

The Bantustan Proposals for South-West Africa

by ANTHONY A. D'AMATO*

WHAT Southern Africa will look like a generation from now is an immediate problem for the South African Government's top policy makers, who realise the precarious nature of *apartheid*. These planners have rejected both the do-nothing approach of the right-wing elements (e.g. the Republican Party) in South Africa and the multi-racial society solution pressed by Mrs Helen Suzman, the only Member of Parliament of the (relatively) left-wing Progressive Party. Between these two alternatives a host of partition schemes have been advocated, and one of them has been accepted: the 'Bantustan' proposals. By geographical isolation of each of the non-White ethnic groups into separate homelands or 'Bantustans', leaving the remainder of the territories of South Africa and South-West Africa to the Whites, the Nationalist Government is proceeding to change the face of Southern Africa. For they firmly believe that only by such drastic physical separation of the 'races' will the rest of the world cease its unrelenting threats of attacking the white minority now ruling all of Southern Africa.¹ And they hope that world public opinion will look kindly on the Bantustans once they exist *de facto*, since the physical separation of peoples means that no prejudicial discrimination can possibly occur.

The Bantustan plan first evolved in South Africa itself and was transformed into limited reality in 1963 with the creation of a single Bantustan in the Transkei.² World reaction, however, was not at all favourable;³

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¹ The names of the various ethnic groups are used in the senses defined in South African and South-West African laws and regulations. A typical set of definitions, taken in this case from the Population Census of South-West Africa of 8 May 1951, is as follows:

'(a) *Whites*. Persons who in appearance obviously are, or who are generally accepted as white persons, but excluding persons who, although in appearance obviously white, are generally accepted as Coloured persons.

'(b) *Natives*. Persons who in fact are, or who are generally accepted as members of any aboriginal race or tribe of Africa.

'(c) *Asiatics*. Natives of Asia and their descendants.

'(d) *Coloureds*. All persons not included in any of the three groups mentioned above.'

² See South African Bureau of Racial Affairs, *Integration or Separate Development?* (Stellenbosch, 1952); D. V. Cowen, *The Foundations of Freedom* (London, 1961); Leonard M. Thompson, *The Republic of South Africa* (Boston, 1966), pp. 81-9.

³ Waldemar A. Nielsen, *African Battleline* (New York, 1965), pp. 59-68.

and in addition there was great domestic resistance in South Africa on the part of Whites who did not want to have their Native servants and labourers relocated to the Transkei. Moreover, as Christopher Hill demonstrates, the Transkei was by far the most favourable Bantustan from the government's viewpoint of efficiency and practicality; establishing others would be far more costly and perhaps frustrated by resistance from all population groups.¹

But the establishment of Bantustans now has much greater likelihood of success in South-West Africa than in the more populous, urbanised Republic of South Africa, although ironically the idea seems to have occurred as an afterthought in 1962.² For South-West Africa, a territory of 318,261 square miles, nearly four times the size of the United Kingdom, is still a mandated territory under an agreement between South Africa and the League of Nations in 1920.³ Even though the International Court of Justice decided in July 1966, after six years of litigation, that it had no jurisdiction in the matter of South Africa's accountability for the administration of South-West Africa, the territory retains its 'international character' under the Mandate. Thus South-West Africa is far more vulnerable to organised international pressures within and without the United Nations than is the sovereign Republic of South Africa. Accordingly, South Africa may respond by setting up Bantustans more quickly in South-West Africa than domestically, and indeed preliminary economic development surveys and feasibility reports on the territory were commenced while the South-West Africa case was in progress.

Not only may the Bantustan programme move faster in South-West Africa than in the Republic, but it has also been fully mapped out both statistically and theoretically as a result of the Odendaal Report and the litigation in the South-West Africa case. Thus the situation in South-West Africa is a convenient unit for analysis. The Odendaal Report has been summarised elsewhere;⁴ but the purpose here is rather to examine

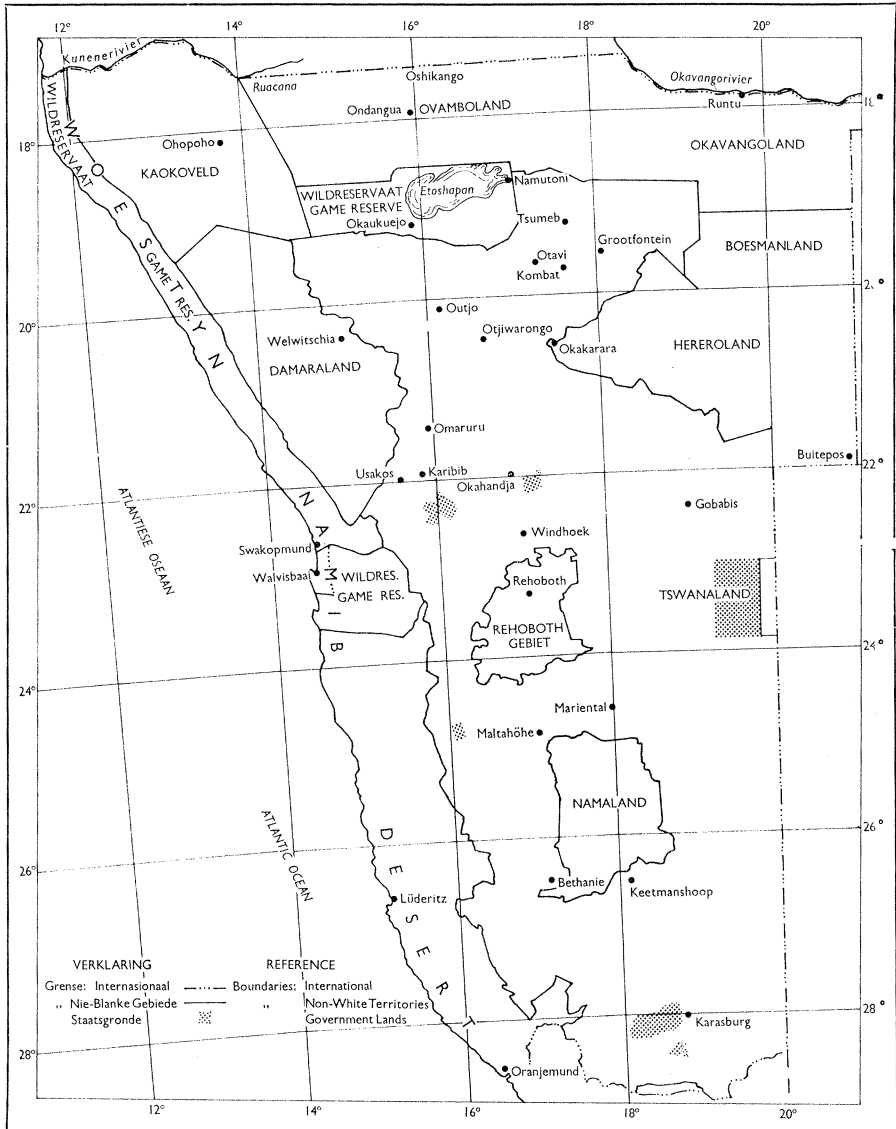
¹ Christopher R. Hill, *Bantustans: the fragmentation of South Africa* (London, 1964), pp. 102-9.

² The Odendaal Commission, which advocated Bantustans for South-West Africa, was appointed on 21 September 1962, two years after Ethiopia and Liberia had instituted legal action in the International Court of Justice against South Africa relating to the administration of the mandated territory of South-West Africa. See Republic of South Africa, *Report of the Commission of Enquiry into South-West Africa Affairs, 1962-1963* (Pretoria, 1964), hereinafter cited as *Odendaal Report*.

³ *International Status of South-West Africa, Advisory Opinion*: I.C.J. Reports 128 (1950). See in general Ruth First, *South-West Africa* (Baltimore, 1963), and Amelia C. Leiss, *Apartheid and United Nations Collective Measures* (New York, 1965).

⁴ See Philip Mason, 'Separate Development and South-West Africa: some aspects of the Odendaal Report', in *Race* (London), v, 4, April 1964, pp. 83-97; and United Nations Secretariat, Working Paper, 8 April 1964 (A/AC.109/L.108).

SOUTH-WEST AFRICA: PROPOSED HOMELANDS¹



¹ Source: *Odendaal Report*, facing p. 110.

the Bantustan proposal from a broader vantage point, asking whether it is likely to accomplish its stated objective of separating the 'races' so that the opportunity for discrimination will vanish, and whether the programme will be regarded by the outside world as reasonable or fair.¹

THE FAIRNESS OF LAND ALLOCATIONS

Do the Odendaal proposals for South-West African Bantustans offer a fair allocation of land? The Odendaal Commission has recommended, and the Government in general has agreed, that 10 separate homelands should be established for the non-European population, nine of which are to be allocated to the Natives and one to the Rehoboth Basters, a Coloured population group.² In addition, three Coloured townships are to be set up within Windhoek, Walvis Bay, and Luderitz for the rest of the Coloured population. Table 1 shows, first, the land area allocated to the nine Native Bantustans and the Coloured Bantustan townships; this leaves 495,927 square kilometres of land in the rest of South-West Africa. Not all of the remainder, the Government stresses, is allocated to the European population, for it includes 135,447 square kilometres taken up by the 'diamond areas', the game reserves, the Namib desert, and large areas of unalienated state lands. However, the latter will be at the disposal of the European central government that remains after the various Bantustans are excised from the territory, and thus it is reasonable to include these lands in the European category.

South Africa stressed at the Hague in the South-West Africa case that roughly equal amounts of land, exclusive of government lands, are allocated to non-Europeans and Europeans. However, the *per capita* figures, which of course were not given in the Odendaal Report, tell a different story.

If one looks at the actual land available per head within the Bantustans on an individual basis, as in Table 2, the inequities are even more striking. It may be seen that the average land area—both the mean and the mode—is 0.23 square kilometres *per capita*.

The foregoing quantitative comparisons tell only part of the story. The quality and desirability of the allocated lands must also be taken into account. South Africa has emphasised in the proceedings before the

¹ Many observers who are rightly apprehensive of a racial war in South Africa have welcomed the Bantustan proposals as the only possible solution. See e.g. Paul Giniewski, *The Two Faces of Apartheid* (Chicago, 1961), pp. 315-51. For a discussion of the High Commission Territories as potential Bantustans, see Waldemar A. Nielsen, *op. cit.* pp. 104-5; also Jack Halpern, *South Africa's Hostages* (Baltimore, 1965).

² Republic of South Africa, *Decisions by the Government on the Recommendations of the Commission of Enquiry into South-West African Affairs* (Cape Town, 1964), pp. 11 and 24.

International Court of Justice that, so far as agricultural resources are concerned, in some aspects the Natives are favoured. For example, 70 per cent of the non-White population, and only 20 per cent of the White population, are to be found in the most favourable rainfall region.

TABLE 1¹

Allocation for:	Land Area (sq. km.)	Population in 1960	Sq. km. <i>per capita</i>
Natives	312,433	424,047	0.74
Coloureds	14,785	23,965	0.62
Europeans, excluding Govt. lands	360,480	73,464	4.92
Europeans, including Govt. lands	495,927	73,464	6.76
Totals	823,145	521,476	1.58

TABLE 2²

Proposed Bantustan	Land Area (sq. km.)	Population in 1960	Sq. km. <i>per capita</i>
Ovamboland	56,072	239,363	0.23
Tswanaland	1,554	9,992	0.59
Namaland	21,677	34,806	0.62
Eastern Caprivi	11,534	15,840	0.72
Damaraland	47,990	44,353	1.08
Rehoboth Gebiet	13,860	11,257	1.23
Okavangoland	41,701	27,871	1.50
Hereroland	58,997	35,354	1.67
Bushmanland	23,927	11,762	2.03
Kaokoveld	48,982	9,234	5.30
Totals	326,294	439,832	0.74

¹ *Odendaal Report*, Tables A, B, and G, pp. 109 and 111; Tables xviii and xix, pp. 39 and 41; Table xi, p. 29. Population figures here exclude from the total of Natives the '4,528 employees mostly from Angola' listed in Table xviii. Land allocation figures here have been converted from hectares, and 'Coloured settlement' has been added to the allocation for Coloureds in Table G.

² *Ibid.* Table xii, p. 29, and Table G, p. 111.

Moreover, in the Bantustans as a whole the annual rainfall is greater in quantity and superior in its effectiveness (evaporation and variability).¹ However, as we have seen, the Bantustans must support a much higher population density. Thus a figure of annual rainfall *per capita*, if one could be imagined, would clearly favour the Europeans.² In addition, the European farms are already artificially irrigated and operating on a commercially profitable basis; the contrary is true of the Bantustan farms. Furthermore, the soil type generally favours the European farms; it contains the greatest amount of loam, whereas the sandy soil is located predominantly in the northern Bantustan areas.³

South-West Africa is rich in natural resources, but with scarcely any exceptions the copper, zinc, and gold deposits are within the European farm and town areas.⁴ The fabulous diamond mines are located without exception in the Woestyn game reservation and the Namib Desert, which will remain as 'unallocated government lands'. The Natives will never receive, under the Bantustan proposals, any voice or interest in the central government, which vests in itself ownership of all these mineral rights and unallocated lands.

In terms of industrial development the contrast is, if anything, clearer. The 'Police Zone' of southern South-West Africa, most of which will be retained by the Whites after the Bantustans are excised from the territory, contains nearly all the factories, processing plants, mines, transport and communication systems, banks, newspapers, and commercial farms in the country. 'The line demarcating the Police Zone', according to Mrs Helen Suzman, 'is of course in reality the dividing line between the modern and the subsistence economy in South-West Africa.'⁵ Nearly all the tarred roads in the territory lace the European area, although several 'National Roads' have been planned for the Bantustans by the Odendaal Commission. Similarly, nearly all harbours, railways, and airlines are found in the Police Zone.⁶ Water resources also favour the European area, although here the Odendaal Commission has made a far-sighted proposal for costly development of water and hydro-electricity in the Bantustans, known as the Kunene Scheme.

One might at this point object that the Police Zone cannot be compared with the Bantustan areas because the Europeans own the industry

¹ Republic of South Africa, *Rejoinder: South-West Africa Cases* (Cape Town, 1964), vol. 1, pp. 310-11.

² *Odendaal Report*, Figs. 4 and 5 opposite p. 14.

³ *Ibid.* Fig. 6, opposite p. 16.

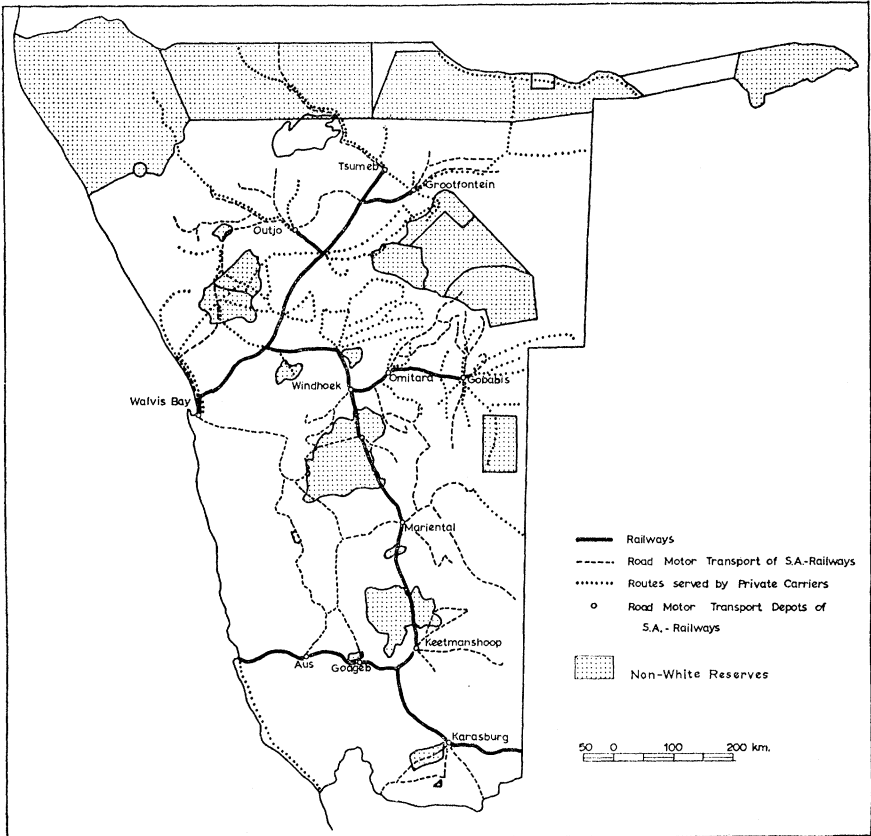
⁴ *Ibid.* Fig. 8, opposite p. 24.

⁵ Republic of South Africa, *Parliamentary Debates: House of Assembly* (Pretoria, 1964), col. 5544.

⁶ *Odendaal Report*, Figs. 55-8, facing pp. 374, 376, and 388.

in their area and there could be no question of taking away from them what they own. This would apply also to the mines and natural resources, the proprietary rights to which reside in a government in which no non-European has suffrage. On the other hand, subsistence-level native labour has contributed to much of the industrial and mining

SOUTH-WEST AFRICA: TRANSPORT ROUTES¹



wealth of South-West Africa. On the labour theory of value, this industrial development really ‘belongs’ to the Natives. Moreover, Native tribes were in occupation of the territory before the White settlers trekked into South-West Africa from South Africa at the turn of the century: thus it could be argued that the Natives own the mineral rights and even the land itself.

Of course, such arguments, whether based on Marxism and history or

¹ Source: Republic of South Africa, *South-West Africa Cases: Counter Memorial* (Cape Town, 1963), vol. III, map opposite p. 16.

capitalism and effective power, will never be fully persuasive in themselves. The point at issue here is that the neutral observer should not *a priori* exclude any characteristic of the land, such as industrial development, before making a fair division of the remainder. Rather, all the characteristics—natural resources as well as improvements, climate as well as location, rainfall as well as irrigation—must be taken into account in deciding whether the Odendaal allocations are fair and reasonable.

No question of the quality or quantity of land can ever be fully settled by objective measurement because land is not fungible (in the legal sense of one unit being replaceable by another). Any partition scheme must necessarily allocate land areas, each of which is unique in its own way. How can a fair division be made, even in theory?

In a comparable instance involving the allocation of unique items, Professor Fuller has cited a case where a testator left his valuable paintings to be divided equally between his two heirs.¹ The market value of the paintings would not, it was soon realised, be helpful in making a division, since it could not take into account the sentimental value of individual paintings to the sons. However, the administrator of the estate devised an allocation scheme much like the one children use in dividing a piece of cake. He instructed the elder beneficiary to divide the paintings into two groups, and then gave the choice of groups to the younger beneficiary. To be sure, the functions were not equivalent: one beneficiary had complete freedom to divide the paintings in such a way that he himself would be indifferent as to which group he received, while the other had only the freedom to choose one of the groups. Yet a fairer, simpler, and perhaps more ingenious method of division could hardly be conceived.

One might posit in theory a comparable division of the South-West Africa land. It would not even be material whether the Europeans chose to make the initial division or retained the right to choose between the divisions formulated by the Natives. Either way, absolute fairness could be achieved, within the initial postulate that the Natives and Europeans had equivalent group rights. Of course it is extremely improbable that the Europeans would voluntarily agree to such an allocation method, but its theoretical possibility suggests that a fair standard is itself within human capacity.

It is furthermore possible to approach theoretical fairness in an undramatic and realistic manner, through the process of negotiation and arbitration. Indeed, bargaining between equals, unresolved points being settled by conciliation or arbitration procedures, has been the general

¹ Lon L. Fuller, 'The Forms and Limits of Adjudication' (1959, mimeo.), p. 39.

pattern where partition has more or less successfully been accomplished—in Ulster/Eire and (except for Kashmir and Hyderabad) in India/Pakistan. Much, though not all, of the potential strife inherent in these disputes was averted by the tacit or explicit understanding that both sides would discuss the matter on an equal footing and submit to the arbitration of differences.

Perhaps the Odendaal Commission tried to capture some of the moral authority of negotiation procedures by its practice of conducting numerous well-publicised public hearings throughout the territory in 1962 and 1963. In the course of the South-West Africa litigation at the Hague, the plaintiffs attacked the Odendaal findings in part because the commission had not consulted enough with the Natives and not held a public referendum on its submissions. But both of these charges seem to miss the essential significance of true negotiation procedure. In the first place, a hearing is entirely different from face-to-face negotiation, for although the public is ‘heard’ it has no bargaining leverage to press its desires upon the commission. A Native technically may have been ‘consulted’, but he leaves the hearing room without knowing whether his listeners had any predisposition to be receptive to his testimony.

In the second place, referenda or other democratic procedures cannot take the place of negotiation. For even on the dubious assumption that a free, knowledgeable plebiscite could be held on the question of accepting or rejecting the Odendaal Commission’s findings, an affirmative vote might merely be the expression of public realism that the government would not offer a better deal if the present one were rejected. Moreover, the choice presented to the Natives would not be to pick either side of a division of the territory in a manner analogous to Professor Fuller’s example cited previously, but rather to choose between the Odendaal Commission’s allocations and the status quo. Thus democratic procedures, even if they were essayed in this case, would not be the equivalent of fairness or reasonableness in the allocations.

Since the South African Government in fact has offered neither negotiation, division-and-choice, nor plebiscite in this situation, the only way to evaluate the fairness of the Odendaal proposals is to compare them with what might have been the results of the former procedures. If the Europeans had known in advance that the Natives would be given a choice, would the Europeans have been willing to risk a Native choice of the lands that the Europeans in fact retained—lands having the overwhelming preponderance of mineral wealth, industrial development, transportation and communication systems, good farming soil and so forth? Would they have been willing to risk changing places with the

Natives in the amount of land per head, taking 0.74 instead of 6.74 square kilometres *per capita*?

Alternatively, if the Natives had a free choice, would they have chosen the land that has been set apart for the Bantustans, even conceding the fact that it has generally better rainfall conditions and even though water, electricity, educational, and hospital facilities would be improved in the years to come? Would they have rejected the Police Zone, which is already well supplied in these respects, and whose farms are already profitable despite the generally less favourable rainfall conditions? Unless the reader's answer to any of these questions is affirmative or even doubtful, it is hard to conclude that the Odendaal allocations have been fair or reasonable to the population as a whole.

The foregoing arguments have assumed that the choice of land is simply a matter between Europeans and non-Europeans, an obvious simplification whose leading advocate is the Government of South Africa. Thus, if racial parity is assumed, the Europeans in South-West Africa can claim at least an equal share of land with the Natives, even though they are greatly outnumbered by the latter. As mentioned previously, one of the Government's central arguments advanced in explaining the Bantustan proposals to the International Court of Justice was that the total land area allocated to the Europeans is only slightly higher than the total allocated to the non-Europeans, exclusive of government lands. This dualism pervades all the Government arguments. It is also noteworthy that the Government usually minimises the complexities introduced by the existence of a third group, the Coloureds, by using the inclusive category of non-Europeans.

However, the very classification of the population into various 'races' must be a factor vitally relevant to the fairness of the Odendaal recommendations.¹ No matter how much one may maintain that there is no scientific justification for treating people differently because of hereditary factors, it nevertheless remains true that the real or apparent 'racial' distinctions are at the heart of the Bantustan scheme itself, just as religious differences have been the cause of some partitions in the past. Like

¹ The greatest difficulties arise in determining an individual's 'race'. Although statistics are not available for South-West Africa, the South African Minister of the Interior stated on 22 March 1957 that approximately 100,000 'race classification decisions' were then pending before the Director of Census and Statistics which were regarded as 'borderline' cases. In addition, 968 cases were pending before an appeals board to determine objections to the Director's classifications. A. Suzman, 'Race Classification and Definition in the Legislation of the Union of South Africa, 1910-1960', in *Acta Juridica* (Cape Town), 1960, pp. 339 and 355. The classification 'Coloured' obviously does not alleviate the difficulty since it erects two fences where before there was one. Most of the litigated cases concern persons who claim that they were wrongly classified as 'Coloured' instead of 'White'.

political gerrymandering, classification according to 'race' tends to increase the 'weight' of individuals associated with some groups at the expense of individuals associated with other groups. Thus, while race classification must be accepted as a premise of the Odendaal plans, it may nevertheless result in unfairness to the population.

Therefore the analogy to the elder and younger beneficiaries of the valuable paintings does not really fit the 'European', 'Coloured', and 'Native' classifications in South-West Africa. Nor can negotiation be a fair procedure if the European group is treated on an equal basis with non-Europeans, since their constituents are numerically fewer. However, a modification of these procedures might be proposed. Since the ratio of Natives:Europeans:Coloureds in the territory is approximately 18:3:1, a fair procedure might consist of having the representatives of the Natives divide the territory into 22 parts, and then let the Coloured representative choose one part and the European representative choose any three parts. Of course, the Europeans, with their present monopoly of power and in no immediate danger of revolution, would not even listen to so radical a suggestion. Yet this procedure does suggest a model for a fair allocation of land *per capita* on the basis of group membership. We have seen that the European population has in fact retained a self-selected area amounting to slightly over $\frac{13}{22}$ of the territory (including government lands). If their share of $\frac{3}{22}$ of the total population is compared to this, the discrepancy suggests the degree of unfairness involved in the Odendaal allocations.

WILL PREJUDICIAL DISCRIMINATION BE ELIMINATED?

Regardless of the conclusion one may draw as to the fairness of the Odendaal allocations, the question remains whether the very concept of Bantustans can ever result in fairness to the entire population. This question may be treated separately from the allocation question, not only because the allocations might some day be changed, but also because it might be argued that the Odendaal allocations constitute the 'last' prejudice, or 'final solution', and that after that hurdle is passed all racial prejudice will disappear.

The question of prejudicial discrimination was aired extensively in the South-West Africa case, even though no decision was reached on the merits of the dispute. In the course of the legal arguments at The Hague, South African lawyers conceded that discrimination would be a violation of South Africa's alleged duties as a mandatory power in South-West Africa, but contended that *apartheid* was not discriminatory.

Rather, they argued that *apartheid* meant 'separate development' without inequality or discrimination. Moreover, they described the proposed Bantustan system as the fruition of the policy of separate development, where even the possibility of prejudicial discrimination would cease to exist.¹

The arguments on this point before the International Court of Justice were inconclusive, and indeed turned out to be irrelevant to the Court's decision. Nevertheless, one must admit that if each Bantustan were to become a politically independent and economically self-sufficient enclave, and if all physical contact between its inhabitants and the Whites outside were to cease, then it would be hard or impossible to support an accusation of discrimination. In order to examine whether these hypotheses are realistic, we might begin with South Africa's consistent and repeated argument that each Bantustan will have 'political independence' coupled with 'economic interdependence' with the White areas.²

Taking first the notion of 'economic interdependence', it is clear that this term can cover a spectrum of situations, ranging from virtual self-sufficiency with moderate trade to the subservience of a manpower pool that can only export its labour. At present, South and South-West Africa depend on Native labour for the mines and industries. It has been clear since the concept of Bantustans was introduced that the capitalists of Southern Africa have no intention of losing their labour force when the workers take up residence in the Bantustans. In order to continue to tap the labour market, new factories will be located along the borders of the Bantustans, gradually 'phasing out' those farther in the interior of the White areas. They will thus be able to draw upon the huge labour supply within the Bantustans and yet remain on 'European' soil to enjoy the security and favourable legislation of the central government. A 'commuting' labour force will be added to the migrant labour system. This entire process is developing in South Africa, where factories are being located along the borders of the Transkei.

The fact of the 'border industries' is well known, but few have speculated as to its long-term implications, which include the following. First, the up-to-date factories that will be constructed will be so far

¹ Prime Minister Verwoerd had stated in the South African Parliament in 1963 that 'it is only when the races are separated and live like neighbours that discrimination will be able to disappear.' *Parliamentary Debates: House of Assembly* (1963), col. 230.

² In 1961 Prime Minister Verwoerd told the South Africa Club in London that the Bantustans would follow 'the model of the nations, which in this modern world means political independence coupled with economic interdependence'. Union of South Africa, *Fact Paper* 91 (Cape Town), April 1961, p. 14.

advanced beyond the fledgling service industries and small shops which might be set up by the Natives that internal Bantustan factories—if even one could be set up—could not compete in a free market with the border industries. The technological gap would be so great as to preclude efficient competition. Rather, the Natives within the Bantustans will probably buy all their products from the European factories in which they work.

A second factor favouring the border industries is their ability to continue to trade with sources outside South-West Africa, whereas trade restrictions could easily be placed on any products manufactured inside a Bantustan. None of the Bantustans, it may be noted, has an outlet to the sea. Of the 10, four are isolated from the others, two have a common border with only one other Bantustan, and only four have common borders with as many as two others. Thirdly, the centrally located White areas are laced with modern communications and transport facilities, linking the industries to each other and to their counterparts in South Africa. The increased efficiency resulting from the easy exchange of technology, parts, and services among these industries makes it appear impossible that any Bantustan industry could catch up.

Fourthly, if in spite of all these competitive advantages some European investors wanted to locate their plants within a particular Bantustan, prohibitive legislation could easily be passed by the central government on the principle that the Bantustans should remain 'pure' for their inhabitants. Finally, those outside would have no motive to invest in predominantly Native-owned factories in the Bantustans. This follows from the facts that Europeans are not allowed to own land in the Bantustans—which is inherent in the concept of separate areas—and that Natives, living at a subsistence level, have only their land to offer as security for any loans from outside. This land would be worthless as collateral, due to the inability of the European lenders to take up the title to the land in the event of default on the loan.

These considerations add up to the prediction that even the largest and potentially most viable Bantustans will be economically subservient to the White areas.¹ This in itself constitutes a form of unequal treatment, as it consigns the Bantustans to permanent economic dependence. But, even more important, it means the perpetuation of a system where Natives work in a territory under laws which will favour the politically represented employer rather than the alien labourer. And of course it means a continuation of the interaction between worker and employer

¹ There is no doubt that this applies to the smaller Bantustans, whose economic subservience has been openly conceded in the South African Parliament. See e.g. *Parliamentary Debates; House of Assembly* (1964), col. 5490.

in the numerous border industries, making the original notion of physical separation of the 'races' inapplicable during the working day. The 'races' will not in fact be separate; their points of contact will simply be relocated.

It is moreover clear that the Natives who at present work in the mining and transport industries in the White-controlled areas will continue to be employed there as migrant labourers even after they change their residences from the shanty towns to the Bantustans. These industries, which cannot be moved to the borders of the Bantustans, are fully dependent upon Native labour and it would be difficult to see politically how they could be made to give up this source of labour.¹

If the 'economic interdependence' of the Bantustans in fact represents economic subservience, it is even harder to visualise 'political independence' for them. For the smaller Bantustans, such as Tswanaland, Eastern Caprivi, Bushmanland,² or Kaokoveld, or for the three Coloured townships, political independence seems impossible.² Furthermore, it must be remembered that the impetus for setting up the Bantustans comes from world pressure against South Africa; without outside pressures, South Africa would never have undertaken the trouble and expense necessary to establish Bantustans. It follows from this that South Africa would not tolerate a situation where the Bantustans might become a source of insecurity for the Whites. The United Party fears that there would be 'eight or nine Cubas right within the mandated territory of South West Africa';³ and the Government does not need to be reminded of this fear by the Opposition. In 1951, when there was more opposition to the Nationalist Party than now and when the Party leaders were talking more frankly than they do today, Dr Verwoerd stated with respect to a plan that was one of the precursors of the Bantustan proposals:

Now a Senator wants to know whether the series of self-governing areas would be sovereign. The answer is obvious. It stands to reason that White South Africa must remain their guardian. We are spending all the money on

¹ One of South Africa's official witnesses at The Hague, Professor J. P. van S. Bruwer (who had served on the Odendaal Commission), admitted on cross-examination that the White economy of South-West Africa 'would not be able to thrive or possibly survive' without the use of non-White labour, although it might at some time in the future—which he agreed might be anything up to 300 years. International Court of Justice, *Verbatim Record*, C.R. 65/56, pp. 22 and 25.

² Another official South African witness at The Hague, P. J. Cillie (editor of *Die Burger*, an influential Afrikaans newspaper), said of the Bantustans, 'Some of those units could obviously not be independent states in any accepted sense . . . Some of them are so small and the numbers are so low that obviously you cannot speak of all those smaller areas as viable states, you cannot envisage that, not for the foreseeable future'. International Court of Justice, *Verbatim Record*, C.R. 65/62, p. 14.

³ Sir De Villiers Graaf, *Parliamentary Debates: House of Assembly* (1964), col. 5465.

these developments. How could small scattered states arise? The areas will be economically dependent on the Union. It stands to reason that when we talk about the Natives' right of self-government in those areas we cannot mean that we intend by that to cut large slices out of South Africa and turn them into independent States.¹

It is obvious that 'political independence', like 'economic interdependence', is a slogan that can cover a wide range of meanings. For the most part South Africa has refrained from specifying what the term means; when definitions have been attempted, they have ranged from control over a large segment of internal affairs to equal membership in 'a free association of states similar to that of a commonwealth'.²

It would be futile to pursue the kaleidoscopic meanings appended to this obviously politically-charged term. A more concrete indication of its meaning can be derived from the Odendaal Report, which spells out the amount of political independence proposed for each Bantustan. With minor individual variations, each Bantustan will have its own 'Legislative Council', which will gradually take over from the present South African Department of Bantu Administration all legislative and administrative functions *except* the following: defence, foreign affairs, internal security, border control, posts, water affairs and power generation, and transport. Moreover, *all* legislation will be subject to the approval and signature of the State President of the Republic of South Africa. Finally, the highest courts of appeal for the Bantustans will be the Supreme Court of South Africa, South-West Africa Division, and the Appeal Court of the Republic of South Africa. These exceptions speak for themselves.

Of course it is possible for South Africa to argue that eventually these exceptions will wither away and that the 'homelands' will become increasingly independent. In that event the most significant inquiry would be, What is the present intention of the South African Government as to the length of such a transitional period? Dr Verwoerd told the House of Assembly in 1958 that the 'ideal' of total separation could not 'be attained within a space of a few years, or even for a long time to come'.³ Mr Van Der Merwe in the same House referred in 1964 to the 'normal evolution of centuries' during which the Bantustans would obtain their independence.⁴ In the 1966 election campaign in South Africa, a Nationalist Member of Parliament reportedly told his

¹ *Parliamentary Debates: Senate* (1951), cols. 2893-4.

² Republic of South Africa, *Rejoinder: South-West Africa Cases*, vol. 1, p. 314.

³ *Parliamentary Debates: House of Assembly* (1958), col. 3805.

⁴ *Ibid.* (1965), col. 5481.

constituents not to worry because freedom for the Bantustans would not be granted for another 200 years.¹



Men of goodwill who understand the dilemma of the Whites in Southern Africa are apt to give a very sympathetic hearing to any proposal that sounds like a compromise solution, such as the Bantustan concept. Yet these observers must be careful to examine the implications of the Bantustan proposals in order to see if they live up to their idealised image. For a belated discovery that the Bantustans are not a solution, but rather an aggravation, of the problem of racial discrimination can lead to more violent repercussions at the expense of all the inhabitants of Southern Africa than a careful assessment of the plan at the present time.

Of course, no proposal can be evaluated fully without a consideration of realistic alternatives. There is no space here to consider the many variants of a multi-racial solution, but it should at least be emphasised that the Verwoerd era did not prove that multi-racialism is impossible. Rather, it was dismissed as a completely unpleasant and undesirable alternative. Yet many leading South African industrialists and political leaders have espoused a multi-racial solution, and it would be wise for the outside observer to pay more attention to their specific proposals. The present paper, as an attempt to point out some of the theoretical and practical inadequacies of the Bantustan proposals over the long run, may thus be viewed as a plea for greater effort and fuller study of multi-racial schemes proposed from within South Africa.

Joseph Lelyveld, 'Apartheid Wins New Mandate', in *The New York Times*, 3 April 1966.