

A SURVEY OF  
RACE RELATIONS  
IN SOUTH AFRICA  
1954 — 1955

BY

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## FOREWORD

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the 1954-55 *Survey of Race Relations* by Muriel Horrell, who is to be congratulated on an excellent piece of work which can be read with benefit by all schools of opinion in the community.

The *Survey* is more than a survey of race relations, for it traces the general trends over the past year of social, economic, and political developments in the country, all of which condition the central problem of South Africa, inter-racial adjustments. While the *Survey* is directed towards the general reader interested in racial problems, it contains much information for specialists and students in a variety of fields. Business men, lecturers, university students, politicians, and others in public life will find it an invaluable *vade mecum* for easy and handy reference. The added feature of an exhaustive index makes its usefulness greater.

The *Survey* brings out clearly the continued determination of our Government to carry out its policy and to secure that control of the situation which it considers essential for its plans. On the whole, legislation enacted over the past year has sought to close loopholes in the existing legislative structure of apartheid, and a host of administrative acts has been directed towards implementing policy already determined. That the application of the policy has been meeting and will continue to meet difficulties is obvious from the *Survey*. The Minister of Labour has admitted the serious shortage of white manpower and has been outspoken about the inefficiency and lack of productivity of the white section of the community. The Government itself is being constrained to employ more and more Non-European workers, and a recent survey of the industrially developing towns in the Western Province by the Institute's Assistant Director would indicate the impossibility of withdrawing African labour from that area as has been suggested. The influx of Non-Europeans into 'European' industrial areas has drawn from Mr M. C. de Wet Nel, M.P., a member of the Native Affairs Commission and of the 'Tomlinson' Commission, the admission that such migration may be expected to increase over the next 20 years. Meanwhile, the Government presses on with the more obvious and facile forms of apartheid — in transport, on the beaches, in the nursing profession, in the universities, and, of course, politically, though more difficult, through the Senate Act.

One of the most serious aspects of the situation is the extent to which the Government is rapidly extending its control over the lives of citizens. The powers of the police have been increased, serious allegations have been made about interference with mail, mass raids have been conducted, passport regulations and influx control have been tightened, the arbitrary banning of persons has been continued, and the proscription of books verges on the absurd. These and other measures have induced an uncertainty and fear in the public which are dangerous and unhealthy for the country. While rule by administrative law has grown in some of the matured

countries of Europe, it is open to question whether a young, expanding capitalist country such as South Africa should be put in the straight-jacket of bureaucratic control.

Though Europeans have been alarmed by some of the Government's pronouncements, they are individually little affected as yet. The 'Black Sash' movement, however, and the response to the appeal by the Roman Catholic Church for funds to maintain the independence of its schools, and individual reactions against intolerance are symptomatic of European unease. The Non-European communities appear to be confused in their present reactions, but not acquiescent. That they continue to suffer increasing hardships and uncertainties in living and in liberty is amply demonstrated in the *Survey*. That increasing pressures and discrimination will follow in the future is surely the logic of the Prime Minister's statement that his party stands for *baasskap*, not leadership.

As a factual analysis of the position, the *Survey* points out a number of practical and beneficial measures. By both municipalities and central government the African housing situation is being dynamically dealt with. Under the Bantu Education Act, the two primary syllabuses produced are good and, while the withdrawal of experienced European voluntary workers from school committees and boards is to be regretted, the giving of a greater measure of responsibility to African parents for the education of their children is to be welcomed. Rehabilitation work in the reserves continues, and there is an expansion of excellent health services. The country continues to enjoy economic prosperity, and the recent loans raised for railway and other development are a measure of the confidence of investors overseas in the country's economic future. The continued and expanding interest of the European community in the welfare of the Non-European peoples through dozens of organizations, great and small, is indicative of a practice and goodwill which cannot be ignored.

What conclusions must be drawn from the facts as put before us by the *Survey*? The situation is complex and not easy of analysis. The trend would appear to be towards a greater acquiescence in, and possibly acceptance of, the idea of apartheid by the European public, towards a certain confusion in the minds of a large part of the Non-European people, so that they do not know whether to accept the hypothetical benefits of apartheid, or to reject them, and an over-all inability on the part of the public generally to distinguish between principle and practice. That there is no overt and concerted expression of organized Non-European opposition, seems due to the measures of control adopted by the Government, to the economic opportunities opening to Non-Europeans, and to a sense of hopelessness in face of the forces which the Government can at any moment deploy. Race relations cannot be said to have improved.

QUINTIN WHYTE

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Numbers of departments of state, the provincial administrations, and many municipal officials, scientific and other research bodies, churches, educational institutions, voluntary organizations, Non-European bodies, political parties, employers' and employees' organizations, Regional Offices of the Institute, Joint Councils, study groups, and other organizations and individuals have given willing and gracious help by supplying material and by answering questions. It would be invidious to single out any of these for particular mention, but their names are given in the text of this *Survey*.

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