

**3<sup>rd</sup> Alfred and Winifred Hoernlé Memorial Lecture**

# **Group conflicts and race prejudice**

**I D MacCrone**



HOERNLÉ MEMORIAL LECTURE  
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GROUP CONFLICTS  
AND  
RACE PREJUDICE

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## HOERNLÉ MEMORIAL LECTURE

A lecture, entitled the Hoernlé Memorial Lecture (in memory of the late Professor R. F. Alfred Hoernlé, President of the Institute from 1934 to 1943), will be delivered once a year under the auspices of the South African Institute of Race Relations. An invitation to deliver the lecture will be extended each year to some person having special knowledge and experience of racial problems in Africa or elsewhere.

It is hoped that the Hoernlé Memorial Lecture will provide a platform for constructive and helpful contributions to thought and action. While the lecturers will be entirely free to express their own views, which may not be those of the Institute as expressed in its formal decisions, it is hoped that lecturers will be guided by the Institute's declaration of policy that *scientific study and research must be allied with the fullest recognition of the human reactions to changing racial situations; that respectful regard must be paid to the traditions and usages of various national, racial, and tribal groups which comprise the population; and that due account must be taken of opposing views earnestly held.*

## GROUP CONFLICTS AND RACE PREJUDICE

*In connection with the study of attitudes, the problem of the origin and meaning of race prejudice occupies so important a place in social relationships as to require careful and detailed consideration.*—Professor O. Klineberg

I MUST FRANKLY CONFESS, Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, that it was with a certain measure of reluctance that I accepted the invitation extended to me by the Executive of the Institute of Race Relations, to give this Hoernlé Memorial Lecture. While I naturally welcomed the opportunity of repaying, by means of this lecture, some of the debt which I, in common with many others, owe to the man whose memory we are honouring here to-night, I did feel that the Executive of the Institute might well have found someone else whose approach to our racial problem was, shall I say, rather less academic and less remote than my own appears to me to be. But when I say this, I immediately take comfort from the thought that Hoernlé was himself academically-minded in the best and most positive sense of that somewhat ambivalent phrase; and that he, more than any other man I know, constantly strove to follow the path of reason in dealing with a problem, the usual approach to which, at any rate in our own country (and, I might add, in view of certain proceedings, even in a city like New York), appears to be one from which reason itself is often conspicuous by its absence.

It is, indeed, fortunate for us here in South Africa that Hoernlé should not merely have contributed so much to our understanding of our racial problems but that he should, by his manner of approach (which was, in its turn, directly derived from his whole philosophical outlook), have done so much to incorporate into our ways of thought and, therefore, into our very culture, that rational mode of thinking about matters racial without which we cannot hope to make very much

progress towards any solution of our racial problems. In fact, I am inclined to believe that it is *this* particular service, among the many rendered by Hoernlé, that will, as time goes on, play an even more important part in the difficult days that lie ahead of us than it has already done in the past. And, speaking for myself, I can think of no finer service that a man can render to his country, and through his country to the cause of humanity at large, than that he should have done so much to raise the whole of our very vexed and intricate racial problem on to the plane of rational discussion and enquiry.

Now it so happens that the particular aspect of that problem which I have selected as the theme for my lecture to-night, is one in which there is a very special need for such rational discussion and enquiry, if we are not to engender more heat than light in our treatment of it. For the very title of my lecture, *Group Conflicts and Race Prejudice*, has an unfortunate emotive quality about it which is more than likely to evoke in some quarters the same kind of obscure emotional reactions which we find regularly associated with the operation of those mental attitudes in the form of race and other group prejudices, which we are to discuss here to-night. But there is no reason in the nature of things why we should ourselves become emotionally aroused when engaged upon a discussion of psychological phenomena as highly charged with emotion as are our race prejudices. That, surely, would not be the path of reason that we are trying to follow!

On the contrary, let us regard these prejudices in an objective way as interesting group phenomena, well worthy of serious consideration for a variety of reasons. For, in the first place, they do indubitably exist and function autonomously in characteristic ways and according to conditions that can be analysed and identified. This point is worth making at the very outset, since there is a school of thought that pretends to deal with group prejudices by the simple process of dismissing them as of no account, or of treating them as if they were a kind of social epiphenomenon, not really worthy of serious study. But if they do exist as psychological realities, then they deserve to be studied for their own sake since the mere fact of their existence is itself a problem that demands thorough investigation and analysis. In the second place, our race prejudices do play an enormous part in determining our behaviour; and by behaviour I mean here not only what we actually do, the way

in which we act towards others, but also, and this is perhaps of greater importance, the way in which we think and feel about others. No one, of course, will readily admit that his own behaviour is a function of prejudice, but that need not affect the validity of what has just been said, since, apart from our infinite capacity for self-deception so far as our own motives are concerned, we do not, as a rule, have much difficulty in detecting the operation of prejudice in the behaviour of others—it being ever so much easier to see the mote in the eye of another while overlooking the beam in our own! In the third place, we have here in South Africa an extraordinarily rich field for the study of race prejudices. I know of no other country in which this particular species of psychological fauna under consideration, abounds in greater variety or displays such a diversity of forms. I am here reminded of how our early naturalists, men like Sparrman, Thunberg, Burchell, and others (not to speak of our big-game butchers), often show in their writings their delight and astonishment at the richness of the Cape flora and fauna. To them our country appeared as a veritable paradise of Nature's bounties. In somewhat the same spirit, I have sometimes tried to think of South Africa as the happy hunting ground for every possible kind of race and colour prejudice. Sometimes I even find myself regarding them with a kind of melancholy affection. And I say this in no spirit of frivolity or cynicism, but solely because if our approach is to be, and remain, a rational one, we must treat our group prejudices—of English *vice-versa* Dutch, of Gentile *vice-versa* Jew, of White *vice-versa* Black, and the rest—in a naturalistic way, as cultural phenomena to be understood and explained. It is just not part of my job as a social psychologist either to approve or disapprove, to pass judgments of value upon, or even to try to do anything about, these race prejudices. Rather my job is the more modest but not less interesting one of making psychological sense of them, of asking the right questions about them and then trying to find the correct answers while basing my procedure throughout upon what appears to me to be the sound scientific maxim that *the first thing to do is to know*. And, finally, although this is, strictly speaking, outside my province, there is the point that we here in South Africa cannot forever go on living in what I have just called this *happy hunting ground for every possible kind of race and colour prejudice*; but which, with stricter adherence to psychological truth or reality,

may be more adequately described as our dream world of racial illusions, a kind of fools' paradise. For, whether we like it or not, we shall from now on have to reckon with what, to many of us, is the startling fact that we form an integral part of a new kind of world that has become profoundly aware of the problems arising out of human relations, that has become racially self-conscious and sensitive about any kind of racial discrimination to a quite unprecedented degree, and that has become articulate and vocal and highly critical wherever it has reason to believe that such racial discrimination may be practised. Confronted by such a formidable situation in the real world from which we cannot segregate ourselves however much we may like to do so, we may try to avoid the reality by refusing to recognise the revolutionary change that has come over the world, while continuing to cherish those racial prejudices that we have inherited from an age that has long since vanished, or is in the process of vanishing, from the rest of the world. Such a course, it seems to me, can only end in a tragic breakdown of our whole social system—a breakdown which may be postponed for a while by defiant gestures but which cannot, in the long run, be averted. For my part, I sincerely hope that we shall not allow ourselves to be first made mad before we are finally destroyed. But we have another and more rational choice offered to us. And that is to bring about those changes within ourselves, in our own mental attitudes and ways of thinking and feeling about matters racial, that will enable us to make the necessary adjustments to a changing world-order so far as the relations between the races within this country, or elsewhere, are concerned. For if we can succeed in discarding, or even modifying, our existing race prejudices that have continued to persist as forms of cultural lag, we shall have removed one of the main obstacles in the way of coming to terms with the demands of the real world in which we live to-day.

## I

Now just exactly what are these race prejudices about which we hear so much in these days? Have they always existed or are they a phenomenon of comparatively recent growth? Why do they appear to play such an important part in determining our behaviour, which, we must remember, includes our ways of thinking and feeling as well as our ways of doing? Just what



is their role in a complex multi-racial society such as we have in South Africa? To what extent do they vary from individual to individual and how are they related to differences in individual personality? What light has been thrown by experimental investigations upon the problem of changing or modifying existing race prejudices? These are only a few of the questions that we might ask about the *problem* presented to us, I might even say, thrust or forced upon us, by the existence of race prejudice as a stark fact; and I have no doubt that many more such questions could be formulated by those of you present here to-night. You will not expect me, I know, to answer any single one of these questions in any detail in the time at our disposal. All I shall be able to do is to put before you some considerations relevant to our theme which, I hope, will be of interest to you.

The first, and perhaps the most important point to bear in mind, is that race prejudices are only one particular kind of group phenomenon of which national prejudices, religious prejudices, class prejudices, sex prejudices, and so on, are other kinds. That is to say, we must not think of race prejudices as if they were a unique kind of group or social attitude; instead, we must think of them in their proper context as simply one of a class of group or cultural phenomena, all of which are dependent upon the same kind of conditions, display the same basic characteristics, and serve the same functions. Of the conditions upon which race prejudices, like every other group prejudice, depend, I shall begin by mentioning two in particular. The first is that a race prejudice, being a group phenomenon, can only appear in the individual as a member of a particular racial *group* or that it is always, and everywhere, a function of the individual's group membership. Such a statement may appear trite but I can assure you that it is not trivial, once we appreciate some of its many implications. For it implies that the individual's race prejudices are not dependent upon personal experiences; that, in fact, an individual may display a full-blown race prejudice without ever having had any first-hand contact with those towards whom he holds the prejudice. This point is beautifully illustrated by the following extract from a life-history document prepared for me by a young Basotho. It reads as follows:

*When I got to Pietersburg, Northern Transvaal, I found the Shangaans there. The Basotho had developed attitude of despise*

*and hatred for the Shangaans. So I also developed it. Why I don't know. Our old people in the country used to tell us stories of how brutal, unsympathetic and bossy the Dutch were, and how they feared and hated them. So I developed an attitude of dislike and fear for the Dutch.*

Substitute for *our old people in the country* the way in which the history of inter-racial contacts is presented in many of our school text-books or taught in many of our schools, and we should have no difficulty in finding many more examples of the same sort of race prejudices acquired vicariously or at second-hand by members of other groups as well. In more extreme cases, we may even find that an individual will continue to display prejudice towards a particular race or group in spite of the fact that his personal contacts with particular individuals belonging to that group are friendly and positive, provided that the race or group prejudice in question remains characteristic of the group of which he is a member. Have we not all had occasion to remark at some time or other: *I like so-and-so as an individual however much I dislike the race to which he belongs.*

Yet another way in which an individual's group membership has a bearing on his race prejudices, is shown by the fact that when he is out of his own group situation or when he is not reacting *qua* member of his own group, he may display behaviour quite different from that which he displays as a member of his group. But as soon as he returns to his own group, we find that he once more reverts to the attitudes and behaviour characteristic of his group-membership, including the behaviour which is a function of that group's prejudices. From this point it follows that, should an individual wish to abandon any particular race or group prejudice, he can only do so at the cost of his group membership or, at any rate, at the cost of that sector of his group membership which he shares in common with the other members of his own group. And if the group prejudice in question is one to which the group itself attaches great importance or which arouses strong emotional reactions, then the individual will without a doubt find himself involved in a serious conflict both with the other members of his own group as well as with himself. Both these implications of an individual's group membership for an understanding of his race prejudices are important in at least two other ways as well. They show that there may be and, in fact,

that there often is, a marked contradiction between an individual's behaviour in his individual or personal capacity and the same individual's behaviour in his group capacity, so far as members of other groups or races are concerned. They show, too, that when dealing with the problem of modifying or changing an individual's race prejudices, we shall have to take into consideration not only his attitudes towards other groups but his attitude towards his own group as well.

Before finally disposing of this important topic dealing with the part played by the individual's group membership in conditioning his race prejudices, there are just two more implications that appear to merit a brief mention because of their particular relevance to our theme. The one is that it explains why, to the individual himself, his prejudices appear to be quite normal and natural since they are shared in common with all, or, at any rate, with a great majority of the other members of his own group. If, as I think can ultimately be shown to be the case, every form, or very nearly every form, of group prejudice, including, of course, race prejudice, turns out to be a pathological phenomenon, a form of group neurosis, it will naturally not appear to be such to the individual members of the group themselves. Where all are more or less abnormal, when judged by a universal criterion, there abnormality itself, when judged by any particular, subjective group criterion, becomes a normal state of affairs within the group. The other implication is that race and other group prejudices are a cultural phenomenon, by which I mean that they have been acquired over a period of time and hence have a history behind them, that they are shared in common by all the members of the group, that they are indoctrinated or communicated, often at an early age, by the processes of imitation, sympathy, and suggestibility within the group, that they are socially approved of and enforced by social sanctions, and that, finally, any departure from them on the part of any individual member will give rise to inter-individual as well as intra-individual conflicts.

There are, no doubt, other implications that follow from the fact that every race prejudice is a group phenomenon or that it is a function of the individual's membership of a particular group. But for our present purpose, it is the general conclusion rather than the details of the analysis that I would like you to bear in mind; and that general conclusion is that,

if we are to understand why the individual thinks and feels the way he does about groups other than his own, we can only do so in terms of his relations and attitudes towards his own group, and towards the other members of his own group. We must learn to think *group psychologically* about the individual by relating his attitudes and behaviour to the field provided by the group to which he belongs. And that applies particularly to a country like South Africa, where to know an individual's race or group affiliation, is to be able to predict a very great deal about his social and political attitudes and behaviour, so far as groups or races other than his own are concerned.

But although race prejudice is always and everywhere a function of group membership, such membership, although a necessary, is not, by itself, a sufficient condition. What we also require is an awareness on the part of the individual of the differences that exist between his own and other groups. For once the individual becomes aware of these group differences, then, and only then, does he become group or race conscious; and we have, arising in the field of the individual, that fundamental distinction between the in-group, his own group, the we-group, the group with which he has identified himself, or *ons mense*, on the one hand, and the out-group, the alien group, the others-group, the group of those who don't belong, or who are *uitlanders*, on the other. It does seem that this distinction between in-group and out-group is quite universal, that it will never wholly disappear, and that it provides the matrix within which every kind of group prejudice of which we know develops. I myself do not see how it can be otherwise since, so long as mankind is differentiated into groups of various kinds—national, religious, ethnic-cultural or racial, class, sex, and so on—it will always be the case that the individual will grow up as a member of a particular group, that he will feel himself to be more at home in some one group rather than in some other, that he will identify himself with his own group to such an extent that his group membership will become a part of his total self or personality, and that sooner or later he will develop a sense of group-belongingness and with it a sense of group-exclusiveness, based upon his awareness of the distinction between his own and other groups, or between the in-group and the out-group or out-groups.

I cannot do better, in bringing these points to life, than by quoting the following extract from a letter written in the sixteenth

century by a scholarly Chinese gentleman to his son, giving his impressions of the members of a Jesuit mission that had been sent to China from the West. This is what he has to say of these Jesuit priests, who were among the most highly trained and educated men of their time:

*These Ocean Men, as they are called, are tall beasts with deep sunken eyes and beak-like noses. The lower part of their faces, the backs of their hands, and, I understand, their entire bodies are covered with a mat of curly hair, much as are the monkeys of the southern forests. But the strangest thing about them is that, although undoubtedly men, they seem to possess none of the mental faculties of men. The most bestial of peasants is far more human, although these Ocean Men go from place to place with the self-reliance of a man of scholarship and are in some respects exceedingly clever. It is quite possible that they are susceptible to training [this of Jesuit priests!] and could with patience be taught the modes of conduct proper to a human being.\**

That this very characteristic attitude of a member of the in-group (of which the Chinese version merely serves as a more than usually vivid illustration) towards the Western outsider as a member of a particular out-group, apparently still persists in this society, although at a lower class level, and that it may evoke quite marked emotional reactions, is shown by the following extract which I take from Pearl Buck's novel, *The Good Earth*. Mrs Buck, I understand, knows her Chinese peasants, so that her description of the effects upon a Chinese peasant of his first sight of a missionary, this time an American missionary, may possibly be taken at its face value.

*This man [the missionary] had eyes as blue as ice and a hairy face and when he gave the paper to Wang Lung, it was seen that his hands were also hairy and red-skinned. He had, moreover, a great nose projecting beyond his cheeks like a prow beyond the sides of a ship and Wang Lung, although frightened to take anything from his hand, was more frightened to refuse, seeing the man's strange eyes and fearful face.*

Coming nearer home, I would like to quote the following two extracts since they show at what an early age the distinction

\*The translated extract appears in *Social Psychology*, first edition, by LaPiere, R. T., and Farnsworth, P. R., chapter XII, page 261, published by the McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., in 1936.

between in-group and out-group begins to crystallize in the child's mind. Both are from documents in my possession. The first, by a young Basotho, reads as follows:

*I was born in the heart of Basutoland and grew up under tribal influences far from European influences. I did not know any member of other races because the population was a hundred per cent. homogeneous. I heard that there were some people called Europeans who had white skin, and long hair and blue eyes. I could not imagine them at all.*

The second, by a young Xhosa woman, reads as follows:

*Our family was growing rapidly and in addition to this responsibility my mother had to work on the lands, fetch wood and do all the many house duties that she had to do as an African woman. So I had to go to school with my sisters even before I was four years of age. I also began church going at a very early age and it is through the church that I first met an English speaking person who was our minister. Just a stone throw from my home was a shop that belonged to another English speaking man. Both these men were kind, and got along well with the community. Although I liked these people, yet I feared them because they had a different colour from us and to me it was always a mystery as to where they came from. One thing that was clear was that they did not belong to us, that they were different to us in everything and I developed a sense of inferiority.*

This ethnocentricity or group centripetalism, which finds expression in the way in which the attitudes of its members are polarized upon the in-group, only serves to show once again the extent to which the attitudes of the individual towards the out-group, or what we have called his group prejudices, are correlated with his attitudes towards the in-group. The two kinds of attitude are, in fact, in constant dynamic interaction with one another within the individual. Thus the more closely an individual becomes attached to, or identifies himself with, his own group, the more likely is he to become negatively conditioned or unfavourably disposed towards, and, therefore, prejudiced against, the out-group. The more he becomes convinced of the superiority of his own group, the more he tends to regard, or look down upon, the out-group as inferior, to despise its members and to treat them with contempt. While the manners, customs, values and ideals of the in-group appear to him to be intrinsically good and proper since they constitute the content of the group culture with which he has been



indoctrinated from infancy onwards, the same variables, when they appear in a different guise in an out-group culture, strike him as funny, odd, strange, foreign, absurd, or just downright wrong and wicked. While towards other members of his group, he is, or tends to be, imitative, suggestible, and sympathetic, since these are the ways by which he can identify himself more intimately with the in-group and learn to act, think, and feel like his fellow-members; towards those who are members of the out-group he is, or tends to be, non-imitative, contra-suggestible and unsympathetic. In this connection, some of us may be able to recall the differences in our emotional reactions to the bombing of British towns and cities and the sufferings of British women and children as compared with the bombing of German towns and cities and the comparable sufferings of their women and children; or the difference in our reactions to propaganda emanating from our own side during the war as compared with enemy propaganda. Again, while the individual tends to treat the other members of his own group as individual personalities like himself, those who belong to the out-group are treated merely as representatives of their group, as so many duplications of the out-group stereotype or copies of the ready-made picture, usually of an unfavourable kind, which we carry round in our minds of what members of the out-group are like. Anyone belonging to the out-group, who cannot readily be fitted into the group stereotype, is, of course, an exception or not true to type.

A trivial example of this phenomenon of group stereotyping can be observed daily in the kind of remark which every male driver of a motor-car is almost certain to make at some time or other (in our culture) when some woman driver in his field has been unfortunate enough to commit some error in driving, namely, *How typical of a woman*, or *Just like a woman*. Needless to say, when the same error is made by one of his own sex, you will never find the same individual saying *How typical of a man*, since, after all, he is a man himself and you can hardly expect him to cast aspersions upon his own sex-group and so, in an indirect way, upon himself. This kind of thing is amusing enough but it does point to the existence of a latent group or sex prejudice on the part of men against women, and, therefore, of an in-group *versus* out-group distinction between the two sexes which probably exists in most cultures but which we need not take too much to heart since it is constantly being over-

ridden by other, more potent, factors. It does not preclude, for example, the most friendly, I might almost say, the most intimate, relations being established between members of the two sexes in their individual or personal capacity, while it illustrates once again the point that we had made earlier on, namely, that we must distinguish between the individual's attitudes and behaviour in his individual or personal capacity and that same individual's attitudes and behaviour in his capacity as a member of a group, since the two roles are not only divergent but may actually contradict one another.

But this stereotyping of out-groups becomes a much more formidable expression of group prejudice and of group hostility when it leads to a savage caricature of an out-group such that any kind of treatment, however inhumane, of the members of such a group appears justifiable or, at any rate, excusable in the eyes of members of the in-group. I need only remind you here of the use made by the Nazis—as illustrated, for example, by the writings of such a wretch as Streicher—of their obscene caricature of the Jew. The existence of this kind of pathological phenomenon, of which we ourselves in this country are by no means guiltless, and against which we should be constantly on our guard if we are to follow the path of reason and not fall victims to our group prejudices, seems to suggest that there are deeper and more sinister forces at work within the individual as a member of a group, than any that we have hitherto had occasion to touch upon in the course of our discussion. It may be that it is these forces that play the crucial part in giving rise to, and maintaining, that distinction between in-group and out-group, of which we have made so much in the course of our analysis of the conditions that give rise to group prejudice. If that should turn out to be the case, then we may be obliged to conclude that an individual's group prejudices, and particularly his race prejudices, serve to provide him with disguised forms of expression and of gratification for impulses that he himself might be the first to repudiate if he were to become fully conscious of their real nature. We have already had occasion to see how the out-group may become an object of hostility and how, in the form of a scapegoat, it may serve to provide the opportunity for the discharge of anti-social tendencies within the individual. Thus the existence of an out-group scapegoat provides the excuse for the individual to indulge or gratify his primitive impulses in ways which are socially approved of but



which would be regarded as abnormal if they were directed upon other members of his own group. But, in this case, the abnormality of an impulse can scarcely be treated as if it were simply a question of the choice of object—for the impulse remains the same irrespective of its direction or the object on to which it happens to be discharged. It would seem, therefore, that the abnormality of a race prejudice (and from now on we shall confine our discussion exclusively to the case of race prejudices) must be sought for by going more deeply into the origin and nature of the impulses themselves for which it provides gratification.

For this purpose, we may find it useful to turn to the discoveries made by psychoanalysis which, as a form of depth psychology, has made a special study of those obscure and, to the individual himself, usually unconscious tendencies and impulses that find expression in indirect and disguised fashion in his behaviour. In so doing, however, we shall do well to bear in mind that we are dealing here, not with the abstract individual of conventional psychoanalysis functioning in a kind of cultural vacuum, but with the individual in a concrete cultural setting and exposed to all the stresses and strains of a patriarchal or authoritarian, repressive and competitive type of culture such as we enjoy. It is coming to be more and more widely recognised both by students of personality as well as by students of culture, that there is a very close and dynamic relation between the type of personality, including personality traits and social attitudes, and the type of culture in which the individual personality develops; and that, over and above the specific constituents of personality, partly innate and partly acquired, which vary from individual to individual, there is also a recognizable pattern, a kind of basic personality structure which is culturally conditioned and, therefore, common to all the members of a particular culture. If this is so, and it probably is so, then it would follow that our race prejudices, as a part of our total personality, are culturally conditioned not merely in the sense that they form part of the social heritage of the group, but in a deeper sense that they are one of the ways in which the culture of the group finds dynamic expression in the individual personality. In that case, it would seem that race prejudices, like wars and other forms of group hostility, are endemic in our kind of society and could only be finally eradicated, not by pious exhortations and appeals to the *Four*

*Freedoms*, but by drastic changes in every one of its major, inter-locking cultural institutions, such as its family and educational systems, its economic system, and its religious system. This very interesting hypothesis might help to explain the dictum (whose author, unfortunately, I do not know) that while *matriarchal societies are pagan, unimperialistic and happy* [and presumably, let us hope for the sake of the hypothesis, relatively-free from race and other group prejudices], *patriarchal societies, which Freud discusses exclusively, are puritan, predatory and guilt-ridden* [and, therefore, infested with race and other group prejudices].

I wish to lay emphasis upon the *therefore* as the operative word in what I have just said since we are assuming that there exists a causal relation between the individual's race prejudices and the kind of basic training which he receives, first as a child in the family, and which is later developed, concordantly as well as discordantly, by the other institutions in our culture. It is a training in which one of the main accents, if not the main accent, is laid upon what in our culture are regarded as the virtues of repression, renunciation, self-denial, the development of a keen sense of duty and loyalty to the group and its *mores*, combined with the incongruous jungle ethics of self-expression and self-assertion and the pursuit of power and prestige in a fierce, competitive, cut-throat social, political, and economic system. It is not surprising that the products of such a culture should suffer from the contradictions inherent in what has been called, by one serious student of the subject, a *deceitful and suppressive culture*; or that what may be succinctly described as *the lie in the soul* of the culture should find expression in ambiguous and discordant attitudes and behaviour on the part of its individual personalities. Listen to this *cri de coeur* from one disillusioned soul who, appropriately enough, presents us with yet another version of the American dilemma which should be as familiar to us at first-hand as that other version described in such detail by Gunnar Myrdal. The excerpts which I quote are from an article appearing in the student newspaper of the University of California, at Los Angeles, and are written by a twenty-two-year-old ex-army student.

*The educational system of America is failing the youth of America! It is fashioning sparrows and pushing them out to compete with hawks. Why on earth should we be taught this foolishness about honesty, truth and fair play?*

*If a student is majoring in law, he should be taught not only the laws but the most approved methods of finding the loopholes. If he is to be a doctor, he should not only learn medicine but how to milk the largest fees. If an engineer, how to construct with the cheapest of materials. If a journalist, how to slant, alter, lie. In the securities field—the different methods of watering stock and duping the suckers—*

*Let us get up petitions to remove these namby-pamby professors stumbling on their White Horse Truth, and get some good hard-headed businessmen in our colleges to teach us what we have to know to become a success.*

Should you wonder what the relevance of all this is to our theme of race prejudice, then I suggest that you should seriously consider the possibility that the basic personality structure through which our culture finds its most concrete expression, provides a fertile soil within the individual for the growth of race prejudices, as we know them in our society. For in every individual personality, however great the individual differences may be in such variables as temperament, intelligence, the vicissitudes of past personal experience, especially in the early years, and the rest, there are bound to be engendered, to a greater or less degree, by the very nature of a common cultural impact, certain common states of repression and frustration, certain common feelings of anxiety and aggression, certain common feelings of guilt and insecurity, that have been so fruitfully investigated by psychoanalysts in particular, and which find their most characteristic expression in that typical representative of our culture, so aptly described by Karen Horney as *the neurotic personality of our time*.

If these things are in our kind of culture, then he who runs may read what the consequences are likely to be so far as the race attitudes of its members are concerned. For, in the first place, we may expect to find that for many such individuals their inner mental conflicts and frustrations of subjective origin may readily come to be converted into, or reinforce, external conflicts between in-group and out-group. We all know the individual who is always looking for trouble and who is bound to find sooner or later what he is looking for. Such a one may be an unmitigated nuisance within his own group until he can work off his frustrations and grievances at the expense of the out-group with whom he can fight, argue and quarrel to his heart's content without running the risk of forfeiting the sym-

pathy, or incurring the antipathy, of his fellow members. To such an individual his race prejudices become a means by which he can avoid, or at least compensate for, severe social maladjustment; and they may even serve as a substitute for a neurotic collapse since, unless he were to succumb to his race hatreds, he would fall ill or succumb to a personal neurosis. Such men are dangerous since they personify trends that are immanent in our culture and for that reason, through the operation of sympathy and suggestibility, they may gain widespread support from others in their own cultural group in whom similar tendencies would otherwise never have reached the level of conscious thought and action. Such men may prove to be, as we have had occasion to see in recent years, the midwives of a dreadful brood of race prejudices since racial fanaticism, like religious or any other kind of fanaticism whose driving force is a kind of pathological hate, can only flourish or secure mass support where both the inner, or psychologically more subjective, conditions, as well as the outer, or culturally more objective, conditions, are alike favourable. In the second place, we may expect to find that those individuals in whom there are strongly marked tendencies both to love and to hate the same object, may succeed in overcoming their psychological dilemma by displacing their hostile impulses and attitudes on to the out-group. Thus we do seem to find individuals in whom love for their own group or for their own country appears to be intimately bound up with hostility towards some other group or some other country; or who appear to be as emotionally dependent upon the object of their hate as they are upon the object of their love. Wherever this is the case, it would seem that the in-group and out-group really represent incompatible elements in a single object that originally evoked conflicting or ambivalent responses of a positive and negative kind, but which has since been split into a *good* part identified with the in-group and a *bad* part identified with the out-group. Wherever we find that the devotion to the one group is as blind and uncritical as the antipathy towards the other, or that idealization of the one is regularly associated with denigration, or, as one dusky son of Mother India recently put it, with *blackening the face* of the other, we have reason to suspect the existence of strong ambivalent tendencies within the individual. In the third place, we may expect to find yet another source of our race prejudices revealed by those individual personalities

in whom there exist strongly marked sadistic tendencies which find gratification in inflicting pain, or suffering, or humiliation, or some form or other of punishment. The objects, I might even call them the victims, of these tendencies may be, and in fact usually are, their own selves. We are all familiar with the type of individual who is over-meticulous, over-conscientious, over-scrupulous and over-fearful of the consequences of his acts; who is wedded to duty and to principle and has a conscience in which he takes a proper pride; who is, in fact, a most valuable type of individual in our society and a typical product of our kind of culture. But this type of individual may also express his tendencies in a less happy or more sinister way, for he may gratify them by inflicting pain and suffering on others; and once more it is the out-group that may provide the most convenient, though by no means the only, substitute. I am inclined to believe that the alleged indifference with which many of us contemplate the sufferings, or the misfortunes, or the injustices inflicted upon those who belong to an out-group or a group other than our own, may in some cases be only a mask that hides the gratification of deeply repressed tendencies at the expense not of our own self or of other selves like our own, that is, members of our in-group, but of quite different selves, that is, members of the out-group, to whom, as a consequence, we appear *callous, remorseless and cruel*. Of the more overt and active forms in which race prejudices may provide gratification for these sadistic tendencies, it is not necessary to speak, since we have had only too many examples of them in recent years.

It is not necessary to continue this exploration of, or, if you like, speculation about, the psychopathology of race prejudice. But if there is one conclusion that emerges from this quite tentative and flagrantly incomplete survey, it is that the out-group plays an enormously significant role, probably in all cultures and certainly in our own. For in so many ways does its existence provide an opportunity for the development of every possible nuance and gradation in race prejudice, that it is not the presence but the absence of such prejudice that would constitute an insoluble problem. It is also quite clear that race prejudices cannot be accounted for merely in terms of some single factor, or even some single set of factors, psychological or cultural. And this is particularly true when we bear in mind that the determining factors become even more obscure and

involved when it is a question of dealing with race prejudice in the form of colour prejudice. How they operate in this special case, I have already tried to show at some length in *Race Attitudes in South Africa*; and I do not propose to inflict the results on you here to-night. But whatever the skin colour of the out-group, the basic factors in a psychological sense remain the same, since it is always the out-group which, in our kind of society, will provide the object on to which can be displaced and projected those impulses or conflicts of impulses which, with all their permutations and combinations, are the sources of neurosis in the typical personality of our time. Again, I do not wish to suggest that we are all equally neurotic—some of us, in fact, may be comparatively normal when judged by our own group standards. But it is the neurotic personalities who set the pace; for it is they who tend to evoke, in one way or another and to a greater or less degree, in others of their own group who belong to the same basic personality type, the same kind of race prejudices by means of which they express their personality make-up. This may be a good thing or a bad thing, according to our own particular personality make-up and our own particular prejudices and partialities. But it does explain why, in extreme cases, such individuals will cling to their race prejudices with all the fervour of a fanatic; and why, if patriotism is, as Dr Johnson observed in his time, the last refuge of the scoundrel, racialism is, as we can observe in our time, the last refuge not merely of the scoundrel but of the neurotic as well!

## II

Let us now turn to consider the problem of group conflicts with which, as the title of this lecture suggests, race prejudice is closely associated. And for that purpose, let us confine ourselves, in the first instance, to the social situation as we find it existing in our own country at the present time. When we do so, the first thing that strikes us is the extraordinary diversity of well-defined groups in the social-psychological sense, as well as the extraordinarily complicated pattern of inter-relations that has been established between these groups of which, for our purpose, we can distinguish the following, namely, Afrikaans-speaking, English-speaking and Jewish, on the one hand, and Bantu, Cape Coloured, and Indian, on the other. There are, no doubt, other classifications that suggest themselves; but,



from the point of view of the study of the relation between group conflicts and race prejudice, they are not likely to be of any particular interest or value.

When we contemplate this contemporary multi-racial society with its manifold of social, political, and economic problems, we do well to remind ourselves that a multi-racial society has always been a feature of this country since shortly after the arrival of the European at the Cape in the middle of the seventeenth century. In the last decade of that century, for example, we find within the Cape settlement of those days an even greater *melange* of polyethnic and polychromatic, not to speak of polyglot, elements than we have to-day in the Union. Although on a microcosmic scale compared with the present time and territorially confined by the *great African mountains* of the Western Province, we find in the society of that time such distinct groups as the Company officials and servants, the free European burghers of the town and countryside (among the latter being the recently arrived French-speaking Huguenots who for some time formed a distinct group of their own and between whom and their Dutch-speaking neighbours there was very little love lost), the free Blacks, some of whom were designated in contemporary documents as *black free burghers*, the slaves, the half-breeds, and the Hottentots, both tribal and detribalized.

Looking back from the middle of the twentieth century on to that society and bearing in mind how utterly different it all was to what we know to-day—the inhabitants of those days, for example, being in the happy state of having virtually no history behind them—we are struck by two things. The first is the much greater fluidity of the society, together with its much greater tolerance for differences in race and colour as compared with what we know to-day. And the second is the very great importance attached to the profession of Christianity and the way in which religion served as the basis of the distinction between in-group and out-group. This difference in outlook and attitude on matters racial between the two societies is brought home to us even more vividly when we recall how in 1685 the humane and liberal-minded High Commissioner van Rheede, who was deeply concerned about the welfare of all the inhabitants of the Cape settlement, irrespective of their race, colour, or creed, had expressed the view in an official document, after a very thorough investigation of affairs at the

Cape, that the whole country, together with its cultivation, might in time be handed over to its coloured population, the offspring of slave mothers by European fathers; or to quote his exact words, *om met den tyd het geheele land, en ackerwerck aan deselve over te geven, want in deze landen gebooren, by dien dienst opgetoogen, hebbende verstand en lighamelyke sterkte genoeg en soude d'Ed<sup>e</sup> Comp<sup>ie</sup> geen beter onderdanen mogen hebben*—

Since there exists in this country no school of genuine social historians, as distinct from group propagandists, to whom we can turn for guidance in these matters, we shall have to content ourselves with merely noting the fact that, as compared with the society of those days, the multi-racial society in which we live to-day has congealed into a colour-caste system consisting of an upper White caste and a lower Black caste. This kind of social system, which has been in existence since at least the end of the eighteenth century, is characterized by its emphasis upon differences in skin-colour as the basis for the distinction between in-group and out-group. Although there are group differentiations within each caste, which are the source of race prejudices displayed by members of the Afrikaans-speaking, English-speaking, and Jewish groups, and by members of the Bantu, Cape Coloured, and Indian groups, towards the other groups within their respective castes, over-riding all these intra-caste distinctions is the colour distinction that bisects the whole of our multi-racial society.

The concept of caste has, of course, long been familiar to Western European society in its classical form as illustrated by the Hindu caste society of India. But it has only recently come into use for the purpose of describing or analysing societies, such as our own, outside the sub-continent. It is true that in our own country we find John Philip, as long ago as 1824, in a long formal document, entitled *A Defence of the Hottentots*, writing of the *magical power of caste*; and again, in 1841, David Livingstone, in a letter to a friend, describing the racial situation in this country as *like caste in India*. Both these references, however, were probably only meant to be taken in a figurative sense, since neither of the two men in question had had any first-hand experience of caste in India; and it would, no doubt, have proved as great a shock to many of you, as it certainly did to me, when I discovered some years ago that I had been born and bred in what I was assured was a caste society. Apart

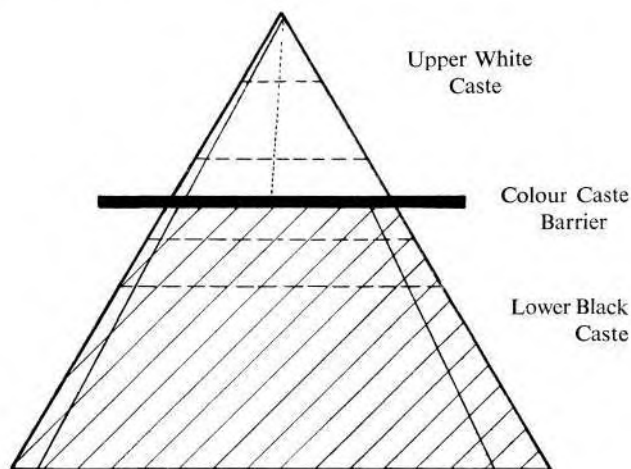


from some quite natural surprise on my part that it had been possible to grow up in such a society without ever being cognisant of that fact, there was the further consideration that a caste society had always been associated in my mind with the iniquities of an utterly alien social system, the main features of which, so I had been conditioned to believe, were an excessively high caste of Brahmins, or the *twice-born*, at the top end, whose main preoccupation in life appeared to be the avoidance of defilement by members of other castes, and a large mass of utterly depressed classes or *Untouchables* at the bottom end, whose whole life as outcasts was a veritable hell on earth. These, together with many other features, mostly of an unfavourable kind, none of which, I must confess, had I ever observed in the society with which I was most familiar, made up the content of my group stereotype of Hindu caste society, which is only of interest in the present context insofar as it exposes one element in a typical group or race prejudice. I have been assured, however, by one very eminent Indian to whom I put the question that, as understood and practised in his country, we are not yet a caste society although, if we continue to develop along our present lines, we might qualify as such in about two thousand years' time! So much for the time perspective of an ancient society compared with which our own, especially in this country, must appear as a thing of the day before yesterday.

I have engaged in this personal digression since I am sure that there are many others who, like myself, have thought and felt in the same confused sort of way about this concept of caste and its applicability to our kind of society. But actually, if we bear in mind (1) the way in which differences in skin colour in this country provide the basis for a cross-sectional stratification of our society; (2) the way in which skin colour and, therefore, group membership is pre-determined by birth; (3) the impermeability of the skin colour barrier which makes vertical mobility from one group to the other in either direction literally impossible; (4) the taboo on inter-marriage or any kind of miscegenation between White and Black; (5) the hierarchical or rank-order pattern of an upper White and a lower Black group; and (6) the unequal distribution of rights and opportunities and of prestige symbols between the two groups, then there can be no doubt that, as determined by these criteria, we most definitely are, if not a caste society in

the orthodox, classical, or Hindu sense of the term, then certainly a colour-caste society.

Let us try to visualize this society by means of the following simple equilateral triangle:



We bisect the triangle by means of a heavy line parallel to the base and drawn in such a way that the apex or upper portion, comprising one-fifth of the total area of the triangle, represents the upper White caste while the base or lower portion, comprising four-fifths of the total area, represents the lower Black caste. Within each of these two caste areas we draw other lines which are very much less conspicuous than the original line of bisection—some parallel to the base line and dividing each caste area into the conventional three-class system of upper, middle, and lower, others sloping in a vertical direction and dividing the upper caste area into Jewish, English-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking groups and the lower caste area into Indian, Bantu, and Cape Coloured groups. All the lines within the triangle represent group barriers and, therefore, serve as the basis of some kind of distinction between in-group and out-group. Increases in status are represented everywhere in the triangle by any movement in an upward direction. In the case of the original heavy line that bisects the whole figure and which represents the colour-caste barrier or *colour-bar*,

we find maximum impermeability since no element can cross this barrier from one caste area to the other; in other words, the colour-caste system is a *closed* system. In the case of the other lines representing barriers within each caste area we may have varying degrees of permeability, according to the amount of resistance offered to crossing over. Thus, for example, the lines representing class distinctions within each caste can be relatively easily crossed since the class system, unlike the colour-caste system, is an *open* system. And again, the line representing the distinction between Afrikaans-speaking and English-speaking groups can be more easily crossed than the line representing the distinction between Jew and Gentile, and so on.

If we bear this figure in mind, then we should be in a better position to appreciate the relation between group conflicts and race prejudice. Though the figure may appear static, the social reality which it represents is dynamic enough, since the most conspicuous feature of this colour-caste, multi-racial society is the domination exercised by a *minority* of Whites over a *majority* of Blacks. Actually, in terms of power, of status, and of social, political, and economic privileges, the Whites must be treated as a majority group and the Blacks as a minority group since it is the White colour-caste group that exercises superior power, enjoys higher status, and monopolises the social, political, and economic privileges in the community. The techniques of domination employed by the majority group in the political, educational, economic, social, and sexual fields, have been analysed and described in detail by Hoernlé in one of his Phelps-Stokes Lectures, delivered in this very hall in May 1939 and published in book form under the title of *South African Native Policy and the Liberal Spirit*; and anyone who is interested in the topic of this lecture should certainly make a point of reading that book and particularly its first chapter. But what concerns us at the present time from the point of view of our problem, is the social situation created by the fact that in our colour-caste society, *domination by the upper caste has evoked not submission but resistance on the part of the dominated caste, that the skin-colour or caste barrier has become a boundary line of contention between conflicting groups, and that the distinction between in-group and out-group has given rise to a state of tension or disequilibrium in the social field.* It is this dynamic situation created by pressure (in the form of domination on the part of the upper caste) and counter-pressure (in the form of resistance

to such domination on the part of the lower caste), that constitutes the essence of the group conflict situation between the in-group and the out-group; and that brings into play or aggravates the race prejudices on both sides of the barrier. All the other barriers within our triangle are in the same way associated with similar kinds of conflict situations between in-group and out-group which have precipitated similar kinds of group prejudice in the form of class prejudices, reciprocal race prejudices between Afrikaans-speaking, English-speaking and Jewish groups and reciprocal race prejudices between Bantu, Cape Coloured, and Indian groups. But all these prejudices in a colour-caste society are secondary prejudices (with the possible exception of anti-Semitism which is more of a world phenomenon than a purely local phenomenon), as compared with the primary race or colour or caste prejudices between White and Black. In such a society, it is the caste group conflict between White and Black that overshadows all other group conflicts and which mobilizes the individual's strongest partialities or attitudes *for* his own group as well as his strongest prejudices or attitudes *against* the others-group or out-group, according to his skin colour.

If we follow this clue in analysing the relation between group conflicts and race prejudice, then it becomes clear that race prejudices are, besides being many other things, also a form of defence mechanism by means of which the individual members strive to protect or defend the interests of the group with which they have most closely identified themselves, against the threats of an alien group or out-group. If they are members of an upper or dominating caste group, then, as in our society, they will regard the reaction to domination in the form of resistance or a refusal to submit by members of the lower or dominated caste, as a threat to the *status quo*, to their own security as a dominating group, to their own power and prestige and the enjoyment of the privileges of a ruling caste. If they are members of a lower or dominated caste group, then, as in our society, they will regard domination by members of the upper caste as a threat to their legitimate aspirations, as a form of discrimination, exploitation, and oppression, as an attempt to keep them in a permanent position of inferiority and subjection, and to deny them the opportunities for an improvement in status whether in the social, the political, or the economic field.

This apparently hopeless deadlock situation with its attendant race prejudices in which our colour-caste society in South Africa finds itself to-day, has a close parallel existing in the Southern States of America, where race antagonisms in the form of colour prejudices on both sides of the caste barrier appear to be as virulent as in our own country, and for very much the same reasons. It might repay us, therefore, in trying to arrive at a fuller understanding of our racial problem, if we were to dwell for a moment, before concluding this lecture, upon a comparison between the racial situations in the two countries. I should mention at the outset that I have no first-hand knowledge of the colour-caste society in the Southern States, with which we are alone concerned for the purpose of this comparison. But I have had occasion from time to time, in connection with my particular interest in our own racial problem, to consult some of the relevant literature published on the same topic in the United States and I have been impressed, as everyone else must be who knows anything about it, by the very high quality and value of the work. When it is a question of the scientific study of the problems arising out of race contacts and race relations in contemporary society, we certainly have much to learn from American scholars and scientists, just as they, too, although they do not appear to realize it, may have something to learn from us.

However close the parallel may be between the racial situations in the two countries, we must not be misled, of course, by the obvious resemblance between the racial patterns, into overlooking the differences between the colour-caste societies in the Southern States and in the Union. And, for my purpose, it is the differences rather than the similarities between the two social systems that I wish to emphasize in this comparison. In the first place, there is the very marked difference in the relative numbers of the castes in the two countries. While in the whole of the United States the American Negro only numbers one in ten of the total population, in the Union the European only numbers one in five of the total population. It is true that in some of the Southern States the Negro population forms a numerical majority; but even in such States the disparity between White and Black is not nearly as great as in our own country. Thus, although the Whites may be outnumbered in a particular State, they always know that in the country as a whole they form part of an overwhelming numerical majority.

In the second place, the history of the past racial contacts between the two caste groups is quite different in the two countries. While in the Southern States the Negroes are all the descendants of slaves who were imported into the country from West and Central Africa and emancipated less than a century ago, in this country the Bantu are indigenous to the soil and have no background of slavery behind them. Their caste status has been forced upon them by war and conquest, and before the arrival of the European they were, in a sense, a free people only subject to their own tribal systems of government and to the vicissitudes of tribal warfare, which were, often enough, very grim. In the third place, the American Negroes have no culture of their own, since such remnants of their culture as are alleged to have survived in their new environment in America are of quite negligible importance compared with the European, or American-European, culture to which they have become assimilated. In this country, on the other hand, the Bantu have a characteristic culture and folk ways of their own which owe nothing to the influence of European culture; they have their own social heritage, their own traditions; above all, their own languages, and even the beginnings of their own literature. Quite a number of the Bantu have, of course, assimilated European culture, as represented by the European in this country, and more will continue to do so. But while the Negro is, or can only become, an American in a black instead of a white skin, in this country the Bantu, taken by and large, are not, and never will become, culturally speaking, merely black-skinned Europeans. Their own cultural roots are too strongly entrenched for anything like that to happen; and even if they were all, as the saying goes, to absorb European culture (and that is not likely to happen, in any case, for a very long time), they would only do so in a way that reflected their own cultural background. In the fourth place, the Negro who finds his position in the colour-caste system of the Southern States irksome or intolerable, can always move freely and without any kind of legal restriction to some other part of the vast area of the United States. If he moves to any of the Northern States, for example, he finds himself much less subject to colour discrimination and he, or his children, will have the opportunity of reaching a higher and more secure status. In this country, on the other hand, the man of colour has no such avenue of escape unless



it be from the countryside to the town; his freedom of movement is restricted, he must carry a pass if he is a Native, and to whatever part of the country he goes, large as it is, he finds the colour-caste system in operation with very much the same rigour so far as the colour barrier or colour bar is concerned and with very much the same results so far as his own status, or that of his children, is concerned.

Now what are the effects of these differences (and there are many more that could be mentioned had we the time to do so) likely to be upon the race attitudes of both White and Black in this country, since *a difference that makes no difference is no difference*? Putting it very briefly, they are likely to give rise to greater feelings of insecurity on the part of members of the upper caste because of the far greater numerical preponderance of the lower caste. There has always been, as a matter of historical fact, a tradition of insecurity among the Europeans which has tended to wax and wane according to the vicissitudes of race contacts. But, unlike his Southern counterpart, the European in this country cannot reassure himself by making comparisons on a continental scale. If anything, such comparisons, especially in the light of recent events, are only likely to increase his feelings of insecurity about the future prospects of the European community, apparently isolated at this southern end of the African continent. We are likely, therefore, to hear a good deal more in the future than we have already heard in the past, about the *black* menace to a *white* civilization or, translated into our terminology, about the increased tension in a colour-caste society brought about by reaction to domination. On the other hand, with regard to the effects of the differences between the two colour-caste societies upon the race attitudes of members of the lower caste, we find that the Bantu in particular are able to rely upon psychological resources that are not available to the Negro in the Southern States. The nature of these resources becomes apparent from the following summary of a group interview with a number of educated Bantu in which it was pointed out to me: that the African people knew that they had been a free people before the white man came to this country; that they had never been slaves but had always been a free people. The African people had fought the white man and had not tamely submitted. There was a tradition of fighting and though they had been beaten by superior weapons, they could still continue

to fight by other methods. The Africans had, and still have, their own culture as distinct from the culture of the Europeans as well as their own tribal traditions, in which they could take a pride. And, finally, the native inhabitants of the British Protectorates and of the territories to the north were not discriminated against or dominated in the same way as the native inhabitants of the Union, and why should not all natives be treated in the same way?

These, as well as other differences between the colour-caste societies in the two countries, do, therefore, make a profound difference to the racial situation by which the upper caste in this country is confronted. That it is a situation in which some change must take place if the mounting tension inherent in the social system, which is as packed with jarring racial elements and as racked by inner contradictions and frustrations as any in the world, is not to lead to a crisis or breakdown in the system itself, is, I think, becoming more widely recognised by all who have tried to deal with our so-called Native problem in a realistic way. For, in the last resort, as I have tried to show, the real Native problem is, in terms of the underlying psychological realities, a problem in the mind of the white man since it is the problem created and constituted by the race attitudes and colour prejudices or, in other words, by the caste attitudes, of the members of an upper caste in a colour-caste society. If the rigidity of these caste attitudes, for example, were to be relaxed to any extent, then one of the main obstacles to an improvement in the racial situation would have been removed.

It is not part of my job, as I have already said, to suggest solutions; and in any case what can a namby-pamby professor stumbling along on his White Horse Truth do in the matter in our kind of culture? But it seems clear to me, in the light of our analysis, that no proposed solution will bring any relief that does not bring about some change in the way in which our multi-racial society is at present bisected by the skin-colour or caste barrier. I do not consider that it is either desirable or necessary or practicable to abolish this caste barrier. On the contrary. But it should be possible, and I certainly think it is both desirable and necessary, to permit a substantial improvement in the opportunities and status of members of the lower caste. You may recall that in that triangle that I asked you to visualize, the existing colour-caste barrier was



represented by a heavy line bisecting the figure and drawn *parallel* to the base line. What I am proposing as a *sine qua non* of any successful solution is that this line, while continuing to bisect the figure, will be allowed to tilt upwards towards one end. In practice, this means that the qualified or educated or civilized non-European, whether African, Cape Coloured, or Indian, who enjoys a superior class status in his own caste, will not forever be treated, from the cradle to the grave, as if he were merely a member of an inferior caste, on a par with all its other members and with a status inferior to that of the meanest or lowest class White. For, unless this class of non-European in particular is able to enjoy not only a superior class status within his own caste group but an improved caste status within our multi-racial society as well, there is no hope, so far as I can see, of any real improvement in the racial situation in this country.



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# The Hoernlé Memorial Lectures

The IRR is republishing the text of the Hoernlé Memorial Lectures, a series of talks which started in 1945. The original introductory note to the lecture series reads as follows:

*A lecture, entitled the Hoernlé Memorial Lecture (in memory of the late Professor R. F. Alfred Hoernle), President of the Institute from 1934—1943), will be delivered once a year under the auspices of the South African Institute of Race Relations. An invitation to deliver the lecture will be extended each year to some person having special knowledge and experience of racial problems in Africa or elsewhere.*

*It is hoped that the Hoernlé Memorial Lecture will provide a platform for constructive and helpful contributions to thought and action. While the lecturers will be entirely free to express their own views, which may not be those of the Institute as expressed in its formal decisions, it is hoped that lecturers will be guided by the Institute's declaration of policy that "scientific study and research must be allied with the fullest recognition of the human reactions to changing racial situations; that respectful regard must be paid to the traditions and usages of the various national, racial and tribal groups which comprise the population; and that due account must be taken of opposing views earnestly held."*

## About the IRR

Since 1929, the Institute of Race Relations has advocated for a free, fair, and prospering South Africa. At the heart of this vision lie the fundamental principles of liberty of the individual and equality before the law guaranteeing the freedom of all citizens. The IRR stands for the right of all people to make decisions about their lives without undue political or bureaucratic interference.