CHAPTER I

BRITISH COLONIAL LINKS WITH SOUTH AFRICA.

WHITE SETTLEMENT AT CAPE

No account of a country can be complete without the history of its origin. As far as the Republic of South Africa is concerned, the roots of its origin are outlined below. Since South Africa was formed at a later stage, what first became known to Europe was the Cape of Good Hope. In 1487 the Cape was found as a result of an exploratory voyage undertaken by the Portuguese in search of a sea route to India. The Portuguese came into contact with the Khoi-Khoi people during these voyages. However, the Cape remained relatively neglected till the end of the sixteenth century. ¹ It came to be used as a regular watering place by English and Dutch vessels in the early seventeenth century. In 1620, officers of the English East India company occupied a part of the cape i.e., the Saldhana Bay. This was followed by the setting up of an outpost on the Table Bay at

¹ It remained neglected because the Cape gained an evil reputation in the Portuguese eyes when in 1510 the Viceroy, Francis Co de Almeida, and a number of his companions, returning from India were killed in revenge by the Khoi-Khoi people, because, earlier, the Portuguese had looted them in the course of a foraging expedition from Table Bay. See C.P.Lucas, The History of South Africa (London, Press, 1899), p.10.
the Cape of Good Hope by the Dutch East India Company on 6 April, 1659.

The outpost was supposed to be a stronghold where the Dutch ships might refit and obtain food and water on the long trip to the Indies. The place which was originally planned to serve as a supply post was colonised later on and the Dutch began settling at the Cape and moving further into the interior.²

The Dutch settlers soon discovered that in view of the conditions in the country, cattle farming was more profitable than the cultivation of grain. They occupied large tracts of land for cattle farming and in the process disposed of the Africans who were the original inhabitants of these lands.³


³ According to missionary Dr. Phillip, "Having extensive herd they not only require much pasture, but are not satisfied if they have not different places to resort to at different seasons of year .... Each farmer, living in this manner, instead of a moderate sized farm must have a district for himself .... All they can see they consider their own and when needed, the Natives are obliged to make room for their cattle or children." In W.M. Macmillan, *Bantu, Boer and Britain* (London, 1963), P. 42.
The main sufferers of the Dutch intrusions into the interior were the Khoi-Khoi and the San (Hottentots\(^4\) and Bushmen\(^5\) as called by Europeans). After pushing the Hottentots further into the interiors the Dutch tried to establish their hegemony by making certain hedges as frontier of the occupied areas, but the frontiers were neither respected by the Africans nor by the Europeans.\(^6\)

A significant development occurred during these early years of settlement in the Cape. A certain amount of miscegenation took place between the whites and the Hottentot's and slaves, and between slaves and Hottentots. The offsprings of these union formed the basis of the Coloured community of South Africa.\(^7\)

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4. Hottentots, otherwise known as Khoi-Khoi were a pastoral people owning considerable herds of cattle and also numbers of small stock. Cattle formed the centre of their life and provided basis of personal status. See F.P. Spooner, *South Africa Predicament* (London, 1960), p. 41.

5. The San, the most ancient of Southern Africa's surviving people were called Bushmen by European settlers. The San were a hunting and gathering people who practised no agriculture and kept domestic animals. J.D. Omer-Cooper, *History of Southern Africa* (London, 1987), p. 3.

6. As a modern Historian puts it: 'The Hottentots would not stay out side the hedge, Europeans could not stay within it'. In E.A. Walker, *A History of South Africa* (1957), P. 43.

7. The Coloureds were later known as Griquas, settled to the north of Cape.
The Bushmen, on the other hand, with their inborn aggressiveness and toughness, gave a tough fight to the Dutch settlers who were expanding into the interiors. Cattle raids and attacks on the Burghers by Bushmen led to reprisals of great brutality which had little permanent deterrent effects and the resistance to European settlers continued by the Bushmen.

In the eighteenth century the number of Boers increased and further eastward movement towards Great Fish River started, and there they met resistance from a much more formidable native people known as Bantu. The main Bantu tribes were the Xhosa, the Zulu, the Basuto and the Bechuana.

In the eighteenth century a state of almost continuous war between the various Bantu tribes had produced complicated tribal movements, and it was just when the Xhosas were moving eastwards, that the Boers, in their efforts to expand

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8. Burghers were the company servants who were offered the opportunity to gain release from their contract by taking up plots of lands as free burghers or citizens.

9. Boer were the Dutch farmers who trekked for additional lands or more pastures.

10. Bantu is a generic term applied to a heterogenous group of people speaking languages belonging to a common family.
further and occupy more lands, came into conflict with Xhosas at the Great Fish River, and in 1778 the Dutch government made a treaty with some Xhosa chiefs fixing the great Fish River as the boundary. The treaty could not hold long, and it was violated and the war broke out in the same year. This war is generally known as Kaffir war between the Dutch and Xhosas. Formidable resistance by the Xhosas during 1779 forced the Dutch to agree to sign a peace treaty which recognised the right of Xhosas to their land which was west of the Great Fish River; the Dutch named this areas as Zuurveld. The Boers who were intruding into the interiors to find new pastures in new lands were known as Track Boers. There were other Dutch who were known as burghers, who colonised land for farming after relinquishing their service in the East India company. Generally land given to them was in compensation for their services. All these Dutch colonists were the first people to call themselves Afrikan - a new entity, no longer Dutch, speaking a new language - Afrikaan, a Dutch derivative with great literary potential. According to Harrison M.Wright, "the Afrikaners were a backward, reactionary people addicted to particularly primitive and bigoted form of Calvinism. The Afrikaners, became more racially prejudiced than all other whites, they were particularly more litigious in Dutch tradition, and were
descended from the lowest strata of Dutch emigrants, the kind of people unable to succeed at home".\textsuperscript{11}

According to Leo Marquard, "the Boer was an eternal anachronism who wandered from one century to the next, with his rifle in one hand and the Bible in the other, a man perpetually behind the times, forever cut off from the progress of humanity".\textsuperscript{12} According to Amry Vandenbosch, "The trekboers or the frontiersmen had been removed from the civilising influence for more than three generation and had lived for so long without the law, that they had become law unto themselves and strongly resented any interference with their customs, habits and the way of life, no matter from what quarter. To this day a section of the Afrikaner people, mainly those from the northern provinces of the Republic, differ markedly in character from their relations who remained in the settled districts of the Cape; and it was from among the frontiersmen predominantly that the Boers of the Transvaal and Orange Free State Republics were drawn".\textsuperscript{13}


\textsuperscript{13} Amry Vandenbosch, South Africa and the World (Kentucky, 1970), p.5.
THE BRITISH COLONISATION OF CAPE

During the late eighteenth century Europe was in ferment; France and England were in conflict. In 1795 under a secret treaty with the Dutch, Britain occupied the Cape to forestall the French with whom Holland was then at war—an occupation which changed its character a little later, when the Dutch entered into an alliance with France. The rebellion of certain Dutch colonists together with attacks by the Xhosas, plagued the British during their occupation and in 1803 Cape was handed back to Holland under the treaty of Amiens\(^{14}\) between Great Britain and France. In 1806 when war had broken out again in Europe the British once more occupied the Cape. This time, in view of the growing importance of the Indian Ocean, the British government decided to retain it permanently and this decision was formally conceded by the Dutch in 1814.

\(^{14}\) The treaty between Great Britain and France was a mere truce which was made because of war weariness. Under the treaty Great Britain had to restore the Cape of Good Hope to the Dutch, and the French had to withdraw from Egypt, the Papal States, and Naples. Since Holland was a war ally of France, Britain had to honour the treaty by returning Cape back to the Dutch. See T.R.H. Davenport, *South Africa: A Modern History* (London, 1977), p.29.
The British occupation of the Cape marked the beginning of a racist regime under which the indigenous Africans were deprived of their freedom of mobility and freedom of employment. The laws passed by the British created an institution of forced labour, pass laws, and originated the concept of 'Reserves'.

LABOUR LAWS AND THE KHOI

With a view to control and restrict the movement of the Khoi and get their services to the settler farmers, the British issued a series of regulations. Every Khoi living within the colonial frontiers was required to have a fixed address either with a white employer, or at a recognised mission station. All Khoi wishing to move from one district to another were required to carry a pass from the magistrate.

15. As to the concept of 'Reserves', it refers to 'native reserves' or 'black reserves' which had been contrived to perpetuate blacks as reservoirs of cheap labour for the mines, industries, ports, and farms belonging to the white community. See Ian Robertson and Phillip Whitten, eds., Race and Politics in South Africa (New Jersey, Transaction Books, 1978), p.78. See also Vijay Gupta, "India-South Africa Realitions and the Post-Apartieid Syndrome," Strategic Analysis (New Delhi), vol.15, no.10, January 1993, p.996.
of the district in which they resided.\footnote{16}

By these provisions Khoi within the colony were very closely tied to their white employers. In 1812 Governor John Cradock tightened the bonds still further by ruling that Khoi children who had been born and raised to the age of eight on the employer's farm could be forced to serve the employer for a further ten years. This came to be known as the Apprenticeship Ordinance of 1812.\footnote{17} This ordinance, was certainly a strignent one when compared with the Hottentot Code of 1809. As far as this Code was concerned it provided that every Khoi must have a place of abode. The contract of service must not be more than one year. If not bound by the contract he was free to leave for another registered place after being issued with a pass by local officials. It made the Khoi virtually tied to the European colonists. The Hottentot Code strictly controlled and monitored the mobility of the Africans and tied them to a complex web of laws imposed by the white settlers.

\footnote{16. When Great Britain abolished the Ocean slave trade in 1807, the colonists came to attach greater importance to the free Hottentots or the Khoi as a source of labour. The colonists having deprived the Hottentots of their lands, loudly condemned them as vagrants. Lord Caledon, Governor of the Cape, issued the Pass Ordinance in November 1809 to avail the labour of the Hottentots. See M.S.Geen, \textit{The Making of South Africa} (Cape Town, 1961), p.56.}

\footnote{17. ibid.,}
STRUGGLE FOR THE ZUURVELD

When the British colonised the Cape, the relations between the white settlers and the Xhosas were not smooth. Xhosa raids and cattle thefts occurred frequently, followed by Boer reprisals and encroachments on lands in the possession of Xhosas thereby resulting in constant fighting between them. In 1812, the British adopted an aggressive colonial policy. It violated the earlier agreement between Xhosas and Europeans, occupied Zuurveld and expelled the Xhosas from their own land by pushing them across the Great Fish River. The use of British troops thus altered the balance of power on the frontier, enabling the white settler society to pursue its expansionist policy, which the Xhosas had checked till then. In 1817 the British signed a new treaty with the Xhosas aiming to deprive them of their land and cattle. The treaty gave birth to the Spoor Law which was shrewdly framed to deprive the Xhosas of their only means of support, the cattle. The British attempted from

18. The effective boundary of the colony was thus moved across the Koonap river; a tributary of the Great Fish River of the east.

19. Here Spoor means track or trail of cattle. Under the Spoor Law the owner of the stolen cattle, accompanied by troops, was allowed to follow the spoor until it reached a Kraal or village and there recapture the stolen cattle or exact compensation in the form of cattle from the Kraal.
time to time to alienate Xhosas from the lands and even to eliminate them physically.\textsuperscript{20}

From various accounts of the implementation of the 1817 agreement and spoor laws, it became clear that the overall policy of the British served the interests of the white settlers. In effect it created a wider divide between Africans and whites because whatever measures were taken under the Spoor laws, they were all against the Xhosas.

The Xhosas soon realized that the spoor laws of the 1817 treaty were against their interests. They continued their opposition to intruding whites and redoubled the attacks on the settlers on Zuurveld. The British also changed their tactics and decided to put Boers against the Xhosas. The Cape authority thought that the best barrier

\textsuperscript{20} The treaty was not balanced, and under the Spoor Law matters did not proceed in a peaceful manner. False claims were often made by the Boers or the responsibility for cattle theft was wrongly fixed and violence often resulted. According to missionary Philip. 'The pretence is the predatory habits of the Caffres stealing the cattle of the colonists. Any lying Boer had only to go to a military post and say he has lost so many cattle. A commando is immediately got up, no affidavit is required, no proof as to the number is said to be stolen..... The first Caffre cattle the commando comes to upon the spoor of the cattle are seized ... if the Caffre resist they are shot dead upon the spot as if they were dogs. On such evidence they have been declared to be a nation of thieves robbed of their cattle their only means of support and from time to time of their country.' n.3., p.101.
against Xhosa attacks could be provided by establishing a buffer community between the Xhosa and the Boers. As Harlow, a well known modern authority puts it, the policy "aimed at the substitution of a strong British Border community for a weak Afrikaner one to put an end to the Kaffir wars for ever". Misuse of Spoor laws by the whites provoked the Xhosas and in retaliation the Xhosas increased the attacks on the white settlers in Zuurveld. And thus started the regular war between Xhosas and the white settlers, known as 1818-1819 Kaffir wars. In order to check the furtherance of these conflicts the British in the aftermath of the Xhosa-European war of 1818-1819, decided to encourage emigration of British to Albany in Zuurveld, Known as Albany settlement. In order to protect the British settlers they entered into another agreement with Xhosas in 1819, under which both sides agreed as equals for a neutral zone between Great Fish River and Kanoop River, not to be occupied by the conflicting parties. But as usual the British violated this agreement and annexed the neutral zone which was allocated to the Boer and British farmers for settlement.


22. Albany was the areas between the Bushmans River and Fish River. n.16, p.78.
This created tremendous bitterness among the Xhosas who were engaged in similar economic activities as whites.

Their main sources of earning was cattle, sheep farming, trade in ivory, gum and hides, the sectors which whites wanted to capture. This created a kind of bitterness among Xhosas which led to a fifteen year long war between Xhosas and the British. The poorly armed, and ill equipped Xhosas were eventually defeated by British forces with the backing of the British empire in 1834. By this act the British occupation was further extended from the Keishkama to the Kei river. This put an end to the Xhosas' brave resistance to colonial expansion. Thereafter the opposition by the Xhosas to the Europeans took different forms. By 1834 the British had succeeded in defeating the Africans and occupying what is today known as Cape Town.

BRITISH MISSIONARIES AND THE AFRICANS

A major development in South African history during the British occupation was the beginning of missionary activities on a large scale. After the initial effort at conversion of slaves and Khoi in the early days of the colony, the evangelist movement lapsed. The view that the slaves who became Christians were entitled to their freedom, led to a strong reluctance to baptise them.
However, early in the nineteenth century missionary activities were intensified among the indigenous people. The European missionaries started settling with the indigenous communities beyond the frontier of the Cape and beyond Orange river in the north, as well as among the Xhosas along the eastern frontier. Here, the objective of the missions was to train the Africans in such a manner whereby they could serve the interests of commercial houses in Britain and Europe. The aim was to evolve a subordinate working class within the white controlled economic system where the converts would yield an increased supply of primary products and would generate an expanding market for European manufactured goods.

The activities of the missions were directed to find within the colonial system, an alternative method to strengthen the imperialist subjugation. For instance, instead of slavery they created a contract labour system which ultimately produced the system of bonded labour and the most hated institution of pass laws. The aim of Missions was to mould the Africans to play a secondary role of a subordinate working class in order to strengthen imperialist subjugation and this they did in the name of humanism and betterment of the Africans.
The Africans who were converted to Christianity had some access to certain modern facilities like education but the authorities practiced discrimination in the degree and form of education which the blacks could acquire. In African schools the manual training occupied a fairly large part of the curriculum of the missionary schools, the training imparted in the mission schools was to prepare attendants and helpers in the tertiary sectors, who could be used for commercial ventures.  

THE GREAT TREK AND THE BRITISH:

Since land-grabbing remained an insatiable appetite of the whites there was a steady northward drift of Boer farmers in the early nineteenth century. But the migration of Boers which began in 1835 was quite different from earlier movements not only in scale, but also in its objectives. It was, in fact, a determined attempt to break away from the control of the British government. In a very detailed study of this subject Eric Walker has pointed out how the policy and aims of the British government ran completely counter to  

the main Boer tradition. In the first place the Boers were sturdy individuals with all the pioneer spirit, and resented a central and remote authority. Secondly, their sense of being entitled to take possession of the wide open spaces conflicted seriously with the government's land policy. The Boers disliked the quit-rent policy, and strongly opposed the new system of putting lands for auction. Thirdly, and perhaps most important of all, they had a superiority complex and a profound contempt alike for Hottentots, Bushmen, the Colored people and the Bantus, which brought them into direct conflict with the aims of the Cape government. Under the pressure of the anti-slave trade movement in Britain, the British in Cape adopted certain liberal measures which were opposed by the Boers. The emancipation of slaves and the inadequacy of compensation paid were repugnant to the interests of the Boers. When the emancipation was followed by Black Circuit, the abolition of pass system and the fiftieth Ordinance, Boers' bitterness

24. n.6.

25. According to the 1820 settler scheme, instead of traditional ranches of 2500 hectare, a person would possess small farms of 40 hectare.

26. In 1811-12, John Cradock, the Governor of Cape responded to complaints sent to London by the missionaries by ordering the Circuit courts to enquire into all cases raised by Khoi against their employers. It aroused resentment among the white settlers who branded these courts as 'Black Circuit'. n.5, p.44.
for the Cape government grew further. The inner compulsion to throw off the shackles of the Cape government was irresistible, particularly since the British were unwilling to take on more responsibility, or give the Boers any real protection against the Bantu.

In their northward drift the Boers clashed with Africans known as Matabele, the Matabele lost to the trekkers their vast areas of land which later became Orange Free State. In 1837 the Boers improvised a form of government in Orange Free State known as United laagers. Another section of the Boers who went on up to the north of the Vaal river, set up a number of virtually independent Republics. Another section of Boers migrated to Natal, where many of them were massacred by the Zulu chief Dingaan who soon reestablished Zulu authority.

The government at Cape was greatly disturbed by these developments, which meant that many of their European subjects, for whom they could not altogether disclaim responsibility, had entered the lands of Zulus and spread out widely into the areas in the face of constant challenge and threat of Zulu retaliation. The Zulu Victory threatened theBrit-

27. Matabele were the pure Zulus. n.15, pp. 97-98.
ish position, and in order to safeguard it, the British attacked Zulus and occupied Natal in 1838. To establish white men supremacy they handed over Natal to Boers for administration. This particular action of the British was a sad reflection of their policy. The Boers got a free hand and introduced segregatory laws and regulations. In order to establish their hegemony, they followed the policy of divide and rule and encouraged one African clan to fight against another.

Disturbance continued till the discovery of coal in Natal. The British ruling from Cape reoccupied Natal in 1842 and finally in 1845 Natal was annexed by the British government at Cape. Since the British were behind all these developments in the Zululand, apparently the British had three main objectives at this point of time. Firstly, to pacify the expansionist demands of the Boers and keep their own control over the new discovery.

Secondly, to avoid direct confrontation of British soldiers with Zulus.

Thirdly, to leave the burden of colonial expansion with the Boers.
From the developments between 1835-42, it was clear that the British succeeded in their colonial objectives. So, in this manner the formidable Zulu power was suppressed in Natal by the whites. Further expansion of the whites continued and many Boers left Natal and went into the new lands of Orange Free State and Transvaal.

This was the grand design of expansionism which was implemented as shrewdly as possible by the British government at the Cape. The British policy intended to use the Boers to advance into the interior and confront the natives, and then subjugate both.

**DISCOVERY OF DIAMONDS AND GOLD AND THE BRITISH**

In 1867 Diamonds were discovered near the Organe river. This was followed by the unearthing of substantial diamond deposits on the bank of the Vaal river. Until the discovery of diamonds and later gold, the British interest remained one of occupying strategic lands and maintaining the security of the sea routes to India.

With the discovery of diamonds and gold (in 1886) the imperial interest in deriving economic benefits from the

precious stones became paramount. The hidden treasure had been found and it had to be extracted and taken to the metropolis. So the British began to divide and use the local actors to achieve control over the vast natural wealth of South Africa. In 1868 the Griqua chief Waterboer claimed the territory known as Griqualand West (contiguous to the Orange Free State) which included an important diamond field. The Chief feared Boer counter claims and therefore appealed for British protection. Since the British interest in the area had awakened by this time, they were coming in great numbers into the area, which required the British government to take proper measures to maintain law and order and their security. Britain, therefore, granted protection to Griqua Chief and in 1869 the disputed area was awarded to Britain in an arbitration proceeding. It was administered by the imperial government until 1880 when it was finally annexed to the Cape Colony. The annexation of Griqualand West by the British further embittered the Boers of the Orange Free State, who in turn destroyed all chances of achieving a Confederation which the British government was aiming for. Behind the idea of a Confederation was the British interest of having direct control and access over the mines, and to check the growing threat from the formidable African Tribes like Zulus.
The Zulus whom the British had defeated in 1838 and annexed Natal in 1842, were still a power to reckon with as they were not ready to accept British hegemony and were preparing themselves to achieve independence from the British lordship. The Zulu threat thus became an excuse for the British to annex Transvaal in 1867 while the real motive remained one of gaining control over the mines of Transvaal. The annexation was not liked by the Boers because by this time they had been pushed again and again by the British to confront the formidable African tribes. This was slowly becoming clear to the Boers and their resentment against British intervention increased, which finally led to the Anglo-Boer war of 1899-1902. Economically, the new discoveries meant that for the first time in South African history a substantial amount of capital flowed into a region hitherto dependent on a few agricultural exports like marino wool and hides. The precious stones which were first secured by the small entrepreneurs soon passed into the hands of large companies headed by great mining magnets such as Cecil John Rhodes, a British empire builder. The expansion

29. The Anglo-Afrikaners rivalry can to a head during the South African war of 1899-1902, known as Anglo-Boer War. In this war, Great Britain, with strong local support in the Cape Colony and Natal, went to war against the Afrikaners of Orange Free State and Transvaal. N. 2, pp. 13-16.
of the mining industry came in 1886, when gold was discovered at the Witwatersrand in the Transvaal. The mining industry attracted thousands of new immigrants, mainly from Great Britain, who imposed the English language and English ways of life on the Witwatersrand. English speaking white South Africans, and British empire builders like lord Milner,30 anticipated that English speaking South Africans would one day become the most numerous section of the white population. English predominance in the mining industry was paralleled by British supremacy in banking, commerce and in the country's scientific and technological institutions.

The British colonialists' imperialist urges were so intense that it led them to fight not only the Africans but also the Boers in 1899-1902 because they could not tolerate independent Boer republics, like Transvaal under Paul Kruger.

30. Sir Alferd Milner, the British High Commissioner, who later rose to the position of Secretary of Colonial Affairs, was dedicated to the strengthening of the British empire in South Africa. He was a convinced believer in the racial myths current at the time that the cultural ties and achievements of particular societies were the expression of the inborn characteristics of different races. It followed that the only truebonds capable of holding people together were those of race. The British, he believed, constituted a race with its own unique characteristics, destined to spread itself all over the world creating an empire. n.5, p.142.
After annexing Transvaal in 1877, the British under the command of Lord Chelmsford expanded further into the Zulu areas. The Zulus put up tough resistance, but the better armed British forces ultimately defeated the Zulus in the famous battle of Ulundi,\textsuperscript{31} and finally removed the Zulu threat to Transvaal.

No sooner were the Zulus subdued, the Boers started a campaign for the removal of British control from the Transvaal. The British forces under General Colley had to come face to face against the Boers, but they were defeated by the nationalist Boers. This war came to be known as the first Transvaal war\textsuperscript{32}. After their defeat, the British made no further attempt to retain control over Transvaal and the Boers established their independent rule. The decisive defeat at Majuba and the surrender of Transvaal by the British created a bad impression among Cape and Orange Free State settlers, and caused a decline in British prestige.

\textsuperscript{31} In the battle of Ulundi Zulu army was decisively crushed and its capacity to face the invaders in a full-scale battle was destroyed. ibid., p. 116.

\textsuperscript{32} As a result of the Great Trek two Boer states finally emerged: the Orange Free State and Transvaal. In 1877 the British annexed Transvaal, but it had to restore self-government to Boers in 1881 following Boer rebellion, known as first Transvaal war. n. 13, p. 6.
On the other hand, as soon as gold was discovered in 1886 a major influx of fortune seekers to the gold mines in Johannesburg began. Within a very short period the population of Johannesburg numbered as many as that of the rest of the Transvaal. Alarmed by such a large influx, Paul Kruger, the President of the Republic, feared the Boer population would be swamped. In anticipation of such a scenario, he denied certain civic rights to the new British population, who had by then come to be known as Uitlanders. By 1895 the Uitlanders outnumbered the Boers themselves by seven to three. Later, the British had to confront again the white Afrikans who had by then proved to have a great deal of courage and strength in their defiance as compared to the valiant resistance given by the Black Africans.

The political issue revolved around whether the Afrikaner nation, led by a nationalist leader like President Kruger, was to establish hegemony over South Africa or accept the wider concept of Cecil Rhodes, linking the Boers and the British in the joint exploitation of Southern-cen-

33. Krugger's response was to raise the residential requirements for the right to vote in Boer elected council and presidential elections from five to fourteen years.

34. Uitlanders were the British South African immigrant mining community.
tal Africa under the British crown and flag. The central economic issue was primarily related to the control of mineral mining, particularly in the Transvaal, and possibly in the future in Rhodesia also. Rhodes was convinced that the Kruger-style political economy must be removed if his imperial schemes were to be successful. After the ignominious failure of Jameson Raid in 1895, Rhodes had to leave political life, but by this time Chamberlain and his followers in the British government, together with the city financiers, had accepted Rhodes thesis. The agent chosen to represent this policy and to succeed Rhodes in implementing it was Sir Alfred Milner, the High Commissioner. He succeeded in provoking Kruger and his Afrikaners into war by 1899, some nineteen year after the defeat of the British at the hands of the Boers.

The Afrikaners, however, were much more strongly organized than the native Africans who resisted British imperialism. The sixty thousand of them who fought in the name of Afrikaner nationalism challenged the whole British Empire, which had to call on four hundred thousand troops to effect their defeat. In the process of this bitter war,

Afrikaner farmers were herded into camps, where thousands of them died. By 1902 the Afrikaners were forced to sue for peace. British supremacy was assured and the heavy investment of the city of London in the Witwatersrand was protected by the imperial government, under conditions so favourable that this was almost doubled by the time of the first world war. But the bitterness of the Boer war lingered on. In the end it was not to be the ideas of Rhodes, Chamberlain or Milner which prevailed in South Africa. Paul Kruger finally had his revenge, although he did not live to see it.

As far as the Anglo-Boer war of 1899-1902 was concerned, there have been divergent interpretations regarding its causes. According to Arthur Keppel-Jones, a Canadian historian, the war was, first of all, a struggle for justice, a war to protect British subjects who were denied elementary rights by a backward and stubborn, and tyrannous regime of Paul Kruger. Second, the war was being fought to protect imperial interests against the aggressive regime of President Krugger in the Transvaal. For two decades he had blocked a federation in South Africa, built up powerful armaments, approached European powers for assistance, and threatened to unite the Dutch of all South Africa in a move
to end Britain's paramount position there\textsuperscript{36}.

In contrast, English economist and journalist, J.A Hobson, provides an economic interpretation of the war. His book, "The War in South Africa: its causes and effects", presents an outstanding case for an economic interpretation of the war. He argues that a small group of moneyed interest, the mining capitalists and their financial allies, engineered the war by a campaign of trumped-up grievances which drew the British government to their rescue.

It was all done, says Hobson, for the sake of increased profits: "The mining capitalist stood to gain an income of two million and a half by a successful political or military coup." A similar viewpoint has also been given by Shula Marks, a renowned British historian. According to Shula Marks, the British went to war for economic reasons. The mining magnates like Cecil John Rhodes and Alfred Beit\textsuperscript{37} looked to the British conquest of the Transvaal in order to

\textsuperscript{36} For details see Arthur Keppel-Jones, \textit{South Africa: A Short History} (London, 1949), pp. 116-144.

\textsuperscript{37} Alfred Beit was the close business associate of Cecil John Rhodes and was one of the four life Governors of De Beers. See. R. First, J. Steele and C. Gurney, eds., \textit{The South African Connection: Western Investment in Apartheid} (London, 1972), p. 113.
smash a regime run by backward rural notables, and set up, instead, an administration capable of dealing with the needs of a modern mining economy. 38

The above interpretation emphasises the idea of a war brought on by such groups as the capitalist mining interests. However, a broader interpretation, one which deemphasises the special interest theory, is of the view that consideration of imperial policy by the British Government constituted the principal cause of war in 1899. Historians have assigned various motivations to the imperial policy, to some the motives stemmed from the prevailing mood of imperial aggrandisement; to others it was defense of the empire against disruption from the Boers; to still others it was the more idealistic motive of promoting federation for the good of South Africa as well as the empire.

POST-WAR SETTLEMENT

The Boer war of 1899-1902 had been a powerful factor in shaping the socio-political scenario of South Africa. According to the terms of the Vereening Peace Treaty of 1902, the Boer republics had to surrender their independ-

38. n.2., p. 14.
ence, and the British, on their part, had to release Boer prisoners of war along with the promise of massive assistance for reconstruction of the devastation caused during the war. Most important of all and for the long term future, the British authorities, anxious to win peace and aware of Boer feelings on the matter, agreed to a clause in which Britain promised that the question of a Black African franchise would not be raised until a responsible Government had been restored in the ex-republics. In agreeing to this clause, the British authorities betrayed the vast majority of the South African population which had strongly supported it during the Arglo-Boer war. The majority African support for the British was accompanied by the expectation that with the Boer defeat they would get their land and liberty back again.

One of the causes of the war had been the mine owners' need for a political administrative system which could allow them to exploit African labour more thoroughly. Thus, once the British occupied Johannesburg, the mine owners reduced African wages.

When peace was agreed with the Boers, the British helped Afrikaner farmers reestablish control over Africans and their land. Moreover, while many Afrikaner soldiers were
allowed to keep their guns, the British police force disarmed Africans who had acquired firearms.

So the plight of the Africans worsened in the post-war years; their wages were reduced, political rights taken away and they were discriminated in social fields too.

**POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION:**

With the annexation of the Transvaal and the Orange River colonies, Milner was appointed British High Commissioner for the two new colonies. The main aims of Milner's policy in the ex-republics was (1) The integration of ex-republics into the British empire; (2) To settle substantial number of British immigrants on the land in Transvaal; (3) increase British influence; (4) To anglicise the next generation of Afrikaners through public education, and (5) To achieve rapid development of the economy of South Africa.

Milner followed a policy of consolidating the British empire by creating an economic climate favourable to English settlement. The increased settlement could help in

39. With the war over, a massive programme of public education was launched for whites in the ex-republics. The language of instruction in all schools was to be English and Dutch was only allowed to be used as a medium of instruction for a maximum of five hours a week. n. 5., p. 159.
getting the gold mines back into full operation as quickly as possible. Mining operations had been hampered due to the war and also due to shortage of African labour following substantial wage reduction.

To restart the mining, Milner was faced with dilemmas posed by-(1) Shortage of African labour due to reduced wages, (2) Unemployed white Afrikaner labour, (3) And the unwillingness of mine owners to pay Africans wages higher than the white workers. So the problem which Milner faced was of providing jobs to Afrikaners and providing cheap labour to mine owners.

A solution to the labour problem was soon found by importing Chinese labour. This raised the concern of the whites. But they were finally convinced that the Chinese labour was to do only unskilled work. When the Chinese eventually left, these restrictions were applied to the Africans. From the above it can be inferred that Milner was the founder, on behalf of the British government, of institutionalised discrimination between black and white workers. The black worker thereafter was kept out of skilled jobs.

40. The mine owners did not want to employ white labour because they could not impose repressive measures, pass laws and rigorous labour discipline on them, which could otherwise be imposed on the Africans.
Thus the avenue for the black workers to go up the economic ladder was legally stopped. With the pass laws, labour laws, Spoor laws, the British laid the foundation of racialism in the body politic of South Africa.

In April 1905, the Earl of Selborne succeeded Lord Milner as the High Commissioner and Governor of the Transvaal and Orange Free State. A few months later, in Britain, the Conservative Government of Arthur Balfour fell and the liberals formed the government in 1905. The Liberal Government, led by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, decided to grant self-government to the two colonies. Full internal self-government was granted to the Transvaal and Orange Free State in 1906 and 1907 respectively. Thus, within five years of the Treaty of Vereening, the two former republics, ruled as British colonies by the defeated Boer leaders, were granted self-government following their assurance to the Liberal Government of Britain of their loyalty towards the Crown.

With the grant of self Government to Transvaal and Orange Free State the British Government was able to attain two objectives,

(1) The Boer leadership was appeased and made subservient to the British Crown, and loyalty was assured in the
future relationship. The Boer leadership had promised the British that once self-government was restored in the Boer colonies, they would remain loyal to the ultimate authority of the British Crown.

(2) Secondly, British and Boer interests were reconciled at the cost of native interests and rights.

Boer loyalty towards the Crown, which had not been possible through Milner's ideology of anglicizing and integrating the Boers into British traditions, was made possible by the conciliatory policy of Liberal Government of Britain towards fellow white Afrikaner people. This, in turn, led to further conciliation and co-operation between British-Boer interests, which was being challenged throughout South Africa by the resentment-filled Africans, who had not only been cheated by the British for whom they had fought against the Boers, but also discriminated through legislation like the poll tax on African males. Such a legislation caused further discontentment and rebellion of Africans against white rule. So after winning Boer loyalty in political terms and making them partners in terms of loyalty towards the common Crown, the British government now turned to deal with certain contentious issues, the solution of which were necessary to further British imperialist
m转iles. The bone of contention was the revenue from the railways and customs of the four colonies. This was an additional factor of concern to the British, apart from the growing black resentment and revolt. While reconciliation and co-operation between the British and Boers was achieved on political grounds, the clash of economic interests between the four colonies still persisted. As the dispute arose between colonies over railways and customs, and as the black rebellion became imminent, the British realised the necessity of a unified South African administration. This realisation was strengthened further after the Zulu rebellion was suppressed in Natal with the help of forces drawn from different colonies.

The British government through its representatives thus started moving ahead with their plan for the union of South Africa where the disputes concerning railway, and customs could be resolved and effective control over Africans established. British High Commissioner Selbourne advocated the formation of a union and published a document to that effect.

In January 1907, Lord Selborne, the British High Commissioner, published 'A Review of the present mutual relations of the British South African colonies' which had been
prepared with the co-operation of several members of Kindergarten.\textsuperscript{41} He advocated the federation of the four colonies, asserting that the various railway systems were "absolutely incompatible", and that inter-state railway and custom disputes would have to be settled sooner or later by "arbitration or sword". Under the influence of the Kindergarten, closer union societies were formed to study other federal constitutions and to work for the closer union of the South African states. The Selbourne memorandum was supported in the Cape parliament, where F.S. Malan, the leader of the erstwhile Bond,\textsuperscript{42} proposed a resolution in favour of closer union. It was seconded by Dr. Starr Jameson, then Premier in the colony's Unionist government and supported by Jan, H. Hofmeyr, the leader of the Farmers' Protection Association at the Cape. Two months before this, Hofmeyr, while making a plea for union in a public speech said: "I am firmly convinced that we have a real and actual interest in the maintenance of the British Empire and of British sea power as a means there to".\textsuperscript{43} For Hofmeyr, British command of the

\textsuperscript{41} n. 16, p. 205.

\textsuperscript{42} The Afrikaner-Bond was founded by S.J. du Toit in 1918 as a cultural organisation, open only to Afrikaanspeaking people. See J.H.P. Serfontein, \textit{Brotherhood of Power: An Expose of the Secret Afrikaner Broederbond} (London, 1979).

\textsuperscript{43} n. 16, p. 205.
seas would enable the British administration to take along
the Boers in a unified South Africa, to deal with native
issues effectively, and keep secured their economic interest
in the country.

A few days later Jemeson also made a statement to the
same tune by saying that "there is no reason why the two
great parties in this country should not settle down and
bring about the natural realization of a South African
nationality in a federal South Africa which will be part of
the British Empire".

From the above statements it seemed that the British
administration in South African colonies wanted to have
effective control over the South African states whereby
various standing issues could be resolved. Besides, most
important of all, the Boers would become the natural
friends of the British, which would enable them to exploit
the resources and the natives of South Africa in the years
to follow. And that is what really happened over the years
in South Africa.

In May 1908, at the inter-colonial railways and customs
conference, Gen. Jan Smuts moved a resolution proposing
procedures to be adopted towards the achievement of the
immediate political union of South African colonies44.
Unanimous action was taken by the white rulers of all the four colonies and the constitution was prepared and approved by the parliaments of Cape, Orange River colony and Transvaal and Natal.

The constitution was then taken to Britain for approval by a delegation headed by Sir Henry de Villiers. It was introduced in the House of Commons by the Under Secretary of colonies, General John Seek and was passed by the British parliament as the South Africa Act, and signed by King Edward VII on 20th Sept 1909. It came into force on 31st May 1910.

The constitution approved by the British Crown gave the white minority a monopoly of political power and the non-whites were denied any kind of representation.

44. The four parliaments agreed to send delegations to a national convention to draft a constitution for united South Africa. The draft constitution was accepted in the final session of the national convention held in Bloemfontein in May 1909 and the union of South Africa was finally formed in 1910 after the draft constitution was accepted by the parliaments of the Cape, OFS, Transvaal and Natal in 1910.

45. Sir Henry de Villers, Chief Justice of Cape Colony.

46. Eighth anniversary of signing of Vereening Treaty.
The British government abandoned any attempt to establish the political foundation on which a racially just society could have been built and, instead, brought into existence a South Africa so structured that the majority of its people were left politically helpless and unprotected against social discrimination and economic exploitation by the privileged white minority. Such an institutionalised structure of political power was to have vital effects on South African society. For all these ills Britain has a historical responsibility to share.

Though the constitution of 1910 united South Africa under a single government, it did not make her an independent foreign state, as South Africa was bound by the decision of the King on the question of war and peace.

With the formation of the union Britain secured every thing to its advantage.

(i) It had brought all the colonies together under the direct control of the Crown,

(ii) It handed over power to a white minority regime which owed its allegiance to Britain only, as there was no other country which had any influence over the whites of South Africa.
(iii) After establishing white rule, its economic interest in mines and its investments in various sectors were secured.

(iv) Boer-British interests were reconciled and a sort of racial bond of whites was evolved to go hand in hand in exploiting the black Africans in the post-union years.

While British interests were secured, the most vital issue concerning the vast majority was left unattended, and the Union of South Africa was divided on the racial foundation against which many prominent people had forewarned. Few liberal whites like Schreiner47 were clearly foreseeing and warning about the evil results of racist policies. They put pressure on the British government to stop the racist act of establishing the white minority rule. Schreiner had stated very clearly that "to embody in South African constitution a vertical line barrier separating its people upon the ground of colour into a privileged class or caste and an unprivileged inferior proletariat is as imprudent as it would be to build a grand building upon unsound and sinking foundation.

47. W.P. Schreiner, a white liberal, persuaded the British governments to amend the draft bill of the Union to include the rights of the blacks. John Hatch, The History of Britain in Africa (London, 1969), p. 218.
In our South African nation there must be room for many free peoples, but no room for any that are not free, and free to rise". 48

Such rational views were given no consideration by the British government and the economic objective was given priority over the vital issue of black political rights in South Africa. The British did not want to antagonise the Afrikaners by raising any such issue as the Afrikaners were to be the future partners in the exploitation of South African resources.

So the issue concerning the black political rights was left unattended because -

1. The British did not want to antagonise the Afrikaners' and thereby jeopardise their own economic interest.

2. The politically suppressed Blacks were to be exploited by the Boer-British combine. This will be seen in the discussion later on.

The formal foundation for a racially divided South Africa was laid in 1910 by the full approval of the British

48. ibid.
government. And this racial division was strengthened further by the ruling white minority of South Africa, of course, under the sovereign authority of the British Crown, which went on passing various discriminatory laws against the majority blacks in the form of the 1913 Land Act, 1923 Natives (Urban areas) Act, the Mines and Workers Amendment Act, 1926, Immorality Act of 1927, and the Natives Registration Act of 1927. These were all highly discriminatory laws to which the British government never objected or questioned despite protest and resentment by the Black South Africans. Within two years of founding of the Union, politically conscious Africans demonstrated their reactions. In 1912, the African National Congress (ANC) was founded to represent the interest of Africans throughout the nation across the provincial boundaries. The African National Congress was influenced by the South Africa Indian Congress founded by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, who had gone from India to work as an advocate. M.K. Gandhi stressed non-violence as the measure of struggle.

Within a year of its formation the new independent attitude of the ANC was demonstrated at the annual conference, where the 1913 Land Act was severely condemned and a

49. Inability of liberals led to the foundation of ANC.
deputation was sent to Cape Town to lobby for its withdrawal, but it could not get any positive response. The ANC then petitioned the Governor-General to withhold his assent, but after getting no response a deputation was sent to Britain in 1914 as the Crown still held ultimate authority over the South African government. But the British government showed its inability to influence or stop such legislation on the plea that it was an internal matter of South Africa, even though it was under the sovereign authority of the Crown.

A similar attitude was shown by the British government towards various other discriminatory laws passed by the South African minority regime.

The British complacency and connivance regarding all the discriminatory legislations passed by the South African white minority regime was also reinforced by the British government. In 1926 at the Imperial Conference in London, it agreed to Hertzog's proposal for dominion status for South Africa, which came ultimately in the form of the Balfour Declaration. 50 This proclaimed the principles of full auton-

50. The Imperial Conference met once again in 1930 to carry out the work of the 1926 Conference. The result of this Conference was the passing of the Statute of Westminster by the British Parliament in 1931, which made the Balfour Declaration on Dominion status a law of the British Parliament. The Statute of Westminster recognised formally the legislative independence of the Union. n. 16, p. 234
omy and equality of status with Britain for the Dominions.

According to the Balfour declaration, the Dominions were defined as - "autonomous communities within the British empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic and external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations." 51

So the British responsibility in establishing a racist state became more apparent by the acceptance of Hertzog's idea of Dominion status for racist South Africa. By looking at the Dominion status of South Africa so agreed by Britain, it can be inferred that -

1. Britain had no objections to any of the racist legislation passed by the South African parliament. Although the British Crown had the final authority over such legislation, it never tried to prevent them from becoming Acts.

2. The above point can be reinforced further by an argument that South Africa became equal in status and independent in its domestic and external

51. ibid., p.233.
affairs only in 1926 under the Balfour Declaration. This shows that prior to the Balfour Declaration, South Africa was under the influence and authority of the British Crown, which was represented by the Governor-General.

3. By the Balfour Declaration the British Government gave racist South Africa equality of status in the British Empire and equal place in the Commonwealth of Nations. Though the Commonwealth was regarded as a symbol of accommodation and tolerance towards the different races inhabiting the Commonwealth, by agreeing to South Africa's dominion status in the British Commonwealth of Nations, Britain had not only expressed her racist attitude but also remained an active partner along with South Africa in giving concrete shape to such an attitude.

Britain established a Dominion office with L.S. Amery as the Secretary of Dominion Affairs. Amery visited South Africa in 1927 and formalised the status of South Africa as a Dominion on the basis of the Report of the Imperial Conference, which had declared:

"The British empire is not founded upon negations. It depends essentially, if not formally on positive ideals."
Free institutions are its life blood. Free co-operation is its instrument."\(^{52}\)

The British government's policy of advocating and preaching about free institution and co-operation as the life blood of the empire, smacked of double standards. In adopting such a policy towards South Africa, Britain was giving its support and acceptance to the white minority's racist policies towards the Black majority who had no freedom, least of all able to think of co-operation.

It was thus clear that the common white interest in the resources and benefits from South Africa was the most important factor behind British support to the racist regime.

The Dominion Secretary during his public speeches also emphasized that Britain and the Dominions, both loyal towards the Crown, were in partnership to support and cooperate with each other in the development of trade and security. He also emphasised that the Commonwealth was held together not only by loyalty to the Crown but also by a community of ideals and interests.\(^{53}\)

\(^{52}\) ibid.

\(^{53}\) ibid.
From the above it can be analysed that:

1. Britain and the South African minority government had common interests.

2. They also had common ideals.

3. And with common ideals the British had no objection to the racial policies of the minority regime of South Africa.

During the first World War, South Africa being a member of the British empire, fought in support of Britain against Germany and other axis powers. The South African forces fought not only in Africa against Germany but also in Europe. The South African forces consisted of White and Black South Africans. Though the Black Africans fought and sacrificed as equals along with white South Africans during the war, no equality was shown to the Black Africans after the war and discrimination went on through various racial legislation.\textsuperscript{54} The British government was approached on the issue, but as usual it remained evasive and excused itself by saying that the matter was internal.

Although the British were all the time saying that native affairs was an internal matter of South Africa and

\textsuperscript{54} ibid., p. 229
the British government was in no position to influence it, there were certainly other means by which Britain could have influenced South African affairs. The Governor General appointed by the Crown could have played an important role in South African internal matters. For instance, the 1927 Native Administration Act gave the Governor General wide powers over the Native Africans in Transvaal, Orange Free State, and Natal. In accordance with the Native Trust and Land Bill the Governor General was made trustee of the fund to acquire and develop land for the native settlement.

The Governor-General was, thereby, actively involved in internal affairs, and at the same time various discriminatory legislation were passed over which the Governor-General showed no reservation. In the event, he even gave his assent to these laws, effectively becoming a partner in all the discrimination of the Blacks.

In 1934 Hertzog had become the Prime Minister and Smuts the Deputy Prime Minister. Hertzog went ahead with his racial policies by enacting and enforcing discriminatory laws. At the same time, events in Europe led towards the second World War and Britain was once again at war with Germany and other axis powers. Hertzog was not in favour of

55. ibid., p. 237.
active participation in war and advocated neutrality. General Smuts, on the other hand, believed that South Africa should sever relations with Germany, and stand by Britain and co-operate with the allies.

This debate led to voting in the union parliament, and Prime Minister Hertzog's policy of neutrality was defeated by 80 votes to 67. The Prime Minister then asked the Governor-General for the dissolution of parliament. This was refused as the Governor-General had a Constitutional right to do so. General Hertzog then resigned, and Sir Patrick Duncan sent for General Smuts to form a government as Prime Minister. South Africa again fought the axis on the side of the allied forces. The South African forces this time comprised of more Africans than the First World War and they were engaged in fighting along with the white South Africans in various sectors in East Africa and other places.56

In July 1943 the coalition government of General Jan Christiaan Smuts gained a resounding victory in the General election which indicated that the decision to participate in the war along with the allied forces was supported by the majority of the white minority. General Smuts had become

56. ibid., p. 244.
very popular in Britain. He was not only made a member of the allied war cabinet, but was also asked, after the war, to draft the preamble of the United Nations which was supposed to be the Guardian of Justice to the people. The irony was that the man who denied justice to the blacks in his own country was engaged in drafting the preamble of the United Nations stressing human rights. The contrast could be observed during Black mine workers strike in South Africa in August, 1946. The protest of striking workers was dealt high-handedly by Smuts' government by killing many black workers, while around the same time when European miners at Blyvooruitzigt staged an illegal strike, both police and management quietly came to terms with them.

A few months later, in the early months of 1947, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited South Africa. The King in person opened the only whites parliament which had been passing all sorts of discriminatory laws.

The British appreciation of Smuts government was expressed by unanimously electing him Chancellor of Cambridge University.

57. ibid., p. 248.
Britain had thus remained in close association with the white minority racist regime. The question of African rights and interests was never raised despite continued repression and discrimination against blacks by the white minority regime. As the British were to make business gains out of such repressions, they, therefore, remained least concerned about the Black Africans. Over the years the racial policies became increasingly offensive on Blacks. Armed might of police and military and secret service was used to cruelly suppress the African protests.

By 1947-48 India, Pakistan and Ceylon became independent members of Commonwealth and gave it a character of multiracial association. New members of the Commonwealth, notably India, sought to use the association as an instrument to promote the ideals of racial equality in the world. According to V.K Krishna Menon, a close associate of Jawaharlal Nehru, promotion of racial harmony was a major Indian objective in the Commonwealth. He said that India's decision to stay in the Commonwealth "...was a free-wheel action by the Indian people and it was to be implemented by the long series of long conversation and in Pandit Nehru's mind was the feeling that India's remaining as a member of the Commonwealth would probably help towards erasing of racial
differences with the rest of the Colonial Empire. This was a thing that weighed in his mind a great deal..."58.

During the Commonwealth Prime Ministers meeting in 1949, the racial question was discussed, and a week later, the House of Commons also discussed this question. Many members of the British parliament pointed out that Britain had committed itself strongly to the idea of inter-racial co-operation as against the idea of racial segregation, and that therefore it should project itself as a model of inter-racial co-operation in the world.59 In 1949 some labour members of parliament asked the government of Great Britain to instruct its representatives in the United Nations to support nations which condemned the practice of racial segregation in South Africa. T.E.N. Driberg prophetically stated: "The time may come when we shall have to consider whether continued defiance by a member of the Commonwealth 'club' of the club's basic principles might not necessitate its expulsion".60


60. ibid., col. 1408.
Criticism of South African policy did not deter the British government and it refused to condemn the actions of the white minority regime, which were totally against human rights norms of the United Nations and the Commonwealth. Britain, instead of taking a humanitarian position, tried taking shelter under Art-2 paragraph 7 of the United Nations charter, that race-relations in South Africa were an internal matter.

On 26 Feb 1951 eight members of parliament belonging to the Labour Party tabled a resolution in the House of Commons calling upon "white people everywhere to free themselves from the conception of racial superiority to follow a course directed towards the brotherhood of man and based upon the declaration of human rights of U.N. that all human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights."\(^{61}\)

The issue of racial discrimination by the white minority of South Africa became a matter of popular concern in Britain, but the official British policy remained one of total disregard of human rights. When the question of racial discrimination in South Africa came up before the U.N.

\(^{61}\) The Times (London), February 1951.
General Assembly again in September, 1952, the representative of South Africa opposed the inclusion of the item in the Agenda saying that any discussion of the question in the world body would infringe the domestic jurisdiction of his country. This argument was supported only by Gladwyn Jebb, the representative of the UK at the UN. He stated that the "internal racial policy of the government of the Union of South Africa is one which the Assembly is not competent to consider and which it ought not to discuss. We hold this for reasons which are both technical and general." He emphasized that "a question which is essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of a state does not cease to be so merely because it may create tensions or affect relation within the state or with some other state or states". 63

The British government, which championed the democratic values and human rights at home was not prepared even to listen, discuss or debate, least of all to condemn, the racialism—the most undemocratic policy of South African government. By not questioning the South African undemocrat-

62. UN Doc. A/2183, 12 September 1952.

ic policy of racialism, Britain gave acceptance and support to the racist policy of the Pretoria regime.

Meanwhile, the Asian and African countries of the Commonwealth continued their campaign against South Africa's policy of racialism. Eventually, the world-wide condemnation of racialism brought a change in Commonwealth policy. In 1959, Australia, Britain's lone supporter on the question of racialism in South Africa, also began to modify its official position. Australia held the view that though the racial policy of South Africa fell within the domestic jurisdiction of that country it would not lead Australia to be unmindful of the purposes of Article 55 of the UN Charter calling for the promotion of universal respect for human rights for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion, or of its obligations under Art. 56 of the Charter. 64

Britain became isolated along with the racist South African regime on the issue of racialism in the latter country. The world was condemning and criticising South African racial policies, and Britain was silently pursuing

64. See speech by the Australian representative, J.D.L. Hood, at the 147th meeting of the special political committee on 9 November 1959. GAOR, session 14, Special Political Committee, 9 November 1959, p. 99.
its economic interest least caring for world opinion on such a vital issue. Moreover, within the country itself, the British government was assailed for failing to match precept with practice in the sphere of race-relations, and also for leading the country towards isolationism.

The history of British involvement in South Africa therefore, was one of opportunism and deception, accruing from one prime motive, namely, economic exploitation. The initial British occupation of Cape for security reasons was later directed for reasons none other than colonial exploitation. The British manipulated the then existing situation and compelled the white settlers to become essentially the expansionist force for Britain. In other words, the incompatibility of the interests of the settlers and British laws in the Cape forced a section of the settlers to move deep into the interior. This meant that the settlers had to fight against the natives to make their way further. As the settlers moved in, it became easier for Britain to follow suit.

With the discovery of gold and diamond mines, British economic interest were enhanced further. British capital started pouring into the region with these new profit-making sites. The British mining interest became so intense
that the Anglo-Boer war was often seen as a war for control over the gold and diamond mines. Although the Boers were ultimately subdued, the British decided to transfer power to Boers in anticipation of further trouble in the face of growing Boer nationalism. In this regard, the British deceived the Blacks, for it were the blacks who had sided with the British against the Boers. The British transferred power to the Boers keeping in view its long-term economic interests. As the forced population could serve the economic needs better than the freed black population, the blacks were deliberately denied the right to share power with the Boers. The British found the whites of South Africa most suitable to further carry out British economic policies. The British strategy behind the transfer of power to the Boers may be explained in the following manner. First, by transferring power to the Boers the British could reconcile their interests with the Boers, in terms of subjugation and exploitation of blacks for economic benefits; second, by transferring power to the white minority the British could keep themselves away from direct responsibility. The choice of the white minority by Britain could also be explained by the following scenario which the British might have anticipated well in advance. First, a minority regime could only cling to power through a mechanism of oppression. Second,
oppression of the majority would thus mean calling international attention on the issue and the pressure for change. Third, in the event of global pressure against the minority regime, Britain could prevent a possible Boer threat to British economic interests. The British could defend the regime better than any other country at the international level, for reasons of its long standing experience, its diplomacy of deception, and hypocritical statements. Thus by handing over power to the white minority of South Africa, Britain not only pre-empted the possible black threat but also the Boer threat to its economic interests in the region. Therefore, one may conclude that Britain had a historic responsibility for the development and legalisation of the apartheid system in South Africa.