Sociological implications of the South African policy of William Miller Macmillan

Alvin Walcott Rose
University of Iowa

Follow this and additional works at: https://ir.uiowa.edu/etd

Part of the Politics and Social Change Commons, and the Race and Ethnicity Commons

No known copyright restrictions.

This thesis is available at Iowa Research Online: https://ir.uiowa.edu/etd/5892

Recommended Citation
https://doi.org/10.17077/etd.6kpsyxz3

Follow this and additional works at: https://ir.uiowa.edu/etd
Part of the Politics and Social Change Commons, and the Race and Ethnicity Commons
SOCIOPOLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE
SOUTH AFRICAN POLICY

OF
WILLIAM MILLER MACMILLAN

by

Alvin Walcott Rose

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, in the Department of Sociology, in the Graduate College of the State University of Iowa

August, 1944
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I wish to acknowledge with appreciation the inspiration and guidance received from Dr. Edward Byron Reuter and Dr. Charles Cordier Rogler in the preparation of this thesis. To these gentlemen, who revealed to me the true object-matter of scientific sociology, I am heavily indebted.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I  Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II  Population</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III South Africa and the Natural History Race Relations Cycle</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV  The Policy of William Miller Macmillan</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V  Sociological Implications</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI  Conclusion</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter I
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the racial situation of South Africa by way of evaluating, in terms of its sociological implications, the plan of action of one of the most competent observers of South African affairs — William Miller Macmillan.

This investigation has proceeded on the assumption that any valid sociological study of the South African problem must necessarily confine itself, in the absence of objective first-hand information, to a criticism of the works of those persons who supposedly have such information.

It thus becomes necessary merely to assemble the generally accepted facts as to the social situation of South Africa and, on the basis of this knowledge, to critically analyze the policy of Macmillan, evaluating it solely in terms of its sociological implications.

The student who would attempt a scientific sociological investigation of any social phenomenon must first divest himself of any desire to become a social reformer or savior of his fellow-man; he must appreciate
the limits and nature of the science of Sociology, taking care that his investigation remain always within the realm and objective of his discipline. The objective of this study, therefore, is not to offer, reject, or accept a plan of action; it rather seeks to determine how consistently and to what extent a declared policy is in accord with accepted sociological principles of race and culture contacts.

Obviously the inaugurator of any national policy must also take cognizance of the political and economic consequences. But even if there is discernible in the nature of social reality no separation of issues into those that are independently social, political, and economic, there still must exist a division of labor in the minds of men. "No actuality can be scientifically comprehended in its immediate totality." It must be viewed from a series of different standpoints with each approach engineered by the scientist of that particular point of view.

The point of view in this study is sociological in that it attempts to determine, on the basis of accepted principles, the probable consequences of a plan of action on the forms of interaction between two diverse races living together.
There were basically four steps in the preparation of this thesis:

First, it was necessary to become acquainted with the generally accepted facts concerning the South African racial situation. To accomplish this a representative group of books and periodicals published since the turn of the century was carefully read.

Second, it became necessary to analyze the policy of one of the leading and most able observers of the South African situation. William Miller Macmillan was chosen because of his reputation as a social scientist and because of his tremendous interest in the South African problem.¹

To obtain a knowledge of his policy, the following seven of his publications were examined:

1. The South African Agrarian Problem
2. The Cape Colour Question
3. Bantu, Boer, and Britain
4. Complex South Africa

¹ William Miller Macmillan, member of the Advisory Committee on Education in the English Colonies, has written especially on African Questions. Born in Scotland, he went to South Africa, proceeding later to Oxford as one of the earliest Rhodes Scholars. After 1911, as lecturer at Rhodes University College, Grahamstown, and latterly as Professor of History at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, he specialized in contemporary social problems of South Africa. A list of his best known works are found in the bibliography of this study.
With an understanding of the South African situation on the one hand and the policy of Macmillan on the other, the third step was to determine the sociological implications of such a policy in the particular social situation of South Africa. This, the most important part of the study, was most difficult; extreme care had to be exercised in selecting those basic sociological principles of race and culture that receive more or less general acceptance. The policy of Macmillan was evaluated on the basis of these principles to arrive at the sociological implications.

The fourth step consisted of summarizing the results of the study and drawing some conclusions about the South African situation and the policy of Macmillan.

The materials used in the preparation of this thesis consisted completely of books and periodicals, a list of which is found in bibliographical form at the end of this study.
Chapter II

POPULATION

The population of the Union of South Africa is usually classified into four racial groups: European (persons of pure European descent); Natives (pure-blooded aboriginals of the Bantu race); Asiatics (Natives of Asia and their descendants, chiefly Indians); and Coloured (Malays, Bushmen, Hottentots, and all persons of mixed race).

Because of the tremendous inadequacies and difficulties in enumeration, extreme caution must be exercised in interpreting long run trends among the different racial groups on the basis of these census figures. Between 1904 and 1939 the total population of South Africa just about doubled, the rate of increase being somewhat greater for natives than for Europeans. The less rapid increase in European population can be ascribed to the absence of immigration and to the deaths during the influenza epidemic. It would seem that the increase of the coloured population comprising all persons of mixed blood should be of particular importance since it may be a good indicator of the extent of race mixing. As can be seen from the figure
below the Coloured group has had the lowest percentage increase. But this is by all students attributed to the influenza epidemic of 1918 which, significantly enough, took an exceptionally heavy toll among the Coloured group.

Much literature appears on this apparent susceptibility of the colored or mixed group to the influenza epidemic. Race determinists have seized upon this phenomena as concrete evidence of the physical detriment of race mixing. However, the prevailing scientific opinion seems to be that the relative decrease in the mixed population is because of the frequent escaping of the light colored persons into the white race and of the tendency to enumerate the darker colored persons either as Asiatics or as Bantu.

Many interesting trends can possibly be deduced from a study of these population figures. However, we have here only to point out that the total estimated population of South Africa is a little more than ten million; that the Bantu, around whom the fundamental problem lies, numbers roughly seven million; that beyond the northern boundaries of South Africa there are countless millions more of these Bantu; and that, with all incentive for European immigration gone and the percentage
increases of the two races about the same, the white fear of being overpowered by sheer preponderance of numbers among the Bantu is an important factor in the study of race and culture in this country.
### TABLE I
Population of Union of South Africa 1904–1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Census 1904</th>
<th>Number 1904</th>
<th>% Incr. over 1904</th>
<th>Number 1911</th>
<th>% Incr. over 1911</th>
<th>Number 1921</th>
<th>% Incr. over 1921</th>
<th>% Incr. 1936 over 1904</th>
<th>Estimated mean pop. for 1939</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>European</td>
<td>1,116,806</td>
<td>1,276,242</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>1,519,488</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>2,003,857</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>79.1</td>
<td>2,116,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bantu</td>
<td>3,491,056</td>
<td>4,019,006</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>4,697,813</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>6,596,689</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>87.6</td>
<td>6,997,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asiatic</td>
<td>122,734</td>
<td>152,203</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>165,731</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>219,691</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>79.0</td>
<td>231,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colored</td>
<td>445,228</td>
<td>525,943</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>545,548</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>769,661</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>72.9</td>
<td>814,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,175,824</td>
<td>5,973,394</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>6,928,580</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>9,589,898</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>85.3</td>
<td>10,160,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a Source of Data: Official Yearbook of the Union of South Africa, No. 20 (1939) pp. 1038-1040.*
Chapter III
SOUTH AFRICA AND THE NATURAL HISTORY CYCLE OF RACE RELATIONS

A scientific method is considered an indispensable requisite in setting forth this South African situation; an indiscriminate collection of historical facts is inadequate for the explanation of any social phenomenon.

It is only as empirical phenomena are brought into relation with social, natural processes that they become intelligible; and it is only as the concrete social description is oriented with regard to abstract processes - the object matter of scientific sociology - that such description rises above an anecdotal and journalistic level.2

Our problem here, therefore, must be interpreted in the light of the "sequence of steps in the transition from one period of equilibrium to another."3

Though yet in its infancy, the interracial development in South Africa apparently is following a general natural history pattern of race-relations. Obviously in showing the conformity of South Africa's race problem to a natural history pattern, determining the efficacy of the policy under consideration is greatly facilitated, for it then merely becomes necessary to discover the stage in the cycle at which the situation

3 Ibid., p. 2.
presently stands, and knowing what the next stage almost inevitably becomes, one needs only to scrutinize a proposed policy to see whether it retards or accelerates the struggle toward assimilation.

In this study the natural history pattern used to describe the South African situation is as follows:

(numbers mine)

1. initial contacts of a symbiotic, categoric sort; (2) physical clash and war incident to the struggle for land and existence; (3) temporary accommodation in the form of subordination or partial isolation of the weaker race; (4) fusion following if this race is numerically weak and the mores of the dominant race are flexible, in which case the race-relations cycle ends before genuine race conflict begins; (5) the emergence of conflict as a struggle for status, resulting from the disintegration of the culture of the social order of the dominant group; accompanied by race prejudice, race consciousness, and race movements; (7) partial accommodation; (8) final assimilation and fusion, liquidating race conflict.

---

4 W. O. Brown, "Culture Contact and Race Conflict" in Race and Culture Contacts, ed. by E. B. Reuter.

This natural history cycle of race relations is adopted here because it was worked out by Dr. Brown on the basis of empirical data gathered in South Africa. In no significant way does it deviate from the major natural history universals as outlined by other reputable sociologists. See E. S. Bogardus, Race Relations Cycle American Journal of Sociology, 1930, pp. 610-17. E. B. Reuter, Race and Culture Contacts, pp. 1-18. Ellsworth Farris, "The Natural History of Race Prejudice" in Ebony and Topaz, edited by Charles S. Johnson.
In presenting a picture of the present South African situation it will be necessary merely to allude to the previous stages through which the Bantu, Boer and Briton relations have come, with more emphasis being given to a description of the present situation.

The initial stage in the natural history cycle of race relations has been termed one of initial contacts of a symbiotic, categoric sort.

It is rare for the first contact between physically juxtaposed races or groups to be of the conflict type. There probably will be some exchange of goods and services, with a minimum of actual social contact. These first contacts tend to be of the symbiotic, categoric sort, involving a minimum of overt hostility, but accompanied by some uncertainty, fear and probably curiosity.

To analyze the nature of the initial European-aboriginal contacts in South Africa, it is necessary to appreciate the preconceived attitudes of the two races - attitudes that were slowly crystallized by the tales and contacts of early explorers when the Cape of Good Hope was but a refueling station centuries ago.

---

5 This study is concerned exclusively with the Bantu, White Problem.
before the "landing of the 5,000" in 1652. The following is an account of one of these explorers who came in contact with the Hottentots in 1475.

As to the natives of this country, I find them entirely savage and wild, strangers to all decency, yea, uncivil and stupid as garden poles, devilish men, who serve nobody but the devil.7

Another original document of one of the early explorers as supplied by Theal in his history of South Africa reads as follows:

They are small in stature, ugly in countenance, the hair on their heads stands as though scorched by the sun and looks like that of a thief who has been dried out by hanging a long while. With regard to their speech it is as if one were to hear some turkey cocks making a noise, so also in their speech, of which little else can be heard than a clucking and whistling. They would also without doubt, as one could observe, have eaten any of our company, since they made little of eating raw guts after they had drained out the muck a little with a finger, from which it can readily be surmised that they must be man-eaters.8

Hundreds of other documents are available concerning racial contacts of the European during this era of expansion with the African which, like these,

show the considerable influence in shaping the attitude of the stay-at-home European in very much the same way that the popular press and books of the present day influence the people of one country in their attitude toward the people of another.

These preconceived attitudes, coupled with the perilous economic plight of the European on arrival and the considerable cultural divergence between the two races, account for such a short period of amicable European-aboriginal relations. It was inevitable that, under the circumstances, the stronger party would have to impose its will upon the weaker so as to arrive at some sort of working compromise.

The following original document anticipates the approaching stage of conflict:

The natives came with thousands of cattle and sheep close up to the Fort, so that their cattle almost mixed with ours, yet we could not come to any trade...it is therefore very vexing to see such fine herds of cattle, and to be unable to purchase out of them anything to speak of; and although, to allure them, and to excite their cupidity, we offered one-half more copper for each beast than we had before paid them, and treated them besides with all possible kindness, still we could not prevail upon them...although, were it permitted, we had this day opportunity enough to take from them
10,000 head, which may hereafter, upon our receiving orders to the effect, be done at any time, and indeed better than now, as they will trust us more;......these people daily give us sufficient cause for this, and thus having cause enough for revenge - to indemnify ourselves upon them or their cattle; and if we cannot, by any friendly gate, get the cattle from them, why should we suffer their stealing and carrying away without vengeance?9

The second natural-history stage——physical clash and war incident to the struggle for land — needs no elaboration as the Kaffir Wars are a familiar part of South African history. However, for the sake of continuity, it is important to see the sequence of steps which led to the third stage in our natural history cycle.

In 1652 approximately 5,000 Dutch landed at the Cape of Good Hope to begin the settlement of what is now the Union of South Africa. They did not find a vacant land but found the Bantu, Bushmen, and Hottentot. However, there was no particular conflict between the whites and the Bantu because as the Europeans gradually

9Macrone, op. cit., p. 20.

10In these earlier contacts the Bushmen and Hottentots were subordinated and now may be considered practically assimilated. They are accepted without differential treatment in most situations and, in fact, have virtually no physical characteristics that distinguish them from the whites. The story of the assimilation of these racial groups is a significant part of this study. It is the precedent used by Macmillan in setting forth his policy. See Chapter five.
settled, the Bantu moved farther into the interior to keep their tribal life intact. It was when the increased population of the European settler forced him deeper into the interior that we have the real beginning of conflict between the two races. This great Dutch or Boer trek into the interior jungles of Africa, their bitter encounters with the native warriors, comprises a most romantic chapter in the annals of South African history.

Enough to say here, however, that this bitter fighting between the Boer and the Bantu has left a scar of fear and hatred between the races that helps explain their present situation. For the sentiments that lie at the root of the present policy of the Dutch party of South Africa were formed in this early period of struggle.

The Dutch were victorious in these wars and declared all territory as European property to be disposed to European settlers with the natives to be housed on strips of territories known as native reserves.

Therefore, in explaining the third stage of South African development — that characterized as "temporary accommodation in the form of subordination or
partial isolation of the weaker race" — one of the essential features must be to analyze the rural situation where the Dutch and Bantu are living together with the former, in control of seven-eighths of the land, at the top of the social structure and the latter existing in dire poverty on the reserves and as a tenant farmer.

The period of conflict for the English section of South African was different from that of the Dutch. Remaining for the most part at the coast or in towns they for a long time did not have the various contacts with the Bantu as did the Dutch. This is an important factor in explaining the more liberal attitude of the English toward the native.

The discovery of gold in the early nineteenth century brought throngs of wealthy Englishmen into South Africa with the hope of accumulating huge stores of wealth and then returning to England. Urban areas quickly grew whose society was clearly stratified with the wealthy Englishmen who detested manual labor—"Kaffir work", they called it,—at the top and the natives, who did the manual labor, at the bottom of the social structure.

But this discovery of gold and diamonds also caused a huge influx of middle-class Europeans who came to Africa for the same purpose as did the wealthy
Europeans. The significant thing is that these middle class Europeans found no middle class in South Africa. They could not belong to the upper class because they did not have the original wealth necessary to operate large mines and hire thousands of natives.

So it was that these middle class Europeans found themselves with but one distressing alternative—to perform unskilled labor, to do "Kaffir work," to compete with the native for common jobs. But the native laborer was plentiful; he had no European standard of living to maintain; he could be hired for four cents an hour. The result was a degeneration of the middle class white and the emergence of a poor white class who, however ambitious, found no social ladder for vertical mobility.

Again, in analyzing the third natural history stage, that of accommodation, another essential feature must be to analyze the urban situation with its economic and social structure having the native and the poor white

While this is the major factor in the formation of the poor white class, the exodus of the whites from the rural areas was also an important contributing factor.
at the bottom and a few wealthy Europeans at the top.

**The Industrial Situation**

The whole industrial social problem of South Africa centers largely around the gold and diamond mining industry. The pattern of accommodation found here is likewise best appreciated by carefully presenting the sequence of steps in its formation.

By the rather effective methods of taxation and the operation of huge recruiting systems the natives were drawn into the industrial areas.

But trouble had only begun. For, in the large part, all the natives who came into the industrial areas.

---

I have encountered no reputable study of the South African problem that does not explain the rural and urban situations separately, though, to be sure, the reciprocal influences of the two areas are appreciated. The Dutch, in control of the rural areas, have a quite different attitude toward the policies for the Bantu than the English who control the larger industrial area near the Southern coast.

While there is insufficient space to treat it here, an understanding of the method of taxation and the recruiting system used to secure industrial native labor is extremely helpful in appreciating the present situation - See Buell, R. L., *The Native Problem of South Africa* New York, Carnegie Corporation, (1929) Vol. I, pp. 20-130.
areas left their wives and families at home. Here was a horde of native men and a throng of poverty stricken white women among whom they were to live. Miscegenation flourished. Illegitimate children sprang up everywhere. Syphilis and gonorrhea spread throughout the area. Something had to be done to solve the problem.

First, the Europeans attempted to rectify the poor white problem by putting them on a differential wage scale. Thus it was that in 1911 the Mine and Works Act was passed in which every unskilled white laborer was from thence on to be paid a salary approximately five times that of the native doing the same work, and in which all skilled and semi-skilled jobs, the operation of all machinery, were reserved to whites.

However, the world war came in 1914 and the price of gold began to fall rapidly. The employers or mine owners had been able to make huge profits only because of the cheap native labor. They, therefore, began to hire more natives and fewer of the unskilled whites whom they had to pay five times as much as they had to pay to the native. Moreover, since the natives had gradually acquired complete knowledge of the skilled jobs, the mine owners began to turn to this cheap skilled
labor supply in preference to the skilled whites.

But this was a violation of the Mine and Works Act and the poor whites, who had been unionized, began the historic Gold mine strike in the course of which seven hundred and fifty three poor whites were killed.

There were great political repercussions as a result of this strike. General Smuts and his government were replaced by Prime Minister Hertzog and his party. For our purposes we need only to remember that the Mine and Works Act stood and was given new sanction by another bill passed in 1926, popularly called the Color Bar Act.

In addition to this attempt to put the poor whites in a caste apart from the natives, the Europeans, secondly, attempted to segregate the races by herding all the native workers into living quarters or barracks known as compounds.

A compound is composed usually of a quadrangle of long, brick buildings which encloses from four to ten acres of land, and which accommodates from one to five thousand laborers. Within the buildings are long tiers of bricks, usually made of cement, with a 'perfect' surface, upon which the natives sleep.
Every compound has its kitchen where a special native staff prepares food and issues kaffir beer. In the so-called closed compounds which prevail on the diamond mines the natives may not leave the compound to go into the city areas until the end of their contracts. When their contracts are terminated they are given a purgative to make certain that no diamonds are carried away inside!14

In spite of these compound regulations the majority of the compound dwellers do get into towns at night and on week-ends with practically all the social evils among the entire urban population remaining.

Prostitution, venereal diseases, immorality, crime, illicit liquor trade, general race mixing among the races, these still characterize the urban situation.

As a last resort to prevent this "intimate and unwholesome contact of the two races" the Union government decided to embark upon a policy of complete segregation. Thus, in 1923 the Urban Areas Act was passed. This act empowered the local government to set aside areas in the cities where all natives, with certain exceptions, must live. It was empowered to build model houses on these locations for the native

14 Buell, op. cit., p. 97.
population who would be charged rent. This improved the situation but fell short as an answer to the existing condition.

So it is that the European, at the top of the social structure, feels that he cannot get along without the native because of his cheap labor; nor can he get along with the native because of his propensity to assimilate himself.

There is clearly evident in this situation a stage of temporary accommodation. The Bantu has been subordinated and, until recently, has assumed his role without significant complaint. But before moving to the next stage in our cycle we should look at the accommodative pattern of the rural situation.

**The Rural Problem**

As has been pointed out, eighty-seven per cent of the total non-European population of South Africa - or some five and a half million people - live in the rural areas. About half of these live on reserves, the other half living on native and European owned farms.

As a result of the Kaffir wars in which the Dutch conquered the natives, some ninety-two per cent of the South African farm lands was occupied or owned
by the Europeans with the remaining eight per cent allotted in the main to reserve areas where the natives were to live.

It is of particular significance to note that in selecting the sites for these locations large strips of land were left between each reserve for the spread of white settlements. "Each European immigrant would thus have it in his power to draw supplies of labor from the location in his more immediate proximity."

As originally planned about eight acres of land on these reserves was allotted each family of five persons. But with the increasing population and the immaturity of the native as a farmer these eight acres have not been enough to support the Bantu. The result has been to reduce the natives throughout the reserve to a pitiful level of poverty.

A grave situation is in the making on these reserves. Overpopulation is causing rapid spread of typhus and scurvy. To supplement their incomes and pay their taxes the men must leave their homes to work in the mines for years, completely disrupting their

---

family life and leaving the young people to grow up without direction.

The native looks from his crowded, disease-ridden reserve and, as far as the eye can travel, gazes longingly upon the idle, uncultivated, unpopulated lands of the large Dutch land companies - lands that once were his, lands that the Dutch acquired in large quantities hoping someday to sell to immigrants for a large profit. Discontent is spreading. A rising stream of protests flows from the native leaders. A Dutch commission was appointed to determine the possibility of releasing more land to the natives. In 1928 this Beaumont Commission recommended that an additional eight million margin of land be set aside for natives. Thus, in effect, it proposed to set aside about thirteen and three-tenths per cent of the land for five million natives, reserving the remaining eighty-six and three-tenths for one and a half million Europeans. But European sentiment was that the proposal was too generous and the proposition was dropped.

The position of the native living outside the reserve is difficult to determine. He usually is either a wage earner or a squatter on a European farm. Such natives as a rule do not go up to the mines because
on European farms recruiting of labor for work elsewhere is prohibited.

Perhaps enough has been said about the urban and rural situation in South Africa to reveal the present condition and racial policy of the European in his attempt to live in South Africa.

Though the races have apparently arrived at some state of accommodation, a sort of working agreement whereby they can live together without open physical struggle, basically the condition is essentially one of conflict. Outnumbered four to one, the white man's chief preoccupation has been to maintain his dominant position. It has not been a policy of sheer repression; nor has it been a policy of assimilation. Rather it has been a policy of segregation as a plausible middle path between two extremes. It is an attempt to develop two cultures, two civilizations among two distinct races living in juxtaposition. Indeed, the European in Africa is representing this policy as fairer to both races. For, while assimilation, they feel, can only make of the native an inferior imitation of white Europeans:

The barrier of segregation will protect them against the destruction of their traditional social forms and their inherited culture by the impact of white
civilization and will give the Bantu a chance to be themselves, to preserve their own, to develop along their own lines.16

This reasoning, however, is generally considered to be an impractical rationalization and the real fundamental fact behind the segregation policy is fear. It is the fear, not wholly unfounded as we have seen, that to allow the whites and blacks to receive the same wage for the same work necessarily compels them to social intimacy. The European argument, in short, is that:

if we civilize the native and let him acquire skill, if we let him enter the learned professions, we cannot in the end refuse him political equality; if we grant him political equality, we cannot deny him social equality; if we grant him social equality, we cannot in the end avoid race mixture.17

In summary, therefore, one may conclude that, in terms of social process and natural history, the racial situation in the South African has gone through the first three of these stages of conflict outlined in the natural-history cycle; that because of the numerical superiority of the Bantu and the inflexibility

---

16 Shapira, op. cit.
17 Where the European errs, however, is, first, in his assumption that with the policy of segregation race mixture will not occur and, second, that, based on the doctrine of the racial myth, race mixture is bad.
of the local mores, the fourth stage of fusion and termination of conflict has been skipped; that the situation now is in the fifth stage of "conflict as a struggle for status, resulting from the disintegration of the culture of the weaker race, and its subsequent penetration of the social order of the dominant group;" that the sixth and seventh stage will surely follow; and that, however, inevitable, a resolution of the process into a state of assimilation and peace seems rather far distant.

Certainly the Bantu in South Africa is not assimilated. He is not even acculturated though he has taken on many European culture traits, and where he has been in relatively intimate contact with the whites he has shown marked trends toward detribalization.

The two races exist in a social order whose structure is a rigid caste system with the wealthy white at the top and the Bantu at the bottom. But virtually all countries have left the Gold standard. Reciprocal trade agreements between countries are being formulated - agreements in which goods are exchanged for goods and gold is not needed as a medium of exchange. The demand for South African gold is rapidly vanishing,
and it was this international gold market that allowed South Africa its growth.

Agriculture, has been woefully neglected in South Africa. The Bantu, who with an adequate purchasing power could easily support the economic structure, knows little and does less to learn about the techniques of intensive farming. Before European occupation the Bantu led a more pastoral life, always moving on to greener pastures.

The landlessness, tribal disorganization, and congestion of the natives is an important part of the social picture.

All too tenuous native reserves can no longer support their population; farm natives think to better their lot and run away, there to meet in mortal competition with the equally unskilled poor whites whose naturally higher standard of living puts them at a disastrous disadvantage in the new and strange conditions.

As in all countries, there has been in South Africa no avenue of escape from the social and biological consequences of contact. The process of acculturation has inevitably caused a disturbance of fixed racial roles. Culturally marginal peoples have emerged. Adoption of the dominant culture standards and values have produced among the Bantu new wants, new aspirations,
and new ambitions. The subject peoples have become increasingly sensitive, and the process of conflict between the races is much in evidence.

It is against this background of race and culture contacts that the policy of Macmillan must be examined. We anticipate in this South African situation a stage of "intensified conflict and mobilization of the races, accompanied by increasing race prejudice, race consciousness, and race movements." Does the policy of Macmillan propose to cushion the probable consequences of this oncoming stage of bitter conflict and thereby hasten the hour when the two races are assimilated? Does his policy indicate an understanding of the South African situation on the one hand and the natural-history of race conflict on the other? What is his policy and what are its sociological implications?

It is to this problem that we must now address our attention.
Chapter IV

THE SOUTH AFRICAN POLICY OF WILLIAM MILLER MACMILLAN

With the possible exception of *Complex South Africa*, Macmillan does not attempt to isolate the economic, political, and sociological processes involved in the South African problem and deal with each of these independently. He rather views the situation as a social problem to be analyzed and treated, not in a segmental fashion, but as a comprehensive whole. In a sense, his work is consequently beclouded and confusing. His policy is not set out in bold relief but is instead obscured beneath an assemblage of criticisms of prevailing policy and points of view.

Perhaps not too late, however, Macmillan realized that "mere denunciation is usually out of place" and a general observation would be that his policy, as found in his publications written between 1911 and 1942, becomes progressively clearer and more concisely stated. In spite of this fact, his policy in the main must still be sifted from the wealth of material he has written, in order that that policy can be evaluated effectively and its sociological implication determined.

Civilization is not 'white' or 'dual' and the talk of segregation today with its
policy of 'separate development' merely runs away from the essential problem—namely, the established contact of advanced and backward peoples as parts of our South African Community. ... Policy is to be judged as it operates to lessen the fatal difference between European and native standards and to raise the mass of landless natives from the state of backwardness which is precisely what makes them a problem. Africa as a whole must learn that there can be no economic or social progress which fails to carry the native population along with it. 18

There is implied in the foregoing quotation, as clearly as any other place, the fundamental objective of the policy of Macmillan and the basic assumptions which, he feels, justify such an objective.

The objective of his policy is to solve the racial problem of the Bantu and whites by eliminating the cultural divergences (economic, political, and social) existing in the South African situation.

His assumptions upon which such an objective rests are: first, that conflict is a function of difference, assimilation as function of likeness; second, that caste breeds antagonism and conflict while class implies status measured by achievement and

therefore decreases social distance, widens the boundaries of social mobility, and, in general, is more conducive to interracial unity; third, that the economic, political, and social status of the majority population in any society is "the index of the progress of civilization within that society."

Throughout the works of Macmillan there is consistently found this theme and these aforementioned assumptions given to justify it. But this concerns merely his objectives. Before evaluating, we must isolate that larger part of his policy which is concerned with the methods by which the objective is to be reached.

The comprehensive policy outlined by Macmillan for the solution of the South African racial problem is of a threefold character: (1) a reorganization of the economic structure so as to make of the Dominion a self-contained entity with its lower class—poor whites and Bantu alike—in possession of a purchasing power sufficient to support the economic structure and, at the same time, to satisfy most of their material desires. (2) An elimination of native unrest in the political areas by making possible the privilege of franchise. (3) Transmitting to the native the complex of European sentiments and customs by inaugurat-
ing a general and intensive program of formal and compulsory education. A glance at each of these three proposals will be helpful.

A reorganization of the economic structure, as proposed by Macmillan, necessitates what he has termed an Agricultural Development Commission and an Industrial Development Commission.

The Agricultural Development Commission would have as its immediate objective the following:

1. An equitable distribution of farm land irrespective of race.
2. Making secure the land rights of natives and poor whites.
3. Abolition of huge absentee ownership.
4. Development of an appreciation for intensive farming.
5. Modernization of agricultural methods.
6. Creation of markets for farm produce.
7. Abolition of excessive land taxes.

Thus, Macmillan concludes that:

The most selfish European interests demand that the resources of the reserves be developed, to enable them to contribute more to the national dividend, and by their increased spending power to provide markets for the country's much-vaunted industries. We have seen what problems of cattle, and fencing and irrigation, and soil erosion, and manure,
and land distribution, must be dealt with to prepare the way for improved methods; given more efficient methods there is still an almost utter lack of transport facilities to get the produce to market, and to make it possible to introduce more variedly-profitable crops than the now universal maize and Kaffir corn.19

One of the principal problems of the Industrial Development Commission according to Macmillan would be to destroy the principle of segregation in the secular economic contacts of the urban areas on the principle that "cheap labor is expensive labor."

Recognizing the unrest among the "marginal" natives because of repressive measures, Macmillan further comments:

What with the Colour Bar and the choice of 'picked' jobs for 'civilized' labours, the outlet for the growing members of the educated natives is extraordinarily restricted....the only obvious openings are as preachers, or, chiefly in mine compounds, as clerks - it giving little cause for wonder that, since the rising man is hardest hit, a few more emerge as agitators.

More concretely, Macmillan would have the Industrial Development Commission center its attention on the following things:

(1) Abolishment of the Color Bar Act and all discriminatory labor acts, substituting natural minimum wage and hour laws, applying to Bantu and white alike.

---

(2) Reduction of unit cost of mining but by methods other than reducing wages.

(3) Development of an adequate money system, making payments in kind illegal.

(4) Development of various forms of processing industries.

(5) Provision of satisfactory housing facilities for industrial natives and their families.

However, Macmillan hastens to add that

Social development must be an accompaniment of economic enterprise....Industries must not be allowed to spring up unguided, drawing to themselves labours who have to shift for themselves for housing and other social amenities. Every industrial village must as a matter of course expect to have its doctor, its school, its church, and meeting hall, and, according to its need, health, visitors or district nurses—all for whites and Bantu alike.

In the political areas, Macmillan is interested in appeasing those few restless educated natives who with their aspirations thwarted could evoke agitation among and provide leadership for the more numerous and uneducated Bantu.

The franchise problem concerns only a tiny minority. But the prospect of attaining this privilege of the franchise must be held out if only as an inducement for other natives to rise and make progress. We are indeed more likely to succeed if we bind the handful of rising natives to us....The sufficient safeguard is that the natives able to qualify are still but...
a handful and can increase only very gradually. These few, and not the millions, are the problem of the moment. If we drive them down by repression, it will only make them the leaders and promoters of such discontents and dissensions as must wreck South African society.21

In regard to the need of education as a method of transmitting to the natives the body of European sentiments, Macmillan contends that:

Education must be the basis of any real advance. There must be vastly improved education, which is now neither adequate, compulsory, nor, even at the lowest stages, free.22

And finally, in a sober tone, Macmillan counsels:

This is a hard doctrine to propose for modern South Africa. It is to sell the birth-right of 'white' South Africa and all else that matters. But if not now it is the only ultimate hope. By our own acts the blacks are part of us and segregation is impossible. Sheer domination may serve for a season for twenty, fifty years, haply for more - though union native self-consciousness has grown lately as it never did in a century preceding. The blacks must have a secure place in the country, peacefully and easily at once, or later by violent contention.23

23 Macmillan, Wm. M., Complex South Africa, Faber and Faber, Ltd., (1930).
Macmillan has not proposed this plan of action as a result of armchair theorizing. South Africa, he feels, needs look no farther than into its own history to find a racial problem very much like its present one. Before encountering the Bantu, the whites had practically the same racial problem with the Hottentots and other coloured people. Today that problem is virtually solved, and it is upon the knowledge gained from this earlier lesson that the proposed policy for the Bantu has been erected.

In its fundamental principles, the colored question is like a paradigm of the problem of contact in the present day....Today the colored people have no political grievance, are proud of their rights, and are making upward progress. The Europeans now accept them as a part of their system. All recent restrictive legislation designed for the segregation of the natives classes the 'coloured' with the Europeans. Their problem is in a measure solved.

This history of the development of the Hottentot into the Eurafrican is of enormous social significance. ... Even while the descendants of the Hottentots are being legally recognized as civilized people, the old restrictions, and new, are being urged, in much the same terms, as a cure for the natives; as if similar measures had not been tried and failed in the eighteen thirties ...24

This Cape Coloured Question, therefore, since it is the precedent on which the present policy is advocated, should be examined. In short, it is the story of how a half million Hottentots, Malays, and Bushmen, once enslaved by the White European obtained freedom and, in less than two centuries, became such an indistinguishable part of the dominant group that it is difficult to identify them.

A comparative analysis of this earlier problem is found in the following chapter.
Chapter V
SOCIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The principal objective of this South African study, we remember, is to determine the efficacy of a declared plan of action in terms of its sociological implications. Consequently, the South African situation has been analyzed within a natural history frame of reference. The Bantu-white relationships were found to have conformed quite consistently to the natural history pattern, having passed through the respective stages of (1) a period of a simbiotic, categoric sort, (2) physical clash and war incident to the struggle for land and existence, (3) temporary accommodation in the form of subordination of the weaker race, and at the present on the threshold of an era characterized by (4) an emergence of conflict as a struggle for status, resulting from the desintegration of the culture of the social order of the dominant group, accompanied by race prejudice, race consciousness, and race movements. There was found no reason to suspect that the relationship would not pass through the complete natural history cycle.

The plan of action of William Miller Macmillan
was then isolated and presented as clearly as possible. That policy was found to have as its objective the solution of the South African problem by eliminating the cultural divergences found within the situation. The methods of achieving this were found to be (1) a reorganization of the economic order, (2) making possible native participation in governmental affairs, and (3) the transmission of the European body of sentiments by instituting a comprehensive system of compulsory education. The precedent used to support the argument was the earlier solution of the "Colored Question" in South Africa.

We have before us, then, the South African situation within a natural history framework on the one hand, and a proposed plan of action for this situation on the other. The objective of this chapter is to orient this plan of action to the natural history pattern to determine its efficacy. In other words, the South African racial situation has been conceived as being in the midst of a progression from one state of social equilibrium to another. The point which the progression stands has been determined. Our central question is: Will the proposed policy retard the progression toward the new social equilibrium or will it accelerate that movement? What
are the fundamental sociological implications of this plan of action?

At the outset it should be made clear that much of this policy represents an attempt to solve what, scientifically speaking, is a native problem and not a race problem. There is perhaps no better statement of the nature of and difference between these two concepts than that found in the following words of E. B. Reuter:

Race problems, as distinct from the so-called native problem, seem to have their origin at the stage in the racial cycle at which bi-racial marginal groups become important and no adequate provision is made for satisfying their wishes. So long as the cultural lines between the races are distinct and clearly drawn, there may be a problem or a series of problems of an administrative order - problems of control, sanitation, labor, education, and the like - but there is no race problem. So long as the individuals are free to enter the dominant group and participate in its culture to the extent of their mastery of its elements, there is no race problem. Race problems proper arise at the point where the dominant culture group denies to individuals and groups who have mastered the culture an unobstructed opportunity to identify themselves with the dominant group and participate in its heritage. 26

26 E. B. Reuter, op. cit., in R. E. Park's Outline of Principles of Sociology, New York, Barnes and Noble (1939), p. 188.
It should be clear, therefore, that the only concern with this plan of action is the extent to which it influences the "forms of socialization" between the Bantu and the whites, which interaction (mostly conflict) is of a racial character in that it represents an obstructed effort of individuals of the subordinate group "to identify themselves with the dominant group and participate in its heritage."

Much of the South African problem of health, education, economics, and government is a native problem and not a race problem; the effort to bring to a backward race a "civilization" which that race does not covet is merely an administrative task and should not be looked upon as a race problem so far as it engenders little conflict between the groups because of race differentials. Having delimited and isolated the object-matter of this study, we may now proceed with our analysis.

The policy of Macmillan may be generally characterized as a secularized program in that it provides for an increase in the number of equalitarian secular or secondary contacts between the Bantu and whites with the anticipation thereby of a diminution of race
distance. This would seem to be a sound doctrine. But it must be remembered that these hostile race attitudes in South Africa exist largely as rationalizations which help maintain and improve the economic advantages and sacred values of the dominant group. However successfully the economic structure could conceivably be reorganized and improved, the standard of living must necessarily be correspondingly raised; and there is no reason to feel that these race rationalizations for the sake of competitive advantage would not survive or, indeed, increase with the increased competition between the races. This thought is offered as a qualifying factor.

In general, in so far as there is a trend, as undoubtedly is the case, away from the cherishing of sacred familial values toward the adoption of race values that are secular in character, differences because of race tend to be insignificant.

While surely not nearly so simple, the situation in a sense may be reducible to the mathematical fact of there being possible among individuals only a limited number of contacts, and, whatever be that numerical limitation, the increasing number of secular contacts would tend to restrict the number of possible sacred contacts. Undoubtedly, with the tendency to displace sacred
values with those that are secular, there must be a corresponding diminution of race distance with the increased secular contacts.

The policy apparently reflects an appreciation of the necessity that these interracial contacts in the economic sphere be on an equalitarian basis. The present South African policy of differential wages for whites and blacks gives support to a caste structure in which the interracial contacts take on a master-servant character, causing the dominant group to see the individuals of the subordinate group as inferior and which tends to develop a bi-social structure in which dominant group contacts with the "intellectuals" of the subordinate group are greatly minimized.

Macmillan's proposal immediately to pacify the few restless educated natives does not reflect as keen an understanding of the nature and function of leadership as a less critical examination of his policy might reveal. His reasoning on this matter may be summarized in a short paragraph.

The millions of natives present no problem so

-------

long as the desires of the few educated leaders are constantly satisfied. It is the unrest among these few natives that must be appeased lest they become agitators and leaders of their less educated brothers. Furthermore, it should not be difficult to solve the problem of the few educated natives.

In the first place, he reasons, the few intelligent natives because of the nature of the Bantu social organization, are not likely to become leaders.

As things are, the philosophers in this state would not be the Kings. No doubt in the long run education will count for leadership, but for the present evidence suggests that leadership will still rest with the chiefs.... The chief may (and does) put obstacles in the way of the progressive man, makes his tenure insecure, or mulcts him. The leaders are of the old school - backward. The younger educated men are separated from these by an inevitable gulf... 28

Therefore Macmillan would satisfy the aspirations of these few educated natives and all would be well.

In the principles of sociology is found the significant fact that in the development of a social

28 Macmillan - Complex South Africa, Faber and Faber, Ltd. (1930) p. 263.
movement there are characteristically two distinct types of leaders. The leader who stirs a restless crowd to action need not be, and often is not, of the intelligensia. He need only be an "excitable, restless, and aggressive individual who is dynamic, energetic, and spectacular."29 He need say very little, but only be demonstrative in what little he says. It is rather the intelligent leader who is needed to carry the objective of a movement through to a successful conclusion. Social movements seemingly have no trouble in attracting this type of leadership once the movement is set in motion.

It is surprising that Macmillan would miss this point since he pointed out in an earlier volume how the English Missionary Society had supplied intelligent leadership for the Hottentots only after that "Coloured Question" was well under way.

W. O. Brown, in a study of the development of race consciousness and race movements in South Africa, found a gradual "milling" of the natives and the emergence

---

30 Macmillan, op. cit., p. 76.
of "soap-box" leadership not always from the ranks of the "intelligentsia". Leadership to stir a restless crowd to action often comes from the ranks of the intelligentsia; but that it must come from this source is not imperative.

Macmillan must be held in error, therefore, in assuming that mobilization of race movements and race consciousness will not occur in the absence of "educated leadership". The facts of the South African situation and the established principles of sociology do not bear him out. Given the basic unsatisfied group need or aspiration, tension and consequent social unrest will emerge. Spectacular leadership somehow will rise and the movement will surely get on its way. To allow a basic group aspiration to persist and expect that a deprivation of "educated" leadership will solve the problem is to misunderstand or ignore the principles of social behavior. However, it must be recognized that this delaying proposal will, perhaps for a century, prevent the uprising of native unrest. The important thing is that it is no final solution.

In spite of the fact that it will not accomplish what Macmillan expects, this proposal to concentrate on appeasing the aspirations of the few educated natives
would not erect any barrier or obstruct the general progression toward the new social equilibrium. On the other hand one would tend to look upon it as being a quite helpful plan, for that which tends to destroy differences lays the groundwork for the process of assimilation.

The third proposal of Macmillan - to transmit to the native the European body of sentiments by inaugurating a comprehensive system of compulsory education for the natives - carries with it two significant implications.

In the first place, to inculcate the not too disturbed natives with the European body of sentiments is to create among them countless heretofore unrecognized needs and aspirations - aspirations that in no way will be as easily satisfied as created.

Whether the educating of these natives is the "duty" of the dominant group is beside the point. Perhaps it is part of the task of bringing "civilization" to a backward people. But the student of scientific sociology is concerned with what "ought" to be; he is instead interested in understanding and setting forth the processes and principles which regulate that behavior which is and will be.

There is certain to be a greatly increased amount of interracial conflict resulting from this educa-
tional program. We would not contend that Macmillan is not aware of this fact, for his policy is directed toward the welfare of South Africa as a whole. In that this proposal recognizes as an inevitable trend and seeks to accelerate it, one would look upon it with approval.

In the second place, an elimination of cultural divergences by arriving at an integrated culture for both races does not necessarily mean the disappearance of race distance. This is an obvious, though extremely important point.

The American situation in which the Negro has completely adopted the dominant culture but occasions marked differential treatment is sufficient evidence for this point. A minority group can be considered assimilated only after the mores of the dominant culture allow for his free and unobstructed participation or after there is a disappearance of those physical features which make him distinguishable.

The social and biological processes are mutually reciprocal influences. Cultural assimilation is both a cause and effect of biological assimilation. It is a cause in that it eliminates many obstacles to intimate contacts and is an effect in that the consequent disappearance of physical differences makes impossible differ-
ential social treatment.

In that the policy is not in opposition to these fundamental principles it tends to be scientifically sound.

The whole native policy of Macmillan, as has been shown, is predicated on the "Cape Coloured Question."

An extremely careful reading of *The Cape Coloured Question* reveals an amusing yet tremendously profound fact. In this volume the author carefully and accurately traces the history of the South African coloured question. The problem unerringly followed the natural history pattern. The Hottentots, Bushman, and Malays who comprise the colored group were quickly subordinated by the whites. They were enslaved. This slavery was abolished in 1833, and the gradual bitter progression toward assimilation is carefully traced. The author does this job so well because he wants to demonstrate that the same repressive measures now being enforced were tried before and tried unsuccessfully.

The observing student cannot help but appreciate here something about which Macmillan appears to be naïve. He does not seemingly sense the basic underlying natural history universals which govern
all race problems. He does not see the restrictive segregative measures in the present problem, in the problem of the "Coloured Question," and in all race problems, as part of an accomodative pattern living in its own due season in the natural history life of all problems of race and culture contacts. He does not see himself as one of those "scientists" who appear in every such movement to condemn and censor the existing state of things. The study reveals in a convincing measure the universal validity of the laws which govern race and culture contacts. To the writer of this thesis this was a profound lesson.

More concretely, one would question the argument viewing the present Bantu-white problem as analogous to that of the Coloured Question and for the following reasons.

First, the Hottentots never arose above a pastoral life while the warlike Bantu have had for several centuries most intricately woven tribal organizations.

Second, there was not the difference in skin pigmentation between the Hottentots and whites as is found, between the Bantu and whites.

Third, there was not the feat of the Hotten-
tots because of their numerical strength as there is of the Bantu because of their "millions." Macmillan is correct in pointing out that this fear is unfounded since the proportionate superior numbers of the coloured group was at that time almost as great as the proportionate superior numerical strength of the present Bantu. But fears and prejudices are not rational but emotional phenomena, and to dismiss a fear or prejudice because it is non-rational is to disregard a powerful social force.

It is clear, therefore, that the two situations are not analogous though there are to be found some similarities.

We are ready now to turn to the conclusions of this study. We have pictured a racial situation, set forth a plan of action, and have determined the sociological implications thereof. What are the salient conclusions of such a study?
Chapter VI
CONCLUSION

In attempting to arrive at the sociological implications of a declared plan of action for the race problem of the Union of South Africa, the writer has reached the following conclusions:

First, much of South Africa’s problem is a native problem and not a problem of race.

Second, the hope of diminishing race distance by reorganizing the economic structure giving equal opportunity irrespective of race will find fruition only in so far as there is a general trend away from the cherishing of sacred values toward the adoption of those values that are secular.

Third, that part of the policy which aims at appeasement of the few educated of the minority group will not guarantee that a mobilization of race movements and race consciousness will not occur. However, granting the wishes of the qualified natives could be considered as accelerating the progression toward equilibrium.

Fourth, the spread of education among the minority group will undoubtedly increase conflict as a struggle for status. But that stage apparently is inevitable. And, so far as the proposal cushions the
conflict in this approaching stage, it can be con-
sidered sound.

Fifth, the damning of repressive measures
because they were unsuccessfully tried before is
viewed as part of the general natural-history
pattern of all race-relations; such seems to occur
in every race movement. It is important in that it
shortens the life of the accommodative pattern and
accelerates the movement toward assimilation.

In general the policy of Macmillan is not
opposed to the general principles of race and culture
contacts. In particular, there are some discrepancies
which reflect a modicum of confusion in the mind of
Macmillan.

But whether good or bad this policy will be
adopted only when South Africa is ready for it. Race
problems are not solved in a day. This study shows
that irrespective of what men like Macmillan do or say
the problem will in due time be solved of its own
momentum. In the cycle of the social processes
there is in each stage the seeds which eventually
will destroy that stage and give birth to the succeed-
ing era.

A policy such as here studied apparently
cannot alter that pattern but will possibly accelerate its movement.

Such are the conclusions of this study.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


