first to pass through a shed in which men stood at pedestal desks. These officials were new; they were not there in 1939, when a man to examine passports was held to be enough. Like the sad sandwiches and the rationed chocolate, they represented the achievements of a new era and a new régime. They were concerned to know what cash law-abiding travellers carried, and thus were imitations of the ‘foreign-currency police’ I first knew in Hitler’s Germany. I was expecting to see them, because I had read that the Minister for Civil Aviation was recruiting ‘a substantial force of security police for airport duty’ and from experience I knew that the business of security police is not to ensure the citizen’s security, but to diminish it, until at last it disappears. The daily news of the years which have passed since I made that journey has shown that these new airport police have not been able to hinder the big operators in surreptitiously removing large sums of cash, and even military aircraft, from England. They will, however, have a precise note of the small sums taken abroad by travellers who have gone on modest and lawful errands, including the two pounds in Portuguese pesos which I took to Lisbon.

I was not a gun-runner, political agent or currency-smuggler, and found many obstacles put in the way of my professional undertakings. For instance, I resolved to go to Africa by British aeroplane, wishing, at a time of such constant lamentation about our ‘dollar shortage’, to pay my passage money to a British line. At Airways House, however, was another type of new official, and he demurred. He did not say: ‘We won’t take you, because the Government does not want bona fide travellers to go abroad.’ He said courteously: ‘It would be much simpler if you could go to the Ministry of Information and get *priority*.’ (He spoke the word as if it were made of Turkish delight.)

‘No!’ I said. ‘I’ve been fighting priority all my life, first under the Tories, with their old school tie, then under Hitler and now under this régime of Communist-propelled Socialism, no offence meant and none taken, I’m sure. When can you give me a seat, without your precious priority?’

‘Well, we’re booked up a long way ahead,’ he said. ‘Of course, if you could get *priority*....’

‘You know I can book a passage at once with an American, Dutch or other foreign company,’ I said. He nodded. ‘Well, then, will you give me a seat or not?’



He shifted uneasily. I saw he wore an R.A.F. tie and felt sorry for him; I wondered what he privately thought when he read ministerial speeches about the dollar shortage. I left him and called on an American airline. They offered me early passage from Lisbon to Johannesburg and a seat in a *British* machine from London to Lisbon. Thus my money for the Lisbon to Johannesburg flight went to the Americans, and also, I suppose, a commission on my journey by British aircraft from London to Lisbon. I met many people who, having lawful occasions abroad, were forced in this way to use foreign services and thus aggravate the 'shortage' of foreign currency which was used to justify privations in England. The Lynskey Report and other matters which have appeared in the news since then have shown the type of traveller who often receives favoured treatment under the system of 'priorities'. To watch it rear its head in England made me sadder than most because I had seen, in many countries, to what evil results it leads.

I took my seat and soon London was pirouetting beneath. I sat in a British aeroplane, my ticket bought at an American counter; after all the trumpeting, this was what Planning meant. Soon London fell behind and the Home Counties began to slip by. My life has been full of leavetakings; they began in 1914 and have never since ceased for long. I can hardly count now how often in thirty-five years I have looked back at England falling astern and wondered whether I would see it again. Below the wing, now, the coast appeared, and a town with two piers.

What memories Brighton held for me! Pierrots on the sands, when the century was young and had not yet unveiled its satanic features. Hospital in the first war. A brief visit, and an astonishing glimpse of prosperity and unconcern, between the wars. Bombs falling while a baby was being born there, in the second war. Loud-speakers announcing the invasion of Normandy. Flying-bombs trudgeoning overhead to London while a second baby was being born there. No bombs when the third was born, but instead, a bitter winter, deep snow, icebound roads and the Shinwell blackout to imperil the midnight drive to London that saved her week-old life....

How will they all fare in the second fifty years, I thought, looking down at Brighton? Picturing the perils they survived in their cradles, I yet found that I did not ask myself: 'Will they be killed in a new war?' but 'Will there be life for them to live, when they are full grown?' I do not know how far a man is entitled to wish future things for his children, but if I were to wish mine what I wish myself it would be, not security, but the dignity of liberty and a freeman's adventurous span of years. The diminishing beauty of life, more than any prospect of violent death, is to me the dark lesson of the first fifty years and the menace of the second fifty.

Then Brighton was gone, and with Brighton such thoughts, and suddenly we came down out of cloud to Bordeaux, where were bomb debris and an airport restaurant full of good food, fruit and wine for those with 'currency' to buy. The people wore the countenance of hope deferred, which the French, I believe, have carried since the revolution of 1790. I watched while two sardonic Frenchmen in a corner cynically ate a large sole each, and then two great entrecôte steaks, with a mound of golden fried potatoes on each occasion. The French have for more than a hundred and fifty years been unable to extricate themselves from the morass into which they, first of all European peoples, were flung, but they still eat well.

To fly after eight years is the next best thing to a first flight and, with England but two hours behind me, I felt anew the old invigoration of new scenes and experiences. I liked the Viking in which I travelled. It had good leg room and large windows. I would have liked to go to South Africa in it and next day, when I transferred to the more famous Clipper, found this less comfortable. Around me were wealthy South Africans returning from America and Europe, English families going to settle in South Africa, and a few passengers bound for intermediate places. Among this company were a friendly and talkative woman who quickly struck acquaintance with nearly all aboard, and a silent middle-aged lady with white hair and a good, unravaged skin who sat quietly in her place and

spoke to none. In an eventful life I have seen nothing so curious as the meeting of these two. It appears to me the perfect comedy, performed by two strangers who were thrown together in a flying-machine over Spain.

The voluble lady may have been provoked to find a woman aboard with whom she seemed unlikely to exchange a word (for the other sat like a statue in her place). Suddenly, after sending inquisitive glances across, the first woman jumped up, went to the other, and said: 'You're beautiful.'

If women dream, I suppose their happiest vision must be that a stranger should one day accost them and say: 'Forgive me, but I cannot help myself. I *must* tell you how beautiful you are!' Now this fantastic and lovely thing happened to a woman who was not even young, and was stone deaf (for so she proved)! Could fate play a more spiteful prank? Chosen from all women in the world to receive this delightful tribute, she could not hear it! Politeness, however, bade her pretend that she wanted to know what was said, while zeal forbade the other woman to desist, so that the impulsive one tried to drown the noise of two engines, which drove us through the air at about two hundred miles an hour, and stood there shouting louder and ever louder, 'You're beautiful ... I say you're beautiful ... YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL! ...' To this day (unless someone later enlightened her), the deaf lady does not know what she missed.

Spain slipped by, with the bright blue sea breaking on its golden coasts and the peasants scratching a hard living from the thin soil on the mountainsides and the bull-rings lying alongside the towns. We flew over Portugal, I caught a glimpse of the Tagus, the wheels touched down and then I was again a travelling writer in a foreign country in peace-time. Immediately I was in trouble.

As my journey was from one part of the 'sterling area' to another, I needed enough 'foreign currency' for the expenses of one night in Lisbon. For this purpose I had through my bank applied, in the manner of a Christian slave at some Babylonian court, for some Portuguese pesos. Knowing the pitfalls of foreign travel I asked for eight pounds, a small amount which yet contained a modest margin to cover accidents. The anonymous department of practical jokers which administers these regulations granted me two pounds. This was its way of saying: 'We wish to help you to as much trouble as possible during your journey: always at your disservice....'

On landing at Lisbon I was required to pay two pounds 'city tax'. This left me nothing to pay for a night's hotel, food, tips and taxicabs. Fortunately, among my fellow passengers was one of those Englishmen who at the crack of doom will with quiet urbanity treat the event as unimportant and unexciting. He had come in quest of orders for steel, which he was prevented from manufacturing and delivering by some other department of practical jokers. He already had many outstanding orders, booked on earlier visits, and hoped in course of years to be allowed to begin fulfilling them. He was entitled to this hope because his country's government, though it felt that the steel industry was too efficient and prosperous to be left alone, had not then taken actual steps for its ruination. Since then its 'nationalization' has been decreed and this admirable man will presumably end his days flying to Portugal to collect orders for steel which his governors at home will not let him supply, and this occupation will be most typical of the twentieth century.

He was my saviour. The Portuguese were so grateful to him for accepting their non-fulfillable orders that he had important friends. One of these, hearing from him of my plight, at once paid my city tax. He thus left me my £2 worth of pesos to pay my way in Lisbon, and probably made all three of us guilty of some grave offence, high reason or the like. He seemed surprised when I mentioned repayment (I knew no way of making it). The return of his money probably appeared to him as novel a notion as the delivery of his steel. Perhaps either would have upset the delicate balance on which the trade and commerce between nations rests in these enlightened times.

By strange chance I was never before in Portugal, and Lisbon suddenly reminded me that I was in one of the last untouched corners of the Europe I loved. Here was an old city unscathed, with the strata of the generations plain to see in stone and statue. Not many such remain in Europe; most are half-ruined or enslaved. Lisbon was once a small ship among the stately cities of the old continent. Now that so many were sunk it seemed bigger and more significant.

I am not young enough in my calling to think the Portuguese hold themselves lucky in their lot. They have many complaints, which I had no time to study, but they still enjoyed many things which others lacked. After the eight drab years the colour of life in Lisbon dazzled me, so that I almost needed to shade my eyes. The native hues of England are soft and gentle, not brilliant. The background is grey, green and brown; it is lovely, but needs the touch of warmth and colour here and there to keep it from becoming drear. Give a man a good house, a good fire in the grate and good food in the belly, good clothes to wear and a good holiday from the great cities, and it is a gay country. Take away these things, forbid a man to warm himself, eat his fill, buy a new suit, escape from bricks and mortar, and only the grey background remains. The chapfallen governors of England after the second war systematically drained off these colours from life.

I felt now like a man who came from a cave into bright sunlight. I left London on winter's eve and found myself in apparent midsummer. Wide boulevards ran between flowers and palms; fountains played and peasant women, carrying great baskets on their heads, went beneath a warm blue sky; through an old town of fine houses and squares busy streets ran down to a broad river where ships lay. These brilliant native colours of a friendly climate and fortunate situation were the background to a picture of abundance and animation. People with full bellies are undoubtedly brisker in mien, gait and manner. If they are bound somewhither they look glad to be going there, and if they only stroll seem actively happy to be strolling. The Englishman abroad, at that period in his island's story, felt like the waif in a famous advertisement, who with wistful bliss sniffs through an open window the odours from a well-fed man's table. I thought of the workhouse fare at home and of the occasional 'concessions' of an ounce of margarine or of sweets, for which the British islander was coming to return thanks in his parlour.

God bless the Minister 'of' Food,  
He keeps us hungry for our good,

this being a suitable adaptation to the present day of

God bless the Squire and his relations  
And keep us in our proper stations.

How circumstances alter cases! In 1939, when I last travelled abroad, Lisbon was but one of many pleasant places that the visitor might choose among, taking each for granted. In 1947 it was no longer something that always was and always would be; it was a symbol and sample of something that was becoming rare. It meant more to me, perhaps, than to most who might pass that way. It meant the European continent which I loved and hold still to be the lighthouse of a darkling world; if it is destroyed nothing is ready to take its place, and a long time might pass before the world could hope to see again anything equal to the group of Christian nations which in nineteen hundred years grew up between Vistula, Danube and Seine, between Cracow, Vienna, Rome and Avignon.

Looking back next morning, as the Clipper rose above Lisbon into a lime-coloured sky, I thought of all the peoples and towns and tongues, the spires and towers and gables I knew, and hoped I might yet one day return to Europe, which now fell away astern, like England the day before. Among the gravest consequences of the second war was this: that the writer of *Somewhere South of Suez* was cut off from his especial field of toil. I spent twenty years studying Europe and would gladly have

ended my days as a wandering writer among its varied peoples. This was something passing the love of women. I loved to come into some old town in France or Poland, Germany or Bohemia, Hungary or Austria or Slovakia, to seek a modest lodging, remain as long as fancy ruled, and for a brief time to become part of its life, while remaining one apart. To be the guest at every feast and the onlooker at every spectacle; to stand aside and see the good in men who call each other evil; to watch the charlatans and cheapjacks in the public places and learn their tricks; constantly to come on fresh and delightful things which to those rooted in a place have become dully familiar: these are rare and piquant enjoyments, hardly to be found on the path of any other calling.

But the bisection of Europe, and all the bans, left me like a fiddler bereft of his fiddle. I needed to travel, and to write, and so I now went first to Africa. Looking back, I saw the south-westernmost tip of Europe fade into the mists. *Au revoir* to all that, I hoped. We hung in a blue haze somewhere between Europe and Africa, suspended on waves of vibrant sound. Our slender, shining craft was a thing of beauty, from without. Inside it looked like a cramped saloon car in a train. Some fifty people sat in pairs, facing forward, divided by a central aisle. So they would sit for an afternoon, a night, a day and most of another night. Below them the lion would rend its prey, the monkeys swing on ropes, the snake slither through the grass, the witch-doctor smell out his victim. Inside their glittering capsule, insulated against tropic heat, these voyagers would pass obliviously overhead and at their destination be met by limousines, the replicas of those which brought them to the airport at their start.

Air travel, in its present stage, is dull. Here fifty people crossed Africa by night and day, and that is still a great experience. Only half of them had small portholes, and many of these were blinded by wings or engines. Few could see out of the vehicle in which they travelled. But for three landings and rare peeps from portholes temporarily deserted by other passengers, I should have crossed Africa from tip to tip without seeing it until I landed at its southern extremity. If large windows cannot be fitted, then passenger aircraft would more suitably be made of some transparent substance. However, my fellow-passengers seemed content to be borne unseeing across a continent. They sat upright, looking at the head of the passenger in front, or tilted themselves by a lever into a half-recumbent position.

At last I caught a glimpse of Africa, and of the Canaries to starboard, through a borrowed porthole. There lay the curving coast as I remembered it in my school atlases; the blue sea broke against it in a white and lacy border. What man born in the heyday of Rider Haggard could suppress a thrill at this first sight? Not I; I should have come to Africa long before, had not Europe kept a writer so busy during the roaring Thirties. Now we drove down the coast, flying a little inland and always lower, until the eye could almost count the sands of the desert.

The great African desert is a startling thing. Even from the security of an aeroplane the feeling of menace is tangible. Red, angry, brutal and threatening, it is the naked face of nature risen in rebellion against man. It was not always desert. Carvings found in parts of it accessible only to a well-equipped expedition *provided with camels* show that it was once well-watered land teeming with giraffes, ostriches, gazelles and even cattle, but *no camels!* Africa, beneath the improvident touch of man has been drying up for centuries. Those who see the result in Northern Africa, and wonder how it came about, may read the answer to the riddle in Southern Africa, where rains sweep the over-grazed topsoil away by the ton, exposing the menacing rock. The southern deserts are spreading; the warning to man, be wise or begone, is plain.

The quick dusk came down. A sickle moon and a silver star glistened in the western sky, like some Sultan's banner planted on the dark rampart of the night. Out to starboard a ship spoke to us in bright flashes of light. Then the moon went down, the night grew misty and black and we were fifty white folk flying through space in an argent bullet above the most mysterious of the continents.

Tilting our chairs we reclined like favourites in a harem; but we were less beautiful. We were as gods in our indifferent acceptance of marvels, but we were not elegant or urbane. Hardly anything remained for us to conquer or discover and we could accomplish more by pressing a button than Leonardo da Vinci or Francis Drake achieved in a lifetime, but did we know as much as our fathers of faith and honour? Below, dessicating Africa inscrutably watched us pass. We flicked cigarette ash and wriggled ourselves into more comfortable attitudes; beneath, lambent green eyes glowed in the night.

'Fasten your belts', said a red-lettered sign, weights pressed on my eardrums, wheels gently bumped on ground, the noise of engines ceased, the door opened and I got out. A bright airport light played on the upturned face of a man who held steps, on its blubbery lips, rough-hewn jaw, great cheekbones and mahogany skin. The primeval face of Africa greeted the white man in his machine.

Nowadays you drop from the night sky and dine in Africa as casually as you might turn from an evening stroll into a Soho restaurant, and the few Europeans, wherever the traveller alights, have stamped the marks of their several nationhoods clearly on these remote settlements. Dakar's shabby little airport restaurant might have been by the Eiffel Tower, for all the African night, noises, heat and black waiters. In a corner a woman, exquisitely chic and *soignée*, sat with a French official. Food and cooking were French, each table had its bottle of wine, and the bread, served by the yard, was that which only Frenchmen bake.

Then on again, from this corner of Paris. I was weary, but cannot sleep in trains or aeroplanes. I idly watched the 'air-hostess' make her charges comfortable for the night. She was pretty and of slightly peevish mien, as any girl might be who has to worry about a hair-do-and-facial from New York to Johannesburg and back once a fortnight. The air-hostess is the most important thing in air-travel; that, at any rate, is implicit in the advertisements, which usually show a very large and beautiful air-hostess in the foreground and a very small aeroplane in the background. I feel, however, that she is a mistake. What this cramped form of travel needs is a buxom and motherly stewardess who will help you to be sick, if that is your pleasure, and who is thinking about her boy, not about her boy friend. Many air-hostesses may themselves be the victims of those misleading advertisements. They may picture themselves (in a delightfully becoming uniform) roaming the skies of the world, Meeting Such Interesting People, and (if I am not too cynical) eventually marrying one of these, a man with an air of romantic melancholy and mystery. In the event they find themselves for ever trotting up and down a narrow gangway or sitting in their back-seats: any interesting people aboard are too sunken in gloom to notice the new hair-style and the attentive one is a Cypriot bagman from Brooklyn; make-up is a bother during a trans-African flight; and if a really thrilling man appears he stares from his porthole as in a trance and absent-mindedly gets out in the central Congo at midnight, never to be seen again. Thus these charming creatures often wear an expression which seems to say that a girl's life is full of disappointments and they might as well have tried Hollywood, it couldn't have been duller than this....

The dawn, and Accra. Anyway, the dawn; Accra must be far from the airport, for I could see no sign of it, or of a coast, or of gold. Propped on leaden limbs I saw with bleary eyes only a few airport sheds and huts and thin bush around. Yet this was England, as Dakar was France. I saw no white man (this was dawn), but the spick and span uniforms of Native soldiers and officials said: 'This is British territory.' Also, little white posts, freshly painted, with rope or chain suspended between them, guarded nothing in particular against who knew what. Little buckets, of sand or water, stood here and there. I recognized a familiar air of preparation and expectation. When I went to the lavatory, where I met a praying mantis at its devotions, I saw on the wall a typewritten 'Inventory of Contents', though these were hardly rare or costly enough to deserve the honour of listing and public proclamation.

These were the authentic touches of a hand I knew. This was Camberley or Aldershot, awaiting The General; those neat uniforms, that cleanly swept parade-ground (I mean, airport), those freshly painted posts and buckets dressed-by-the-right, the list of contents....

This was not a conscious piece of reasoning (I was hardly conscious myself at such an hour after such a night); it was the mechanical deduction of a trained journalist's mind. It was correct. I found a Native official reading the morning newspaper and this said Field-Marshal Montgomery was due to land at Accra that day, in the course of an African tour!

I took my first daylight look at Africa, and it was an illuminating one. The Gold Coast long counted as the white man's grave, a hot and hopeless place where the white man went down and the black man never rose, but whether it ever deserved this ill-renown I do not know. Today I repeatedly meet people, in many countries, who speak with great enthusiasm of Accra and its beaches and long to go there, so that I intend myself to explore it one day. Anyway, I did not expect to find there up-to-the-minute Native newspapers and the evidence of lively Native politics. Yet the newspaper which my Native official read, while his white masters slept, was written and printed by Natives and already distributed by dawn! Its views were keenly on the heels of the news, which was the impending arrival of Field-Marshal Montgomery; it reminded him that, long before the British withdrawal from India, Indian officers had received the King's commission and served with white ones. This meant, I judged: 'Now do the same in Africa, and then depart.' I thought the world would grow dangerously small for the European man if he were to leave Africa, too, and felt he ought to stay there, for his own good and that of its peoples. This was the matter which most interested me in Africa.

With sorrow I met once more in Accra the Mother-Hubbard-like fare of my native island. I do not know whether under the Colonial Office system orders from Whitehall go out to all the Colonies saying that paste sandwiches are the utmost that must be offered to transcontinental travellers, or whether zealous colonial officials think to please superiors in London by reproducing in far-flung outposts the fare which the British islander now accepts as his due at King's Cross station. Anyway, when I met these miserly scraps again, all unexpectedly, at Accra airport, I said, 'Mr. Strachey, I presume,' and turned away.

After Dakar, untidy and well-fed, and Accra, tidy and ill-fed, I was not surprised to find Leopoldville a busy, bustling little Brussels on the equator, with a fine airport and a thriving modern restaurant, a meal at which (fortunately for the currencyless British traveller) was included in the fare. The Belgians should be more numerous; they know the secret of living well in all conditions. They are also among the most successful, and probably are *the* most successful of the European countries in Africa, particularly in their handling of the African Native in the towns and in industry.

In Leopoldville I had time, in the full noon of an equatorial day, for a first leisurely look at the land which long had fascinated me from afar. Attractive buildings were going up, everybody was busy and everybody looked happy because he was busy. There were colours between the high clouds in the sky as if a rainbow had broken up and strewn its fragments around. There were new roads and new white houses, with cool awnings and blinds. On all sides raw bush crept up, and through it and along the roads moved women with babies on their backs and baskets on their heads. They were so many, all moving at a uniform step and pace, that it was as if the country were covered with conveyor-belts, in human shape. They passed with superb grace; had I been Buddha, sitting at this roadside, I would have been content to contemplate, not my own navel, but this almost hypnotic movement of the burden-carriers, which was like that of statues walking amid the shimmer of heat.

Their pace never varied, despite the load on their heads, the baby behind and the bare feet on stony ground. When they passed each other it was like the passing of ships. They did not stare or glare or stop to gossip, as they might have done in Kensington High Street. They drew near, met and drew apart again like dark swans on a timeless stream. There was much beauty in this pageant of toll beneath the coloured sky. Whence, I wondered, came the humble dignity and pride that these moving figures expressed: from simple poverty, from heavy labour, from the humility of lowliness, from primitive darkness, or from what? Would they lose it if they became prosperous, employers of others, liberated, enlightened? And if so, why?

The aeroplane started again and flew deep into another night, through thick white vapours, over invisible mountains and deserts that violently disquieted the air, so that the roaring silver missile was thrown up and down and about and the queasy were sick. I could not sleep and, being so high above the earth, fell to thinking about it as a globe with continents sketched on it, and about the changing shape of the world as I have seen it in these thirty-five years and foresee it in the future.

What is the world, I thought, and what are continents? It has four continents, not five: that is, four great land masses detached by water from other continents. Europe is not, geographically, a continent. It is a tiny western fragment of Asia, and rose to the courtesy rank of continent only by virtue of its especial, supreme achievement: Christian civilization. Its peoples were those most responsive to the apostles from Arabia who brought news of the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. The acceptance of those teachings produced a common spirit among its peoples, even when they fought each other, which led them to a state of civilization, far from complete but higher than the planet ever knew before. They so far outpaced all other peoples of the earth that the petty part of it which they inhabited came to be called, wrongly, a continent. Before that it was an unimportant region somewhere north of Babylon.

Through the second twentieth-century war, I thought, looking back, the masses of Asia, organized in two powerful political forces born in the first war, returned to and engulfed half of Europe. If that process continued, the end of the decisive century might bring the end of the fiction that 'Europe' was a separate continent; the area and period of Christian civilization would be wiped out and something new appear in its place.

This was the great question which I expected to see answered between the years 1950 and 2000. I could not, however, persuade myself to believe, as so many believed, that it would be answered by the military result of a third war, because the second war brought the Asiatics half way into Europe and showed that the proclaimed causes and the military results of the twentieth-century wars have nothing to do with the political results. These are arranged behind the scenes. The two Asiatic movements which arose in the first war and reaped the victory of the second one were Soviet Communism and Political Zionism. Their conquests, however, were not achieved by arms, but by the skilful application of a new science: that of gaining and exerting power through the men in charge of great affairs in all countries. To see the shape of the future, it was necessary to realize that the advance of Soviet Communism to the centre of Europe was enabled and approved by the leaders of Britain and America at conferences, held while the fighting continued, which were kept secret from the public masses. It was necessary to realize also that the Zionist invasion of Palestine, which in my opinion was but the prelude to much larger events in that part of the world, was similarly promoted and made possible by the leaders of Britain and America. This process, or these processes (for Communism and Zionism moved hand in hand from their emergence in 1917 on) began in the first war. Neither the Communist occupation of half Europe nor the Zionist annexation of Palestine was ever proclaimed among the aims of the second war, but these results of it vastly transcended all others achieved. The ostensible aims of the war were in fact hardly achieved anywhere at all, for even those countries which were 'liberated' were required to submit to a new

international agency, for the nonce called The United Nations, in which these secret influences were clearly likely to be paramount; they were proved so at the outset in the matter of Palestine.

If the process were carried to its conclusion in the second half of the century (and I felt sure for myself that the attempt would be made) then its aims, I thought, would be three:

(1) To complete the destruction and enslavement of Europe, possibly under pretext of saving and liberating it, as in 1939-45; (2) to complete the expulsion of Europeans from Asia and from other footholds overseas; (3) to complete the reversal of the story of the last 150 years by setting up a new pagan empire, probably based on Palestine and New York.

These aims might conceivably be accomplished without a third world war (though not without the use of force) if the new international agency could be made servile to them and powerful enough to enforce them. Failing that, I thought the twentieth century would probably see its third war, with these ulterior aims. What I could not believe, in the light of the two wars and their results, was that a new war, declared at the outset to be one between 'East and West' or 'Capitalism and Communism' or 'Freedom and Despotism' or 'Democracy and Dictatorship', would be allowed to lead to the liberation of Europe and the resurrection of Christian liberty there. That could only happen if there were a much livelier public awakening to the facts of the second war than seemed likely.

In any or every event, however, I expected Africa to become of major importance during the next fifty years. In the case of war it would be the white man's right flank against the Asiatics, even if he again found, when he had beaten them, that his victory had been turned into his defeat in New York and London, Tel Aviv and Moscow. He would have to turn to Africa for food, and possibly for manpower. Even apart from war, now that India and the Far East were closing their doors against him, he would need an outlet, in a shrinking world, for his energy and population. If Europe and the white man were to survive, he would need Africa for the next century at least. After that Canada, Australia and New Zealand would be big enough to take a full share in the guardianship of European civilization.

I had with me a population map of Africa. The white-inhabited area was marked in red. It amounted only to a thin coastal strip on the southernmost tip of the huge continent, and a few small blobs inland. A map of Normandy, showing the position of the invading armies a few days after the landings of June 1944, would have looked much the same. The European occupation of Africa was but a foothold, after three hundred years. Would the bridgehead be established and the interior occupied, or would the intruders be swept into the sea? In the twentieth century they had a new foe to reckon with: the powerful agitation of the Asiatics among the black men.

From a distance I had judged that the outcome in Africa depended chiefly on South Africa, which is the only part of Africa with a substantial, though still small, white population. In South Africa were some two and a half million white people and eight million Natives; in Africa as a whole were about five million whites and one hundred and fifty million Natives. South Africa was clearly the place to begin an African journey....

'Please fasten your belts.' I borrowed a porthole and saw jewels flash out against the dark velvet of the night, diamonds and rubies and emeralds, a great scintillating heap: Johannesburg. I made ready to land and took leave of a friendly fellow-passenger, a South African, who knew of me and offered to lend me a car, an offer which I thankfully accepted in the spirit in which it was made. It enabled me to shorten the period of strangeness and to find my bearings quickly in a land different from any I knew. This token of goodwill, made before I even set foot on South African earth, was the first of innumerable others. I never knew anywhere such hospitality and helpfulness as I met there, from



South Africans of British stock and from many Afrikaners, while I always received courtesy from those Afrikaners whose inveterate dislike of my country disables them from offering friendship to any Englishman.

The wheels touched down and I looked at my watch. Three days and nights were gone since I locked the door of the little house in Chelsea. I wondered when I should again see those who filled my thoughts. In the twentieth century you never can tell. It was likely to be a long separation at the best, and physical distance makes such a separation seem even longer.

Documents, questions, delays, a bus ride through dark, mysterious places into a sleeping city. I found myself at length, with my belongings again clutched in all my hands and arms, decanted in the small hours among tall buildings in a town where I knew not a soul. I had in my pocket, however, another token of goodwill: a letter offering me the hospitality of the Rand Club. Where might it be and how should I get to it at this hour? Before the airport bus could melt into the night I asked the driver, who nodded a casual head towards a doorway opposite.

‘Glory be,’ I said, and with the sleeplessness of three nights in my eyes and legs I staggered towards it.

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# PART TWO

## SOUTH AFRICAN YEAR

## Chapter One

### FEET OF GOLD

In Johannesburg, again, I blinked in the radiance of full shop windows by day and of bright lights by night. I believe the lights, at least, have now returned to my native island, but when I left it was dark and I am still unused to brilliant illumination, though for two years twinkling city twilights and gleaming harbour fronts have gladdened my eyes in Africa and America. 'Let there be light' was a divine command and the British Ministers of the years after 1945, when they cut the people's light and heat, as well as their food and clothing, to my mind acted as the instruments of a malignant purpose, whether they knew it or not.

I soon found in South Africa (and later in America) that, though there was light, the tentacles of this world-wide design had reached the land, like all others in the world today. Opposing political parties, as in England, when they successively came to office showed that they all followed the master principle: that there were 'shortages' which demanded 'controls'; that these necessitated growing armies of unproductively employed officials who clamoured for the producing masses to work harder and harder for the prospect of less and less. The shadow of the servile State approached even this fortunate land, as I subsequently found it creeping towards the wealthiest one of all: America.

The root shortage, as in many countries, from which all the other shortages and controls and threats of new trammels sprang, was that of 'dollars'; by the financial legerdemain of the last thirty years nearly all governments today pretend to assess the wealth or poverty of their countries, not in terms of their own pounds, francs, marks or whatnot, but in the currency of the United States. How could this strait jacket possibly be laid on South Africa, one of the greatest gold-producing countries of the world? It only needed to sell its gold freely to be immune from such constraints. But like other lands it was held in the toils of this octopus-like system of the twentieth century. By chance, through landing in Johannesburg, I came to the best place to study the working of this fantastic mechanism of world-power.

Johannesburg is not South African as Cape Town and Durban, Bloemfontein and Pretoria, Fort Elizabeth and East London are South African, any more than New York (as I later found) is American as Washington, Richmond and Boston are American. It is a city apart. Fifty years ago, when the Boers were invading Natal from the Transvaal and the British were coming up from the coast to meet them, Johannesburg was but a few houses and shacks. The struggle seemed clearly to be between Cape Town and Durban on the coast, for the British, and Bloemfontein and Pretoria, the inland strongholds of the Republics to which the trekking Dutch farmers from the Cape withdrew, for the Boers.

Far in the rear lay a shanty-town which was to become larger and more powerful than any of them. Johannesburg has the gold, control of which seems to be the master-switch in the powerhouse of world politics today. While the gods smile, the victory in South Africa does not lie with Cape Town and Durban, as seemed the case in 1901, or with Pretoria and Bloemfontein, as looks to be the case in 1950. The true victor, until the great plan of the twentieth century is completed or finally fails, appears to be Johannesburg. A cartoonist once aptly summed up the situation by depicting a Boer and a British South African quarrelling over the ownership of a cow while a smiling Zionist milked it.

Here in Johannesburg begins the master-process of the twentieth century, which appears to me to operate above the comprehension of republican farmer and colonizing Britisher alike. Here the gold

is taken from the earth which is then sent to America and reburied, retaining even in its second entombment some magic property which enables it to vitalize or withhold loans and credit operations, to selected political ends, all over the globe. So marvellous a mineral is gold that, the deeper you inter it, the more potent it is. Here in Johannesburg are born martial aid and Marshall Aid, lend-lease and UNRRA, gifts of arms and money alike to the Soviet State and its satellites and to those who may be called on to oppose them. (I noted with delight a report from Washington, dated July 16th, 1948, that 'pressure will be brought to bear on countries which show reluctance to accept Marshall Plan loans'.) So subtle and yet simple is this process that even the country which supplies the gold which is the basis of credit, may be denied credit if its government is disliked by the guardians of the gold at its re-interment. Thus, South Africa itself, when it elected in 1948 a government which was disliked by some quarters in New York, was promptly and repeatedly told that it could not hope for 'a loan' until this government mended its ways or a new one were returned. As *all* South African Governments (and as far as I know all governments) are members of an International Monetary Fund which dictates the price of gold, escape from this thrall through the free marketing of gold was closed, and the 'shortages' immediately began. The gold continues to flow, as if it were a river beyond the control of man, to its tomb in Kentucky, and the political operations everywhere to be directed from the power-unit it operates there. Another great hoard is accumulating in the dark interior of the Soviet Empire. This appears to me to be the reality of world-power in the twentieth century, operating through or despite all parties, politicians and governments everywhere. A man need but learn who controls the use of the gold to know the secrets of this century.

In Johannesburg he may see where the political rainbows begin. Around the city are great dumps, the size of Durham slag-heaps but of different colour. They are usually grey, sometimes with a yellow tinge, and to the newcomer may appear dull; but some hold that they are lovely in sunset or moonlight and to the visitor of future times may appear as exciting as the Pyramids. These little mountains are made of the waste matter from the gold-mines. They are the dross: the gold is on its way to Fort Knox, there to supply arms to Stalin or deny them to Chiang Kai-shek, accord recognition to Tito or withhold it from Franco, strengthen Israel or weaken Egypt. To watch this mysterious movement of gold at its source is a memorable experience for time's traveller. Here he sees something vastly more mighty than turbines or jet-propulsion, something only less omnipotent, indeed, than God. In the city built on gold the jewellers' shops, like those of London and New York, have little gold to sell. It is all going or has gone to Fort Knox, or is hidden in Asiatic Russia. During one recent year that buried gold increased by about £500,000,000, which is equal to all the gold produced anywhere in the world (outside darkest Russia) for two and a half years. In the next ten years nearly all the monetary gold in the world will at the present rate go there. While men in streets waste talk on atomic bombs, they ignore the real source of world-fission: that amassed and buried and potent gold.

Johannesburg in some ways reminded me of Berlin in the Nineteen-Twenties (later I discovered its spiritual affinities with New York). This was partly due to the large and recent Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe, which has made a deep imprint on the city's life, as it has in New York and did formerly in Berlin. The effect on politics was similar, too; politicians, municipal and national, felt moved to support Political Zionism in order to obtain election, and the Johannesburg seats were thought, at that time, to tip the balance in Parliament. It is an invigorating, busy place, where something exciting seems always round the corner. It stands six thousand feet high and during storms the thunder crashes on the rooftops of the multiplying high buildings as if some gargantuan trap-drummer rub-a-dub-dubbed there. Such an altitude places exceptional strains and stresses on the human organism, and adds something to the tension which other matters combine to create.

It is a jostling, acquisitive, absorbing place by day, where the old-clothes-man from Kovno may become a millionaire almost overnight. In it great financial projects are always hatching, and some

huge embezzlement, violent crime or lurid official scandal is often under interminable legal investigation. Of these affairs Johannesburgers habitually tell each other, 'You see, nothing will happen,' and they are frequently right. Like Chicago and Los Angeles in America, Johannesburg in South Africa appears to approach a state of lawlessness; officials who are tempted to show zeal in upholding the law sometimes complain of mysterious intimidations and relegations, and of the 'framed' accusation, 'pinned' on the zealot.

Like Berlin twenty years ago and New York today, Johannesburg is well supplied with Communist and Zionist book-shops, literature, newspapers, films and talk. Its night-clubs, too, reminded me of Berlin; in one I felt I was back at the Haus Vaterland and almost expected to see the mechanical thunderstorm on the Rhine. To the traveller fresh from London, where motorists were driven from the roads by every means short of machine-guns, the number of its American cars was astonishing. They were like whales with great chromium grins, seeming to grow ever bigger, and a good friend told me that South Africans of modest means, if they are in monetary straits, will sell their shirts rather than default on payments for the car. This is natural, for in a country of such distances life becomes sorely restricted without one.

Their number and bulk produced a parking problem similar, again, to that of New York. When Johannesburg was taking shape 'corner stands' were much sought and therefore most valuable, so that its builders compressed as many streets into the area as possible, and intersected them frequently. In this, too, Johannesburg stands apart. In most other South African towns the streets were made wide enough for an ox-wagon with eight yoke of oxen to turn in them) so that they are nearly broad enough for even a 1950 Mammalac to revolve in. By using a midget, skin-tight car of the kind made in Italy the Johannesburger might save himself much tribulation, but he likes large and glittering things, and would rather toil round his city in vain search of a place to put his supercharged, supergrinning Mammalac than use a baby car.

The days are invigorating in Johannesburg. By night the tension descends. The Johannesburger, after his hard day's pursuit of gain, golf-balls or parking-room, is denied the oldest and simplest of the townsman's pleasures: a stroll with his wife, sweetheart or friend. The dazzling streets are almost empty an hour after dusk. (In this Johannesburg is not different from other South African cities; it is general.) The white man cannot safely go about at night, with or without his womenfolk. At dusk the more dangerous characters among the town-spoiled Natives, and some outcast whites as well, come out from their dens. The urban police forces are weak. Figures for highway robbery are high and would be higher if white people went more numerously abroad at night.

Thus the Johannesburger at night steps into his car and from it into club, restaurant, picture-theatre or concert. (As in many parts of America the theatres have all been turned into cinemas, so that he rarely has the chance to see live plays.) When he returns home a dim figure at his gate rises from a soapbox-seat to salute him; this is his private Native guard, hired to protect his household. 'We are living in a state of siege,' a friend told me. In the cities of white South Africa, after nightfall, the white man withdraws into his home and yields the town to the dark man. Tenancy of the country does not appear to have been made into secure freehold yet.

I expected when I went to South Africa to find new things to write about, and welcomed this. For a man who lived among them from 1914 to 1939 the political feuds and obsessions of Europe, and the deterioration they foreseeably led to, were mournful things and I was glad to put them behind me, as I thought, for a spell. I was not more than a few days in South Africa when I realized, with surprise and sorrow, that distance from the turbulent centre, abundance, sunshine, prosperity, spaciousness, unscathedness, liberty and a splendid country made the white man no happier. I found there (and later in America, too) festering resentments akin to those of Europe, and other troubles besides. Among this small white population, insecurely encamped amid dark masses on

the southern tip of Africa, grudges and fears persisted. I met no man who did not speak, sooner or later, of the Boer's hostility to the British or of the menace of the Native.

For third parties, international aspirants to world power who sought to raise the dark man against the white one, and to divide the white men among themselves, South Africa was a land of opportunity.

Every traveller to South Africa will encounter this same experience. The thing is not to be ignored, because those he meets talk of little else; he cannot close his mind to it even if he would. I thought at first that matters of relatively small importance, in the great scheme of things, were being given exaggerated importance in their own land. Gradually I came to realize that they were affairs of life and death, ultimately, for the white man in Africa generally, not only for those immediately concerned.

In Johannesburg I watched the dark man of few words on whom the white men spent many words, the man to whom they left the streets at night, to whom they felt superior but about whom they felt uneasy. At his present stage of development he is a queer fellow, this African who goes to the zoo on Saturday afternoons to gaze open mouthed at lions and tigers, which he has never seen but often heard about. He will tell his employer that his entire tribe is dying, to gain an advance of pay with which to buy a guitar, and then will be blissful, strumming eternally on one note. He apes the white man, whom he dislikes, and, strutting importantly in weird rags from the slopshop, makes himself a living caricature of his master, like the monkey on the barrel-organ. He is only in degree less of an intruder than the white man. The true 'Natives' of South Africa were the Bushmen and Hottentots of the Cape, whom the early Dutch settlers exterminated as thoroughly as the Americans the Red Indian. The 'Natives' of today came to these parts from Northern and Central Africa, and then were conquered by the white newcomer.

They come to Johannesburg as mine-workers or as odd-job-men of all kinds, in the second case often illicitly. The Native miners are under supervision and are kept in touch with their tribes, chiefs and headmen, their wives and families. But Johannesburg is full of the others, the 'lost ones' of Alan Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country*, who have forgotten their kraal, put on a white man's cast-off shirt and trousers, and belong to no society but that of the shacks and shebeens. No man knows how many they are, whence they come, what they do, or how they live. In a country where the dark man outnumbers the white by four to one, they are a growing and incalculable black proletariat. They live in holes and corners, often on open ground where harassed authority either allows them to put up shacks of corrugated iron, plywood and tin, or closes an impotent eye when they do this without permission.

Such shanty-towns as Moroka and Alexandra are rife with disease and the danger of epidemics, and yet the people in them are much less unhealthy and miserable than the inexperienced visitor would expect. They are used to living rough. Moreover, these conditions are in a large part produced by the Native's determination to come into the white man's cities. A hundred years after the industrial revolution in England, South Africa is passing through a similar phase. In England the hungry smallholder or the squatter expelled by the enclosing squire was driven to the factory towns and their slums. So it is, to some extent, in South Africa. The Native Reserves are too small to support the great Native population; the Native must earn money to pay his tax; these two factors join to drive him, like last century's Englishman, towards the factories which are springing up around the cities. But that does not explain why Natives from far *outside* South Africa's borders pour into Johannesburg.

They are not forced or invited to come. The city lights call in the Congo as in rural Ireland or Wales. The dark man wants to see the white man's town, to earn a few coins, to buy enchanting

things in the white man's bazaars. One day he disappears from the kraal and travels perhaps hundreds of miles through scrub and bush. He slips across the frontier and soon another lost one joins Johannesburg's dark legion. These men forget their native land, their people, the laws and customs they once obeyed. They become almost as rootless as the Negroes of America. From the ranks of the white men one welcoming hand is extended to them, in the spirit in which Mephisto gave his to Faust over a good bargain (but these men have never heard of Faust). The Communist Party courts them, tells them the white man hates them and they must hate the white man and drive him one day into the sea. The driving-power of the Communist Party is supplied, as in other countries, by men from Eastern Europe, or the children of such. The newcomer thought himself lucky, perhaps, to put behind him the dullness of village life and come to the city. He was not aggrieved, but now white men tell him how badly treated he is.

Compared with the lost ones herded in the shanty-towns (which, by the way, are not worse than places I once saw in Moscow) the Native mine-workers are happy. They are well fed and paid more than a miner in the Soviet State, and as much as miners in France or England were receiving forty years ago. Moreover, they are not lost; they are still part of their peoples. The mining companies take care of them from the kraal to the kraal, returning them there, time-served, with enough money to buy a cow to acquire another wife. Their health is looked after. The ebon statue I saw beneath a shower in a mining-compound, the man who lazily let his body sway to the beat of a rumba from the loudspeaker there, the other who made himself a xylophone-like instrument from old tobacco tins and sheep's membrane - all these were more fortunate men than the outcasts of Moroka. They still knew where they belonged.

Nevertheless, their servitude to the disruptive forces of the twentieth century seems as plain as that of the waifs in the shanty-towns. These last are the black revolutionary mass in training which, if the instigators could contrive it, would one day be turned against the white man in Africa; the Communist Party by all account currently helps smuggle fresh bands of 'lost ones' into Johannesburg to increase the overcrowding. The Native miners are the slaves of the gold which appears to be used to promote the revolution of destruction from the upper level, the seat of power. At the flash-point these two explosive schemes (the use of the revolutionary mass and the use of gold) seem to me to meet in a common purpose of destruction. That looks like the plain lesson of the Soviet Revolution in 1917 and of the extension of the Soviet area to the middle of Europe in 1945; in both cases gold, not mobs, played the chief part.

In South Africa, as in other lands and later in America, I had this feeling of some powerful, hidden force using the troubles of men and the treasures of the earth as instruments in a supreme plan. 'The gospel of gold and the philosophy of power'; the words, strangely, are from a character of Oscar Wilde. General Smuts, when he was Prime Minister of South Africa, once told a visitor from London, 'I am sure there is some hidden pressure behind all the worries of Europe, America and Russia.' He did not explain, and I cannot guess, exactly what he meant, but to me the signs of this 'hidden pressure' seemed in few places so clear as in the gold-mines and the shanty-towns of Johannesburg. I wondered vaguely, as I looked at the yellow dumps, whether gold carries in it some inherent curse, which comes into play when it is largely amassed or evilly used. I wondered this again, later, when I saw the derelict 'ghost towns' from the old gold-rush days in America, and considered the ultimate fate of some of the great fortunes accumulated around them.

In due course I fared further on my way. I drove past Alexandra and took with me a vivid last glimpse of Johannesburg. On some rough ground between shanty-town and main road a huge Native stood poised in the taut attitude of muscular exertion. Silhouetted thus against the sky, he made a striking figure of primitive man challenging civilization. He was not naked, however, his hand held no spear, and at his feet, towards which he gazed, lay no stricken foe or slain beast. He wore ragged European clothes, he wielded a golf club, and his eyes were fixed on a little white ball.

If there is a moral in that I do not know it, unless it is that the white man and the dark one, for better or for worse, now share the same lands and have to find some way of living together.

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## Chapter Two

### FIFTY-FIFTY?

I could hardly believe, after driving a little way, that Johannesburg was still near or even existed in this parched and empty land, thirsting for rain, which seemed new from the pains of creation. This was the Transvaal, where after long drought the threatening desert peeps out from between withering grass-stalks, then vanishing, like the demon king in the transformation scene, when the rains bring their green miracle.

Johannesburg was a kaleidoscope made of little brightly coloured pieces of Manhattan Island and Tel Aviv and an earlier Berlin, of Wall Street and Lombard Street, of Petticoat Lane and Dahlem, of Beverly Hills and Harlem, of Basutoland and Swaziland and Zululand. It was a jewel by night and a gimcrack by day. The feeling of the mining-camp was still in its clubs, where men's feet, you felt, instinctively sought the brass rail when it was no longer there, and prodigal thousands were spent on an annual Ladies' Night.

How old Paul Kruger, brooding on his stoep at Pretoria, must have hated it, I thought. Like William Cobbett in the last century and Hilaire Belloc and G.K. Chesterton in this, he presciently distrusted and feared the twentieth century. Johannesburg was alien corn in the vineyard he loved. With feelings rather similar to his an English yeoman might have looked from his house to the stockbroker's castle rising across the fields.

But escape is not the answer and I sometimes think that the good God keeps a suitable reproof, stern or mild, for any who seek to evade the challenge of his mysterious ways. Johannesburg was a warning promptly given to those who once called themselves Boers (or farmers) and today name themselves Afrikaners, or racial republicans (they are not Dutch, for they have much other blood and are separated by centuries from the Netherlands). In 1838 they wanted, like the famous film actress of a later day, to be alone; or, like the crooner of the Nineteen-Forties, to

leave the world behind and go and find,  
A spot that's known to God alone,  
just a spot to call our own....

and in this quest they set out from the coastal strip of South Africa where the white man was settled. They put behind them the detested British Government, the magistrate who stood between the farmer and his slaves, the distant parliament which set slaves free, the tax-gatherer who demanded revenue and the interfering busybodies who wanted to limit the size of a man's farm and even reserve land for the Native.

They much resembled the Americans of last century. After those colonists cast off British government, many of them disliked their own governments and moved westward, over the mountains, to be alone. The story of that moving frontier was the story of America until those trekkers reached the other coast and no more empty, governmentless spaces remained.

The Boers set out into the unknown interior, skirted the mountain wall of Basutoland and took the lands which they might call their own: the Orange Republic and the Transvaal one. The Natives were driven out or allowed to remain only as share-cropping farmhands. The Boers were alone at last, and around their two capitals, Bloemfontein and Pretoria, arose tiny white republics which an eminent English traveller, Lord Bryce, judged to be 'ideal commonwealths' when he visited them in 1895. But is an idyllic seclusion truly the simple justice the Boers held it to be in a world where

Jesus of Nazareth could not obtain justice? Is it even possible? There are not enough Transvaals or South Sea Islands for all.

The way of the Transvaaler was to be hard, for the land was barely wrested from the Natives when gold was found on the Rand, and no further from Pretoria than Haywards Heath is from London. Johannesburg began to rise towards (and in the Boer's opinion to cry to) Heaven. Instead of going by, the world squatted on his doorstep. Pretoria filled with strange faces and figures, with Fagins and Artful Dodgers, with smart financiers and hungry concessionaires, all smoking and drinking and bribing; in fact, it was like a priority-hunt in London in 1950.

President Kruger, in his massive frock-coat and top-hat, smoked his pipe and loathed it. He was the symbol of political power in this conquered land. Now a new symbol of political power, in the Transvaal, in all South Africa, throughout the world, took shape next-door. The republican dreams of the old century were dying. The new Caesar, Mammon, was come. It might put on the mask of republicanism for its own ends, but would be the cruellest emperor of all. The Voortrekkers were come a long way; and now this cuckoo in the nest!

I thought of those things as I drove towards Pretoria. The Transvaal reminded me a little of Prussia and a Prussian officer I once knew. He spoke of 'these cold, hard acres' as something which must be known if the Prussian soul were to be understood. Such lands may mould the minds of the men who inhabit them; the cold Prussian acre may help to generate that periodic Teutonic fury. The great spaces of the Transvaal in the arid season may help heat the brooding grievances of many a backveld farmer.

My earliest memories were of British soldiers riding out from St. John's Wood barracks to go to the South African war, but when I went there myself fifty years later I had almost forgotten it. I found, however, that its memory flourished like the green bay tree. The young Afrikaners sang 'Sarie Marais' as often and fervently as if it were just beginning. Who was Sarie Marais? Why, who were Madelon, Püppchen, Bluebell, Sari Maritza, Lili Marlen'? None of them existed, but their names meant home and warm lips to fighting-men at many times and in many lands. Sarie Marais, to judge by her name, had Boer and French and perhaps other blood. Anyway, she waited 'in the old Transvaal' for her soldier boy, just as Dolly Gray waited for hers. The British soldier sang about Dolly Gray when the fight was on, the young Afrikaner about Sarie Marais fifty years later. It was the symptom of a fever as old as antiquity, which, if it is not reduced by the timely treatment of wise leaders, may become dangerous.

The memory of the two great wars has not left a deep imprint on the minds of men in South Africa (where at least a quarter of the white population dissociated itself from them both) or, as I later found, on those of men in America. The Anglo-Boer war, in South Africa, and the North-South war in America, are vivid, living realities. In America masses of people, in their souls, are still fighting the war between the States and still do not clearly know which side they are on. For some reason not easy to decide, those two wars between white men fighting in new countries oversea have left deep scars of bitterness. I sometimes wondered if the dark background ('the treatment of slaves') against which both were fought might be the reason. Even that does not clearly explain the thing, for in America I was told by a good judge that if compensation had been paid for slaves, who were at that time legally acquired property, no war need have been fought. In South Africa compensation was paid, but this did not diminish the enduring Boer resentment which exploded in the later wars. All men of goodwill whom I met in both countries agreed that these were two of the most unfortunate wars in history 'and should never have been fought'. If the white man's place in the world were to shrink and collapse, they would lie at the beginning of the process, for the matters at issue are ideal for exploitation by interested third parties.

I reached the end of the grim brown veld and saw Pretoria before me. Its name and situation were South African history. It was called after a Voortrekker, as Durban was after a British Governor, and stands at the end of the Great Trek. Here is a city plainly built by men with the Christian and European heritage in their blood; every cock would crow if that were denied. Pretoria is, consciously or unconsciously, an answer to Johannesburg, rather as Washington is to New York. It is a place of fine buildings, wide streets, pleasant homes and gardens, of a leisurely way of life. Neither great wealth nor obtrusive bad taste has invaded it; its industries are made for Pretoria, not Pretoria for the industries. If bluebells grew on trees, they would look very much like the jacarandas of Pretoria; the carpets which these spread on the roadways are of nearly the same colour as those of English woods in spring. To Pretoria Winston Churchill was brought a prisoner and well treated, and hence he gallantly escaped. Here Oom Paul sat on his stoep and was conquered. I found his house and realized that I was making pilgrimage to it. I could no longer imagine that, even as a child and even in wartime, I ever felt anything but respect for this dour peasant-president.

Pretoria today is the central point of one of the most significant dramas of our time. There will be decided whether white men are capable or incapable of brotherhood among themselves, and probably whether the white man will stay in or vanish from Africa. The old Boer capital is crowned by the superb Union Building designed by an Englishman, Sir Herbert Baker, who was discovered by another Englishman, detested of the Boers, Cecil Rhodes. It is as if the genius of one race set a diadem on the genius of another, for it is the symbol of union after disunity. It is as if the gods wished to set up, somewhere in the racked -and riven world, a monument to the things men might achieve by welding old enmities into a common purpose, and founding a nation on that. Fifty years ago the Transvaal was ravaged by war (I once read, with surprise, a statement of General Smuts that the ruination there was even greater than anywhere in Europe during the two world wars). The Union Building, surmounting prosperous and handsome Pretoria, proclaims that making peace can be more heroic than making war, that the Great Trek led through disunity to unity. It expresses the ideal of Kipling who, when he edited *The Friend* at Bloemfontein during that war, wrote

Later shall rise a People, sane and great,  
Forged by strong fires, by equal war made one,  
Telling old battles over without hate,  
Not least his name shall pass from sire to son.

(‘his name’ refers to the gallant Boer General Joubert).

Fifty years after the words were written, their opposite has happened. The Union Building is the promise of what might be, but might yet be the tomb of what might have been. Not far away the Voortrekker Memorial was erected. Another fine work, it could have been the complement of the Union Building, a monument to the achievements of one of the races now united in a nation. At its consecration in 1949, on the fiftieth anniversary of the South African war, however, all emphasis was laid on past resentments and disunity, and little was left undone to wound the feelings of British South Africans, although they had contributed largely to the memorial. The celebrations were held almost exclusively in Afrikaans and for many weeks bitter speeches about the long-dead war, the need for a republic, the abolition of the Union Jack as a twin flag and much more embittered the air. Prominent Afrikaners declared that intermarriage between the two races must cease and that antagonism between them ‘must always exist’.

The Voortrekker Memorial could have been given the meaning that the long trek ultimately led to reconciliation, as expressed by the Union Building. The other meaning was deliberately chosen and the memorial set up as a denial of the Union Building and not an assent. Unity in South Africa was in fact first destroyed by the Great Trek; the clear challenge thrown down by these festivities was

that the Great Trek went on, and had not ended in or at union. The whole future of the white man in South Africa and Africa was thrown afresh into the balance.

The British South African, I found, usually feels a deep respect for the Afrikaner and the achievements of his fathers. As an outside onlooker, I felt great admiration for both breeds. They are of the best European stock and in unity would now be on the verge of founding a nation of the first quality, one of Suid Afrikaners and of South Africans. Their achievements are great, they are physically fine (the Afrikaners outstandingly so), make excellent soldiers and in sport excel. The British South Africans, though they are little over a million and play games only at weekends, produce cricketers and tennis players of the highest class. The Afrikaners, who are not much more numerous, are the best rugby footballers in the world; the sight of a sixteen-stone Afrikaner covering a hundred yards of rugby field, in about ten and a half seconds is one to remember.

I have had good friends of both races, before I ever saw South Africa, and treasure the memory particularly of an Afrikaner pilot with whom I flew in the first war, and of Colonel Denys Reitz, whom I knew in London during the second one. Could the Boers who fought in the South African war have lived longer, unity would be safe; the bitterness of today is fostered by elderly men who were too young to fight or by younger ones who were not then born. Colonel Reitz, as an emissary of surrender in British hands, wrote, 'The British, with all their faults, are a generous nation, and not only on the man-of-war, but throughout the time that we were among them, there was no word said that could hurt our feelings or offend our pride, although they knew we were on an errand of defeat.' Mr. Winston Churchill, as a Boer prisoner, wrote: 'The Boers were the most good-natured enemy I have ever fought against in the four Continents where I have seen active service.' That war was in fact the last chivalrous one of this century and its story abounds in heartening instances of soldierly generosity on both sides; the contrast between the spirit in which it was fought and that in which today's politically poisoned legends about it are spread by men who had no part in it is part of the general deterioration of this century. The affair has left the field of fact and entered that of propagandist agitation, which knows no hedges.

A book about South Africa, by Mr. G.H. Calpin, bore the title *There are no South Africans*. I thought the present truth might be differently put. There is a nation on the verge of foundation and on the brink of destruction, and the decision is yet to come. The quarrel seemed to me to be in its essence more between Afrikaners than between Afrikaners and British. The British turn the cheek of native patience to all rebuffs and injuries, and might continue to do so, but if they were relegated to a place of inferiority no white nation could be built in South Africa, for the Afrikaner's numbers are too small to hold this place alone, in overweening pride against all others. The saddest plight is that of those Afrikaners (they probably amount to between thirty and forty per cent of the whole Afrikaner population) who want to build a united nation and who see the future dark and threatened by this feud. It spreads a spiritual gloom throughout the land.

For my part the only fault I felt able to find with the white folk of this splendid country was that they were too few: too few to assure the survival of the white man in South Africa or in Africa. The feud, artificially kept alive, hinders the increase of the population either by intermarriage or by immigration. These obdurate men who, as they themselves proclaimed, 'had forgotten nothing' (even if what they remembered was outside their own experience) were by the mid-century near to gaining a sway over all the Afrikaners as complete as that which the Nazis gained over all Germans, or the East European Zionists over all Jewry, and the plight of the remainder was as difficult. These men were building up a mystic legend round the ox-wagon, the beard and the Voortrekkers comparable with that which the Nazis built up round Frederick the Great and his grenadiers. They denied and wished to wash out the British share in building South Africa, to erase all its symbols one by one and to declare a republic, not of reconciliation but of resentment perpetuated. Once more they wished to be alone, but not this time in the Orange Free State and the

Transvaal; they wished to return to the Cape and Natal and rule over the whole, that is, to reverse the story of 150 years. That was not all: they expected to expand, to incorporate the formerly German South-West Africa and the three British Protectorates of Basutoland, Swaziland and Bechuanaland, thus enlarging to an area nearly that of Europe. This was a large ambition for a united nation (it was also the vision of Cecil Rhodes) and looked hopeless for a small republic of mutually resentful racial groups.

When I first saw South Africa in 1947, and during the year I remained, the power of this highly organized section of unforgetting and unforgiving Afrikaners was great and clearly growing, and feelings either of abnormal anticipation or gloomy foreboding were general throughout the country. When I returned in 1949 the picture was darker, and the chances of preserving unity were lessening. A great drawback about a policy based exclusively on past resentments is that you cannot check it when the grievances have disappeared. The bone of contention is yours, but your supporters will not on that account embrace the other contender. They have come to love contention more than the bone. This is the danger in South Africa today.

The irreconcilable Afrikaner's ill-will, through this process, has grown in proportion to the tokens of goodwill showered on him. Thus Mr. Winston Churchill, marching towards Pretoria in 1900, wrote that: 'the British flag must be firmly planted in Bloemfontein and Pretoria', the capitals of the two Republics later defeated. By 1906 the British Prime Minister, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, immediately upon his election restored self-government to the Republics. This was supposed so conclusively to establish amity that in 1910 the former foes (the two British colonies and the two Boer Republics) joined in the great Union. The next result was that in 1914 a Boer General and Prime Minister, General Botha, brought the Union into the first war.

Another Boer General, however, General Hertzog, was still unappeased and opposed this. That continuing resentment was surprisingly large appeared when he was elected Prime Minister after that war. He, too, was convinced in time; returning from London in 1931 with the Statute of Westminster, which made the Dominions sovereignly independent (thereafter their only link with the British Crown was their own wish to remain connected, and power to break away was theirs), he said there was no further freedom that South Africa or the Afrikaner could aspire to.

He again opposed South Africa's entry into the second war and was repudiated by the South African Parliament, so that the country entered it under a third Boer General, General Smuts. When I came to South Africa in 1947 I soon felt that his prestige in South Africa was not as great as the outer world thought it to be. The reputations of public men outside their own countries in the last thirty years have often depended on their attitude towards Zionism, which in my experience is astonishingly powerful among the world's newspapers. General Smuts, like Mr. Winston Churchill, was from the first war a leading supporter of Zionism, which inside South Africa counted for little, save among Zionists. This, however, had little to do with his defeat in 1948; that was due to the appeal of the old cry: 'Away with the Englishman, his King, his Empire; we want to be alone.'

With General Smuts's defeat the supply of Anglo-Boer war generals ended, and the old resentments reached a higher level than ever before when affairs passed into the hands of men who had not fought in it. The whole edifice of union was threatened, and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, could he have surveyed them, might have been surprised and saddened by the results of Liberalism's master-stroke: conciliation towards the defeated Boers. That is not to say that a thing prompted by a good motive must not be done because its results are bad; nevertheless, Liberalism stands condemned more by the events of today in South Africa than any of its other effects, which seem to amount only to the dissipating of a patrimony and the begetting of abortions, Socialism, Communism and the servile World State.

The new Prime Minister (Dr. Malan) and all his colleagues were Afrikaners. For the first time since Union the Cabinet contained no British South African. During the time that followed a week seldom passed without some speech or act aimed at wounding the feelings of nearly half the population. The Afrikaner Nationalists, however, had not a clear majority, and achieved one only by coalescing with a small, more moderate party (the Afrikaner Party), the leader of which, Mr. Havenga, spoke the language of statesmanship. 'To build the future on mere dissatisfaction is risky; the government, therefore should solve the great problems confronting the country in a manner that the broad mass of the people can support ... Freedom under the Republics could not have been greater than that enjoyed today by sovereign, independent, united South Africa.'

Such counsel was merely irritating to men who had ridden to importance on the horse of old resentments. They appeared to live self-enclosed in grudges about matters they had known only as infants or not at all, and were somewhat remote from all else. No living current of feeling remained between them and Holland; for instance, in 1940 a section of Afrikaner Nationalists condoned or applauded Hitler's cheap triumph over that ancestral 'small nation' of the Boers, apparently because it worsened the British plight. In 1948 they were genuinely surprised that the Netherlands still remembered this and did not welcome emissaries associated, justly or unjustly, with such sentiments of 1940.

The Nationalist Afrikaner victory of 1948 was a fascinating political event, technically considered. It was the victory, achieved by thirty years of hard work, of an organization with one dominant aim: to sever the British connection. This was the Broderbond, a band of brothers formed in 1918 of which General Hertzog said in 1935: 'We now have to do with a secret political society accessible to and existing only for Afrikaans-speaking members, the moving spirits of which are out to govern South Africa over the heads of the English-speaking people among us and who are out to raise Afrikaans-speaking Afrikanerdom to domination in South Africa, ignoring the rights and claims of the English-speaking section of our population.'

In 1944 General Smuts said that the Broderbond had 2500 members in key places (that is, among politicians, priests of the Dutch Reformed Church, which plays a part in South African politics similar to that of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, university professors, government officials, officers, editors and teachers), and that 'dreadful things could happen in our country if it were not fought and its stranglehold on public life broken'. In 1948 the constitution of the Broderbond became public. It stated: 'Let us bear in mind that the main point is for Afrikanerdom to reach its ultimate goal of dominance in South Africa. Brothers, our solution for South Africa's troubles is that the Afrikaner Broderbond must rule South Africa.'

In May 1948 the Broderbond triumphed. The new Prime Minister, the majority of his ministers and of the members of his party were members of it. An uncertain future opened for South Africa, and the visitor could feel a deep spiritual distress in a country which, from afar, seemed to have everything to make it the envy of less happier lands. What the Broderbond desired to do was known, and its members made their resolve to do it plain at every opportunity. The only restraints on them were the fragility of their majority, public discussion of their actions and any sobering influence which the more prudent Afrikaners might exert. As to the fragile majority, they set about to enlarge it to a point where it would give them invulnerable power. Though South-West Africa was not officially annexed or incorporated, South-West African seats were added to the Cape Parliament, and the Nationalists confidently expected to win most of these from German voters, because they had opposed both European wars. German political leaders in South-West Africa appealed to all Germans there to vote for the Afrikaner Nationalists at the next election, stating that the German vote, if thus cast, was enough to ensure the continuation of Afrikaner Nationalist government. It appeared, therefore, that the ultimate decision in such matters as the proclamation of a Republic and the progressive elimination of the British South Africans from the joint patrimony

might lie in the gift of the small German population, which might thus be able to pursue its own vengefulness through the vengefulness of others. A move was also made to restrict the Cape Coloured People's right to vote, not because they were coloured, but because they habitually voted against the Afrikaner Nationalists.

In 1900 Mr. Winston Churchill, campaigning through Natal, mentioned the title of a brochure written by Colonel Denys Reitz, *A Century of Wrong*, and wrote: 'God send us now a century of right.' By 1950, after a half-century of propitiation, the Afrikaner Nationalist, now ruler of the land, appeared to feel he had endured another half-century of wrong, and chief among his objections to 'Slim Jannie' was probably General Smuts's question, on the score of British magnanimity, 'Has such a miracle of trust and generosity ever happened before?' Only worse than that remark was his own representative's declaration, after the announcement of the Statute of Westminster, that 'When the present Status Bill is passed by Parliament South Africa will be freer than Paul Kruger's Transvaal.'

A greater injury than stealing a man's purse or honour is to steal his grievances. If I judge him fairly, the Boer of the predominant type that gained power in 1948 is not happy without his injuries. He carries them each evening for supper, and broods on stoeps in lonely places. His blood is mainly Dutch and German and mixes well with that of the Scots; he is a dour man. He dislikes to talk of anything but politics. He has dignity, simplicity and strength and commands the respectful liking of Englishmen, but he does not like to be liked. Until 1906, when the British righted the wrongs on their side of the previous century's ledger, he counted as a Christian soldier, who fought, and fought well, for his small people's liberty and independence. Perhaps the British understood that and him better than any others in the world could understand. But by 1950 he was no longer a Christian soldier; he was in the grip of a pagan nationalism, and bent now on subjugating others, not on liberating himself. The men he followed did not desire merely to wipe out the last trace of defeat, but to reverse the result of an old war, put themselves in the position of victor, impose the penalties of defeat on those who had won by relegating them to an inferior status and obliterating their symbols.

History shows few examples of a small number of determined men clinging so obstinately to an idea. The case of the Zionists is not analogous, for they are many times as numerous and powerful in all the capitals of the world. This section of the small Boer nation which lived only to see the British ousted from South Africa bred in its early manhood sons more fanatical than itself, whom it could not check when it reached a gentler spirit in old age.

Anthony Trollope, on holiday from Barchester, in South Africa in the 1870s wrote (of the 1850s): 'Already had risen the idea that the Dutch might oust the English from the continent, not by force of arms, but by republican sentiment ... The idea is grand, but such ideas depend on their success for their vindication. When unsuccessful they seem to have been foolish thoughts, bags of gas and wind, and are held to be proof of the incompetency of the men who hold them for any useful public action.' By 1950, a hundred years later, the grand idea came much nearer to success than ever seemed possible. Trollope could not imagine that by the middle of the next century no British soldier would remain in South Africa, that the Transvaal with its gold and the Orange Republic with its diamonds would have been handed back, that the Union Jack would be almost gone, that Pretoria would be the seat of South African government or that an Afrikaner Governor-General would bow to an all-Afrikaner government at Cape Town, that the basis of all this would be voluntary relinquishment by Britain and that the rest would have been achieved through the single-minded pursuit of an ambition by political means, or that the exclusive Afrikaner Republic would be at the door.

The Boers, by 1950, had shown what remarkable results can be obtained by the skilful use of political weapons. They had accomplished as much as could have been attained through a successful war, and entered into possession of a very fine realm, in the making of which they took an essential but not the major part. The moment was come to say 'No' when their host, destiny, proffered the bottle and said, 'A little more? One for the road?' It is the moment when statesmen say No and politicians say Yes; the twentieth century has seen hardly any statesmen since 1914. The Nationalist Afrikaners, or at all events the Broderbond said Yes. The prospect opened of a third crisis like those of 1914 and 1939, and the issue, I thought, depended more on those Afrikaners who wanted unity than on the British South Africans. On the issue, again, depended the future of the white man in Africa, for if he could not stay in South Africa he was unlikely to remain in the other, hotter places where his kind are much fewer. The white men were far from numerous in South Africa itself, and this white bridgehead might eventually collapse if the white men on the beaches spent their years and strength in dispute with each other.

The traveller in South Africa finds all Europeans there, Afrikaner and Briton, preoccupied with problems, so diverse in different places and so complex in all, that after listening to the great argument about them he might think: 'Here is something which only God can now put right, not man, and He is surely preparing his millstones.' Of all the many opinions I heard, however, one seemed to me likely to be right: that there is in truth only *one* problem, and that if it were solved the others might disappear as the white ants vanish when the burrow of their huge, slug-like and spawn-laden empress is exposed. It is that of the small white population, which is caused by the political feud. Had South Africa ten million Europeans, instead of two and a half, the problem of 'white survival' might fade away, and with it the other problems, which in fact are all vari-coloured facets of this central problem. The inferiority of numbers makes the white man fear the prolific darker man among whom he lives and hesitate to help this man's advance, so that he puts himself in a light which he himself dislikes. Equality of numbers, and a movement towards superiority, would establish South Africa as a white man's country, the cornerstone of a great continent of boundless prospect. The Afrikaner does not admit that. He believes immigration would swamp his Afrikanerdom, which he is resolved to make supreme. He is right to the extent that it would make the exclusive Afrikaner Republic impossible, but I met no sober judge who thought South Africa could long survive in that form; the splendid future, all agreed, was only open to a united nation.

The Nationalist Afrikaner victory of 1948 was an immediate deterrent to immigration. The other States of the Commonwealth, formerly apathetic about immigration, actively encouraged it after the lessons of the second twentieth-century war. Canada, Australia and New Zealand set about to increase their European population and welcomed British settlers foremost. The Nationalist Afrikaner took the other road. I do not presume to suggest that British immigration alone could produce the greater numbers which South Africa needs. White immigration from anywhere in Northern Europe would be as good, but it is difficult to see from what other quarter sufficient numbers could come, and I believe the Nationalist Afrikaner is in fact opposed to large-scale immigration from any direction, fearing the submergence of dominant Afrikanerdom.

Only one other force in South Africa (as in England) is equally hostile to immigration (or emigration), namely, the Communist Party. Its newspapers in England constantly attack the treatment of British immigrants in South Africa: its newspapers in South Africa attack the British as imperialists and 'jingo'. If the white man were as numerous as the dark one it would lose its only appealing street-corner cry: that the great *majority* of South Africa's inhabitants is denied all rights and opportunity. The Nationalist Afrikaner does not see what Trollope saw seventy years ago, long before the appearance of an international party of revolution with branches in every country:



‘At present the Native is altogether excluded from the franchise. But the embargo is of its nature too arbitrary - and, nevertheless, would not be strong enough for safety were there adventurous white politicians in the Colony striving to acquire a parliamentary majority and parliamentary power by bringing the Zulus to the poll.’ (*South Africa*, Chapman & Hall, 1879.)

The adventurous white politicians have appeared and are active in all countries, fanning the disputes of white men and the grievances of dark ones for their own end, the servile World State. The Nationalist Afrikaner, a rare white man among multiplying dark ones, still sits on the stoep of his homestead among the gum trees, with six thousand flat acres around, nursing ancient rancours and spiting the times. ‘Do not let us put our small handful against the world,’ once said General Smuts, ‘you have a great country, a great continent with great mineral resources ... You will not be allowed to remain in Naboth’s vineyard ... in a state of isolation you will always be in danger ... We have received a position of equality and freedom, not only among the other States of the Empire but among the other nations of the world. Shall we now throw away all these advantages to get back to our old antheap? It is dangerous, it paralyses a people, to live in the past.’ Wise words, even though General Smuts, by some strange twist of reasoning, thought it good for the East European Zionists to live in an even more remote past, and one not even theirs.

I came away from Pretoria, over which the shadow hung of old animosities, of the approaching celebrations of the fifty-year-old war, of the declaration of a racial republic. It darkened the Union Building, which seemed the symbol of a unique work of peacemaking in a world that otherwise knows only how to make war. Pretoria is one of the Union’s two capitals. Parliament sits at Cape Town, the Government offices are in Pretoria. That is as if Westminster were at Land’s End and Whitehall at John o’ Groats. The ministries and the foreign missions have to keep a great store of boxes and crates, in which all the files and papers are packed in January, when politicians and parliamentarians, diplomats and documents, disappear to Cape Town, reappearing thence in the mid-year. I heard many arguments, of time and toil and cost, against this unusual though picturesque arrangement, but many in favour could be offered. The twin capitals were the basis of the whole edifice of fifty-fifty on which the Union was built and grew. Over them as yet fly both flags, on State occasions. In them two languages are spoken and officially recognized.

The spirit of union, however, was low in the town that lay at the foot of the great building. A deep division rent the land and on either side of it were unhappy people, or unsure ones; some who wanted to intermarry and mingle with those on the other side and were hindered, others who had mixed and now found their homes riven and others again who stayed encamped on one side of the gulf and thought to find happiness in looking bitterly across it. Hatred, like absinthe and opium, brings the passing illusion of bliss.

A disconcerting undertone, which I knew well from days in a distracted Europe, ran through life in this distant and pleasant place. I drove away from it hoping as an onlooker that the Union Building might yet fulfil its promise. I began a long journey through a land of infinite possibility, trammelled only by old grudges, which attached themselves to all life like the grey beards of the Spanish Moss to the live oaks of Louisiana. I discovered a quality in the air and light of South Africa, a magic in its colours, which entranced me, so that later, when I was far away, I longed to return.

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## Chapter Three

### NATAL THE BELEAGUERED

I left the Transvaal and made for Natal, the former British colony, and its port, Durban. The way leads through Heidelberg (leaving Frankfort on the right) to Newcastle (leaving Dundee and Utrecht on the left); if you then keep straight on, ignoring the tempting signpost which says 'To Richmond', you naturally come to Durban. The distance is about four hundred miles and the difference similar to that between dour north-of-the-Tweed and dulcet south-of-the-Thames.

A hundred miles out of Johannesburg mountains rose beneath the spacious sky and I began to feel the presence of two influences which may help shape the white man here: loneliness and remoteness. Even this road, possibly the busiest of all, has gaps of fifty miles between *dorps* (the word means village but connotes also spiritual isolation). On a run equal in length to that from London to Brighton you may see hardly a habitation or creature. If you have a breakdown the next driver who passes will stop, help if he can or carry a message to Nextdorp, and send back aid. This friendly helpfulness on the road is a warming thing, and I missed it later in America, where such succour is rare (I was puzzled by that until an American friend told me that it is held unwise to stop for either hitch-hikers or drivers apparently in trouble).

These unpeopled gaps along the road may signify that inland South Africa, after one hundred years, is not yet a white man's country. The white man has built little settlements far apart and strung wire between them to stake his claim to the land, but he has not closely populated or intensively cultivated it, or harnessed the rainfall. The small white population is a fundamental weakness, however little South Africans today may like the thought. Plenty of white people in the world would gladly live on less than six thousand acres apiece. If they are debarred, the multiplying masses of Natives and Indians will press harder on the fences. The lonely traveller may see a few human beings, but probably Natives, who do not understand him. If he loses his way, he will soon realize how few the white men are in the land. On these roads the only sound is the occasional whoosh-swish of the white man flashing by, separate from all around him in his wheeled, enamelled capsule. He roars past and is gone; behind him the dust settles, the pop-eyed piccanin returns to his play, the grim mountains look down; Africa thinks it over.

'Civilization has barely touched Africa at a few selected points,' wrote General Smuts, 'and in the course of the ages the contacts of Africa with civilization have never been permanent or long-lived. After a casual acquaintance with her sister continents she has always shaken herself free and returned to her wild ways. Her spirit has been alien and aloof from that of the rest of the world and her charm continues uncontaminated by the conventions of civilization. The European invasion which began in more recent years has to some extent affected her peoples ... but in her heart of hearts she is and remains wild and unaffected by the invading influences.' (Foreword to *The Low Veld*, Col. J. Stevenson Hamilton, Cassell, 1929.) On this far journey I felt that Africa was weighing the white man in the balance and saying: 'Well, I never was conquered yet. And you, little man, do you think to do it with two and a half million souls?'

When I told people in the Transvaal that I was going to Natal they showed grief. 'Natal!' they said. 'Durban! But my dear fellow, Natal is just not South Africa. And the Natal British - they are like nothing else on earth. Don't waste your time; get out among the ordinary people.' When they heard that I was to stay at a small place called Nottingham Road they were still more pained. 'What, stay at Not-at-home Road!' they exclaimed. 'Then why did you leave Kensington?'

In many countries I have met the city which 'is not South Africa' (or France, or England, or America); the only ones, in respect of which the phrase seemed to have clear truth and meaning, were Johannesburg and New York. As to the enchanting class of 'ordinary people' or 'just folks', in whom all wisdom and virtue reside, I have found them nowhere and doubt their existence. In this case the disparagements of Natal only caused me to approach it with greater curiosity, and it was an exciting moment when I saw before me at the roadside the notice: Natal.

It is a lovely name, and the world seems to have been a lovelier place four hundred and fifty years ago, when Vasco da Gama sailed the seas and, discovering new land one Christmas Day, called it Natal in honour of that Nativity. Men had great faith and confidence then and these still ring in the names they gave to the places they found. Were Natal discovered today it might be named Unonia. As I drove into it I wondered idly if Rupert Brooke, had he lived a hundred years later, would have ever been moved to write.

If I should die, think only this of me,  
That there's some corner of a foreign land  
That is for ever UNO.

Almost as soon as I crossed the invisible line that separated Natal from Sarie Marais's Transvaal the country changed its hard, bare lines for undulating ones, verdantly clothed. It had a provocative touch of England; fortunately nature, and not the colonists, was responsible for that. However, nature did not erect the notice which I soon saw at the roadside: 'Stop for tea at the Buttered Crumpet, fifty yards down the road.'

From 'A Little Boy Called Taps', I thought, to the Buttered Crumpet! I had in spirit travelled this road before. The names I came to now were imprinted on my earliest memories. Down this road the invading Boers rode into Natal and up it came the British, Mr. Churchill with them, the two meeting in their hardest battles before besieged Ladysmith. I stopped the car, got out and looked up and down that historic road. Mr. Churchill came up it praying for 'a decisive victory ... which would plant the British flag firmly in Pretoria and Bloemfontein'. The Boers drove down it praying for a decisive victory which would carry their quadricolour to Cape Town and Durban.

Where are the decisive victories of yesteryear? The British won theirs and handed it back, like a sword rendered to a gallant enemy. The Boers thereafter, by the arts of politics, won theirs. But who has lost and who has won in this caucus race? Behind the contestants, fifty years ago, appeared other, shadowy, unarmed invaders bent on profiting by the wars of others. I said that a thin red coastal strip denotes the only part of South Africa, and Africa, effectively colonized and populated by Europeans. But since 1900 another colour, brown, has been overprinted on this red area in Natal, and especially in Durban; without firing a shot the Indian has occupied substantial areas of the old Colony. At the other end of the road the decisive victory, for the present, is that of Johannesburg, a main power-station in the process of gold-manipulation which clearly dominates our century. The last laugh is not with either Boer or Briton.

I started again and drove slowly, revelling in the colour of this land. A widow-bird rose and struggled across the road in front of me. Its dress was black and its tail so long and heavy that it could scarcely keep in the air; it looked just like an unhappy lady borne down by the weight of her woes and her weeds. I should think it is the most aptly named bird in creation.

And just round the next corner was another lady, Lady Smith herself, whose husband, Harrismith, is at the other end of the turning on the right. The world *was* good when a young Spanish girl could give shelter to a young English officer, prosaically called Smith, during the Napoleonic wars in Spain, and end her days as the wife of the Governor of the Cape, so much loved by all that two

South African towns were named after the pair. What memories her name brought back now to a Londoner born in the Nineties! My father kicked his top hat through city streets at the relief of Ladysmith and Mafeking.

The little town has a hallowed air. I had not known that the dust of old wars is so fragrant, or the gentle spirit of brave men so tangible in the place where they died. In South Africa I gained a deep respect for the British soldier who fought all over this hard country for a hundred years. What a staunch man he must have been, what hardships he must have endured, and what obstacles have overcome. He was not held in much regard in his time. Only those who could do nothing better (was the general feeling) would join the Army. I think he was even called a mercenary, on account of his daily shilling! The conscript of today has a big task if he is to equal that man. I looked down the little street and pictured the Dublin Fusiliers, in honour of their especial ordeals and bravery, leading in the relief column nearly fifty years ago, and Winston Churchill riding with the staff.

There is a little church in Ladysmith which, no matter what might happen in the world, will ever be a corner of a foreign field ... The vicar, though I could not find him, was a brother of Field-Marshal Montgomery. On the other side of the main street was a large café-cinema, where, although the hour was early, those melancholy girls called usherettes stood about in trousers. Hollywood was come to Ladysmith; for this relief much thanks.

I went on, to Colenso. This was a journey back through time. The battlefield lies hard by the road, as I remembered it in the picture-books of my childhood. Caton Woodville's drawing of 'Lieutenant Roberts saving the guns at Colenso' is clearly before my eyes still, and I knew the pitiful, open field, without any cover, and the hill from which the Boers poured down their fire, before I saw them. I recall that I was sad for Bobs, V.C., and his son, V.C. Now, as I looked at the son's grave, I felt no trace of that childish sorrow, only a reverent gratitude. The little battlefield is as it was that day. No Imperial Commissioners have collected and removed the dead. They lie where they fell, among the Wait-A-Bit bushes (a thorn with spikes longer than they seem, which arrest the unwary stranger as neatly as a button-holing acquaintance), marked by simple monuments, rough stones and barbed wire. Over them lies the brooding stillness of Africa, which the traveller feels everywhere in 'white South Africa' outside a few High Streets. The feeling of an old battle is lively in the air. I saw Roberts and his gunners sweating and straining, the horses rearing and showing the whites of their eyes, the puffs of smoke from the hill; I heard the bullets whine above and between them, and the dull thud of impact....

Good night, sweet prince,  
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.

Far on the right of the hot and lonely road lay the high Drakensberg, the Dragon Range. Beyond those mountains lay lands still mysterious and untamed. The endless riddle of the twentieth century was all about me on this road, for this was where it all began. The Anglo-Boer war was the Pagliacci of the century:

I am The Prologue ... Ring up the curtain.

It was the first of three wars which, if they may be judged by their results, have been brought about by super-national managers for purposes different from those which seemed at issue. Was the real stake the gold, the power of which runs like a scarlet thread through the two later wars? General Smuts once said, in London: 'The world is facing one of the great revolutions, perhaps the greatest revolution, in all human history. It began where I began, with the South African war ...' General Smuts began on this road, and Mr. Churchill too. It is a great historical highway of our time.

I drove along it slowly, looking for a certain place. 'A few hundred yards from Frere Station': this might be the very railway cutting. I got out, looking for some memorial, but found none. Then, beside a dead tree, I stumbled across a rough gravestone with a legend traced on it in cartridge cases: 'Here lieth the remains of those who were killed in the armoured train, November 15th, 1899. Erected by the Border Regiment in memory of our comrades of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers.'

So this was the very spot where the most famous and baffling figure in the tragi-comedy of this century made his first great entrance in its Prologue. Here Winston Churchill appeared on the great historical highway which still stretches into the mists of the future. Here, after just failing to free the armoured train from the boulder with which it was neatly ambushed, he was captured by the Boers. Elbowing his way impatiently into the twentieth century, he looked that day much as he looks now, fifty years later. I judge so, at least, from the description of an old burgher, Frans Changuion, who was among his captors, 'he had the appearance of a great fat schoolboy'. The words are not chosen to flatter, but the enigmatic man of the second world war is recognizable in them (they were recorded by Peter Quain in the *Natal Daily News*, October 7th, 1948).

Many people still in Durban (I later found) remember the day when Mr. Churchill, escaped, returned there, was carried shoulder high from the point and spoke from the steps of the City Hall. 'Only one possibility is excluded,' he then wrote, 'an inconclusive peace.' Ah, these jests of time and history! Not far away young Jan Smuts, at the head of his commando, similarly hoped for a conclusive victory. At either end of the historical road were these two men, whom enviable and splendid careers awaited in the twentieth century. There, as they appear in the Prologue, they may be considered: Christian patriots both. To my mind the greatest riddle of the time is the support which both these men gave to the cause of Political Zionism, from which, as I believe, great tribulations will spring in the next half-century. My conjecture is that these two famous men, and many others of their generation from President Wilson to President Roosevelt, from Lord Balfour and Mr. Lloyd George to Mr. Baldwin, took up that cause in good faith and goodwill and never realized that a long spoon is needed at such suppers.

I wondered why no memorial stood at the place of Mr. Churchill's capture. Later I learned why. In 1946 the Historical Monuments Commission of South Africa decided to put up a commemorative plaque there, but Boer objections were raised and it changed its mind. The Afrikaner does indeed lay down old grudges like wine, rolling them over his tongue after many years with the gusto of a connoisseur. (In Durban, however, a private resident set up a bas-relief to commemorate the speech from the steps of the old City Hall.)

I drove on from the scene of the armoured train's ambush. I had felt from the moment of leaving the Transvaal that I might be in a different country, for in each township and dorp I noticed a new colour in the pattern, another kind of squalor in squalid corners and other smells in smelly ones. Briefly, Indians were everywhere. Each part of South Africa has its peculiar problem inside the greater problem, and this is Natal's particular one. It has nearly all the Indians because the Cape, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State virtually debar them, leaving Natal, which imported them, to lie alone in the bed it made. I stayed a happy while at Nottingham Road and then went on through the mist-belt, past a fine school that might have been Rugby and another that looked like Roedeian, and came one lovely morning over a hillcrest to see Durban below me and the blue Indian Ocean beyond. It was the fulfilment of a boyhood dream.

Through a lucky mishap, *Glück im Unglück*, I spent much longer in Durban and Natal than I expected that day and think this one of the happiest periods of my life. The polychrome human scene and the climate delighted me, while this coast, the white man's southernmost front line, must be among the loveliest in the world, marked by the four fine citadels of Durban, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London, guarded in the rear by the inland strongholds of Pretoria, Bloemfontein,

Grahamstown and Stellenbosch. In unity, a resplendent future should fill the empty spaces of the land between and the dubious gaps of the political prospect.

Natal has for forty years been given the part of him who gets slapped among the provinces of South Africa. It has nearly all the Indians and more of the Natives than any other. It is the one of the four where (a heritage of British rule) the most substantial proportion of the land, about half, is reserved 'for the Native. It has no single representative in the present Union Government and bit by bit is being elbowed out of control of its own affairs. Its flag was once the Union Jack and it still retains this as one of two, but is constantly threatened with the abolition even of that, while it is habitually told that the tiny Union Jack remaining on the second flag must be removed to make that one 'clean'; its people, I gathered, would not much object to that if only the pledge, given at Union, to fly both flags on State occasions were kept, but this is widely and ostentatiously ignored. Durban once had a flying-boat service direct to England, and I should think this was an air-service unique in the world. The splendid flying-ships made a leisurely way southward through Africa, more like men of taste travelling in olden times than the blindfold aerial globetrotters of today, and alighted in Durban's magnificent harbour, on the doorstep of their passengers' homes or hotels. Apparently a direct link, even of transport, with Britain was an affront to Afrikaner opinion and today the flying-boats use a reservoir in the Transvaal. Durban, like other South African and many American cities, once had good theatres, but someone turned these into cinemas and now it has none.

The Nationalist Afrikaners dislike Durban because they identify it with England. If the gibe, 'more English than the English', was ever true, I fancy the time must be long past. My experience was that the English-speaking people of Natal wanted to build a South African nation, of two equal languages, but at that very point the Nationalist Afrikaners would not meet them, being intent on an Afrikaner Republic. Having seen that even a republic would not necessarily mean the end of association with the Commonwealth, many Natalians, I found, were less opposed to one than formerly, if it were a republic of *union*. After all, in days before Union Natal was once angry enough with England to threaten to set up one of its own!

'Jingo' is another word the Nationalist Afrikaners (and the Communists, for that matter) like to use about the folk of Natal. The jests of time and history are often played through songs. Long ago a music-hall comedian in England sang:

We don't want to fight, but by jingo if we do,  
We've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money too!

and the last line was, 'The Russians shall not HAVE, Constantinople!' How many music-hall singers have covered up their lack of ideas by letting the curtain fall, in wartime, on a bellicose ballad ('They've *got* to applaud that!'). Lyrics, bought and sold for a few shillings in the Charing Cross Road, have long legs. For nearly a century the word jingo has gone trotting about the bushveld and backveld from one Boer homestead to another. The joke comes, like so many others, in the middle of the twentieth century, for now the dingo, jingo, having been contemptuously kicked from many stoeps, has lain down on them and been adopted by new masters. The bellicose patriots are now on the Boer platteland, certainly not in Natal. The authentic language of jingoism, by the Nineteen-Forties, came from those lonely farms:

'A German victory is without question a precondition for the formation of the Afrikaner Republic.' 'As long as there are two languages in the country, there will never be a united nation.' 'There should be no intermarriage between Afrikaans- and English-speaking South Africans because of the unfortunate effect this has on the Afrikaans language.' 'No Afrikaner woman should do anything that her great-grand-mother would not have done.' 'Een land, een volk, een taal.' The last phrase woke loud and ugly memories in my mind. I heard one like it still from the night of my birthday,

March 11th, 1938, in Vienna: 'Ein Volk, ein Reich ... ein Volk, ein Reich' - all night long into the dawn it continued then.

The people of Natal, as they watch the political beard of the Nationalist Afrikaner appear in increasing numbers in the public offices and services of their province, often reproach each other with 'apathy' in accepting so many ill-deserved affronts so passively. However it must surely lie in the nature of reasonable men to be long-suffering and slow to quarrel. That may look like weakness at first but often has proved a source of strength later. In South Africa, at all events, it will take two to make a nation, so that ultimate wisdom may lie in leaving the quarrel to one. For the present Natal (and for that matter English-speaking South Africans generally) are passing through a phase of doubt, unsure of themselves and uncertain of the future.

Many influences have combined to shape the character of the people of Natal, who often complain of each other's political indifference to the stealthy deprivation of their share in the common patrimony of South Africa. They may have been softened on the surface by a lenient climate, long years of good living gained without over-arduous toil and the cushioned feeling which the attendance of native servants gives, but are hard enough at core. They saw the Boer invade and retreat; they saw the victory over him cancelled; now they see the Nationalist Afrikaner return (the distinction between Nationalist Afrikaner and Afrikaner is important), bitter as ever. If they call the British island 'home' he says they are not 'true South Africans' but he will not have them share in making a South African home and they are not to blame because he has no European home. They have seen a Liberal Government in London hand them over to Afrikaner domination without guarantees and a Socialist one abolish the designation, 'British citizen'. The age is a confusing one for them.

For all the easy comfort of their present existence, they are white men, clinging to the edge of dark Africa. Their future fate is between egg and clutch; with many other chicks it should be hatched before the century ends. I thought that Durban, somewhat remote in thought and space from the great processes of the century, might be a front-line city in the great clashes and conflicts, armed or unarmed, of the next fifty years. Would its future be that of a declining club or what its position entitled it to be: that of an advanced stronghold of the Christian area, gazing over the ocean towards the surging masses of the East? The white men would decide that in the end. At present they were divided among themselves.

*Since this chapter was written events have overtaken the reference on page 82 to Mr. Winston Churchill and the armoured train. Just before the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Relief of Ladysmith, in March 1950, a suitable memorial to that event was erected on the spot of the derailment and of his capture.*

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## Chapter Four

### ‘THIS IS OUR ENGLAND!’

One day I made my way back from Durban to the signpost marked ‘Richmond’, turned left and drove a thousand miles, to Cape Town. Even with a break in the middle it was for a solitary traveller an arduous journey and increased my respect for Anthony Trollope, who covered long South African distances by mail-cart and Cape cart seventy years ago. The Barchester novelist was a keen observer; hardly a word of his *South Africa* is wrong or out of date today.

To travel alone is the best way to learn the loneliness and emptiness of this country and the gulf between white man and black. On the Johannesburg-Durban road the traveller may persuade himself that he is riding through a land populated, if sparsely, by white people, but I lost that feeling when I turned towards The Cape and never truly recaptured it (save at East London and Port Elizabeth) until I crested Sir Lowry’s Pass and saw The Cape thirty miles away.

As you go westward the white man’s houses become rarer, until only the wire proclaims that these are his lands. His villages are specks in vastness. Richmond was hardly more than a name on the map; Umzimkulu a hotel which, surprisingly, gave me vegetable soup, Lancashire Hotpot and sago pudding; Ixopo (where you may try your tongue at the clicking consonants) was a main street and a cross-road, shanties and huts, white men’s bungalows around and two signs: ‘Village Tea Room’ and ‘This way to the Golf Club’.

The male Native still went dressed in some tattered remnant of white man’s clothing; the shirt, worn outside the trousers, seems now the emblem of his manhood and exploits, like the assegai and man-killer’s necklace of old. But men were few. Women greatly predominated and these were quite different from the beaded, nearly naked Zulu girls further east. They wore heavy blankets and turbans. Their hair was trained with brown clay into long rats’ tails, and from these matted wigs looked savage faces. They talked to each other over their shoulders but without turning their heads and when they laughed looked as if they were playing white mouth organs.

Whence came the Bantu (a generic word, meaning simply The People, for all those Natives other than the nearly vanished Bushmen and Hottentots, the aboriginals of the country). These turbaned and blanketed women, and others who wear helmet-like wigs, put the traveller in mind of old Egyptian carvings and the Arabs of North Africa. Some of the Bantu may have made a long southward trek, long ago, in the vain ambition to be alone. I would have liked to stop and study these people, not to dash past so much of interest in a wheeled box, but in South Africa you cannot learn much by casual inquiry. The white folk often resent it and the dark ones resist it. The great divide is wide. If I could make this journey again I would go in an open lorry or truck, with a tent and unlimited time. The world is full of places where a man should stop awhile from sheer wonder at its creatures; to whiz by in a limousine is like going through the National Gallery and the British Museum on a scooter.

Few countries can be of such delightful and variegated complexity. I expected to find the western border of Natal but an invisible line running over a mountain, on both sides of which the same grass grew, but it was not like that. There was a tangible difference. In East Griqualand, beyond the line, were faces and forms again quite distinct from those of Natal. Here were the remains of something which the Nationalist Afrikaners (and for that matter many who are neither Afrikaners nor racial politicians) fear and abhor, ‘a coffee-coloured nation’.



‘In South America’ (the present South African Prime Minister once declared) ‘the policy of letting this develop has brought about nothing less than nations of half-castes.’ The Griquas were such a nation, sprung from the original Hottentots, the earliest Dutch colonists, and the Malay slaves of these last. When white women were few in distant settlements scruples of colour were rare, and the Griquas grew up, a small nation of vagrant folk whom the British Governor at The Cape thought to help when he persuaded them to go and settle in the far eastern corner of the Colony, where they set up a short-lived State under British suzerainty. ‘British rule in distant parts’, wrote Trollope, ‘is so precious a blessing that men will have it, and the old hen is forced to stretch her wings again and again.’

The Griquas trekked to those distant, unknown, untamed lands. Did their achievement disprove that ‘the half-caste has all the vices and none of the virtues’ of his progenitors? Or did the sequel uphold that tediously iterated phrase (for they proved incapable of maintaining their little State, or themselves on their farms)? Possibly all that is proved is that they had what others wanted and were too few to hold it; they settled on some of the finest and most drought-resistant land in South Africa. Through this excellent pastureland I drove towards the former capital, Kokstad, of Adam Kok, King of the Bastards (for Griquas were called Bastards until a Scots clergyman persuaded them to change the name and he set up to be a king).

Thinking of these things I pondered the mysteries of colour. Not far away, on my left hand, was the place where the *Grosvenor* was wrecked in 1782. The three white women aboard reached land with the captain’s party but were never seen again, and soon a whisper spread, and grew into a story that has made the stuff of books and plays until the present day: that they were taken, and taken to wife, by black men. What evidence exists suggest rather that they died of exhaustion, but nevertheless curiosity about and compassion for the fate they might have suffered filled the hearts of white people for generations. All these generations, however, overlooked something much stranger, namely, that the human beings they met on this savage shore were descendants of white women whom this very fate had befallen long before. Oddly, that bothered the world not at all.

‘The castaways met several Natives’, says Professor Percival Kirby in *New Light on the wreck of the Grosvenor*, The Africana Society, Johannesburg, 1945, ‘and being unable to speak the language of the Natives they were unaware that these tribesmen were descendants of white people. They were of the AbeLungu clan, which was probably even then under the chieftainship of Mdipa, son of Gquma, a European woman who had been shipwrecked many years before and had become chief wife of the paramount AmaPondo chief, Tshomane.’ Eight years after the wreck the Governor of The Cape sent an expedition under Jacob van Reenen to search for the survivors (so great was the continuing interest of the world in this matter). Van Reenen reported that, although he found no trace of them, he came across three other old women of white or mixed skins. They knew nothing about their nationality or origins.

The great authority on the subject is Mr. J. Henderson Soga, the son of a Scots-educated Gaika chief and a Scottish lady, who became a Native minister of the Presbyterian Church. In his book (*The South Eastern Bantu*, published in English in 1930 by the Witwatersrand University Press, Johannesburg), he says that in the one hundred and fifty years before the wreck of the *Grosvenor* the Pondoland coast saw many recorded wrecks and some of the survivors, from necessity or choice, settled among the Natives there. The crew of the wrecked *Stavenisse*, in 1687, found at least one survivor of earlier shipwrecks living there and when the survivors of the *Stavenisse*, years later, were rescued ‘five persons preferred to remain’. This community was joined in 1713 by fifty-seven European survivors from the wrecked *Bennebrock* and in 1714 another vessel found seven of these still there, of whom ‘three remained with the Natives’. In 1738 the expedition of Hermanus Hubner found three Europeans, Miller, Clerk and Bilyett, in Pondoland with numerous wives and children, and finally, in 1790, Van Reenen found the three old women, one of them called ‘Bessie’.

'Bessie' was the daughter of Gquma, the European girl cast ashore on the Pondoland shore, and taken to wife by the paramount chief Tshomane, long before the wreck of the *Grosvenor*. They had three sons and the daughter, Bessie; the eldest son, Gela, in time became paramount chief. The chief of the AmaTshomane clan in 1930 (when Mr. Henderson Soga wrote) was the great-great-grandson of Gela.

The world mourned the white ladies of the *Grosvenor* so long. It never concerned itself about Gquma (the name means 'Roaring of the Seas') who retrieved from her fading memories, possibly of a Scottish home, the name Bessie and gave it to the baby girl, who, as an aged woman, would meet van Reenen on this wild coast, and be unable to tell him who she was. I wished that I might step into a time-machine which would take me back for a talk with Gquma in her mud-hut....

'Good morning, Gquma.'

'Ah'll thank ye not to call me that. Jean Mcphairson's ma name.'

'I'm sorry. How long have you been in Africa, Miss Macpherson?'

'Och, long enough. Not that Ah've kept count. It could be thairty years, or forty, or fifty.'

'And what are your impressions?'

'It's a heathen country. Ah wish masel safely back in Glasgae.'

'It must have been a terrible ordeal for you. I wish I could tell you what I feel.'

'Mon, do not be sae peetiful about it. Ah do not question the ways of the Lorr'd.'

'You accept your lot in a spirit of Christian resignation!'

'Cairtainly in a Christian spirit, but not one of resignation. Ah'll have ye know Ah'm a Scotswoman. It is surely not what Ah was brought up to expect and Ah suppose it was bitter at first; Ah forget, it was so long ago. Ah've too much work to be sorry for masel.'

'Work?'

'Aye, Ah said worrk. They're a puir, heathen lot, idle and sinful, and it takes me all mah time to drive a little Christianity into their thick heads. When Ah first came here mah husband - that's Mr. Tshomane, ye ken, the laird, he is the big man in these parts - mah husband expected me to worrk in the fields while he sat outside the wee hoose in the sun all day, smoking and drinking beer. Ah soon showed him that's not the way we do things in Scotland, Ah give ye mah worrd.'

'Ah see ... I mean, I see. May I ask you something? The world has been deeply concerned about some other ladies who were cast ashore near here.'

'Dae ye mean the three from the *Grosvenor*? Och, the puir bodies! They were no equal to the hardships and fatigues. Puir leddies, they were weak and delicate, Ah think they were English. As soon as they set foot ashore they lay doon and dee'd.'

'Is *that* why you are sorry for them?'



THE GRIQUAS      (*dancing off*) You're the cream in our coffee ...

THE WHITES      (*dancing off*) We're the milk in your tea....

A man who likes to sit by the wayside and contemplate his delightful world may find infinite profit and pleasure in Kokstad. I had only an evening there, which I spent playing billiards with a Scotsman who suffered from golf and a duodenal ulcer, an agreeable Jew who knew of me and (oddly) agreed with all I said, so that he spoke only ditto voce, and an Irishman who had never been outside Kokstad, having been begotten there.

I left before full daylight and in the dimness asked another lonely early riser, whom I saw crossing the street, which of the two visible roads was mine for Cape Town. He gave me, in the accent of London, the familiar countersign: 'Sorry, but I'm a stranger here myself.' I wondered how new he might be in this remote place, that he did not know which of two roads was the main one. However, I know that if there are ever lost men in a place where I am lost my instinct will lead me to them like a homing pigeon. Once, with a desperately ill baby in my arms, I drove round London in a freezing blackout looking for someone to tell me where Great Ormond Street was. I found two living creatures, of whom the first was a Chinese and the other a Pole, both lost and unilingual.

By trial and error I hit the right road and soon found myself continually ascending into and descending from mountainous land, between green downland, timbered slopes or bare, grim walls of rock. The feeling of secret reserve, of a continent withholding judgment, was strong in these high fastnesses. The lonely road rose ever higher, always disappearing into horizons beyond which, I felt, must be a huge, precipitous drop, yet each time I reached what seemed the top of the world I saw the white ribbon ahead, winding downward and then rising into higher mountains still. Riding along the ridges between them, I felt like a fly on a horse's back. The warm day grew imperceptibly grey and chilly and all at once I was in cloud, with but a few yards of rising road visible before me. I felt as if I were on an endless stairway that might lead to Saint Peter. I had been crawling on the roof of the world and now had left it altogether and would go on for ever, up and up, into this white nothingness.

In fact I did leave behind the world I knew, for this cloudy ride brought me into the Transkei, which is another world, the black man's. The population map of South Africa has a few black patches where the black man's land is his own, not to be acquired by white men. They amount to little in the Transvaal and almost nothing in the Orange Free State, but to a large part of Natal. The biggest single Reserve (a bequest from British rule) is this Transkei, in the eastern part of the Cape Province (formerly Cape Colony). The Transkeian Reserves spread over fifteen thousand square miles. The traveller who enters them through the stark, beclouded gateways on the east leaves the white man's empty country for a full one. Rarely is he out of sight of human creatures or habitations.

'The red Kaffir is here - the man who dyes himself and his blanket and his wives with red clay', wrote Trollope. Today the red Kaffir is in Johannesburg, probably wearing a costume resembling that of an Argentine cowboy and surplus-stock army boots of which he buys the largest size when he finds that the mad white man charges no more for big boots than for small ones. The red Kaffir's wife is still here, in multitudes, and comes across the fields with a movement like that of the wind stirring a cornfield or a sailing-ship gliding before a steady breeze. These women are a joy to the beholder. The home-dyed blanket, which at the wearer's movement falls into classic lines, is seldom red; it falls into an infinite variety of shades from rust and bronze to copper and saffron and beyond. Each blends with the next and with the hues of this African scene; there is something here which the taste of cultured folk cannot achieve. The women carry on their heads loads varying from

a great bundle of wattle to a small parcel or a bottle, and often babies, strapped on their backs, with lolling heads ride astride their hips.

I have never seen so perfect a symphony of line, colour, movement and background. On every side stretched the neatly thatched clay huts, which like the ochred blankets blended subtly with the surrounding scene. Agaves, with their huge bayonet-like leaves, were planted to form cattle-pens. These squares of grey-green bayonets looked like bivouacs left by some departed, fantastic army. The mealie patches spread around, the naked piccanin scuttled across the road, a naked girl stood at the roadside to watch me pass, and two more, their heads turned towards each other in the way of secret-exchanging girls everywhere, disdained to give me a glance.

How would the black man live if he could? Here he was left more or less alone, and the contrast with the picture of the locations, compounds and shanties in the towns was startling. Only the superficial traveller would take the scene at its surface value, which was that of a pastoral idyll. But it survives to show that the Native in his tribal state, under his chiefs, *had* found a way of life which was idyllic, if pagan. In boyhood he romped around the kraal or tended the flocks.

When I was playing with my brother,  
Happy was I...

In puberty the wise men took him and others of his age, daubed them with white clay and segregated them in an initiation school, while the girls who were on the same threshold went to another. I have not seen what happens in them and thus cannot agree with or differ from Trollope: 'There is much in these ceremonies which is disgusting and immoral.' However, I have met a trader's wife who knows much of what goes on and has great respect for a custom by which the secrets of sex are unveiled, solemnly and with ceremony, to boys and girls at a point in their lives which is as important to them as a twenty-first birthday to Jack or Jill. She even thought this more civilized than the process of accidental and episodic revelation which is accepted in the white man's countries. She distrusted what Trollope called 'the anxious endeavours of missionaries to cause the cessation of these ceremonies'. In Africa the missionaries often seem to concern themselves too much with sex. They put the Mother Hubbard next to godliness; attacks on divorce are fruitless in lands where plural-marriage is the law and the initiation ceremony is apparently chosen as the next best target.

After that plunge, into manhood or womanhood the tribal Native soon married. The man deposited cows with his wife's father, which were held as a forfeitable or returnable stake for his kindness and her fidelity, and sat down at the door of his hut to watch her tend his fields. Thus he might watch his cows calve in the comfortable knowledge that these new recruits would bring him another toiler in his fields. When he tired of squatting there he wandered off from kraal to kraal in search of a beer-drink. The land was commonly owned under the chief. The witch-doctor often wielded the real power, playing a part similar to that of 'Advisers' in our civilization. If the Native did not propitiate the witch-doctor he might be 'smelt out' as an evildoer and thereafter live unhappily or die painfully; if he appeased the witch-doctor with gifts he might hope for preferment (in more enlightened lands called 'priority'). This easy-living man had a definite job: that of protector, hunter and warrior. His work began when wild beasts ravaged the kraal, or another tribe attacked it, or his chief sent him to raid a neighbour clan. When he died he was buried where he had lived.

Only in the Transkei, Zululand and parts of Natal can this tribal picture still be seen, not much impaired but without the warfare and hunting. In the Boer Republics it was wiped out, and it would have vanished from Natal had the Boers retained their Republic of Natalia of 1839, of which they were dispossessed when a British garrison of 247 men returned in 1842. 'The Volksraad in August

1841 deliberately resolved that all the Kaffirs should be removed from Natal; of course, quietly if possible, but if not, by force of arms, wrote Mr. George Russell in his *History of Old Durban* (P. Davis, Durban, 1899), 'Sir George Napier, the Governor of The Cape, then appealed to, foresaw without any difficulty that bloodshed must ensue and, on instructions from the British Government, proclaimed to its misguided and erring subjects, the emigrant Boers' (that is, emigrant from The Cape) 'that Her Majesty's Government intended to stop the effusion of blood and to resume military occupation of Natal, promising at the same time to respect the rights, laws, religion and landed occupation of the farmers so long as they did not interfere with the Natives and submitted to the Queen's authority.' After the reoccupation most of the Natal Boers also migrated to the Transvaal and Orange Republic.

The British principle everywhere was to disturb the Native as little as possible in his tribal laws and the occupation of his land. The Boers tried to drive the Native out or enslave him. There was a perfectly honest and sincere cleavage of opinion here which has continued until the present day; though none now think of re-enslaving the Native the dispute about the way of handling him remains a living issue in South Africa as in the southern States of America. The South African election of 1948, which surprised the world, showed how fierce the clash of conviction still is.

The British in the last century did not extend their frontiers from mere acquisitiveness. The old hen, as Trollope said, was forced ever and again to spread her wings. Britain might today be richer and safer if it *had* concentrated its energy on Southern Africa rather than India, for it had the minerals and foodstuffs the twentieth-century Briton would need, and was open to being populated, not merely ruled, by white men. Where they went, however, the British were drawn by the first rule of all good government, which is, to prevent bloodshed and maintain order. They legally succeeded to The Cape, and the Dutch farmers were the Queen's subjects; they could not let these exterminate or enslave the Native in British territory, or even withdraw and do these things on the other side of the fence. The British annexed territory after territory, not because they wanted them (they were surfeited) but because they were compelled to preserve order and protect the conquered Native.

Hypocrisy is easy to read into the process. 'I think it must be intelligible that the British philanthropical system of government was an hypocritical abomination to the Dutchman who knew very well that in spite of his philanthropy the Englishman still kept taking the land,' wrote Trollope; but he added. 'Had justice only been done there would have been no United States, no British India, no Australia, no New Zealand, no South Africa. Humanity, forbearance and Christianity must put themselves as closely as possible into alliance with physical supremacy - and together make the best they can of the bargain.'

This last sentence contains the philosophy that embittered the Dutch farmers, so that their descendants today have inherited a resolve to undo the whole process of last century, if they can, and bring matters back to where they were before the King of the Netherlands in 1814 ceded The Cape to the British. The practical philosophy of seeking to do rough daily justice, within the bounds of larger transactions which may be right or wrong or partly both, ever infuriated the Boer. He believes that he has always been prevented by the British from doing what God enjoined him to do.

The old Dutch settlers came mostly from a sect in Holland which in its rigid austerity was comparable with the Quakers of England (who themselves, when they went oversea, saw nothing incongruous in exterminating the North American Indian and in expressing pious horror at the enslavement of the Negro). The Boers seldom had more than one book in their homesteads, the huge Dutch family Bible, by which they lived and swore. Trollope, Mr. Churchill and other students agree that they found their fierce faith in the Old Testament. In Deuteronomy the Israelites are enjoined either to slay or to enslave. The Boers seized on this as the literal word of God. They slew or enslaved the Bushmen and the Hottentots of The Cape, the Natives of the Transvaal and

Orange Republic. They believed in a stern Old Testamentary God, not in a mild New Testamentary one.

That is at the root of the matter. I have sometimes wondered why the Old Testament and the New are bound together in one book without interleaving explanation. Is the Old Testament *Christian*? If that is so, it must mystify the black man, for it contains tales of tribal massacre, vengeance, patricide, incest and all corruption, in which the Native might recognize his own history before the missionaries came.

Anyway, the Trekboer believed that by slaying and enslaving he obeyed the word of God and was ready to fight for this belief. He called his first Transvaal republic 'the South African Republic', 'as though', wrote Trollope in 1877, 'it were destined to swallow up not only the Free State but the British Colonies also'. By 1950 that aim was far advanced. The Briton, while he ruled at The Cape, equally believed that Christianity forced him to prevent the Boer, not from settling, but from slaying or enslaving the Native. The great Transkei (with the Natal reserves and Zululand) were the sum of what the British achieved for the Native in this belief.

The difference in honest conviction must be one of the most stubborn in history. It was irreconcilable a hundred and ten years ago when the Trekboers turned their backs on The Cape and the British. 'We first took and cultivated and civilized this Cape Colony,' Trollope pictured them as saying then, 'but as you want it in God's name take it, and use it, and do with it as you list. But let us go and do as we list elsewhere. You don't like slavery. We do. Let us go and have our slaves in a new land ... anything will be better to us than your laws and your philanthropy.'

It was as obstinate forty years later, when Trollope himself came to South Africa. 'That attempt to strike down the Native with the right hand and to salve the wound with the left was to the Dutchman simply hypocritical. "Catch the Nigger and make him work", that was the Dutchman's idea. "Certainly - if you can agree about wages and other such matters", said the British authorities. "Wages - with this savage, with this something more, but very little more than a monkey! Feed him, and perhaps baptize him: but get work out of him", said the Dutchman.'

It was as persistent in 1900, when Mr. Churchill arrived. Boers asked him: "Is it right that a dirty Kaffir should walk on the pavement without a pass? That is what they do in your British colonies. Brother! Equal! Ugh! Free! Not a bit. We know how to treat Kaffirs." Probing at random I had touched a very sensitive nerve ... What is the true and original root of Dutch aversion to British rule? ... It is the abiding fear and hatred of the movement that seeks to place the Native on a level with the white man. The British Government is associated in the Boer farmer's mind with violent social revolution. Black is to be proclaimed the same as white. The servant is to be raised against his master; the Kaffir is to be declared the brother of the European, to be constituted his legal equal, to be armed with political rights. The dominant race is to be deprived of its superiority; nor is a tigress robbed of her cubs more furious than is the Boer at this prospect.' Mr. Churchill went on to imagine a meeting between this Boer and Mr. Morley, a Liberal leader of that day, and to imagine the purring delight with which the Boer would listen to Morley's eloquence about liberty and the rights of nationalities, the horrors of war and the crime of aggression, and the jarring note that would interrupt this harmony when the question of the Native arose. Mr. Churchill, however, in the passage I have quoted, appears to suggest that enlightened white men, if they were not Boers, would unanimously approve of the black man 'being constituted the legal equal of the European'. If that was his meaning, he was in my experience completely wrong. Neither in South Africa nor in the American South have I met any large proportion of white men, of any race, having to live with the black man and not merely to moralize about the subject from afar, who would agree to that equalization in any measurable period of time. It is a solution urged almost exclusively by those

who do not live with the black man and feed their vanity on the condemnation of those who do. It was proved wrong and impracticable in the American South after the war between the States.

The great argument, of which the passages I have quoted summarize a century's content, continues today, and today is completely artificial. It is kept alive, inside South Africa, by one group of politicians who find in it the easiest way to office and importance. Through them those two-thirds of the Afrikaners who by their vote in 1943 implicitly applauded Hitler, are kept in fear and dislike of the British as a French child might be whose nurse constantly frightened it by singing *Malbrouck s'en va-t-en guerre*. Yet British power, wielded over South Africa from outside, has ended, and to picture the English-speaking group inside South Africa as being solidly opposed to the Afrikaans-speaking one in the matter of policy towards the Native is an absurdity. What the Afrikaner and the South African Britisher equally have to fear now is the power of those 'adventurous politicians' whose rise Trollope foresaw, and who work today to divide white men and to gain a universal thrall over them through some international agency, at present called The United Nations. The pertinent lesson for South Africa is that of the period of 'Reconstruction' after the American war between the States, when unscrupulous white men and Negroes hopelessly unready for emancipation were let loose to ravage the defeated South.

In South Africa individual attitudes towards the Native often differ little between the backveld Boer and the English-speaking South African. The Natal British, for instance, commonly 'like' the Native and 'dislike' the Indian, but I fancy this is in the spirit in which the Shanghai Anglo-Americans formerly 'liked' John Chinaman and 'disliked' the Jap. The Native (like John Chinaman, is poor and unambitious; the Indian (like the Jap) is industrious, acquisitive and often rich. Many Afrikaners are deeply troubled in their minds about the lot of the Native and the artificial cleavage between themselves and the English-speaking population. Nevertheless, the Afrikaner Nationalists continue to present the matter to the simple-minded as if it were one exclusively one between 'true South African' and 'English Liberal' and would have been settled for ever, had South Africa kept out of the last war, or Germany won it, and the last Englishman been ground into the dust.

So the great argument, skilfully fanned from outside, goes on, and meanwhile the densely populated black Transkei survives among the sparsely peopled spaces of white South Africa. In these Reserves are no fences; wire is the white man's emblem. Here the black man goes beneath the brazen African sky with a different gait, and even rides a pony. Here he *is* a man, for a' that. Yet few men are to be seen among all the women who tend the flocks and fields. They are away, working in the white man's mines, farms and factories. They go to earn the hut-tax, of 10s. a hut with a minimum of £2, for coins do not grow in the ground. Perhaps, also, they want to go. The white man's way of life seems to call them, as the Pied Piper's tune called the children of Hamelin. 'The Kaffir himself is determined to come to Kimberley', wrote Trollope seventy years ago, 'because he has learned the loveliness of 10s. a week paid regularly into his hand every Saturday night.' Diamonds are not what they were, but Johannesburg offers, at the lowest, more than 10s. a week, and plenty of food in the mines, broadcast music in the compounds and the pleasant vision of a return to the kraal, with some cash in pocket, for a rest and the propagation of the species. (The holiday seems even more important than the money; a Native who will not respond with harder work to the offer of more pay, may perform prodigies of labour if he is told he may knock off when a chore is done.) On the South African Railways he may earn today £10 a month. The girls, too, encourage young men to go to the cities, twitting them with their callow inexperience if they stay at home. Thus, although the policy of all governments (according to an official statement) is not to encourage full-time farming in the Reserves, but to impel the Native by the hut-tax to seek a livelihood in the mines or in the Boer farmer's fields, the lure of the white man's cities alone is enough to attract him.



About half of the eight million Bantu now live in the Reserves. The rest are landless farm-labourers or workers outside. Even so, the Reserves are supposed to be over-populated and over-grazed to starvation point. As long as the Native uses cows for currency, valuing them merely by the number of their horns and not by their breeding or milk-giving quality, this will continue. The Natives outnumber the Europeans by nearly four to one; an eighth of the land is theirs. Such figures are loudly used by the humanitarian intellectuals of Johannesburg and Cape Town, who, like those of Bloomsbury and Manhattan Island, cannot bear to see any human creature denied the equality among all men which rules in Siberia, or the undisturbed use of ancestral land which the native Arabs of Palestine enjoy. This chorus, transmitted across oceans by diligent Communist and Zionist agency, produces the reproachful expression which the international agency sometimes likes to turn on South Africa, the rooftop of which constantly hears the rattle of first stones.

Creation, however, contains no such thing as a complete, self-contained, all-demonstrating and incontestable fact. In the Transkei I saw other facets of these particular facts. The 'denuded and eroded soil', which the Red Kaffir retained through hard-working British administrators of the past, is some of the best in South Africa. Its poverty is due to the excess of currency-cows. By the cultivation and marketing of crops it could be brought to produce great wealth. If authority puts obstacles in the way of that, under-privileged peoples elsewhere have succeeded despite such opposition, and if the Transkei be compared with the teeming lands of India or Japan it is not even overcrowded, but pleasantly open. The male Native does not revere diligence or acquisitiveness, which are both foreign to his inherited traditions.

The peoples of the Transkei did not look unhappy to me, but merely different. The great National Road, which the white man has driven from end to end of the Union, is always under repair at one point or another by native labourers, working under white supervisors who sleep in tents beside their task. At these places the traveller must deviate by rutted track which often takes him far from the highway, through the mealie fields, between the kraals. Here he is as near to the heart of this corner of Africa as he will ever be. As I drove along, jolting and bumping, I passed women working in the fields. The hearing of the Native is peculiar. Its range is incomparably greater than that of the white men, yet seems deficient at short distances. Often the Native appears only to hear the approach of a motor car when it is nearly abreast of him. These toiling women swung round as I drew near, suddenly presenting startled faces daubed with red ochre. For an instant primeval and savage Africa gazed through an abruptly parted curtain, which closed behind me as the deviation ended and I returned to the great highway.

On this the white man may not stay, in the Transkei. Unless he is an official or trader he must go on and out. I felt it must be a priceless thing to the Native to have this place which he may call his own. I even found the Transkei a green and pleasant land, and imagined its people would think of it in such terms. I did not dimly imagine that they might compare it, for its freedom, with England! Yet it was so.

I came over a mountain range to a place which, if it was not a white man's town, was at any rate one with many white men. Umtata differs from nearly all other towns in the Union. It resembles the capital of a colony, where a few thousand white folk, mostly officials of the colonizing power, live among a million dark ones. In it is the fine building of the Bunga, or Native Council, where the chiefs exercise some influence over the Transkeian Native's affairs under the guiding hand of white magistrates. One day, when I was in those parts, the Bunga saw a lively debate about a motion to regulate the large-scale brewing of Kaffir beer, which is even more important to the Native than ale to an Englishman. One chief rose, like a baron at Runnymede, to protest against restriction of this great liberty of the people. The consumption of beer, he cried, should not be limited, and to show how great a principle of human freedom was at stake he added, the Transkei is our England, our only home where we can go up and down'.

This was a tribute akin to one of gold, frankincense and myrrh. It meant that in the Transkei a man was a freeman still, might drink his beer, and 'go up and down' freely, without being stopped to show his 'pass' and imprisoned if he could not. (The pass-laws are detested. The late Colonel Denys Reitz once startled South Africans by stating that in 1939-41 348,907 arrests under the pass-laws were made in the Transvaal, Orange Free State and Natal and that in 318,858 of these cases convictions followed. In 1948 a Zulu chief's son, convicted of a pass-offence, said in court: 'The King of England came here and visited the Zulus. We are the descendants of this land and such being the case we do not need to produce passes.')

The twentieth century is the jester among the ages. The Transkeian Natives, I reflected, did not know that in England now men *do* carry passes, without them may not 'go up and down', and if they move about their country need to 'register' like the Native outside the Transkei, where the resident Red Kaffir is in fact freer than they in this matter, having inherited from British rule a freedom which was self-evident to Englishmen ten years ago!

The matter of the pass-laws has long been a chief complaint among those raised by the 'adventurous politicians' and the vaguely compassionate abroad, on behalf of the South African Native. The Native's abiding bitterness about it is shown in an anecdote of Mr. Winston Churchill, who tells how Natives in Pietermaritzburg jeered at Boer prisoners, calling to them 'Where are your passes?' The compulsory identity card, and its attendant documents and registrations, in fact amount to the same thing. Amusingly, the British Socialists, who first made these documents a permanent peacetime infliction in England, still rail against 'laws that compel coloured Africans to carry special passes'; a Private Member's Bill for their abolition in British Colonies was announced during 1949. Meanwhile in Kenya Colony, presumably under stimulation from Whitehall, an Ordinance was issued to compel the small white population, not only to 'register' and carry identity cards, but also to have its fingerprints taken, for the purpose of 'controlling movements' and the like! The most ironic development was in South Africa itself, where the Nationalist Afrikaner Government, so much reproached by various interested parties abroad for its treatment of the Native, announced the intention to extend the pass-laws, in the form of identity cards, to its *white* population!

All these humorous events made me smile, albeit with one dry and one moist eye, when I read the Transkeian chief's words: 'This is our England, where we may go up and down!' He was, I reflected, a little behind the times, though I hoped these would in due course restore truth to his words. In high good humour with the Transkei, I drove out of Umtata towards East London.

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## Chapter Five

### THE PROBLEM!

Between the Transkei and East London, and on later and further journeys, I thought as I drove along about 'the problems' of South Africa. The traveller, even if his wish were only to collect butterflies, could not escape them, for all thought and conversation are dominated by these matters of present controversy and future menace, more than in any other country I know. 'The problems' are legion, and of them General Smuts once said, in a tone of enthusiastic resignation. 'Look at the other Dominions. No quarrels! No problems! Everything smooth and easy! How empty! How dull! Now the Union - there isn't a human problem under the sun we haven't in this one Union of ours: black, brown, yellow, white - we have them all. Can it be said that we are a peaceful, amiable nation? Of course it can't. But it cannot be said that we are not an interesting nation. How exciting life is here! How there is a passion here that creates a sort of genius! I wouldn't - no, I wouldn't - be anything but a South African for the world.'

The words fit the feelings of an impartial onlooker like myself, who is able to stand aside and contemplate 'the problems' with a detached though passionate interest, to watch the fall of cards on the green baize table of fate and the ball spin in the roulette-wheel of the future. For him South Africa is a land of endless exhilaration, a kaleidoscope that never palls. He cannot ignore, however, that South Africans do not always feel this zestful enjoyment. They have another mood, of presentiment, which General Smuts also once described: 'What a nation we might be - with our qualities and opportunities, what a great powerful people, if only we could leave off quarrelling, if only we had not so many hates.' Like its own great game reserve, the Kruger National Park, South Africa is unique in the world. Here are species and specimens, found nowhere else, living in a fantastic propinquity. Here is God's laboratory, and no man yet sees the meaning of the experiment.

In some countries (fewer now than formerly) a handful of white men rule over millions of dark ones; there they serve in the office of chiefs, and the arrangement works efficiently. In others substantial native minorities (like the Maoris of New Zealand) are ruled by a white majority, and this also functions smoothly. In yet other countries, such as North America, the original dark-skinned inhabitants were virtually exterminated, leaving the white invader in possession; this solution, for obvious reasons, is effective, and was efficacious in South Africa until the trekking Boers brought new dark masses, whom they were not allowed to remove, into the borders of South Africa by moving ever deeper into the interior. In effect they did by this what the American Colonists did by importing Negro slaves; they joined their future with that of the dark man. In their case, however, they joined it with that of a black majority much more numerous than themselves. In the American South the Negroes remained a minority, though a very large one, and in the whole of the United States were a small one.

Thus was created what South Africans think of as *The Problem*. 'It is not the familiar problem of a repressed minority', wrote Mr. H.V. Morton when he went *In Search of South Africa*, 'but the more puzzling one of a vast majority on a lower plane of development which, if given privileges, might swamp its masters and imperil the future of a painfully built-up civilization.'

Thus God's Wait-A-Bit bush, which arrests and delays the South African white man on his quest for an assured future, is this spiky question of the dark man, four times as numerous, who is denied liberty outside the Reserves and yet is impelled to leave them, so that the mines and farmers may have labour, or because he wants to go. To the white South African this appears, among the many 'problems', as *The Problem!* To me *The Problem* seemed the obverse: the small white population,

not the large dark one; but I was an outside observer and I found few South Africans, Afrikaners or British, who enthusiastically shared what I thought an obvious assessment.

It is as if the good God once more had his little joke, saying to the Dutch farmers: 'So a little farm at The Cape, where the Native and the Coloured man had a limited franchise, was not enough? You needed six thousand acres of cattle-ranch apiece in the Orange Republic or the Transvaal? Then take them, but take also this little matter that goes with them.' The little matter is the Native Problem, that of eight or nine million Natives who lean the deadweight of their mere presence on a demand for betterment, while the white men, who refuse to increase, are but two and a half millions in number.

'Though defeated in war, the Afrikaners won for themselves, through the arts of statesmanship, the predominant place in a self-governing, and later independent, Union of South Africa', wrote Mr. Donald B. Molteno (one of the three Native-elected white M.P.s in the South African Parliament of 1945-48). Now the Native is learning these arts, or rather, unscrupulous white politicians in distant lands are pursuing them through him. 'We are busy teaching the Bantu the lesson that the Afrikaner learnt after the Anglo-Boer war,' wrote Mr. Oswald Pirow, a leading Afrikaner Nationalist, 'namely, that it is possible to carry on a national struggle with the ballot-paper as weapon.' If the Nationalist Afrikaner still broods only on undoing the Anglo-Boer war, the black man may similarly long to undo the eight Kaffir wars of the last century, which the Dutch farmers could not alone have fought.

Trollope, seventy years ago, saw this shape of the South African wood, of which so many today seem to perceive only their favourite trees. 'When once the Kaffir shall have learned what voting means there will be no withstanding him, should the system of voting which now prevails in the Cape Colony be extended over a South African Confederation ... The condition of the Kaffir has been infinitely improved by the coming of the white man; but were it to be put to the vote tomorrow among the Kaffirs whether the white man should be driven into the sea, or retained in the country, the entire race would vote for the white man's extermination. This may be natural; but it is not a decision which the white man desires, or by which he intends to abide.'

Trollope, like all but corrupted white men today, would no more consider a general extension of the vote to all Natives than suicide. He added presciently: 'It is not that I think the Kaffirs will at once swarm to the poll ... They will care nothing for the franchise and will not be at the trouble to understand its nature. But certain Europeans will understand it - politicians not of the first class - and they will endeavour to use the privilege for their own purposes. Such politicians will not improbably secure election by Kaffir votes ... and after a while the Natives will learn the powers they possess as have the Negroes of the Southern American States.'<sup>[1]</sup>

That was an uncommonly accurate forecast. The international parties of the Nineteen-Fifties fulfil the Barchester novelist's prophecy of 1878: the 'European politicians not of the first class' have appeared and seek, generally from outside South Africa, to use the Native for their own purposes. His side allusion to 'the powers possessed by the Negroes of the Southern American States' is also of current interest. He wrote not long after the North-South war there, at a time when those powers seemed greater than they proved in the event to be, in the hands of people who were not equal to understanding or using them. Today, however, the Negroes of the South are much courted by the Communists and East European Zionists, who seek to mobilize their vote by putting 'colour' in the front of their programmes. In countries where the main parties (say, Conservative and Socialist, Republican and Democrat, Liberal and Conservative, or Afrikaner and British) are nearly equal in voting strength, some special group of the population with a separate grievance, if well-mobilized, may turn the balance of power. In 1948, for instance, the Negro Council in Chicago announced that

its three million voters in Illinois, Ohio and California were instructed to vote for Mr. Truman's re-election as President and did so almost to a man; if this was truly so, they decided the issue.

Thus Trollope was right when he wrote: 'The power of voting in the Southern States of the American Union is creating a political confusion of which none of us can foretell the end', but has not yet been proved right in adding, 'but as to which we are all convinced that in one way or another a minority of white men will get the better of a majority of coloured men'. The South African dilemma may be a coin with two heads. If all Natives had the vote, the white population would have to jump in the sea. If they are represented, en bloc, by a few European members, these may come to hold the balance of power, so that the white man is in effect outvoted. The apparent solution, more white folk, seems to be eschewed by general consent, so that, for the present at least, *The Problem* must continue to grow.

Can such a situation be rigidified? That is the doubt which the visitor feels in the air. *The Problem* lies heavy on the white man's mind. Nobody knows what is in the black man's mind. He keeps his side of the white man's barrier, apparently because he is told to; but let the white man approach it and he comes up against a wall indeed. In his schools the white man learns more about Dingaan's Day than about the Native of this day, more about old Kaffir wars than the way the Native now lives. The Native knows this and encloses himself in his mind's reserve. Men who often say, 'I know the Native', cannot answer simple questions about his life, or even learn (I found) why he daubs his face with clay; if asked, he tells them, 'It is against sunburn', and they may vainly search for a glint of mockery in his eyes.

He is an enigma, caught between tribal past and the white man's civilization. I only met one Native who showed me something of his mind, a highly educated Zulu, whose impulses mastered him enough for him to say, 'Sah, we *despise* the white man!' I said that made him the counterpart of the poorer-quality white men, who despised the black man. He was embittered because the white man had taken his tribal life and faith from him; perhaps the early Britons felt so towards the Romans. 'We understand the conception of God, sah,' he said, 'it need not even be explained to us. We were never idolaters or sun-worshippers. We worshipped God. But do not try to explain to us about the Mother of God and the Son of Man. We cannot understand that.' He was torn between hatred and admiration for the white man's achievements. I could not imagine, much as he loved the old ways and feared the new, that he would, if he could, put on the leopard's skin and monkey-tails again. 'When I go to my home, sah,' he said, 'my brother thinks I am a spoiled man, a black European.' 'And that grieves you?' I asked. 'Yes, sah,' he said. 'Do you wish to live among your people?' 'Yes.' 'Do you wish to live in a kraal?'

A pause. 'No, sah,' he then said, 'I would like to have a house.' He wanted the lights that switch on, the plug that pulls. The white man's magic was powerful; if the white man passed there would be no return to the savage idyll. The life of the Transkei was but a relic. Whatever lay ahead for the black man, it would be something different. What part might Christianity play in it? Has the missionary achieved anything, and if he has not, is that his fault or is the Christian lesson fading? I could not tell. Yet I had a mission-girl servant (that is, she was once a girl and was mission-trained) who seemed to me the model of a Christian. I never knew anybody with a stronger sense of duty and goodness to others. Her faith gave her strength to endure a hard lot, and dignity too; it was impossible to imagine her doing any mean thing. The Native would be strong if there are many like her. Perhaps there are. I could not tell and do not think anyone knows, for their armoured and self-protective secrecy is impenetrable.

They remain beyond the white man's ken. What can you make of a Native who goes out in heavy rain wearing an overcoat with collar upturned and proudly carrying on his arm a lady's umbrella, tightly rolled. Many white men assuage their worries about the Native with the thought that he has

‘a low ceiling to his brain’. Sometimes he seems so. I have seen a Native enter a store and find himself confronted by an ascending staircase from the basement, which he wished to reach. His thoughts were plain to read. ‘Why does the white man make the stairs move against me? I do not know, but that is his magic. I must go down the stairs that walk up.’ He stepped on the escalator, was borne back, walked faster so that he remained stationary, increased his pace until he made a little progress, and then ran for all he was worth, looking back, when he at last reached the basement, with a pleased smile. What the white man could do, he could do!

Natives will come far to fill bottles from the Indian Ocean. Why? None surely knows, but they say it is to show their folks in the kraal that they have seen The Big Water. I have watched them drink this water; even the Atlantic, to a white man, is less unpleasant. Once I watched one run after each receding wave, holding his bottle in the water with its mouth pointed seaward. Between waves he held the bottle to the light. He showed neither wonder nor disappointment that it remained empty and might be running after each wave now but that I turned the bottle in his hand until it pointed towards him, when it immediately filled. At the other end of the scale are Native men and women of high ability. If they are few, that is largely because training is scarce and subsequent opportunity insignificant.

The mere presence of this enigmatic, silent multitude oppresses the white man. In the country the Afrikaner takes them to the magistrate for a few lashes or administers these himself, if they do not work. In the towns the white manual workers are sometimes most hostile to them, because they fear the black man’s growing ambition to do their own, not very difficult jobs. In the towns, too, are the white intellectuals who use the Native and his grievances as pawns in the Leftist political game. At the top of *The Problem* are a group of harassed Native Affairs officials who strive to improve the Native’s lot but are hindered by insufficient funds and authority and by the constant growth of *The Problem*; and a few highly enlightened white men who search for a way of jointly securing the white man’s future and bettering the black one’s plight.

Such men, if pressed hard for the ultimate solution of *The Problem*, sometimes aver that they foresee, one day, a great mingling of white and black. Having said that, they shrink back as if a serpent had reared its head and hurriedly add: ‘Not for five hundred years, of course.’ Clearly they cannot bear to contemplate, in the world they inhabit, something they imagine in a distant future, and in that they are at one with all others, including the Natives but excepting the Leftist intellectuals.

What, then, will come of *The Problem*? The wanderer in South Africa might wonder less if the white South Africans were not so preoccupied with it. They were worried about it when Trollope was in South Africa, and before that, and remain so now. In 1913 Mr. G. Heaton Nicholls (who later became South African High Commissioner in London) wrote a novel, *Bayete!*, which showed *The Problem* exploding in a Native rising. He was reluctant to publish it but finally felt impelled to do so ‘as a note of warning’. That was thirty-seven years ago and nothing of such dimensions has happened. Possibly the last Zulu rebellion, of 1906, was in 1913 still large in the author’s mind. That affair, however, may have made another rising less likely, not more: the single European casualty was a lesson and warning to the Native. Dingaan at least wounded three white men before his three thousand Zulus were killed on December 16th, 1838 (the Nationalist Afrikaners celebrate this date every year as ‘Dingaan’s Day’, though his it clearly was not).

In 1947, Dr. Arthur Keppel-Jones, of the Witwatersrand University, also foretold a Native rising in a book called *When Smuts Goes*. It foresaw intervention by the United Nations Organization on behalf of the Native. As this body, at that very moment, had in effect ordered the Zionist invasion of Palestine, from which the Arab Natives were driven into homeless destitution, the moral argument of this book was hard to follow; the reader was entitled to infer that, if any motive should

ever prompt the United Nations Organization to such an expedition into South Africa, it would not be humanitarian concern for Natives. The book also imagined a violent 'persecution of the Jews' by an Afrikaner Nationalist government (presumably because that party does not include Jews among its representatives, any more than the Zionists include Gentiles). When the Afrikaner Nationalists came to office just after the book's publication lively negotiations for Jewish affiliation began with a Jewish gentleman who declared he found 'anti-semitism' in other parties but not among the Afrikaner Nationalists, and added that the Jews were 'the most nationalist of all peoples'. Zionist and Afrikaner newspapers both pointed out that anti-British feeling should provide common ground, and one Afrikaner journal explained that Afrikanerdom and Judaism both believed in racially exclusive marriages. No sign of 'anti-semitism' appeared, and at the prompting of a visiting Jewish journalist from New York the new Afrikaner Prime Minister ordered the exclusion from South Africa, as an undesirable immigrant, of an obscure English visitor to Natal who was falsely stated to have set up a 'Hitler institute' there.

Thus Dr. Keppel-Jones's book could not be taken as a sound guide to the likelihood of a native rising in South Africa, though it might eventually prove correctly to foretell the interventions of some international body (Trollope's 'adventurous politicians'), on this or that pretext, in the affairs of various countries. Strangely, its author thought that Communism would not play much part in the Native revolution it foresaw. I felt, on the contrary, that if any large Native rising ever came in South Africa it would be prompted by those 'European politicians, not of the first class' whom Trollope foresaw, and would not assume importance unless outside help were given it by interested parties, pursuing ulterior ends. Short of that Trollope still seemed a truer prophet than these later writers. Substitute 'South Africa' for 'Natal' and 'Natives' for 'Zulus', and his words give the facts of today.

'I have no fear myself that Natal will be overrun by hostile Zulus ... I cannot bring myself to fear that any number of Zulus will long prevail against white troops.'

Nevertheless, *The Problem* grows and the tension it causes continues. The basic facts are that, whether European man remains in Africa or not, the black man will remain: that no European race has yet established a permanent civilization on this continent: and that the Europeans of South Africa have not yet, by natural increase or immigration, achieved numbers sufficient to make their settlement permanent or secure. Meanwhile, the grooves and furrows of concern are more to be seen in white faces than dark ones. That, however, may mean only that the man without a shirt is the happy one.

Does it matter, anyway, what two and a half millions of white folk decide to do, who use up their strength in dispute with each other? It matters greatly to the white races as a whole, for the survival of which Africa will be important during the next century. South Africa is 'the key to all Africa; if the white man failed to establish himself in the Union he would not remain elsewhere.

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## Chapter Six

### IMMIGRANTS!

I drove into East London, noticing with mild surprise that bilingualism had bestowed on a place with so famous a godfather the Afrikaans second name of Oos Londen (I did not see in the Transvaal or Orange Free State such English alternatives as Johnstown, for Johannesburg, or Bloem's Fountain, for Bloemfontein). Before seeking a lodging I went shopping. I had a *cri de coeur* from England ('they're absolutely threadbare, and I shan't have any coupons for ages yet').

I found and entered a shop. Two very pretty girls smiled at me. East London, I felt, had something of the friendliness of old London. The main street was called Oxford Street, and in the air was that stimulating feeling of ships and seamen being just round the next corner, which all good ports should have. I was intercepted on my way to the two pretty girls, however, by a friendly man of my own years.

'Nylons, sir?' he asked; I am evidently identifiable at sight as an Englishman. I said no, and told him what I wanted. 'Oh yes,' he said, 'it must be very hard for the ladies at home. They ought to take *those* off the ration at least.'

'Well, I don't know about *hard*,' I said, 'but it's cold. I think it is the new *sans culottisme*. You are from England, then?'

'Yes, he said, I'm from London, East. Now, what size, sir? Small women's, women's, or large?'

'Well, now, I said, I've never thought of it just like that, and I'm not an expert, but let's take the middle size. Moderation in all things. How do you find life here?'

'Very good indeed,' he said, 'although there's not the same friendliness shown now that there was during the war - I was here during the war. The Afrikaners have the upper hand and they're anti-British and want a republic. Let them get on with it as far as I'm concerned, if it makes them any happier, but I don't think it will. Now, these are very nice, sir....'

This East Londoner in far East London was one of the first immigrants I met. Afterwards I knew many others. Those who streamed out towards the Commonwealth countries amounted to a large army and many more would have gone if they could. I wondered, as I watched the process, if the God who looks after the great family were performing a new wonder here. Its first need was for more people in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa; if the second war showed anything at all, it showed that. The British emigrant of these years seemed to me, on average, a recruit any government might welcome or unpeopled country be glad to get. The surface softness of the between-war years was gone. Perhaps it was a product of prosperity. Nothing daunted the British emigrants of the Forties. I saw them come to South Africa, and other parts of Africa, overland and by sea, by bicycle, motor bicycle, jeep, lorry and horseback; by invasion boat, Brixham trawler, sailing yacht, steam yacht and by small aeroplane. I met an elderly lady who made her way across half Africa alone in a caravan, and a man who, from a total capital of £1130, paid down £1100 as part-purchase price of a ship in which he ultimately reached Cape Town with enough passengers to pay for the £12,000 vessel and its running.

Since the white man first began to colonize great lands, oversea the story of emigration has often been one of friction between the established settlers and later migrants, and of the disappointment of the last. This seems to be a main cause for the emptiness of the great Commonwealth States,



which is a danger to the future and to the whole. The earliest Dutch settlers landed at The Cape in 1652. By 1750 the 5000 Europeans there were protesting against 'The Immigrants', and this has gone on ever since. It is a curious thing, not easy to explain. Mr. George Russell, who described himself as 'an emigrant of 1850' in his *History of Old Durban*, 1899, wrote: 'The familiarity and mistaken kindness of the Emigrants towards the Natives scandalized the old settlers.' In 1850 the oldest settlers had not been in Natal more than a few years. In present-day South Africa, which appears urgently to need a larger white population, a critical or hostile attitude towards immigrants is fairly general among the Afrikaners and the English-speaking population alike. I have heard British residents of two or three years' sitting complain of The Immigrants, or explain that, while they welcomed immigrants, the new ones were 'not of the right type', which appeared to have become exhausted when they themselves landed.

These complaints refer usually to British immigrants, and specifically to the habit, thought to be common among them, of criticizing the new country they have come to and comparing it unfavourably with 'home'. My own impression is that this is true in about half the cases, and that it is a cause of friction which would be quickly removed if emigration were a thing encouraged and organized at the source, instead of one which is hindered there, so that individuals have to make their way out through a mesh of obstacles.

I think that in loose talk the critical bent of some British emigrants is much exaggerated, and the quiet reserve and modesty of the others given too little credit. The best of the many stories I heard concerning the first characteristic concerned a member of an effete aristocratic family which, in the manner of the type, has in the present generation produced successful Socialist politicians, successful business men and successful fox-hunting sportsmen and squires. A South African friend of mine, who occupied a club bedroom in a South African town next to that of this man, was wakened one night by a noise and saw a Native rifling his wardrobe. He sprang out of bed with a yell and the Native, looking round, saw a huge, ominous and naked white man coming for him (my friend sleeps in the buff in hot weather, as I do, if I may intrude a personal item). The Native ran out of the open french window on to the broad club balcony and to the end of that, whence no escape offered save by jumping to the ground twenty feet below. Forced to choose between that and an encounter with the terrifying white figure which bore down on him, he screamed and jumped, abandoning some loot which he had in his hands; by wonder he must have been spared grave injury for he vanished into the night. My friend then picked up the loot, which proved to be clothing belonging to his neighbour, the Englishman. He went through the french window into this man's room, wakened the sleeper and told him what had occurred. The Englishman remarked, 'Well, of course in England we should just send for the police and they'd soon nab the beggar', and went to sleep again.

Before the second war governments at both ends of the trail showed indifference towards emigration. After it Canada and Australia set out to encourage useful immigrants and to populate their huge, empty lands. The Australian Government received 70,000 immigrants in 1947 and announced that this number would be increased to 100,000 a year. Mr. R.G. Casey, a leader of the Australian Liberal Party, which in 1949 succeeded to power, said it ought to be raised to 200,000. Mr. T.E. Holloway, the Premier of Victoria, said in November 1948 that Australia wanted ten million British immigrants in the next twenty years. Mr. A.J. Hooke, Provincial Secretary in the Government of Alberta, in April 1948 stated that the British island was over-populated by more than twenty million people and that Alberta would welcome as many of these as it could get.

South Africa, under the Afrikaner Nationalist government of 1948, reverted to an anti-immigration policy, announcing that it would 'maintain the composition of the population in its present proportions'. This meant, since no source of Afrikaner replenishment offered, that a government elected to ensure 'White survival', was resolved to keep the white population in a minority of one

to four, and to perpetuate a ratio, inside the white population, of one and a half Afrikaners to one British South African. It meant the continuance of a small white population, instead of its increase. The Boer instinct of survival is one which British South Africans understand and respect, but in this rigid form it leads straight to the menacing questions of the future.

A paradox may be seen in this, which runs through politics in many countries today. The Afrikaner Nationalists' action, in checking British immigration, coincided with the aims of Communism, which they detest. In England a chief Communist objective is to prevent emigration, particularly to Africa and to South Africa. Clearly Africa looms large in Communist plans for the second half of this century; supreme importance appears to be attached to preventing the rise of great white populations there, and South Africa is plainly seen as the key to this matter. This is the real reason for the constant attacks on South Africa in London's Leftist newspapers. Similarly, in South Africa the Communists actively support the campaign against The Immigrants, telling the rural Afrikaner that 'the Jingo' will swamp his Afrikanerdom and the Natal British that they will encroach on employment and housing. The South African newspapers' practice of publishing pseudonymous letters facilitates this agitation; obviously doubtful epistles, expressing violent distaste for South Africa, appear over such signatures as 'Blighty for me', 'I've had it', and so on.

Mr. A.J. Hooke, the Albertan Minister who spent three months in England in 1947-48 for the purpose of promoting immigration to his part of Canada, perfectly understood this Communist technique, of which I find people as a whole surprisingly unaware. He said. 'Only on two occasions did I find any opposition to an immigration policy being pursued by the Province of Alberta. It is interesting to note that the opposition was voiced by Communists who argued that England was not over-populated and that she required all her people at her home in order to man her industries. Many people from Alberta wrote to me while I was in England, expressing themselves in favour of the idea of bringing British immigrants to our Province. Among these letters we received one, the writer of which was most critical of our plans to bring Britishers into Canada. He argued that we had all we could do to take care of the people we now have and that to bring immigrants at this time would result in swelling the unemployment ranks. This letter was from a Communist well known to me. It is quite easy to understand this technique ... If England can be kept in a weakened condition by over-population, and Canada prevented from becoming stronger by under-population and industrial development, they both become an easy prey for Communist aggression.'

Another measure which might have been devised as a lethal weapon for the Communists to use against intermigration between the Commonwealth countries was the housing-and-letting-control which was almost everywhere introduced. In the particular case of South Africa the same paradox becomes visible in another form: housing-and-letting-control was introduced and rigidly applied, not by the Afrikaner Nationalist Government (which eventually relaxed it) but by the earlier one, which claimed to be in favour of immigration. It enabled the Leftist newspapers to tell readers in England that if they went to South Africa (or, for that matter, to Southern Rhodesia, or one of the African colonies) they would be unable to find a house or flat; at the other end, it enabled them to tell South African readers that The Immigrants were preventing them from getting a home.

Substantial white immigration, British or any available other, seemed more important for South Africa than for any other country in the world, but in these various ways it was reduced to a trickle, if it was not stopped. The vision remained an empty dream, which Mr. Churchill saw in 1899, when he looked from a ship at the lovely coast of Natal:

'All nature smiles and here at last is a land where white men may rule and prosper. As yet only the indolent Kaffir enjoys its bounty and according to the antiquated philosophy of Liberalism it is to such that it should for ever belong. But while Englishmen choke and fester in crowded cities ... there will be those who dream another dream of a brave system of state-aided - almost state-

compelled - emigration ... a system that shall remove the excess of the old land to provide the deficiency of the new and shall offer to the most unfortunate citizens of the Empire fresh air and open opportunity. And as I pondered on all these things the face of the country seemed changed. Thriving ports and townships rose up along the shore and upon the hillsides inland towers, spires and tall chimneys attested the wealth and industry of man ... rows of stately buildings covered the grassy slopes; the shipping of many nations lay in the roadstead; above the whole scene waved the Flag and in the foreground on the sandy beach the great-grandchildren of the crossing-sweeper and the sandwichman sported by the waves that beat by the Southern Pole or sang aloud for joy in the beauty of their horde and the pride of their race. And then I came back from the land of dreams....'

The reality, fifty years later, has not yet caught up with the dream. There are no thriving ports along that coast south of Durban, and the only new township of any size, I fancy, is called Margate and counts as a seaside annex of Johannesburg, the victor of that war. Testimonies to the wealth and industry of man do not yet abound. The south coast has not yet a good road, though it has a railway which, the Natalians say, Christians can only love because God made all creeping things; possibly the Afrikaners, who now control the South African railways, do not greatly desire the development of Natal. Where a flag flies over this scene it is not usually the one Mr. Churchill had in mind, and if any sing on the beaches they probably sing 'Sarie Marais'. If they merely talk, and in English, they may well be complaining about The Immigrants.

For that matter the dreamer himself has changed from the dreamer of 1899, who saw visions about on the coasts of Pandoland and Natal. In 1947, when the State, far from 'aiding and almost compelling emigration', put many obstacles in its way, Mr. Churchill attacked those who wished to go, calling on them to 'remain at home and fight it out'!

'... Now these are very nice, sir,' said the salesman, producing something pink from a packet. They're American, made of run-resist material.'

'Really,' I said, 'run-resist! It sounds most suitable. Put them in an envelope and I'll post them right away. So you are a refugee from Social Security?'

'Yes,' he said, 'I'd like to find a country where there are no controls, no pensions, no contributions, no unemployment pay, no state health schemes, no compulsory full-employment - nothing but the right to live where you want, do any job you like if you can get it, and starve if you can't. I don't want to be either controlled or mollycoddled, or to control or mollycoddle anyone else. Of course, that's only how I feel. I expect there's a lot to be said for it, really, but I don't like it.'

'Don't be so British, I said, 'you're like Somerset Maugham's lonely jungle Englishman who used to dress for dinner each night, though in a different way. There's nothing to be said for it. May I borrow a pen?'

So I posted my urgent packet with a hastily written note from East London, which said. 'It seems strange to have to come seven thousand miles to get these for you, but since they are what you need, I send them, with my love.'

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## Chapter Seven

### GREAT CLOSED SPACES

I drove out of East London by Oxford Street (leaving Fleet Street on my left hand) and then (past Hanover, Braunschweig and Frankfort on my right) to Potsdam and Berlin (the route, of course, leads to King Williams Town, Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth).

I had the pleasant sense of old acquaintanceship whenever I found German villages like Potsdam and Berlin in South Africa, and later, in South-West Africa, Swakopmund. I have never lost my admiration for the native Germany of the poets and thinkers, of the little ducal courts and sturdy peasants, of the lovely old towns and thriftily farmed countryside, and these places reminded me of it, like the German settlements in Serbia, Rumania and Hungary. I do not think the white man's civilization will be safe again unless and until Germany is free within in its own borders, for a divided Germany is a potent instrument of war-making put in the hands of third parties, and this was the truth behind the propagandist fictions of the wartime conferences of Teheran and Yalta.

When I made this journey, less than three years after those ominous parleys, the propagandist knob was being turned again and Germany was being 'saved from Communism' by means of 'the great air-lift', so that the simple man in the news-reel theatre in London and New York applauded loudly to see this proof that his leaders' eyes were opened and that their hearts were strong. He did not perceive that the great air-lift was in the nature of a smoke-screen for his own confusing, and that on the other side of it the same process continued: by means of help from afar, this time chiefly American, the Soviet area was extended across China. When Chiang Kai-shek was gone the way of Mihailovitch, General Anders, King Peter of Serbia and most other allies in 'the fight against Hitlerism', the great air-lift suddenly ended and all was as before: Germany remained divided and, for the present, no more and no less submerged by Soviet Communism than before. Then, suddenly, there was 'a revival of Nationalism' in the non-Soviet half of Germany, so grave that the only man who for twenty years fought both Hitlerism and Communism was forbidden to return to his native Germany. This was Otto Strasser, who by order from Washington remained, nominally free but in truth captive, in Canada. To have been, not only an enemy of Hitler, but also a patriot and an enemy of Communism, continued in fact to be a political death-sentence, and in many cases a physical one. Behind the greater scenes, that 'western movement of the capital of world Communism from Moscow to Berlin' appeared still to be encouraged which Mr. John Strachey, British Minister for Food in the Nineteen-Forties, hopefully envisaged in the Nineteen-Thirties. This was the reality behind the appearance.

The real effect of the second war, and as I believe the real aim of those who directed it through the men apparently in power, was to continue the destruction of nationhood everywhere; from this supreme point of view the anti-Communists and the anti-Hitlerists were equally unwelcome and both were just as mercilessly treated or abandoned. The points at which this theory may next be tested are in Germany and Greece; the case of China has demonstrated its continuing validity. In my judgment, nationhood is as indestructible as matter, and I think that when the great experiment, or plot, of the twentieth century has culminated in the attempt to destroy 'national sovereignty' everywhere, the many nations, no matter how reduced, will be found more lusty than ever.

Whatever part Germany may have cast upon it in the final stages, Germany seems indestructible. These German settlements in South Africa were still the counterparts of all the others I knew, and retained the distinctive signs of diligence, order and thrift. Each had its Lutheran Church and in the little churchyards the tidy stones, row on row, told in German the old story of Christian family life I remembered between Mecklenburg and Bavaria:

‘Here lies my dear wife, our dear sister, our dear mother Hedwig Schmidt, born Braun.’

These German villages did not change, I thought. The enormous farmer, the model of a beer-drinking Bavarian *Bauer*, with whom I shared a glass looked at me with quick curiosity when I spoke to him in German, but said little when he learned I was English. Deep longings for a German victory must twice have stirred the hearts of these people. In the porch of one little church lay copies of the parish magazine, printed in German. Its outer pages were filled with the advertisements of firms which offered to send food-parcels to Germany.

Germans have never emigrated to South Africa in masses and their present numbers are small. The German influence, however, may yet prove great. General Hertzog was of German descent and claimed at Versailles that one-third of the Afrikaners had German blood. In his case German blood may have warred with his simple Boer faith in 1939. He claimed to wish to keep South Africa neutral in its own interest, but his words hardly upheld that exclusive motive. He depicted Hitler as a man embittered by the injustice of Versailles and said, ‘I have gone through this struggle myself’. However, a man who thought of national justice alone would have felt for Poland, not for Poland’s invader. Today the Union has taken the first steps towards incorporating the former German colony, South-West Africa, which Hitler claimed (and which Britain originally conquered, then presenting it in token of goodwill to the Kaiser).

The names of Potsdam and Berlin, encountered in this African countryside, set my thoughts busy. They seemed always to have stood, like danger signs, at the edge of my life’s way. I thought of days in the other Berlin and the other Potsdam, days not old which yet seemed already to belong to some dead and stratified past. Berlin and Potsdam! A canoe on the Havel and a waterside café on the Spree; a swim in the Wannsee and the lime trees in the spring; the street-sellers’ fir trees at Christmastide and strolls with Nadya in the Tiergarten; tennis on the unbuilt lots in summer and skating on the same, flooded, in winter; ‘Die Strasse Frei’ and the ‘Internationale’; the Kaiser’s sons at the Garrison Church, the Reichstag burning, Hitler’s massacre of his captains; good people and bad politics....

I hoped I might live to see the other Berlin and Potsdam again, at peace and thinking about peace, as I drove on through the changing South African scene. Lush green lands turned into bleak mountainsides dotted with ant-hills as big as native huts, and then into what looked like original jungle, and then again the road ran between banks covered with the prickly pear. When this hideous vegetable gathers in great masses by a roadside it is as if an inferno has given up its victims and these, in tortured, mocking or suppliant shapes, menace or implore the traveller on his way. Or, in the imagery to which my experience particularly moves me, it is like a mass-meeting of Communists in the Red Square, of Nazis in the Alexanderplatz, or of Zionists in Madison Square Garden.

If the prickly pear grew in Bloomsbury or Manhattan it might be a case of protective formation, just nature trying to imitate Epstein, but it grows in remote places and makes the traveller ponder on God’s mysterious ways, for his limited vision can conceive no reason why it was included at the creation. It spreads like wildfire and life ceases where it goes. It seems part of nature’s practical joke on man. Elephants love it, and as the small Addo Game Reserve, not far from these parts, contains some two dozen elephants still, I wondered why they and the prickly pear were not brought together; this would have been a happy ending worthy of Hollywood. That, however, would be bad for fences, so the elephants and their favourite fruit are kept apart, and possibly even elephants forget in time. The extermination of the prickly pear is pursued by infecting or injecting it with a fungus which also loves and devours it (there may be the germ of another problem here, because the fungus might spread to the non-prickly pear, which is planted for cattle-feed).

Ladybirds love the fungus which loves the prickly pear, and eat it greedily. Nature's circle continues to revolve like the earth itself.

In these early travels I gained a deep respect, which later continued to grow, for the achievement of the white man. I often had to remind myself that South Africa, which is twice the size of the British island, contains only enough white people to populate the cities of Liverpool and Glasgow. Yet a railway or road has been cut to the most inaccessible places (even fifty years ago Mr. Churchill remarked on the comfort of the trains). The rivers may be waterless channels of sand and boulders: a South African writer, Mr. Leonard Flemming, once said of the Orange State rivers that if a man fell into one he just brushed off the dust and walked along until he found a place to climb out; but the white man has bridged them all, somewhere. He has built four great ports, and in their suburbs factory-towns are going up as if the future were sure to be as quick-growing as that of the United States (though it hardly can be so if immigration continues to be hindered). He found the gold and set up Johannesburg on it. He found so many diamonds that the fields have had to be sealed. He has sought but not yet found oil (Mr. Carol Birkby's *Thirstland Treks* contains a dramatic account of an oil-boring venture at Dubbeldevlei in the lonely Karoo which was continued for sixteen years before being abandoned as hopeless), but is preparing to distil it from coal. He operates air-services and shipping-lines. He produces athletes and sportsmen to give the best in the world a run for their money. In war he puts small armies of first-rate soldiers and respectable air-forces into the fight, and he is founding a navy. Every second family owns a motor car (the South African gives the car first place among his necessities, and this does not denote a luxurious or easy standard of general living), and only about one man in ten pays income tax.

The white man has built up all that in a hundred years (for nothing outside The Cape is much older). The Cape Liberal's objection that 'the Natives did the work' comes merely from the place where even herrings are red. The greater share of this achievement was British. The Boer made the Orange Republic safe for Afrikanerdom and the Transvaal safe for Johannesburg but the patrimony which the Afrikaner Nationalists seek exclusively to inherit (in defiance of their own Roman Dutch law, which knows no prior rank among sons) was mainly British. The British built the ports and railways, supplied the capital, opened the banks and shops and bore the long heat and burden of frontier duty.

A surprising mark of this achievement, to me, was the extent of the white man's wire. In my English youth I used to ask myself how a man could say to himself that this was his own, his native land, when, since enclosure, almost all of it was hedged about with wire or wood. I suppose this enclosedness of England made my pulses beat for the great open spaces; similarly, wire may have set the Boers a-trekking away from The Cape, and made the Americans 'go West'. Now I found that, in this distant land, the wire ran beside my car like its own wheels, impartially enclosing green pastures and barren hillside, growing crops or arid scrub; it surrounded places so unfertile and remote that I would not have expected any to visit or covet them. Only where herds of lean and nondescript cattle, grazing amid kraals, said 'Native Reserve', did the wire disappear.

The open *veld* (like the open range, as I later found in America), has vanished from the world. The prairie is no more, the great empty spaces, even if they are not full, are all enclosed, unless any still survive unfenced in South America or Australia. The sons of yesterday's adventurers live in a shrinking world today. The white man no longer needs to inhabit a stockade or fort, for safety against Red Indian and Kaffir, but he builds a spiritual palisade for himself.

Over a hillbrow I came on Grahamstown. It long held the frontier against the Kaffir and now lay below me, asleep in the blazing sunshine of mid-December: Colonel Graham's town. I drove up the pleasant main street, which was nearly wide enough to take a battery of horse artillery abreast, round a great church which seemed to have been dropped in it by parachute from some English

shire, towards the house of one of Rhodes's dreams, where glittering white walls, beneath concave red roofs, leaned against a brilliant blue sky.

Grahamstown looks as if, when it stopped fighting, it set out to grow into a respectable cathedral town like Exeter or Ely. It is like nothing else in South Africa, where nothing is like anything else, save in the question it prompts: is this the cradle of something great, or the monument to something past? Inevitably, with all the questions of the future in the balance, this palpable doubt hangs over many places in South Africa today. If once they are affirmatively answered Grahamstown, like all the others, is ready for a period of great growth and development.

I suppose it is to the British what Stellenbosch is to the Afrikaner, among the university centres of South Africa. Stellenbosch is the fountainhead of fiery Afrikaner nationalism, Grahamstown is the opposite, being neither fiery nor nationalist. Indeed, in its present phase it rather reminded me of Oxford in the Nineteen-Twenties, when the confusing philosophy of Mr. Bernard Shaw gave birth to the 'We won't fight for King and country' resolution. The only political forces which make an organized effort to capture the malleable mind of university youth, Communism and Zionism, have today been recognized and rejected by later generations of students at Oxford and Cambridge. At Grahamstown (and later around Yale and Harvard) I had the impression that these movements were still having some success in gaining control of university magazines, debating societies and the like. On the whole, Oxford and Cambridge seemed to me to be about twenty years ahead of the South African and American universities in these matters, or perhaps a truer judgment would be to say that they have twenty years' more experience of the *via Dolorosa* along which a weak acceptance of internationalist slogans leads.

At Grahamstown, and in the mist-belt of Natal, are the English-type public-schools which some Afrikaners dislike. Yet, in spite of cathedral, university college, schools and the present sense of arrested development, the feeling of a hard-fought frontier is still tangible in the air, like a benediction. Not long ago Grahamstown's youth caught up with it; during the second war the presence of the Royal Air Force, at the great training-camp and flying-field, enlivened it. The young airmen came down into the little town, courted and married the girls and bore them off. ('But most of them have come back and settled here now. Conditions in England are difficult and our girls are used to native servants....')

I left Grahamstown to its pleasant reverie, wondering how it would feel if the Union gave way to an Afrikaner Republic based on past resentments, with exclusive flag, dominant language and single national anthem. Folk of British descent might find that a hard ordeal. The British South African does not think of the British island as a physical home, but does venerate the British achievement, in which peoples of so many breeds have joined, as a spiritual one, and if he were deprived of it would be a sad man. However, the other alternatives were not dead: those of reconciliation, and the birth of a dual nation, either within the Union or within a united republic still member of the Commonwealth.

The present uncertainty bears hard on these South Africans who have chosen to be South Africans but cannot deny their blood. I knew a man in Durban who went to South Africa in 1910 and in 1924 returned to London, where for ten years he had an office in Ave Maria Lane with windows overlooking Stationer's Court and an old plane tree which grew there. The call of South Africa was too strong and in 1934 he came back for good. When he heard of the fire of London, of December 31st, 1940, and the destruction of Ave Maria Lane he wrote to a friend in London asking, not 'How many were killed?' or 'How many million books were burned?' but 'Was the old plane tree destroyed?' It survived among the ruins and to this day he still thinks of the land that bore him in terms of a green tree by old St. Paul's.

On wings of dust I sped from Grahamstown towards Port Elizabeth. I was not thinking of ostriches, which is odd, when I consider how often I have taken their name in vain, and was startled when, suddenly feeling that I was not alone, I looked up from my reverie and into the eyes of one which gazed at me over the wire. The smile of Mona Lisa would have looked artless, set against its significant leer, which would have reached its ears, had it owned perceptible ones. It winked, with a movement like the lowering of a carriage hood, as its bulging eyes met mine. I saw at once that I was wrong in so often complaining that these birds bury their heads in sand; this was the best they could do with them. I was puzzled by its mien of sardonic amusement until I recalled that the ostrich has had the laugh of the white man in the long run (and who would not run a long way from such indignities?). Forty years ago an ostrich could not call its tail-feathers its own and an endless and degrading servitude faced the breed. Then Anthony Hope's Miss Dolly, in Mayfair, noticed that Somerset Maugham's Liza, in Lambeth, was also wearing these feathers, and from that moment the ostrich has had ever less cause to look back. The great brass weights, which once were used to balance the feathers in the feather market at Port Elizabeth, now adorn the hearths of people with a collector's flair, as the warming-pans of old England now hang over many a fireless grate in the new one. The ostrich today may almost without anxiety wear his panache, even at the wrong end, and is approaching a state of utter social security, so that he should before long be as extinct as the dodo.

The approaches to Port Elizabeth run through sad sand flats covered with scrub or prickly pear. Here I saw ahead of me a bridge, and a motor car with a man waiting by it. I expected that a good friend, not yet personally known to me, would await me by a bridge and was to recognize him by his car, a two-tone grey Mammalac. The waiting car was one such. I stopped, ran gladly to the waiting man, and eagerly shook his hand.

'How *are* you?' I said.

'Thank you, I'm very well,' he said pleasantly.

'Have you been waiting long?'

'Oh no, just a few minutes.'

'It's very kind of you to drive out and meet me,' I said.

'I didn't,' he said.

'Are you not Mr. A?' I asked.

'No,' he said.

'Are you waiting for someone?'

'Yes.'

'This is impossible,' I said. 'In this huge country there *cannot* be two different men waiting for someone at this very moment by a bridge, in a two-tone grey Mammalac. Is there another bridge?'

'Yes, he said, a mile on.'

So I drove on and stopped by this second bridge, where no car waited and I began to suspect the kind of practical joke which fate likes to play on me. Beside the bridge was a wide lagoon, into



which a spit of sand ran, and at the extreme end of this, as if they stood on the edge of the world, were eleven people, nine of them Natives in European clothes, gathered round a preacher and his assistant who looked to be white. These adult children sang melodiously and sadly by the turgid water's brink. The preacher took one of them by the hand and led him waist-deep into the lagoon, while God's chillun on the shore sang louder and louder. Then the singing abruptly ceased and the preacher took the convert and vigorously ducked him three times. He came up the third time and thus was saved. The singing broke out again, even more loudly, and I saw a two-tone grey Mammalac come across the bridge.

We drove past rising industrial areas, with great factories where American packing-cases go in at one door and fully assembled motor cars roll out of the other, through the longest High Street in South Africa and into a hospitable town. The world hears much about the Dutch Voortrekkers of 1838 and little about the British settlers of 1820. Four thousand four hundred and twenty-three of these people were sent over by the British Government, at a cost of £50,000 and at the request of Lord Charles Somerset, who saw that Kaffirs must be opposed not only with muskets, but also with colonization. The 1820 settlers suffered great hardships and the venture was badly organized, yet they held on, multiplied and built this fine port. Had they been fifty thousand the words 'White South Africa' might need no interrogation mark today.

It was good to break a long journey at Port Elizabeth, to rest and read a while, and to find cordial shelter at a club which in its hospitality remained what Trollope called it seventy years ago, 'a pattern club'.

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## Chapter Eight

### WHITE CHRISTMAS

Father Christmas, wiping his sweaty brow, handed me a leaflet and asked me, in his gummy beard, if it were hot enough for me. His sad old eyes were those of his kind; it is marvellous to see a child look up with wide and trusting gaze at these careworn veterans in the red cap, coat and breeches. In the steaming shop-window behind him pieces of cotton-wool were strung on threads, to make him feel at home. Paper holly and mistletoe decorated plum-puddings in tins. On Christmas cards, lights gleamed cosily behind the windows of snowbound cottages where Christmas revelry went on and the footprints of merry-makers led to the door. A Native, who wore a funny hat, solemnly studied these cards. He was evidently the spirit of Christmas present in Port Elizabeth, I thought, and I wondered what he made of them. Few showed African scenes. They were mostly of homestead lights, becardled cakes, waits, church bells ding-donging over white fields, wise men, angels and mangers....

It was Christmas Eve and meltingly hot. I was still unused to the sight of abundance and, looking at these shop-windows, thought rancorously of the political Christmas-Day-in-the-Workhouse, with the Minister for Rationing as Bumble, and 'bonuses' of sixpennyworth of sweets to which the old festival had been degraded in England. It was lovely to find at the post office throngs of people who sent off parcels to England. Everywhere I went, even in remote places, I saw the separate counter or corner for the food-parcel service, and knowing the short commons which my fellow-countryfolk endured, I felt abiding gratitude to these who tried to help so far away.

The politicians everywhere still have much to do before they can destroy goodwill among Christian folk. I know of an Afrikaner lady whose parents' farm in the Transvaal was burned during the South African war, when she was a child. Homeless and destitute, they were greatly helped by a parcel of clothing from Britain, and her mother enjoined her never to forget this godsend. In 1948 she remembered this counsel and sent several parcels of food to the country from which, nearly fifty years before, the gift of clothing came. This is the other side to the story of the Boer grandmother, of whose sufferings, many South Africans complain, they hear endless complaint from politicians who did not fight and will never be grandmothers. Similarly, I know a South African lady of British descent whose husband and three brothers were all killed in that old war, and whose home was pillaged and burned. She feels no resentment, only a sadness that the ancient quarrel is not allowed to heal. This sorrow darkens the present and future for many South Africans of both races who have played in the same eleven or fifteen, fought side by side, mixed and married and respect each other's pride of race.

My parcels dispatched, I wandered about Port Elizabeth. A man far from his home and his own is alone in the thickest and kindest throng on Christmas Eve. The streets emptied; the white men mounted their petrol-driven steeds and galloped off to blue lagoons, to country clubs and golf-courses, to mountain inns or places on the coast where the big fish waited. The spirit of Christmas, nevertheless, knew no distinctions. I saw a happy Native in a green zoot-suit who carried a shooting-stick. Hollywood, I thought; this was the result of Mr. Clark Gable's appearance in the dress of a dashing southern gambler in *Gone with the Wind*. Another Native came towards me who blithely sang, 'I'm dreaming of a white Christmas'. In what sense, I wondered, could he possibly mean it? But he did not mean it in any sense; like the white folk, he was Tin Pan Alley's parrot.

I drove, with my lonely thoughts, to Amsterdam Hock, which looks as if the illustrator of W.W. Jacobs's books might have built it. A line of bungalows runs along the curving bank of an estuary, with many little landing-stages and boats. Ten miles away the silhouette of Port Elizabeth rises

above the horn of the bay. Old Sam and Ginger would feel at home there, and in this delightful place, for the Christmas week, I was king of a little castle. While its hospitable owner went to Cape Town I used his bungalow and was cared for by his servants. Now, as I sat on the veranda, a mahogany infant with an ivory mouth organ brought me tea; I took her for fourteen and later found she was the mother of two. Below, the boat-boy dug for prawns. They were bigger than any prawns I knew and on being discovered frantically doffed a small steel-helmet which they wore at the end where they would sit down if prawns sat down. They seemed to acknowledge a courtesy, but I guessed that the prawn's enemies might find a death-dealing sting beneath those hats.

At the end of the estuary, a few hundred yards away, the breakers of the Indian Ocean came charging in like white cavalry on a blue field. On this coast I found the best bathing and swimming in the world as far as I know it. I have for fifteen years cherished, and still cherish, the hope of returning to Lake Geneva at the Montreux end, where the blue water comes straight from heaven by way of the Dent du Midi, and that is the only other I know to compare with that of the Indian Ocean between Port Elizabeth and Durban. It has an incandescent glitter and a living quality that I have never found in the Atlantic or Pacific or in any river save possibly some of the mountain streams of Austria, and is equally delightful for surfing or where there are pools fed by the tide, for actual swimming.

On the railing of the landing-stage below the veranda sat a fowl out of *Alice in Wonderland*; it had a long nose, a crest at the back of its head as if its hair were streaming in the wind, a stumpy body on short legs, an abbreviated tail and white horn-rims round the eyes. It looked at me solemnly, and I returned its stare. Round about, death chased life in and out of the glistening water beneath the molten sky. Here was a place for a philosopher to sit and observe that life and death are part of a circle, merciless, rhythmic and lovely, beginningless and endless as time and space. Silver bellies showed as fish jumped out of the water. Did they jump from joy of living, or to catch an insect above, or to escape a pursuer below? Whatever their motive, the circle of life and death continued: the watching tern saw them and plummeted down, not on to but deep into the water, reappearing with gleaming morsels in deadly beaks. The curlews went hunting with beaks as long, in proportion to their bodies, as elephants' trunks. The elegant white herons picked their way as daintily among the reeds as an Edwardian lady holding her skirts high above a muddy street.

Nature knows no eternal peace, but only the law of survive or perish. Where is the dodo now? It was a ponderous pigeon with a hooked beak, stout yellow legs, a plump body twice the size of a turkey's and tiny wings. 'The dodo' (a notice in the British Museum says) 'is exhibited here as illustrating quite a serious principle: that in wild nature the creature which-finds itself in easy surroundings and allows its powers to fall into disuse is likely to be exterminated when faced with new and more exacting conditions.' It is the heraldic bird of Social Security and should be burned in effigy on Parliament Green when England is free again.

The ebbing tide uncovered a sandbank. It lay like a platter of dull gold in the blue water and the seagulls gathered on it, dispersing and returning each time a boat passed. I noticed a laggard among them, who was always last to rise and last to land, and then saw he had but one leg. He reminded me of the club-footed sparrow for whose return I used to watch each spring at the Café Donau in Vienna; both were the antitheses of the dodo and accepted life as something to be fought for, against all odds. A seagull needs two legs for the quick run before becoming airborne and the few quick steps on landing. This one had to get up enough speed for the take-off by hopping on one leg, and in landing to alight plump on it. The spirit is more than the flesh, and I applauded his courage and performance.

Clouds came up and the sun went down. Heaven's lime-light-man alternated the slides in his lantern and in swift, entrancing sequence the colours changed. The sandbank turned from a golden

platter into a rose-pink one, and then into a pewter dish with a thin pink rim, lying on a dark cloth. The lights of Port Elizabeth sprang out, the Christmas beetle began to harp on its one shrill note, darkness came down, and still I sat. A little light moved out from the shore and plied to and fro on the silent water. It was that of a fisherman enticing the jumping mullet, which seems to be the simple village maiden among fish: it cannot resist the bright lights, jumps out of its element, and if it is lucky falls back; if not, it flounders in the deceiver's arms. The jumping mullet also has a place in political heraldry; on the coat of arms of Social Security it might appear as the dodo's supporter.

I could not rest for memories and longings and drove into Port Elizabeth. One or two friendly souls were not gone the way of all flesh (to Muizenberg) and I had a drink, and after that dinner, a meal that seemed to be served by time-machine from last century: soup, fried sole, asparagus, liver-on-steak, chicken with sausages, ice-cream and savoury. Either my organs have contracted with the years of rationed food or years are changing them; I cannot now do justice to such banquets, even on Christmas Eve. I thus had time for table-talk, with a charming lady who told me that people in England were better fed than ever before, though of course the diet was rather monotonous, but look at all the milk the children now received! 'I know,' I said, 'I know, and Mussolini made the trains run on time. Have you been in England lately?' No, she said. 'Ah!' I said, and soon after that drove back to the philosopher's rest.

The Port Elizabeth wind, which is never far away, had risen and now howled across the flats in an exaggerated way, like the storm in a Hollywood ketchup-and-thunder melodrama, when the heroine, with unscathed tresses, vanishes into swirling mists of fate. I was glad to be back in the pleasant bungalow, less glad to be alone with my thoughts of other Christmases. Like unbidden guests they crowded round me: Christmas in the trenches ... Christmas in hospital ... Christmases in Berlin and Vienna and Prague and Budapest ... last Christmas ... the one before that ... the children and the tree ... the one in London during the bombardment, with Lorelei....

I sat in darkness, looking at the lights of Port Elizabeth. Among them those of a great wheel turned; I thought of the long-vanished Big Wheel at Earl's Court, of the one in the Prater that I so often watched from Cobenzl. Christmas Eve, Christmas....

I switched on the radio and a faint glow crept from it into the dark room. After a moment it made a noise like dishwater running down a blocked drain: the Drool Sisters Plugged A Number. I quickly revolved a knob. It gave out sounds like those which might come from the two ends of a dog with a tin-can tied to its tail: the Drool Sisters sang of love. Another turn of the knob, and again the Drool Sisters. The Drool Sisters, I thought in despair, had occupied the universe, or perhaps the end of the world was come and my immortal soul was alone in endless space with these inescapable anthems, the last echoes of the world left behind. I turned the knob again, in the faint hope of salvation. A cultured voice said. 'And now, we bring you the hit of the week from Mozambique: "Holy Night"!'

'The Hit!' I thought. Of the *Week!* From Mozambique! Was it possible? I waited to hear the Drool Sisters spread tidings of joy:

0 Boy! Blessed are the meek!  
0, ye shall find if ye shall seek!  
C'mon, c'mon, say, it's unique!  
It's the hit of the week  
From Mozambique,  
From Mo ... Mo ... Mo-zam-bique!

(Prolonged crescendo, full brass, roll of drums and salute of twenty-one guns by a battery of UNO artillery.)

Instead the soft and lovely music I knew flowed into the room:

Silent night, holy night,  
All is still, all is white....

and grace and truth returned to Christmas Eve, via Mozambique. Still ... white: all was still and white when I last heard that sung as it should be sung. It was on Christmas Eve of 1937. Now I looked back from this bungalow by the Indian Ocean and saw again the Stefansdom in Vienna, the archbishops and the priests and acolytes at the high altar, the humble folk around. I felt that night that nearly two thousand years of spreading Christian enlightenment were moving to ... to what? A barbaric end? A dark interlude? We still do not know; the darkness is now twelve years old and no tunnel's end appears. My instinct was right, that night. Before 'Stille Nacht' could be sung again in the Stefansdom the barbarians were there, and when they were driven out others more barbaric followed in. Vienna has known many silent nights since then, but no white ones, only a long black night that brings no dawn.

I listened, in Africa, to 'Holy Night' with these memories of Europe. When it was done I turned the knob and a new voice said 'Christmas in England.' When it added 'Messages from British film stars' I almost switched off, for I feared to hear a fanfare of golden trumpets, followed by the muted song of the choir of heavenly angels which the broadcasting authorities everywhere apparently retain to supply background music to such songs as 'Bongo, bongo, bongo', or 'I love you so much it hurts me darling that's why I'm so blew'; after that, I thought, would come the sound of B.B.C. reindeer snorting and studio sleighbells ringing and then voices saying, oh so sweetly. 'A very happy Christmas to all my fans overseas.'

Happily I was patient, as ever, and was transported by the magic of this invention from Africa to my native London. No mechanical device ever gave so much power over the minds of men as this one, or was ever used so subtly to poison them:

... Juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,  
And in the porches of mine ears did pour  
The leperous distilment....

the words of the King of Denmark's ghost neatly fit much of the mixture which comes seeping through these machines from the enemies, avowed or masked, of God, honour and country. But radio, well used, has great power to reach the heart, destroy distance and reunite families far dispersed. I felt now, as I listened to the pleasant voice that broke on the air (that of John Mills, I recall) that I looked down on my native city, by some supernatural aid hovered over its roofs, lifted one here and one there, and peeped at well-loved scenes and people. Beneath a humble roof were father Jack Warner and mother Kathleen Harrison, telling daughter Patricia Roc that their manners were fully good enough for her young man. Under another, in club armchairs side by side, sat Basil Radford and Naunton Wayne, trying to remember where they met before and at last recalling that they had proposed each other for membership; a neat jest, excellently done.

Ah, England, London, I thought: how good-humoured and balanced you still are in a rancorous and unstable time. The next roof might have been the one I would have lifted, had I had this power. Under it a woman wrote to her husband oversea. Her voice, like the other voices, brought especial memories to me; I remembered seeing the gifted and beautiful Ann Todd on the first night of a play, 'Lottie Dundass', at the old Theatre Royal in Brighton. Now her voice was the authentic one of devotion and sincerity. This broadcast, I felt, must have been prepared by someone who knew the ordeal of unavoidable separation, and many lonely men may have felt that it was addressed singly to them, that Christmas Eve. The last words of the woman's letter to her husband lingered

tenderly on the air: 'Don't spend Christmas at the club. Try and get in with a family: after all, we are all one family - under God!'

I was spending mine neither in a club nor with a family, but alone, for I had work to do. As the last of the broadcast stations closed down, I wrote a long, long letter, far into the night....

On Christmas morning the mahogany child wakened me with tea and said: 'Kissimus bokkis, mastah.' The dark folk have learned the white man's potent greeting, Christmas Box! I put on bathing trunks and went out. A great blue jellyfish, as big as a large footstool, lay stranded on the sand. It was a golden morning and the white chargers thundered from the blue field upon the bright shore. It was a new day, Christmas Day, and nearly a new year; Father Time had his finger on yet another bead of his abacus. The world was still wide and lovely. Ahead of me lay Cape Town, then Basutoland, Rhodesia, Tanganyika; after that, I hoped, Madagascar, Mauritius, Réunion....

Reunion! That was a cloud in the sky. I did not know if the new year would bring me reunion. I breathed an ardent wish and dived in.

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## Chapter Nine

### MARCH OF THE COONS

Never was I wakened so early on New Year's Day, or by such strange music. Dawn was only starting when these sounds brought me to my bedroom window in 'the comfortable and hospitable club at Cape Town' where Trollope long ago found the friendliness accorded to me. Peering down into the gloom I saw fantastic revellers crossing Church Square in clamorous masquerade. They passed out of sight and their oddly disquieting music dwindled, but there was no more sleep, for at once a second distant band approached and grew louder, more merry-makers danced dimly across the square and vanished, and then, as the daylight waxed, came more and more and more....

The evening before, when I was still dog tired from a long journey, the words 'Coons' Carnival' caught my eye in a newspaper, causing me to wonder what it might be. This was it; I dressed quickly and went down. Incessantly they crossed the square, the Coons, in little groups of musicians and of marching men. There were violin-and-guitar bands, trumpet-and-saxophone bands, concertina bands, saxophone-and-guitar bands and cymbal bands. The white folk in the streets paid them little heed, being familiar with a spectacle which enchanted me. Behind the bands came marchers, some beating time to the music with walking-sticks, which they tapped on the roadway, others with handclaps.

Each group wore an especial uniform, secretly devised and saved for during the old year and sprung upon the public eye on this great day, the first of the new one. One wore grey flannel suits, grey soft hats and brilliantly striped ties; a second, white trousers, red pullovers and black soft hats; a third, grey trousers, coloured blazers and straw hats; a fourth, coster-like suits of bright, varicoloured silks; another, Zulu-like robes and feathers. The delegations of sober associations, proud of their European blood, marched to Christian hymn tunes quickly played; the gangs of District Six shimmied and shook with lolling heads and rolling eyes to the dirges of Tin Pan Alley. Some paraded as Christy minstrels or white-eyed Kaffirs; faces already dark were daubed with blacking and great red mouths were painted on them.

In front of each company went the Cape Town Coons' male counterpart of that high-stepping, baton-whirling 'majorette' who leads the parades of Shriners and Nobles in America. Perhaps the Cape Town Coons borrowed this procession-leader from the Americans, who borrowed him from their own Negro carnivals, which imported him from their ancestral Africa, so that he has now returned, in devious manner, to the continent of his origin.

In endless sequence they came, these Coon leaders, prinking, preening, prancing and pecking like cock-ostriches in the mating-season, and behind them the tireless Coons strummed and strutted, tapped and clapped, shuffled and shimmied in the high spirits of children freed to play. It was the carnival of the world which is neither all white nor all black, and it debauched from its native mean streets to claim right of way in the central broad ones. For two days its music waxed and waned and at every second corner the traveller saw the cock-ostriches prancing towards him and the glittering silken uniforms fluttering in the sun, all in a strange, stirring, inescapable symphony of sound and colour.

I often heard the comment of the Harlem nightspots, 'They *do* understand *rhythm!*' but for me there was more than rhythm in these curious airs, this unusual beat. There were inarticulate memories and hopes, seeking expression. There were the gipsy violinist's song of homelessness and the Styrian peasant's song of home, the childish melancholy of the negro spiritual and the tom-tom's call. I heard familiar melodies but could not at first identify them because time and emphasis were

changed to suit the impulses and feelings of a little nation without past or future. I tried to recognize the tune to which one gaily cavorting troop jerked and perked and stamped and pirouetted. Suddenly I knew it; I often heard The Forces' Sweetheart sing it in the blackout:

All the world is waiting for the sunrise  
Every flower is heavy with dew.  
The lark on high his sleepy mate is calling,  
And my heart is calling you.

A lament in quickstep, past the Old Slave Tree.

Its stump stands at the corner of the square which these dancers crossed. None of them glanced at it, yet it is the monument of this people and its roots are their only roots. It was probably planted by van Riebeeck, the first Dutch Governor of The Cape, somewhere around 1660, and from the slave depot opposite (now the Old Supreme Court building) the slaves were brought to be shown, appraised, pinched and sold beneath its boughs. Slavery was abolished in 1838 but the old tree remained until November 1916, when all save the stump was removed because of age and decrepitude. In November 1917 slavery was reintroduced, not in Africa or America, but in Asiatic Russia, whence it has now spread back to the centre of Christian Europe, and this was the first of the great hoaxes of the twentieth century.

Where this tree-stump stands, the nation of the Cape Coloured People was born ('coloured' in South Africa denotes a person of mixed descent, not a Negro, as in America). Here the slaves from East Africa and Madagascar were sold whose blood then mingled with that of the original Hottentots, now vanished, and of Europeans. Two hundred years ago none heeded if a few lonely white men in mysterious lands afar fathered children by dark wives or women, and those early settlers could not foresee the great future problems which they also beget. Now the Cape Coloured People are a small nation, formed by processes similar to those which other nations, big or little, once passed through but have forgotten. They have no parental country, no history, no traditional religion or language, and no monuments save the Old Slave Tree. They are nearly a million in number, not many fewer than the, Afrikaners or the British South Africans. Most of them live in Cape Province, and most of those in Cape Town.

Thus they are a nation without a country but one with a city which on one day in the year belongs to them. Their skins may enable them to 'pass for a European' or condemn them to be 'mistaken for a Native'. The distinction is important. If one can pass for a European he may rise high. None with a skin so dark as to preclude that simulation has ever reached eminence. They were once 'His Majesty's Coloured Subjects' in fact, and their present status is vague. They have a limited franchise which, if declared intention be realized, is to be withdrawn or curtailed.

Thus they seem forlorn, poised between the white empyrean where they fain would be and the black void into which they fear to fall. However, their mere presence appears to trouble the European's mind almost as much as if they were a mighty host at the gates. Thought and conversation in Cape Town are largely dominated by them, as they are in other South African cities by the Native or the Indian. Like a shuttlecock the great argument passes to and fro between the Oldest Member, who asks angrily. 'How would you like your daughter to marry A Coloured?' and the Cape Liberal, who murmurs between compressed lips of spite: 'Open any European cupboard you like in this town and you'll find a Coloured skeleton in it.'

South Africa produces strongly marked types. The backveld Boer and the Durban British have not varied much in a hundred years. Cape Town has 'the Cape Liberal'. He may be of British or Dutch, Huguenot or German descent. If he has a Dutch name the Afrikaner Nationalists scornfully call him



one of 'the loyal Dutch'. The taunt appears long out of date, because it originally meant 'loyal to England', and the Cape Liberal of today is more likely to look towards Moscow. The cause of the Native, Cape, Coloured and Indian, is publicly espoused most loudly by this group, which is a misfortune both for them and for the many enlightened South Africans, of Boer or British descent, who work both for Anglo-Afrikaner reconciliation and for an improvement in the lot of the dark men.

Distrust of this group, I was often told, was mainly responsible for the defeat of General Smuts in 1948, which surprised the outer world. Many good South Africans felt they could not, for all his great services, vote for a party which was likely soon to pass from his leadership (he approached eighty) to that of his acknowledged 'political heir', Mr. J.H. Hofmeyr. The election was in fact fought on trust or mistrust of Mr. Hofmeyr, and mistrust won. The Afrikaner in Standerton who told me, 'We won't have Hofmeyr. He wants mixed marriages and five pounds a week for the Kaffir', was possibly misled by artful suggestion. Mr. Hofmeyr (who died soon after the election) probably never said that. But the recorded things he did say, many South Africans maintained to me, showed that popular distrust of him was fully justified.

To understand Mr. Hofmeyr, a most typical figure of this period, the story of Liberalism, everywhere, must be considered. Fifty years ago 'Liberalism' was in its heyday. On all hands 'small nations' longed for national freedom, and on all hands men thirsted for individual liberty. 'Liberalism' was the champion of both great causes, which inspired men everywhere. Bulgaria, Greece and Rumania were barely free of the age-old Turkish occupation; Serbia and Bohemia complained of the Austro-Hungarian one; Poland was partitioned between Russia, Germany and Austria; in Russia individual freedom was but beginning; on all sides the chastening of 'expansionist countries' and of 'despotic rulers' alone seemed necessary to bring about the freedom of small nations and of individual men. The much worse tyrannies which would be practised in the name of republicanism and of the common man could not be foreseen. There was a great work of liberation to be done. 'Liberalism' seemed clearly the force to do it.

Today, fifty years later, politicians in all countries, calling themselves Liberals, have promoted the re-enslavement of small nations and the destruction of individual liberty. 'Liberals' were foremost in supporting the extension of the Soviet area, across the borders of many small nations, and the Zionist invasion of Palestine. The thing has been turned into its opposite. The fragmentary Liberal parties of the present are but the stalking-horses of Communist Imperialism, Zionist Imperialism, and behind those, of the servile World State. The shining dream has gone, like the golden glitter from a gilded brick. Only the once-radiant name remains, and the use that may yet be made of it, for ulterior motives, among under-privileged peoples such as the dark-skinned ones of South Africa.

For these reasons many South Africans, when they studied the utterances of Mr. Hofmeyr, felt they could not reconcile them or trust him, or see in him an opposite to Afrikaner Nationalism, whom they could support. He claimed to stand or fall, as a Christian, on the treatment of the Native, and often used the phrase 'honour is better than survival'; however, he glorified the deed when half a million Natives (of Palestine) were driven destitute into the desert. He attacked 'Nationalism' in South Africa but adulated Zionist Nationalism. He wanted 'national sovereignty' abolished everywhere but desired that Zionist national sovereignty should be set up. He even thought the victory of Zionism the most important thing in the world (and therefore more important than anything in his own country), for he told a Zionist audience in Pretoria, 'I say to you, hold fast to that Zionist ideal whatever happens, for it *alone* can save Jewry *and the world*' (my italics).

Like nearly all leading politicians of the last thirty-five years, he appeared to accept the shape of the Master Plan and to drop Christian principles at any point where they conflicted with it. The man

and his mind are of the greatest current interest because his recorded utterances may equally reveal what moved in the minds of Lord Balfour and Mr. Lloyd George, President Wilson and President Roosevelt, and still moves in the minds of living leaders in great countries today. The open contradictions are astounding, though they may be too familiar, among the politicians of this time, to startle anyone.

For instance, he told a Zionist audience: 'In all the annals of the world there is certainly nothing so remarkable in human experience, probably no phenomenon of such historical significance, as the preservation by the Jewish people of its national identity ... Though men might torture the body of Judaism they could not crush its soul. The lamp of national feeling was kept burning ... The Hebrew people is one of the small nations ... and from Palestine there will again flow rivers of living water for the healing and enrichment of the nations.'

These appear to be the words of an ardent upholder of the cause of 'small nations' and of 'national identity'. But Mr. Hofmeyr, as South Africans pointed out to me, in fact seemed to hold that *only* the small Hebrew nation should be 'preserved', for in an article on world affairs he wrote: 'All powers, small as well as great, insist on the maintenance of their sovereign rights. The desire to seek peace and ensure it is strong in the hearts of men but seemingly not strong enough to prevail against their determination as citizens of a particular state to insist on the maintenance of the sovereign rights of that state ... The United Nations Organization must become ... some sort of world government, at the expense of the sovereign rights of individual nations.'

Finally, as South Africans remarked to me, there was the astonishing variation in Mr. Hofmeyr's opinion about the way to treat Natives. Of the Natives of South Africa, he wrote: 'The policy of repression would involve us in the hopeless task of building a permanent European civilization on the basis of a repressed, discontented, hostile, majority Native population.' Yet he held that the repression of the Native of Arabia, by armed intruders from oversea, would 'save the world', and should be pursued by any means and at any cost. The sum of his beliefs, if he was sincere in both opinions, seemed to South Africans who discussed them with me to be that 'the treatment of the Native' was a useful political issue inside South Africa, but that in the greater scheme of things the success of the small group of Political Zionists was more important than anything else, and that they ought to rule over the all-sovereign World Government. If he did not mean that, these South Africans thought, his mind must merely have been full of confusions for which no other adjective offers than 'Liberal'. In either case, they held, he was not a man to trust with the future of South Africa. Listening to them, I recalled that he was, however, a man with powerful political counterparts in England and America.

Mr. Hofmeyr, then, was for better or worse the representative of 'Liberal opinion' in South Africa, the cause of General Smuts's defeat and of the victory of the Afrikaner Nationalists, at a critical moment in the country's story. A sincere and genuine liberalism, South Africans told me, might have had a great future in the land, but they could not understand or believe in 'the Cape Liberals' as embodied in him.

The dilemma represented by Mr. Hofmeyr is, I find, present in all countries today; he was but the South African example of a universal type. South Africans, of either race, who would have liked to vote against Afrikaner Nationalism could not bring themselves to vote for him. He avowedly supported another, alien nationalism. Similarly in England men who would like to vote against a degenerate Socialism and for a patriotic party, find when they examine the Conservative one that it is subservient to Political Zionism, which is an alien cause. Exactly the same phenomenon appears in the United States; Americans who distrust the course of the Democratic Party and Democratic Presidents, if they turn to the Republican Party find it trying to outdo the Democratic one in championship of that alien enterprise. No party, anywhere, yet dares to dissociate itself from this

ambition, so that patriotic national policies are in pawn everywhere and the man who wishes through his vote to serve his own and his country's interests is deprived of the means to do so.

At The Cape itself something in the air seems to breed a gloomy kind of conversation which puzzled me. I thought the famous Cape must be one of the loveliest places in the world, lacking, for better spirits, only that which its white inhabitants apparently do not wish it to have: more white inhabitants. The first sight of it (and every new sight of The Cape is a first one) is of those experiences in life which never disappoint. I have come into The Cape by road, by air and by sea, and felt a greater thrill each time. The picture of Table Mountain, the white man's uttermost southern bastion, rising beneath its cloud-cap above the town and harbour, is unforgettable, a delight that increased, for me, with each renewal.

Yet the tone of talk there today is often similar to that which Trollope heard seventy years ago: 'It is a beastly place, you know' (said one Cape Town gentleman to him), 'a beastly place. But we have plenty to eat and plenty to drink and manage to make out life very well. The girls are as pretty as they are anywhere else and as kind - and the brandy and water as plentiful.' The brandy and water are still plentiful, and the good friends I made said much the same kind of thing; they ate, drank and refrained from being merry. I once dined with three residents of whom the first said the white man would sink into second place in the land and the dark one become uppermost; he had long thought of migrating to Australia. The next added that the only solution to *The Problem* was miscegenation, which was 'an impossible solution'. The third, though he said nothing, seemed to give silent assent to these forebodings, which rang strangely in my ear in so fine a place. Wherever I went I was told by angry patriots that miscegenation would never occur and had never been known, or by pallidly irritable intellectuals that The Cape was rife with it. These last showed a somewhat morbid interest in miscegenation; I was surprised to find the odour of Bloomsbury and Manhattan so strong in a place constantly swept by ocean breezes.

I saw a good deal of the Coloured people during their carnival and later. The luckier ones lived in tiny flats stuffed with bulbous furniture; the heart's longing to attain the levels of 'white civilization' was plain in their case, too. I saw them also in the dens of District Six, where the police go in pairs and only if they must; that is where the *skollies* live, the roughs or hoodlums. I saw them again living almost like wild men among the bush and scrub of the Cape Flats, their *pondokkies* often hidden from view until they were actually reached. A *pondokkie* is a shack built of pinewood, sacking, flattened barrels, tin, or any available scraps of material. A dropped match may set fire to hundreds of these, and once nearly a thousand of these people were made homeless by a fire which swept through the shacks like a tidal wave, a mishap which was of minor account because by next noon new ones were up.

*Skollies* in *pondokkies*: problems within problems, like wheels within wheels, some contracting and some expanding, so that always there is a point of friction somewhere. Yet, as in Durban and Johannesburg, the white men seemed more anxious than the dark ones, for a' that. The mills of God would grind out some solution, if the white man could not. The pageant I saw on New Year's Day could not have been enacted by people so hopeless as the Cape Coloured folk, like the Native and Indian, are depicted to be by the 'Liberal' of the Nineteen-Fifties, with his adjustable humanitarianism, his compassion at home and incompassion abroad. I have seen or heard tell of many pageants: the dance of the Catherinettes in Paris, the Battle of Flowers in Nice, the great processions of Brussels, the Lord Mayor's Show in London, Mardi Gras in New Orleans - all rooted in national history, old custom or deep tradition. Here was one of a people without a past and it was to me the most fascinating of all.

As New Year's Day waned I watched it from a seat on the veranda of the club. At the other end sat the Oldest Member. 'They do understand rhythm,' he said, 'it's a funny thing, I've watched them for years and I've never found out where they go to when they turn that corner.'

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## Chapter Ten

### ... FOR EVER JAVA!

I went to a Malay wedding, and felt that I passed from a noisy market into a quiet garden. The bride in her golden diadem sat among her maidens, raised above the guests who faced each other across laden tables set at right angles to her throne. She wore pink and the bridesmaids blue, but she would change at successive reappearances, perhaps into green and then into silver-grey and finally into white, being taken in a coach with plumed white horses to each of the several houses where guests awaited her. If a Cape Malay bride is poor she may change less often, but, rich or poor, her wedding is a fine affair, not to be forgotten.

A bridegroom (not her bridegroom, whom, she would only rejoin towards evening in her new home) sat on another throne among his groomsmen. These men all wore dinner-jackets and black ties, save he who wore a white tie with a black lining, which by reversal was apparently suitable for less joyful occasions: a thrifty arrangement. He smoked cigarettes and seemed far away, perhaps in spirit with his own bride.

The guests sang wedding songs in rising and falling cadences of half- and quarter-tones. They sang in Afrikaans, which has become the Cape Malay's language, as English is now that of the American Negro. One after another intoned the first bar of a new song and then all joined in. Sometimes the leader was the bridegroom, sometimes a groomsman, sometimes an older man or woman among the guests, and when these veterans struck up I saw the slyly mocking glances of youth pass between the girls, but this was hardly to be noticed because they were all people of great Native decorum, and dignity filled the room.

The songs sounded sad, but may not be so; they may have been full of the beauty of youth and hope and mating and merely pitched on a note unfamiliar, and of mournful ring, to the European ear. If the melancholy of captivity or exile remained in them, this was natural, for they were the songs of a people cast far away from their country, who in the slave-days were not allowed abroad after nine o'clock and spent their evenings making songs, weaving legends and telling tales of home. The name of the Baas ran through them. All weal or woe depended on the Baas, in those days, and his stern figure still moves through these melodies. I heard in them a sound akin to Poor Ole Joe's lament.

Poor Ole Joe, however, would have felt strange in this fine company. There was elegance here, and serenity and beauty. Among the girls on the bridal dais and around were faces perfectly oval with a smooth calmness of brow and eye seldom found in Western physiognomy. Many of the women wore a headdress, usually in some enchanting shade of blue, which seemed to be an adaptation of the veil, a daughter of the yashmak, a thing of gossamer cunningly falling from the temples and caught up beneath the chin.

Of the bridesmaids, one was dark brown with features slightly negroid; another, light-skinned and grey-eyed, could have passed for an English girl; the third, whose almond eyes were set in an oval, olive face, was of pure Malay type; the last, being dark with rather sharp features, might have been a Frenchwoman. As they came down from the dais, to go in state behind the white horses to the next reception, the grey-eyed one, from her untutored dignity and calm, gave me a smile of the most natural friendliness. I would have liked to fall in with the procession and discuss with her whatever matters a Malay girl in Cape Town likes discussing....

In the Cape melée the Cape Malay stands apart. Among the throng which fills The Tavern of the Seas with its great argument, he remains quiet. He is of a lost tribe which is not lost. The Coloured people do not know to which colour, country or creed they belong. The Cape Malay has no clearer or brighter future than theirs, but he has the inner balance which membership of a great and distinct community gives. He is not a hopeless litigant against destiny because he has the comfort of a universal religion: Islam. Accepting the omnipotence of God, he takes pride in his daily service to Caesar. He is diligent and law-abiding. Having a spiritual home, he is not homeless.

There are only 35,000 Cape Malays. They came of two main stocks. First, the Dutch rulers of The Cape, from 1667 to 1767, imported slaves from the Malayan Peninsula and its adjoining islands for the benefit of the burghers. Second, the Dutch rulers of distant Java sent to the Cape Malayan political leaders who resisted their efforts to subdue that country. Thus the highest and the lowest join at the roots of the Cape Malays. Afterwards came many infusions of other blood; Arab, Indian, Ceylonese, Chinese, European, Coloured, Negro and a little Bantu. Yet a fairly pure Malay strain survived dominant, and the centripetal force of Islam, whose followers are called Muslims, has proved stronger than all centrifugal forces.

The welding process began with the great Sheik Joseph, who fought the Dutch East India Company in Java in the Sixteen-Hundreds. He was taken prisoner and imprisoned in the Castle at Batavia, but from his prison still exerted so strong an influence on the Malays that in 1693 the Dutch exiled him to the far-off Cape, where he died in 1699, and where his soul thereafter went marching on. He was a pious prince, a great priest and great warrior, so that the tradition of God, honour and country lived on among the Cape Malays; his power over these uncomplaining people is now as great as it was when he lived. His shrine at Faure, overlooking False Bay, is a place of pilgrimage for them at all seasons, and from it other shrines stretch in a rough circle round the Cape Peninsula. Within it, the Muslims believe that followers of the Prophet will live 'safe from fire, famine, plague, earthquake and tidal wave'. There they have their being and obey the injunction of one of their traditional teachers: 'Be of good heart and serve your masters, for one day your liberty will be restored to you.' Liberty from personal slavery *was* restored to them. Islam gives them a spiritual home in exile.

Their religion affords these people what Christianity once gave lost, outcast or oppressed peoples, and may yet again give them: a bond of union with hundreds of millions of others of diverse races, stations and languages, strewn about the earth. It is the common faith of all these, and it has a common tongue, for Arabic remains the language of the Koran and of the mosque everywhere. 'It overrides the racial, national or social distinctions which must needs exist between a scholar in Egypt and a farmer in Java, a tradesman in Morocco and a journalist in Syria' (*Islam Today*, edited by A.J. Arberry and Rom Landau, Faber & Faber, 1943). Of the uniting force, across frontiers, which Christianity once was, the underground Christian churches of Bulgaria (which were built against a Muslim Sultan) still bear witness. Today, when Zionism has begun a war which may similarly unite and raise the Muslim world, the lesson of those subterranean churches is forceful.

I was once again impressed in Cape Town and Durban by the resemblances between the faith of the Crusaders and of those they fought. The Muslim worships God, though he holds Mohammed for the prophet of God, not for a divine being; he also regards Jesus of Nazareth as a prophet, but not as the Son of God. The Christian feels a respect for the dignity and simplicity of the mosque that he cannot feel among the horrific idolatries of Hindu temples. The mosque is the house of God) not of gods, and that he can understand. A familiar peace is in it, and from it springs the spiritual strength which upholds the Cape Malays.

The shrine of Sheik Joseph is their link with their ancestral homeland, Java, which they will never see. The mosque is their link with the holy city of Islam, Mecca, which they will by all means see

before they die, at any cost in thrift and hardship. Crammed on the decks of chartered vessels, they set out for Jeddah and from there, two to a camel, to Mecca, where the great mosque is lit by thousands of lamps and so crowded with pilgrims that the newcomer must bide his turn for kneeling-room. The vision of a lifetime is fulfilled.

‘It was beautiful, the great city which we all had longed to see: white in the moonlight, the mountains around us, the countless trains bustling about us, all lifted our hearts so that we jumped up and shouted for joy. I cannot tell you what I felt, what we all felt, on looking at the place we had all dreamt about so much from our youth.’

People who have such dreams, and make such journeys, are not homeless, and the penniless Cape Malay, returning a *Hadji*, is a man happier and fortified. For him his mosque in Cape Town and the voice of the muezzin calling from its minaret will ever after be Mecca. He keeps all the fasts of Islam and like Muslims everywhere begins the great one of Ramadan, when his elders, watching from the hills or rooftops, see in the night sky the first tiny silver sickle of the moon, no bigger than a paring from a houri’s little fingernail.

The sojourner in Cape Town, unless good fortune brings him to the right guide, will find the townsfolk uninformative about the Cape Malays and their quarter. Yet these are of the greatest interest. The quarter is a rare, if not a unique place, infinitely picturesque, with its lanes of terraced houses and its retiring mosques. Today overcrowding and slum conditions ‘have succeeded in tarnishing its beauty but not in destroying it’, as the great authority on this subject says (Dr. I.D. Duplessis, whose book, *The Cape Malays*, Maskew Miller, Cape Town, 1944, is an erudite and charming study). The Native is seeping towards Cape Town and its accumulating factories and seeks any corner where he may sleep of nights. Shebeens have sprung up; runners disguising themselves beneath a Muslim’s fez bring low-grade liquor in; the dagga-smoker sometimes runs amok. The Municipal Council has declared the Malay Quarter a slum area, and unless other counsel intervenes the place where the Cape Malays were happy in their fashion and preserved their customs and traditions may be swept away....

I was sorry to leave the feast. The bride was gone and the bridegroom who was not hers followed, because his own bride was due. I wondered whether he already had a wife or wives, and whether there were so fine a pageant for each new one. The Muslim may have four wives. However, the law of his religion is that he must treat them all alike, so that if he is tempted to buy the new one a pair of nylons he may be deterred by the thought that the others are entitled to share. If the Cape Malay seldom has more than two wives nowadays, this may be the reason.

I admired the dignity with which these people suffered the presence of an inquisitive stranger. They still sang as I came away. Later I heard a Malay choir sing the most famous of their many folk songs, which has nothing to do with home and Java and on the face of things is a surprising one to hear from people once enslaved. It is ‘Daar Kom die Alabama’, or ‘There Comes the Alabama’. Apparently the Cape Malays rejoiced equally with the other populace of Cape Town on that July day in 1863 when the famous raider appeared off Cape Town. Their hearts, apparently, did not beat for the slave-freeing Yankees, but for the slave-owning Southerners. In the light of this century’s events their instinct may have been sound; anyway, the American Negro has remained in the South.

But I felt they were not singing about the ‘Alabama’. The emphasis was on the words, ‘far across the sea’. They must mean very much, in any context, to folk who came, as exiled leaders or captive slaves, from so far across the sea.

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## Chapter Eleven

### PARLIAMENT AT THE CAPE

I wandered along Parlement Straat - Parliament Street - and watched the end of the Greater Trek. At intervals motor lorries stood against the kerb and muscular natives passed heavy boxes and cases across the pavement, through doorways and up stairs. The Ministers and Envoys were returned by special train from the one capital, Pretoria, to the other, Cape Town, for the session of the Union Parliament. With a blare of brass the Governor-General's procession, in rehearsal, approached; a fine troop of mounted men in pith helmets, holding carbines before them, some infantrymen in lightweight battledress, some sailors. The South African, of Dutch or British descent, is a soldier born, astride, afoot, afloat and aloft, and rejoices the eye which has beheld parades in many lands. I watched with memories of Delville Wood and of South African comrades in the trenches and in the air. Nowadays the memory of Dingaan's Day in 1838 is kept green each year but that of Delville Wood in 1916 has been nearly buried in oblivion.

A few days later I watched, as a guest, the ceremonial opening of this young but historic parliament. A strong tree grows when the buds of separate ambitions are grafted on a common trunk, tradition. Here was the tradition of the Mother of Parliaments, adapted to South Africa's needs. Mr. Speaker, in his great wig and robes of black and gold, faced Mr. President of the Senate, who might have been the Lord Chancellor. The Ministers and Members of Parliament were on the left of Mr. Speaker and the Senators on the right of Mr. President. The Royal Salute sounded outside and Black Rod came in; he bore a Huguenot name. His Excellency, in plumed hat, was an Afrikaner, and the officers of the three Services, behind him, had Afrikaner or British names, perhaps in the proportion of three to two. The Governor-General passed between ladies who performed a movement like the breaking of a roller on a smooth shore, and ascended to the Throne. In his person the King was present, who in person occupied that Throne and opened Parliament the year before. Perhaps that was the last time South Africa was generally happy, until it finds kindness and a common cause again. The King's visit briefly supplied that uniting force which South Africans long for. It joined masses of people who are otherwise kept divided by a political harping on old resentments. Whether a Nationalist Afrikaner republic could provide a similarly uniting force is something which remains to be tested.

Once Royalties or British generals represented the King in this parliament. Now an Afrikaner performed the office with the same dignity. This was tradition in the making, and admirable. Once the Admiral (from the Royal Navy's Simonstown, round the corner) stood at the Governor-General's right hand. He was the symbol of the sure shield, as the Governor-General was that of the uniting force. Now the Admiral was relegated to a place behind South American chargés d'affaires. That seemed pointedly ungracious, but tradition, wisely guided, may outgrow such things.

I watched this impressive scene with thoughts of many other parliaments in my mind. There was General Smuts, painted by Rembrandt into the canvas, gazing inscrutably towards the Throne. At his side sat his political heir-elect, Mr. Hofmeyr, a much younger man who nevertheless was soon to die, though not before an election was lost and won over him. General Smuts I studied with deep curiosity. No other life, in this tumultuous half-century, can compare with his for shape and colour save that of the man he fought against fifty years ago, Mr. Churchill.

This man, I thought as I looked at his fine head, has watched the great chaos for fifty years. He was perhaps one of the only surviving two, in public life, who could explain all its mysteries. Did he himself understand them, and did Mr. Churchill? Both were enigmas to me. I could not understand their support of an ambition which, I believed, might make the second half-century more chaotic



than the first: Political Zionism. Apart from that, both their life-lines were clear, straight and comprehensible. Both spoke the language of Christians and patriots; both upheld lonely and unpopular causes when they thought right. Yet the lifeline of each contained this one inexplicable loop. I wondered if both had been caught up by something, the consequences of which were unforeseeable when it began, but are now becoming plain. 1917 was the year of this century's calamity, not 1914 or 1939, 1918 or 1945.

It was a rare privilege, later, to meet such a man, and I wish I could have obtained from him the key to this central riddle of the twentieth century, but short acquaintance was not enough for such deep-reaching discussions. I found that his mind dwelt on the heights of a lofty and philosophic detachment, from which, I thought, he looked down on the world with a growing conviction that God alone now could, and would, restore order. 'It all began with the South African war', he said, in allusion to the great confusion of today. I mentally agreed, thinking of the rise of the money-power between Johannesburg and New York, but probably he did not intend such a meaning.

He said on another occasion (not to me): 'I am sure there is some hidden pressure behind all the worries of Europe, America and Russia. It is a pressure that may bring a lot of good in the end. Do not think only of wars, of the wars we have just got through and the possibility of another great war. Hitler was an experiment to unite the nations. But it was an experiment of slavery and the Devil, and it failed. The goings-on behind the Iron Curtain are another experiment and this will fail too.' Yet these epithets seemed to me to apply equally to Political Zionism, of which he continued a foremost supporter, which his heir, Mr. Hofmeyr, called 'an ideal' to which the Zionists should 'hold fast'. As to that, again, General Smuts once gently rebuked the Nationalist celebrations of Dingaan's Day in these words: 'In my old age, and as leader of my people, in these dark days when far greater and more inhuman tyrannies' (than those of a Zulu chieftain) 'threaten the human spirit, hold hard to the jewel Christianity.' The astonishing perplexity remains: what place has the jewel Christianity in the diadem of Political Zionism? To that question no answer ever comes but the one that echo gives, yet I think it might lie at the root of 'all the worries of Europe, America and Russia'. However, it may 'bring a lot of good in the end', since truth must out.

To me the devotion of these two famous men, General Smuts and Mr. Churchill, to the Zionist ambition is the most fascinating conundrum of these fifty years. All the other politicians of international status who sponsored it died before they could see its first-fruits, but these two have witnessed whither it is leading. Each has so vast an experience, so sweeping a vision of the world and the age, that continuance in its support, in the lurid light of the present, becomes a major mystery.

My eye travelled on from General Smuts and his followers to Dr. Malan and his, who were on the eve of victory, and then to the ladies who sat facing the Throne. They were beautiful and well gowned, and many wore large hats with ostrich feathers. I surmised that they had not troubled their dressmakers again that year but were delighting the onlooker with the exceptional array on which they had spent many dreams the year before, when the Queen was there. Then the Governor-General began to read the Speech from the Throne, first in Afrikaans and next in English, for in this Parliament, like that of Ottawa, two languages are spoken. It is another example of the infinite adaptability of a good parliamentary model to diverse circumstances.

I suppose Trollope referred to Afrikaans, in its beginnings, when he wrote of 'coloured persons in Cape Town who among themselves speak a language which, I am told, the Dutch in Holland will hardly condescend to recognize as their own'. Its future was destined to be much brighter than his informants foresaw. Many Afrikaners today who were brought up to speak Dutch have had to learn Afrikaans. It is a vigorous and thriving language with many newspapers and a growing literature. To my ear it is well suited to poetic metres and the drama and has much of the resonance of

German. It has established itself and now claims the respect of all, without the condescension of any. If it can hardly become a universal language, that is because the Afrikaner's numbers are few.

Yet the political controversy about Afrikaans, like the whole dispute between Boer and Briton, seemed to many of my South African friends an artificial thing, artificially kept alive. The longest-lived of the Nationalist Afrikaner's grievances is that 'all Afrikaners speak English but the British won't learn Afrikaans'. The matter is not so simple. The chief virtue of this grievance may be, once more, that it is a grievance, the removal of which would offend the Nationalist Afrikaner very much. He usually breaks into English if a conversation is begun in Afrikaans and is apt to make wounding fun of the English-speaking struggler who strives to speak the tongue he claims to long to hear. The possession of a separate language (he has to speak English for reasons of trade and commerce) is in its way an effective political weapon. Speaking English, he knows the mind of the English-speaking community. Inside his own he uses Afrikaans, and his mind remains largely closed against the English-speakers. This is a chief reason for the gulf between Afrikaans-speaking and English-speaking South Africans, but it is one which the Nationalist Afrikaner would not willingly see closed. However, his generation can only have its day.

His Excellency the Governor-General, Mr. Brand van Zyl, ended the Speech from the Throne and, preceded by Black Rod, returned between the curtsying ladies to the street beyond. I heard the music of the two national anthems; first 'Die Stem van Suid Afrika', and then 'God Save the King'. The whole ceremonial was full of dignity, tradition and common achievement. I hoped it might be part of a process of continued unity, not one of disunity and deterioration.

I joined an amiable host for lunch beneath a portrait of Cecil Rhodes. The Members all around were hearty, and their ladies gay. My hostess wore a big muslin hat, which I admired, saying it was not only becoming but must give its wearer an especial thrill by the thought of the agonies of envy and spoiled vision it would inflict on the one behind, who on such an occasion could not say, 'Would you mind taking off your hat!'

She smiled. 'I wasn't there, she said, 'but you seem to understand something of women's minds.'

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## Chapter Twelve

### NOCTURNE

The moon was white and high and its twin lay like a pearl in the oyster of Table Bay. The distant lights of Cape Town clustered in gleaming carnival round the dark mountain and sent little expeditions to climb its side in bright foray. On the hillside around were vineyards and the scent of flowers. I stood on a cool and colonnaded veranda among gathering guests. Behind us was a graceful room where shaded lights softly multiplied themselves in silver and cut-glass and wine, and good pictures hung above the mellow furniture of fine craftsmen.

My spirit rose to the beauty of the moment, while I privately repined over its one imperfection, the flaw in the diamond. 'On such a night as this ...'; it was a night for two to share and I was the only lonely guest. It was a night of stars, if not, for me, of love. The moon travelled slowly to meet its twin at the end of a silver pathway across the water, and perfume lay on the caressing breeze. It was a night for gladness, I thought, as we went to dine; one when wit should share with the golden wine the freedom of the table. Outside the door, like pretty serving-maids, the topics waited only to be called: beauty, music, tales of strange lands, the play and many more.

It was not to be. I think most travellers in South Africa find that the old resentments and the present problems dominate all talk to a degree that at first surprises them. This gives a sober, or even sombre note to social and sociable occasions which is hardly to be matched elsewhere. From Slagtersnek to the Peace of Vereeniging, from the Native to the Indian, from the Jameson Raid to the Coloured vote and back again the debate travels, and seldom deviates. I wondered if this grave state of mind derived from the climate and the dourness of the first Dutch settlers. That may be so; Mr. Ralph Kilpin, in his *Romance of a Colonial Parliament*, Longmans Green, 1930, relates that the members of the old Cape Council of Policy in the late eighteenth century had many an angry brawl, culminating in one when the Governor himself drew his rapier against a troublesome Councillor. Sometimes I wondered if men, or at any rate white men, were changing. Would the people of The Cape today, who often seem to find it a place of dour foreboding, devise for it, if it needed a name, that of the Cape of Good Hope?

Instead of the pretty serving-maids, the dark-visaged problems entered with the soup. I heard the tale of the Boer Spy. 'When I was a boy,' my neighbour said, 'my mother entertained an English officer in the dining-room while my father gave food to a Boer spy in the kitchen. You would need to spend a lifetime here to understand these things.'

I often inferred that my intelligence, even during a lifetime, would not suffice for their understanding, but on this lovely night my spirit rebelled a little against the problems and I tried, possibly with discourteous obstinacy, to strike a lighter note among the tolling of mournful bells. I suffered utter defeat. Thus, another guest reproached me with the British Government's critical attitude towards South Africa's treatment of the Natives. I thought the British Government a bad one in most things, but had never before heard that it took any attitude, condemnatory or other, in this matter. However, I said that if it were so, I fully agreed: the British Government treated the natives of England so ill that it should mend its own glasshouse before throwing stones. After deep thought the other man said he did not understand this; he was under the impression that there were hardly any Negroes in England.

Of all sad words the saddest are those which contain a jest unrecognized by its hearers. However, I unwisely rushed in again. The talk turned to the long, enforced separation of the South African Native from his wife or wives when he is recruited for the mines. I said mildly that, as a native

Englishman far from his kraal, I held this for a great hardship. Another guest rejoined gravely that at such short acquaintance I could hardly understand enough of these matters to form an opinion.

I tried again, in higher hope, when the debate, between two male guests, left the problems and turned to rams. One told the other of a man who had bought some rams in Australia and lost money on the transaction. His hearer remarked: 'Well, if I were buying rams I should get an opinion from a good authority first.' I said: 'But surely ewes are the only real authority about rams, and ewes won't tell.' My hostess seemed amused, but the earlier speaker, having given the matter consideration, said: 'I don't see what ewes have to do with it.'

So I fell to smiling amiably at all and communing with myself. There is a certain hostility to fun in South Africa. I do not criticize that, because I do not know if fun is A Good Thing: I just like it. This seriousness is not confined to people of the one race or the other. Trollope encountered it: 'I liked Pietermaritzburg very much ... but whenever I would express such an opinion to a Pietermaritzburger he would never agree with me. It is difficult to get a Colonist to assent to any opinion as to his own Colony. If you find fault, he is injured and almost insulted. The traveller soon finds he had better abstain from all spoken criticism, even when that often repeated, that dreadful question is put to him, which I was called upon to answer four or five times a day, "Well, Mr. Trollope, what do you think of ... South Africa?" Even praise is not accepted without contradiction.

I never felt any difficulty in answering the dreadful question, because I loved South Africa, but it remains true that praise and dispraise are equally likely to arouse objection. Nor is silence accepted without contradiction. My experience often was that the nod or encouraging smile alike drew a glance of suspicion and the remark, 'You are probably thinking that we ...' The views thus foisted on me were then demolished with stern reproach, for the speaker could not be deterred from thinking he or she knew what I thought. Once I lay in hospital, injured. A pretty nurse entertained me, during her visits, with complaints about The Immigrants. I mentioned casually that I was not an immigrant. She paused in affront, thought and said, 'Why not? Don't you like this country?' Had I said yes she might have been hurt, so I went to sleep.

South Africa is, in white population, a small country, but the great argument, about it and about, is the greatest I have heard in any land. It has not yet led, though, to a great increase in the white population or to that substantial betterment of the lot of the dark one which could be achieved only through such increase. I listened to it, on this and many other nights, without intruding myself into it, because I was a visitor, and never tried again to lead it towards a lighter vein, for that is plainly not in the hearts of the debaters.

The ladies went out, the talk went on, we joined the ladies and presently we went. I drove slowly through the fragrant night towards Cape Town, thinking of matters far outside the great argument: of my own folk. The road wound through woods and crossed the shoulder of a hill and I saw below me ships' lights in the bay.

I stopped to look at those lights. At the other end of the road which the ships had travelled lay home. I wondered what they were all doing. The children would be asleep in bed, their mother might be reading my letters or writing hers. If wishes were ships, I thought! Why could she not be with me at this moment and place; both were made for the likes of us. Not for many years had we begun a new year apart. I thought of the first New Year's Eve we spent together, and in the dark waters of Table Bay saw the fires of burning London; we watched them from the same window, that night.

The moon and its twin met and went away together. The night was left full of brighter stars. I drove down into a sleeping city, and soon its roofs rose between me and the ships' lights in the bay.

## Chapter Thirteen

### JUST NUISANCE!

For many years the pigeonhole of my ambitions contained an ardent wish to follow the Marine Drive southward from Cape Town along the Cape Peninsula to the fabulous Cape itself. Now, one blithe morning, I set out, put Llandudno on my right, turned across the Peninsula, ignored a signpost that invited me to Clovelly, and found myself in Devon.

Whatever the maps may say, Simonstown lies in that county. Here were the tang of Portsmouth and the air of Plymouth Hoe; intangible captains and seamen thronged the quiet dockyard streets; shadowy armadas of sail and steam, wood and steel, filled the bay. There was an exquisite little basin where once heart-of-oak lay in blue water and Nelson's buckled shoes helped hollow the worn white steps; I feel sure of that, for his spirit is in the air there. If his shade were to ascend those steps today it might pause to cast its one curious eye on the now-deserted Wrennery of 1940-45 and the little stockade which the propriety of My Lords placed between it and the merry sailormen. From tarred pigtail and straw hat to a jaunty cap set on bright curls! 'Emma would have looked fine in a blue tricorne with a gold badge', Nelson's shade might reflect.

In the Residency the Admiral, Commander-in-Chief, South Atlantic, yet lives among the engraved portraits of his eighty predecessors. It is a fine old Dutch house, adapted, among lovely gardens which face the magnificent bay, and has a cool grace given to it by generations of Admirals' ladies. Once, in a company far from this place, I asked: 'Why do admirals always have such exceptionally charming wives?' and was told: 'That is why they are made admirals.' If it is so, My Lords of the Admiralty must be wise men in more than seamanship. Even admirals' wives, however, need to be watched, I learned at Simonstown. In a corner of the Residency, like a large rocket, hangs the King's Colour, furled and enclosed in a brass-capped cover. This flag represents the person of the King, and through him the body and spirit of the nation, or family of nations, and may only be moved with the ceremonial befitting such an emblem, and a King's Guard. One startled Admiral, newly arrived at Simonstown, found his lady discussing with her head servant plans for sending the King's Colour to be dry-cleaned!

There was a sad void in Simonstown, as there must be in any naval base after a war. The great armadas, the captains and the seamen were departed, and only a few care-and-maintenance men remained in the dockyard. From the windows of the little Council Chamber, which said to me 'Here is the West Country', the mayor and aldermen, in their becrested chairs, looked out on a gleaming but almost empty bay. Only a cruiser and two sloops were in port. I went aboard one of the sloops, under friendly guidance, for a glass of beer. The spirit was the same as ever; the Navy, if reduced, was ready. I liked the way the senior lieutenant, approached with some query by a younger officer, said with easy strength: 'Use your common or garden loaf vulgaris.'

The Royal Naval Club, too, was at this moment a place of shadows and memories more than of living people. Kipling loved it and spoke of it in his tales. Here he sat with Cecil Rhodes and dreamed of the future. I do not like to walk on dreams and hoped I trod in the footsteps of living history still. After the most elevating cocktail I ever drank (it was jet-propulsion in a wineglass and I have its secret) and the most agreeable luncheon, I went to visit the grave of a dog.

That place, whatever might come about in the world, will remain for ever England. It was in a deserted camp on a mountain-top, overlooking the bay. Twice in this century the camp was filled with British seamen. The vibrations were still in it, for me, as it lay forlorn beneath the blazing sun. I heard the whisper of voices from Devon and Somerset and Lancashire and Scotland in the breeze,

and saw the sailors cocking their caps, chucking their chests, pulling their blouses down, as they set out along the steep road for a glass of beer in Simonstown or Cape Town.

Dogs ever loved the stir of a camp. Just Nuisance, a Great Dane, attached himself to this one during the war and became famous in all the seas. He travelled each day to Cape Town with those holiday-making sailormen, rejoined them in the last train back, went to sleep, and as it approached Simonstown ran through the carriages barking to waken other sleepers, whom he shepherded uphill to the camp. He died two months before the invasion of Normandy and, wrapped in a Union Jack, was buried with full honours of firing-party and Last Post on the mountain-top. My good friend of this day, who commanded the camp at that time, said he 'nearly blew up' as he made the funeral speech. Behind him the sailors, instead of sucking sarcastic teeth, shed salt tears. Above the grave a memorial finer than any seaman would aspire to now stands. It says: 'Great Dane, Just Nuisance, Able Seaman R.N., H.M.S. *Afrikander*, 1940-1944, died 1 April 1944, age 7 years.'

I lately read the comment of an American returned from Europe: 'The world was a better place when it was run by the British Navy.' He might be right; nothing yet offers to fill the place which its passing would leave. Simonstown is one of the pillars of its strength, a British naval base within the sovereign Union of South Africa for as long as the Admiralty needs it; that was a condition of the compact. In both wars it played a vital part and in each was an offence to the Afrikaner Nationalists. The very thought of its loss alarmed those who see a future for South Africa only within the larger family. That the Nationalists should desire to deny the Navy Simonstown seemed an intolerable breach of faith, and even General Hertzog would not face that reproach.

But the beauty of the Commonwealth method may be that insoluble disagreements, treated with sweet reasonableness, often dissolve. Twenty years ago the question of Simonstown was explosive enough to blow up Union. In 1948 the Admiral publicly suggested that 'South Africa should accept greater responsibility in naval defence', with the ultimate aim of taking over Simonstown. The recommendation must have been approved by the British Government and hardly raised comment in either country. Its meaning apparently was that South Africa might assume greater part in the common defence, and in that sense might take over Simonstown. The Afrikaner Nationalist newspapers replied, in the traditional tone, that South Africa ought certainly to take over Simonstown merely for its own satisfaction, not for any greater purpose.

Whatever the future of Simonstown, or of union in South Africa, the British association freely gave South Africa a basis of self-defence, in all three elements, which it could have obtained in no other way. During the second war, when Durban was of great strategic importance, the British Government (or its taxpayers) built a naval base on Salisbury Island in Durban Bay; at the end this was handed over gratis to the South African Government and now serves the small but excellent South African Naval Force. The South African Air Force was born with the British gift of a hundred machines in 1921, and continued with the construction of airfields and training-schools during the second war. The South African Army (Union Defence Force) was supplied with British arms and equipment. The Nationalist Afrikaner Minister of Defence in 1948 announced that it would be reorganized 'so that it would become independent of co-operation from sources outside the Union' and 'modernized in such a way that it does not dishonour the sovereign independence of the Union'. In that spirit, apparently, the British military model and nomenclature were done away with and the Boer Commandos revived, with their ranks from Field Cornet to Commandant; in the opposite spirit, perhaps, the British Army in 1940 adopted the old Boer name, 'Commando'. The Minister also decided to rearm the Boer rifle associations, with weapons which (Senator Heaton Nicholls pointed out) were British-donated ones.

All in all, the story of South Africa's armed forces has been that of the strength which unity gives and which is dissipated when

Two households, both alike in dignity,  
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny.

Or so I thought, as I looked down on Simonstown.

This was one of the best of many memorable days I spent in South Africa, where something new and different begins and ends each day's journey. I came back to Cape Town thinking fondly of Just Nuisance and the sailormen, and proud of the British share in making this land.

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## Chapter Fourteen

### BRAND FROM THE BURNING?

Oddly, on the road between Simonstown and Cape Town my thoughts were suddenly transplanted from South Africa to Europe, to the great events I saw in the bud and the red blossom. For a little while the African scene faded and I saw again the greater one and its central figures: Berlin, Hitler, the war and its mysterious results. This happened in a curious way. My writer's road took me to a lady who lived in a lonely part of the Cape Peninsula. Her home was made of two *rondavels* (the circular one-roomed huts with a conical, thatched roof which the white man has adapted from the Native kraal) joined together by a small kitchen and bathroom. It was as cosy and comfortable as that which the urban agents would call a modern two-roomed flatlet with every convenience, but was set, far from neighbours, in woodland that was nearly wilderness. In wartime she even had to keep the blackout, so that it was a very solitary abode then, ideally suited to the telling of mysterious tales and the curdling of blood.

There, in 1942, she told me, she read aloud to her family a play of mine, 'Downfall'. It was written round my belief that when the climax of the second war came Hitler, That Wicked Man, would not be killed, but be spirited away. She said that, through reading it aloud in that remote and darkened place, she felt herself projected into the centre of the world's great hubbub and into the scenes, and the minds of the men, at its core. It was, she said, an eerie experience and remained so vividly with her that something of the eeriness returned with my appearance in her house.

When I saw her a book of mine, *From Smoke to Smother*, was in the press in which I said that the evidence, to me, suggested that in the actual event Hitler did not die but was helped to disappear. It was published in June 1948. A little after that a matter came to light which, I think, supports my anticipation of 1942 and my opinion of 1948. I feel pretty sure today that Hitler, whether he is now dead or alive (and I do not attach great future importance to his own survival, only to the lesson for the future) did not die in his encircled Chancellery in Berlin. I should be happy if I could live to see proof or disproof of this, for it is a large root in the couch-grass of truth, which has many roots and no one beginning or end. To me one of the most astonishing things of this incredible century is the way the masses of mankind, having been told for years that Hitler was The Guilty Man above all others, and that with his death good would return to earth, placidly accepted dubious evidence of his end and at once forgot him. The implication of that is that the power of suggestive information, or 'propaganda', over the mass mind is almost boundless, and that again is something more important in the future than the question whether Hitler is *now* alive or not.

I must for clarity recapitulate this fascinating story as far as it now goes. Early in his twelve years of might I began to suspect that Hitler was not what he professed to be: merely an arch anti-Communist and anti-Jew. His actions, I thought, would clearly help Communism and Political Zionism (and the outcome of the second war proved this). I was at first puzzled that he did not see so plain a consequence. Later I thought he *did* perceive it and was the accomplice of these two powerful forces. Twenty years ago the theory might have been beyond credence. Today, in this century of masks and secret allegiances, it is reasonable. The man of one sworn loyalty, and a different, hidden one, is now a familiar figure in all countries; he has appeared in the trials of Dr. Alan Nunn May and Dr. Fuchs in England, of an M.P., officers and officials in Canada, and of certain persons in America. I thought Hitler a man of this type, but risen to the highest place instead of just to a high one. It seemed to me that, for great successes, which they could not otherwise achieve, Soviet Communism and Political Zionism needed an apparent antithesis, as a heavyweight champion needs a sparring partner. I believed Hitler played this part, and think the results of the last war uphold this reading of his part in our affairs.



For one thing, his appearance was as mysterious as his disappearance. Although the British and Americans, when they reached Berlin and Vienna, were able to put their hands on a mass of documents one would have expected to be destroyed, the Viennese police dossier of Hitler's formative years before 1914 has never been published. Chancellor Dollfuss is supposed to have been killed, in 1934, because he knew of it. His successor, Chancellor Schuschnigg, may also know of it; he was present at the Nuremberg Trial but was not put in the witness-box, although the invasion of Austria and his own treatment were matters in the indictment. At every turn a blank wall opposes those who try to find out what manner of man Hitler was, what he did and with whom he consorted in those significant years. Who enabled him, then, an obscure nobody apparently without a past, to spring into the central limelight of affairs in 1919, like the demon king in pantomime? I never learned an answer to these questions, but by 1938 I thought the Rabbi of Prague (see *Disgrace Abounding*, 1939) might be proved correct, who said, 'Hitler is the Jewish Messiah.' Not all rabbis agree that Political Zionism is Messianic, but this one thought so and by that standard could today claim to be right.

Therefore I conjectured that this man-from-nowhere might in truth be the accomplice of Communism and Political Zionism, two forces which have always supported each other. His 'Fascism' thus seemed to me to be merely the third prong of one trident, with which the cauldron of our century is kept stirred. This theory, I calculated, would be proved or disproved at one definite, foreseeable moment. If Hitler were genuinely what he claimed to be, he would die when the ring closed on him. If he were *not*, his escape would be contrived by other conspirators.

The testing moment came. Hamburg Radio announced on May 1st, 1945, that Hitler committed suicide in his dugout on April 30th. That was the kind of announcement which my theory foresaw. But was it true? In 1947 the available evidence was assembled in Major Trevor Roper's book, the title of which, *The Last Days of Hitler*, contained the summing-up. In *From Smoke to Smother* I said that this evidence seemed to me *not* to establish the death. I thought a case for a preconcerted escape could equally be built on it. The significant points in the whole matter, I held, were these:

Apparently by prearrangement between President Roosevelt and Stalin at Yalta, the Allied advance on Berlin was so ordered that Soviet troops should take the city. One might surmise that the matter was presented to the dying President as an unimportant one of 'prestige'. In Hitler's dugout, as the ring closed, was a General Hans Krebs who 'had served in Moscow for a long time before the war' and who (Major Trevor Roper's book revealed) was sent out on the night of Hitler's alleged suicide to parley with the oncoming Soviet commanders. He has not been seen again, and appears to me likely to have had a hand in any contrived escape, if there was one. The bodies of Hitler and Goebbels were not found, and no trustworthy witness verifiably saw Hitler dead. Hitler and Goebbels, the two chief leaders, were not included among the accused at Nuremberg. If their death was held proven, why was not also that of Martin Bormann, Hitler's Deputy, who was tried in *absentia*? The evidence of his death or disappearance seemed not much more or less convincing than that of theirs.

Thus my reading of what was known was that Hitler, Goebbels, Krebs and perhaps Bormann were enabled to escape by confederates, possibly among the approaching Soviet forces. If that were so my theory about Hitler's real allegiance and motives was established, at least to my satisfaction. To this point I carried my argument in *From Smoke to Smother*.

Then came the sequel. After the publication of that book I read one published in America, namely, the private papers of Mr. Harry Hopkins (*Roosevelt and Hopkins*, by Robert E. Sherwood, Harper, 1948). Mr. Hopkins was one of the somewhat mysterious advisers of President Roosevelt. President Roosevelt died twelve days after Hitler's alleged suicide. Mr. Hopkins died nine months later. After President Roosevelt's death he was persuaded by the new president, Mr. Truman, to undertake a

last mission to Moscow. His reports to President Truman of his conversations with Stalin, whom he met in Moscow about a month after Hitler's supposed death, are contained in this book. He records that Stalin told him:

*(1) In his opinion Hitler was not dead but hiding somewhere; (2) He even doubted if Goebbels were dead; (3) The various tales of funerals and burials struck him as being very dubious; (4) He thought Hitler, Goebbels, Bormann and probably Krebs had escaped and were in hiding; (5) He was 'sure Hitler was alive'.*

Stalin was the man-in-possession and had first call on all authentic evidence. His statements may be compared with my deductions in *From Smoke to Smother*; they are almost identical. To the best of my knowledge they were not made public until they appeared in Mr. Hopkins's papers, years later.

The impressive fact emerges, for the unhappy future historian to ponder and wonder over, that the masses of mankind were led to believe that The Guilty Man was beyond doubt dead and that the Nuremberg Trial was staged in that tacit assumption, while the man best placed to know thought him alive. The American President knew of Stalin's opinions, and presumably communicated them to the British and other parties concerned. The four governments which joined in the Nuremberg Trial agreed in striking Hitler's name (and Goebbels's) from the indictment, although all must have known of Stalin's disbelief. Every word that Stalin utters is today what the Americans call 'headline news'; in this little matter his view was not worth considering or publishing.

His open expression of scepticism suggests that he was not privy to any preconcerted arrangement, if there was one. That does not explode the theory, any more than it explains why the Soviet dictator did not publish his own doubts. If Hitler escaped I should think he had helpers in places where the public at large would least expect to find them. I think there may have been a superior coterie of conspirators which joined hands across all the 'fronts' of the war, and that its results point to this. At all events, these particles of truth come through the sieve: that Stalin was one of the three most powerful men in the world at that time, that he did not believe in Hitler's death, did believe him living, and nevertheless joined with all others concerned in staging a show trial at which the chief accused was not even charged because he was assumed dead, while lesser tools and dupes were hanged wholesale.

If I could have three wishes granted, the first would be to know Mr. Churchill's opinion in this matter. He was the most vehement accuser of 'the wicked man' who, in the event, was not even accused. Mr. Churchill, by strange chance, had earlier experience of a wanted man who mysteriously vanished from a citadel, burning and apparently surrounded on all sides, and therefore has an especial qualification to judge the possibilities of such an escape. Many years ago he supervised the siege, by armed police and soldiers, of a building in Sidney Street, in the East End of London, where a gang of anarchists, of the Communist or Stern Gang type, was trapped. The chief of them was one Peter the Painter, a man similar in his type and obscure origins to Hitler and Tito.

When the house was burned down the bodies of his accomplices were found in the ashes. Peter the Painter's was never found. Somehow, he was spirited away....

*Since writing this chapter I have received reports, openly published in the German newspapers of the British zone, that Martin Bormann, Hitler's Deputy, is alive, in the Soviet zone, and in Soviet employ.*

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## Chapter Fifteen

### THE FICTION OF FOOD FACTS

On an eerie African night, shrill with insects, I drove through what seemed to be jungle to a rough clearing in which I discerned the dim shape of a house. As I got out I stumbled against a motor car, and then another, and by peering found that half a dozen stood around, beneath great trees. Only one light burned in the house.

‘Is it a big household,’ I asked, ‘or is there a party?’

‘Oh no,’ said my companion, ‘these are all Hendrik’s. He just leaves his old cars here as he uses them up and buys new ones.’

I liked the notion of leaving old cars to die in their tracks; there was a lordliness about it, and in South Africa, outside the suburbs of the cities, the tidy-front-lawn tradition is not needed. It may not even be possible, for lawns are hard to grow. True, the bowls enthusiasts, who are numerous, succeed in producing them, but golf-course grass is a major problem in South Africa. However, what is misery to the green-keeper may be joy to the player; the first hole at the Royal Johannesburg course, which is five hundred and ten yards long, was done in one during drought!

These motor cars were a sign of two difficult problems which, men told me, harassed the South African farmer at that time. The first was whether to buy, or not to buy, a new supercharged Mammalac. The second was where to find an accountant who could keep the revenue wolf from the farmer’s door. He was having wealth thrust upon him. He was the victim of circumstances which at this moment enriched and later might impoverish him.

When you travel about the world you see the reverse, or fictional, side of what are advertised in England as Food Facts. The politicians there have discovered the luscious word ‘shortage’ and the delight of proclaiming it a permanent thing. This enables the ‘emergency’ of war, with all its delightful powers over people, to be made a perpetual emergency of peace; it allows new ministries to be set up and staffed, taxes to be maintained at the highest level, ‘rations’ to be issued as to a prison population, informers to be engaged, and the citizen reduced in hope and spirit by thin diet and the constant threat of worse. Since the condition of Permanent Shortage was foolishly not provided for at the creation, never before existed, and would never be produced by act of God, the illusion of it needs to be created by the hand of man, and this is done by placing artificial barriers between the growers and eaters of food. The arrangement is called Food Control, by which governments drunk with sight of power forbid growers freely to grow and sell, merchants freely to seek and buy. The name reveals the purpose. If Food Control were meant to increase and cheapen supplies it would be called Food Promotion. A Food Promoter (or Housing Promoter, Fuel Promoter and Letting Promoter) who did not supply food (or houses, firing or rooms) would soon be out of his post. A ‘Controller’ will clearly never need to fear for his because his job is to perpetuate a want; the greater and longer the ‘shortage’, the more secure his tenure.

By some natural law of compensation, however, the creation of an artificial deficiency creates a surplus somewhere else; it is like squeezing a tyre. By producing a deficit of supplies in the public mart, an excess is caused in the clandestine one round the corner. By repressing the energies of honest traders those of illicit ones are expanded, and any section of the population which, by tradition or training, is especially skilful in eluding such restraints is enriched.

Hendrik, my host of this amusing evening, was by the chance of the moment among the honest men enriched by this process. He was an enlightened Afrikaner, who knew a great deal of the outer world which he had never seen, and dimly perceived the design, of universal enslavement, behind the smoke screen of 'shortage'. He was a big fruit farmer.

'In former days,' he said, smiling in his beard, 'we used to grade and market our own fruit, find our own buyers, and be well satisfied if we got three shillings a box. Now we have A Board, which tells us how much we may grow, lumps all the fruit from all the farms together, and sells it to your government at a price agreed between it and some clever gentleman from your Ministry of Food. I'm sorry for your people.'

'Why?' I said.

'We get twelve shillings a box now,' he said, 'and large bonuses drop on us from the skies.'

'Bonuses!' I said.

'Yes,' he said, 'five, eight, ten thousand pounds.'

'But why?' I asked.

'Don't ask me, he said. 'I don't know. Look here.' He showed me official figures: 'In 1946 the Fruit Board paid out sums of from £5000 to £50,000 to 30 farmers; in 1947, sums of from £5000 to £50,000 to 143 farmers.' He smiled again. 'We would have done well with much less than that,' he said.

'You certainly do well,' I said. 'Do you complain?' 'No,' he said, 'but I still don't like it. We could grow more and sell cheaper. What are your people paying for this fruit in London? Two shillings and sixpence a pound for grapes, perhaps? It's farcical.'

'What would you like changed?'

'I would like to grow fruit in my own way, to my own standards, he said, 'find my own buyers and sell as much as I can grow as cheaply as suits me. I'd like to think that the people who eat it can eat as much as they want at a fair price.'

I thought of this conversation when I read, in a report from England, that the Minister for Rationing told Scottish housewives he 'completely disagreed with them that food subsidies should be abolished; that would be ruinous to the interest of the working people'. The price these pay for fruit appeared to me, in the light of Hendrik's remarks, to contain a very large subsidy.

The mystery of food in England presents itself in many new aspects to the English traveller when he studies it from afar. I privately disagreed with Hendrik when he said the system was 'mad'. If Food Control were considered innocently as an honest attempt to feed populations, such consequences would indeed prove it mad. But if it is a carefully planned way of inflicting political servitude on people it is sane enough. By that measurement sanity might be found in the advertisement I found in a South African newspaper:

'Britain Wants British Goods To Re-enter Britain; send your friends at home ...' (and here followed a list of British products which British people in their homeland are forbidden to buy). This story of ships steaming to distant lands with British food or manufactures and then taking them back to Britons who may not acquire them until they have made the return journey is one of the non-

advertised Food Facts. However, the double journey is not strictly necessary. For those who have the money and the friend in South Africa (or, as I later found, in America) anything from a British motor car to a packet of British biscuits may be obtained *in* England, if the order is placed in the oversea country. I could not guess how often the actual cash is paid there; the important thing appears to be that a book-keeping transaction should occur in the distant land before delivery is made in England. In many oversea countries the large stores show notices offering delivery of goods from British firms to recipients in Britain. Personally I should like to see the system made use of by every single inhabitant of the British island, because then the whole sham of 'shortage' and 'control' would collapse and Britain would prosper again.

Hendrik was, as I say, an enlightened man. 'You know that £80,000,000 loan,' he said as I left, 'well, I don't think we were giving much away when we made it. I fancy a lot of it will come back this way in the form of our bonuses and your high prices. Why do your people suffer it?'

'I don't know,' I said, 'they're very long suffering.'

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## Chapter Sixteen

### SOUND OF A HORN

I wrenched myself with regret from The Cape, hoping soon to return. The gods, when they picnic, must often choose to sit at that homeric, white-clothed table between two oceans and look down in jovial content on the town below, with its brief but brilliantly patterned history and its kaleidoscopic human scene. Johannesburg is the kinsman of New York, Chicago and Los Angeles; Durban is a beleaguered white man's outpost like Shanghai and Singapore; Cape Town, for all its Coloured People and Malays, is distinctively an outcrop of old Europe. Fortunately I saw it often again.

Strange mischances often befall me on journeys and early in the four hundred miles of this one my horn began to sound, first intermittently, then incessantly. That happened to me once in my Little Rocket in the Ringstrasse of Vienna and I then first knew the sensation of being (as they say) the cynosure of all eyes. On this day, having far to go, I resolved to press on. In these wide and unpeopled spaces, I thought, my horn will neither disturb others nor bring me embarrassing attention.

A self-sounding motor-horn, however, is a strangely tyrannous thing. After a hundred miles, and two dorps, mine began to unnerve me. I turned on the radio full blast to drown it. Somebody sang 'I'm nobody's baby'. Five minutes later I conjectured that the self-same mechanical defect must have occurred at the same moment to an unknown broadcasting station; it could not stop transmitting 'I'm nobody's baby'. With a foolish impulse of self-preservation I stepped on the accelerator, madly hoping to leave both the note of my horn and of nobody's baby behind. Louder yet, both accompanied me. I tore through Africa in a pandemonium of noise; I doubt if so uproarious a traveller ever passed through those silent expanses before. It was exhausting, and I knew when I was beaten. I stilled the clamorous orphan. The horn continued, now on a triumphant note.

I cannot account for the feeling of guilt which an irrepressible horn awakes in its owner. I began to look nervously around. I found that the Cape Province was not so sparsely populated as I earlier imagined. Startled faces, usually dark, popped up on all sides like Jacks-in-the-box. I lost one of my boyhood's illusions: that of reverent admiration for gallant colonial warriors who held their fire until they saw 'the whites of the enemy's eyes'. What valour (I always thought) to wait until the impis were so near! I now found that the whites of eyes, particularly those of impis, are plainly visible at a full quarter-mile. Scores or hundreds of these eyes converged on me, all big with the accusing question, 'Why?' Though I thought the answer should be obvious, I tried to fill my face with so poignant an exculpation that they would understand. It was no use: a huge and indignant interrogation awaited and followed me along that road.

I grew rebellious. After all, it was my horn, and I could not stop it anyway; who knew when I would find a mechanic? I tried to look as if I habitually drove with sounding horn and disdained to meet those impeaching eyes. Then I came to mountain passes with endless hairpin bends, a precipice on one side (my side) and sheer rockface on the other. I saw without surprise that all the white motorists in South Africa were coming the other way. On upper slopes, I saw heads thrust out of limousines to see who called so clamantly afar off, and each time I edged past another car, with an inch between myself and annihilation, harsh voices called 'All right, all right, man, we can hear you, turn it off, can't you!' There is little compassion in the world, I thought, but as I could not stop or turn back, and did not choose to hurl myself over the brink, I passed toilsomely up that mountainside, between abyss and abuse, down its other side and came to George.

George is quiet, cool and shady, no place to enter with loud trumpeting. It lies below a great mountain, like Innsbruck, has one long street and some intersecting ones, and a tiny cathedral. It has lovely two-storeyed white houses, gay gardens with gigantic flowers and fine avenues. It has elegance and dignity. There is something of The Cape about it, and of New England, and even of England. It is in parts Georgian, and should be so, being named after the third George; it seems truly to keep something of his graceful time. It has a hotel with a veranda and a picture-theatre with Carmen Miranda. It contains many British residents and its countryside is populated with Afrikaner farmers. The twain unhappily do not mingle much and on the hotel veranda I have seen groups of Immigrants (early Afrikaner) looking daggers at groups of Immigrants (later British), an unprofitable thing, because the British never know when they are being looked daggers at.

‘The prettiest village in the world’, Trollope called it, and so it is, though the words might also be used of Stellenbosch, at greater risk of offence, because Stellenbosch, while its population is less than that of George, would object to ‘village’ where George would not demur. Both places have oaks, cool white houses, character and tradition. Stellenbosch is, however, a better place to study an Afrikaner institution, that of sitting-on-the-stoep. On those wide, stone-floored verandas families gather in cool of eve to watch and discuss the passer-by, neighbour or stranger. Sitting on a level higher than the street, these groups look like members of the last tribunal, and their stern mien reveals their judgment: perceptibly it is that the passing stroller will come to no good end.

I averted my face as I drove through the scandalized streets of George, pulling up with final fanfare at the first garage I saw. The horn immediately stopped. I explained what was amiss and hurried out of hearing in search of a night’s lodging. I could not face a further journey that day.

The next morning the mechanic said he had not found ‘much wrong’ but thought I would have no more trouble. When I was too far from George to turn back the horn began to sound again, first in pips and squeaks, then in unbroken sequence; once more the heads popped up from behind hedges and hummocks. I pressed the accelerator home and drove like a man pursued by demons to Knysna, which surprised little township I entered like a conqueror, with arrogant and brazen fanfaronade.

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## Chapter Seventeen

### THE HOUSE THAT GEORGE BUILT

The name George follows the traveller through this little patch of Africa like a refrain which he cannot quite recapture. It begins to haunt him at George itself and when he reaches Knysna he is still saying, 'Now how does it go?' Not only the little town fifty miles behind him is called George, but the whole district, and another man called George built Knysna. Moreover, these two small places, set in a remote African countryside where the poor whites multiply, near primeval jungle where the last wild elephants linger, tangibly belong together and have a common urbane character that links them with England far away.

If coincidence alone made neighbours of these two townships, one named after George Rex, King of England, and the other founded by George Rex, Esquire, it was a strange one. Was George Rex, Esquire, the son of George Rex, the king? What became of Johann Orth, who was The Man in the Iron Mask, why did the Crown Prince Rudolf die, was the Prince of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha the Duke's son? The dividing line between historical mystery and old wives' tale is often hard to find. A semi-official South African guide-book baldly says that 'George Rex was the son of King George the Third, who married a beautiful girl named Hannah Lightfoot, assistant in the shop of a Quaker linen draper'. The authority is not given and, as far as I can determine, cannot be furnished. The story is old; it was told in *The Fair Quaker*, by Mary L. Pendered, published in the last century, but the authoress, although she believed it, wrote that no conclusive evidence could be discovered either of a marriage or of George Rex's royal birth.

What may be verified, then, is merely this: that a man bearing the remarkable name of George Rex appeared at The Cape late in the eighteenth century, when it was a place of remote oblivion, and between 1795 and 1797 was appointed to the equally remarkable office of 'Marshall of the British Vice-Admiralty Court' there. At the brief Dutch occupation of The Cape between 1802 and 1806 he, like other British people, went away from there to Knysna, then barely a name on any map. There George Rex, Esquire, presumably by mere chance, settled down next door to the village named after George Rex, the king, who may or may not have been his father. There, after the British return to The Cape, he acquired, partly by Government grant, estates of some twenty thousand acres, built a fine mansion and lived as a great squire in these far African lands, dying in 1839 among much public sorrow.

The grant of land suggests that he was a person of importance. If he was a plain private citizen, merely endowed with a name likely to arouse curiosity, the truth of his parentage has eluded a hundred years of discussion. If he was of royal blood, this showed itself in his taste and large enterprises which, if not regal, were princely. He was a man of unusual vigour and vision. The travellers' tales of that time speak of the great mansion on the hill near Knysna and of his courtesy and hospitality. It was larger than Knysna itself, a very settlement with its own carpenters, masons, saddlers and gardeners. He set out to make a port of Knysna and to found a shipbuilding industry there, and he built a famous vessel, the *Knysna* brig, which men say may be somewhere afloat even today, and by means of which the port of East London was found and founded. It was made of timbers from the stinkwood tree, ungraciously so named, for I never found that it stinks and it is a magnificent wood.

Now all is gone. Like Uptake, the house that Rex Whistler depicted, the mansion has vanished, and with it settlement, gardens, shipyard, brig. Only a memory and a mystery remain, and an unkempt grave. I went to see this, crossing a railway track and a field, and passing a hovel where a poor white woman and many children gaped over a fence. In untended ground enclosed by a crumbling



brick wall, within sight of the hill where the mansion stood, was this neglected grave with the plain stone: 'George Rex.' Next to it was another, broken.

They say (I cannot verify how rightly) that marriage officers of The Cape were, by high authority, instructed not to wed George Rex, and that he took to himself one or more wives, as most lonely white men did in those times, when there was none to say Nay or even Fie! Thus the Rexes, of station high and low, are numerous in Knysna today. Many stones in the churchyard bear the name. A Mayor of Knysna once tried to have the Historical Monuments Commission care for George Rex's forlorn resting-place. Surviving Rexes asked him not to interfere with private property.

Something lingers in the air there, like the faint echo of a protest. Either chance or man has tried to erase the memory of George Rex, Esquire, to cover up trails, to hush dispute. Yet from an untended grave and the site of a vanished house his personality still impresses itself on this whole place. Is it better to call the past dead and seek to bury it, or to treat it as part of the living present and decently debate it? A Hamlet might soliloquize eternally about that.

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## Chapter Eighteen

### POOR LITTLE WHITE GIRL

There were two girls in an untidy room with beds for five. One, who lay face down on her bed, raised her head as we entered and then buried it in the clothes with strange giggles, as if she might be accustomed to abrupt male visitations and thought they called for this coy pantomime. My companion glanced at me with an excusing shrug: he had previously told me that the bagmen sometimes claimed prescriptive right of way through these quarters. The other girl looked at us with dull, suspicious eyes. She frowned with the effort to understand when asked simple questions. 'Did you go to school?' She looked vacantly towards her companion, who, giggling and wriggling, ploughed herself anew into her pillows. 'Yes,' came the answer after two repetitions of the question. 'How many teachers were there in your school?' She could not reply.

My guide, as we went away, said it was 'a tremendous problem'. 'Little better than morons,' he said. 'Look at the condition of their rooms. We have shown them how to be clean but they cannot learn. Most of them have never been outside this place. I asked them all the other day and found only one; she had been, once, to George. They're baboons.' I knew this contemptuous epithet from the oft-told tale of the stranger from oversea who asked his farmer host if any shooting were to be had and was told he might get a baboon in the thicket across the fields. Returning later, he said he had killed several baboons but was surprised to find them wearing scraps of clothing and uttering half-human noises.

'Good heavens, man,' protested his host, 'you've shot the van der Merwe family.'

Later I saw all the girls from these back-rooms. They served my meals and were disconcerted by any request, for instance, for a spoon or for salt. They wore green-and-yellow frocks and green-and-yellow bows in their hair, smiled from reddened lips, or glanced from between blackened lashes at the predatory bagmen. They knew no way, however, to give sparkle to their lustreless eyes.

The poor white is another of South Africa's Problems, but not peculiar to South Africa. He occurs, as a mean white or as poor white trash, in the Southern States of America. Huckleberry Finn's 'paw' was one. The world of today may know more of him than formerly through an American novel and play, 'Tobacco Road'. In my experience, however, this work depicts him on the basest and most sordid level, much below the true mean. He is poor in cash, but also in wit and spirit, in countries where the white man claims an inherent or acquired superiority, so that he is a standing affront to his fellows, and may also be the instrument of God's reproof. He is of the white aristocracy. Be he never so humble, a Native does his chores, yet he often lives below the level of a self-respecting Native. Thus he lets down his side and, in that sense, is 'poor' or 'mean' or 'trash'. The words do not allude exclusively to his poverty or signify mixed blood; he is white.

Many explanations are given for the poor white in South Africa. The chief of them are that under the Dutch system of inheritance large farms, being equally divided among all sons of large families, in time become severally too small to earn a livelihood for their owner; that the poor smallholder, thus evolved, deteriorated into a share-cropper on another's farm; that he knew no other way of earning a livelihood and was unequal to the struggle with life in the cities, when the factories began to arise; that he gladly takes the meanest kind of work, which Natives should do if white supremacy is to be maintained; and much more.

I wondered, however, specifically in South Africa, if the chief cause might be remoteness from the great white masses and from his kind. A country with so small a white population, spread over a vast space, cannot provide adequate education for innumerable, scattered, tiny groups. The poor white often cannot read. Until radio arrived the umbilical cord between him and the white countries was quite severed. He lived in a country where a man, if he lacks a roof, may sleep under the sky and where he may usually find a mealie or a slice of water-melon to eat (and some bilharzia-infected water to drink). Deterioration is easy in such circumstances. The poor white may be only an example of what whole white races might become under conditions similarly unfavourable.

Later, in the American South, I felt that loneliness and remoteness from white masses could not wholly explain the poor white, for those factors do not operate there, anyway in the same degree. It seemed to me then that the poor white emerges where large white populations mix with large black ones, and specifically in areas where the black one was formerly enslaved. Then again, I wondered if the poor white were in truth a separate, problematic species at all, or merely one which showed up with especial sharpness against a black background. The bums and hoboos of West Madison Street in Chicago seemed to me human beings of the same type and level; but they were not 'poor whites' because there was no black background. They counted merely as white men in poverty, not as 'poor whites'.

If the 'poor white' is in fact a separate species and problem, then clearly he appears where white men and black ones meet, and especially where the black men were once slaves. Is this the vengeance of slavery? Two hundred years ago one of the Dutch Governors of the East Indies, van Imhoff, when he visited The Cape, said: 'I believe it would have been far better had we, when this Colony was founded, commenced with Europeans and brought them hither in such numbers, that hunger and want would have forced them to work. But having imported slaves, every common or ordinary European becomes a gentleman and prefers to be served rather than to serve. We have in addition the fact that the majority of the farmers in the Colony are not farmers in the real sense of the word, but owners of plantations, and that many of them consider it a shame to work with their own hands.'

The words of enlightened men ring sadly down the centuries; during the war between the States in America many southerners felt as van Imhoff felt a hundred years earlier. The penalty of restricting the white population and using slave-labour, in countries claimed for the white man, was the deterioration of a substantial mass of the white population to the level of the dark man, or lower. The same factors, in South Africa, hinder the process of regeneration today; slavery has gone, but the poor white still expects his household chores to be done by Natives, and the smallness of the white population delays great works of saving either soil or souls.

The poor whites mainly live in rural communities near such places as Humansdorp or Knysna, or seep towards the cities and their factories like the fellow-villagers of Adam Bede and Tess of the D'Urbervilles. The streets near the stations attract them, in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. You may see them whittling a stick beneath a palm tree on the Esplanade, mumbling to themselves in the City Square, or passing the cheap sherry to each other in Dock Road. In such remote places, as Knysna Forest they build themselves ramshackle hovels of corrugated iron or petrol tins, which may sometimes be seen peeping out of the trees, but not often, because these folk, living so near to the animals, like to keep hidden.

They are not a constant body of the population. Some lift themselves out of the mass, a few descend into it from a higher level. They are unfortunate people who are now passing through an experience which befell many Europeans a hundred years ago, but one which in their case has a menacing black background and less certainty of future emergence. They are of many kinds, some despondent and others hopeful. I once went, with a man whose work took him much among the

poorest folk of Cape Town, to see a poor white woman who had had nine children by a first husband and was just recovered from her sixth by a second. I was prepared for grim squalor and found, instead, a respectable body, clean and neatly dressed, whose spotless dwelling would have gladdened any parson's heart in an English slum. My guide was astonished. Believing that the human animal is gregarious, I thought this was likely to be a common effect of urban surroundings in such a case.

Then again, one night, I drove with two young doctors for thirty-five miles through Knysna Forest to a poor white woman of forty-two who was having her seventeenth child. Knysna Forest is original jungle in the middle of the Cape Province. The last wild elephants still inhabit it. It is an impenetrable tangle of climbing and creeping and crawling and intertwining trunk and tendril and vine, almost sealed against the light. It is the home of one of the largest communities of poor whites.

We passed right through it and came to a lonely cottage. The seventeenth baby did not live, but there was nothing poor of spirit about the mother, her other children or the house. There were all the signs of fortitude in a pitilessly solitary life. The old drama was played with dignity in this place not much better than a manger. The doctors saved the mother, and in the early morning set out through the jungle to their homes, thirty-five miles away.

There are no set rules about anything, I thought next morning, when my poor white girl brought my breakfast. The bow sat oddly on her unkempt hair and I thought she had not washed much before encarmining her lips and blackening her lashes. She was inarticulate, her thoughts went in slow motion, a request for sugar started a process of laboured and painful cogitation behind her dull eyes. She was of Europe, a lost one, a half-wild woman of the woods. I wondered how long wise teachers would need to quicken her wits. Not very long perhaps, I thought, but in a small white population there were many poor whites (they are computed to number about 300,000, or nearly one in eight of the total) and few teachers. Unless the white folk increased their numbers, it might be a slow process.

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## Chapter Nineteen

### AFTER US THE DESERT?

I drove along a baked road between scorched red mountains. A dust-devil went pirouetting in front of me, a whirling little dancing-dervish of a thing made up of scraps of dead grass and sand and other of nature's unconsidered trifles, caught up and whirled along by the wind. This was the country of the Karoo, the high and dry plateau which stretches for hundreds of miles when you climb inland from the green coastal belt of the Cape Province. Mr. Winston Churchill, surveying the Karoo, once wondered for what purpose God might have created it. It looks like desert, but it carries a tiny, almost invisible bush on which sheep thrive, so that farmers prosper. They need such consolation, for life in the Karoo is hard and burdened by ever-present anxieties about rain and water. The implacable sun blisters the very mountains and subjects the human organism to peculiar tests and trials. If it is stony ground for all else but the little weed, it may be good soil for old resentments, for here those of the unforgetting Afrikaner are long-lived.

I came to a little town, clustered round a church which was modelled on St. Martin's in the Fields, and joined some friendly folk for that brief hour which is cool and not yet dark. A woman said, reflectively, 'We only begin to live at this time', and suddenly I realized how true the words might be. That twilight, moreover, is short! The night that follows may be cool, but it is night, and in South Africa people go early to bed. It is the land of lost evenings, and who that ever loved a woman or a play would willingly picture his life without its evenings?

The Karoo is another of the problems, for, like the white man, the Native and the Indian, it is an invader, and none can surely foresee whose invasion will win. Large parts of it are desert and it has driven back the pastureland about 150 miles, from west to east, during the last hundred years. The geologists, who count in much longer periods of time, say they can trace four desert invasions of South Africa, each of which killed or drove out all that went on four legs or two, and they think this might be the beginning of the fifth.

Is it the work of men, in scorning the vengeance of nature, or the reproof of a higher power, if this is the fifth invasion? Suppose, for debate's sake, that the cultivation of the land in small holdings had been pushed outward from The Cape: would that have strengthened the soil, preserved the rainfall and beaten back the Karoo? I do not pretend to lay the finger of little knowledge on the all-explaining first cause, but the conjecture is fascinating. Instead of an expanding area of cultivated land, the trekkers spread the expanse of great cattle-ranches. Cattle was their wealth, and the Native's. They only grew what they needed to eat, on a small patch of cultivated land round the homestead, and the cattle roamed over the rest of their six thousand acres ('The claim of each Trekboer to a farm of not less than six thousand acres became ultimately an inborn right'; *A History of South Africa*, by C.W. de Kiewiet, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1941).

The cattle grazed the land bare, loosened the soil, and made tracks down the hillsides to the homesteads. The rains deepened these tracks into ruts, grooves, gullies and then ravines, into which new rains carried the thinning soil, and thence into the rivers. The same thing happened in the Native Reserves, where the increasing press of people brought multiplying flocks and herds. In many parts of South Africa today you may watch the rain washing the red soil from the hills into the watercourses, and the rivers carrying this lifeblood to the sea. Here and there men make valiant defensive efforts; they plough across the hillside, so that each furrow throws up a little earthwork against the downrush, or plant trees to fill the gullies. But erosion is great and, once more, the defenders are few. The policy of six thousand acres to a man, and to each man all the cattle he

could graze, claimed a penalty when the ranch was divided and sub-divided among sons and grandsons.

The Great Trek of 1838 destroyed South Africa's national unity until this was mended in the Union of 1910, which is threatened again today; some South Africans fear that it also may have ruined the land. Others wonder if nature here is too fierce to be tamed for long. The great friend, rain, for which all pray, becomes the great enemy when it carries off the soil. The universal longing for rain, the oft-heard comment that 'this country would be the finest on earth if we only had water', has to be set against the fact that the South African rainfall is in fact abundant, but that the way to conserve it has not yet been found, and that at present it produces erosion. Only a much greater white population, and the greater resources which this would bring, could enable works of rainfall-conservation and soil-preservation to be carried out on a big enough scale; that was the opinion I found among good judges.

Meanwhile the fierceness of the sun, the yearning for rain and the thinning of the soil combine to produce, in such places as the dry and lonely Karoo, that brooding state of mind in which old spites seem peculiarly to thrive. I went to a *Vleisbraai*, or barbecue, a picnic beneath the moon where chops and sausages were grilled over an open wood fire and were moistened in the eating with that brandy of which Trollope mildly remarked 'the merchants have not as yet found it worth their while to store their wines for any lengthened period'. It was an excellent feast and began in great heartiness, but soon that restraint emerged which the traveller will often experience in these parts, so that the merry-makers dissolved into separate groups beneath the trees and sombrely debated among themselves. There was a young man who sometimes mixed jovially with the others and sometimes sat apart, looking straight before him. He wore a ring taken from a dead British officer's hand by his father in the old, old war. I was told the dead man's family had once learned of this, and because the ring was an heirloom had asked him if they might not reacquire it. He was not willing. Its possession gave him happiness. Yet he did not look happy....

It was a fine picnic, in a cool green valley between the scorched red hills. I never ate such chops and marvel still that the lambs of the Karoo can be so tender. I understood the strain and tension of life there. A jovial fellow told me he longed for the Karoo while he was fighting northward through Italy. 'I suppose it looks like a desert to you,' he said challengingly. I forbore to say yes or no, believing that either would displease. More rain, less sun; that longing possessed these good people, I thought. What they might need even more, I felt, was something they would not allow: more neighbours.

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## Chapter Twenty

### IN BLANKETLAND

About half way between Johannesburg and Durban, during that first journey in South Africa, I saw on my right a magnificent mountain range. At its foot lies the Natal National Park and its Hostel, which I briefly visited; it is a place to make any traveller regret that he must quickly depart. Overlooking it is the eastern bastion of Basutoland, the Mont aux Sources, a mountain in the shape of a semi-circular table. It looks as if it were set there for the dispensation of justice on Judgment Day. It is overwhelming in its majestic proportions and seems to await a magistrate equally high and huge.

Beyond it lay Basutoland and that day I resolved to go there. Now, several months later, I made my way towards Basutoland through the Orange Free State, once described by Mr. Leonard Flemming as having 'more country and less scenery than any other part of the world'; it looked a pleasant land to me and I intended soon to return to it, but a later mischance upset my plans.

The Union of South Africa contains one territory, Basutoland, still 'administered by the British Crown', and two others, Swaziland and Bechuanaland, march with it. All three were British-ruled long before the Union was dreamed of. In virtue of pledges given to their inhabitants they remain under British rule, through a High Commissioner who divides his time between Cape Town and Pretoria, periodically visiting them. The Act of South African Union, however, made vague provision for their 'ultimate inclusion in the Union'. Their Natives, divided in many matters, unitedly object to such inclusion. They do not want to become part of the Union. Successive South African governments have urged that the time for inclusion has come. London has not yet agreed. At the British end the matter can only be one of principle, for the three Protectorates cost the British taxpayer money.

The entrance to Basutoland is marked merely by a modest archway over the road and a police post, but the traveller passes into a different world. This is not alone because the mile of approach to the tiny capital, Maseru, seems to have been laid out by a British Board of Works official with memories of Surrey in his mind's eye (and most attractive it is). A Basuto policeman admits the visitor and in Basutoland he will meet no white folk but Government officials, traders and missionaries. These may not own land; Basutoland belongs to the Basuto. Here a black race breathes freely.

That is the work of a wise chieftain, old Moshesh, who knew when to cry: 'Peace, enough!' Nearly a hundred years ago, after a lifetime of wars against other tribes, Boers and British, he sent a message from his unsubdued mountain stronghold, Thaba Bosiu, saying: 'Let me no longer be considered an enemy to the Queen: I will do all I can to keep my people in order in the future.' When this request was granted, and Basutoland preserved from the Orange State Boers, he rejoiced that 'my people have been allowed to rest and live in the large folds of the blanket of England. My country is your blanket, O Queen, and my people are the lice in it'.

It is a rare statesman who knows when to stop fighting and from which adversary to seek protection. 'What I desire, wrote Moshesh to Sir Philip Wodehouse, 'is that the Queen send a man to rule with me.' His desire was fulfilled and by that stroke of diplomacy he preserved a small nation in its own lands. He could have achieved the result in no other way. The Basuto remain today the only unconquered and independent Bantu tribe in South Africa. They are free in a world which knows no absolute freedom, but only the continuing battle for freedom, never won. There are not four freedoms, but only two: the freedom of a nation, and the freedom of a man within a nation.

The Basuto have more of both than any other dark man in South Africa. Their freedom remains balanced in the delicate equipoise established by Moshesh. While the Queen remains (her picture adorns their huts and later rulers are but her sons) the neighbouring Orange Free Staters cannot overwhelm their national freedom; while 'the Queen's man' rules over their chiefs, these chiefs cannot wholly destroy their individual freedom. The Crown stands between them and foreign invader and domestic tyrant alike. It is no empty word or worthless emblem: The Crown hangs chiefs if they kill and The Crown as yet preserves them from other rule.

It is fascinating to study the battle for freedom in this isolated, mountain-walled little country about the size of Wales (small lands coveted by others seem usually to be of that extent; Palestine was often so described before it was liberated from its native inhabitants). Basutoland is remote and not rich; cannot it be left alone? The contending coveters persist, and new ones appear. Not only do the Afrikaner Nationalists want it. Stranger ambitions make themselves felt, and I believe this may be the reason for mysterious things that are happening in Basutoland today.

The long arms of those two great forces which appear to me to join in wreaking the havoc of our time reach even into this little fastness. The money-power and the revolutionary-power both spread their grasp over it. In every little town stands the office of the Mines Recruiting Corporation, and through its doors passes the constant stream of Basuto going to Johannesburg to dig gold for entombment in Kentucky. In the reverse direction, across the mountains from Johannesburg, come the Communist organizers, Natives who have received 'education' in this sense and operate the little printing-presses in Maseru or work among the tribesmen. No land is too small or remote for the Communist Party if it offers the prospect of setting white man against dark one, tribesman against chief, or Boer against Briton, in pursuit of the larger design.

The Basuto chiefs have grown uneasy. They understand the Queen and the Queen's man, and They understand the Boer, and of the two prefer the Queen's man. But will The Crown continue to protect them, and for how long? If not, whose is the succession? Who are these new intruders, and why does the Queen suffer them? What is happening in the great world outside, where they hear of these new folk, Communists, spreading over half Europe and all China with the help of the white man, and of something called The United Nations which promotes war and invasion in Arabia, nearer home? Is the Queen less strong? Has old Moshesh's arrangement outworn its usefulness? Has his diplomacy lost its magic? In their perplexity of the Nineteen-Fifties the Basuto chiefs have recalled earlier tribal ways of warding off misfortune. Finding the times incomprehensible, they have been turning to the witch-doctors.

In tiny primitive countries and great advanced ones the root question is always the same: Who truly wields the power, who rules whom? President Roosevelt appeared supreme during fateful years, but who really prompted him? Chiefs may be destroyed through witch-doctors, and these in turn may have hidden mentors. Who controls the witch-doctors? Qui bono?

Before Moshesh successfully tried European diplomacy, the Basuto had other ways of fending off disaster. They were not in essence different from the use of herbs for balm or of the bark of trees for remedies, but they went much further and were used only against the gravest dangers to the nation or to a tribe, as embodied in its chiefs. For such emergencies as those only the strongest medicine (or 'drastic remedy', to give the true meaning) was useful, and it could only be made by taking various parts from a living human body, the eyes for sight, the tongue for fluency, the blood and other things for potency. Such was the ancient tribal wisdom, before The Crown came to Basutoland, and of late years the witch-doctors seems to have been advising the chiefs, in their perplexities of the mid-century, to have recourse to it.



‘You need strong medicine’ say the witch-doctors; strong medicine, to smear the pegs which then are placed round the chief’s hut to ward off all dangers to the kraal and the tribe. The chief submits. Then the gleam of The Crown appears inexorably in these inaccessible mountains. The chief is hanged and his fellow chiefs are told that if the practice continues the very thing they fear will befall them: they will be reduced. The Crown agreed to protect the Basuto for the equal good of all, chief and tribesman alike, not for such deeds.

But whom would the ruin of the chiefs benefit? Not the Basuto, or The Crown, or the South African Union, should it one day succeed to the country. The hidden third party alone would gain, which is hostile to all. In effect these killings, committed by chiefs who are prompted by witch-doctors, seem to be a bid to destroy the achievement of old Moshesh, Basuto freedom, and I think that might indicate the motive and the real culprit.

For the present the Basuto remains a free man and proud. He is a figure of dignity in his blanket and plaited straw hat, on his tripling pony. Even without saddle or stirrups he seems part of his horse, which is the sign of his manhood; you will not see a mounted Native in the Union outside the Transkei. He is respected by the white folk who live with and rule over him. His country has one road running along its western edge and all the rest is mountain range; it is indeed like Wales. Over these mountains, which may be traversed only by pony and the stony Government Path, great storms perpetually rage while the verdant western plateau lies beneath a cloudless sky.

Along the one road lies a line of little townships, Mafeteng, Maseru, Teyateyaneng, Leribe and the rest, where the Resident Commissioner and the District Commissioner and the other officials of The Crown live. These places are still called ‘Camps’ from the old days of the Gun War and the armed occupation, and in them the British soldier has left a gentle memory of hard duty quietly done, and an honourable peace. This country reduced my respect for such gigantic enterprises as that of Mulberry Port. I wondered how companies of foot soldiers and troops of cavalry ever reached and maintained themselves in such places, eighty years ago. How did they ensure supplies, cross these fierce mountains, survive such storms, transport their ammunition; above all, what must they have suffered when they were wounded! I was badly wounded once and know what it means even to be transported quickly by stretcher and ambulance and ship to first-aid post and dressing-station and field hospital and hospital at home. My imagination quailed at the thought of lying out on these mountains in the 1880s without much more hope than that of a field-dressing.

I once took tea with a handsome old lady and gentleman at a place called Fort Hartley, set among a vast loneliness. There was peace and grace in it and at first I credited this entirely to the trader and his wife. Then I asked, ‘Why "Fort" and why "Hartley"?’ and learned that a British fort once stood near where a Major Hartley, long ago, won the Victoria Cross for bringing in a wounded man under the nose of the tribesmen. Near the fort was a tiny hospital, not bigger than a small barn. Now it was the trader’s house. I wondered how the redcoats had found and whence they hauled the bricks, the beds, the instruments and medicines for it, in the Eighties. Sitting in the trader’s garden I looked at its white wall and pictured the wounded man being brought to it. I went in and looked round the tiny ward. It was cool and still filled with a blessed peace. I hoped the wounded man recovered and that his rescuer survived....

Maseru, with its lovely Residency, appealed to me. I particularly liked its little daily pageant, the procession of the prisoners. These are the Basuto who have incurred the displeasure of The Crown and are in benevolent captivity; there is a much-told tale that on race-days the captives take their jailers out to see the sport. They are marched out, the men in red jerseys, and the women separately, in voluminous skirts, to do various chores. They are not shamefaced, but comport themselves as citizens who enjoy an especial and enviable status, and take apparent pride in their marching. The women, with their rhythmically swinging skirts, look like a Basuto Black Watch. The men throw

out their chests and chins as if they were bound to the changing of the guard in Whitehall. They enliven the Maseru scene and I commend them to any moving-picture photographer who may chance that way.

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## Chapter Twenty One

### THE CROWN AND MALEFU

Picture an infinitely lonely Basuto village set between heaven and earth. In a flat place with a little pasture, among rocky walls, are ten or twenty Basuto huts. Half a mile away may be the next group of huts; more probably, it is much further distant and out of sight. Around, mountains rising into mist and cloud, and the twilight thickening....

A woman comes out of a hut, gazes towards the grazing herds and calls, Malefu, Malefu! No answer comes. Malefu is her niece, a child of seven, sent by an ailing mother to stay with its aunt. Just so might Millie be sent by her mother in Kilburn to spend a week with her aunt in Islington, and just as Millie might be told to fetch a newspaper, so has Malefu been put to mind the goats. In these parts the children begin to herd goats and cattle almost as soon as they can walk.

The woman stands at the entrance to her hut, gazing and calling. Then she goes across the fields, pausing to ask another child if it has seen Malefu. No. She goes on, casts this way and that, calls, shades her eyes, and at last comes back in agitation. Other women come out of their huts and join her. They point and gesticulate. None dares say what is in her mind. They round up a man or two (the mines take so many men away!) and again figures spread out across the pasture, seeking, calling. Again they come back and chatter excitedly around the huts. Soon it is dark.

Malefu lies on an animal-skin in another hut, far away among the mountains. She is doubly unfortunate to be there, for the witch-doctor said 'a twin-child' and she is not one of twins (twins are apparently abhorrent to many tribes). Half a dozen men share in this blood sacrifice; a chief, the witch-doctor, a headman and others. Those who know them best deny that they know this to be a gruesome crime; they are tribal-law-abiding men who revert to an old belief. Nor are these deeds correctly described, according to good authority, as 'ritual murders'. They have nothing to do with the tribal religion. They are committed to obtain the strongest medicine or most potent remedy, against threatening dangers.

Even a woman crouches behind the men and watches, feeling ... who shall say what? None can with certainty say what passes in the minds of primitive people; that, at least, is my conclusion. Whatever her feelings, they are not those of a mother. She is there by the witch-doctor's command; 'a barren woman', he said.

Perhaps Malefu did not suffer much, although the witch-doctor's prescription demands that the cuts should be made and the blood drawn and the other things done while life is in the body. The woman said Malefu seemed in a stupor, and that may have been so. The witch-doctor's skill with herbs is equal to inducing one. They say that in one of these sacrifices a drug, unknown to science, was used to keep the victim alive and in a coma for two or three days. In another a Basuto took part who was by day assistant to the white medical officer of the region. He purloined some chloroform for the purpose and appeared in the dress of a surgeon about to operate, with rubber gloves.

The victim may be man or woman, child or ancient; that may be mainly a matter of who can be ambushed. Lips, eyelids, other parts and blood are the things the medicine horn must have. Thus the strong medicine is mixed and later two naked men, the chief and the witch-doctor, stealthily surround the chief's hut with pegs smeared in it. It will confirm the chief in his position or protect him against reduction, strengthen his village and fortify the tribe generally. If it fails, that is the victim's fault, who was too weak, and a better victim must be sought. The witch-doctor cannot go wrong.

Thirty-eight men, chiefs, headmen, witch-doctors and tribesmen, were hanged in one recent twelvemonth for such murders. Many others lie under sentence of death or in prison as I write. The chiefs and people were warned not long ago by the High Commissioner that if the killings do not cease the system of indirect government through the chiefs will after ninety years be ended. Neither the warning nor the hangings have been effective. No white man knows for certain why the murders so suddenly began and have so long continued. They began in 1941, when they had been unknown for many years. Old Moshesh himself put the death penalty on them; but today old Moshesh's medicine is under doubt.

I felt that the chiefs must be in the grip of a greater fear than that of death or deposition. The only greater one I could imagine was that of the end of Basuto freedom. Perhaps they read the signs of the times more clearly than many white men and cannot understand why the white man allows these accumulating perils to approach. In consternation and confusion, perhaps, they have returned to the witch-doctor and his strong medicine, his stern remedies.

By doing so, however, they relinquish to the witch-doctor the power they wish to keep. He becomes the real power in the land, and who prompts the witch-doctor? The theory which seemed to me most likely came from a Basuto who should be an authority. Chief David Theka Makkaola was for some time acting Paramount Chief of the Basuto and he served with Basuto troops in North Africa, Asia Minor and Italy. He said the murders were instigated by 'certain political bodies which are using the witch-doctors as instruments to further their aims'. The immediate object, he added, was 'to break the power of the chiefs and leave the people leaderless ... this, in some measure, has been achieved, since many of the principal chiefs now stand accused of participation'.

That seems to me an explanation too probable to be wrong. That chiefs should lend themselves to a conspiracy to ruin chieftainship, and make the engulfment of this little country easier, need astonish none who have followed the doings of public men in the enlightened West during the last thirty years.

I met one of these witch-doctors. When I met him he was a herbalist. The witch-doctor is always a herbalist when he is facing a white man; when he turns his face towards a tribesman he becomes a witch-doctor. The fiction also has its counterpart in the greater world: Mr. Facing-both-ways who is at once a humane Liberal and a ruthless Communist. This jovial fellow, who looked like any other blanketed Basuto, reined in his horse and greeted my companion and myself with loud hallo. He was reputed to cure madness (by herbs, of course) and I hoped to see some of his cured patients, but finding them standing round his house when he was absent, I did not tarry, lest the cures should be incomplete, and met him as I drove away. A few weeks later he was charged as the instigator of one of these murders and, on being sentenced to death, broke into a frenzy of rage (or madness). Seizing a sjambok, which was among the exhibits of the case and lay within his reach, he laid about him with such ferocity that a scene followed rare in the history of any High Court, even in a small Protectorate.

The rule of these sacrifices apparently is that the body must be left to be found; otherwise the strong medicine would not be effective. But for this the murders might never out, for the victims seldom escape. I only know of one such case and oddly also met that man, for he was one Joseph Solmakol, who had charge of the pontoon on which I crossed the Orange River between Mohaleshoek and Quthing. Riding home one evening, he was stunned by a blow on the back of the head. Then he was either left for dead or his assailants were disturbed. He recovered consciousness, minus an ear, part of his nose and an eyelid, and was able to crawl to a hut.

Unhappy is the Basuto chief or tribesman who puts his faith in witch-doctors; whatever awaits Basutoland, they will not help him much. The bodies are found. The Basutoland Mounted Police,

under their white officers, ride out to these remote places and slowly piece the tale together. Beads of perspiration stand out on the brows of the men and women they question, so great is fear of the witch-doctor, but the pursuers do not desist.

Then the last act begins. In the High Court of Basutoland the Honourable Mr. Justice So-and-so takes his seat and the Attorney-General unfolds the case for The Crown. The compact made by Moshesh is still in full force. The blanketed men in the dock watch inscrutably and, I judge, fearlessly. None knows, save they, what their real motives and standards were. All know that they will receive inexorable retribution by the code to which they submitted in return for protection.

‘The case put forward by The Crown is very briefly that the accused, or one or more of them, kidnapped this girl, kept her in captivity for some time and eventually murdered her and mutilated her body, the motive being to provide medicine for accused No. 1 so as to secure him in his position as headman. In other words The Crown alleges that this is a ritual murder such as is unfortunately not uncommon in this territory. No. 1, the Chief, told Mofela, one of his councillors, that he intended getting a doctor to treat him so that when Chiefs were being reduced he would not be deposed ... The Crown will show ... The Crown submits ... The Crown demands....’

There is a gallows in Maseru and The Crown avenges Malefu to protect her kind.

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## Chapter Twenty Two

### BASUTO MASQUERADE

The blanketed tribesmen rode up on their ponies from all directions, dismounted and joined the solid, semi-circular phalanx round the clearing where chairs were set. It was a *Pitso*, a gathering of the tribe in open forum. The District Commissioner sat in the central chair, his police officer beside him, and behind him a few white guests, of whom I was one. Next to the police officer sat the suspended chieftainess, with her son. Both were involved in the latest strong-medicine killing. She was a study in mahogany impassivity, never moving a muscle or eyelid while most damning things (by the standards of The Crown) were said. Her mien matched that of the tribesmen gathered round. Every face was a mask or a blank, I could not tell which. What they thought was any white man's guess.

On the other side of the District Commissioner sat the chief who was to administer her territory, and he spoke first, opening the *Pitso*. He was a great man in the land, a direct descendant of Moshesh, who asked for a 'Queen's man' to rule the land with him. He faced the blanketed tribesmen in a white man's blue suit. He was an educated man and spoke English almost as fluently as his own tongue. If any face there showed expression it was his. It suggested deep concern, implied that he was on the side of the white angels, regretted this dark affair, and wished his hearers to mend their ways. He said as much. The displaced chieftainess stared before her like a graven image. The listening tribesmen stared at him from inscrutable faces. Did she feel guilt, did he or they feel repugnance? Who knew? Only one thing was certain; they knew that a life had been taken and that the white man's law demanded the killer's life. Doubtless they accepted that as just; whether they thought it right was another matter.

The District Commissioner spoke plainly. He said there had been foul murders, that their chieftainess was suspended and her son arrested until the inquiry was complete, and another chief put in as trustee. He scarified them, taunted them with cowardice for not coming forward to tell the police all they knew, and asked what they feared: 'The chiefs? The witch-doctors? The gallows? Or all three?' He spoke of terror in the kraals, of human packs hunting human victims, of villagers afraid to open their doors at night. An interpreter translated his words in ringing tones of rebuke. They stirred me. Did they move those others? The surrounding faces, although they might well include those of the next witch-doctor, next killer and next victim, remained masked or blank. The wicked chieftainess gazed unflinchingly before her. Only the good chief, her supplanter, seemed slightly to respond.

The District Commissioner finished and cried, 'Khotsa!' and suddenly all these faces opened like one opening face as they roared back, 'Khotsa!' 'Pula!' he cried again, and that mass-mouth opened to reply, 'Pula!' All agreed that they wanted peace and rain, whatever they thought about chiefs, witch-doctors and strong-medicine killings. The chieftainess was led away. I noticed that the interpreter of the resonant voice shook her hand as she passed.

My writer's eye, which often goes its own gait, rested speculatively on the good chief, the man put in the wicked chieftainess's place. He was trusted by the white man. He wore with his natty suit a wide black-and-red belt, a Margate cummerbund in a later model, which showed behind his open jacket, and on his head that which the Americans call a snap brim hat. He reminded me of an amusing caricature of a Latin American gigolo I once saw; the caricaturist was Cyril Ritchard in Noel Coward's revue, 'Sigh No More'. I drew no conclusions from this outer appearance, however. Obviously any man from these parts who has cash (the senior chiefs receive a fair stipend) to visit the slopshops of Johannesburg is likely to emerge magnificent in his own eyes, but a little

overdressed in those of men born to the pinstripe. What sort of man, I wondered, really lay beneath the white man's suit and the dark man's skin? Did he truly understand the ignominy of these murders? Would he genuinely combat them and their practitioners? Did he feel abhorrence, had he in fact inherited from his ancestor Moshesh respect for the white man's law and faith in the strength of The Crown? Many high chiefs, from some violent inner conflict or fear, were turning to the old superstitions.

The trained journalist, who has lived with politicians and leaders and human convulsions in many lands, cannot discipline his intuitions. Later I visited this chief in his village. It was a natural fastness, standing on a high plateau between a steep abyss and a screen of trees. In this space was a stockade and behind that palisades and more palisades, and a maze of huts. When I arrived, two magnificently dignified tribesmen, cloaked in their blankets like Neapolitan bravos of old, argued a dispute about fields before the chief's councillors. In such matters these people govern themselves, and this, with the undisturbed possession of their lands, is the priceless thing which makes them fear inclusion in the South African Union. Each of the disputants in turn advanced to the centre of a small open space and stood question and answer; wise elders separated right and wrong and quoted precedents; a clerk made notes; judgment was given.

Then I visited the chief's chief wife in the innermost enclosure. She lay on a mattress, in impregnable isolation. She might have been a million miles, instead of ten, from the nearest white man's township. With difficulty she raised herself to a sitting position. She must have weighed twenty stone and I could hardly believe she was the slim girl, in European clothes, that I later saw at his side in a wedding-picture, taken only ten years before, in his own house. I think she was about twenty-eight. I wondered if she could put on flesh at that rate and live long. Buxomness is admired in women, in these places; I do not know whether it ever becomes an unadmired obesity. It seems a sign of rank and caste, in a great chief's senior wife, to do nothing and to move seldom.

She lay and grew fat. I do not know if she had many children, but she reminded me of the white ants' queen, whose size is many times that of the other ants and whose function is but to spawn. Her fatness, however, was not repellent. Her face was fine in feature; she wore a red-and-white striped head covering, turban-like in shape, and a red blanket which were picturesque and even beautiful. She received an incursive stranger with perfect composure and dignity, overlaid, however, with some impenetrable restraint. The atmosphere of the place seemed to me vibrant with unspoken things. Because of them I felt guilty of a rude intrusion. A white man in such places cannot guess the mind of people whose tongue he does not speak, and whose thoughts he would not learn if he could. But, once more, I could not rule my instincts. I felt this mountainous woman lived with fear. The feeling it imparts to the air is the same in all countries, and does not vary with the colour of skins.

I went my way and later, on the return journey, passed her husband who waved a hand and flashed teeth from the driver's seat of a thirty horsepower Mammalac. Few, if any other Basuto, own Mammalacs. He had been a pleasant host. He still had old Moshesh's own uniform coat and stick, and was thought to be an enlightened man. He was something of a craftsman and adorned his own hut with curious carvings and mouldings, which he coloured with pale pink and green and yellow washes....

About a month later he, with two other chiefs and eight or nine tribesmen, set out to replenish his medicine horn. The undertaking must have been well advanced that day when he spoke at the *Pitso*, when I visited him and his wife in their village. I would call this *The Case of the Four Brothers* if I were compiling a case-book, for the victim was sold by his brother and the killer was then accused by *his* brother.

All was done with decorum. The victim once chosen, his brother was summoned to a secret meeting where the chief announced that he 'wanted something from a person who would be killed', and was asked if he would sell his brother for £100, to which he agreed. Presumably he need not have been told at all, any more than the bodies need be left to be found; these are indications of the guiltless frame of mind in which the blood-sacrifices are approached. The victim was ambushed, the mutilations were made and the blood let, and the body was thrown into a gully.

Many months later The Crown caught up. The chief's own brother described the secret meeting, the other brother's agreement, the ambush and the killing, and was thus the chief witness for the prosecution. The Attorney-General once more presented the case for The Crown, and once again the Honourable Mr. Justice So-and-so gave judgment.

What a case, what characters and what a climax! The upright chief, with a strong-medicine killing in his plans, standing beside the deposed chieftainess and rating [ed: prating?] against strong-medicine killings to the tribesmen. Masked or empty faces around: small wonder! The old witch-doctor, privy to the plan, jovially greeting my guide and myself as we drove from his house towards that of the chief, whom he had probably visited to discuss the matter. The huge woman on the mattress in the innermost palisade, who seemed to live with terror. The choice of the victim and the assent of his brother; the killing and the accusation by the killer's brother. Sentence of death and the mad old witch-doctor running amok in the court with a sjambok until he was overpowered and carried raving from the room. The appeal, and my Lords of the Privy Council in grave debate between breakfast in Kensington and lunch in St. James's. The rejection of the appeal and the gallows in Maseru....

I was far from Basutoland when I read the accounts of the trial. Vivid pictures leaped into my mind's eye. The chief: was he wearing the snap-brim hat and the natty suit at the killing and did he drive to it in his Mammalac, or for that occasion did he wear the blanket and ride a horse? The great turbaned woman who seemed married to fear; it cannot be agreeable to know or suspect that your husband has such purposes, which the white man repays with death. The grinning old herbalist-witch-doctor, showing the gaps in his teeth as he bent towards us from the saddle.

What unimaginable things, I thought, the hands we shake may do - by our standards.

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## Chapter Twenty Three

### THE GOVERNMENT PATH

Basutoland is the most hospitable place to the stranger. From the Residency all through the line of camps to the loneliest trading-station friendly hands helped me on my way, and to the fulfilment of two ambitions. The first was that born when I looked up at Judgment Seat from Natal: to penetrate to the real Basutoland beyond. The second was to go on horseback, but as the journey could only be made that way the two ambitions converged. In a less friendly land neither could have been achieved, for more time and effort than I could spare would have been needed to learn the way, procure guides, hire pack-saddles and pack-horses, buy or borrow a tent, collect provisions and avoid the many pitfalls which await the novice on such a trek.

These difficulties were magically removed. The British traveller is a fortunate man. If he can but emerge from his native island the world beyond remains well-disposed to him. He enjoys a credit of confidence amassed by generations of his fellow-countrymen who went before, and perhaps for the first time realizes how substantial that balance is. I met by chance in East London a man with business interests in Basutoland, and through him met another, in Cape Town, who was able to help. This was Sir Ian Fraser, of whom I knew much but not, until then, that he was of the famous Frasers of Basutoland, which was an unknown place when young Donald Fraser opened a store there in the 1870s, just after Moshesh's request for British protection. Today there are fifty Fraser trading-stores in Basutoland.

From that moment difficulties vanished, and one morning early I set out with two companions, thus fulfilling my ambition to make the journey on horseback. The full truth of that matter, however, is that I wanted from my boyhood to make *a* journey on horseback; in fact, to ride. I never had a leg over a horse until six weeks before, in Natal, when I sat on one for half an hour each morning of a week. That week left the canter an unsolved mystery, but I achieved one brief, precarious gallop, to the memory of which, as I set out into inner Basutoland, I clung like a shipwrecked man to a spar. The future, with a four-day ride before, looked Pregnant With Possibilities (as They say).

I first took a heroic breakfast at Matelas, where the bountiful trader killed a lamb for us, of which, I think, I ate the greater part, probably from some disordered notion about ballast. I wore a borrowed hat of the kind called ten-gallon, in which I felt self-conscious even in the wilderness; its broad brim, however, and various unguents were not enough to keep my lips and chin from cracking like sausages on the grill in that mountain air. I was advised to cover my seat with sticking-plaster, but did not, trusting to its good, pre-war material. We set out in fine cavalcade, two guides, three pack-horses, three riders, three spare horses. Our good hosts waved us encouraging farewell, but I felt expert eyes appraise my horsemanship. The things I do, I thought, and rode boldly towards the mountains, muttering to myself:

Your head and your heart keep up,  
Your hands and your heels keep down.  
Your knees press into your horse's side  
And your elbows into your own.

These golden rules unhappily leave a large margin for human error.

That was a journey of two days, or a thousand years, each way. Fortunately my pony knew the route and seemed to have been sired by an armchair. Nevertheless I was glad when we reached the

end of the plain and the beginning of the steep Government Path across the mountains. Not even I, I told myself, could fall off a *walking* horse.

The Government Path went up and down, but much more up than down. It was between two and three feet wide and constant rains had removed the soil, leaving sharp and jagged edges, between which the horses unerringly picked their way. It went in zigzags, perhaps thirty yards to the left and thirty to the right, and they plodded up it with a disconcertingly jolting step or sidled down it with forelegs and hindlegs set as brakes. Each time it climbed the shoulder of a mountain a higher one appeared and over it went the zigzag line. The men who made this track performed a miracle of toil.

At close acquaintance mountains have a damnable iteration. As these rose higher, and the fertile valleys became rarer, they grew bleaker and lonelier. The Government Path, however, is not lonely. Though no sign of human life may offer on either side, there is continuous activity along it. Always there is a Native from some forgotten corner, driving his asses, mules and oxen to a trading-station with wool or grain, and he will readily travel two or three days further if rumour tells him of a distant trader who pays a penny a pound more. So the pack trains continually pass and follow each other, and the Government Path through wilderness is sometimes like a London street in the rush hour. Instead of motor-horns and the remarks of taxicab men, there are the crack of whips and the cries of pack-drivers. The strangest figures mingle there. Some, in battered billycocks and white man's rags look like characters from *Ally Sloper's Annual* (if any remember it). Others, surmounting the hill as the traveller approaches it from below, seem, with the sky behind them and a pitcher on their heads and their blankets falling into the folds of antiquity, to step out of a Bible story.

These heads, however, seldom carry a pitcher, and usually shoes, baskets, bottles, packages, bales. Fine raiment is for the kraal or the store, not for the Government Path; I saw a woman carrying a pair of worn European shoes and a white woman's hat in a basket on her head. For an hour my horse plodded behind a young girl who, without pause or sign of fatigue, carried a heavy suitcase on her head up and down the track. She never put hand to it; without whipping, my horse could not overtake her. Probably her lordly brother, returned from the gold mines to rest at the kraal, had sent her back to Maseru to fetch it. I heard of a woman who carried a sewing-machine, with table and treadle attached, over the mountains in this manner.

The men are the lords of the Government Path, in virtue of their horsemanship. They do all the things forbidden in European riding schools. I saw one, drunker than any lord should be, unable to fall off his horse when he wanted to; at least, I judged that he must be trying to fall off and could not. He had no saddle and the reins, in two pieces, hung down on either side of his galloping horse's head. He groped for them, but without much interest, and I watched him for half a mile until, swaying like a Holy Roller but clamped to his steed, he was borne from sight.

'How far?' I asked the guide as noon retreated behind us. 'One hour, he said. For any but a trained and habitual horseman the motion of a horse on the Government Path is a major ordeal, approaching Chinese torture. 'How far?' I asked, an hour later. 'Two hours,' he said. At about five o'clock the gathering storm broke. A knife-like rain stabbed down and cloud swirled round us. I dismounted and put on an army greatcoat, the loan of another friendly hand. It was made for a much bigger man and trailed on the ground. The ten-gallon hat was like a small tent on top of a larger one. I remounted with difficulty, hauling slack after me. The coat covered most of the horse. It was not easy to find stirrups or reins, for coat. The blanketed horsemen who passed saluted me; clearly they thought that, thus attired, I must be a very great chief. I bowed, not daring to release reins which I might never find again.

Suddenly the Government Path came to a level green plateau and without warning my horse broke into a fast canter. I had not encouraged it and was puzzled. Until then I was rather anxious for the horse. I had felt its heart pound as it toiled up those endless zigzags, heard its breathing grow laboured and seen the sweat pour down its sides. I hated to use a horse like that. Now I realized that it concealed secret reserves of strength. This animal was not exhausted. It went faster and faster. Incommoded by the coat, slipping about in the wet saddle, I vainly tried to check it. I rolled like a barge in the Bay of Biscay. First one foot came out of a slithery stirrup and then the other, and always one waved wildly in the air while I desperately recalled the golden rules. However, I still clung on; at one moment I believe I hung below the horse's belly and looked up into its big brown eyes, but I clambered back and at last it slowed down and stopped. I saw two sheds in the mountain mists. I realized then that these animals know when their night's resting-place is near, and like to reach it quickly.

This was a lonely trading-store, and a rest-house with bedsteads and blankets for such wayfarers as I, in the mountain-tops. It was owned by a white man but was in the charge of a lonely Basuto. The trader had left a note of welcome, with some food and brandy; I said this was a friendly land. Thankful to be whole, I wrote a letter and went to sleep, and the next morning early the horses were straining and sweating and panting up the flinty zigzags again, which for two hours crossed the shoulders of mountains bleaker and more barren than any I knew. Travel by pack-train is arduous and delaying, and I became surfeited with the savage splendour of these mountains. Here, where human life ends, nature is most alive and vengeful, and here its vengeance begins if man drives it into too tight a corner. When the dark men are pressed close together, in lands too small for them, they send their flocks ever higher until these nibble the mountainsides bare, and the rains sweep the unbound soil away, with the lean herds, into the ravines, driving the invaders back on those behind them. The arid desert begins on these mountain-tops where there is always rain.

This grey-brown wilderness was empty of all colour until we came over a crest and saw bright red battalions storming the mountains in front. In their sides the down-rushing water makes an indentation, like the groin between human thigh and belly, and leaves in these a deposit of the stolen soil. In these depressions grew myriads of Red Hot Pokers. Broad at the base of the column and thinning to a single leader near the mountain-crest, they were like regiments of redcoats, fighting up the slopes. Never grows the rose so red: I wondered if British soldiers, in those old campaigns, ever penetrated to this place.

Then we came to higher mountains still where only isolation and desolation remained. High places like these are the ends of the earth, for Land's End and Finisterre and all other places where earth meets water are only land's ends, and both land and sea belong to the one planet. But this is world's end. If you raise your arm here you reach into what lies beyond this minor planet. Here life ended, I thought, and then saw that it did not, quite. High overhead two great birds wheeled. I thought they must be eagles and they went in great, slow, unending curves. They had mastered problems which still defy the atom-splitters; they were lords of time and space. They could go on wheeling and never tire. They merely spread their pinions and let the wind do the work; not once did I see a pinion beat. They sailed on, majestically, indolently, and floated regally out of sight.

Yes, I thought, those are the lordly ones, the freest of all creatures that on earth do dwell, because they hardly dwell on it, remain at its extremities and put it behind them at will. Then I remembered that they too are tethered by the flesh in those wide wheelings that looked so fancy-free. They watched with keen eyes for a rat or rabbit and were not likely to see many, for in these altitudes the rat is held edible. However, they survived and had many consolations.

We came at last to a high green valley, and this time I had firm check on my horse, who knew it was near long before I saw it. In it, among surrounding kraals, lay a trader's store. The Government

Path and every mountain track converged on and ran past it. Here was salesmanship at its subtlest. No horseman or herdsman was compelled to buy his blanket or sell his wool at the store, but wherever he came from or went to he had to pass it, and the implicit invitation was strong. At this remote place, one Christmas Eve, the trader bought £120 worth of goods and sold £352 worth.

How come a big store and good house (and the mission church not far away) to a place hard enough for a mounted man even to reach? Every brick, plank, sheet of iron, pane of glass, pot or pan, must come over the mountains on four legs. There was an ox which carried a safe over these mountains to a store: it died as the safe was unloaded.

The store is the centre of Native life, where the men chat and the more numerous women gossip, between the fingering of blankets or the bargaining over hides. It is High Street for these countryfolk and for those on the hills around. While I was there a boy stole some trifle and was chased. He had barely emerged from the store when an excited chattering broke out on the hills around. From kraal to kraal, half a mile, a mile and more distant, went the news: 'There's something going on at the store ... it's young Maloi ... he's stolen something ... they're after him ... they've got him ... they've taken it away from him....'

The white traders of Basutoland lead a good, but a hard and lonely life. They are among the last of the frontiersmen. There are regular dynasties of them, like the Frasers and the Yeats; others again who were born there, perhaps of a British soldier-father, and own a single store; and others, young men who have come in from outside. At this Fraser store at Marakabei was a young man back from the Tank Corps, who was a talented black-and-white artist, painted fair watercolours and made the furniture for his house. The itinerant writer's life has many compensations, and among mine was that of finding, with astonishment, that my books had travelled on ox-back to some of these isolated places. An even more surprising experience befell me at the store near the historic mountain of Thaba Bosiu, now kept by Mrs. Bailey, the daughter of John Stephen Yeats. She told me that on March 22nd, 1940, she read an article of mine in a South African journal which foretold what happened in France a few weeks later; 'It all came about as you wrote,' she said. I could not recall the article at all; I have written so many. 'How in the name of wonder do you know the exact date of it?' I asked. 'It is my birthday,' she said.

The next morning was gloriously fine (the *mornings* usually are) and I woke to strange sounds. I went out and saw the women from the kraals coming in twos and threes to cut the chief's corn. As they came they gave a long, shrill cry, and were answered by the women already at the distant corn. It was as if they called 'Here we come' and the others responded 'Here we are', and sounded merry, and the cries echoed and re-echoed round the mountains. These voices carry by some trick of pitch (for the callers do not shout) which is outside the white man's ken. I saw our guides talk, almost quietly, to watching tribesmen on slopes a quarter-mile away, noticed the perceptible pause between question and answer as the one went and the other returned. After this journey I understood the speed with which news travels from tribe to tribe.

To cut the chief's corn is a communal, woman's duty, paid by a beer-drink. The women wore bright dresses; they choose the gayest colours from the lengths at the store and make them in the style favoured by Queen Victoria, whose picture hangs there. While they worked their lords caracoled about on horseback; the horses, from which they demand everything and to which they give nothing, flashed delicately and swiftly up the slopes on slender legs.

Later I watched the women return, having laid the corn and the beer low. They sang and swayed a little and laughed loudly; they were happy people. They gave a little roadside show for the stranger; four of them squatted and made music with voices and hands, and four others squatted facing them

and danced with rippling backs and shoulders. It was gay and infectious. They Do Understand Rhythm, I thought....

I was sorry to leave Marakabei and sorrier still when, high in the mountains, the afternoon storm broke on us. This was a melodramatic, barnstorming storm, which tore the sky to tatters, to very rags, and split the ears of us groundlings. Behind and in front of us was tropical heat; here the cold was icy, the hailstones were like pebbles, and I was quickly soaked to the skin, greatcoat and all. The thunder and lightning were incessant and soon the Government Path was a mess of mud through which sharp edges protruded. The panting, steaming horses struggled upward or slithered downward, and on all sides the soil slipped by the ton into the ravines and rivers. This was soil erosion in the act, and alarming to watch.

Just as night fell we made the half-way house and built a smoky fire of cowdung, hoping to dry our clothes. I wished the storm might stop, chiefly for the horses, which were out in it, and largely for ourselves, for in such rains the gullies become torrents, too deep for horses to cross. You may set out, cross two or three, and be halted at the fourth, where you must wait until the waters fall. That is uncomfortable in a tent. We had not a tent.

But next morning the sun was up, the path was drying, the fords were normal. In the afternoon we came again to the green plain leading to Matelas, four or five miles away. I felt my horse quicken and gave it its head. I paid the penalty later, but would not undo that glorious gallop for anything. I wanted all my life to sit on a horse going full out. I loved this horse now like a brother, and in a reasonable world would never have parted from it again. I felt that it would not allow me to fall off, and cannot otherwise account for remaining on its back.

I was in the lead, and once my horse set the pace, and the unsaddling place was in sight, the rest of the cavalcade was not to be held. Pack-horses and spare horses came streaming up, with manes and tails lying horizontally on the wind. Once an arrogant mule, a gate-crasher, passed us and my horse did not dispute the affront. I touched it with the whip, a mere nudge, as one friend to another, and the mule disappeared astern like a dead pig thrown overboard from a ship. I could not believe that animals, having such a journey behind them, could move so fast. I knew there was no place like home, but never before saw the force of its appeal so clearly proved. I just touched my horse with the whip again, a tickle it was; the cavalcade fell fifty yards behind. The beast seemed to have endless reserves of speed; it was fresher than at the start, four days before. My ten-gallon hat flew off; bereft of reason, I reached out and caught it just before it was too far away. I could not put it on again so I waved it in the air and whooped. Faster and faster we went. I never had more than one foot in the stirrups and not often one, but my guardian angel rode a-pillion behind me. The cavalcade drew near again; I flicked my horse's flank and, producing another fifty horsepower from some secret reservoir, it went like a rocket for the home-fence, now a quarter-mile away. I thought of jumping it, but decided in time that this would be unwise without at least one foot in a stirrup, and contrived to rein in.

I was seldom so happy in my life. For nearly five days I was proud of that gallop.

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## Chapter Twenty Four

### WHAT PRICE PROTECTION?

As I drove away from Basutoland I pondered on the human instinct for acquiring land, for territorial aggrandizement. Only the simple-minded or the superficial, I felt, would dismiss it as a disease of governments; it must be some deep instinct of the individual soul, given mass expression through governments. Was it a base instinct of mere greed and vainglory, or did it spring from some deep-rooted impulse of security and survival? It ran through the whole story of the time I lived in and through all history before that, as far as I knew it. The covetousness of some for the lands of others was ever the key to the rise and fall of nations and empires. It was the gospel of power and would not cease or become bearable with the rise of 'World Government'; that would be the greatest triumph, for as long as it lasted, of the impulse to strive for power over others.

I thought of all the lands, small or large, which in my own day caused disputes or wars between countries big and little. Macedonia, Thrace, Cuba, Herzegovina, Montenegro, the Sudetenland, Slovakia, Palestine; where are they now? I recalled how often, between 1933 and 1939, I wondered why Hitler harped on the Polish Corridor and prepared a war about it, when Germany's future clearly could only be happy in peace. The answer to that riddle, I decided in time, was that Hitler was in his heart the enemy of Germany. My own country, I reflected, was the only one I knew in history which, after the lesson of the American colonies, freely yielded self-government to its growing daughter-nations oversea, handed back the fruits of victory to the enemies of yesterday, relinquished rich lands to their native inhabitants or prepared subject races eventually to rule themselves in the remaining colonies. The final result of this new method was yet to see, but for the nonce, at all events, England on this different path, while suffering great tribulations, had been spared annihilating ones.

Here in Southern Africa I watched the old instinct at work again and wondered what its outcome might be. Alone among the great sovereign States which sprang from the British Empire, South Africa sought more territory. The demand was loudest among those Nationalist Afrikaners who most clamantly attacked English Imperialism, in its day. Was it a thing of reason, or of the old emotional instinct? If South Africa were in truth a white man's country, with a large and vigorously increasing white population seeking new outlets for its powers and prowess, good reasons might be advanced for it. But the white population was small, and the intention was to keep it small, and the preponderance of the black population was the ever-present problem which worried the white men. Why, then, aggravate *The Problem* by bringing in new masses of dark men who did not wish such inclusion? Their lands were not even rich, but for the greater part poverty-stricken by the white man's standards; only the black man could be, and was, happy in them after his fashion.

I could see no reasonable explanation, but the spread of boundaries was in the political air. This was an ambition of all South African governments, not only of the Afrikaner Nationalist one which took office after General Smuts's defeat in 1948. It merely took on with that change a note of some belligerence, the new Prime Minister, Dr. Malan, saying in 1949: 'It is unheard of that in a sovereign independent country like the Union there should be territories subordinated to a foreign country. South Africa is getting impatient.' Only in the twentieth century, probably, could a political leader choose and use words of ill-omen so recently proved; they unhappily recall certain allusions of 1938 and 1939 to Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland.

The actual policy of outward extension, however, was no different from that of Dr. Malan's political opponents and predecessors. It probably reaches a good deal beyond the three Protectorates of Basutoland, Swaziland and Bechuanaland. The native African Chairman of the

British Government's Gold Coast Commission said in 1949: 'We are not unaware of the fact that the Union of South Africa places its horizon at the equator.' That may be the case, and it was also the vision of the man the Nationalist Afrikaners particularly dislike in memory, Cecil Rhodes (although he envisaged it to contain the much greater white population which the Nationalist Afrikaners will not allow, apparently because they consider the British, who would presumably have to supply the increase, as 'the fifth column of an overseas nation', to quote Dr. Malan's words). The Nationalist Afrikaners have emigrated in such substantial numbers to Northern Rhodesia as to disquieten the Natives there and to form a political block, the weight of which is used to promote the gospel of Afrikanerdom. In Southern Rhodesia their numbers are proportionately smaller, but still enough to constitute a political factor.

When the fewness of the Afrikaners is considered, and the fact that the Nationalist Afrikaners are only a section of those few, the unease which their ambition spreads over an enormous area of Southern Africa is surprising. That shadowy State 'reaching to the Equator' would be one of the largest in the world, and under full development one of the richest. What mortal brain cannot conceive is that it could be built up on a republic of a few white people and of resentments in all directions. Moreover, the value of these resentments seems to be entirely confined to vote-catching. It is much more a matter of words than deeds. In practice the actions of the Afrikaner Nationalist Government of 1948 towards the English-speaking and the black population, were not much different from those of other South African governments. The picture which was given to the American and English newspaper reader, of the black population suddenly coming under 'a reign of terror' (Mrs. Roosevelt), or of English settlers besieging the ships to get away, was an absurd invention of 'adventurous politicians' afar who seek to grind an axe in South Africa.

Nevertheless the Nationalist Afrikaner Government was one of subtraction rather than addition; of reducing the place of the English-speaking South Africans in the Union and of diminishing the rights of the black population, rather than of adding to either. This, in its effect within the Union and among peoples outside whose inclusion was desired, was just as bad as a régime of actual oppression, because it darkened the future.

It seemed also, in the last analysis, to be an absurdity, without any real truth in the living present of South Africa at all. Thus the Nationalist Afrikaner Government planted the banner of *Apartheid* on the highest tower of its castle. This means apart-ness, or segregation; the separation of the white from the black race. In practice hardly anything happened or will happen, for the simplest of reasons: namely, that the Afrikaner farmer would probably spring to arms if he were deprived of cheap black labour for his farms. This makes *Apartheid* impossible, though it is a thing which the white South African of either race, and all the black population would adore if it could be done. It is the dream-solution of Lincoln and of other great Americans for the problem of the American-Negro, and found a sad little attempt at realization in Liberia. It could only be thoroughly tried if white men were ready to yield territory to black ones and do their own chores, and even then its results are not sure to forecast. For the present it is an empty word, much used by Communist and Zionist writers in America and England for the pursuit of their own ends. It is a strange sign of the twentieth-century times that the astute Afrikaner Nationalist politicians should be ready to incur abuse in those quarters for a thing they do not intend to do. As van Imhoff said long ago, much might have been better had it been done at the start. Today it seems as near an impossibility as any mortal transaction.

Since politics take no account of realities if they are based on resentments, the ambition to swell the boundaries of South Africa by enclosing within them the three Protectorates of Basutoland, Swaziland and Bechuanaland is taking clearer shape. They were there long before the sovereign Union was formed, so that to depict them as an offence to its sovereignty is a rhetorical flight. Their peoples asked for British protection and, though they would doubtless prefer to be quite alone,

regard it today more than ever as the priceless boon which it seemed to them in Trollope's day. The Basuto have been reminding London that they hold to Moshesh's compact with the Queen (who, as I say, still lives for them). The wise man, Tshekedi Khama, who long ruled over the Bamangwato of Bechuanaland as Regent (until his nephew brought a white wife to the kraal) has for many years been fighting in London to avert inclusion. The Swazis are equally alarmed and hostile to it.

Why any South African Government, let alone the Afrikaner Nationalists, should covet the three Protectorates is something which, perhaps, can only be explained by the age-old instinct for acquiring land. They are, in effect, Native Reserves, and one of the Union's main troubles is that its own Natives have not enough land. Their inhabitants would swell the black mass, a satisfactory manner of handling which has not yet been found. Their land is theirs now; if the white man's system of tenure of freehold were to be extended into it, failing some large outlet for the Natives elsewhere, that would but enlarge other present problems.

But in high politics such matters often seem to be decided in the interest of ulterior parties who are only seen at much later stages of the dispute. The fate of the Arabs in Palestine, at the hands of an international agency arrayed against 'racial antagonisms', is the best case in point. Thus the names Basutoland, Swaziland and Bechuanaland may in coming years, for a little while, occupy the headlines like those forgotten ones, Macedonia, the Sudetenland or Thrace.

The eventual inclusion of the three Protectorates in the South African Union was 'provided for' in the Act of Union of 1910. Why the British Government of that day made such provision is not much more clear than the reason why the one of 1917 issued the Balfour Declaration; perhaps the future looked different then. In the intervening forty years successive British Governments have resisted the requests of successive South African ones, to complete the process, by saying that no decision will be made until the Native populations have had a full opportunity of expressing their views. Possibly this stalemate has checked the Afrikaner Nationalists, up to now, in proclaiming the Afrikaner Republic in South Africa. The presence of British enclaves, with populations unitedly anxious to remain outside Afrikaner rule, would be a great blemish in their eyes. They might try to break the deadlock by petitioning the King, through the Privy Council, to fulfil the 'provision' of 1910 and have the Protectorates transferred to the Union.

Who knows, in that event, how far 'the wishes' of the Basuto, the Swazis and the Bamangwato could make themselves heard? The wishes of Native populations have played small part in great affairs for the last thirty years. On November 3rd, 1949, the British Government reiterated the undertaking of earlier governments about consulting the Native population before taking any decision. On November 6th, however, *The Times* remarked that 'On the question whether ... the Natives of the territories might not be better off within the Union, the Union have a case which should be sympathetically heard ... It is possible that these peoples may be persuaded to prefer a different allegiance, but while they continue to claim the protection that has been promised it cannot fairly be denied them.'

As in the case of Palestine, this seemed to foreshadow the translation of the debate to another plane: that of whether 'the Natives would be better off' instead of that of where they have a right to be. I have great respect for these premonitory hints of *The Times*. As I pointed out in earlier books, the British Government of 1943 in official statements still recognized the legal Polish Government in London and still fought for the liberation of Poland, but by March 1943 *The Times*, under the headline 'Security in Europe', declared that 'The sole interest of Russia is to assure herself that her outer defences are in sure hands; and this interest will be best served if the lands between her frontiers and those of Germany are held by governments and peoples friendly to itself.' The British Government of 1943 followed this counsel, and the intervening six years may have shown the



attentive newspaper reader how far the surrender of Poland served the security of Europe (or they may not).

Similarly, in September 1938, *The Times* recommended the cession of the frontier area of Czechoslovakia to Germany, and the British Government of that day, which promptly repudiated that advice, immediately followed it at Munich. The subsequent events did not much fortify the security of Europe.

Thus I feel that some high, invisible authority may some day decide that the Basuto, the Swazis and the Bamangwato would be 'better off' somewhere else than where they now are and fain would remain. The precedents are not happy for them, but such is the twentieth century. The arrangement would not, I fancy, be come to from respect or liking for the Afrikaner Nationalists; it might be part of one by which 'a more reasonable' authority came to power in the Union, and for this improvement the three Protectorates might be part of the price. The genuineness of the improvement would then have to be tested in the event. Even in the remote mountains of Basutoland the feeling of high politics was tangible. In the greater coteries of supernational politics a vision of a huge South Africa reaching to the Equator may also prevail; but not one under Afrikaner, or for that matter under South African, domination.

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## Chapter Twenty Five

### SOLILOQUY IN PLASTER

I landed on the Eleventh Dorsal (which is not a date in the French Revolution) and thought: 'That is the most jarring jolt I have had since I was hit on the Somme, longer ago, ahrrm, Than I Care To Remember.' Then other thoughts followed, implanted in childhood by the *Boy's Own Paper* and its like: 'If you are thrown remount at once; grin and bear it', and so on. So I remounted (today I wonder how) and lashed the horse. I found that galloping was done for that day. I was not happy even at a walk, having a swelling round my middle, so that the waistband of my breeches oppressed, and a lump in my throat, not caused by grief, which prevented me from answering my companion's inquiries, then and for an hour. We rode home. I was in the grip of a great fear. All who have been hurt will guess this dark foreboding: bed-pans. I was right.

Memory, I think from several similar experiences, must be a nerve or membrane, in appearance like the tape of a ticker-machine. If it suffers a sudden shock the injury extends a little on either side of the damaged part. I have often noticed that unconscious men, when they recover, forget not only what happened after the blow, but something of what went before it. Thus, although I fell off, I do not remember the fall. It was the penalty claimed by my horsemanship and by an acquaintance I incorrigibly seek to deny: fatigue.

I lay me down and when I tried to stand again folded like a jack-knife. After four days I was borne to the nearest place, some forty miles away, where my internal affairs could be photographed (this was in Natal). The photographs, excellent likenesses no doubt, showed something between a bamboo cane and the Leaning Tower of Pisa, with an upper section cracked, compressed and protruding. Then, in blissful unconcern, I first heard the word 'plaster'.

I have been onlooker at or participant in some strange affairs but shall never again share in so memorable a performance as that in which I now took the leading, though a passive part. It was a symphony in white. The background, an operating theatre, was white. The two doctors and five charitable sisters wore white. The bandages were white. The plaster was white, and wet. I wore my skin, which is said to be white. I was suspended between two tables. On one my arms rested, and my head on them; on the lower one, some distance away, rested my thighs. The essential me, in between, hung in the kind of curve once associated with the name of Gibson. All the beauty of line must have been in it, could I have surveyed myself, and in this shape I was to be rigidified.

In plastering, I found, speed is essential, and when the operation began I realized where slapstick and custard pies were born. Feathers never flew like that plaster. None escaped it; my devoted helpers received as much as I and the room a good share. I think the matter continued for over half an hour, although I was in no position to take precise note of time, and when it ended the place was a shambles in white, where white-robed figures tenderly removed from two tables the unmelted half of a snowman. It seemed to me a theme for ballet.

I lay stiffly abed and pondered on unwariness and spines. We forked radishes are nothing without our vertebrae. How silly a tree would look without its trunk! Strange, I thought, but there seems a jovial justice in this. My faults, if I have any, are that, loathing restraint and loving liberty, I go too far and too fast in search of it, and here I am, imprisoned in a penitent's shirt of concrete, a one-man pillbox; the penalty fits the offence! Though I could not now contemplate my navel, I remained philosophic enough until a thought occurred to me which made me shiver inside my cement corset, a thing easy to do, for it refrigerated the essential me, while what was left outside melted in the South African heat. To suffer the risk of heat-stroke and pneumonia together is

unusual. Ultimately I had a large coal fire built and remained huddled over it, with lobster-red face and chilled innards, until the plaster dried.

The thought which shook me was, 'What if this had happened in those mountains, two days' ride from aid?' I could not have ridden to succour, and did not think my spine would have liked being slung between two horses. I thanked my guardian angel for delaying this mischance a few days; they made a great difference.

There were strange pains in my back, and not only at the Eleventh Dorsal, but I saw no gain, once plastered, in lying on it. 'Can I go?' I said. 'If you keep it on and *go easy*,' they said. 'How long must I wear it?' I asked. 'Six months,' they said. 'Will my spine be all right then?' 'Well ... it *should* be,' they said carefully, 'if you keep it on and *go easy*.'

A man plastered from collarbone to pelvis receives the corporation and carriage of an alderman. Supporting these on weak legs, I returned to the outer world. Gone for the time were my dreams of Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Tanganyika, of Madagascar, Mauritius and Réunion....

Reunion, however, was near. She was on her way to me. She did not know about the plaster.

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## Chapter Twenty Six

### DAWN RENDEZVOUS

I stood on the dock's edge at Cape Town and peered seaward into the breaking dawn. Mysterious, ownerless golden lights spangled a thick blue haze. I could not tell if they belonged to the ship I awaited, because I could not see the harbour mouth. My back, inside the strait-waistcoat, felt that it would collapse like a concertina if that armour were removed. I had come fifteen hundred miles, by road, rail, air and on my feet, and on any other journey should have fallen by the wayside far back, but this rendezvous I would have kept, at need, by crawling on all fours.

Slowly the dark blue veil thinned and I saw the shadow of a great ship, to which the lights attached themselves. I fixed my eyes on them and saw that the shadow moved, slowly, through the haze. Tantalizingly deliberate is this last mile of a reuniting journey. The sun was up, the sea aglitter and the deserted dockside busy before the lavender liner came close enough for me to see them at last: Lorelei and the children. A man lives more than two thousand million instants in his time and of all those only a handful remain ever brilliant, a jewelled chain of living moments that never dulls. This one was the central pendant in mine. We did not speak, but smiled and waved. Words are vain when a train pulls out or a ship approaches and so we waited until we could be together. I knew I could not go aboard for several hours.

As the gap between hull and harbourside lessened, however, I felt my appearance demanded that I should shout one explanation to the deck far above, for I already saw the dawn of a question in her eyes. No trousers of mine would button over that plaster, so I wore some borrowed from a man of greater girth. As my jackets also would not meet, I had been lent a lightweight tunic made for its owner by the master tailor of a cavalry regiment in Palestine in 1917 (I never saw such tailoring and it was as good as new). I had the figure of Tweedledee, together with an unnatural and pompous erectness. My face was wan.

The children shouted with glee, and their mother smiled delight, but also with some perplexity. 'I'm very sorry,' I called up, 'but I've fractured my spine. I'm wearing a plaster, that's why I look like this.' She still smiled, but differently: with the smile of Niobe and of La Gioconda. 'I really couldn't help it,' I called up. 'I didn't say anything,' she called down. 'You looked a lot,' I said. The smile I knew returned. 'Tell me all about it later,' she said. 'Wait there now. I must get you aboard somehow. You can't stand there like that.'

On the evening of that enchanted day we sat on deck alone, for most of the passengers from England went ashore for the evening while those for Durban were not yet come aboard. I wanted to show her the lights of Cape Town, where they climbed from the Bay to the Mountain, but they were dimmed by a thick mist.

'We've come a long way,' I said, 'from London in the bombardment to this place.'

'It doesn't seem long,' she said, 'it seems no time at all.'

'Don't deprive me of an instant of it,' I said, 'it was a long and lovely way, and every moment better than the last, and this is the best of all.'

'I always told you we should be here together, one day,' she said. 'I wish the mist would lift, so that we could see the lights. I'm so starved for lights.'

‘It will, I said, ‘for us. I’m sorry to give you this shock.’

‘You are a ninny,’ she said. ‘Couldn’t you wait until I was here, to crack your back?’

‘I’m the sufferer,’ I said. ‘You can’t imagine how I overdrew my account at the bank of anticipation, on your behalf.’

‘I can, she said, ‘your letters made that quite plain.’

‘I lived this moment, when we would be on deck together, a thousand time, in imagination,’ I said. ‘The warmth and feel of you were palpable. And now I can’t get near you at all. I might as well be a man in a barrel, with two holes for my arms. What a cunning hoax has been played on me.’

‘Don’t worry,’ she said, ‘it won’t be long. Look, the mist is lifting. Do you know, I’ve never seen anything like this before, anyway, not that I can remember.’ Soon the whole jeweller’s shop-window lay before us in bright display. Through the dark sky above it fell a shooting-star. ‘That went a long and lovely way, too,’ she said, ‘and so quickly. Tell me some more.’

‘Of Thee and Me?’ I said. ‘I will, and then some more of Me and Thee. I wish I could get closer to you. If only I could get out of this contraption....’

She smiled. ‘What funny things happen to you,’ she said. ‘How long must you wear it?’

‘Six months,’ I said, ‘they *say*. Let them say.’

‘Now, now,’ she said, quickly, ‘you *must* do what they say, for all our sakes.’

‘It’s going to be a very quiet life,’ I said. ‘Quite different from what I hoped. I wanted to travel with you and show you so much in this lovely country. Now we shall be stuck in one place waiting for me to get well.’

‘Do you want anything better?’ she said.

‘You know how I love to go on and on, especially if you are with me, I said.

‘Do you want anything better?’ she persisted.

‘No,’ I said, ‘I never deserved or expected anything half so good. I can’t quite believe it yet. Thank you for coming.’

‘Thank you for having me,’ she said. ‘What a marvellous world it is and how fortunate we are. What a lot many people must miss!’

‘Did I ever tell you,’ I began, ‘that you ...’ and I said various things. She listened. ‘No,’ she said when I paused, ‘you never told me any of those things before. Tell me again,’ and so I did, and we sat on deck far into the night, and for nearly a week after that we sailed through sunny days and starry nights, humbly happy in the most delightful experience that human beings know: reunion against a background of enchantment. We loved the great ship and the quiet officers and stewards who had served the line in peace and war, sometimes in two wars, for many years. The Union Castle Line offers an example of union to the Union of South Africa which it serves. Fifty years ago Union ships and Castle ships would not speak to each other in passing! Mr. Churchill, steaming to the war in the S.S. *Dunottar Castle* in 1899, recorded that ‘We passed a homeward-bound liner,

who made great efforts to signal to us, but as she was a Union boat the captain refused to go near enough to read the flags ... It is difficult to see how the public can be the gainer by this silly antagonism.'

We came to Port Elizabeth and East London, finding hospitable friends at both places, and to Durban, where I was to be kept relatively inactive for many months. This was the hottest season of the South African year and I found the wearing of a concrete vest to be a torment which the Chinese forgot to invent. One day, maddened by its constriction, I tried to cut it off with a pen-knife behind a rock on the beach. After half an hour I was exhausted and bled a little from one or two cuts, and I browbeat my wife into completing the task. I did not realize the size of the thing until it was off. It snapped back into its torso-like shape and, being slightly bloodstained, looked like the gruesome relic of some nameless crime. I threw it into the Indian Ocean, which, retriever-like, obstinately returned it to my feet. At last I hid it in the bush.

I found at once that its rigidity had concealed from me certain matters in my back which now became clear. I thought of the X-ray photographs of an upper section of the Leaning Tower protruding from its alignment. I looked at the ocean rollers and an idea came to me. I chose a suitable spot, entered the surf and took my stand there, turning my face to the shore so that these rollers might break on the Eleventh Dorsal. I had a mad notion that nature's surgery would thus drive the projecting piece into its place. Also, I wanted to be cleansed of all memory of that plaster.

The cleansing was glorious, but the surgery did not work, and next day I went penitently to a doctor. He listened ironically and spoke casually of 'a collapse of the spine', thus giving me a vivid picture of the Leaning Tower crashing in ruins. I asked if nothing but plaster could secure this precious monument. I doubt if anything would have reconciled me to a second plaster, in that temperature, and I fancy he understood. I received a surgical brace. 'How long must I wear this?' I asked. 'Eight months,' he said. So, clamped in leather and metal, and becrutched under the armpits, I put aside all plans of travel for some time to come and settled down on a balcony overlooking Durban, to contemplate the mad and lovely world.

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## Chapter Twenty Seven

### CITY OF SUSPENSE

The man is lucky who spends a year of his life in Durban, half way between Australia and Argentina, even if a cracked backbone puts him there. It is a city of wide views and far vistas, a place from which the spinning earth may most agreeably be surveyed. It faces the brilliant ocean and at its back lies the high Valley of a Thousand Hills. On either side of it, up and down the coast, stretch the lovely sugar lands. Its scene was set by the gods in their most lavish mood, but an even greater enthrallment, for me, came from its multicoloured human drama. This in its bright hues fills every day with zest, at all events for such a stranger as I am. It is as if a great play went on before an audience, indifferent if not asleep. 'A world drama is being enacted in South Africa, part of the great drama of human life; we are in the midst of it, playing our part, and most of us do not know it' (*Black and White in South East Africa*, by Maurice S. Evans, C.M.G., Longmans Green, 1911). The words are apt. Durban is a front-line city of the twentieth century, but appears not to feel that.

Among the South African cities it is not alone exposed to the impact of future events. It is perhaps nearer to greater problems than the others. It hangs suspended in space between 1850 and 2050. In 1850 it was hardly created. In 1950 it is a great city. What will it be in 2050 when the questions of the twentieth century have at length been answered and the great adjustments made, when, in all probability, mankind will for a while have settled down again?

Its people are not conscious of being actors in a Greek tragedy; I use the comparison, not because I think the course of events must of necessity prove tragic, but because of their apparent feeling that these events are not for them to shape. In South Africa itself Durban (and all Natal) has been relegated in the last forty years to an ever-diminishing share in national affairs. Outside South Africa, it looks across the ocean to teeming India, the vanguard of whose millions already has a firm grip on the East African coast, and particularly on Durban. Whither is that process to lead? The people of Durban feel, somewhat resentfully, that they face 'a difficult, perhaps insoluble problem' (Mr. Maurice Evans) but do not show any sense of its immediacy. They are tolerant and good-humoured, slow to take affront and easy-going, and often tell each other that they live in a back-water. The state of mind may be one which grows in this latitude, for the line of the earth's periphery on which they live also runs through Perth and Brisbane, to the east, and Buenos Aires and Valparaiso to the west, and these places, too, count among the sleepier hollows in the mountainous conflicts of this age.

Durban makes no conscious choice between suffering in the soul and taking arms against a sea of problems, preferring the first as nobler. Its people often complain of their soul's sufferings and reproach each other with inactivity about them. The lament about Native and Indian encroachment is often heard, and the many remedies are as often discussed, but on the whole Durban prefers to leave matters there. The shape of the great puzzle seems fairly clear. It is that the white folk live among two other peoples, Native and Indian, who practise polygamy and multiply fast; also, as Cecil Rhodes pointed out, the white man has stopped the Natives killing each other and are thus keeping their numbers low. The consequent outnumbering of the white folk could only be avoided by white polygamy or white immigration. The first is not feasible; to the second Durban, on the whole, seems not much less opposed than the Nationalist Afrikaner. An aversion to Immigrants is in all oversea countries often to be found in those who have migrated.

Thus Durban occupies in the twentieth century the place of a beleaguered city, and life there is extremely pleasant. The white folk occupy the better suburbs, the sea-front, and a diminishing part of two central business streets. These lead to a spacious and admirable square, with various

buildings for civic duties and for performances, dances, films and other entertainment, to which the white people transport themselves by car from the suburbs at night, returning in a few hours to their homes. The climate is enchanting and the night-scene lovely, but empty of white people save at this central point, and that is only thronged until about eleven o'clock. To the north is Zululand and all around is India. The Zulus are blithe and the Indians are diligent. The white people worry about both. A few enlightened white men see the future in its entire shape and realize that the only answer, favourable to the continued foothold of the white man, is to be found in the Book of Numbers. The white population lives on a fortunate island, in these stormy times, but the ever-present problems prevent it from feeling itself particularly fortunate.

Durban in wartime was world-famous for its hospitality to British and Allied troops. This began when *The Lady in White*, whom countless thousands remember as the first expression of that universally friendly reception, sang songs of welcome to the troopships as they entered the splendid harbour, and it continued warmly and generously until they left. Some of these men, returning in 1948 and 1949, were disconcerted by the change they found, for the voice of the Nationalist Afrikaner and the Communist, campaigning against Immigrants, was loud even in Durban. Hearts warmed to British ships and fighting-men when the Japanese were reported to have established a naval base on the Madagascar coast and to be preparing an attack from the sea on South African coast towns, when listeners in Durban heard a voice from Zeesen ironically telling them the names of ships that had left the harbour a few hours before. But in 1949 the German South African who broadcast from Zeesen was back in South Africa, a freely pardoned man among his friends who sent him that information.

Durban, however, could not help that it was one of many things done in the name of the old quarrel which, with the other problems, oppresses all life in South Africa today. Durban dislikes these things but does not grow ill-tempered about them. It placidly goes its way into the second half of the twentieth century, somewhat anxious about the outlook but refusing to be much disturbed. Least of all front-line cities in the world has it the feeling of being part of 'a world drama', and perhaps that is all to the good; an excess of histrionic feeling is a dangerous thing, and an absence of it refreshing in this century.

It is a place where the most delightful things happen quite naturally. In 1928 a female hippopotamus began an unaccountable stroll from Zululand which took her, in thirty months of wanderings, all through the populated Natal coast and through Durban, where she startled two late revellers in the chief thoroughfare, West Street, one early morning, and thence to the borders of the Cape Province, four hundred miles away. Natal loved her until she was shot by an illiterate farmer, who unhappily could not read newspapers, in the Keiskama river, becoming in death 'Huberta the Hippo' where she had for the two and a half years of her fame been Hubert.

Monkeys sometimes came to the garden which my garden overlooked and another one, where I also rested my back, harboured a snake or two. The monkeys were amusing visitors, to me, though not to those who grew fruit or vegetables. The snakes: well, who likes a snake. They gave me food for thought. Why, I wondered, of all the wild things that once had their being in these parts, have the ape and the viper alone (save for that solitary hippo) remained, in small numbers, near the haunts of the white man? Were they the rearguards of nature, or its fifth columnists, left to bide its time and see whether the expulsion was final. Who knows? 'Fifty years of civilization have not brought sufficient wisdom to the intelligent Colonist to enable him to circumvent the white ant', wrote an eminent resident of Durban, Mr. George Russell, in 1899. Today, fifty years later, the matters of the white ant, the Native and the Indian, have not been solved. Durban, however, continues as unhurriedly as ever on its pleasant journey down the years and through the problems.



## Chapter Twenty Eight

### I, CYPRIAN!

It would be easy, and is tempting, to write current history in the metre of a Cautionary Tale:

And now Augustus is the boy  
Who blacks the boots at the Savoy!

Take the Zulu. He, too, was deathly proud and now blacks boots. His humbling might be a clear warning to others. He was full of soldierly valour and lacked the civic sort. His regiments, unequalled in magnificence, stand apart in military history, yet the lion-mane and leopard-skin must have covered a coward. The Zulu, so brave in combat, suffered a fearful tyranny at home and his courage, if native to him, was yet maintained by fear. Decimation and self-impalement, in the Roman Legions, were petty penalties compared with those which the Zulu *impis* and their captains knew.

The Zulus beat all goers (for none cared to come to them and only the Basuto withstood them) until the white man arrived with his hornless cattle, called horses, and his fiery pebbles, called bullets; but they never rose against their worst enemies, King Chaka and his brother and murderer, King Dingaan. Chaka the Terrible, the Mighty One whose spirit the Zulu still fears, was the greatest of a fantastic House which ruined the Zulu nation; a Moshesh might have saved much more for it. Chaka put seven thousand people to death when his mother died, killed any of his five hundred concubines who bore him a child, forbade his warriors to marry, made men kill their wives, sons their fathers and sisters their brothers.

The colours of such holocausts fade quickly from time's canvas, while those of charging *impis* remain bright. Those glistening men beneath the nodding plumes, spurred on not by their own vaulting ambition but by the prick of fear, remain real and vivid; the victims are mute, shapeless and incomprehensible. Disraeli said the Zulus were 'a remarkable people; they defeat our generals, they convert our bishops, they have settled the fate of a European dynasty'. Actually they defeated *a* general, one of their chiefs deluded one confiding bishop about his attachment to Christianity, and they ambushed the Prince Imperial. The Zulu lives long and if you give a penny to an ancient sitting on the kerb in Durban today you may place it in the hand that assegai'd that Prince. You may also present it to an old man whose sons would formerly have cherished him, in his declining days at his kraal, but who are now lost in the shanty-towns of Johannesburg, possibly in the company of Native girls who have become prostitutes. This effect of the impact of two races, one advanced and one backward, upon each other in the shadow of the mines and factories weighs heavily on the thoughts of enlightened white South Africans.

On the Berea, the residential ridge overlooking Durban, where the resplendent Zulu once hunted, he now works as houseboy, in white shorts and moujik-like blouse. He lives in a little *kia*, or house, apart from his employer's, who might rest tranquil if he slept in servant's quarters within, but now worries often about undesirable guests in the *kia*. This is the small reality of *Apartheid*, the separation of races, an ideal the total realization of which both parties would fervently welcome if it were practicable. They are in fact inexorably cast together, each needing the other, unless one ousts the other. The houseboy will die a 'boy', no matter how old he grows, and cannot aspire to that right of manhood, the opportunity to advance.

In the town the Zulu works in shops, offices and factories, or pulls a ricksha. The ricksha-boys look the happiest of a congenitally happy breed, and clearly rejoice in fine feathers and the parade of

masculine strength. About twenty years ago some letters, on a suitably high moral level, were exchanged in the correspondence columns of *The Times* about the indignity of ricksha-riding for white people. The writers were offended that dark men, between shafts, should pull reclining white men; the difference between such labour and that of a white ferryman on an English river might be hard to explain. Anyway, the days when 'the white inhabitants are practically the only ones using the ricksha' (*Black and White in South East Africa*, 1911) have gone. Today the rickshas seldom carry white folk, and often Indians or Natives. The ricksha-boy remains one of the blithest beings in Durban.

Durban contains over a hundred thousand Natives, mostly Zulus. Where do they sleep, if they are not houseboys? Though the Indian may, the Native may not own a house. That is the practice, whatever the law, and few Native householders are to be found anywhere in South Africa outside a few model settlements like those of Port Elizabeth and Stellenbosch and the pattern villages of the Tongaat Sugar Company in Natal. The polite fiction is that the Native sleeps either in his *kia*, if he is a houseboy, or in a barracks for males only, if he is a factory-worker; and that he retains his native kraal, returning to it, and to his womenfolk when his term is up. In fact the Native male population far outnumbers the *kias* and the beds in the barracks, and constantly increases. There is a single hostel, much over-crowded, for the female Native population. Women with children are debarred and one strangled a newborn infant, rather than leave, just before I visited it. Rider Haggard's name was among the signatures in the visitors' book; he went there forty years ago.

Multitudes of Natives, then, sleep here, there and everywhere, in sheds and shanties, under the sky, where they can. Yet they are not so miserable by their own standards as by the white man's. If you grew up in a beehive hut, you do not find a shanty intolerable; if your mother bore you in a field, you do not rebel against bearing your own child in an ambulance. The great debate about the Native is mainly carried on by people far away who do not know what he thinks or wants, but assume he feels what they would feel in his place, which is a different thing. I never met a white man in South Africa who was sure he knew what was in the Native mind. The wall between the races is huge. What I think, however, is that these deprivations may count less with him than the denial of any way to better himself. That arises from the numerical inferiority of the whites and their disinclination to increase themselves. The vents are closed and the pressure grows.

If verdicts were being bandied about (as they constantly are by a long line of far-away critics from Mr. Keir Hardie to Mrs. Roosevelt) the true one might vindicate the white man in South Africa by this simple test: the dark man survives and multiplies. He has not been almost exterminated like the North American Indian (as an Afrikaner Minister, Mr. Eric Louw, aptly remarked at a United Nations debate, 'We have at least left enough Natives to *have* A Native Problem'). His numbers grow, he effortlessly retains his separate individuality, and his physique overcomes the ills, tuberculosis and venereal disease chief among them, which the white man's cities have brought and which appal the enlightened white men. Some force, incalculable if it is not divine, as yet protects him from the epidemics which humane investigators fear ('In the shacks amoebic dysentery is rapidly spread by the ingestion of human faeces and tuberculosis by the inhalation of contaminated air. And should smallpox or typhoid or bubonic plague once make an entry there, the consequences will be devastating. Moreover, the criminal statistics are appalling. In the Cato Manor district alone during six months there were twenty cases of murder and six of rape ...'; from Mr. Justice Broome's Report on 'the legitimate needs and grievances of the Native population of the City of Durban in respect of housing, health welfare, etc.,' 1948).

In spite of all the Zulus, next to the Basuto the greatest of the Bantu races, have remained a nation. They still have much of their Zululand, a bequest from British rule, and mainly hold to their tribes, kraals and king, for all the 'lost ones' of the Rand. The Zulu in Durban is luckier than the one in Johannesburg; his home is near and his women visit him in the city, or he them in the kraal. He

does not look an altogether luckless man as he goes through the streets with his trail of bright-eyed little hens behind him, he in town finery, they in their best beads. Save for the ugly singlet which someone has persuaded them to wear over their breasts, they are as they were in Chaka's day, oiled, glistening, plaited, and walk with timid dignity behind their lords.

At the other end of their trail, too, around the distant kraals, they are pretty to watch as they wait in the fields on a Saturday afternoon for their lover's or husband's visit by Indian bus. They are naked save for the little kilt and the beads, but love to adorn themselves with a white man's towel, gaily striped. This they scrub in the river until it gleams, and wear, draped or negligently hung on their shining brown bodies, with the grace of a duchess in ermine. They are one big smile, and none need pity the Zulu his homecoming, or even his polygamy. The men most to be pitied are the white Native Affairs officials in the locations and barracks, who have to pit insufficient resources against ever-growing overcrowding.

In the Royal House on a hilltop some two hundred miles north of Durban lives Cyprian, King of the Zulu, the ruler of this nation once feared, now humble, still virile. A factual book about South Africa, where everything is disputed, could hardly be written, so I must at once qualify this description: I cannot swear that he is a king, or rules, or that by any judgment but mine the Zulus remain a nation. His status varies with the eye of the beholder, South African or Zulu. In 1948 he was confirmed by the South African as Chief of the Usutu tribe; in Zulu estimation, however, the Usutu are the chief Zulu tribe and their chief is the King.

Whether he is merely a tribal chief by white man's sufferance or King by Zulu law, the hills awoke again to the mighty shout of the war cry and to that thunder of feet which makes the very earth shake, when he was installed. Five, thousand Zulus, in small bands under their headmen, gathered at the Royal House (a modest bungalow, much less impressive than Chaka's beehive city). The old barbaric splendours of a Royal feast were renewed; the beasts were killed and roasted, the gourds of beer passed round, and the warriors became excitable enough to worry their headmen. Cyprian wore raiment resembling that of a Salvation Army bandmaster. His warriors were ragged caricatures of the old impis. They wore the skins, of leopard and monkey and buck, but beneath them the tattered shirts and trousers and pullovers which they can no longer bear to discard. Yet these covered thews and sinews not much less than of old.

That was a strange episode in the comedy of black and white. Three months earlier a general election left the Afrikaner Nationalists with a slender majority in the lower House, but none in the Senate. Three months ahead lay a minor election for a few 'Native Representative' seats in the Senate; victory in these would have given the Government control in the Senate as well. Between these two elections Cyprian was confirmed Chief of the Usutu and publicly told by the Minister for Native Affairs: 'The question of his being declared Paramount Chief of the Zulus will be gone into later and much depends on his own conduct. It is now up to him, and the Zulu chiefs and the people, to show that he is worthy of being made Paramount Chief and that they wish to support the Government....'

This statement was made on the eve of polling-day. Subsequently the Afrikaner Nationalist candidate distributed to the Zulu voters a circular saying: 'I, Cyprian, make known to the country that after having deliberated over the candidates for the election, I support the Nationalist candidate ... I ask the people of my father to support him.' The signature was rubber-stamped: 'Cyprian'.

Such strong support for the Afrikaner Nationalist cause was somewhat unexpected in Zululand and this circular awoke much interest and comment among all classes of the community, Native and European. This led the Nationalist candidate to make an explanatory announcement: He had, he said, visited Cyprian at the Royal Kraal 'and drew his attention to the remark passed by the

Minister for Native Affairs'. 'No inducement', he added, 'was held out to the Chief to support me', but a few days later he received through the post 'a letter bearing the Chief's rubber stamp'. As time pressed he had it copied and distributed by post to the Native electorate. These circulars were similarly rubber-stamped 'Cyprian'.

In the event the Zulu voters rejected the advice thus given, for the Nationalist candidate's opponent was elected by 372,184 votes against 68,414.

The matter of the Paramount Chieftaincy, like all else in Africa, remains for the future to settle. In the mind of the Zulu, as far as the white man can plumb it, Cyprian appears to be firmly enthroned and the Zulu Royal House to be firmly established. In this particular case the pull of the towns, of the factories, of urbanization, of the politicians in distant continents who seek to grind axes on the differences between dark men and white men in the African one, had not yet been enough to alter that. Zulu nationhood continues, at any rate for the present, a virile force, and the Zulu seems often to revere the memory of Chaka and Dingaan as a Frenchman might revere that of Napoleon or a German that of Hitler, for a' that. This is something above (or below) reason.

Meanwhile, the Zulu laughs easily and habitually; it seems to be his normal countenance. Often white folk wonder what he is laughing at, or if he is laughing, child-like, at nothing.

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## Chapter Twenty Nine

### PASSIVE AGGRESSION

By whichever road you enter Durban (save the wet one, and even that is the *Indian* Ocean) you must pass through the encampments of the besieging Indian Army. They lie athwart the coastal roads from north and south and the inland one from Johannesburg. They proclaim themselves, even to the stranger, by colour and squalor, by long hair and bright saris, by furtive houses and fetid hovels. Where the Indians go, say the white folk, all life withers; but the Indians thrive and increase. Where they squat no blade of grass apparently wishes to grow, yet they have few equals as growers of fruit and vegetables and can make a pumpkin sprout on a pump-handle.

The inner city is encircled by them again. The white man has two parallel thoroughfares, West Street and Smith Street, but even in the bright noonday avoids the other parallel streets, which the besieger has occupied. This is siege by commerce and invasion by purchase. If it were a battle of arms the communiqué might announce that the attackers had established themselves across the main approaches, penetrated the fortifications, and nearly surrounded the central citadel. Everywhere the white man has fought to the last, only yielding when the price offered was beyond his strength to resist.

When young Mr. Winston Churchill and young Jan Smuts were campaigning against each other between Durban and Johannesburg and thinking of decisive victories either way, a third young man of the twentieth century was discovering, in Durban and Johannesburg, his theory of passive resistance, which now looks like a novel one of unarmed aggression, in the light of the results it has achieved in Natal. Mr. Gandhi may or may not have foreseen this, but his idea is proving an effective new strategy in the pursuit of old aims. The wrongs (as he thought them) of the Indians in Natal produced his new theory that armed resistance was vain, improper or unnecessary, and that oppressive edicts could be broken by non-violent means. For instance, people forbidden to use a certain street could sit down in it in thousands during rush-hour. Then their rulers were forced either to shoot them, which they would not do, or to remove them, which they could not.

This simple notion is capable of infinite variation and is of much charm, but in its later stages became a form of passive aggression, the counter measure to which has not yet been devised. In India it changed the shape of world affairs. Mr. Gandhi bequeathed it to the colonizing Indians of Natal and the East African coast generally and they have made good use of it. His invasion of Natal (of invading which both Boers and British were accusing each other fifty years ago) has gained much ground without a shot fired.

The Indians were brought, as slaves, to Natal in 1860, after the British settlers had been hard at work for twenty years. Their position in South Africa, therefore, is analogous to that of the Negroes of the American Southern States, with one great difference that they were almost immediately freed. In Natal and in the American South one striking and unforeseeable result has followed from the importation of slaves; that the freed slaves are in both countries today much more prosperous than the original dark-skinned population, the Native of South Africa and the 'Red Indian' of the United States. Apparently this consequence springs in both countries from the refusal of the Red Indian and the Bantu alike to adopt or submit to the white man's creed of hard work and acquisitiveness.

The Indians, the hopeless underlings of a rigid caste system, were as glad to leave India as the planters were to have them, for the Zulu would not cut sugar. His tribal tradition and training tell him that field work is women's labour. He sees no indignity in domestic labour, and would rather

cut the white man's corns than the white man's corn. So the Indian came, leaving behind the overbearing Brahmin, famine, suttee (but not child marriage), and found in Natal opportunity beyond his dreams. Twenty years later his condition already surprised Anthony Trollope: 'I have passed through a village of coolies where the men had their wives and children and were living each under his own fig-tree. Not infrequently they hire Kaffirs to do for them the heavy work, assuming quite as much mastery over the Kaffir as the white man does.'

Trollope was astonishingly farsighted. Long before Natal grew really uneasy about its Indians (they have never penetrated in numbers into the other three provinces) he wrote, in 1879: 'There is a side to the sugar question in Natal which to me is not satisfactory ... There are 320,000 Natives in Natal ... yet the work of the estates is done by Coolies from India ... It seemed to be so sad that with all that idle strength standing by, requiring labour for its own salvation, with so large a population which only labour can civilize, we who have taken upon ourselves to be their masters should send all the way to India to do that which it ought to be their privilege to perform. But so it is. There are now over 10,000 Coolies domiciled in Natal, all of whom have been brought there with the primary object of making sugar ... After his five years of compulsory service the Coolie may seek a master where he pleases, or may live without a master if he has the means.'

There are now over 230,000 Indians in Natal and today's traveller may vainly wonder why the Indian was allowed from the start to acquire land and dwelling, shop or business in a way denied to the Native. Even those who are readiest to say they like the Native but cannot stomach the Indian do not answer that question. The constant complaint is heard that the Indian will soon be much more numerous than the white man. He may already be so; none can count how many Indians go into one motor car or how many children run round an Indian shack. He breeds with gusto and is a polygamist, and on that account alone his passive resistance to certain white ordinances, which exclude him, becomes a form of passive aggression. If all are to have 'equal rights' (for instance, to family allowances or pensions) where is the equality of right between a man who marries and supports one wife and three children and leaves one widow, and he who has two or three wives and fifteen or twenty children working for him, and bequeaths several widows? The Indian birthrate in Natal is 37.1, compared with 33 in India and 19.1 in England and Wales.

The Indians who came to Natal were 'Asiatic labourers from densely populated areas in India belonging to the lowest classes who had been living in a state of semi-starvation', according to Mr. Gandhi. Today the Indian community contains many poor men, but as a community is wealthy and owns a large part of Durban, where the Native owns nothing. It includes very rich men, who have luxurious clubs at Isipingo and other outlying places. The Coloured girl in Durban often finds her way to these places and sometimes goes through a Hindu wedding ceremony, later being cast off without any or all redress.

All things are comparative, and the outcry which is often raised at United Nations meetings, about the treatment of the Indians in South Africa rings false to those who observe how seldom the roofless Bantu is mentioned there. The Indians of Natal enjoy the same advantage, in these international poker-games, as the Political Zionists. They are wealthy and have powerful friends in those places; the Native, like the native Arab of Palestine, has none, so that his rights or wrongs go equally unheard. Thus Mother India, which cared not a fig for these orphans when they went to seek their own fig tree in Natal, is loud on their behalf, and is often supported by the humanitarian Liberals of London and New York, who rejoiced to see the Palestinian Arabs driven from their native sands. What Mother India's game is may emerge in the next half-century, as the unexpected results of Mr. Gandhi's political thought have appeared from the last one. Pandit Nehru once remarked with emphasis that 'India happens to have 300,000,000 people', and on another occasion that 'Colonialism must end'. Indian Colonialism, however, may be just beginning.

The sheer weight of that great mass of population, and of its passive method in colonization, is being felt all down the east coast of Africa. Of the islands in between, white men casually say that 'Mauritius is already lost'. In Tanganyika and Kenya the growing pressure is increasingly felt, and in Fiji, on the other side of India, too. In Natal such authorities as Senator Heaton Nicholls think that: 'India, already overpopulated, is looking for other lands to which the people can migrate. The land they are looking at is Africa. Does anyone think that a handful of Europeans in Africa, and especially South Africa, are going to thwart the policies of a huge nation like that.'

The debate ever returns to that 'handful' and to the disinclination of South Africa to let it grow. That appears to be the breach in the ramparts. Meanwhile the discussion about the Indians, like that about *Apartheid*, revolves round an empty word: repatriation. All parties are theoretically in favour of it, as they are of *Apartheid*; the Indian Government nominally accepts it; and none intends to carry it out for the obvious reason that you cannot repatriate a man from his own *patrie*, the land of his birth. You can only expatriate him, if someone will receive him. South Africa is these Indians' *patrie*. I cannot guess their feeling for unknown Mother India, but a celebration of Indian independence, which I watched on the beach at Durban, was a spiritless festival without inner fire. They will stay in Natal and they breed faster than the white man, who can outdo them only by procreation or immigration. The sum seems simple but the result is unacceptable.

With many gifts, the Indians of Natal do not endear themselves. Mr. Gandhi's son often seems to despair of them and has been howled down for saying: 'I am a believer in God and there are many people here who are non-believers.' They are often so inefficient that their prosperity seems at first sight strange. It chiefly derives, however, from the two great wars. Bans on normal commerce, which the white man of the twentieth century automatically accepts as a normal part of these affairs, automatically enrich a community which has an especial aptitude for extra-legal commerce, so that it can supply that which lacks in the open market. When these prohibitions are continued long after the fighting ends (a practice also accepted as normal in many white countries today) the enrichment of those highly qualified in clandestine buying and selling mechanically continues. It is another facet of passive resistance, or passive aggression, and the white man has never yet matched the Oriental in this talent, though he may have to learn.

The Muslims are few among the Natal Indians, and are quieter, soberer folk. The Hindus predominate and their displays of fire-walking and the festival of the Tai-Pusam may be publicly witnessed. This religious exhibitionism is startling enough, even to those who try to respect the customs of others. It is marvellous to see men and women, with rolling eyeballs, having silver tridents stuck through their protruded tongues so that they cannot retrace, or to watch hundreds of hooked pins being stuck in to a man's chest and back, as if he were being baited for fishing, and these hung with limes and little jars of milk, and a heavy processional car then hitched to the hooks in his stretching skin, and this drawn to the temple by him, while he walks on sandals with sharp blades and pointed nails set in them, all without the spilling of a drop of blood. These mysteries, and the fire-walking on unscathed soles, are beyond the white men's ken. They are also repugnant to him, and if his star has set him to live in Natal, which has the Star of the Nativity in its heraldic arms, he feels he must protect himself against domination by such widely different folk.

The white South African, however, does not suit any action to such thoughts. He complains about Immigrants and Indians impartially and keeps the first out while the second increase. He winces when a Mayor of Johannesburg says, 'Durban is now an Indian and Native city from which the Europeans have withdrawn to the suburbs' but refrains from even retorting that the kettle is no blacker than the pot. He says cheerfully, 'Durban will soon be another Bombay' and goes happily off to a game of bowls, possibly in the spirit of Drake.

Sir Maharaj Singh, Governor of Bombay, who was formerly Agent-General of the Indian Government in South Africa, in 1948 said: 'As one who has travelled a great deal in South Africa I can say, without hesitation, that within the lifetime of many of us there will be a revolution by the non-Europeans against the Europeans, in which the former are bound to win in the long run and will have the support of all Africans, all Asiatics and also a large number of Europeans.'

The moral basis for this opinion seems doubtful, for liberated India, or at all events Hindustan, was among the countries which upheld the European invasion of Asiatic Palestine. In any case, if the implication is that the Indians of Natal, specifically, have cause to rise, that seems absurd in view of the manner of their coming to South Africa, their present lot, and the immense advantages they have over the Natives, who by no means find common cause with them, but particularly resent them. For that matter, I can foresee no major revolution in a South African vacuum. That could only happen through outer encouragement and support, of the kind which led to the expansion of the Soviet area into Europe and China and to the extermination of the natives of Palestine. At that point, however, the matter passes into the sphere of the super-national poker-game, in which the Indians of Natal are but one small though useful card.

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## Chapter Thirty

### CRY HUE!

I wandered by night through one of the Native locations of Durban, a great block of barrack-buildings where the male Natives who come from their kraals to work in the city are supposed to sleep at nights. Thousands of men packed themselves into it and thousands more could find no corner in it and slept who knows where. The growth of the problem overwhelms each separate attempt to reduce it; thus a fine new building there, originally put up as a recreation hall, by sheer pressure of natural instinct was now surrendered to the visiting wives from the kraals. 'Man must have his mate': the wartime song was true. 'The present inadequacy of accommodation necessitates indecent overcrowding and unduly hard restrictions on the length of visits; it should be mentioned, however, that Durban is the only city in the Union that supplies this sort of accommodation at all' (the Broome Report, 1948). The hall was thronged with reunited, though nearly invisible pairs. Their marital bed was the floor, as it would have been in a kraal. Two benches apiece, set on their sides against the wall, made for each pair a small, triangular bedchamber behind fences not much higher than a recumbent human form. I hastily withdrew, and went across the compound between sleepers scattered on the grassless ground.

I saw a tall, pale and spectral figure approach, ghostly against this background of black night, black men and dark buildings. It was a white man, wearing only a blanket which left shoulders, arms and legs bare. The eerie figure picked its way between the dark prostrate forms and halted at a word from my guide. Pink eyes looked at us from negroid features and suddenly I knew: it was an albino, a black man whiter than any white man. He answered questions dully or reluctantly and went his way, nature's outcast among his kind. What circles within circles: here, among millions of dark men who might resent the wider life that lay open to those of fairer skin, was one who must long to be black, like his fellows! The inscrutable destiny which made pigmentation also made his lack of it. It must be hard, I thought, to be pallid and yet suffer the disabilities of being swart.

The mystery of colour is among the greatest of our little planet and I never met a wise man who thought he knew the truth of it. They all believed, however, that if a mingling of colour is the final answer of providence, that must lie in some future too far off for them to see. In South Africa (and the American South) colour is, or has been made by politicians to be, an ever-present topic, which none can escape. The fear of mixing is so great that, in a country where rugby football is a passion, even the visit of the famous All Blacks from New Zealand prompted dark forebodings lest they include some Maoris and be not All White.

Yet I do not believe that there is any natural antipathy between men on account of *colour*. Any aversions between differently coloured groups arise 'from the instinct of survival, not from the variations of hue at all. That may be most easily tested in South Africa, where the Nationalist Afrikaner's fear for his Afrikanerdom makes him as resentful of the British, who are of his own colour, as of any other. Indeed, he appears to be ready to destroy himself for that aversion, which causes him to refuse to replenish the white stock in South Africa through immigration from other white areas. He does not want to be dominant merely because he is *white*; he just wants the chief place in the land over all others, and for that ambition even accepts the risk of submergence by the rising black tide. The *colour* bar is a lie of politics. There always were suspicions and resentments between peoples of different origins, customs, speech, ability and advancement. When England was rural, people at different ends of the same village distrusted each other as foreigners, and the Islanders of Wight still call the mainlanders 'overners'.

The real question of colour is not that of an inhuman discrimination merely on account of the skin's tinge, as it is presented to the mass-mind in the great centres of white population. It was made by God and man has not found the answer. It is as complex as time and as mysterious as space, and enlightened men, in my experience, cannot come to any conclusion about it. It is not simply a matter of black mating with white, and thus producing equation. It goes much deeper than skin, far down into incompatible ways of life and beliefs that cannot be equated in any foreseeable time. There are enormous gulfs which could only be bridged in long ages, if ever, and may be lethal penalties for any who would leap across without looking. The colour of the skin is an insignificant trifle among much greater matters, a tiny part of something as dangerous to touch as an adder. It is a matter of the dark man's soul as much as, perhaps more than, that of the white man's. Mere mating and the opening of ranks are no answer to witchcraft and the bloody superstitions, initiation ceremonies and the cow-dung floor, the fish-hooks and idolatries of Tai-Pusam, blood sacrifices and strong medicine, child marriage and polygamy; all this would not be solved if a sudden end were put to 'discrimination'!

Sometimes the thing is tested, and rarely with auspicious results. Long ago a Scots girl married a Gaika chief, who became a Presbyterian minister and brought her back to South Africa. In Scotland, among her white folk, the matter seemed simple; in Africa, among the dark ones, it was not. She remained, as all would expect, 'an upright, conscientious, thrifty Christian Scotswoman', but her husband added to this last tribute the words to his sons. 'Take your place in the world as coloured, not as white, as Kaffirs not as Englishmen ... You, my children, belong to a primitive race of men who amid many unamiable points stand second to none as to nobility of character. The Kaffirs will stand high when compared in all things with the uncivilized races of the world. They have the elements out of which a noble race might be made.' The words, from such a source, ring more proudly and truly than those of 'down with the colour bar' from another; the white man might often learn from the black one. Pride of race seems to me a good thing in all men, since it derives from a power greater than man.

The mingling, not so much of colour as of the things which colour connotes, is being tested again today in one of the British Protectorates in Southern Africa, Bechuanaland. There a highly educated and cultured chief, Tshekedi Khama, as Regent for his nephew, Seretse, long applied the Western knowledge and training he acquired to the preservation of his tribe, his race. Many years ago he was deposed for imprisoning and flogging two white men, an act which infuriated neighbouring South Africa. Time showed, however, that he did not beat them with a *colour* bar, but rewarded them less severely than his own tribesmen would have been punished for the same deed, and he was restored. The chief danger he foresaw to his people was that of engulfment in the Union. His nephew, however, also went to be educated in England and on the approach of his majority there threw up a new and unexpected problem by marrying an English girl.

That was a great dilemma for the race, but it was not in essentials one of colour, any more than the matter of Mrs. Simpson (the nephew, Seretse, justified himself to the assembled chieftains in words rather different from King Edward's; he said he loved his people and wished to assume the burden of chieftainship, but with his wife beside him. King Edward first ascertained that this was unacceptable and then laid down the burden). Ancient faiths and beliefs were at stake, and the future of a race, not merely the complexion of a face. An expostulating chief told the young heir to the Bamangwato throne. 'Nobody can cast fire among the people he loves. If you bring this woman, the tribe will scatter and then, will you be chief of these poles?' So might Mr. Baldwin have spoken, and the Lord Chancellor of that time might have uttered words not dissimilar in meaning to Tshekedi Khama's: 'Tswana law is not yet written, but yet is law. We thought you might be the one to write it, but you have poured earth on it. Khama changed certain laws, but he did so as chief. I will not alter the custom by which the chief's wife regulates the courtyard.'

These two examples show the operation of 'the colour bar' in the reverse sense from that which is given to it in the great argument of today, and also show that it is not a *colour* bar at all, but something going far below the skin. Mrs. Simpson was a white woman, but the objections raised to Seretse's marriage were the same.

Among the white races of today, a lively understanding and fear of these things is most marked among the peoples of Northern Europe, the Germans, Hollanders, Scandinavians and British, and folk of these stocks in North America. Noticeably, those white races which contain some admixture of Mediterranean or North African blood, like the Spanish, Portuguese, Italians and French, remain indifferent to the matter in their homelands, in their African and other colonies, and in the South America they settled. Whether the mingling of blood has produced the weakening of their energies, which has shown in recent centuries, is a thing for ethnologists to ponder. An alternative theory is that they are simply more reasonable about the thing, holding it to be one which God will in due time regulate, and on which men need not waste heated words today. They do not grow excited about colour, for or against.

If that is their frame of mind, it may be the best one. It is, however, one which the twentieth century will not allow the other white men to enjoy. 'Colour' has plainly been chosen as an ideal question for setting white men against each other by the forces which aspire, by the end of this interesting hundred years, to rule the world. It appears to be a very good one for arousing the moral indignation of people far away from the issue. It was used to cause the bloodiest civil war in history, that between the Northern and Southern States of America, and to lay the foundations of future world-power in a polyglot New York. The student of today may smile at the picture of The North, as it tightened its grasp around the throat of the few surviving Red Indians, making war on The South about the treatment of the slaves. The North contained hardly any Negroes, though it earlier thrived on the trade of supplying them to The South. Those who detest sin in others have always flourished in northern latitudes, both in America and England, and in 1907, when the Red Indians had almost disappeared, the Congo Reform Association of Boston, glaring at the Belgian Congo, thundered that: 'If other powers do not take the first step, in the name of outraged humanity, the United States should.' The frame of mind remains familiar today, from Greenwich Village to Chelsea, and those who yield to it are the chosen instruments of stronger, astuter forces bent on destroying the white man.

Thus the remainder of this century will hear the welkin ring, until the great decisions come, with the cry of 'colour', 'the colour bar', and 'down with all discrimination of race, creed and colour'. It comes, perceptibly, from the two powerful political forces which the two wars have thrown up on the border of Asia: Soviet Communism and Political Zionism. These are the 'adventurous politicians', bent on reaching ulterior ends through the use of the black man and abuse of the white one, whom Trollope foresaw.

They most loudly cry 'colour bar' in South Africa and the United States, where they may reasonably hope to keep the white voters fairly equally divided by constantly placing the colour bogey between them, and to exercise real power by tipping the balance whichever way they desire. In the United States they have in fact achieved that position, and in South Africa are not far from it. Their chief allies are the humanitarian intellectuals who lament the lot of the dark man while declaring that 'Only Zionism' (or only Communism) 'can save the world'.

The parallelism of these two movements, which sprang from the same part of Eastern Europe, is constant and significant. Clearly they work towards the joint final purpose of reducing the white man and the dark one to a common low status in a world governed by them. It is a feature of the twentieth century that political forces advance by attacking what they most ardently practise, so that words mean always their opposite. Thus the thing which Soviet Communism and Political

Zionism alike practise is that which they use to inflame white man against white man: discrimination. Soviet Communism discriminates ruthlessly against political opponents; Political Zionism against non-Zionists. Discrimination against the Christian religion is doctrinal throughout the Soviet area. Inter-marriage with Gentiles is fiercely opposed by the Hebrew faith (and was described by a Zionist speaker in a broadcast debate in South Africa as 'race suicide'; of this particular discrimination Hitler's law against inter-marriage with Jews was merely the obverse, justified in similar words).

The directing minds of the two great new movements of this century have clearly made a thorough scientific study of the weak points of human nature, on which they operate like a dentist drilling on a nerve. More accurately, they have continued this scientific study, for their knowledge of a satanic subject is too complete to have been amassed in a lifetime; this is something which reaches back through generations of conspiracy, at least to the French Revolution. A group of men who have made such a discovery and are able to apply it throughout the world is in a position of immense strength. By dividing you may rule the world, but you must first learn where to divide. The weak points in human nature are primitive resentments and suspicions, and fears of submergence by neighbours. They are but pimples in themselves, but by constant injections of a virus disguised as a cure may be brought to erupt in violent outbreaks.

This is the function of the cry 'colour bar' in the poker-game of super-national politics, as it is played, chiefly between Moscow and New York. 'Cry Hue! and let slip the dogs of hatred!' The operators have discovered that you may inflame the passions of the 'do-gooders' in Boston, Lincs., and Boston, Mass., alike by telling them that dark men are being ill-treated far away. You may move them to demand in 1907 'in the name of outraged humanity' that the United States should take steps in the Belgian Congo, or in 1957 perhaps, that in the name of outraged humanity the United Nations should take steps in South Africa. In countries where white men have to live with dark ones, you may thus keep their fears fanned, where the matter might otherwise find an amiable solution. In the great United States, particularly, you may keep North against South, white man against white man, indefinitely, while the régime of the servile World State is prepared; this is the American situation today.

In such a cause, of inflaming resentments and not of allaying them, the great chorus of complaint about 'the colour bar' is raised throughout the world. The Communist and Zionist newspapers maintain it in England and South Africa, but the great bulk of it comes from America, where I later studied it with fascination. It is an amazing example of the subtle encouragement of passions. Negro Communists are paraded as typical specimens of an oppressed race (the Negro population as a whole is unresponsive to Communism). Some guiding hand gives a specious trend to all literature and entertainment. The book supplements of the leading newspapers each week review a mass of books about 'the colour bar', and mysterious committees make 'awards' to many of these. If an objective book about the subject appears in some other country, it may be taken over and made into a play which proves to be anti-colour-bar propaganda. The theme is constantly introduced into radio programmes, films, dramatic plays and even musical plays; London playgoers will find it in some of the great American successes performed there in recent years. Most of the big newspapers 'run' it as incessantly as the comic-strips. The publication of a book giving any other side of the matter than that of 'the party-line' is almost impossible to imagine in America today. In Hollywood, as I found when I went there, each new 'programme' of pictures by some unwritten but unchallengeable law has to contain a certain proportion about 'the colour bar' or 'anti-semitism'. Producers and players are aware of this incubus on their work and resent it, but are powerless to alter it.

If all this were sincere, it would show that the great heart of the white world beat more for the American Negro and the South African Native than for any other being anywhere. It is not sincere.

The Negro and Native are stalking horses, used to pursue different game, and their betterment is not the aim. The moral always drawn is that 'discrimination' is mortal sin, but in truth the discrimination thus attacked is not any which the Negro or Native suffer. The stealthy insinuation is that any resistance to subversion, in the Communist or Zionist form, is 'discrimination'. Any opposition to the admission of unlimited numbers of Asiatic immigrants from East Europe, to their employment in the highest places, or to their territorial ambitions in Europe or Arabia, is 'discrimination'. For this reason the chief parts in these suggestive books and plays are sometimes interchangeable. The persecuted Communist or Zionist began at one time to appear in them, but was publicly unpopular. He was supplanted by the persecuted Negro (when *Home of the Brave* was a book, the victim of 'discrimination' was a Jewish soldier, but in the film he became a Negro). The Negro is the stalking-horse.

For this reason South Africa, and its white and black inhabitants, will play a large part in the events of the next half-century. It is a good place to seek the stuff of propaganda, in the pursuit of great designs which are more closely concerned with Europe and North America. In South Africa itself (as in the American South) the truth of colour is very different from the specious picture painted by the would-be World Governors of tomorrow. Colour is only skin-deep; the things that really divide lie in the heart and soul. If all the restraints were suddenly removed today, tomorrow might see some strange pairings in Johannesburg and Cape Town, as in New Orleans and Nashville. They would be few, however, for the desire to mix exists only on the lower levels of both sides. The proud and the prudent would still remain apart, not from disrespect of the others but from respect for themselves, and between those who rushed together the abysses would remain. Naidoo, one day, would feel the need to skewer his tongue, and black Hilda to consult the witch-doctor.

There is no colour bar of the kind depicted by the East European aspirants to world power; there are many other barriers, though less rigid ones than those which imprison the forced-labour slaves of the Soviet area and those which exclude the natives of Palestine from returning to their land. Nevertheless, like many other fictions, the colour bar may play a great part in preparing the final conjuring-tricks of this century, which always produces from the hat something other than the anticipated rabbit. The only man in the whole throng who can rightly complain of a *colour* bar, however, is that unfortunate albino.

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## Chapter Thirty One

### JOURNEY'S LOG

One day I made ready to continue my mid-century journeyings from South Africa to America, glad to have remained longer than I expected and sorry to go, for South Africa is a country of magnificent scenes and the most stirring possibilities. Hardly anywhere else in the world does an equal prospect still offer to the white man, of a huge and spreading expanse of territory where, under his leadership, all races might share in an improving future of boundless scope.

South Africa is the natural basis of that development, if it is ever to come about, but at present the realization of the vision is arrested by the artificial perpetuation of an old and empty feud and by the virtual suspension of white immigration. This hung like an avenging sword over the future of the white man, not only in South Africa, but throughout all Africa. At the end of 1949 General Smuts, speaking to a Zionist audience in Johannesburg, implicitly alluded to this unhappy deadlock when he felt able to claim only to have been 'associated with at least one thing in my life which has been successful', the erection of the Zionist State in Arabia. Whether even that was in fact a successful undertaking, from the larger point of view, the second fifty years of the century will show. General Smuts, in the evening of his days, appeared at last to feel an awakening doubt, for he spoke of 'a sort of estrangement between the British and Jewish peoples' and said if this were to be the abiding result it would be 'a calamity'. Yet this result of today was as foreseeable as the earlier estrangements which the Political Zionist brought about, and as that between the American and Jewish peoples, which they will in the continuance of their ambition bring about tomorrow.

While South Africa continues to be disabled from ensuring the white man's future in Africa, which should be its natural function, the task devolves on the British African territories to the north, if any shoulders there are ready and able to undertake it. Chief among them, and the only one equal to the mission, is Southern Rhodesia, which in its name at all events still honours the vision of Cecil Rhodes. Its Prime Minister has long been Sir Godfrey Huggins, who said in September 1948: 'There is going to be a United States of Africa as sure as the sun comes up. It will happen, first, through the linking together of the two Rhodesias, North and South. Then will follow the entry of Nyasaland with us into the great Middle Dominion of Africa. And at the end the federation of every one of the territories of this continent into one United States.' (What Sir Godfrey Huggins envisaged might better be called a Union of Southern Africa; the name 'United States' appears to have a magic appeal which it does not inherently deserve, and is often loosely applied.)

The great argument about the future of the white man in Africa has long revolved around such schemes of unification or federation. They sound splendid, but ignore two important obstacles: white inhabitants and the subtle opposition of the Colonial Office in London. If you cannot make bricks without straw, you cannot build a durable Union of Southern Africa without white settlers. Southern Rhodesia, though it has no internal feud like that of South Africa and complains, rightly, about the Colonial Office, by paradox is not much more hospitable to white immigration than South Africa. At every point in the circle these strange hindrances intrude. While the numerical inferiority of the white man continues to increase, no basis offers for the durable establishment of a larger federation or greater Union.

Only with many more white inhabitants would a larger Union, however fine it sounds, be likely to fulfil the prophecy of an American observer, Professor Lowell Ragatz of the George Washington University: 'Britain has an ace up her sleeve ... Britain built and lost two great empires, in America and India, but the prospects are that the third, in Africa, will be the greatest.' In this case the ace, if it is there, seems a long way up the sleeve. Under Socialist rule in London the formation of the

larger Union is firmly blocked, at any rate in the only form which the white settlers would accept. From the other end, Southern Rhodesia, it is in effect prevented by the smallness of the white population; only a much greater one could give this country the strength which would enable it of its own vigour to build one.

Southern Rhodesia stands before three doors, two of which are closed to it from the other side, while the third, strangely, it keeps closed itself. The first door, which it would use if this were feasible, is that of integration with the Union of South Africa. The racial vengefulness of the Boers in South Africa deters the white folk in Southern Rhodesia from taking that way; they hear responsible Afrikaner politicians affirm that hostility between Boer and British South Africans must ever continue and that intermarriage between them ought to cease. The second door is that of union with northern neighbours to form Sir Godfrey Huggins's 'Middle Dominion'. It is kept closed by Colonial Office insistence that the Native would have to be represented by Natives in the Central Government from the start. That is the demand, the true meaning of which Trollope saw seventy years ago; it would let in the 'adventurous politicians' from elsewhere who would use the Native for their own ends and would in the end mean the submergence of the white man in the country he conquered and settled.

The third door, in Southern Rhodesia as in South Africa, is that of increasing the white population to a point where it would not need to fear the numerical superiority of the dark one, and would develop resources capable of uplifting the lot of all. In this matter Southern Rhodesia, curiously, goes the same way as South Africa. Its restrictions on immigration are fairly stringent, and appear to amount to the dismantling of the foundations of a house (the greater Union), the erection of which has been declared necessary. This, too, is a matter in the sovereign control of Southern Rhodesia, and cannot be ascribed to Colonial Office opposition. One of the great planners of the invasion of 1944, Major-General Sir F. de Guingand, speaking at Bulawayo expressed concern about this and said that any 'difficulties' (such were pleaded in excuse of the restrictions) ought to be overcome if safety were to be achieved.

Throughout the British territories in Africa, the saving lifestream of white immigration continues to be dammed, and small heed is given to proposals such as that submitted to the Central African Council by Mr. G.A. Jellicoe, for mass-immigration of five million Europeans by 1975. These alone, however, could supply a real basis for the erection of an enduring Union of Southern (or of Central) Africa. In these circumstances no great reality seems to attach to Southern Rhodesia's choice of the third doorway into the future: 'It seems then that we shall have to go forward on our own and build a new Dominion' (Sir Godfrey Huggins, December 4th, 1949). Not even a great Dominion, let alone a greater Union, can be built with a few score thousands of white settlers.

The public men have long agreed that something ought to be done. General Smuts once said: 'Africa is the last reserve continent of the world, the last to be developed. You need it and we need it. Britain must fill the void left by India and Burma. A new dominion in Middle Africa could heal that grievous wound. And for us in South Africa and Africa, that Middle Dominion would be a stabilizing force and a friendly bastion against the threats which may come from the north.'

To this larger shape of the next half-century Major Lewis Hastings also referred: 'It is a fair assumption that if a threat ever arises again to what we call the Western world, it will come from some sort of aggressive dictatorship situated on the mainland of Europe ... Africa is the one great continental land mass that stands between a possible European dictator and the rest of the world. With its sea and air communications Africa is also the natural focal centre and rallying-point in any struggle which finds the great maritime powers aligned together ... In fact, all that the continent lacks to complete the picture of a focus of energy, sufficient to deter the most hopeful totalitarian, is a more fully developed industry, with its natural concomitants of a highly integrated road and rail

system. That merely adds force to the reasons already given for believing that the chief Imperial task of the immediate future is to develop Africa.’

If that is the chief Imperial task it is not being undertaken. Industry, roads and railways are wants that could only be made good through a much larger white population, and the wealth it would bring. In sovereign South Africa the vendetta of the Nationalist Afrikaners prevents that. In Southern Rhodesia some incomprehensible opposition produces the same result. In the lesser British territories to the north the deadweight of Socialism in London leads to a similar stagnation. The finger-printing of white folk in Kenya is an example of the sterile thought that has come out of London to Africa in these years, and the only large example of ‘Colonial development’ that has been seen there has been a prodigiously costly venture in peanuts in Tanganyika, which appears to have been ordered by the Minister of Food. Whether this enterprise, which in its first year cost the British taxpayer £29,000,000 will ever supply him with peanuts in any quantity, or whether he wants these, are things yet to be seen. What seems clear is that harbour and railway work has been undertaken which would be inherited by the successors of the British in East Africa, if Colonial Office policy were pursued to its logical end.

It is curious to see that, while the white settlers of British Africa complain of ‘Colonial Office policy’, they in fact work to the same end by opposing large-scale white immigration, so that ‘the chief Imperial task’ is hindered at both ends. Of Colonial Office policy, Sir Godfrey Huggins once said the federation of the two Rhodesias, and larger developments hinging on that, ‘have always been stopped by the attitude of the United Kingdom Government, but they cannot go on resisting this for ever unless they want to dam up Africa in perpetuity’. (Not all the interferences of Whitehall, however, could dam up Africa for the white man more effectively than its own barriers against immigration.) On another occasion he said: ‘Because the British Government would require representation of Africans by Africans in the central government from the start, and because Africans are not yet ready to assume such responsibility, the federation movement seemed to have reached a deadlock.’

‘Deadlock’ is in fact the position of the white man’s future in Africa today. The deadlock could be broken from the African end by mass-immigration, but this solution is rejected. In the case of Southern Rhodesia this appears particularly unfortunate, because the action of its government in 1949, in abolishing the ‘controls’ which have been squeezing the life out of so many countries in these years, made it a place which millions of people of free spirit would go to if they could.

In ‘Colonial Office policy’, however, the workings of those stealthy and invisible influences may be traced, which operate through the apparent wielders of political power. Under Socialism, ‘Colonial Office policy’ is a product of the mysterious Fabian Society in London, in which Communist, Political Zionist and alien influences generally are strong (see *From Smoke to Smother*, p. 194); that is to say, it is not a body qualified to uphold native British interests in Africa or anywhere. The Fabians, like the Boston ladies of 1907, are zealous for ‘African freedom and self-expression’ (if not for those of Palestinian Arabs or of Poles and Czechs) and in effect their work would lead to the self-surrender or exclusion of the white man in or from Africa. That would be something in the line of the expansion of the Communist Empire and erection of the Zionist State. In 1946 forty-one members of the British Government were Fabians and the number will not much have changed since. A founder of the Society was Mr. Sydney Webb, who as Lord Passfield became Secretary of State for the Colonies in an earlier Socialist Administration, that of 1929. In 1930 he issued a White Paper which laid down a ‘new policy’ for the treatment of the Native in East Africa, a place unknown to him. Then visited by some expostulating white settlers from those parts he confessed that, had he been acquainted with the subject, he would not have published his proposals, and they died an ignominious death. However, he also died and the Fabian Society and



its 'Colonial policy' went on, in distant ignorance of the matter at issue and in high moral disapproval of white folk who lived in Africa.

Outside South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, no third territory is big enough to give a lead in ensuring the white man's future in Africa. Those two countries either restrict or do not much encourage white immigration. The other territories are hindered in their growth by the Colonial Office interventions and perhaps by the parochial state of mind which tends to appear among white people in overseas lands.

Thus by the mid-century the prospects of a great re-invigoration and of a rapidly growing new Union in Africa, within which white and dark men alike would find a future of rising promise, were in abeyance. The picture was similar to the one I knew from Europe before the second war, of country after country falling into a line that could not lead to advancement, and of a world that, even at this extremity, seemed caught in invisible toils from which it could not escape. The ace up the British sleeve and the chief Imperial task were both but figures of speech. The white man in Africa was too few in numbers for the fulfilment of the great vision which at the century's beginning held all far-seeing minds in its grip. Only a change of heart in the matter of white immigration, I thought, could yet secure the future. For the present the racial squabble in South Africa, the paltry white population of Southern Rhodesia, and the Colonial Office's opposition in the other territories combined to form great road-blocks on the white man's path.

However, all these things may be but unsubstantial shadows of the moment, which will flicker across the screen and presently vanish with changing governments, broadening outlooks and a revival of the white man's spirit in the coming half-century. If that happens, the prospect is boundless. In any case the shadows of the present could not spoil my personal delight in South Africa. I liked to think that, in its present or a greater form, it would yet fulfil the great visions of liberty and achievement which filled its founders. So splendid a land, I thought, deserved better than to be used by a handful of white folk as a shunting-yard for rusty old disputes, clanking and clanging to and fro; it was fitted to be a main line, where great purposes went strongly and swiftly to their accomplishment, and I hoped it would yet embrace its own happiness.

Having drunk of the waters of Africa, I resolved to return if the twentieth century allowed, and was later able to do so. Not for anything that I can afford would I have missed the evening with conspiratorial Germans and Afrikaners out in the *Platteland*, the Coons' Carnival at Cape Town, the fire-walking Indians of Durban, the chat with the murderous Basuto chief or the ride into inner Basutoland, the hour at the sad grave of George Rex, the *Vleisbraai* in the Karoo, the Zulu wedding in the Natal hills or the Christmastide at Amsterdam Hoek. South Africa gave me many bright pages in the album of a lifetime, and even the best one of all: that of a golden dawn of reunion in Table Bay. It gave me a friendly welcome and, for more than a year, a fine balcony from which to watch, and try to sketch, the twentieth century exactly as it goes.

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# PART THREE

## BEFORE THE MILLENNIUM

## Chapter One

### BALCONY OVER DURBAN

For a year, from a high balcony over Durban, with the bright city and blue ocean below, I sat back and watched the whirling world spin like a grindstone, and the sparks fly from it as the political banditti of the twentieth century whetted unassuageable knives. After pressing my nose against the great events of the last thirty-five years I was glad for a while to sit in the gallery, among the *enfants du paradis*. A high place and far vista constantly remind the beholder that this planet is small and a stage at that; that the strutting terrible ones and their victims alike are merely players and that the run is short. Behind the scenes of each new melodrama another is ever in rehearsal. There are no final curtains, only the eternal play.

The current melodrama, a heavy one, plainly approaches its third act and climax. It might be entitled Judas is an Honourable Man, or The World in Fetters, and will be concluded, I think, before the century's end. Whichever ending it reaches, the villain's triumph or his undoing, another play will follow; the human comedy does not finish, and put in its right proportions is finally comedy. The timeless universe contains some two thousand million stars, the nearest about twenty-five million miles from this earth; there are thousands of other universes and the Astronomer Royal holds that life exists in several other worlds. The white men form a minority of the little earth's population and if the present melodrama took them back to the caves, to start again, that would be but another beginning. These proportions of the matter looked clearer than before, from a balcony over Durban, and in this spirit, not in that of any gloomy scribifax or chapfallen oracle, I watched the unfolding shape of the play.

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## Chapter Two

### FULL FIFTY YEARS

Within our unimportant scheme of things, the year 1950 appears important. Like a ruled line, it closes a half-century of large events (by our standards) of which a sum may now be made. They crowded on time's traveller like mountain peaks, too near and massive to be separately comprehended while he was among them. Now that he may look back on the great range, its form and proportions begin to assert themselves.

There were two great wars; they were the storms which obscured his vision as he went along but now he may turn and survey the landscape they have left. From it arise two shapes which were not visible at all when he set out in 1900: Communism and Zionism. All else has been laid low or reduced. These two beanstalks, though neither is Russian, sprang from a common root in Russia. Before the first war they germinated secretly in the cellars and ghettos of Russia. They appeared above ground together in 1917, when the alien Communists were helped to usurp power in Russia and the Zionist ambition was espoused by a British Government. Through the second war, the Communist area was stretched by the mid-century to include half of Europe and nearly all of China, while the Zionist State was set up in Arabia and foreseeably would spread from there. These achievements were brought about through arms, money and political support given by American and British politicians, wielding wartime powers. They were not final, but marked the end of the second act, as the appearance of the two new forces in 1917 concluded the first.

In the further course of the comedy, I argued from my playgoer's seat, the twain would press on together towards the culmination. That, I foresaw, would be (in Disraeli's words) the triumph of 'the destructive principle' everywhere, the overthrow of 'tradition and aristocracy, religion and property', and the destruction of 'ungrateful Christendom'. The dress-rehearsals of the play reached back to 1790 and to the unsuccessful productions of 1848, 1895 and 1905. In 1917 and 1945 came the two first acts of the successful one. The third act, I thought, if it were played out as written, would see the spread of 'the destructive principle' to what remained of Europe, to the British Commonwealth and to the American Republic; and the erection of the servile World State ruled from New York and Jerusalem. That, I opine, is the sum intended when a line is drawn beneath the mystic figure '2000 A.D.'. After it the significant initials 'A.D.' might be discarded. The symbolism of the play in its first two acts must not be ignored by the attentive play-goer, who aspires to foresee the dénouement. The Nuremberg trial was given the significance of a Communist and Zionist vengeance; at the trial of the Oberammergau Passion Players the only performer left uncondemned was Judas!

Against the background of Christian advancement which the little planet had reached by 1899 these two forces of the twentieth century look to me like dinosaurs, extinct monsters suddenly re-emerged. They seem also only as separate as two boughs of the one tree. Disraeli's words were that the destructive design is promoted by 'secret societies who form provisional governments, and men of Jewish race are found at the head of every one of them'. With the important qualification that they profess the Jewish faith but are *not* of Jewish *race* (as I hope I show later) this remains true, after a hundred years, of the two great new forces of today, which were secret societies in his time. It was true of the earlier Communist governments and proves true today whenever disclosure or study are made of subversive Communist work in America, Canada and other countries. The fiercest propagandists of Zionism, who come from the same place as those others, constantly instruct the Jewish masses that the Communist State is their truest friend.

Thus by the mid-century Soviet Communism and Political Zionism stand in the comedy's central limelight, while other players, who only seemed to play leading parts, are gone or are humbly grouped in the background. These two forces have achieved their successes by a unique method: the conversion or subversion of others by persuasion or coercion, flattery or threats, enrichment or ruination. In this their rise appears different from all the petty planet's other barnstormers. The methods by which they brought public men in all leading countries to support their ambitions, and to contrive the situation of the play at the beginning of its third act, seem to me only comprehensible by studying the approach of Svengali to Trilby. The capture of souls was successful. Possibly many who entered into such relationships saw no danger in them and may only realize this when the third act comes to its melodramatic denouement in the next fifty years.

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## Chapter Three

### THE SECOND ACT

The plan that gestated in Russian cellars, though its seeds went back to 1790 and 1848, first broke into open and obvious blossom at the end of the second war, which was mysterious during its course. Now that a few more years have rolled, its place in the great design is clear. Time's traveller, looking back, may see shapes which the mists of war concealed, for in America great disclosures have been made about twists and turns in the course of the war which seemed inexplicable at the time. In England, only Mr. Winston Churchill could illuminate the larger mysteries, and his narrative is still incomplete. In America the numerous books of revelation are remarkable alike in what they divulge and in the calm public reception of it. A grand indifference apparently prevails about those deeds of yesterday which prepared today's disappointments and tomorrow's third act.

In *From Smoke to Smother* (1946-48) I recalled the strange change which came over the second war in its mid-journey. Until 1941 England was nearly alone, outnumbered and outpowered, but the battle still seemed clearly to be for a Christian cause and for liberty. Then, after the Soviet State was attacked, after America came in, after the war was enlarged, came the subtle transformation. All who fought with us or under our wing were, by a sudden shift of propagandist emphasis, turned into suspects or enemies. The Polish government was disowned, Poland was thrown to wolves which had already devoured the Baltic States, without much audible protest. Mihailovitch was deserted and later killed with the weapons of his allies, his king was discarded, a Communist dictator set up. The King of Greece was vilified and only kept his throne because his own people obstinately recalled him. De Gaulle was derided and arms were lavished on the French Communists; the Germans who wanted to kill Hitler found neither hearing nor aid and were themselves killed in thousands by him before he vanished. His chief adversary, Otto Strasser, was held a virtual prisoner in Canada. Those who thought to swim with this new tide were just as cruelly drowned when they later became hindrances to the great design: Jan Masaryk fell mysteriously from a window and Benes died mysteriously not far away.

This abandonment of half Europe to the Communist order on which Hitler's own order was modelled (as he truly told Rauschnig) was preconcerted between three men, one sometimes reluctant, who *appeared* to wield imperial power. The plain effect was to promote the expansion of the Communist Empire, which protruded Political Zionism before it like a serpent's tongue. The war was lost while it was being fought, and when American soldiers were most heavily engaged became the 'phoney' one they wrongly thought it before they joined in, when it was genuine. Not four freedoms, or any freedom, were restored, but the pagan area was spread far, through secret conferences of three men. The American general who eventually commanded the great invasion called his book about it *Crusade in Europe*; by no conceivable standard did the second war re-establish the Christian purpose or area.

Whose was the purpose behind these transactions? President Roosevelt was chiefly concerned in them. Like President Wilson, who in the first war began the course he followed, he was ill. His statue in London shows an erect and challenging figure; in life he could not stand unaided. This statue is much larger than George Washington's, but he was spiritually of lesser stature and poorer clay. He was first elected President in 1932 and remained so until his death in 1945; Washington declined a second re-election, while Roosevelt, dying, sought even a third. His 'first major act of policy, in 1933, was to recognize the Soviet State, against a pledge that it would not seek to spread Communism in the United States or otherwise interfere in his country's household affairs. During

his thirteen years, especially the wartime ones, the highest doors were opened to its infiltration so that in 1949 (when I visited America) public scandals were rife.

He seemed the most powerful man in the world. In reality power was apparently wielded through him by others who, if they may be fairly judged by the result of his actions, sought to promote Soviet Communism or Political Zionism, or both. Many of these he put in high places. His most secret documents, before the war, were betrayed to the Soviet State, and during the war men involved in those transactions accompanied him to the momentous, secret conferences. He admitted ulterior prompting in the paramount transaction (the bisection of Europe) which made the third act of the century's melodrama certain; and it may be plainly traced in his whole activity. The corrupting effect of 'absolute power', observed by Lord Acton, is visible in this President, and also the other thing discerned by that great student of the process of this age: the presence of 'managers' who served the grand design through him.

He was repeatedly warned, from first to last, of 'hidden pressure'. At the start Mr. Lewis E. Douglas (who resigned as Director of the Budget in 1934 in protest against the New Deal policy of deficit-spending for welfare purposes) said to him: 'Mr. President, I do urge you to open your mind to the possibility that among the men surrounding you there is a kind of purpose you are not aware of.' The President scoffed, and persisted in that obduracy for thirteen years. At the beginning of the war Mr. Isaac Don Levine, a prominent Jewish writer, strove through ten public men to open his eyes to the fact (proved true in 1948) that high officials were passing secret papers to the Soviet (then Hitler's ally); the men concerned remained in their places or rose higher. Mr. Levine also informed the British Ambassador in Washington at that time that there was a Soviet spy in the code-room of the British Cabinet, and another in the Committee of Imperial Defence; he knew this from General Krivitsky, former Chief of the Soviet Secret Service in Western Europe, who in 1939 was a fugitive in America. Lord Lothian was at first dubious but later urgently asked Mr. Levine to persuade General Krivitsky to go to London. One of the spies was detected, convicted of treason and shot in the Tower of London (I do not know what happened about the other); General Krivitsky returned to America and in February 1941 was found shot dead in a Washington hotel. None of all this could impress President Roosevelt. From 1939, at the latest, until his death he was repeatedly warned of the dangers to which he exposed the American Republic, yet he could not be brought to scrutinize the persons with whom he surrounded himself, or their purposes. After his death his successor constantly opposed the exposure of this hidden mechanism, which has been revealed, not in its entirety, but has been dug up piecemeal by parliamentary and other investigators working against great odds.

This President was to rule for thirteen years, and despotically in the last four, something the makers of the American Constitution never foresaw. In October 1940, seeking a second re-election, he said: 'While I am talking to you mothers and fathers I give you one more assurance. I have said this before, but I shall say it again and again and again: your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars.' He reserved, however, the natural human right 'to fight in case of attack'. In November 1941 he presided over a Cabinet meeting of which one of his ministers, Mr. Stimson, recorded, 'The question facing the Cabinet was how we should manoeuvre the Japanese into the position of firing the first shot without allowing too much danger to ourselves. It was a difficult proposition' (from *President Roosevelt and the Coming of the War*, by Charles Beard, Yale University Press, 1941).

Therewith the great empowerment began and the war, enlarged, took another course. The story is most plainly told in a series of articles published by Mr. William C. Bullitt, who was American Ambassador to the Soviet after President Roosevelt recognized it in 1933, and later Ambassador in France, during the German invasion. Mr. Bullitt, returned to America, found himself among those whom the President would not heed. He says the President was informed long in advance about the

Soviet-German alliance which in 1939 was to begin the second war; he reported in 1934 that Hitler could have this pact whenever he wanted it. When it came about his counsel was ignored. President Roosevelt (he says) 'had often said that President Wilson's failure to achieve solid settlements in Europe after the first war was due to the fact that he did not insist on specific acceptance of his specific programme while the opponents of the Kaiser were dependent on the United States for victory. President Roosevelt was warned that if he should help Stalin to victory without previously obtaining from the Soviet dictator definite, written, public pledges with regard to the future of Europe and Asia, he would find himself in a far worse situation at the end of the second war than that in which Woodrow Wilson found himself at the close of the first - the weight of power in both Europe and Asia would have passed from the United States to the Soviet Union'.

Nothing availed. 'When the President was urged in the summer of 1941, by myself and others, to give lend-lease aid to Stalin only after the Soviet dictator had given formal, written public pledges to respect the eastern boundary of Europe as it existed in August 1939, and to raise no objection to the formation of a confederation of European States, and to make no demands on China, it seemed reasonable to believe that he would act favourably on the suggestion. But he rejected it on the ground that, although there was no doubt Stalin would make such promises, there was equally little doubt that he would break the promises as soon as it might suit him.' The immediate result, says Mr. Bullitt, was that in December 1941 Stalin demanded British recognition of the Soviet annexation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, portions of Finland and Rumania, and half of Poland, and that the President, being informed, 'took the cringing position that the test of our good faith should not be our willingness to agree to the recognition of extended Soviet frontiers at this time, but rather the degree of determination which we showed loyally to carry out our promises to aid the Soviet Government with equipment and supplies'. Stalin got more than £250,000,000 worth of lend-lease aid in the end, but gave no pledges.

The President's duty, continues Mr. Bullitt, since he was under the Constitution also Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, was to make certain that the means employed by the military commanders to achieve victory would not make it impossible to achieve peace *after* victory. Instead, he consciously took the risk that, after the defeat of Germany, the Soviet Union 'would occupy and dominate Eastern and Central Europe, and, after the defeat of Japan, would threaten the independence and territorial integrity of China'. Mr. Churchill uttered warnings and periodically suggested a secondary attack through the Balkans or Trieste, so that the Danube valley should not be in Soviet hands at the war's end. Adoption of this project 'might have saved a large portion of Central and Eastern Europe to the free world, but General Marshall opposed such an expedition and President Roosevelt supported him'.

Mr. Bullitt says the President was much under the influence of Mr. Harry Hopkins, his 'chief adviser', who was of 'infinite ignorance' in foreign affairs (these had never engaged his attention; he was a New York welfare official!). Counselling by Mr. Hopkins, who in turn was much under the influence of other persons, President Roosevelt hoped to achieve 'the conversion of Stalin' by giving him everything he asked for to prosecute the war without asking anything in return; persuading him to adhere to vague professions of benevolence like the Atlantic Charter; telling him that 'the influence of the White House was being used to encourage American public opinion to take a favourable view of the Soviet Government'; and inducing him to accept democratic ways and Christian principles at the famous 'face to face' meetings.

Mr. Roosevelt, then, if he was not conscious of the purposes for which he was being used, suffered from the same infantile delusions as Mr. Chamberlain. A final conversation between him and Mr. Bullitt ended, after a three-hour discussion of a memorandum which the Ambassador was asked to submit, with these words: 'Bill, I don't dispute your facts, they are accurate. I don't dispute the logic of your reasoning. I just have a hunch that Stalin is not that kind of man. Harry says he's not,



and that he doesn't want anything but security for his country, and I think that if I give him everything I possibly can and ask for nothing from him in return, *noblesse oblige*, he won't try to annex anything and will work with me for a world of democracy and peace.' Mr. Bullitt said dependence on the rule of *noblesse oblige* was unwise, since the President was dealing with a Caucasian bandit, not with a belted earl, and Mr. Roosevelt rejoined. 'I am going to play my hunch.'

Thus was the great twist given to the declared purposes of the war. In this atmosphere of 'Harry says' and hunch-playing the fate of millions was regulated and the path laid which led to Yalta and to the third act of this century's melodrama. The President 'began to be swept away by the waves of propaganda he and Hopkins had started. Able and patriotic officers of the Department of State and the Foreign Service, who knew the truth about the Soviet Union and refused to lie in favour of the Communist dictatorship, were moved to unimportant posts. Clever young men who knew the truth but cared more about their careers than their country, and were ready to testify that "Stalin has changed", were promoted rapidly ... A network of Soviet sympathizers was created in Washington and apologists for Soviet policies were sent as American advisers to the Chinese Government and to Latin America ... While our fighting-men were winning the war, our government went blithely on losing the peace'.

Such were the things that happened behind the curtain in 1942 and 1943. At the Teheran Conference in November 1943, says Mr. Bullitt, President Roosevelt 'on the plea of an attack of indigestion absented himself from the crucial discussion of the future of Poland between Stalin and Mr. Churchill', but agreed to the bisection of Poland, which meant in fact, foreseeably, the bisection of Europe and the continuance of the twentieth-century war. He also agreed to the desertion of Mihailovitch and the setting-up of Stalin's agent, Tito. At that time, Mr. Bullitt recalls, the President could still have stood up to Stalin's demands, for 'Hitler's armies were yet on Soviet soil and Stalin needed the full flood of lend-lease supplies even to regain the frontiers of his alliance with Hitler in 1939'. Mr. Bullitt records that the President was by then 'more than tired. He was ill. Little was left of the physical and mental vigour that had been his when he entered the White House in 1933. Frequently he had difficulty in formulating his thoughts and greater difficulty in expressing them consecutively'. Other American colleagues of the President at this time wrote that he 'looked horrible', that they 'couldn't stand it', that they were 'profoundly depressed' and 'frightened'.

Thus the all-powerful man, infirm in body, beclouded in mind, surrounded by mysterious advisers, encircled even by treason. Outside, the waiting multitudes of mankind, confident that the war was being waged for justice and liberty. Just enough strength and time remained to this unhappy man to go to Yalta and do the last deed.

At Cairo in November 1943 he, with Mr. Churchill, publicly declared to the Chinese leader, Chiang Kai-shek, that 'all the territories Japan has stolen from China, such as Manchuria, Formosa and the Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China'. At Yalta in 1945 he made a secret agreement (also signed by Mr. Churchill) 'giving' to Stalin the Manchurian port of Dairen and naval base of Port Arthur, as well as 'pre-eminent interests' in the railway which traverses Manchuria from the Soviet Union to Dairen. This was a secret breach of the public pledge and was given because Stalin demanded these things in return for a promise to enter the war against Japan 'two or three months after Germany has surrendered'. Two years before Stalin had already given that promise, without any conditions. Before the President went to Yalta the American military commander in the Far East, General MacArthur, informed him that Japan was in a mood to surrender and appealed to him 'not to let the Soviet into the war against Japan', urging that the later results would be disastrous. The dying President brushed the telegram aside with the words: 'Our most brilliant general and our poorest diplomat.' For the sake of a nominal participation of a few

hours in the war against Japan the Soviet dictator was 'given' China and the Chinese ally was betrayed, a stroke of diplomacy hardly brilliant.

President Roosevelt further agreed that the Communist State which had been set up in the Chinese province of outer Mongolia should be permanently detached from Allied China, and that the southern part of Sakhalin and the Kurile Islands, helpful places in aggressive designs, should be annexed by the Soviet Union. This agreement was kept secret from the public, even from the President's companion at Yalta, Mr. James F. Byrnes, who a little later was to become Foreign Minister.

Then President Roosevelt returned to America, having defeated all allies and his own country, and died. He bequeathed the strange policy and the secret undertakings to his successor, who adopted both. The Anglo-American armies, at that moment, were advancing into Germany on a broad front. Field-Marshal Montgomery, much earlier, had proposed a spear-like thrust on a narrow one, being confident he could thus quickly reach Berlin and end the European war. The American Supreme Commander, General Eisenhower, demurred; he was bound by orders from the failing President. When the new one succeeded time still remained for the American and British armies to take Berlin, Vienna, Prague and a great part of Germany, Czechoslovakia and all Austria; in fact, to reduce if not to thwart the bisection of Europe which meant the continuance of the twentieth-century war. President Truman (Mr. Bullitt relates) was 'advised' to let the Red Army capture Berlin 'and it was so ordered'. The design which Mr. Roosevelt's acts had furthered was carried further still. The fighting ended, the American armies and the great equipment of war were precipitately dispersed.

Thus the Soviet Union was put in possession of half of Europe, not by its own strength but by American and British political support, armed aid and the retarding of the American and British onslaught. The dividing line ran through Berlin and the middle of Germany. The Germans in the eastern half, which contained the German food-lands, were delivered to the Soviet. The western half contained their only means of earning money to buy food (since the Germans there were deprived of their own supplies): the industrial Ruhr. The British, in their share of the western half, undertook to make this impossible by dismantling German industry. This meant, if the plan were carried out, the destruction of the most numerous people in Europe by division, enforced idleness and starvation. It was like depriving a market gardener of his plot and forbidding him to work for any other living.

This 'plan for Germany', the western counterpart of the eastern transaction about China, ensured the spread of Soviet power from Berlin to Vladivostock. Its author was supposed to be a Mr. Henry Morgenthau, junior, an American Treasury official; at all events, it was called 'the Morgenthau Plan'. It was strongly opposed by two senior American Ministers of great experience, Messrs. Cordell Hull and Stimson. President Roosevelt prepared the enforcement of it before he died but in his last days admitted (according to one of his intimates, Mr. Robert E. Sherwood) 'that he had yielded to the importunities of an old and loyal friend when he affixed his initials to the document'. The name is not given, and the disastrous thing was done, or at all events begun. The hand of the unknown third party is seen again in this decisive transaction. It enables the Soviet, in the shaping of the third act, constantly to play the eastern Germans against the western ones, and all Germans against the Western world, by depicting the Americans and British as the destroyers of German unity and German industry, and by dangling before all the Germans the bait, in any future competition for their military manpower, of the restoration of their eastern lands, now under Soviet-Polish rule.

These things were done in war. If they were not moves in the furtherance of a secret design, but merely mistakes honestly made by men unversed in great affairs, this should have shown when the

war ended. The war did end. President Truman succeeded President Roosevelt. In a short while the ill-faith and dark intentions of the Soviet Empire became too clear to be denied and were supposed to have been recognized by all, so that loud accusations became common and as a sign of changed heart and clearer purpose the 'great air-lift to Berlin' was begun. In truth, however, the great design was woven further, in peace as in war. Though there was much talk now of inevitable war between East and West, Capitalism and Communism, free America and slave Russia, democracy and dictatorship, the master process went on, and the switch of suggestive-information from Appease Stalin to Oppose Stalin did not stand scrutiny at any point.

That was most clearly shown in China, where President Roosevelt's undertakings of Yalta were in fact more than fulfilled, long after he was dead. There, effective opposition could have been offered and was not. President Roosevelt was not long dead when (in 1945) his Ambassador to China, General Patrick J. Hurley, returned to Washington and resigned after saying publicly that his work had been nullified by the Communist infiltrators who, during the Roosevelt era, had crowded into the American Foreign Office and Foreign Service. In the following excitement General Marshall was sent to China. He did not know that country and was briefed by similar counsellors, who said the Chinese Communists were 'mere agrarian reformers who had no connection with Moscow'. Chiang Kai-shek was by this time rare among the wartime allies in that he was not quite deserted. General Marshall persuaded him to sign an armistice with the Communists on January 10th, 1946. On April 14th, 1946, they broke it by attacking Changchun. They were well armed, having received American supplies through the Soviet. Thereon General Marshall forbade any further military aid to Chiang Kai-shek's government! He stated, later, that 'it was in effect an embargo on military supplies', and it continued until, in 1949, Communist success was sure and nearly complete.

Thus the story of the war-behind-the-war in Europe repeated itself in China, after the end of that war. The embargo on arms for the non-Communists was even declared because Chiang Kai-shek resisted the demand that he open his government to them! As soon as the great design was completed in China, it showed signs of further extension in Europe. The Communist dictator in Yugoslavia, 'Tito', a man of origins as mysterious as Hitler's, was found to be a different kind of Communist from Stalin, and in 1949 American support began to be given to *him*, in various forms. As he was the enemy of Greece, shadows now begin to form around one of the last of the wartime allies. The prospect also opened that, if the 'war against Communism' came about, it would find the anti-Communists leagued with a Communist dictator, so that no man would know what cause it really served. If by chance the Stalin-Tito quarrel were *not* genuine, American supplies would continue to find their way by that route to the central stronghold of Communism; the Communists and anti-Communists would fight each other with arms and money from the same source. This possibility, despite the lessons of these years, either entered into no minds in high places or its public discussion was discouraged.

Mr. William Bullitt's narrative of the second act in this century's thriller is supported by several American books. One, remarkable for the virginal innocence of its disclosures, is *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, by Mr. Robert E. Sherwood, Harper, New York, 1948. In it the strange emissary who flew above the din of war to discuss uncomprehended things with unknown men in unfamiliar places leaves his opinion of the calamitous Yalta Conference:

'We really believed in our hearts that this was the dawn of the new day we had all been praying for and talking about for so many years. We were absolutely certain that we had won the first great victory of the peace ... The Russians had proved that they could be reasonable and far-seeing and there wasn't any doubt in the minds of the President or any of us that we could live with them and get along with them peacefully for as far into the future as any of us could imagine. But ... we all had in our minds the reservation that we could not foretell what the results would be if anything should happen to Stalin. We felt sure that we could count on him to be reasonable and sensible and

understanding - but we never could be sure who or what might be in back of him there in the Kremlin.'

President Roosevelt it was who died, however, and Mr. Hopkins, and nothing yet has happened to Stalin. These books, and current happenings, have cast some light on those who were in back of President Roosevelt in the White House. Who is in back of Stalin seems less important. His happiness when the Yalta Conference ended is on record. The picture of the second act, now taking ever clearer shape, is that of a few men, freed from all restraints, privately handling the affairs of millions and concerting arrangements which were bound to defeat the professed purposes of the war.

Mr. Winston Churchill's part in the melodrama of the Three Men is a somewhat different, and curious one. His own narrative has not reached the later stages as I write, but these American books show him protesting at this and striving to avert that. He had his own aberrations, particularly in the matter of Tito and of Political Zionism, which he strove from the start to further, but at other times perceived that Europe was being handed to a darker tyranny, and was apparently helpless to prevent this in a trio of which the central figure was resolved 'to give Stalin everything he asked for'.

The moral of the second act, if playgoers ever bothered about morals, is that in wartime political leaders need to be under increased public restraints, and not freed from all restraint. The dogma, now commonly accepted, that in war they must be given divine powers, and left unhindered in the use of them, has now twice been proved false. It places real power in the hands of 'old and loyal friends', that is of Lord Acton's 'managers', who continue 'the design'. From Lord Balfour's Declaration of November 1917 to President Roosevelt's undertakings of 1945, the full fruits of which in both cases will in my belief appear in the third act of the twentieth century's play, runs a straight line.

However, these things have a humorous aspect and the spectacle of the President of the American Republic imperially presenting Sakhalin to the Soviet Emperor is one for some mirth.

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## Chapter Four

### THE RISE OF ZION

Surveyed from a balcony over Durban, the rise of Zion appears to me something new in a world which otherwise is ever the same, the more it changes. The Roman Empire and the Church of Rome in their day wielded great power over vast areas, but they were visible bodies and their sway was limited, in practice, to Europe. Political Zionism (as distinct from the religious Jew's vision of an Arabian paradise) seems to me a once secret conspiracy for power and territory, pursued in all great countries of the world through power over public men and now partly revealed through successful accomplishment. The method was never tested on a grand scale before and the rate and range of Zionist progress have been too great for the masses to comprehend while it was happening.

No empire in history rose by such means. It has all been achieved in a half-century (save for the forethought that went before) by bending Gentile politicians to the Zionist will, and the future historian ought to be stupefied by the triumphs reached, even if the end be a mighty fall. For over thirty years political leaders of the Christian West have grouped themselves like Rodin's Burghers of Calais, with a Zionist halter round their necks. If their motives were as noble as those self-sacrificing patriots', the final event might sadly deceive their posterity.

The magnitude of these events is best seen, again, if they are surveyed as a mountain range on the plains of time. From smallest foothill to present peak they occupy but fifty years and now dominate the present landscape and cast great shadows into the future. Only in 1882 came the first whisper of Political Zionism from the ghettos of Russia, where a community of people lived hardly known to the great Christian world, and not till 1897 did Theodor Herzl convene his first Zionist Congress at Basle. He said: 'From the first moment I entered the Zionist movement my eyes were directed towards England, because I saw by reason of the general conditions there the Archimedean point where the lever could be applied.' By the Sixth Congress, in 1903, Max Nordau said: 'Let me tell you the following words as if I were showing you the rungs of a ladder leading upward and upward: Herzl, the Zionist Congress, the English Uganda proposition, the future World War, the peace conference where, with the help of England, a free and Jewish Palestine will be created.' Here is foreknowledge of the highest order; it may be compared with the flounderings of Mr. Chamberlain or President Roosevelt.

The first world war arrived and when it was three-parts run, in 1917, came the Balfour Declaration, punctually to this forecast. Lord Balfour once described the story of the human race as a discreditable episode in the life of one of the minor planets; his Declaration fits the description. We were pledged to liberate the Arabs from the Turkish yoke and could not rightly dictate their choice of guests, let alone inflict new hosts on them. They were no more consulted than the British people; in wartime the politicians claim unbridled power. The Declaration was the result of persuasions brought to bear on the British Government by secret canvassers of whom, and of whose cause, the public knew nothing. Mr. Asquith's overthrow in that war seems now to have been due to his refusal to support Political Zionism.

With the Declaration Political Zionism first openly, though vaguely, appeared among the world's contestants for power and territory. It merely 'viewed with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people'. British Ministers repeatedly affirmed that the 'national home' did *not* mean 'a Zionist State'. Zionist immigrants from distant lands, however, were brought into Palestine, under British rule, until the Jewish population there, which in 1917 amounted to about seven per cent of the whole, was about a third. An injected *majority*,

nevertheless, would clearly never be achieved in this way. Frequent Arab risings of protest occurred and at length the British Government, fearing a major war, announced (in 1939) that it would not continue this enforced intrusion unless the native Arabs of Palestine acquiesced in it. At that a major war broke out in Europe.

Ten years before (in 1928) a leading Zionist, Lord Melchett, had spoken rather in the vein of Mr. Max Nordau in 1903: 'Let me take you back to 1913. If I had stood here in 1913 and said to you, "Come to a conference to discuss the reconstruction of a national home in Palestine", you would have looked on me as an idle dreamer; even if I had told you in 1913 that the Austrian Archduke would be killed and that out of all that followed would come the chance, the opportunity, the occasion for establishing a national home for Jews in Palestine. Has it ever occurred to you how remarkable it is that out of the welter of world blood there has risen this opportunity? Do you really believe that this is an accident? Do you really in your hearts believe that we have been led back to Israel by nothing but a fluke? Do you believe there is no greater inner meaning to the opportunity we have been given? After two thousand years of wandering in the wilderness we have a chance and an opportunity bestowed upon us, and many sit back and say that it is of no interest to us. I wonder if they have thought of that train of circumstances.'

If the words meant, as they appear to mean, that the God in whom Political Zionists believe ordained the murder of an archduke and a welter of world blood in order to bring about the National Home, they could with slight alteration be used of the second welter of world blood which brought about the Zionist State. The speaker, had he lived, might in 1948 have asked, with as much or as little truth as in 1928, whether this was nothing but a fluke.

The second war proved at its end that two of the chief war-waging powers, though they claimed to differ in all else, agreed in two cardinal purposes: the expansion of the Soviet Empire and the establishment of the Zionist State. The second peak in the range was reached. The British Government at the last shrank from the act, but other hands continued the course set by the ominous misdeed of 1917. Power in the world again proved to lie with secret canvassers who had access to public men apparently powerful. The Zionist State was not among the aims proclaimed when the masses were mobilized against each other, yet an international agency called The United Nations Organization was set up at the war's end and a majority of its members, who included such redoubtable powers as Liberia and Haiti, awarded the ancestral lands of the harmless Palestinian Arab to invaders from Eastern Europe. Arms, money and invaders were forwarded and arrived from America and Russia (subsequently a Zionist Minister complained that of the £100,000,000 which the affair cost Israel, 'only £25,000,000 was borne by outside help').

Thus, in an atmosphere of bogus sanctity and mock legality, aggression was proclaimed moral in one case and place alone. By this act the leading politicians of the non-Zionist world denied every moral right and principle they ever preached, and the entire cause of the two world wars. History knows no instance of aggression so strange or shameless, and in the later life of this body many of its members may vainly cry: 'Out, damned spot!' and wish they could undo it. The crowing of cocks might have filled the rather forlorn suburb of New York where the thing was done. The new United Nations Organization proved itself at birth a much more malevolent and dangerous society than the old League of Nations. It planted in Arabia a time-bomb more lethal to Western mankind than even the one in the middle of Europe; I think the remainder of the century will prove this.

Thus the Zionist ambition rose from its foothill, the Balfour Declaration in the first war, to its first great peak, the Zionist State, in the second. Its future vertexes as yet lie shrouded in the mists of the next fifty years. The ends already reached are the more impressive when compared with the means used. At the start, fifty years ago, there were merely a Zionist organization and Zionists, spread over the world. The weapons used were simply arguments privily brought to bear on leading

politicians, editors and public men generally. The arguments were clearly powerful, because the Zionists were everywhere able to mould men, called great, to their will as if they were of clay even softer than mortal. The mastery of the prompters, and the sternness with which they punished any player who spoke out of his part, remain astonishing.

The details of the culminating event are fascinating to contemplate. This paramount result of the second war revealed itself only at the fighting's finish, when President Truman at once 'requested the admission of 100,000 displaced persons to Palestine'. This was in fact intimation that the war was to end by beginning another war, or that the one twentieth-century war was to continue (for the final spread of the war in Palestine is still incalculable to foresee). In his Presidential Message to Congress in 1947 President Truman said. 'We shall approve no territorial changes in any friendly part of the world unless they accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned. We believe in the eventual return of sovereign rights and self-government to all peoples who have been deprived of them by force. We believe that all peoples who are prepared for self-government should be permitted to choose their own form of government by their own freely expressed choice, without interference from any foreign source. That is true in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, as well as in the western hemisphere. We shall refuse to recognize any government imposed upon any nation by the force of any foreign power.' A few months later, at American prompting, the United Nations 'agreed' to partition Palestine, the Negev to be Zionist and Western Galilee Arab.

In March 1948 the American Foreign Secretary, Mr. (or General) Marshall, persuaded President Truman to recant the American vote, telling the Foreign Affairs Committee of the American Senate that partition would bring about another world war; 'it would be just like touching off a powder keg'. That is the fact. Mr. Marshall's achievement was the second false dawn in the Nineteen-Forties (the first was our victory in the Battle of Britain); inexcusably forgetting the warnings of long experience, I added a hopeful postscript to *From Smoke to Smother* on account of it. The American Government seemed to have halted on the brink; the third act appeared to have been cancelled just as the curtain rose.

The prudent retreat, however, was too good to be Truman, as a current observer remarked. A few seconds before British rule in Palestine ended (because doubt about the American President's attitude made its continuance impossible) Mr. Truman, on May 14th, 1948, 'recognized the State of Israel'. Zionist newspapers gleefully recorded the startled surprise of the American delegates at the United Nations Assembly; the American representative, a Mr. F.B. Sayre, 'lamely explained that his delegation had no confirmation of the news'. Far away, I wondered that Mr. Marshall did not resign and made a note, 'He must be waiting to see if President Truman is re-elected'; true enough, he went when that happened. The President announced that he had been guided by 'the highest humanitarian purpose'. Later he told a Zionist audience. 'Six-twelve p.m. on Friday, May 14, when I recognized Israel, was the proudest moment of my life.' The year ended with a Presidential gift to White House employees of a bookmark with the words, 'I would rather have peace than be President'.

He remained President and war went on, for the nonce only in Palestine and a strip of Egypt. The event itself must be without its like in recorded history. From Beirut the President of the American University wrote to the *New York Times* to say that the news arrived in the midst of 'truce negotiations' in Palestine, which an American delegation was striving to further. 'The only comparable situation in our present experience', he remarked, 'was the attack on Pearl Harbour, while Nomura and Kurusu were supposedly conducting negotiations in good faith in Washington. On that occasion we were at the receiving end, and we did not like it.'

After President Truman's encouragement the war in Palestine became so fierce that the United Nations sent a mediator to restore peace. Zionist wishes at once spread further than even the

boundaries of the new State ordered by the United Nations. Count Bernadotte thought to induce them to accept those boundaries and was immediately killed. Some hundreds of members of the Zionist group called the Stern Gang were arrested by the new Israeli Government and put in jail at Acre, where 'about four hundred of them obtained a gramophone and had a dance until two in the morning ... they smashed cell doors, tore out window bars and pulled down barriers between the men's and women's quarters' (*Daily Express*). The Stern Gang claimed responsibility for the deed (according to the *Zionist Record*), but the men arrested were not charged with it. Two of their leaders appeared in court, but only on charges of 'belonging to the outlawed Stern Gang'. The prosecutor made the strange and striking statement that Count Bernadotte's murder was 'just as well planned as the attack on Pearl Harbour'. The men were convicted, given short sentences and immediately amnestied. Some time later the Mayor of New York turned out a police band to welcome a leader of the group to the city from which Count Bernadotte went forth to make peace and be killed.

There seemed no humiliation to which the political leaders of the countries leagued in the United Nations would not submit. It had performed the task for which, apparently, it was called into being, namely, to give an air of sham-legality to the destruction of a small people. It could hardly be expected to shrink in horror from the lesser murder, even of its own emissary. The killing of Count Bernadotte was completely successful in its purpose. The Zionists would not allow that 'the Negev should be Jewish and Western Galilee Arab'. They took both the Negev and Western Galilee. It was vain for an American delegate at the United Nations (Dr. Philip Jessup) now to remonstrate: 'If Israel wishes to keep Galilee ... it should be prepared to give the Arabs at least a part of the Negev in exchange.' The Zionists were determined, above all, to keep the Negev for to give that up 'would deprive Israel of the waters and minerals of the Dead Sea' (the American Zionist Emergency Council, in a full-page advertisement a few days after Count Bernadotte's murder).

These Dead Sea minerals seem to be the key to the matter (See *From Smoke to Smother*, pp. 296-8, and *The Palestine Mystery*, by Arthur Rogers, Sterling Press, London, 1948, 2s.). An official publication which may now be found only in such places as the British Museum and the House of Commons Library, called *Production of Minerals from the Waters of the Dead Sea*, says the minerals there amount to more than forty million metric tons of potassium chloride, magnesium bromide, sodium chloride, magnesium chloride and calcium chloride, together with inexhaustible supplies of potash. The value of the chemicals alone, at the market rates of 1925, was estimated at £240,000,000,000; a prominent French scientist once estimated that there is much gold there also.

This wealth in the Dead Sea may explain the enormous output of energy which has been devoted to acquiring Palestine, and might serve as the basis on which world power would be built there. If that is the explanation, Count Bernadotte cut right across the design. Therefore, with perfect logic, he was killed. *The Times* of December 12th, 1948, said: 'Count Bernadotte proposed that if Israel were allowed to keep the Arab territory of Jaffa and West Galilee it should *give up the Negev*; that the Palestinian Arabs, having failed to form their own State, should consider union with Transjordan; that the Arab refugees should be helped in their distress and permitted to return to their homes if they desired; and that Jerusalem should be administered by international agency - a recommendation that undoubtedly *incited* certain Jews to kill Count Bernadotte.'

My italics are intended to draw attention to the vital point, and particularly to the use of the word 'incited'. The other proposals were equally deadly to the great design. The one about Arab refugees was warmly supported by a Jew, Dr. Judah Magnes, who was President of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, in these words: 'Refugees should never be made use of as a trump in the hands of politicians. It is deplorable, incredible even, after all that the Jews in Europe have gone through, that an Arab problem of displaced persons should be created in the Holy Land ... Bernadotte has done more to advance the cause of peace and conciliation than all the other persons put together. I



am convinced that most of his suggestions will form the basis of discussion in any future attempts to find a peaceful settlement of the intricate Palestine problem.'

These noble words may count as Dr. Magnes's epitaph; he died almost at once, having spoken more courageously than almost any responsible politician in the Christian West.

I followed all these events in a new way: through the Zionist newspapers, which I only occasionally looked at before. I discovered that the perusal of these journals, in comparison with that of the non-Zionist, mass-circulation prints, was like looking through a lighted window into a house, all other windows of which are darkened. These publications, which are almost exclusively read by Jews, plainly tell the truth of many things which is hidden elsewhere. The whole shape of the great design is not unveiled to the Jewish masses, but the moves in the game, and the men and means used in it, are clearly illuminated.

A feeling of superior knowledge and foreknowledge pervades these newspapers. Take, for instance, the vital matter of the Negev. On November 16th, 1948, the Gentile reader in the world's capitals learned from his newspapers that the Security Council had 'ordered the Jews to leave that part of the Negev which they had recently occupied', and presumably inferred they would do so. The *Zionist* reader had already learned on November 5th that they would *not*, from the Israeli Premier, Mr. Ben Gurion: 'The ability of the United Nations to implement its decisions, the efficiency of the Arab League, the fighting ability of the Egyptian forces and the ability of the Israeli troops - all these were tested in the Negev battle, and all failed except the last.' After the order to depart, however it was apparently decided (on November 19th, 1948) that the appearance of withdrawal might be tactically advisable, so that London newspapers told their readers 'Israel has agreed to withdraw in the Negev' and Dr. Ralph Bunche, Count Bernadotte's successor, described this as 'gratifying'. The *Zionist* reader (on November 26th) learned the truth of the matter. 'In actual fact the position in the Negev will remain unchanged and despite the fact that certain Israeli troops would leave the area Jewish forces will still retain their dominance there. It is pointed out by observers that the mediator's staff in Palestine are not in a position to check whether the Israeli troops now stationed in the Negev exceed the number there before the October military operations.'

The methods by which the conquest of Palestine was effected were equally candidly reported in these publications. In May 1948 a friend of mine, after reading them, cabled to the Air Ministry in London the warning that certain British aeroplanes were likely to make unauthorized departure from R.A.F. aerodromes for Palestine, and urging alertness. Nothing was done; the aircraft duly disappeared in September and October, while London newspapers expressed amazement. A Zionist newspaper in July 1948 reported that German-model fighter aircraft, made in Soviet Czechoslovakia, were being flown from Prague to Palestine at the rate of two a day. In January 1949 British Governmental 'revelations' to this effect, laid before the United Nations and there ignored, were hilariously reported in the Zionist newspapers. Similarly, a Zionist newspaper proudly reported on December 10th, 1949, that 'the number of Americans in the Israeli army is kept secret but is quite considerable'.

The risk Count Bernadotte ran was as plain to foresee in these newspapers as the resignation of Mr. Marshall. The American President was often reminded of the power of the Jewish vote. A note of sustained fury, and astonishment, was (and is) maintained about Mr. Bevin, because his removal is taking so long to effect. Delight was expressed when, midway between the murder of Count Bernadotte and the shooting down of five R.A.F. aircraft over Egypt, Mr. Churchill protested against 'a sulky boycott' of the Zionists being supported by Mr. Eden and by *The Times*, which reported the existence of 'a formidable consensus of Christian opinion against the Arabs'. In my service with *The Times* I did not encounter any machinery for measuring Christian opinion and fear the phrase is without verifiable content.

The Zionist reader, in any case, was able to infer that the Conservative Party in England, though it 'supported the Socialist Government's foreign policy', would oppose that policy in one matter: Zionism. He learned from a leading Zionist spokesman of the visits of a Conservative Party official to Palestine on Mr. Eden's behalf, and was told that 'Mr. Bevin persists in sulking but the position might change in due course'. He knew of Mr. Churchill's support before the House of Commons learned of it, because a Mr. Bernard Baruch told fellow-Zionists, through a New York publication: 'Mr. Churchill told me last summer that he favoured British recognition of Israel.' Thus the three-line whip to Conservative M.P.s, to support the attack on Mr. Bevin in the matter, was no surprise to the well-informed Zionist reader. He was led to believe, what the British elector of 1950 may not know or dream of, that the Conservative Party's first duty will be to accept the paramountcy of the Zionist ambition, as Mr. Hofmeyr accepted it in South Africa, and as the American President clearly accepts it. Seen through the Zionist press, the process of playing off party against party, politician against politician, in the Gentile countries of the world by forcing this issue between them assumes the shape of a fascinating and superbly played game.

The lot of the Arab refugees, too, is more candidly, though pitilessly, presented in the Zionist press than in the great mass-circulation journals. Count Bernadotte, before he died, telegraphed to Mr. Marshall that the fate of these apparently forgotten people 'threatens to become a sudden human disaster comparable to an earthquake or tidal wave'. This description is supported by many reports in Zionist newspapers.

'There is not a single Arab left in the whole of northern Palestine. The entire Arab community of Safad fled during the action. This amazing exodus of 14,000 people took place in less than six hours ... One must pass through Arab towns and villages to realize where all this has led the Arabs of Palestine. More than one-third of all Palestine Arabs have left or lost their homes and there is little doubt that most of them have lost their dwellings for good ... The many Arab towns and villages which have been evacuated should be occupied by Jews from the Middle East countries ... All the time I was in Israel I saw hardly any Arabs. Jaffa is a city of the dead.'

To many pages of such reports the Zionist press was able happily to append the news that: 'The International Refugee Organization, which is mainly supported by the United States and Britain, announces that the Palestinian Arabs are not eligible for its assistance. The organization has allocated £1,500,000 for the Jewish Agency's resettlement programme. Half the amount will be used for youth immigration to Israel.' On January 28th, 1949, this body decided by all votes against the British one, to expend £1,000,000 on sending 50,000 Jews *into* Palestine. The word 'refugee', like many others in our time, seems to need defining anew, when invaders are paid a million pounds and fugitives denied a penny.

The point of the jest came on December 19th, 1948, while the Arabs were being driven destitute from their native land. *The Times* then reported that: 'The United Nations General Assembly tonight unanimously agreed upon a draft convention on genocide which is now declared to be a crime in international law. Genocide is defined as acts intended to destroy in whole or in part national, ethnical, racial or religious groups; and rulers, officials or individuals are made punishable by state or international penal tribunals not only for the crime but for the conspiracy, incitement or attempts to commit it. In a separate resolution the Assembly requests the International Law Commission to study the possibility of establishing a criminal chamber of the International Court of justice for the trial of persons charged with genocide.'

Hypocrisy on this scale assumes a grandeur of its own, beyond criticism. The Assembly which drafted the convention was the same which at the same moment genocided a completely inoffensive (though weak) national, ethnical, racial and religious group. Every member of the unanimous Assembly was indictable under every count. A Syrian proposal to refer the genocidal

deed then being perpetrated in Palestine to the International Court was opposed by the Canadian delegate in these words: 'To open now the general question of the legal basis upon which the United Nations is acting in regard to Palestine seems neither necessary nor desirable, for it would inevitably hinder and postpone negotiations for a peaceful settlement.'

The word 'genocide' was first invented for the Nuremberg trial and applied especially to the case of the Jews. The draft convention, if that origin and the genocidal act in Palestine are borne in mind, appears to mean only that any opposition to Zionism is to be declared genocide, while anything done by Zionism is exempt. It is to be an international law of lese-majesty, under which dire things may befall any simple peasant girl in the courts of Zion who cries: 'The king is naked.' It was drafted by a Zionist professor from Eastern Europe, and the American Jewish Committee, in 'hailing its adoption', pointed out that 'it contains clauses recommended by the Consultative Council of Jewish Organizations and other groups'. Its origins and intentions are unmistakable.

Thus the peaks of the fifty Zionist years are the first Zionist Congress in 1897, the Balfour Declaration in 1917, the partition of Palestine by virtual order of the American President, the armed invasion and establishment of the Zionist State, and the Genocide Convention, clearly aimed only against anti-Zionism. The thing is fantastic, unimaginable before it happened and unaccountable in the event, for the complicity of two generations of Western politicians remains inexplicable.

A particularly fascinating aspect of the story is the energy devoted by those who were depicted as enemies of the Jews to finding States for them. I told in earlier books how Hitler, Göring and Goebbels devised schemes for Jewish States. Field-Marshal von Manstein, at his trial, told of Hitler's plan for a Jewish State under German influence on the German eastern frontier. Sir Oswald Mosley, long portrayed as a great foe of Jewry, in his book *The Alternative* (1947) proposed the partition of Palestine in their behalf and in addition the opening of Abyssinia to large Jewish immigration. Another man similarly reproached, Mr. Oswald Pirow of South Africa, revealed in 1948 that in 1938 he negotiated with Mr. Chamberlain, with a number of Jewish leaders and with Hitler about 'an adequate national home for Jews' in Tanganyika, Madagascar or British Guiana. The Soviet State maintains a Jewish republic in Birobidjan.

It is an amazing achievement that a small community, spread over the world, should be able to set all the Gentile politicians of the world, friend and alleged enemy alike, racking their brains and searching their atlases in this way. However, all efforts to divert the Zionist ambition from Palestine were wasted time. Palestine was wanted, for the reason which I think I may have shown. At the end of the second war it was obtained, through the American Government and through the Soviet one, which, while at home it professed to be 'anti-Zionist', supplied the leaders, the main body of the immigrants and most of the armed aid for the conquest; the rest, and the money, came from America. Obviously, this was not the end. In 1917 the Zionists (from Russia) in London and New York were rejoicing in the defeat of allied Russia; in 1938 they were organizing a boycott of Germany in London; in 1948 they were organizing a boycott of Britain in New York. The erection of the Zionist State is clearly but a stage in a process which will continue. So much energy was not generated for this small purpose.

Until the armed invasion of 1948, the mounting successes of the Political Zionists seemed to be achieved solely by political pressure in the capitals, parliaments, parties and newspaper offices of the world. Closer scrutiny shows that this is not so; murder and other intimidations played the decisive part. The British Government was faced, in Palestine, with the choice of two alternatives; either to use its armed strength to set up the Zionist State, or to quit and leave this to the Political Zionists, supported and armed by America and the Soviet. The British Government might have evaded the dilemma, but for one thing: the readiness to force a choice upon it by killing its representatives. This happened repeatedly, but the men on the spot were never allowed to visit

punishment on the killers. The intimidation of death, in Palestine, was coupled with the intimidation of political pressure in London. No British Government, in thirty years, dared take up the challenge, and in the end withdrawal was the only way out.

The workings of intimidation in Palestine are described in Mr. J.M.N. Jeffries's book, *Palestine, the Reality*, and in most other books written by British authors about Palestine. Its efficacy was just as great at the other end, in the political and editorial offices of London, Washington and other capitals, as all who know them are aware. Always there was the intervention of a master hand, which overruled orders and duty. In 1920, Jabotinsky, the first of the leaders later called 'terrorists', mocked his judges, telling them that whatever sentence they passed on him would be quashed, and he was right. The number of British officials, police and soldiers who were shot in the back, stabbed, strangled or hanged ran into many hundreds in the following years. It included a British Minister, Lord Moyne, one of Mr. Churchill's colleagues; his murderers, alone, were judged and executed, apparently because they killed him in Egypt, not in Palestine.

A Royal Commission once reported that the Zionists in Palestine had 'a very efficient Intelligence Department from which the Administration could keep very little secret'. Captain Roy Farran, in his book *Winged Dagger* (1948) wrote: 'I was compelled to seek information from the C.I.D., and all government departments, police stations and army camps employed Jews in large numbers. The intelligence system of the Jewish underground is the best in the world because it starts with the advantage of agents at every level in the Administration.' Captain Farran was sent to Palestine to combat this underground organization and was eventually charged with murder. Acquitted, the master hand mercilessly followed him to England and killed his brother, whose initials were the same, by an explosive parcel addressed to 'Captain R. Farran'. Captain Farran ends his book with the words: 'I prayed to God for a meaning to these last eight years ... Oh Lord, give us back the driving force of national pride. Oh Lord, let me not live if I am to see the liquidation of all my forefathers' estates in my time. Show me the way to use my freedom and tell me that it has not all been in vain.'

He was the last of a long line of British representatives who tried to do the duty they were sent to do in Palestine, and found that, on the one hand, they might be killed, and that on the other, some hand protected the killers. These killings seem to me to have been committed, not in hot but in cold blood, as a means deliberately chosen to enforce a political ambition, if all else failed. That is their importance and lesson: the success of the Political Zionists has in fact been achieved by the killers, and by those who were able to protect them. These killers have always been depicted to the world as a small group of reckless terrorists, at the edge of Political Zionism. In truth they form its core. Theirs was the hand which enforced the British withdrawal and killed Count Bernadotte when he seemed likely, at the last moment, to thwart the further plans. Therefore, for the purposes of the future, they *are* Political Zionism, and they will not hesitate to pass from smaller killings to greater ones: that is, to seek larger ambitions still through war.

The process is plain to foresee. Like all forces that seek power and territory, Political Zionism shows the working of a natural law: that with success they gather a momentum which sweeps aside the first modest ambition and carries them to ever higher crests of vainglorious demand. Leon Pinsker in 1882 set the boundaries of the first Zionist dream around 'the purchase of a small territory in North America or a sovereign Pashalik in Asiatic Turkey', and warned against coveting Palestine; soon the hoop he set in motion left him far behind. Theodor Herzl eclipsed him but still thought only of a place for the surplus of Jews and exulted over the British Government's offer of Uganda. He was called 'traitor' for recommending its acceptance and young Chaim Weizmann thought him a laggard in his ideas. Today President Weizmann, contemplating the Stern Gang, might wish that the thing would stop at his little Zionist State in Palestine.

Today, however, the head of steam is too great for such small boilers. The dynamiters and killers will not be ready to hear of sweet reasonableness in the matters of Jerusalem, the Negev, the return of Arab refugees or anything else. Why should they? They have shown that they can sway the governments of the Gentile world to their will. They know that the body called The United Nations is their servant, not their master; to make that plain they killed Count Bernadotte. They must believe that their power over it is great enough to deter it from challenging them, as their power over successive British governments was enough to deter these from protecting their own and from punishing murderers. The Zionist State in its first form was not, in the last analysis, the work of Pinsker, Herzl or Weizmann, but of the Stern Gang, which was ready to answer any challenge with death and powerful enough to remain immune. It follows then that men of that school will shape future events; they are Asiatics, not Jews, by race and will act in concert with Soviet Communism. The greatest shocks of the third act, I think, will come from this quarter, not from bisected Europe. Clearly the men who have achieved such astonishing things will feel they are in a position to enlarge the enterprise and use force on a bigger scale. Why should they not, when the concern in New York approved the first foray? Palestine seems to me clearly the Archimedean point at which the lever of ambitions now boundless is to be applied.

What are, first, the further ambitions; who are, second, the men? I think the foreshadow of the expanding ambition may be traced in the utterances of various leaders or supporters of Political Zionism:

In 1922, Nahum Sokolov, at the Carlsbad Zionist Congress, said: 'The League of Nations is a Jewish idea. We created it after a fight of twenty-five years. Jerusalem will one day become the capital of world peace.' (The description of the League of Nations appears to me to apply even more to the United Nations.) In 1923, at the French Zionist Congress, Vladimir Jabotinsky said: 'If England does not give Palestine to the Jews, we will be the dynamite that will blow the British Empire to smithereens.' (The great sovereign States of the Commonwealth all sprang to the side of Britain in 1939; in 1948 all their representatives voted against Britain in the matter of Palestine.)

In April 1948 the *Palestine Post* quoted Professor Harold Laski as saying, in New York: 'The first guns fired in Palestine after May 15th' (the date of the British withdrawal) 'will echo round the world for they will be the first shots fired in that global third war which will end for our generation the prospect of civilized life. Those who leave the Jews to die for a dream will themselves be destined to perish, not for a dream but for a nightmare.' A South African newspaper gave a different version of the last sentence: 'for a nightmare full of sound and fury, but without meaning to those whom it will destroy'. In either form, Professor Laski's opinion appears to be that the war in Palestine was the beginning of the third global war, a view which I share and one which Mr. Marshall expressed to President Truman.

In May 1948 Mr. A. Abrahams (Political Adviser to the World Revisionist Executive) wrote in a Zionist newspaper: 'We must regard ourselves as the mighty nation that we are, and not as a third-rate State conditioned by the small territory we at present hold. All the resources of the world are at our disposal. All the knowledge of science and technique are with us for use. Throughout the world we have mighty hosts of Jews eager to help, to provide, to devise and to fight. Nothing dare be left to chance. There is no known weapon in the world without Jews who know its construction, who have taken part in its development and construction. It is for the Government of Israel at this historic hour to call upon all its sons to come and offer their gift of brain and muscle ... Provided we think and act as a nation at war, planning for total victory, and drawing together all our resources, we shall triumph and shall be restored in full strength and power, marking the first stage of our liberation and clearing the way for the second and final stage - the return of all Israel to the whole of the Land of Israel.'

In October 1948 a Mr. Ben Hecht, a prominent Zionist living in America, said: 'Within the next twenty-five or fifty years Israel will get the territory they need and go on to become one of the five leading nations of the world.' In September 1949 another prominent Zionist in America, one of Mr. Truman's followers in the House of Representatives, Mr. Emmanuel Celler, was reported by the *New York Times* as saying: 'Maybe the Israelis may have to give the Arabs another lesson and cut through their forces again like a knife through hot butter. Only this time the pleas of the United Nations will not deter them. They will shoot their way clear into Beirut, Amman and Alexandria.' In November 1949 Mr. Elias Sassoon, an official of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, was reported by the United Press as saying that: 'Israel is prepared to carry the war into Arab territory if the Arabs started fighting ... Permanent peace is further away than it was at the beginning of the year.'

These are a few of many similar utterances of which I have record. Through them, I think, runs that note of superior foreknowledge which is so distinct a feature of Zionist debate, and which lacks in the greater Gentile argument. They may be compared with the statements about humanitarian purposes and enduring peace which leading Gentile politicians habitually emit when they make moves in support of Political Zionism.

The shape of the expanding ambitions and of future events is, in my opinion, clear in them. Who are the men behind them? The twentieth-century melodrama would not be itself if those who rose to power on the claim that the Jews must be restored to the ancient birthplace of their race were themselves by race Jews. They are not, so that the joke is complete.

Political Zionism and Communism emerged together from Russia, and Jews there supplied the driving-power of the one movement exclusively and of the other in great part; the process in its beginnings may now be studied in Dr. Chaim Weizmann's autobiography, *Trial and Error*. Today the leaders of Communism *outside* its parentland are still in great part Jews from Russia or Russian-occupied Europe, or the children of such. The leaders of Political Zionism everywhere remain, of course, exclusively Jews; in the great majority they are Jews from Russia or Russian-occupied Europe or the children of such. This particularly applies to the 'terrorist groups' and their troops; that is, to the bold men who in my judgment will shape the course of future events from Palestine and to the great mass of recent immigrants, which was furthered there by the Soviet State.<sup>[2]</sup>

Political Zionism wielded one great argument in the lobbies of the Gentile world: that the Jews had an unchallengeable moral claim to return to ancestral lands from which they were driven in far antiquity, and that any opposition to this claim arose, not from genuine doubt of its validity, but from an inhuman, antipathetic instinct called 'anti-semitism'. The Eastern European Zionists, however, are not Semites (though the Arabs are), have no semitic blood, and their remote forefathers never trod Palestinian earth. They are Asiatics from innermost Russia who in olden times embraced the Hebrew faith. They are no more Semites than the ancient Britons, who also embraced a faith born in a semitic country. The Bosnian Slavs who embraced Mohammedanism might as well claim to return to Mecca because it was the birthplace of Mohammed.

Mr. Benjamin Freedman, a Jewish industrialist born in New York, wrote in the *Economic Council Letter*, published there, on October 15th, 1947: 'Political Zionism is almost exclusively a movement by the Jews of Europe. But these Eastern European Jews have neither a racial nor a historic connection with Palestine. Their ancestors were not inhabitants of the Promised Land. They are the direct descendants of the people of the Khazar Kingdom, which existed until the Twelfth Century. The Khazars were a non-semitic, Turko-Finn, Mongolian tribal people who, about the first century A.D., emigrated from Middle Asia to Eastern Europe. There they created one of the largest kingdoms of their time ... About the seventh century A.D., the King of the Khazars adopted Judaism as the state religion, and the majority of inhabitants joined him in the new allegiance.

Before that date there was no such thing as a Khazar who was a Jew. Neither then nor since was there such a thing as a Khazar whose ancestors had come from the Holy Land. The semitic people who established Judaism in Palestine many centuries before the Khazars became converts to the Hebrew faith, *did* mostly emigrate from Palestine. But none of them emigrated to the Khazar Kingdom far to the north.'

This is a historical fact, verifiable by any who care to confirm it. Mr. Freedman was challenged, unwisely, by a Zionist objector who derisively referred to 'the legend of the Khazars'. He replied soberly that this was an historical question which could be settled by historical evidence, and invited his challenger to accompany him to the Jewish room of the New York Public Library (the collections of which, I may add, are exhaustive). There they could together examine the *Jewish Encyclopaedia*, volume I, pp. 1-12, and the published works of Graetz, Dubnow, Friedlander, Raisin and many other noted Jewish historians, which, as well as other non-Jewish authorities, 'establish the fact beyond all possible doubt'.

Mr. Freedman, some time before Mr. Truman's 'proudest moment', wrote: 'The threat of Political Zionism to the welfare and security of America is little realized ... There may soon take place in Palestine an explosion which will set off another world war ... The influence of the Zionist organization reaches into the inner policy-making groups of nearly every government in the world - particularly into the Christian West. This influence causes these groups to adopt pro-Zionist policies which are often in conflict with the real interests of the peoples they govern. This condition exists in the United States ... New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Massachusetts and California control 151 electoral votes out of a total of 531. In these states are concentrated the overwhelming majority of Americans of Jewish faith. In these states Jews hold the balance of power. Zionists claim that they can 'deliver' this vote. Although a great majority of American Jews are not Zionists ... the Zionist minority has found means to silence them, and to convince nearly everybody that anti-Zionism means being anti-Jewish. In the light of this, and in the light of past elections, the present administration, with its eye on the next elections' (which President Truman's supporters won) 'has been strongly pro-Zionist. The pro-Zionist, politically motivated declarations of the President have been accepted throughout the world as official statements of American foreign policy. Yet it has always been a cardinal principle of American policy that all civilized peoples have a right to enjoy their own freedom ... Soviet Communism will succeed in its attempt to conquer the world in direct proportion to the support which America gives to Zionism ... It will take courage for Americans of whatever origin to think these facts through and take public positions upon them. They will be smeared. They will be slandered. Already, Zionists have been able to bring about the economic ruin of many Christians and Jews who have dared challenge the right to claim Palestine for a Jewish national State.'

Later, in America, I was able to confirm for myself the accuracy of this description. Mr. Freedman hoped to avoid the partition of Palestine. After it was ordered, he added: 'This is but the beginning of sorrows - not only for the Jews of Palestine, but for the Jews of all the world. And the Jews of America, in majority non-Zionist, but intimidated by the fury of a little group that is leading on to ruin, may some day recall with regret the prophetic words of Jacob Schiff and the elder Morgenthau, for the sins of the few will surely be visited upon the many.'

The elder Morgenthau referred to was Mr. Henry Morgenthau, senior, father of him whose name was given to the Morgenthau Plan for Germany. The father wrote: 'Zionism is the most stupendous fallacy in Jewish history ... The very fervour of my feeling for the oppressed of every race and every land, especially for the Jews of my own blood and faith ... impels me to fight with all the greater force against this scheme, which my intelligence tells me can only lead them deeper into the mire of the past, while it professes to be leading them to the heights. Zionism is a surrender, not a solution. It is a retrogression into the blackest error and not progress towards the light. I will go

further, and say that it is a betrayal; it is an Eastern European proposal, fathered in this country by American Jews which, if it were to succeed, would cost the Jews of America most that they have gained of liberty, equality and fraternity.’

I too believe that Jews and Gentiles are equally involved in this affair and will alike suffer through it in the third act. It only looks like an issue between Jews and Gentiles because the masses of Jewry have yielded to an intimidatory conspiracy from Eastern Europe. This is recognizably a disease of the twentieth century. The Germans followed the wrecker’s light of an unknown man of undiscoverable origins with an alien creed. The Gentile politicians of one great country after another have lent themselves to the aims of alien conspirators from dark places in Russia. In all countries, as yet, the men of goodwill have been overwhelmed. The fate of the enlightened Jews, foretold by Mr. Morgenthau, is only that of the Germans, of all classes and parties, who first resisted and then tried to kill Hitler. In England, thirty years ago, enlightened Jewish leaders fought hard against Political Zionism, foreseeing the same outcome that Mr. Morgenthau depicted. They were swept aside by Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Balfour and other Gentile politicians, just as the protests of enlightened Jews in America are drowned by President Truman’s eulogies of Political Zionism today. The ‘guilty men’ of the mid-century are in fact Gentile politicians and non-semitic Jews from East Europe. Between them the masses of enlightened Jews and of Christian Gentiles alike are caught.

Thus Political Zionism is mainly led by men who are demonstrably not Jews by race, have none of the blood of Shem, and no ancient tribal roots in Palestine. It is tempting to see in them those indicated in the words, Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie’ (Revelation, iii, 9). The conquest of Palestine is not a return of dispersed Jews to an antique homeland, but a Mongolian expedition, and one designed, as I judge, to set up world-power there.

An eminent authority, Professor Lothrop Stoddard, wrote in 1926 that these Ashkenazim, the Eastern European Jews, are neither Jewish nor semitic, but a mongrel breed of minor Asiatic races with a strong admixture of Turko-Mongol blood; in other words, Khazars. The true semitic Jews, from Afro-Asia, he wrote, are the Sephardim, who are slender of figure, long-headed with fine-cut noses, while the Ashkenazim are short in stature, round-headed with large noses of coarser shape. A Jewish writer, Arthur Koestler, writing from Tel Aviv in December 1948, made some germane remarks. He thought Oriental Jews (that is) the true semitic Jews who live permanently in Palestine) then formed only from 25 to 30 per cent of the population of Israel. Of the growing generation Mr. Koestler remarked, ‘the young male’s most striking feature is that he looks entirely un-Jewish ... there can be no doubt that the race is undergoing some curious biological alteration’. The infusion of non-semitic blood from Eastern Europe might make the alteration logical. ‘A considerable part of the population comes from Eastern European countries’, wrote a Zionist reporter in December 1948, and in January 1949 the Jewish Agency at Tel Aviv announced that ‘250,000 Jews will be brought to Israel in 1949, most of them from the Slav countries’. Mr. Koestler also reported that: ‘There is discrimination in fields of employment ... There is favour towards those of Russo-Polish descent. To oppose the organizations which promote this may sometimes mean economic ruin.’

Such are the men, then, who stand near the powder-keg, fuse in hand. They are not Jewry, but use it. In the third act of this century’s melodrama the attentive playgoer should seek the character behind the mask, and not judge him by it. These men came from the same place and are of the same race as those who founded and spread Soviet Communism, and the two have ever sought their purposes hand in hand.



The means by which they have gained their hold over Jewry puzzles many, though the methods by which they have obtained the docility of politicians throughout the Christian West seem to me more astonishing. Both achievements appear to be the result of evil knowledge amassed through generations of secret conspiracy, and continue to baffle those who have not personally experienced any thrall. I often found people perplexed to know how Russians or Germans could be brought to such abasement even by concentration camps and secret police, or how innocent men could be induced to confess uncommitted crimes. Once the thing has been seen with the mortal eye no mystery remains.

In the case of Jewry, spread over the world, such surrender to a sway remains inexplicable to the mass-mind. It is achieved by the same method, intimidation, practised in different ways, and has proved just as effective in the hands of men armed with this evil knowledge of the weakest places in human nature. There are concentration camps without fences and penalties without triggers.

Control of a community dispersed over many lands is largely effected through the rabbis, the most eloquent and fanatical of whom are often zealous Zionists. A well-known Jewish journalist of New York, Mr. William Zukerman, wrote in April 1948: 'No one is swifter and easier in the use of the word peace than are Jewish rabbis. The word is so much on their lips and in their sermons that it has become with a good many of them nothing but a cliché. They are always ready to denounce warmongering in others and praise it when it comes to our own ranks. War to them is, of course, a terrible evil, but it depends on what kind of war. War by the Germans, Russians, British or Arabs is evil, but war by our country and people is patriotism and the holy of holiest duties of man. It is a source of shame to many Jews who are lovers of peace (and in spite of the rabbis, Jews *are* the most peace-loving people) that throughout these terrible years not a single voice of a rabbi has been raised against collective slaughter, no matter whether it is performed on our side or on another ... The future historian of our times will have to mention with regret that Jewish rabbis as a group were more nationalistic than spiritual leaders of their people in a time of great crisis.'

A rabbi who is a Political Zionist has many scorpions in his hands. I have the words of a Chief Rabbi, who, calling in the Synagogue for funds to support 'the cause of fighting Israel', took as his text: 'Command the children of Israel that they put out of the camp every leper and every one that hath an unclean issue and everyone that is unclean of soul.' He said 'deliberately' that a Jew who refused to do his share placed himself outside the pale of Jews entitled to social, communal or religious honours. He was a menace to the community and must be treated as such.

This is a fair example of much oratory in and around the synagogues. The Jewish pale is real, and exclusion from it a thing of penalties greatly feared. In Mexico City ten Jews were put on trial before a Jewish Community Court for not contributing to such funds and nine of them yielded at once rather than incur further penalties (this practice also derives from Eastern Europe, where Jewish boards had legal power to impose taxes on Jews and to enforce them at law). 'Dissent' (Mr. Zukerman also wrote) 'has become synonymous with treason.' In Buenos Aires contributions to the war in Palestine were fixed, by Zionist tribunals, at two per cent of the assets of business men and manufacturers and half a month's salary for workers; any who failed to pay were to be excluded from Jewish functions of every kind by withholding the special card needed for admission, and would be denied burial in Jewish cemeteries.

Such religious sanctions, used to promote aims of territorial conquest and of political power, are much feared. While the Zionist State was being set up rabbis all over the world sought to strengthen within Jewish communities the 'infamous Nuremberg law', enactment of which was supposed to be so base a sign of Hitler's anti-Jewishness. In Switzerland, a Zionist newspaper reported, 'There is not a single Swiss rabbi who will convert Gentiles or marry couples of mixed religion. In addition no *Mohel* will perform a *Bris* on a boy of a mixed marriage. In this way a clear separation has been

made between the traitors and the Jews' (the Zionist Press, however, reported with satisfaction that 'A famous London Mohel circumcised Prince Charles'). In September 1948 the rabbis of the American zone in Germany demanded that the Israeli Consul should refuse visas for Palestine to Jews married to non-Jewish women, even if a rabbinical certificate were produced showing that their wives had embraced Judaism. Hitler's model was ardently followed. In the Zionist State itself a great struggle went on to have his law against intermarriage introduced in its full splendour; Mr. Zukerman and Mr. Koestler recorded that the religious leaders were fighting hard to have a clause included in the Israeli Constitution to make mixed marriages 'a crime punishable by law'.

The rise of Zion has been a fantastic thing in the first two acts. I think I have shown the identity of the men who raised and now control it, the methods which were used and the direction in which their, or their successors' ambitions must lead. None who wish to comprehend the melodrama of this century should take their eyes off that part of the stage in the third act; it is more important even than the flashpoint in Europe, which in the great design is now a secondary one, a means rather than an end. Mastery over the Jewish masses and over Gentile governments have alike been demonstrated and are clearly too great for the thing to stop now, even if the men by the powder-keg wished that. This is world-power in the making, and the attempt will continue to its end, probably to final discomfiture of the aspirants, but to much discomfort for many others in its course.

'Champagne flows in Tel Aviv, reported the Zionist press on May 15th, 1948. 'In Jerusalem pyjama-clad women danced to folk music outside the Jewish Agency's building', they added, and 'Large crowds of young Jews celebrated in Times Square, New York, until the early hours of this morning, singing the Zionist national anthem and waving the Zionist flag', they continued. I saw one of these blithe festivals, recorded in the following words: 'From the Wolmarans Street Synagogue to the Johannesburg City Hall a procession of Zionist youth, carrying banners and torches and followed by thousands of people, marched through the main streets of the city, singing and acclaiming the rebirth of Israel.'

The face of the crowd, following a myth, is everywhere the same. That one in Johannesburg, with its torches and songs, was essentially the same as the one I saw in Berlin fifteen years earlier, on the night of January 30th, 1933. There were torches there, too, and songs, and in the shadows elsewhere, on both occasions, hunted men fled for their lives. Watching the Johannesburg parade, with the memory of the earlier one and many others in my mind, I doubted if Zionist nationalism would bring the Jewish masses much joy, or was meant to, any more than German nationalism brought it to the German masses. I think it might bring great tribulation to Jew and Gentile alike.

However, I was very glad to have seen the two parades, and hope in time to record whither the second leads, too.

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## Chapter Five

### THE DECLINE OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC

A former American Ambassador in London, Mr. Joseph P. Kennedy (who in 1940 thought Britain was beaten), in 1946 wrote: 'The British Empire has progressively declined since the turn of the century - a process substantially accelerated by the events of the last ten years ... The British Empire is now the third and last of the really great powers and is clearly in a category below the United States and Russia.'

Such opinions are often heard in America and may reflect surface appearances rather than deep realities, or derive in truth more from things heard in early class-rooms and playgrounds than from living events. About that time I was beginning to be puzzled by the note of dejection and alarm I found in letters from American friends 'who seemed to feel that much was wrong in the American Republic. To me it looked, from afar, invulnerably powerful and inexhaustibly rich; secluded between two wide oceans its national safety and domestic prosperity seemed impenetrably secure; but they did not feel confident or even safe. When I had enforced leisure, on a balcony over Durban, to study a mass of literature on the subject, I began to find the reasons for their anxiety (and later saw these more plainly in America itself). The outward strength and security of the Republic were plain, but it had been much reduced from within through the two wars. It could tranquilly face the four corners of the world in arms, but might not be safe from strangers in its midst; against these the straight boulevards of Washington, planned by a French military engineer to give long field of fire against rioters or invaders, would not avail, for they did not come with arms, or openly. The Republic was going through a process of undermining from within similar to that which began in England in 1917, and this was far advanced. It was 173 years old and, by all the signs, its great strength was being subtly diverted to serve the ends of external, alien causes in distant parts of the world.

These causes, as everywhere, were the twins Soviet Communism and Political Zionism, which found ways to enter the Republic, to penetrate to high places or plant pliant men in them, and to dictate or divert major undertakings of American policy to their ends. The hidden mechanism revealed itself in the deviations of this policy during the second act. It was more dangerous in the American Republic than anywhere else, because of the strength and wealth of the country, and, I think may fairly be added, because of its inexperience in handling explosive world affairs. The prudent drafters of the American Constitution did not provide checks, if any are feasible, against such manipulation of the Republic's power and of a presidential and parliamentary system. They did not foresee invasions by mass-immigration, or the use of votes so gained to 'deliver an election', or the loosing of presidents in wartime to pursue any aims without public control, or the consequence of these things: the irremovable or semi-permanent president.

Thus the American letters I received were in the disconsolate tone of Cassius:

Ye gods, it doth amaze me,  
A man of such a feeble temper should  
So get the start of the majestic world,  
And bear the palm alone ...  
Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world  
Like a Colossus; and we petty men  
Walk under his huge legs, and peep about  
To find ourselves dishonourable graves.  
The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,

But in ourselves, that we are underlings ...  
Age, thou art sham'd!  
Rome, thou hast lost the breed of noble bloods!

The authors felt themselves underlings, lamented the feeble temper of their presidents in this time, and saw the shadow of Communism and Political Zionism rising over them like a two-headed Colossus. They could not see how to escape the thrall and cried that Washington's Capitol had lost the breed of noble bloods. Outward power and glory might be theirs, they said, but no longer their own Republic.

This development of the American Republic, they thought, was in the line of the Communist Revolution, the Balfour Declaration, the expansion of the Soviet Empire and the erection of the Zionist State. They read it to mean that, while the Republic is predominantly European in population and tradition, much power there has passed into Asiatic or Eurasian hands. The energies of the Republic, in these years, have visibly been diverted to the furtherance of ulterior causes. The comedy, they said, continued with the rhythmic inevitability of Greek tragedy, in which the gods are masters of the plot, that men cannot avert or alter.

The process first became apparent, like all else, in the first war, when an American President received that large empowerment which is more dangerous than any Absolute Weapon; indeed, my belief is that atom bombs and poison gas are only brandished before the public eye in order to distract it from this much more lethal peril. President Wilson, before election, said: 'We have come to be one of the worst ruled, one of the most completely controlled and dominated governments in the civilized world - no longer a government by conviction and the free vote of the majority, but a government by the opinion and the duress of small groups of dominant men.' Through him and his successors, many Americans told me, the words gained more truth than they then contained, for in his Presidency appeared the beginnings of new groups of dominant men whose dominance has hardly been interrupted since.

The first, and still the greatest, of the Advisers was a Mr. Bernard Baruch. He accompanied President Wilson to the Peace Conference of 1919 and then remained counsellor to five later presidents, Messrs. Harding, Coolidge, Hoover, Roosevelt and Truman. This is a phenomenon of the twentieth century, and I offer it for study as such. The results of his advisership cannot be adjudged because overt acts of policy were always those of the President or Government. Non-accountability is inherent in the institution; the responsible figure passes in time, and the non-responsible, but possibly more powerful ones, go on. In this case the lifework of a man who once described himself as the most powerful in the world, over a considerable period, and who continues to wield very great power, cannot be audited at all from public results. Surmise alone is possible, and a general inference from the development of the American Republic during his time. The innovation, in a rare case, might be good, but as an established source of power tends of itself, like that of kings, presidents and wartime prime ministers, to grow dangerous to the community, if immune from parliamentary and popular supervision. The Americans I met thought so; they did not so much fear the consequences of Mr. Baruch's own advisorships as the great expansion of the system of semi-secret advisorships which sprang up, once the seed was sown. This they held wholly wrong and perilous.

Mr. Baruch in the first war represented this new, and previously unimaginable, prodigy in affairs of State: the non-elected, non-accountable, non-supervisable potentate in a parliamentary land. He is not solely important, only generically so as the archetype. Beginning in a small way, the advisory system has in these thirty years spread outward and downward through every department of American life, so that today even American generals in the American zone of Germany, for

instance, have Zionist advisers beside them, to whom, apparently, they must defer. The masses of the Republic are almost oblivious of this mechanism of remote control and of its workings.

During the first war Mr. Baruch was chairman of a War Industries Board. Its powers reached beyond anything previously imagined possible and substantial public uneasiness arose concerning them; the public mind was much more sensitive than in the second war. An American Parliamentary Committee was set up after the war's end to inquire into the extent and use of its despotic authority. This inquiry, though it led to no future restraints, remains for the future historian one of the most revealing documents of the century. Mr. Baruch was asked: 'You determined what anybody could have?' and answered: 'Exactly; there is no question about that. I assumed that responsibility, sir, and the final determination rested with me ... That final determination, as the President said, rested with me; the determination of whether the Army or Navy would have it rested with me; the determination of whether the railroad administration could have it, or the Allies, or whether General Allenby should have locomotives, or whether they should be used in Russia or used in France.' 'And all those different lines' (he was asked) 'really, ultimately, centred in you, so far as power was concerned?' He answered: 'Yes, sir, it did. I probably had more power than perhaps any other man did in the war; doubtless that is true.'

Clearly the nature of the power thus wielded far transcends that of the persons, political or military, outwardly responsible for the conduct of a war. It was not merely that of expediting the output and delivery of the stuff of war, but of deciding who should have it and in what theatre of war. That is power on the supreme political and military level; in a world conflict it is world power. By the second war this startling innovation was become recognized wartime usage.

Mr. Baruch, and others of the growing community of advisers, retained great influence throughout the peace, especially under the long presidency of Mr. Roosevelt. Just before the second war began Mr. Baruch was told by Mr. Winston Churchill (according to Mr. Robert E. Sherwood's *Roosevelt and Hopkins*): 'War is coming very soon. We will be in it and you' (the American Republic) 'will be in it. You' (Mr. Baruch) 'will be running the show over there but I will be on the sidelines over here.' Mr. Churchill did not remain on the sidelines long. Mr. Baruch has not publicly stated if, or how far, he ran the show during the second war, when President Roosevelt was publicly thought to be all-powerful, but his influence remained large and perennial.

After the second war, in any case, he bade fair to become the most powerful man in the world again, if he had not remained so, for he was appointed head of what, in his own conception of it, was to be the most potent body of all, the Atomic Development Authority, or Ada. This was to take over matters atomic, in which British research led the world until Mr. Churchill transferred the British discoveries to exclusive American use under his empowerment of the second war. In 1946 (according to the *Yorkshire Post*) Mr. Churchill said there was no man in whose hands he would rather see 'this awful problem placed' than Mr. Baruch's. Mr. Baruch's plan (see *From Smoke to Smother*, pp. 126-7) was that Ada (a committee of a few men) should have a world monopoly of atom bombs, worldwide powers of inspection to prevent their manufacture by others, and sovereign powers to drop them on any 'who violate the agreements that are reached by nations'. One example of an 'agreement reached by nations' was the agreement to partition Palestine. Had Ada then been in existence, it would presumably have been empowered to drive the Arabs from their Palestine; were it in existence now, and 'the nations' agreed that the Zionist State needed more territory, it would presumably move to enforce such agreement. The implications of this seem boundless and exempt none, anywhere, either in America or outside it.

This Plan, however, has as yet been delayed in fulfilment, though President Truman in October 1949 reaffirmed that he would continue 'to back the Baruch Plan to the hilt'. It seemed from such incidents that the American Republic's major actions of State policy by this time were no longer

fashioned between government and parliament but took shape in the Plans of advisers, adopted by presidents. Two of many instances indicate this. The atom bomb, and atomic bombing, were to be entrusted to a committee under such a Plan. The punishment of Germany was laid down in a 'Morgenthau Plan' signed by President Roosevelt at the urgency of 'an old and loyal friend'! Mr. Roosevelt later said he 'had no idea how he could have initialled it' and Mr. Churchill still later said, 'I did not agree with it and I am sorry I put my initials to it'. This Plan was supposed subsequently to have been dropped, but in fact the bisection of Europe on the Berlin line, which in my judgment makes a third war as inevitable as any human act could make it, was the fulfilment of its very spirit.

The identity of the 'old and loyal friend' remains unknown, as the initialling of the Plan for Germany itself remained unknown to President Roosevelt's own competent Ministers until after their President initialled it. By that time the disease of power appeared to be rife in a whole line of counsellors who were publicly unknown. The long exercise of power exercised in such a manner may of necessity have an insidious effect on men who wield it. The Plan for Germany, when it ultimately became public, had horrified all responsible, men who saw it, particularly the Ministers who, in a parliamentary republic, would expect to be consulted in such paramount affairs; they thought it satanic.

But the damage was done and remains to be mended, if that is possible, and that is the point which worries Americans today. By the mid-century they felt that the system of advisers, non-accountable to parliament, and of plans, born in anonymity and fathered on presidents, had so entwined itself about the machinery of government in the American Republic, at all levels, that its public representatives were coming to seem shadow-shapes, while its actions could no longer be forecast by standards of merely American interests. These conditions also, they felt, were ideal for the working of forces which pursued aims outside America through the American Republic. Such statements as those, quoted above, by President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill, increased their alarm. They could not see the shape or course of the future if the foremost political leaders remained oblivious to the true meaning and consequence of such grave measures, put before them.

Mr. Roosevelt, particularly, surrounded himself with mysterious, non-accountable colleagues, and the books of disclosure suggest that this was the source of his most fateful actions, particularly those decisive ones, when his appearance 'frightened' those about him and he contrived the capitulation of Yalta, which set the scenes for the third act. The most remarkable was Mr. Harry Hopkins. From a friendly portrait in *Roosevelt and Hopkins* and a critical one in Mr. John T. Flynn's *The Roosevelt Myth* (an essential source-book for the period) he seems to have been a runabout between the President and superior advisers, less in the public eye. Mr. Hopkins lived in the White House. At first he was concerned mainly with quickening war-production. Later he toyed with cosmic matters, rather like Hitler with the globe in Chaplin's 'The Dictator'.

In the earlier capacity he was clearly useful, having long experience as a charity-appeal organizer (American friends say he was of the type known as 'little brothers of the rich') and a natural bent for accelerating the work of others and cutting through dead wood. In the later one, he might leave the later historian prostrate with tears or laughter, assuming that the transactions into which he rushed leave any later historians. His private papers, as presented by Mr. Sherwood, show a trio of ghost-writers (Mr. Hopkins, Mr. Sherwood and a Mr. Sam Rosenman) preparing President Roosevelt's speeches for him in permanent session at the White House. Mr. Hopkins instructed the other two to insert in one speech (without the President's knowledge and before the Republic entered the war) a Proclamation of Unlimited National Emergency. Mr. Roosevelt retained it in his speech. Later Mr. Hopkins advised the President not to meet Mr. Churchill 'without Uncle Joe'. When he learned that Mr. Churchill was to meet Uncle Joe and that Mr. Roosevelt 'was dispatching a cable to Churchill ... with the implication that he was content to let Churchill speak for the United

States as well as Great Britain', he gave orders that the transmission of the President's confirmatory message to Stalin be stopped'. The sober-minded might shudder to see world affairs thus handled. Mr. Sherwood describes the exploit as 'one of the quick and arbitrary actions, far beyond the scope of his own authority, which had gained for him the affection and admiration of Roosevelt ever since the beginnings of the New Deal'. (Another telegram, implicitly warning Stalin not to conclude any arrangements with Mr. Churchill, was then sent by the chastened President.)

Mr. Hopkins is portrayed (in his own documents) making stern interventions, by means of cable direct to Mr. Churchill and the like, in matters of monarchy in Italy or Greece, two countries unknown to him, and generally handling the affairs of millions like dimes. At the final, fatal meeting at Yalta he told the President what to do through notes passed to him. 'The Russians have given in so much at this conference that I don't think we should let them down. Let the British disagree if they want to.' Sometimes the wording and writing of these notes, and Mr. Roosevelt's scribbled comments seems to show two men hardly master of their powers: 'All of the below refers to Churchill's opposition to early calling of conference of United Nations. There is something behind this talk that we do not know of its basis. Perhaps we better wait until later tonight what is on his mind.'

At the end of that astonishing fiasco the mood of President Roosevelt and Mr. Hopkins was one of 'supreme exultation' (writes Mr. Sherwood). From Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Balfour and President Wilson, through Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Horace Wilson, to President Roosevelt and Mr. Hopkins: the Yalta Conference was the continuance of a course and a curse. When I studied the story of Yalta, in the self-revelations of its participants, my mind's eye went back to Budapest in September 1938. There I followed the story of Munich, through radio items heard by chance at the British Legation or in my own flat with the lights of Buda spread below me, or read on sunny café terraces in the columns of the *Pester Lloyd*. I felt again the shame I then felt, as a man and an Englishman, at the spectacle of men who frivolously handled affairs far outside their ken, and the sensation of inevitable tragedy which finally filled me from that moment. After that, all hope of averting the second war was gone. Yet the meeting of Munich, the part played in it by the unqualified Sir Horace Wilson and the joy of Mr. Chamberlain, all shrink into pallid triviality compared with the meeting at Yalta, the part played by the unqualified Mr. Hopkins (soon to receive a Doctorate of Oxford!) and the exultation of Mr. Roosevelt. All hope of averting the third act went then, in my judgment. The only difference was in my own playgoer's feelings; I was come to think the thing a comedy, after all.

Nevertheless, the world might pay pilgrimage today to the tombs of the professional diplomats and ambassadors of old, who knew the stuff they handled and were Christian patriots. If there are clubs in any life beyond this one, I like to imagine the sardonic amusement with which Wolsey and Richelieu, Metternich and Talleyrand, Pitt and Palmerston will receive the men of the Balfour Declaration, of Munich and of Yalta.

When Mr. Hopkins died, a little after President Roosevelt, and both soon after Yalta, an American newspaper wrote: 'Americans need not concern themselves now whether Harry Hopkins was great or little or good or bad; their care should be that the phenomenon of a Harry Hopkins in the White House does not recur.' That meant also that the phenomenon of a President irremovable save by death should not recur, and that of the whole system of non-accountable advisers. It was, too, a world problem, and not simply an American one; in many leading countries power over parliaments and parties was by this time wielded by 'small groups of dominant men', whose motives and actions could not be publicly scrutinized or audited. In the American Republic the phenomenon continued after President Roosevelt's death; the machinery for pursuing other than American interests through American power remained intact. An earlier President Roosevelt, Theodore, was asked at the century's turn 'how long he gave our government to live', and

answered, 'About fifty years'. The question and answer presumably meant, the constitutional American Republic, and the time is about up.

Throughout his presidency Mr. Franklyn Delano Roosevelt pursued the policy of opening the doors of the American Republic to new men who pursued one or other of the two new ambitions of the twentieth century, Soviet Communism and Political Zionism. Whether their hearts beat for the American Republic first and foremost was something only they could know, but their support of either or both of these causes was a likelihood in the first case and something often avowed in the second. Both were distinct from the native interests of the American Republic, so that time alone could show if their espousal by American Presidents was to its good. As far as I know President Roosevelt did not publicly declare, like Mr. Hofmeyr in South Africa, that Zionism alone could save the world, but his actions led towards the establishment of Political Zionism in a place of power from which it could dictate the world's salvation or ruination. He placed avowed Political Zionists in posts of visible power. Simultaneously, at lower levels, he opened the gates to Communist infiltration and penetration of the whole edifice of power in the Republic. The process was one of the surrender of power from above, and corruption from below.

In 1932 a Jewish writer, Mr. Walter Lippman, wrote: 'It is evident that Mr. Roosevelt is not the leader of the forces behind him' (in his first presidential campaign). 'He is being used by them. They count heavily on controlling him because they look upon him as pliant.' (This pliancy, proved in the next thirteen years, may count as President Roosevelt's most marked characteristic.) In 1936 a rabbi, Mr. Louis Gross, wrote: 'The Roosevelt Administration has selected more Jews to fill influential positions than any previous Administration in American history.' (A similar development, the *Jewish Chronicle* once stated, occurred in Russia after the Communist revolution there.) In 1938 the *New York Times* wrote, 'after an interview with Mr. Roosevelt, Senator Wagner said the President is prepared to take a "more than formal action" to safeguard the Jewish National Home in Palestine and to prevent any restriction of Jewish immigration. "I believe", added the Senator, "that we are so situated that we can make our protests to the British Government effective."'

These quotations, and many others which I have, give glimpses of the 'phenomenon' of this century in action: of power being wielded through an elected president to achieve aims far outside his country's bounds or interests. For a great country to become bellicose and expansionist in its own behalf is a familiar and recurring thing in history; for it to show these traits, in lands half across the earth, on behalf of a third party is unique, as far as I know. The only comparable affair is that of Pontius Pilate, which, however, did not entail territorial conquest. The process begun with Lord Balfour, Mr. Loyd George and President Wilson, was continued through President Roosevelt and his successor to its logical finish. Towards the war's end a prominent Zionist sympathizer in America, a Mr. La Guardia, was appointed head of the body called UNRRA, the funds of which were in the event largely used, in Europe, to promote the 'second Exodus' which made the war in Palestine. General Morgan's attempt to expose the thing before the clock struck too late was punished as quickly as if he were an American. Mr. Truman's proudest moment was the next stage. His precipitate recognition of the new Zionist State may be regarded as the beginning of the third act. In the American Republic political leaders *outwardly* responsible and elected representatives were swept aside. General Marshall's protest, as Foreign Secretary, was as unavailing as that of Mr. James Forrestal, Secretary for Defence.<sup>[3]</sup>

One Congressman, Mr. Lawrence H. Smith, said that the partition of Palestine would lead to 'a war of annihilation', and another, Mr. E. Gossett, that the American Republic 'had perhaps planted the seeds of World War III'. Many Jews spoke in similar terms of warning; all alike were derided or ignored.



The Political Zionists had their way and the results may be appraised in due time. The American Republic took over from Britain, now alarmed, the leading part in promoting the rise of Zion, and, I fancy, in promoting its own decline, for countries are no longer free which allow themselves to be used for exterior designs. Mr. James Truslow Adams, in his *Epic of America*, wrote: 'As we compare America in 1931 with the America of 1912 it seems as though we had slipped a long way backwards.' Were a comparison drawn between the America of 1950 and that of 1931, I think the result would show a much greater slipping-backwards, despite material wealth. The same deterioration, in greater or lesser measure, shows in all countries which have accepted the paramountcy of Zion at a high level and allowed the permeation of Soviet Communism at lower ones.

In the American Republic the rise of Soviet Communism went side by side with the rise of Zion. The Political Zionists worked from above: that is, from the seats of the mighty and from the control of key-states in the Republic's electoral system. The Soviet Communists permeated from below, corrupting parties from within and seeping into government departments. The 'hatred of Americans for Communism', in which the mass-newspaper reader of all countries believes today, is an illusion. That is to say, it may be a native, inherent trait of the mass of Americans, but it does *not* find expression in the major acts of the Republic's State policy; these have in their effects often promoted the spread of the Communist State in the last eight years. The rise of Soviet Communism in the American Republic is not an increase of numbers or votes, any more than it was in the Eastern European countries or China, now enslaved by foreign-supplied arms. It is the rise of influence through penetration, permeation and infiltration. It is the old stratagem of the Trojan Horse in a new form. The invaders, however, come or derive from the same place as the Political Zionists: Russia or Russian-occupied Europe. They are in the majority Khazars.

Under President Roosevelt many measures were taken to disguise the numbers, nature and political allegiance or motives of people entering the Republic. To inquire into such matters began to be presented as 'discrimination of race, colour or creed'. After 1941 the practice of keeping records of Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe was abandoned. A policy was adopted which Mr. Hilaire Belloc once described thus: 'A deliberate policy ... not only to use ridicule against anti-semitism but to label as anti-semitism any discussion of the Jewish problem at all, or for that matter any information even on the Jewish problem. It was used to prevent, through ridicule, any statement of any fact with regard to the Jewish race save a few conventional compliments and harmless jests ... If a man did no more than call a Jew, a Jew, he was an anti-semite.' Any Jew who opposed Political Zionism was equally attacked. In these years the truth of G.K. Chesterton's dictum was shown: 'Journalism is a false picture of the world thrown upon a lighted screen in a darkened room so that the real world is not seen.'

Under cover of this deterrent to public comprehension, two important results were achieved. The administrations of President Roosevelt were 'permeated at almost all levels with Jewish appointees, many of them Communistic', according to the *Economic Council Letter* of December 15th, 1947; and masses of newcomers were brought into the Republic without the customary checks. Thus the present Jewish population of the Republic can only be estimated. At the last 'religious' census in 1936 it was about 5 millions and fair conjecture puts it at between 6 and 8 millions today, mainly concentrated in the seven 'key-States' of the electoral map. The bulk of the increase came from the Eastern European area which produced both Political Zionism and Soviet Communism.

A new mass of persons of loyalty and origins not clearly discoverable, therefore, entered the Republic during President Roosevelt's period. After his death a powerful campaign was waged to ensure the continuance of the process, in favour of 'displaced persons' from Europe.

Under the hypnotic spell of wartime propaganda, the public expression of doubts about Communism in high places, or even about Communism itself, was akin to treason. Young men who sniffed the wind rose in their careers in the American Foreign Service and other departments and prudent seniors were relegated. Arrangements were made for someone called 'Tito' to have Yugoslavia, for the Soviet State to spread westward to Berlin and even (*after* the war) eastward across China. Watching the lighted screen in the darkened room, the masses did not demur. When the war ended, however, and for the purposes of the third act the new legend, 'Don't trust Stalin', was flashed on the screen, public anxiety in the Republic revived. If Communism had been wrongly trusted in Europe, why was Communism still powerful enough in the Republic to surrender China to the Soviet Empire? Ah, to start 'a witch hunt' would be anti-semitism, came the answer. One eye of the Trojan horse blazed in virtuous affront; the other winked.

Nevertheless, the business of fooling all the people all the time is a hard one, and the task of preventing discovery difficult. If political leaders are sincere, this shows itself when they find that the suspicions of others were right and their own confidingness was wrong. Next door to the American Republic lurid disclosures were made. The Canadian Prime Minister, Mr. Mackenzie King at that time, was incredulous when he learned from Igor Gouzenko, the fugitive from the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa, that treasonable aliens had permeated Canadian services and departments and had succeeded in suborning native Canadians and Englishmen. Once convinced, however, he knew his duty. He set judges to work, unearthed and published the full truth, had the culprits tried and sentenced. Also, he secretly flew to President Truman and Mr. Attlee and informed them that 'the situation is as serious as ever existed in Canada at any time'. Further he told them that it was only part of even graver situations in their own, more powerful countries.

From that moment further concealment was inexplicable, yet no governmental action or announcement followed, in either country, to match the Canadian one. If the 'situation was as serious as ever existed in the American Republic and England (and I think it is), it continued to be concealed, even when the tone of public references to Communism *in Europe* switched to one of alarm, reproof and talk of war.

In all countries, unless they have a government as dutiful as Mr. Mackenzie King's, the only hope of public enlightenment lies in the efforts of persevering individuals, who persist in trying to expose what they see as a national danger. By doing so they court quick retaliation from the powerful and organized forces, which forbid opposition to Soviet Communism and Political Zionism alike. Mr. James Forrestal's resignation and the smear-campaign which drove him to suicide are the counterparts, in the American Republic, of the attacks which led to General Morgan's retirement. Parties which claim to uphold the patriotic cause, like the Conservative Party in England and the Republican one in the American Republic, seem just as hostile to them, and thus show that they too accept that secret dominance. The reluctance of the Conservative Party to accept Captain Roy Farran as a candidate, and its manager's marked aversion against Mr. Andrew Fountaine are in the same long line.<sup>[4]</sup>

In the American Republic the spearhead of this individual effort to expose the undermining of elected government by alien and treasonable infiltration has been a parliamentary committee, The House of Representatives Committee on Un-American Activities, which for years has dug among the evidence. The hidden strength of Communism throughout the world is shown by the derision which is poured on this body by newspapers in many countries (including Conservative ones in England), and by the sustained 'smearing' of its leaders and members. Its best known chief, Mr. Martin Dies, was 'smeared' into oblivion. When the Democratic Party is in power, as it has been for a generation save for two years between 1946 and 1948, the majority of the committee appears to be automatically used to frustrate its work. Nevertheless a minority of its members persist and in

those two years they accumulated material which a generation ago would have been enough to send any government crashing in ruins.

The committee, between 1946 and 1948, sought to bring about a public investigation comparable with that of the Canadian Report. Just before President Truman's re-election in November 1948 it published a Report (September 27th, 1948). This referred to the Canadian Report, saying the American people were deeply shocked by its disclosures and also 'by the disloyal operations of some of Canada's prominent citizens who were working in collusion with Soviet agents'. Without specifically mentioning Mr. Mackenzie King's intimation that matters were even graver in the American Republic, it said, 'the American people applaud the vigorous manner in which the persons involved were brought to trial and, in view of the fact that the major effort of developing the atom bomb was being carried on in the United States, presumed that similar prosecutions would follow there'. These never came and 'the Committee has been endeavouring to find out why'.

The reason was bluntly stated: Presidential opposition. The Report says an American General testified on oath that he was prohibited by 'a Presidential directive of August 5th, 1948' from 'discussing with you or your committee any information relating to the loyalty or integrity of any government employee or former government employee'. He added, 'as a general opinion' in the matter, that 'there was continued and persistent and well-organized espionage against the United States and particularly against the atom bomb project, by a foreign power with which we were not at war and its misguided and traitorous domestic sympathizers'. The General said he had informed President Roosevelt of this in a report which the President read in his presence 'just before he left for Yalta', and that the same report was put before Mr. Truman by him immediately the new president took office. The Un-American Committee's report adds that it covers only one small, local field of its investigations, and in this found 'three separate acts of treachery by scientists ... which required immediate prosecution to the full extent of the law'. It mentioned by name several persons of Eastern European birth or secondary origin and concluded that the full story of the conspiracy could not be told 'because the Presidential veto denies Congress access to the evidence in the files of the Executive branch of the Government ... The iron curtain imposed by Presidential directive must be forthwith lifted'.

That appeared to raise a clear and major issue between Parliament and President, even more clearly stated in Senator Homer Ferguson's words: 'Congress is rapidly being pushed into the intolerable position of having either to legislate through a blind spot or compel the President to answer for his conduct in an impeachment proceeding ... Congress is charged with the responsibility of protecting the security of our people through legislation. But if, when it tries to do so, the President can deny to Congress the information it needs to legislate intelligently, then the President has gone beyond the prerogatives of his office and threatens the very foundations of representative government.'

The issue between Congress and President was obscured by one of those timely interventions which are so distinct a feature of this century's deterioration; at moments when the rot seems about to be stayed, something happens to ensure continuance. Five weeks after the issue of the Committee's Report Congressional elections restored to the Democrats their majority in the House of Representatives. At once the political writers foretold that the Un-American Activities Committee would not be allowed to make much more trouble. Since then its minority members have been consistently baulked in their efforts and constantly 'smeared'. All this, moreover, was in the period when the menace of Communism was supposed to have been recognized and the chief aim of the American Republic's policy was presented as the stopping of its spread.

Thereon the Committee, suspecting that its further inquiries might be impeded, published the material already accumulated. This seemed, in perusal, even more startling than the Canadian Report, and if its statements were true they appeared to bear out Mr. Mackenzie King's belief that

'the situation' in the American Republic was even graver than the Canadian one. The witnesses heard by it included a Mr. Whittaker Chambers, until then a senior editor of the mass-circulation journal *Time*, who from remorse confessed to have been earlier a Soviet secret agent and courier. He said he had obtained, and forwarded to Moscow, secret papers of the highest importance to the American and other Allied Governments. He accused a high State Department (Foreign Office) official of Mr. Roosevelt's Administration (who was a member of that President's staff at the fateful Yalta meeting) of making these documents available to him. The official brought a libel action.

At this stage President Truman called the affair 'a red herring' and during other, later inquiries and disclosures frequently and irritably used the same tone. In some instances, as judicial and other investigations were under way, these comments might have been held to amount to contempt of court in any other man. The President several times placed himself in this way between demands for investigation and the matters at issue.

Accused of libel, Mr. Chambers led detectives of a Grand Jury, which seemed to be slowly coming into the affair, and of the Un-American Committee to his farm in Maryland and to his pumpkin plot, where he pointed to one, the top of which had been sliced off and put back. Inside were found masses of microfilm photographs of secret documents about American and British tanks, aircraft and war vessels, and diplomatic reports covering many parts of the world. This proved that Mr. Chambers, as the investigating Committee of the House of Representatives stated, had in fact procured documents of the highest secrecy, from whatever source. As to that, the appeal of the official concerned, from a conviction in the first instance, pends as I write.

Five days later a Mr. Laurence Duggan, also a State Department official during President Roosevelt's time, fell to his death from the sixteenth storey of an office building in New York. The Un-American Committee forthwith released material showing that he had also been accused of complicity in these matters. The acting chairman of the Un-American Committee suspected murder, and so did an eminent colleague of President Roosevelt, Mr. Sumner Welles, who said: 'I find it impossible to believe that his death was self-inflicted.' I know of no inquiry arising from these suspicions that Mr. Duggan was murdered. The matter seems to have been passed over.

Within a few months a Minister for Defence, barely resigned, and two officials of the American Foreign Service (the second was Press Attaché at Santiago, in Chile, and his death may or may not have been connected with these matters) died through falling from high windows, while three other high officials or former officials, of various Departments, justly or unjustly accused in this or similar affairs, died suddenly; one was found in the river with his throat cut and another committed suicide in the Justice Building. During this period many other disclosures or charges were made, relating to espionage in government departments or to conditions in the atomic research plants. If these reached juries, the verdicts were usually of guilty; if congressional committees examined them they were generally pronounced empty. A broad picture emerged of secret and subversive influences working through the organizations of the American Republic. A persistent effort to conceal this was equally visible.

The various incidents I have enumerated formed a series of disclosures which, at any former time in almost any country would presumably have led to an irresistible public demand for complete investigation, exposure and the determination of responsibility and the punishment of any found culpable. In the condition into which public debate had fallen in the American Republic in the years following the Roosevelt era it appeared possible, at any rate for a long period, to confuse the issues in the public mind by the intensive 'smearing', through the press and radio, of any who pressed for full inquiry and exposure. Nevertheless there was always someone who would not be deterred, and this led, at the end of 1949, to the most remarkable disclosure of all.

A former American Air Force officer, a Mr. George Racey Jordan, who during the war was Lend-Lease Inspector at Great Falls, Montana, whence Lend-Lease aircraft were flown to Moscow, stated publicly in a radio interview that in 1943 and 1944 substantial quantities of atom-bomb compounds and uranium were sent to the Soviet Communist Government. He further averred that, becoming suspicious of the large amount of baggage which Soviet officers were carrying in these aeroplanes, he had a search made and discovered a large quantity of highly secret American State Department documents, in carbon-copy or photostat facsimile, from each of which the stamp 'secret, confidential or restricted' had been cut away. In one suitcase, he alleged, was a letter on White House notepaper with the name of Mr. Harry Hopkins (who lived at the White House) printed on it. This letter, he stated, contained the words, 'I had a hell of a time getting these away from Groves'. ('These' referred to the secret documents; General Groves, who at that time was in charge of atom-bomb research, was the officer who told the Un-American Activities Committee after the war that he was debarred by Presidential veto from testifying before it about espionage.)

Mr. Jordan further stated, in this broadcast statement, that Mr. Harry Hopkins instructed him to expedite certain freight shipments to Soviet Russia, to say nothing about them, even to his superior officer, and to keep no record of them. He said: 'Mr. Hopkins was the button the Russians touched every time they needed emergency help.' Mr. Jordan's statements did not receive the full and public investigation which their gravity seemed to demand; they were scouted and he was 'smeared'. They lead to two fascinating fields of thought....

The first is this: at the time the atom-bomb compounds, uranium and information were being sent to Soviet Russia, at Mr. Harry Hopkins's prompting (if Mr. Jordan's statements are correct) the public at large had not even heard of atom bombs. The thing happened in 1943 and 1944, if it happened. The public first learned of the atom bomb when it was dropped in September 1945. The initial research work was done by British scientists and the results of this were transferred to the American Republic by Mr. Churchill under his sovereign empowerment of the war. Presumably he thought that his own country would benefit by the American development of atomic research, and apparently he was wrong, because in 1949 (when I was in the United States) the British Government requested access to information and experiments and seems to have been denied this; at any rate, those American columnists who had been clamouring for the Soviet Government to be given all atomic information at once joined in the chorus that 'the atomic secrets must be nailed down'. Presumably, also, Mr. Churchill thought that the further development of those atomic mysteries which he entrusted to America would remain secret from the Soviet Government and for that matter from all other countries, for some time after the war's end he declared that exclusive American possession of the atom bomb was the one solid guarantee of continuing peace. He seems again to have been wrong, for the secret originally yielded up by Britain to America, was by then no longer in exclusive American possession.

That appears to be a fact, irrespective of the accuracy or inaccuracy of Mr. Jordan's statements, for no sooner were they made than the American State Department (apparently prompted by them to these charges) announced that in 1943 (two years before the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima) four export licences were granted for shipping uranium compounds to the Soviet Government. That was in 1943. From the first public appearance of the atom bomb in 1945 until 1949 leading politicians in America and other countries were telling their peoples that peace was only safe while the atom bomb remained a secret in American keeping, and would become insecure when the Soviet, despite this secrecy, of its own ingenuity solved atomic mysteries. Late in 1949 President Truman suddenly announced that the Soviet 'has the atom bomb'. If readers of *From Smoke to Smother* were puzzled by a somewhat ironical, or even flippant note in my references to contemporary debate about The Absolute Weapon, they may now see the reason. All students of the Roosevelt era shrewdly suspected these things, which are now coming to light piece by piece.

Seldom in the course of human events have the realities been so different from the appearances, or the facts of what was going on from the official statements.

The second field of reflection now opened to public survey by Mr. Jordan's statements is larger still and even more interesting. Mr. Harry Hopkins was President Roosevelt's chief counsellor at the Yalta Conference. The nature of the advice he gave is available for all to read, in his own handwriting or in his own notes. The Yalta Conference was the fourth decisive event of this century. The first two were the establishment of the Communist State and the Balfour Declaration; the Reichstag Fire and the Yalta Conference cleared the way for the expansion of the Communist State and the erection of the Zionist State. At Yalta the scenes were set for the third act of the melodrama, for the second half of the century, for the continued pursuit of these two ambitions, in peace and war, to the point where they meet in the servile World State. President Roosevelt was so close to death that he may not have understood all that was done at Yalta; by his own words, he did not understand the Plan for Germany when he initialled it. Thus the personality of his chief adviser there, who was also so near to death, becomes of great interest to the future historian, and if Mr. Jordan's statements should not be publicly disproved a wide area of surmise is left open.

These were the things, I found in course of study, that caused my American friends to fear that, despite its outward power and wealth, the American Republic was in decline, its energies were being used to further exterior causes, and the patriots were not strong enough to stop this.

The young republic seems to be caught, like other countries, between the pincers of Soviet Communism and Political Zionism, of the revolutionary power and the money power, of advisers in high places and infiltrators at lower levels. The method was implicit in Theodor Herzl's words: 'When we sink we become a revolutionary proletariat; when we rise there rises also our terrible power of the purse' (*A Jewish State*). It is dangerous for the American Republic, and dangerous for the world, because in the third act the world will not be able to judge for what *real* aims the power of the Republic is being used.

Early in 1949 Mr. Truman's first full four-year term as President was officially inaugurated on the steps of the Capitol in Washington. 'Capitol' might be a name of ill-omen; the first Capitol was the Roman Temple of Jupiter, king of the pagan gods, and Rome 'lost the breed of noble bloods'. Amid cheers the President, who was wont to rebuke investigators into the Communist infiltration of the Republic, announced a policy aimed at 'conquering Communism without war'. In the twentieth century the mass often looks like Bottom the Weaver and wears the ass's head as it is led towards the dark abyss. This particular throng needed only to look over its shoulder to see that Communism was conquering China *through* war, against adversaries denied arms by the American Republic. Before 1949 ended the Communist grasp on China, achieved in this way, would be nearly complete and the familiar process of disowning the allied government and recognizing the Communist one, was beginning all over again. When 1950 began the likelihood was growing daily plainer that the process would continue to be extended. As in China, American support in many forms began to be given, at President Truman's prompting, to Yugoslavia, the enemy of Greece, under the pretext used in China: that Yugoslav Communism was of a different kind. British troops were being-withdrawn from Greece, and unless that brave little land unaccountably escapes once more from the toils, I fancy that before very long the question of abandoning its legal government and recognizing a Communist one imported from outside its frontiers will once more arise. At that point, the last wartime ally east of the iron curtain would have been betrayed, many years after the war's end. Behind the smoke screen, 'Down with Communism', the reality of the design would become too plain to be ignored by any who wished to see it.

On the steps of the Capitol in Washington, however, the crowd cheered 'the new policy' of 'conquering Communism without war'. Simultaneously the policy of promoting Political Zionism

was pursued, ever more openly now and without any sleight-of-hand. With the deliberate symbolism which is so striking a feature of the process, President Truman in 1949 chose the Day of the Dead, November 11th, to speak to a gathering of 'The National Conference of Christians and Jews' (a body regarded by experienced American observers as a 'Zionist-front-organization') in Washington. He announced that he was preparing new laws 'against bias', and held up the Declaration of Human Rights and the Genocide Convention as two achievements, of the American Republic and the United Nations, particularly worthy of celebration on the day when the millions of dead fighting-men and civilians of the two wars are commemorated. Those two documents, in fact, appear to be clearly the denial of all those dead ones may have thought they died for; they declared aggression a human right and resistance to it genocide, and that was proved by the affair which was in perpetration in Palestine when they were drafted and proclaimed.

The shape of the third act seems to loom up fairly clearly behind all these things. In the Nineteen-Forties and up to the mid-century the American Republic went marching on, but not towards the goal of its native interests. Its strength had been used, and seemed likely to be further used, for alien causes, and this was the secret of the inner process of decline which alarmed its most enlightened men. Clearly, that course would not change, at the best and earliest, until a new generation of politicians had grown up and supplanted those of the mid-century.

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## Chapter Six

### THE BUNDLE OF HAY

The third act of the melodrama, the next fifty years, therefore will see the shape of the great design grow, ever clearer. It will in my judgment continue to be that of mounting Soviet and Zionist power, culminating in the attempt to set up the servile World State and to reduce the Christian area to slave status. As the prospect becomes plainer the number of patriotic men in all countries who perceive it will increase and these, in peace and in war, will need to carry on a running, second battle against the secret thralls to which their own governments, politicians and parties have yielded in the twentieth century. That is the decisive battle of the age and if they succeed in it the attempt will fail. If they fail the attempt will succeed and the long process of gradual uprising against tyranny will then need to begin again. The century has shown that liberty is a self-closing door, not one which remains open when it has been forced. By some perversity inherent in human nature its tendency is to begin shutting again the moment after it has been prised open. In the second half of this century it is closing on Christian liberty in Europe; the pressure comes out of Asia and is exercised, from Russia and Palestine, through governments in the Christian West.

Because they instinctively feel themselves threatened with the end of the world they know, many people fear that the end of the world is near. That is a very different thing, however. A man needs but spend a starry night on a ship's deck at sea, or an hour in a planetarium, to come to his senses about that. To me, on my balcony over Durban, the smile on the face of the Man in the Moon appeared broader than before and if he watches events on this globe the cosmic lamplighter may well be entertained. I fancy he knows that the reassuring tidiness of space will not be disarranged and that his noisy children from the tiny planet Earth will not succeed in taking the smile off his face, even if they one day contrive to alight in the middle of it. For that matter, unless he is keenly observant he might not even notice the gap if this planet disappeared.

I doubt if it will. More probably, Earth's children will one day investigate or invade other worlds, and the comedy may then be continued on a larger stage. I should like to see the day when the United Nations enlarge themselves into the United Planets, when the World Atom Authority is expanded into the Firmament Fission Force, when the initials become paramount in space, so that U.P. sends the F.F.F. to partition the planet Pallas, on behalf of those who discover that it is their lost homeland (and contains platinum). On that happy day, when all is U.P., Cosmic Peace, with all its horrors, will break out.

For the time, the mind of man seems bent more on the destruction of this planet than on the discovery of others (but, as I say, the moon's smile widens). It is amusing to remark, at this moment in the twentieth century, when men's schemes are rising from terrestrial to celestial explorations, that they appear chiefly to think of the damage they might do to Mother Earth, left behind, and not of the goodwill they might spread to other earths. In the American Republic, as 1948 ended, the unfortunate Secretary for Defence, Mr. James Forrestal, referred to researches which might lead to 'earth satellite vehicles'. The American Republicans, whom a satirically intended broadcast once brought out in masses to repel Martian invaders, pricked up their ears and asked for more information. They learned from newspaper interpretations that platforms would one day be established in space beyond the force of gravity (though not, I hope, of levity) from which long-range rockets might be directed 'very accurately' at the earth.

Then Mr. Harry Ernest Ross, of the British Inter-Planetary Society, explained that it should be possible to fire, to a height of 20,000 miles, rockets carrying prefabricated sections of a 2000-ton platform 200 feet wide. Such platforms, assembled in that high emptiness, once they entered their



orbit would continue to fly for ever, keeping the same position, relatively to the earth, as the moon. A newspaper added that 'in later stages of development it is conceivable that a group of scientists might be stationed there' (I felt that in the earliest stages large groups of political gentlemen, and small groups of dominant ones behind them, might suitably be stationed there).

However, it may not be necessary to go so far, in order to dent the earth, for a Dr. Fritz Zwicky, 'one of America's foremost jet scientists', thought it could be drilled like a Gruyere cheese without even leaving it. He foresaw, probably in his own lifetime, 'a new weapon capable of travelling right through the Earth'. This opened a new problem: how much of Earth would remain to attack other worlds or to repel invaders from them? As to that, Dr. Olaf Stapledon ('a philosopher and sociologist who addressed the British Inter-Planetary Society') remarked that 'the present inability to reach an East-West agreement was not a hopeful sign that man could agree with neighbours in space, and there would therefore probably be some sort of universal war'. At this prospect, on my balcony over Durban, my journalist's pulses leaped; I only hoped I might live to see it, the causes which would be proclaimed at its start, and the purposes which would emerge at its end. I should hate to miss a war in space, begun to overthrow the tyranny of Mars, and finished by setting up the tyranny of the Saturn State (with its satellites) and the partition of Pallas. I should love to write a cosmic *Insanity Fair* from a platform in space. I only feared I would not live that long, since at present 'even our best liquid fuel motors unfortunately are only about half good enough for a moon shot' (according to Mr. G. Edward Penray, a co-founder of the American Rocket Society).

For the nonce, then, and probably for my time and the remainder of the third act, this planet spins in space, as it ever did. Its disintegration into particles is not yet possible and therefore cannot be threatened by those who aspire to rule it. The most that can be offered in those quarters is the extermination of the people on it by violence and by starvation, and these things are continually threatened. They are in my belief imaginary dangers, which cannot be realized, but since the days of poison gas (which has claimed far fewer victims in the world than snake-bite) the Awful Weapon of the next war has been the favourite one of politicians who seek power in the world through stampeding the fears of the masses.

Thus, since 1945 threats of universal extermination have repeatedly been addressed to all mankind by those who claim to rule the earth through exclusive possession of the atom bomb. The facts and the fictions about the atom bomb are widely different. The earth, after all, though relatively small in space, is relatively large in bombing. A meteor nearly as large as Belgium is said to have fallen somewhere in Asiatic Russia during the first war and only to have been noticed many years later. A spectacular result, for future political use, was achieved by dropping the first atom bombs on defenceless, thronged populations in flimsy houses, against the wish of the military commanders engaged in that theatre. They were supposed, in 1945, to have destroyed, not only existing life, but the seed of all future animal and vegetable life, something, I fancy, which, only God could do. By October 1948 Japanese scientists reported that, although 'there was practically no insect life in the areas of the bombs for more than a month afterwards', 'soil fertility was greatly increased at Nagasaki and Hiroshima after the atomic bombs were dropped'. Three-fourths of the buildings destroyed had been rebuilt, shops were crammed with food and goods and a brisk trade was being done. Large cracks, however, were appearing in a monument erected there to 'Eternal World Peace'.

Nevertheless, in the Christian West the Awful Weapon continued to be held over the heads of all men as a threat to make them 'surrender national sovereignty' and submit to 'world government'. The attentive reader should remark that these threats almost invariably come from politicians with an axe of power to grind, and hardly ever from fighting-men. That they could come from that one exclusive quarter at all was due to the transfer of the atomic discoveries, in their early stages, by Mr. Churchill to President Roosevelt under his wartime power. Development in the later stages was

kept out of military hands by President Truman, so that the Awful Weapon became the property of a committee.

As to its potency in use, as distinct from its employment as a Damocletian sword in politics, opinions varied with the source. The Dean of Canterbury complained of an unnamed United States official who, he said, claimed that 'the United States is now in a position to kill 75,000,000 Russians in twenty-four hours'. The claim, if it was made, is a stupendous absurdity which none of mature years should heed. An Australian 'radar expert', a Mr. David F. Martin, said at Sydney, if he was truly reported, that: 'Britain would be indefensible in atomic warfare but the number of atom bombs which could be made in the foreseeable future could not cripple either Russia or the United States.' These are examples of the use of the Awful Weapon, poison gas, atom bomb or other, in political argument. The views of non-political authorities, military and other, are different. The British Atomic Association stated the truth: that through the development of atomic weapons alone no nation could gain a quick victory over a great power having widely dispersed industries. (The dispersal of industry is a matter interlocked with that of emigration; I have recorded the unhappy restraints on emigration to Africa.) Field-Marshal Montgomery put the dazzlingly obvious in other words; he said the atom bomb did not essentially alter warfare at all.

Through the smoke left on the little planet by the Awful Weapon, however, appeared the figures of the non-combatant World-Rulers, crying: 'Submit to us or to the Awful Weapon!' This group of men, spread over all countries, is not clearly identifiable with Soviet Communism or Political Zionism, for its members usually profess an antagonism to Communism and frequently are not Jews. Their efforts, however, visibly help to close the grip of those pincers. They are for 'World Government', which foreseeably would be world dictatorship by a small group of dominant men, not necessarily revealing themselves in the persons of the frontal Governors. They are to be found in all governments and government departments at all levels.

I think of these men as the Infatuati, holding that they intellectually descend, by way of the Intelligentsia, from the Illuminati, the secret authors of the French Revolution. Theirs is, in effect, a black religion. Some of them may not know that all of the time, and all of them may not know it some of the time, but I do not think all of them can be ignorant of it all of the time. A few must comprehend that they aim at the destruction of civilization while crying that they alone can save it. I use the word 'civilization' in the false but generally accepted sense of the white-populated area of the planet; clearly you cannot destroy the teeming millions of Asia, China, India and Africa. Enforced depopulation could only in the event apply to the white races, and raise the differently coloured ones over them. Yet such depopulation is the demonstrable aim. It first appeared in the tenets of the secret societies behind the French Revolution and is the aim of World Government today. At such presumption the moon might grin from ear to ear, but the project is in serious preparation.

An enterprise is afoot to set up a World Government by 1955. An 'unofficial People's Constituent Assembly' is to be held at Geneva in 1950. How is it to be constituted? Why, 'elections' are first to be held 'all over the world', by means of voting-papers sent to 'every registered voter'. 'Registered voter' means one thing in England and America, and quite another, if it means anything at all, in the huge areas of Asiatic, Indian and African population. Obviously any representatives from those preponderant areas of population would not represent 'registered voters' and would be bogus; yet without such this would not be a universal body. For this 'election', about one hundred candidates' are to be chosen by some self-appointed selective body, and the 'registered voters' will be invited to choose from the paper list one 'representative' for each million of his country's population.

The 'representatives' thus 'elected' would form the 'People's Constituent Assembly', which would draw up 'a Charter for World Government' and disperse. At that stage the 'electors', for what they

were worth, would vanish from the scene. From that moment on the task 'of all the peoples' and of their 'elected representatives' would be 'to bring pressure on national governments to ratify the Charter. In other words, a group of men, claiming to be the members of a World Government, would spread out among the national governments and parliaments of the world and 'bring pressure'. The results obtained by such pressure-groups in the last thirty years are sufficiently startling for this project to be seriously followed.

The 'authors of the plan' believe they can 'prevail on a sufficient number of the public all over the world by 1955 to enable the first World Government to be created by that year'. The 'pressure' is apparently to be effective, because 'If national governments are convinced that public opinion is behind them they will have no choice but to transfer a part of their sovereignty to the new level of government as soon as this is brought into existence'.

Although 'the Charter of World Government' has yet to be drafted and approved by the 'elected representatives', the 'authors of the plan' apparently know what its most important provision is to be; namely, one that: 'When fifty per cent of the nations of the world, or the nations representing fifty per cent of the peoples of the world, have ratified this Charter, the Legislative Authority herein described shall be deemed to be set up.' At that point the new World Government will claim the right to make laws for the planet! In achieving the necessary fifty per cent of support such formidable states as Dominica, Haiti and Liberia would no doubt be valuable allies, and pressure in their lobbies would be great.

What would this World Government do, if it could, in 1955? The Constituent Assembly of 1950 will be required to draw up 'a clear statement of Human Rights'. Whose rights would they be, and whose wrongs? The United Nations ordered the destruction of a small people and declared their own deed of 'genocide' a crime while it was being committed. Would its successor or rival, this new World Government, define Human Rights in the same or a similar sense? Nothing I have seen in the literature of World Government suggests anything different. On the contrary, if its intentions may be judged by the words of its supporters it would continue to sow ruin throughout the white-populated area of the world, with the inevitable result that peoples of different skin would submerge that region.

I have pronouncements about World Government and the need for it by politicians, scholars, scientists, lawyers, Zionists, economists, writers and officials, mostly British or American, who must be presumed to mean what they say. In all this mass of argument may be found a common and central proposition: depopulation through the denial of the right to give birth! That is what World Government means, but only to people in white-populated countries where the thing could be enforced; African tribesmen, desert Arabs, Chinese peasants and Indian coolies cannot be stopped from procreating in the bush, sand-dunes or paddy-fields. Thus the Man in the Moon may chuckle at the spectacle of the Earth's white men arguing whether the white-populated area may best be emptied of life by explosives or by starvation.

Mr. Joad once wrote: 'It is now about one hundred and forty years since Malthus<sup>[5]</sup> alarmed our ancestors by pointing out that human fertility was so great that the human race would presently increase beyond the ability of the planet to feed it. But the growth of science quickly dispelled the alarms occasioned by Malthus's gloomy prophecy ... The effects have been a rapid increase in the world's population. At the beginning of the war it was some 2000 millions and is now roughly 2150 millions. That is to say, in spite of the destruction of six years of war, there were between 150 million and 200 million more people in the world at the end of it than there were at the beginning. Sir John Boyd Orr has estimated that in fifty years time there may well be 1000 million more people in the world than there were at the beginning of the war, that is to say, for every two alive then there will be three. But while the number of people has grown, food supplies have diminished.

Not only are there no more continents to open, but we are exhausting the fertility of the soil of the existing continents ... Broadly speaking, there are three methods of keeping down the population. First, famine and starvation; secondly, war, which is partly the result of famine and starvation; thirdly, the deliberate limitation of populations by birth control ... The obvious need is for some kind of authority to fix an optimum population for each nation and then ... for the governments to plan the populations of each nation in accordance with the figure prescribed. This means fixing the number of children that each couple should bring up. Now all this, of course, implies a World Government, and, until we get it, nations, instead of limiting their populations, will try to increase them, in order to gain advantage over one another in case of war, and to provide cheap labour in time of peace.'

Mr. Joad's argument may be analysed thus: famine and starvation 'partly' cause war and all three combine to keep down population, which has been proved greatly to increase in spite of them, so that some more lethal method must be tried. Sir John Boyd Orr (who is named among the sponsors of the World Government plan) wrote: 'It is estimated that in about forty years the pre-war population of some 2000 million will reach 3000 million ... In the nineteenth century the population of Europe increased from 188 million to 390 million ... The additional food needed was obtained from the virgin lands of new continents ... Today there are no new easily cultivable virgin lands and no new continents ... Of those who have studied this problem some think that the position is hopeless. Our Western mechanized civilization which has destroyed the resources of the earth with accelerating rapidity is, they say, doomed ... We must look forward to a long dark age during which the earth will have a chance to recover from its wounds, after which a saner civilization will begin to evolve, *probably in Asia*' (my italics). 'Some Americans take a very drastic view of the situation. Among them is William Vogt ... who adopts the Malthusian theory that increase of food production cannot keep pace with increase in population ... The only cure is universal birth control and the decimation of surplus population by famine and disease ... Both foolish sentiment, keeping surplus impoverished people alive to the detriment of the standard of living of their benefactors, and democratic free enterprise which enables natural resources to be exploited for the benefit of the few, must be ruthlessly curbed. He believes ... American aid should only be given to countries which have applied birth control to maintain population at the level the land will support.' (Mr. Vogt's book is called *Road to Survival*, and I was left wondering, whose survival?)

Malthus did not foresee the great increase in food supplies from new countries, which falsified his dark forebodings. Tomorrow an increase in food supplies from new planets might equally nullify these fears of today. That men should recommend such remedies, however, might make one hope, on balance, that their kind will not reach new worlds. Another contribution came from Mr. D.E. McCausland, K.C., who wrote: 'When Malthus wrote one hundred and fifty years ago he based his prophecies of starvation for the human race on three main postulates: the limited amount of agricultural land, the natural laziness of man in cultivating it and the reproductive instinct which is quite independent of the food supply. As to the first and second he proved to be very wrong' (and as to the third also, I interpolate with an eye to Asia and India) 'but this development does not necessarily invalidate his theory ... We are falling back into the position visualized by Malthus ... Undoubtedly scope still exists for a considerable increase in food production ... and for some years yet science may be expected to keep pace with demand. But how long can the equation last if population continues to bound up, also under the stimulus of science through improved hygiene and a constantly falling death rate? If definite limits must be placed upon the world's food supply, we are thrown back on the question whether any limits can be placed upon the increase of population. That this is essential is the view taken by Mr. Warren Thompson, of the Scripps Foundation for Research into Population Problems. He gloomily predicts that the increase in populations, if maintained, will consume the increase in production and lead to devastating famines and a higher death rate ... From time immemorial over-population has been a fruitful cause of war. Whole

civilizations have been wiped out by the attacks of barbarians who contrasted their numbers and poverty with the riches and fewness of their neighbours.’

The strange paradoxes of this argument can be seen again in this case, as in Mr. Joad’s. Rich, civilized peoples, not numerous, were wiped out by more numerous barbarians. The moral drawn is that in future rich, civilized peoples should reduce their numbers! Obviously this would lead to them being wiped out again by barbarians, whose increase cannot be limited! Mr. Kenneth Walker (quoted by Mr. Joad) was reported to say to an International Congress at Cheltenham: ‘I can imagine that when the question of national and world supplies becomes more and more prominent, there is the possibility of family planning by the individual being displaced by government control of the number of children each couple should bring up. I pray that we shall never determine sex; otherwise I foresee a more serious turn of events. I see the time coming when parents may be refused a government permit to have a daughter because they have failed to provide their quota of sons to fill the mines or the armed forces.’ In Washington, a Dr. Brock Chisholm, ‘Director-General of the World Health Organization’, said that ‘worldwide birth control measures were as necessary to human welfare as increasing the world’s food production’.

A conclusive objection to these recommendations suggests itself. It is, that if they had been made and enforced a century ago Mr. Joad, Sir John Boyd Orr, Mr. McCausland, Dr. Brock Chisholm, Mr. Warren Thompson and Mr. William Vogt might never have been born. The argument is that unless ‘some authority’ prevents us from being born, we may be hungry, or starve, or die, so that it would be better not to be born at all. Euclid would disdain to prove that absurd, yet the proposition is seriously advanced in the twentieth century. For my part, I would prefer to have the experience of life, no matter how hard.

The fact remains that public men holding substantial offices in many countries wish to set up a World Government and aver that, as the foremost among the Human Rights it would protect, it should deny the right of giving birth and of life. Though they may not all perceive this, the reality is that such a measure is only possible in the white-populated area, and that it would expose this to submergence by ‘barbarians’. That is also, in my judgment, the aim behind Soviet Communism and Political Zionism, so that in this cardinal ambition three powerful forces of the mid-century converge, those two and the World Government one. ‘Barbarians’ cannot be prevented from multiplying; any man who has seen Asia or Africa knows that. The lethal scheme is only enforceable in countries where men and women have been ‘registered’ and given identity cards, where food-supplies have been ‘rationed’ and may be reduced or withheld for some ulterior purpose, where artificial restraints have been put on the free growing, sale and purchase of food. Behind this plan, indeed, lies ‘a long dark age’, but for the white peoples of the earth *alone*, and something new, which might or might not be ‘civilization’, in Asia. Probably not all of its supporters realize that, but then, did President Roosevelt realize what he did at Yalta?

By the mid-century, anyway, public debate in the Christian West was dominated by men who spoke of destroying mankind with Awful Weapons or by depopulation. In each case the threats, if they were analysed, meant, not ‘mankind’, but ‘the white peoples’ or ‘the Christian area’. Among these white peoples the voices of those who upheld the old ideals, of Christian principle, national freedom and individual liberty, were for the moment almost drowned. I expected to hear them become loud again during the decisive third act.

Perversely, my nearest interest, as I watched from Africa (and later from America) these great schemes for ruling the earth, depopulating the white man’s lands, setting up World Government, unveiling ‘new civilizations’ in Asia, invading space and visiting other worlds, remained the present lot and future prospect of my small native island. In my judgment it is the target of all present conspiracy. By 1950, five years after the end of the second act, the fictions of propaganda

were dead and it was in a sorely vulnerable and beleaguered plight, as it was always accustomed to be. I think this condition in which it emerged from the war was well foreseen by those groups of dominant men who proved so powerful at its end. It appears to me today to be surrounded by more than deep sea, and greater skill than ever before will be needed to preserve it from defeat by back-doors during the second half of the century. It was always able to produce a Drake, Nelson or Wellington against visible invaders. But this is the century of the invisible invaders, of conquests through secret conferences, of private transactions about countries and continents while the fighting still goes on.

England, I thought, needed a politician who in his own craft would combine the skill and courage of Drake, Nelson and Wellington. If it found one, it would find a statesman again.

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# PART FOUR

... THE CARAVAN GOES ON

## DANCE OF THE FIREFLIES

From my imaginary seat in the gods, where I watched in foreshadow the melodrama of the next fifty years before the millennium, I was abruptly recalled to earth, to Africa and to today. From the pleasant contemplation of the cosmic comedy I came suddenly down to the present reality of human hopes and fears, of individual longings for liberty, of life and death on this planet. I forgot the great play while I watched a little one, one of the many little ones which go to make up the whole. There were shots in the night, and shouting, and the glow of rising fires. I was back in the world of human events; the chance that seems to guide me put me once again in the middle of what men call news.

My bags were packed for America and the sadness of a new separation lay heavy on us as we sat together on the balcony, one January evening, and waited silently for each dusk's entertainment, the pageant of the fireflies. These little travelling stars, which were easy to capture and hardly big enough to see when they rested on your hand, came out just as twilight thickened into night and in undulating, circulating flight patrolled the darkness for just half an hour; then they were gone and came no more until the next dusk. We often wondered: did their batteries run down after thirty minutes, so that they flew thereafter without lights; or was this by firefly law the prescribed limit of their evening's liberty; or were they able in that short time to find all the food they needed? We wished they would have stayed longer, but they never did.

On this evening we watched our little lamplighters with heavy hearts, because of the new parting, but also with uneasy ones, for the dusk they patrolled was full of disquieting human vibrations. There was some inaudible difference in the stillness, some premonitory hush that was not like the usual evening hush. I was already prepared for something, but did not know what. I had spent the afternoon in a Native and Indian quarter, one of those throbbing places in the pulsating city, from which the white man habitually averts his gaze. The Natives there sang and shouted to each other on a higher note than the one with which I was familiar and their eyes showed the beginning of the cataleptic look which they assume in violent excitement. They walked about with huge grins and sometimes broke into a few dancing steps. I went home sure that something brewed. Durban has so persuaded itself that it lives in a vacuum, not in a boiler with a growing pressure of steam, that a newspaper later said an atom bomb could not have been more unexpected than what actually occurred. In reality, the moment of its occurrence alone was unforeseeable.

While we watched the fireflies the Zulu newspaper-boy came with the evening paper. It reported, with surprise, that riots had begun. Suddenly, in those streets running parallel with the two main thoroughfares which the white folk avoid, Natives had attacked Indians, smashed their panes, plundered their shops. After nightfall they would clearly attack the Indian quarters and shanty-colonies on the city's edge.

They did. That night, and for two more, the fireflies were harbingers of death. Below our balcony was a wide valley, with the lights of white men's houses on the other side of it and beyond them the glow of central Durban, its coloured signs and its harbour. In the centre of the dark valley between shone always one light, that of an Indian store set among Indian fruit and vegetable plots. It was a furtive place, where Natives bought food in a gloomy shop; innumerable Indians teemed in its mysterious interior and in shacks around.

While we watched the fireflies the light went out and the valley filled with fear and strange sounds. The Indians, like all the others in the swarming shacks of Jacobs and Wentworth and Cato Manor, barricaded themselves behind tin walls and wood-shuttered shop-windows. Through the plantations of banana trees and pineapple plants came the bare-footed Natives, reverted to their tribal stealth, as



dark as the night itself. We heard them clicking their sticks on each other in a weird and menacing rhythm, as if they were the spear-shafts of old, and uttering old war-cries.

Watching from the balcony we could not see, but only imagine what was happening, until the fires began to redden the sky. Once before we had watched fires together: those, far greater ones, of burning London. Now every dog in Durban began to bark; this clamour went on for the three nights. The riot-cars and fire-engines and ambulances, which carried sirens like those used for air-raid warnings in England, filled the nights with wailing. Between all those noises was another, in the dark valley; the thud-thud of stones and bricks, hurled by the besiegers, on the roof and shutters of the Indian store. From the blackness came shots and shouts, and once a scream. This was the death-cry of the only white man killed. He was a neighbour and lived next door. He ran down the hill to offer to help the police and, being welcomed, said he would run home to fetch something he needed. As he ran an Indian cried. 'There goes one!' to a policeman, who shot him through the head.

I have lived through many nights of violence in many countries, but few as eerie as that, when the Native's savage soul burst its bonds in the darkness and the stones thudded and the dogs barked and the sirens wailed and the fires blossomed. Durban was unprepared for such an outbreak. The Durban City Police are a fine body of men, but too few for an affair of such size. The South African Police, posted in handfuls at scattered points around the city, have been progressively taken over by the Afrikaners, and this virtually excludes any reinforcement, in numbers or efficiency, which English-speaking recruits might bring. Hardly any troops were available near at hand.

On the third day large reinforcements of police were brought in by road, rail and air, and the matter was ended sternly. A week later the number of Indian dead was stated at fifty-three and that of the Natives at eighty-three. The Indian figure may be correct, for the Indians are a closely-knit community where the fate of each individual may be ascertained. As to the Natives, the number might be higher. The birth or death of a Native is not recorded by the white man and the very number of Natives in Durban is necessarily a matter of wide guesswork (the estimate is that they are more numerous than the Europeans and Indians, of whom there are about 125,000 each). No inquests were held and the Natives complained that they did not know what became of many of their own.

Problems within problems: here one of the many burst into flame for a moment. The outer world, astonished by the sudden blaze, was told that it resulted in some way from the 'colour policy' of the Afrikaner Nationalist Government. I hope I have shown that this is a political fiction, used by interested parties who seek certain ends through the cry of Hue! It was quite untrue; whatever the merits or demerits of that government, it had nothing to do with this fierce eruption, or at any rate, no more to do with it than any other South African government of any sort or time. The Indians of Durban and Natal are for better or for worse Durban's and Natal's problem, and one almost as old as Durban and Natal themselves. In those days I often heard from the white folk the opinion that the Indian brought the trouble on himself by his 'exploitation of the Native'. However, the Indian did not bring himself to Natal, nor did the Native bring him. The condemnation is as if the squire rebuked the butler for oppressing the scullion, while refusing to allow the scullion ever to rise above dish-washing.

The trouble was, is and will be what Trollope perceived seventy years ago, that: 'The Indian asserts quite as much mastery over the Kaffir as the white man.' That is something incomprehensible and bitter to the Native soul. The white man is his lord by right of conquest and colonization; the Native does not demur at that ancient law. But a second party, the Indian, who was neither fighter nor coloniser, was brought in as slave and then given all those chances to uplift himself which the

Native is still denied. The white man authorized that and does not mitigate the thing, though he complains about the Indian.

The Native is used to what the white man would consider a hard lot, and I do not think he is embittered nearly as much by poverty, homelessness, short commons and arduous labour as by this unaccountable preference given to the Indians. Nearly every way by which he might raise himself above his low level is closed to him, but many are open to the Indian. The Native may not, for instance, become a hawker or pedlar; the white man will not follow these occupations himself but in practice reserves the essential licences to the Indians, who hold them nearly all. The fruit and vegetable businesses in Native or Indian quarters are bestowed on Indians in this manner, and many of the grocery businesses too. In practice the Native may not own a house or land; the Indian may. The white man liberally licences buses to Indians, and in these the Native must travel to and from his work, for he is not allowed to operate his own transport. The Native sees the Indians riding in limousines while he goes barefoot or is lucky to own a pair of shoes. The grievances of the Indian are cried night and day in the newspapers of the world; the Native, however, when he contemplates the Indian's enviable lot, is unlikely to believe in a 'colour bar', though he is well aware of the existence of great barriers.

In the upshot a judicial Commission of Enquiry was appointed, the result of which I have not seen. It followed closely on an earlier one (Mr. Justice Broome's) which in its turn was appointed by General Smuts because a Durban City Councillor expressed the view that: 'In Durban we are sitting on a volcano', while a Durban newspaper wrote that: 'Native confidence in the white man's system of justice and civil administration has been badly shaken ... worse still, the impression has been created that physical protest alone will stir them to action' (this was during General Smuts's administration).

Those few South Africans, of both races, whom I found able to take an aloof and long view agreed that no local inquiry or local action can solve the great South African problem, of which this and other outbursts are merely symptoms. They could see only two answers to the question of the future, of which one would have to be chosen. Either rusty hatchets must be buried, South Africa made in fact 'a white country' through a great increase of the white population, and the lot of the Native improved as part of the general betterment which this would bring; or the white man will in the end be unable to maintain his foothold in South Africa and the other African territories which he has colonized in insignificant numbers.

After three days, and the last night of rifle and machine-gun fire in the darkness, the light went on again in the Indian store, the dogs ceased barking and the sirens wailing, the Indian filed his insurance claim and the Native resumed his mask. The fireflies did not interrupt their dusk carnival at all and we continued to keep rendezvous with them each evening until I took my bags, once more waved adieu, and went on a long, long journey, indeed, the longest one I have ever made.

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## POSTSCRIPT

Eighteen months have passed between the beginning of this book and its publication. It appears at a moment envisaged, without confidence, fifty years ago by Olive Schreiner, the authoress of one of the most famous books about South Africa, *The Story of an African Farm*. Writing in 1897 she said: 'It is the far future of Africa, during the next twenty-five to fifty years, which depresses me. I believe we are standing on the top of a long downward slope. We shall reach the bottom at last, probably amid the horrors of a war with our Native races, then not the poor savage or the generous race we might have bound to ourselves by a little generosity and sympathy, but a fierce, half-educated, much brutalized race, who will have their own! I see always that day fifty or sixty years hence and it is with reference to it that I judge of many things in the present.'

The mid-century period which she considered has come and down the years many other South Africans have written similarly. 'The terrible proletariat which we shall create for our own ultimate undoing' (as she also wrote) is in formation, and apart from that, a different and separate problem, has come about the great Indian lodgement all down the eastern seaboard of Africa, something which she possibly did not foresee. Even so, I as an onlooker from outside do not see the war with the Native races, *generated by spontaneous combustion inside South Africa*, which she and others sadly forecast.

The tale of 1900-50 seems, at a long view, certainly to be one of fifty lost years, for during that time the white population could have been doubled and doubled again, so that the white man's fear of the dark one's preponderance would have subsided and, inside the process of growing industry, income and resources, the dark man's lot, political and social, would have improved. All the racial feuds and fears have prevented that. History shows that if a Christian nationalism becomes inflamed into chauvinism it always defeats its own objects, and the Nationalist Afrikaner, by yielding to that oft-proved error, might at the last bring about the opposite of that which he desires: Afrikaner, or even white, dominion. At all events, by 1950 the rise of a South African white nation, uniting all the strains, was imperilled, and I knew many South Africans, of both Afrikaner and British descent, who could no longer see the solution. Though the throng at the great Voortrekker Monument celebrations at the end of 1949 clearly showed that it wanted reconciliation between the two strains of white South Africans, the tone of politics continued to be one of harping on old resentments, and 'racial problems' weighed ever more heavily on the minds of reasonable men whose home South Africa is. They dreamed of a government of national reconciliation which would keep clear of international or supernational coteries, but saw little chance of that.

Nevertheless, the Native war which many South Africans have long feared seemed to me an illusion, at any rate in the form they imagined it. If it came, the Nationalist Afrikaner was as stubbornly ready, and as unafraid, to fight it as he was to fight the British at the century's beginning. I thought he might deceive himself, however, about the sort of thing that might happen, of which Anthony Trollope, thirty years before Olive Schreiner, seemed to me to perceive the shape much more clearly. The 'European politician' (or the Asiatic one) working through the dark man, not the impulsive uprising of the Native, appeared to me to be the danger, and one that threatened all white men in Africa equally, not only the Nationalist Afrikaner in South Africa.

For at the mid-century something became clear, the suspicion of which first awoke my lively interest in Africa and led me to it. In my judgment, which is strengthened by what I see as I go along, the coming half-century will witness the final stages of an attempt, for which the first two twentieth-century wars were preparation, to put the world under a pagan dictatorship, ruling by terror or the threat of it. If that aim could be achieved through some such self-enthroned committee as the one which now calls itself The United Nations Organization in New York, it would be; otherwise, it would in my belief be pursued through a third war.

In either case, Africa, the neglected continent, will be right in the middle of these events, a major piece in the game. If the third war comes it will not, like the first one, be something that goes on half a world away; or, like the second one, an affair which for a while rumbles faintly 'up North'. It will be fought very largely from, if not on, African soil; in its course or aftermath Africa's problems will come to the surface and all sorts of folk from far away will claim the right to dictate their solution.<sup>[6]</sup>

The *military* view of what may happen was lucidly given by an American specialist in the use of air-power, Major-General Hugh H. Knerr. He advised that Africa should be made 'a full partner' in the next war because the Communist Empire would (he thought) 'neutralize the British island in the first phase of the war'. In the secondary phase, Africa would be indispensable, for the war would then become: 'Inter-continental air warfare based on the American and African continents - the American continent as a strategic base for initial retaliation, and the African continent as a tactical base for the building up of air power to support ground operations aimed at the ultimate occupation of enemy territory.'

I believe that is a sound *military* forecast of what might happen and that many other good *military* judges would agree with it. But the military course of a war and its political results are two entirely separate and different things, as the outcome of the second war plainly showed. The political results are preconcerted by political leaders who have seized despotic powers in the name of 'an emergency' and who dispose of the millions of mankind, of their countries, and even of continents at private parleys while the military leaders carry out their orders. Thus almost the whole of Asia, and perhaps yet the whole of it, and half of Europe were handed over, at such private conferences, to a dictatorship worse than the dictatorship which mankind was mobilized to overthrow.

What, then, would be the *real* lot or fate of Africa at such hands, in a new war? That raises the question of the political reality behind the military appearance, of the *true* motive behind that which might be called at its outset a war between, say, 'East and West', or 'Democracy and Dictatorship'. The argument or pretext offered to the patient masses of mankind would be that the occupation of Africa was necessary 'as a base', 'to stage the counter-attack' for (let us say) 'the liberation of the world'. But what would in fact happen to Africa? For what part would it in truth be cast in that plan of setting up a world-dictatorship which, in my belief, would be pursued behind the military fog of the third war?

That is the root of the matter, to use a phrase which Mr. Churchill liked to apply in admiring description of one of President Roosevelt's strange advisers, a Mr. Harry Hopkins. Now that the fog of the second war lies five years behind us, the truth may be seen: that the men who acted so imperiously, and seemed all-powerful, often were unaware of the consequences of what they did, and were prompted to it by other men whose real power, thus exercised, was quite unknown to the masses. President Roosevelt, for instance, could not later understand how he had come to 'O.K.' the 'Morgenthau Plan', which in effect bisected Europe and set the stage for a third war. Similarly, he handed China to the Communist Empire, apparently without knowing that it would be taken. The *reality* of American state policy during the second war, as distinct from its appearance, was that it promoted two causes which were never declared to the masses at any time during the war and would never have received public sanction had they been explained: the advance of the Red Army to the centre of Europe and the Pacific coast of Asia, and the erection of the State of Israel in Arabia. In this way *two* detonation-points for the next war were established, one in the heart of Europe and the other in the heart of Araby.

The next reality was that this course of American state policy was continued, behind an appearance of resistance to the spread of the Communist Empire, through the years following the war. Assistance to the anti-Communist forces in China was discontinued and China abandoned to the

Soviet Empire. At American insistence the Political Zionist invasion of Palestine was upheld by The United Nations Organization, and all countries voting for it thus set a grave precedent in respect of their own territories. The leaders of this new State declared that the 'ingathering' of the ninety per cent of Jews, whether they were Political Zionists or not, who remained outside Israel was their aim; clearly this could never be achieved save by the conquest of much more territory, at present held by several neighbouring Arab States. The Communist Empire, and the captive countries forcibly attached to it by the abandonment of half Europe, received lavish gifts of American money and equipment. This at first occurred through a body called The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. By the time it was wound up the mistake of subsidizing Soviet aggression was supposed to have been realized and further American monies, given under such heads as 'Marshall Aid' or 'European Recovery', were limited to the 'free' countries of Western Europe, which were to be fortified 'against Communism'. One of the captive countries, however (Yugoslavia), was then discovered to be 'anti-Stalin', and because of this was allowed to participate. It remained a Communist country, and thus the prospect at once opened that if the war 'against Communism' broke out, one Communist country, or one group of Communist countries, would in fact be supported against the other, merely because its leaders disliked, or were portrayed as disliking, each other.

Thus the *political* falsity of any third war was clear to see before it began. It seemed fairly obvious that occult groups, probably in all the countries concerned, were producing this *appearance* of inveterate hostility in order the better to pursue their final attempt at a world dictatorship more tyrannical than any that might be overthrown.

At this point in the game the shape of the design for Africa began to show through the smokescreens, at any rate in my perception. It seemed clear once more that, whether or not the political leaders understood this, actions of high state policy in the United States and the Soviet Empire, particularly, were bending towards a common aim.

Early in 1949, when he inaugurated his first full term as President, Mr. Roosevelt's successor, Mr. Truman, announced a programme for saving the world from Communism. It contained a 'Fourth Point' which at that moment was unclear in its purpose or implications. This proclaimed 'a bold new program' for 'undeveloped areas', a programme to 'foster capital investment in areas needing development', to 'greatly increase the industrial activity in other nations' and to 'raise substantially their standards of living'.

During 1949 and 1950, in America and Africa, I watched for light about this dim undertaking, having learned from experience that the most fateful enterprises for mankind often lurk behind such mysterious pronouncements. Gradually, as twelve months passed, more and more light emerged. Africa was the object of it. In December 1949 the news came that, at 'Marshall Aid headquarters in Paris', the representatives of Britain and other powers with interests in Africa, had been asked by the United States to draw up 'a new defence master plan to open up Africa south of the Sahara'. A 'huge project' was called for, 'under which new roads and railways would be built between the African possessions of Britain and those of other countries, new air bases established and scores of ports modernized'. South Africa and Southern Rhodesia were both enlisted in this project, and soon it became clear that a blueprint of enormous developments in Africa was being prepared, on the strength of which Congress would be asked to vote further tremendous sums. The whole scheme, the South African Minister of Transport said, was 'one of the biggest plans in the world at the moment'.

The prospect of a Cape-to-Cairo motor-road running alongside a uniform-gauge Cape-to-Cairo railway, and of branch roads and railways being built in all directions to new ports appears to be more than the fulfilment of all African dreams. If it is all simply to serve the military purpose

described by Major-General Knerr, and if the political course of any third war were to be kept parallel with the military one, it might indeed be an enterprise worthy of the American taxpayer's support and of the thankful admiration of all others.

However, the realities, as separate from the appearances, of American state policy since President Roosevelt was elected in 1932, make a prudent caution desirable in examining the matter. During the course of these initial investigations, which were preparatory to President Truman's appearance before Congress with the complete blueprint and the request for funds, a report from Washington cast a little further light on the matter. This said that the American officials 'concerned with President Truman's Point Four' were working to the principle of 'a new type of benevolent imperialism, designed to spread prosperity without exacerbating political nationalism'. In other words, if the gigantic undertaking went through, 'American nationals will serve on the Governmental as well as the technical level in the politically independent countries concerned. Although this will be a startling innovation in Asia and Africa, it will in fact be merely an extension of a system which is already in operation in Latin America'. 'The formula' (this report explained) was devised by 'the Institute of Inter-American Affairs, which, originally founded as a wartime agency, was given permanent status this year and is now planning to drop its name and stretch its activities to the Middle and Far East.' Teams of Americans, it added, would be incorporated into the appropriate departments of the government of the country receiving aid; the chief of each team would be directly responsible to the Minister and would also have a veto power over any project involving American funds. The statement concluded by saying that 'at present 325 American administrators supervising 9500 nationals were inside the government departments of sixteen Latin-American republics'.

This opens up quite a new prospect for Africa, for the Nationalist Afrikaner in South Africa, and for European powers or persons in Africa generally. An old truth is exemplified anew: that nobody does anything for nothing. If the military contingencies of a third war alone were in question, the surrender of political authority would hardly be necessary. Would there be any, or many, Communist or Political Zionist agents among these appointees?

All this made me, personally, curious to know from what source President Truman's sudden, and at the time surprising, interest in 'the undeveloped areas of the world' (which proved to be Africa and Arabia) might have come. I could not but remember President Roosevelt's subsequent surprise that he could ever have signed so disastrous a document as the Morgenthau Plan, and the other regrets, concerning other of his actions, which seem to have been rising within him when he died.

Pursuing with diligence this line of thought, I came to a discovery which, after long experience in these matters, no longer astonished me. The only earlier exposition of this stupendous scheme for developing Africa which I could find was in a Communist book! This was *Teheran, Our Path in War and Peace*, published during President Roosevelt's period by Mr. Earl Browder, who then was the American Communist leader.

President Truman's 'Fourth Point' was 'a bold new program for underdeveloped areas', a programme 'to foster capital investment in areas needing development', to 'greatly increase the industrial activity in other nations' and 'to raise substantially their standards of living'. (It did not specifically mention Africa; that application emerges in the event.)

Mr. Browder's words were, 'America can underwrite a gigantic program of the industrialization of Africa ... It must initiate a general and steady rise in the standard of life of the African peoples ... Our government can create a series of giant industrial development corporations, each in partnership with some other government or group of governments, and set them to work upon

large-scale plans of railroad and highway building, agricultural and industrial development, and all-round modernization in all the devastated and undeveloped areas of the world.'

Mr. Browder thus *did* mention Africa, which President Truman's Fourth Point proved to have as its object, or as one of its two main objects. Mr. Browder also said: 'Closely related socially, economically and politically with Africa are the Near Eastern countries of Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Trans-Jordan. Here also a broad program of economic development is called for.'

Only those near to President Truman can know who persuaded him of the merit of the idea. It is obvious, however, where the idea came from in the first place. Once more the paramount fact of our time is established: the actual aims of American high policy and of the Communist Empire are not separate or opposite, but the same. There must be in America, under President Truman as under President Roosevelt, some group or force strong or persuasive enough to 'sell' Communist aims to the political leaders, and simultaneously to convince them that these will 'stop Communism'. Here is a Communist idea presented to the American congress and people as one of several ways of thwarting Communist expansion. It is in fact exactly what the Communist Empire wants, for its own longer-sighted ends.

Who, then, would inherit Africa, in the sequence of such events? I believe the clue is given in Mr. Browder's linking-up of 'gigantic developments' in Africa with similar enterprises in several 'closely related' countries of the Near East. In this matter, too, President Truman's Fourth Point, in execution, is following the Communist desire. 'Gigantic developments' in Arabia are also under consideration. In March 1950 it was reported that, if Egypt refuses to allow the transit of Iranian oil through the Suez Canal to the refineries at Haifa in Israel, Britain and America may proceed with plans to cut a new canal which will abolish the need for using the Suez Canal'. A 'difficulty' is mentioned: namely, that 'they would have to traverse several different nations foreign to those from which the oil was originally tapped'.

This appears to be an example of the way in which a great supernational design, for reshaping the earth so that Europe is left a slave-area and a World Government set up, apparently with its power-centres in New York, Jerusalem and Johannesburg, is pursued throughout and behind the confusion of the years. This scheme of the new canal to take the place of the Suez Canal was presented to the newspaper-reading public at the start of 1950 as one arising from the refusal of the Egyptian King, in its turn arising from the war with the Political Zionists, to allow Near Eastern oil to travel through the Suez Canal to the refineries at Haifa in the new Zionist State. The route for the new canal, however, was surveyed in 1939, under the British mandate, long before the Zionist invasion, and before political leaders anywhere admitted the intention to set up the Zionist State. It would run through the present Zionist territory, would apparently be built with the British and American taxpayers' money, and would clearly and vastly enhance the strategic importance of the Zionist-occupied area. If the territory of the Zionist State were to be expanded through local wars or through any third world war, this huge project would plainly lay the foundation of such expansion and would apparently place the keys of empire in the Near East in Zionist hands.

I think the shape of the final secret may be faintly discerned in this 'development of Africa' and 'linking-up' of Africa with several Near Eastern countries. To the best of my knowledge their inter-relationship is not so close that they need be bracketed together even in Mr. Earl Browder's recommendations or in the blueprints prepared for Mr. Truman's Fourth Point. But here the matter seems to touch the very heart of the great supernational game.

The State of the Political Zionists claims that its mission is to 'ingather' all the Jews of the world, whether they wish to be gathered or not. To do that it would need most of the territory of the

neighbouring states mentioned in Mr. Browder's book. It would also need a great deal of money. 'Marshall Aid' money being professedly reserved for countries opposed to Communism, it refused to apply for any, not wishing to offend one of the two parents which gave it birth (the Soviet State) or its own Communists. That being so, it still needs money in large sums: at a Zionist meeting in New York a speaker put the amount it wanted for the next three years alone at \$900,000,000. Under the Fourth Point it would presumably be eligible for these gigantic American gifts and would not hesitate to receive them, knowing from Mr. Browder's book, or doubtless from still better sources, that no Soviet disapproval need be feared.

Thus the Fourth Point may in the real event allow the money-stream to be kept running not only into Africa, but also into the Zionist State, as it has run into the Communist area. I do not suppose that at the outset of a third war (which if it comes about may well prove to be, in terms of Bible prophecy, the decisive phase of Armageddon), the expansion of the Zionist State into a great Near Eastern Empire would be proclaimed as an aim; but in the outcome, as the result of the second war shows, it might well prove to have been the real aim. The logic of the second war, if it was logic, was that there was an anti-Jewish dictator in Germany and that therefore the Arabs must be driven from Palestine, and this was the most terrible outbreak of anti-Semitism in history, the inoffensive Arabs being Semites and the newcomers non-Semites. By that precedent, at the outbreak of a third war, a régime somewhere else in Europe, or Asia, might be proclaimed to be anti-Jewish and the Arabs, in the later event, be scourged from the remaining Arab countries. (If a violent anti-Jewish eruption were suddenly discovered somewhere in the Communist Empire, I think this might be regarded as a timely notification that the third war was not far distant.)

This greater Zionist State, according to sufficiently numerous remarks by Political Zionist spokesmen, would be the real power-centre of the world, and Jerusalem the real, if not the nominal, capital of the world. If that were to be the outcome of a third war, as I believe it is the project envisaged in some powerful places in all countries, the convergence of the real aims of American and of Soviet policy, as policy has been controlled in both countries, would become clear; the first point at which this became plain was the co-operation of the two countries in setting up Political Zionism. At that point, also, the greater Zionist State, all-powerful in the Near East, would inherit an African continental hinterland with roads, railways and ports ready made for it, and the political authority already partly transferred to the nominees of the 'Fourth Point'.

Thus the changing shape of things, according to the viewpoint. The opening-up of Africa as a strategic enterprise is sound enough, in the clearly-worded exposition of such military specialists as Major-General Knerr. But the military leaders, as Generals Eisenhower and Omar Bradley have remarked, do what the political leaders tell them, and the shape of the political ideas behind the Fourth Point in Africa is different, dark and ominous. If in any third war political policy ran parallel with military operations, all would be well. But to be sure of that the peoples of the great nations would have to cure their leaders of the habit of assuming imperial power in wartime, closely control their acts in wartime, and scrutinize the groups behind them. That day seems still afar off.

Great events portend for Africa, but I do not think they will take the shape of the spontaneous, localized 'Native war' feared by so many who have examined the future with misgiving. Africa is now a kingpiece in the game and a great hand hovers over it; the hand which built Johannesburg on feet of gold and buried the gold at Fort Knox, which reaches down for mining labour into the loneliest kraal, which spread the Communist area, by arms and not by conviction, from the centre of Europe to the Pacific, which set up the Political Zionists in Arabia.

The future, for Africa, will be absorbing to watch. In the final throws of the great twentieth-century game, it has been added to the stakes.



## FOOTNOTES

1: The disdainful word 'Kaffir' is seldom used today; like Giaour or Goy it means infidel or unbeliever, and to the Native is a stigma and a reproach, signifying people without a country, chief or tribal status.

2: Lieutenant-General Sir Frederick Morgan, who in 1946 publicly called attention to this 'second exodus' which was to produce the new war in Palestine, was another victim of the secret intimidations to which I earlier referred. He was vilified for stating the fact (see *From Smoke to Smother*, pp. 256-9), and later was retired from the Army. An official announcement said this retirement was 'at his own request'; however, I believe he did not retire voluntarily.

3: Both remained at their posts until Mr. Truman was re-elected, some months later, and both went soon after that. Mr. Forrestal, who like General Marshall feared the enforced partition of Palestine would ultimately breed the third world war, was subjected to intensive 'smearing' by Zionist writers. This did not spare his family and, with his fears for the future, so reduced him that when I went to America a friend of his told me he was near the point of suicide. A few weeks later he killed himself by jumping from a window. Friends of his told me they held him to be as much a victim of Political Zionism as Count Bernadotte or Captain Roy Farran's brother. The public was told that he was 'as much a victim of the second world war as any soldier killed in action', the suggestion being that his wartime work in office had broken his nerves. Under this specious device an official ceremony of homage was paid to his memory!

4: See *From Smoke to Smother*, pp. 293-4. At the Brighton Conservative Conference in 1947 Mr. Fountaine, a delegate from Norfolk, demanded action to 'root out subversive activities', saying that 'within living memory loyalty to the king, honour, patriotism and common decency have been defamed on every hand'. The central Office coterie on the platform shied like a startled horse from this proposal and tried to sidetrack it, but the feeling of the conference was so strongly for it that they were instructed, by a great majority, 'to make public the evidence of subversive and anti-democratic activity in this country'. If anything *was* made public it has escaped me. The most violent Central Office opposition to Mr. Fountaine became evident, however, and as I write this seems likely to obstruct him from becoming a candidate in the 1950 election, unless local feeling overrides the party managers.

5: Nearly all these writers quote Thomas Malthus, who in 1798 published his *Essay on Population*. His biographer in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* prophetically says: 'The views and methods advocated by those modern upholders of small families who call themselves Neo-Malthusians would have received nothing but condemnation from Malthus.'

6: A mild foretaste of what would, in my anticipation, be a very severe rule in the world was given in 1949 when, at the behest of an enthusiastic women's rights society in London, some United Nations 'trustees' climbed three thousand feet into the remote mountain fastnesses of the British Cameroons to investigate a complaint that the venerable Fon of Bikom there had six hundred wives. That amiable centenarian, unable to confess that he had (as was charged) recently brought a maiden to his harem by force, pointed out that he did not take it on himself to express opinions about the habits of the Christian, or even of UNO society. He was living in peace with merely 110 wives, forty-four of them very old ladies inherited from his predecessor. Of the others, those still able to bear children had but one regret: that he was too old to sire any.

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