"Just as the development of the technical instruments of modern industry brought to an end small scale industry and produced capitalism, so also, the evolution of agricultural technology tends to abolish small scale agriculture, for there is an insurmountable incompatibility between small scale agriculture and mechanization. It follows that by organising strictly along co-operative and communal lines we will not only be adjusting our action to the current of human progress which dictates that social action shall take precedence over the egoism of personal convenience and that public rights shall be enriched each day at the expense of private rights, but shall also be achieving the desideratum of putting an end to the divorce existing between the productive forces which tend to be collective and the totally antiquated regime of individual private property."

The Mexican National Agrarian Commission. (1922)

INTRODUCTION.

Much of the interest intellectual circles have displayed in the land question may be ascribed to the acquisitive habits of a predacious society. This is especially true of South Africa where, as a result of a singular historical evolution, the majority, having been reduced to a pariah status, are rigorously denied ownership rights in landed property.

It is understandable, then, that, as a bitter reaction to what is regarded as an "unfair" line of social development, the respect for real property and an engrossing interest in it should pervade the life of the "educated" classes. To be sure, there is an indissoluble link between their ideological life and that typical stubborn devotion to their daily bread. The land question is, in truth, pretty much of a personal affair. Everyone wants to own "a nice little property" in the hope that, by dint of business enterprise, it will one day be "a nice big property."

Since historical development in this country has run counter to their interest in personal aggrandisement - in what Veblen in "The Theory of the Leisure Class" calls "conspicuous accumulation" - it is in the nature of things to expect that our toiling intellectuals would vent their spleen on the historical process and enter into a conspiracy to reverse it. They are therefore heard to preach an agrarianism which seeks to assail and render nugatory our technical and industrial conquests. For not only must the right to unfettered ownership be established for all: the workers in industry, commerce and transport are exhorted to return to "the ancestral lands" on the morrow of the democratic struggle and exercise individual ownership rights over them. That such a mass exodus from the cities spells the doom of the machine age means little to them. They are determined to demonstrate that they can cheat the historical process; or rather, that the historical process should not contrive to cheat them.
Political radicalism is the philosophy of the small middle class. It is a philosophy that embraces the inimical elements of proletarian equality, on the one side, and bourgeois private enterprise, on the other. This philosophic dualism stems from the intermediate position they occupy in society, sandwiched as they are between the capitalists and the wage earners. There is, first of all, the accent on property writ large. Woe betide the intellectual who confounds possession or usufructuary rights with ownership. His approach to the land question must be juridically sound. He will, for instance, be told that the enjoyment of usufructuary rights over landed property, no matter how profitable, is at variance with the avowed aim of ownership as a plenary power. For ownership, so they aver, is a thing-in-itself and has no bearing on the economic functions it may or may not fulfill. It has honorific value. They are obviously horrified at God's socialist injunction in Leviticus: "The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with me."

But while they will not deny their bourgeois half-selves, the intermediate strata of society seek security lest, as a result of the fluctuating fortunes of capitalism, they be pushed down into the ranks of the proletariat. To guard against such a contingency, they envisage a nation of property owners by advocating an equitable distribution of the land. Their sense of social justice is, indeed, admirable when one hears how they intend dividing up the land into allotments of equal size. And in their egalitarian zeal they do not take into account whether some families will receive "baboon rock" or tracts of sand as worthless as those of Arabia.

We may laugh and we may cry, says Spinoza, as long as we understand. Much of the laughter and the tears over the land question has been untimely. And therefore we must protest. The land area is limited. It cannot be increased like machines. Moreover, it is of unequal fertility. For these reasons, everyone cannot have land, while those with fertile allotments and enjoying the use of better implements must soon outstrip their less fortunate neighbours. Economic inequalities are therefore inevitable. And so, too, are class schisms.

Yet the darling vice of the naughty petty bourgeoisie is that they tear the land question out of the sum total of socio-economic conditions which give rise to it. They forget that a solution to any social problem must flow from the definitive conditions which have irrevocably been handed down to us by the preceding historical epoch, and that it is therefore bootless to combat irreversible social currents. They forget, too, that as long as the power of money reigns supreme, the producer is dominated by the vagaries of the market. And under such circumstances, the impoverishment of many is inevitable.

The more radical elements seek to guard against the crystallization of classes in their Utopia by advocating the distribution of non-marketable land. This is equally useless, if we assume for a moment that it is at all possible to withdraw the land from trade by mere legislative enactment. For the peasants, in any event, will have to exchange the produce of the land, and once this arises, as it inevitably must unless our radicals envisage a post-industrial subsistence economy - then those with more fertile farms, better implements and greater enthusiasm for work will soon have in their employ the owners of "hungry" lands and a paucity of tools.

It is not the intention of this essay to carry on a quarrel with the historical record by preaching a return to and division of the land to meet some claim based on abstract justice. On the contrary, we take the assimilation
of the expropriated people into the industrial system as an accomplished fact. Here History presents us with a loss as well as a gain: a loss, that is, of the land and cattle as well as of the equalitarian system of primitive society; a gain in that the industrial system furnishes us with ever-growing technical and cultural resources to combine these, at a higher historical level, with the communalism of tribal life. And here precisely lies the reason why History cannot be reversed: every society carries within itself those elements which will eventually abrogate the old order, usher in the new and place human life on a higher level.

In terms of historical development, then, an agrarian policy must have as its aim the development of the rural productive forces in harmony with the industrial sector to facilitate the transition to a classless society. The vehicle of such a social transformation is the working class. Such a land policy cannot therefore take into account, save for tactical requirements, the pre-dilections and accumulated prejudices of those layers - the middle and small peasants - with vested interests in, or a patriarchal attachment to, the soil.

To those who frown upon our class approach as a presumption so contrary to the times, this analysis will try to show that the class struggle in South Africa takes the ideological form of a racial conflict in which the so-called Non-White groups and the exploited sections are largely co-terminous. What is race but the class or economic factor in politics working in a disguise? The class lines are mercilessly cutting across the lines of "race", and this is leading, by an ineluctable law of capitalism, to the polarity of Capital and Labour groups. The reduction of the Afrikaner landowners to wage workers has proved it; the transformation of the African peasantry into proletarians and the concessions being granted to a nascent African middle class have confirmed it. One may stand four-square behind the struggles of this or that "racial" group, but one's class interests show up through the thread-bare cloak of race by the demands one puts forward.

The liberals have, however, tried to steer a course between the Scylla of race and the Charybdis of the class struggle by elevating themselves above both race or class. And from those safe lofty heights they, together with the epigones, are advocating a graveyard South African patriotism which someone called the last refuge of scoundrels. But their tremendous enthusiasm for capitalist enterprise, as well as their expectation that secondary industry will give battle in behalf of the democratic forces, is conclusive proof that they are precisely attracted or repelled by class interests, whether they know this or not.

If classes are the real driving forces in society, then it is scientifically and politically indefensible to regard the land question in South Africa as a Non-European problem or, more specifically, as a question that only affects the African people. Nor, by the same token, can it be viewed as the problem of the so-called Native Reserves. To do so is to subscribe to the ethnic trash of racial categories, to that trash which, in the words of Hegel, had been trampled underfoot by the passage of History. Our social problems belong to a country that is economically, politically and therefore psychologically one and indivisible. The class that boldly tackles those problems and shows a way out of the impasse will speak on behalf of the entire nation and without reference to special "racial" interests.
THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE LAND QUESTION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The land question in South Africa is unique. For this reason it is necessary to treat it historically. To throw into relief its cardinal character, consideration must be given to the development of the land problem in a few selected countries.

I. How Capitalism creates the Land Question.

The distinguishing feature of capitalism as a system of commodity production is that labour itself is a commodity to be bought like any other and then put to work to produce surplus value for the owners of the instruments of production. The worker who sells his labour power must be free in a double sense: "free", that is to say, from the land and the means of subsistence generally, so that as a propertyless person he cannot subsist except by the regular sale of his labour power; "free" also in that no legal regulations exist to restrict the sale of that power. The creation of such a wage earning class is the signal mission of capitalism which thereby also solves another problem: it creates the home market for its mass produced goods.

Capitalism takes its rise in, and is fed by, non-capitalist or, in any event, by pre-capitalist economies. But all tribal, feudal and small peasant subsistence economies are useless for the purposes of capitalism. And this is so because of the tie-up in these social systems of labour and the means of production. That is to say, the workers are also those who own or possess the land and the instruments of toil. There is, moreover, a domestic unity between agriculture and industry which makes these economies self-contained. Production is largely in response to domestic needs and not to an external market. In short, the producers of the goods are almost invariably the same people who consume them. The system of exchange and distribution therefore remains poorly developed. And so, too, the division of labour.

The internal solidity of these economies presents obstacles to capitalist development. It has to di vide ways and means to divorce the people from the land which, in the absence of a money economy and therefore of commercial transactions, permits of no alienation or sale. This task involves striking a death blow at the very root of these economies - the land. The dispossessed peoples are then bound to the capitalist system by the cash nexus. The first step in their dispossession is the separation of domestic industry from agriculture and the utter ruination of the former by flooding the country with the mass produced cheap goods against which the ancient crafts cannot compete. This partly destroyed the self-sufficiency of these communities. The next step is the appropriation of their land which follows a similar pattern everywhere. The introduction of new forms of landed property, such as individual marketable plots, oppressive taxation, the squandering and monopolisation of the land are the so-called legal means. Wars of dispossession, on any frivolous pretext, are another. Furthermore, all the mineral wealth, exotic flora and fauna are appropriated so that the mass of the people cannot obtain an independent livelihood.

Those forms of landed property which capitalism meet in new countries are not in consonance with its needs for investment in and the exploitation of the soil. Such property must be re-fashioned, now violently, now by legal chicanery, to suit capitalist ends. Here England furnishes us with the best example of the revolutionary methods used to adapt land tenure to the needs of capitalist agriculture.
Thus the English Enclosure Acts of the 18th Century played an important part in driving the peasants from the land and in converting agricultural holdings into pastoral farms. This mass expropriation, euphemistically termed "the clearing of the estates," was undertaken to meet the growing demand of the textile industry for wool. These Acts allowed the lords of the manorial estates to expel the peasants from the common and other lands and then to enclose them for sheep farming. In point of fact, however, these Acts simply brought law into line with a practice which had been going on ever since the 13th Century and, more especially, since the 15th Century when the mass expropriation of the peasants was already under way.

Where conditions did not coincide with the new conditions necessary for capitalist agriculture, the traditional rural economic centres were destroyed and their population evicted in hot-house fashion. In truth, the entire rural economy was renovated from top to bottom to make possible the profitable investment of capital in agriculture.

It is clear, then, that to the extent that capitalism remoulds agricultural relations to suit the profit motive, no landed property exists. This theory of Ricardo, the English economist, may come as a nasty shock to those who regard property as sacred or as a thing-in-itself. But capitalism everywhere divests property of its legal trappings and traditional paraphernalia and invests it with an economic content that conduces to its profitable exploitation. Land becomes an instrument of production which is detached from property proper. In this way agriculture is rationalized and the land worked in response to market demands. Land becomes a money-making instrument and it does not matter to the owner whether he is separated by great distances from his estate. The traditional sentimental attachment to the soil gives way to an attitude of class cupidity.

In Prussia, by contrast, the adaptation of agricultural conditions to capitalism proceeded in a gradual, piecemeal manner. The feudal estates were slowly transformed into Junker estates. The emancipation of the serfs (1810), being effected from above, was a slow, agonising process because they had to face a crushing burden of payment as compensation and were therefore subjected to usurious practices which meant the retention of feudal bondage, if not de jure, then at any rate, de facto. Very slowly, the serfs were transformed into farm labourers. A small group of Grossbauern—big peasants—also emerged.

In North America, again, the starting-point of capitalist agriculture was the small patriarchal peasant farms which quickly evolved into bourgeois farms. This progressive and swift development was possible because America did not pass through the feudal stage. Capitalist agriculture was therefore able to develop unshackled by outmoded rural institutions. But in the Southern States there was this striking difference, that the re-shaping of agrarian relations proceeded in a violent manner because their characteristic plantation system, based on slavery, was at variance with capitalist development which requires a free labour supply. After the emancipation of the slaves, these plantations were broken up into allotments which were the starting-point for their evolution into capitalist farms.

2. India and South Africa compared.

At the time the English East India Company began its rule in India, the social organisation of the country consisted of the ancient village communities who possessed the land in common. The village system was based on the domestic unity of agriculture and manufacturing. But despite the communal spirit that pervaded the life of the Indian village, a caste of officials had elevated itself above the
inhabitants and, having forged ties with the ruling dynasty, laid in germinal form the foundation of future social differentiation. They included the tax gatherer, judicial officials and the supervisors of the collective life of the village.

The greater portion of the products was directly consumed by the community and did not take the form of a commodity. But since time immemorial the State took a certain quantity of the products as rent, without in any way disturbing the attachment of the people to the soil. Herein lies the secret of the apparent immutability and unchanging character of the village system. Dynasties came and went, but political events had no effect on the fabric of village life: the Indian rulers did not and, as representatives of static social relations, indeed, could not, divorce the inhabitants from their means of subsistence.

As a predatory organisation, the English East India Company's policy was one of spoliation, of draining India of her resources by trade and plunder and a vicious system of extortion and tribute. This undermined the village system but did not bring about its dissolution.

This task devolved on industrial capitalism which spread its tentacles to India towards the end of the 18th Century. The new English manufacturing class regarded India, not only as a source of raw material, but also as a market for its finished products. The policy of flooding the country with these goods broke the essential unity between agriculture and the ancient industries. The ruined weavers and spinners were forced to depend on agriculture and over-crowded the villages which had now to produce raw material for the British market. In this way, India was transformed into an agricultural colony of Britain. The congested villages were about to crack and disintegrate.

They were given the death blow by the introduction of private property in land and all that this entails: registration of ownership rights, individual holdings, mortgage and sale. A new method of tax collecting was devised to hasten the divorce of the producers from the soil. The king's portion was traditionally a proportion of the year's output which the peasants had to give as a form of tribute. This system was replaced by a new one of fixed money payments, irrespective of the year's output, and assessed on individuals in the majority of cases. This tribute became known as rent, thereby revealing that the peasants had become tenants and the British rulers the landlord-in-chief. In this way, Britain assumed direct economic and political control over the Indian masses.

Britain, however, realised that she could not rule India effectively with a mere handful of English settlers and administrators. It was imperatively necessary to create a social buttress for her rule in the shape of a new Indian class whose interests would be bound up with the perpetuation of British rule and which could act as a bulwark against social revolution. An Indian landlord class was created to this end. The existing Zemindars or tax-farmers were constituted landlords in perpetuity, subject to a permanent fixed payment to the government, by the Permanent Land Settlement of 1793. Many of them could not realise their fixed quota and were driven out. A new class of "gentlemen proprietors" took their place. They stopped at nothing to squeeze the last anna out of the peasantry. Their social purpose was clearly stated by Lord William Bentinck in 1829: "If security was wanting against popular tumult or revolution", he observed, "I should say that the Permanent Settlement ... has this great advantage at least, of having created a vast body of rich landed proprietors deeply interested in the continuation of the British Dominion and having control over the mass of the
people." It is said by those with a supra-class approach to History that those who sell themselves to the foreigner are quislings. Call them what you will: in the final accounting, it is on the basis of their class interests. Can we ask them to betray those interests? Considerations of "national" interests are purely transitory.

The new method of tax collecting and individual land tenure hastened the process of dispossession and led to the spread of landlordism. The peasants were alienated from the soil because they could not pay. Since Britain deliberately discouraged and undermined at every turn local industrial enterprises, lest these compete with English manufacturing, there was no outlet for their agrarian troubles. They had perforce therefore to cling to the soil at all costs. Many became deeply indebted to moneylenders in an endeavour to retain their allotments. Others, again, embarked on the practice of sub-letting, thereby contributing to the spread of landlordism.

The Madras Board of Revenue had this to say in 1818 on the land policy of Britain: "In pursuit of this supposed improvement (of tax collecting) we find them ... dissolving the ancient ties (of the village) ... and by a kind of agrarian law ... assessing and parceling out the lands which from time immemorial had belonged to the Village Community collectively ... professing to limit their demand to each field ... assessing the Ryot at discretion and ... binding (him) by force to the plough, compelling him to till the land acknowledged to be over-assessed, dragging him back to it if he absconded, deferring their demand upon him until his crop came to maturity, then taking from him all that could be obtained and leaving nothing but his bullocks and seed grain, may, perhaps obliged to supply him even with these, in order to renew his melancholy task of cultivating, not for himself, but for them."

As an agricultural appendage of Britain, more and more people came to be dependent on agriculture. In 1891 the percentage of the population dependent on the soil was 61.1 per cent; in 1921 it was 73 per cent. Since the Indian masses did not see another avenue of employment open to them, the problem of land remained the crucial social issue in their lives. The sub-soil of the impending struggle against Britain was, indeed, the land question. And despite the fact that India is politically independent today, this basic problem - thanks to the deal struck between the Indian bourgeoisie and Imperialism - remains unsolved.

The land question in South Africa is not an agrarian problem in the classical connotation of the term. Indeed, this essay sets out to establish the thesis that the problem of land, as the exclusive and predominant source of livelihood of independent farmers, is one that affects only a small stratum of the people. In this sense there is no land problem for the vast majority of the people. This statement, sweeping as it is at first sight, bases itself on the unique social relations in our countryside as a result of a singular historical development.

Firstly, the preponderant majority had been systematically uprooted from the land and swung into the orbit of an exploitative society as wage earners. This root and branch expropriation was undertaken and is at present being intensified to meet the insatiable labour requirements of agriculture, mining and manufacturing industry. The Africans were given no opportunity to settle down as smallholders on the smouldering ruins of tribalism and gain a livelihood as independent farmers. Nor were they allowed to develop the traditions of private property in land. Since, however, a peasantry can arise and eke out some sort of existence under
the most adverse conditions, it has always been ruling class policy, sanctified by custom and hallowed by tradition, to subject the oppressed to mass evictions from areas where they might take root and then to remove them to districts where they may become more dependent on and accessible to the employers of labour. Our agrarian problem is certainly not a peasant problem. It is the problem of an agricultural proletariat on European farms, of ruined cultivators in the Reserves, the worker aspect of whose economic habits is being emphasised at the expense of their peasant character.

Secondly, under the impact of industrialisation and the irrevocable capitalist process of transforming ever larger layers into wage workers, the landless Africans today, like the landless Afrikaners of yesterday, are seeking to escape from rural poverty by migrating to the cities where industry offers them better scope for employment. Whereas in India a peasantry was deliberately created to supply Britain with raw material, South Africa was, by contrast, never regarded as an agricultural colony. Very early in her career, South Africa came to be regarded, not as a supplier of goods, but as a supplier of labour, first to feed a predatory pre-capitalist subsistence economy, and then the mines, capitalist agriculture and industry. Whereas in India the masses saw no outlet for their land problems, the people of South Africa saw in industry an escape from rural unemployment; or otherwise they perforce became agricultural labourers, thereby developing down the years a psychology different to that of a landholder.

And thirdly, in as much as industrialisation and its concomitant - urbanisation - is an irreversible trend, the problem of developing the rural productive forces, in a period of large-scale production, cannot be solved by a return of the dispossessed to the land and their reversion to small-scale farming. The peasant, as the pack animal of mankind, is clearly an anachronism in such a dynamic set-up and it would therefore be anti-historical to call him to life again.

In every Colonial country, nascent capitalism must create a social buttress for its rule by creating a middle class and, more particularly, a landlord class. Up till 1870 this country was regarded neither by the Dutch nor by the British as a source of raw material which would have necessitated the creation of a peasantry to sweat and toil for an overseas market. She fulfilled the role of a military outpost to guard the approaches to the East, both for the Dutch Company and Britain. During this period the problem of colonising the interior did not fall within the purview of both Dutch and British policies. Indeed, to save the British purse from administering territory which was unprofitable, the Sand River and Bloemfontein Conventions of 1852 and 1854, respectively, repudiated English authority over the area north of the Orange River.

Of cardinal importance, however, is the fact that a large and growing number of white settlers had come to regard this country as their very own and consequently severed all connections with their country of origin. One reason was the conflict of interests between the Dutch colonists and the J.E.I.C. which looked upon the Cape as a going concern only in so far as it could further the interests of the merchants of Holland. More important was the fact that, contrary to popular fallacy, there were large unoccupied tracts of land which encouraged the colonists to move away from the Cape and meet their need for grazing land in the interior of the Cape. That white colonisation began from the south at a time when the African tribes were moving in from the north and expanding along the eastern seaboard is of crucial impor-
-tance. That both groups were semi-nomadic pastoralists, bent on occupying new grazing areas, is a circumstance that precipitated the land wars.

It was the presence of these white settlers with an insatiable greed for land that precluded the traditional line of capitalist development. For when the mines were opened up, most of the arable areas had already been seized or occupied by the Boer pastoralists. With machine production the demand for labour grew more acute. Thus it became necessary, a fortiori, to create a nation of landless people, and to eliminate by force of arms any independent producers on the land.

We see here a close correspondence between the lines of class exploitation and the lines of colour. The alternative to a native peasant and landlord class as a social bulwark was furnished first by the whites generally and later by a white labour aristocracy.

In contrast to China and Mexico, for example, the introduction of an acquisitive social system took place in an environment where the tribes had not reached the stage of private property in the means of production. There was therefore no propertied class which the conquerors could use as the basis for class differentiation among the people and as a social base for their rule. In point of fact, the position of the chief almost invariably depended on his observance and consolidation of a classless society. Nor was there, as in India, a caste of officials or bureaucratic apparatus which could form the groundwork for the creation of a landlord class. Primitive communalism was one and indivisible. Hence the violence that was used to bring about its abolition.

If the social base of capitalist rule over the black millions came to be provided by a white labour aristocracy and not a white landlord class, then this is eloquent testimony to the elimination of a peasantry, whether white or black. The labour needs of an expanding capitalist economy were too acute. The imperious need of capitalism to speculate and invest in land, at the expense of the small producer, had perforce to be gratified. In no other country were the middle layers of rural society eliminated with such rapidity.

3. The land Wars and the Labour Wars.

All the communities comprising the South African nation are the descendants of immigrants from across the seas and of those who migrated to this country from North and Central Africa. No group can therefore lay claim to South Africa or any portion thereof on the grounds of original occupation. If the Hottentots had any right at all to dislodge the Bushmen (1) - the first wave of migration from the North - then the Africans, as the last arrival from across the Zambezi, had the same right to dislodge both. And by the same token the Europeans had the right to expropriate all (2) The approach to the racial problem must transcend the claims of "races."

(1) The terms "Hottentots" and "Bushmen" are regarded as terms of abuse. It is preferable nowadays to call them respectively, the Khoi-Khoi and the Batwa.

(2) The brief historical survey of the development of the land question that follows lays no claim to original research. The material, some of which bears the hallmark of vintage, has been gathered from secondary sources. It has been used to depict the singular line of Colonial conquest in this country. A bibliography is given at the end of this article.
other to regain possession of, land in that part of the
country. But it serves no purpose to determine which side
was responsible for each of the nine so-called Frontier Wars.
Rather have we to view the struggle against the wider back­
ground of the universal struggle for land in which the Boers,
with better techniques and therefore better organisational
forms, were able to employ the more ruthless and insidious
means to expropriate the Africans.

What aggravated the struggle was not so much the
differences between the two groups, but precisely their simi­
larities. Both were pastoralists carrying on agriculture as
a side-line; both were semi-nomadic; both had to expand to
gain control of more land and secure supplies of water. But
if the Boers were, economically speaking, simply an advanced
African tribe, the different concepts of property which the
conflicting camps observed admitted of no modus vivendi be­
tween them: in point of fact, they called for the total de­
struction of the one social organisation by the other. The
Africans knew only of usufructuary rights, not individual own­
ership in land. Every allotment or fountain reverted to the
tribe in the event of non-user by the occupier. This was a
system which knew nothing of fences and boundaries - the badges
of private property. It was therefore natural enough that the
Africans honoured in the breach all boundary agreements with
the Boers. They were agreements which were in most cases not
only unfair to the Africans, but which had perforce to be
thrown to the winds by both sides because of the pressing need
for land.

The expulsion of the Xhosa to the east bank of the
Keiskamma River had the effect of creating a severe congestion
on the land. After every war, to be sure, the seizure of land
and cattle did violence to tribal communalism and hastened its
dissolution. For without these means of subsistence, many
were left destitute and rudely lost their tribal ties.

With the expansion of Boer territory, his labour
needs increased. After every war, indeed, the Boers willing­
ly took the impoverished tribesmen as farm hands. The land
wars were also labour wars.

The introduction to the Africans of European goods
by the system of bartering created new needs among them, under­
mined tribal crafts and destroyed the unity between tribal
agriculture and industry. In this way the self-sufficiency
of tribal life was destroyed.

As a result of the War of the Axe (1846-7), the
area between the Fish and the Keiskamma was annexed as the
district of Victoria East in which the so-called Fingoes
were given a small location, leaving the greater part of the
area for European occupation. The "Fingoes" became an
accessible labour supply.

The system of residential segregation in the shape
of locations was an administrative measure for exploitative
ends. In 1849, the Secretary of State for the Colonies,
Earl Grey, wrote to Governor Harry Smith as follows: "Per­
manent locations should be established within the Colony; in
selecting the sites of these locations, sufficient intervals
should be left between each of them for the spread of white
settlements; each European immigrant would thus have it with­
in his power to draw supplies of labour from the locations in
his immediate proximity." These locations had of set purpose
to be severely limited in size lest they become self-sufficient
and so defeat the aim of forcing their inhabitants to seek
regular work. Said Grey: "I conceive that it would be
difficult or impossible to assign to the natives such loca­
tions of an extent sufficient for their support as a pastoral
people ... I regard it, on the contrary, as desirable that
these people should be placed in circumstances in which they should find regular industry necessary for their subsistence." To the land policies of South Africa, the words of that astute Imperialist, Lord Curzon, are more apposite: "Administration and exploitation go hand in hand." For having been uprooted from the land, the Africans had to sell their labour power in order to survive, while the Indian masses were tied to the land to produce goods with which they had to part for a song. A predatory white community, with land and labour needs, brooked no policy of giving the Africans any land.

After the 1850-53 War, European settlers were introduced in British Kaffraria, between the Keiskamma and Kei Rivers. The "rebellious clans" were thrust back and more locations were created for the African labourers. The Gaika tribe was given 600 square miles of territory which was clearly too small to sustain them. The Tembu were given the Tambookie location which some 16000 persons left each year to work on the European farms. Kreil, chief of the Gaika tribe, was expelled from the area between the Kei and Bashee Rivers. Europeans filled up the expropriated areas.

The construction of roads, bridges and public works led to an increasing demand for labour. It is therefore no coincidence that wars corresponded with periods of acute labour shortage. Many tribesmen had to part with their cattle to buy the European goods which had eliminated tribal industries and created new wants. Thus after the 1856 War there were in the Mdlambe location 1.02 head of cattle per head of the entire population; in British Kaffraria it was 0.76 and among the "Fingoess" 0.07. Because of this impoverishment, from 33-34000 Tembu and Xhosa had entered the services of the whites by 1858. The "Fingo" location at Healdtown had to depend on labour services for their livelihood because their arable allotments averaged only 4 acres of barren land. One-third of the Peddie location was in the service of the colonists. By 1865 the majority of the Xhosa were leaving the locations in search of work.

It is significant that the so-called National Cataclysm of the Ama-Xhosa coincided with a period when the colonists were demanding more land and more labour. It would repay serious study to determine in how far the Colonial government either initiated or encouraged this mass self-destruction. Be that as it may, the readiness with which the Xhosa turned to magic to deal with their conquerors testifies to the heavy losses they had suffered in land and cattle and the desperate measures to which they resorted to deal with a desperate situation.

The famine that resulted gave Governor Grey his opportunity: 30,000 were pressed into the service of the farmers and the lands of the chiefs were either reduced or confiscated. Yielding to the clamour of the colonists more land was incorporated into the Colony. The need for lebensraum became chronic.

4. The Great Trek and the Aftermath.

The mass exodus of the Boer pastoralists on the Eastern Frontier across the Cape Colonial borders in 1836 is called the Great Trek. In a sense it was the logical and inevitable development of the 18th Century trek movement in search of more land. Economically, it was accelerated by the knowledge that there were tracts of land beyond the Cape borders where their insatiable appetites could be satisfied. Politically, it took an organised form by Boer resentment at the British-sponsored renovation of the Cape's institutions to bring them into line with 19th Century liberalism. Tactically, the Great Trek represented an outflanking movement of the African tribes in the Eastern Province from which a frontal attack had failed to dislodge them. And strate-
gically, it proved to be an encircling movement of the Xhosa, South Sotho and Zulu tribes who were finally split by Boer penetration into Natal. This placed the Boers in a commanding position to attack from the rear the Africans on the Eastern Frontier.

The Great Trek not only opened up new regions for colonization. By that very fact, it increased the labour needs of the colonists and imperiously called for the expropriation of the African tribes.

But by virtue of the very nature of their subsistence economy the Boers were incapable of corroding primitive communalism and assimilating the Africans into their natural society. The relatively small labour requirements of a simple pastoral society did not call for the creation of a working class as an integral part of the productive system. Thus the Boers sought to ensure a regular supply by establishing military control over tribes and recruiting individuals from such tribes for regular work within the borders of their Republics. Territorial segregation was the logical outcome of such an arrangement. The Africans could consequently not enjoy any rights, including land rights, within the Voortrekker States.

Where, however, their labour requirements had been satisfied the Boers pursued a policy of what French historians of Colonial development call the refoulement - the driving back of the Africans, of the appropriation of their land and, where possible, their extermination.

After the annexation by Britain of the Republic of Natal in 1843, it was Theophilus Shepstone as Secretary for Native Affairs who laid the foundation of the system of Reserves in that territory. They were of set purpose too small for the Africans to be self-sufficient in them. For example, 50,000 were settled in the three reserves of Inandi, Umvoto and Umlazi consisting in the main of sandy and barren areas. The population gave a density of 55 persons to a square mile or 11½ acres per individual. Despite this congestion, the colonists, increased by regular British immigrants, wanted the Reserves further reduced and so force forth from them "an abundant and continuous supply of kaffir labour."

In 1865 the Natal Native Trust was created to hold the locations in trust for the Africans of the Colony. In some cases only was the grant of locations accompanied by the right to purchase land outside their borders. Of 12,000,000 acres in Natal, the Africans were given a mere 2,000,000. The blacks then numbered 300,000 and the whites 20,000.

The wars between the Free State Boers and the Basutos were essentially land wars. For ever since 1836 they were trying to settle by force of arms the question of the ownership of the fertile Caledon River basin. The struggle was aggravated by the indiscriminate distribution of largesse to the Boers by Warden, the British Resident of the Orange River Sovereignty between 1848 and 1854. Mosesh, the Basuto Chief, rigorously protested that the Warden Line, drawing the boundary between the Boers and the Basutos, cut off his people from some very fertile land. War resulted. The Boers executed the policy of refoulement with extreme ferocity, leaving the Basutos in possession of mountain fortresses which could not sustain their herds. The disastrous effect of these wars could be seen in the forcible export of Basuto labour to the European areas.

Nowhere was the policy of refoulement pursued with such a vengeance as in the Transvaal. By legal chicanery and punitive expeditions the Boers appropriated large tracts of tribal land.
The spirit in which the Boers carried out their campaigns is reflected in the "Staats Courant" of 1858: "The time has gone by for trifling any longer with these faithless savages; although the hostile tribes are numerous, well-armed and confident, we have no doubt that the Commando ... will be easily able to give such an account of themselves, that a future history of the Batlapis (sic) will be unnecessary ... We trust that our people will do their best to root them out."

The westward drive of the Transvaal was not actuated only by the prospects of material gain: it aimed at gaining control of the vital strategic Road to the North which traders, missionaries and political adventurers serving British Imperialism used to gain access to and ultimate control of Central Africa. In attempting to stand astride this Road, the South African Republic sought to prevent Britain from out-flanking her and then threatening her with an encircling movement which would finally have meant the corruption and assimilation of their subsistence economy.

5. Industrialisation and Landlessness.

If the first step in the process of Colonial conquest is the expropriation of the people's land then the next step is the appropriation of their labour. This stage was ushered in by the discovery of diamonds and gold. Mining made necessary the introduction of machines which in turn called for the concentration of hired labour in and around the productive units. Such labour meant detribalised labour. The Africans had thus to be released from the protective system of tribalism and attached to the industrial machine. It is understandable therefore that in the decade following the opening of the mines, the most serious wars were waged against the Africans and the most obnoxious taxes imposed.

Not only did mining lead to the dissolution of tribal life. It also dealt a death blow to the particularism of the Boer subsistence economy. For when the demand for agricultural and pastoral products to feed the industrial areas became acute, the patriarchal farmer now began to rationalize his farming to produce for a market. Land itself became a machine, requiring a working class and a market. Land prices rocketed. The capitalists themselves began to speculate and invest in land. Those farmers who could not adjust themselves to the new conditions of production sold out and swelled the ranks of the new proletariat. The modern farmer took his place. The capitalist became territorialised. The land question began to assume the form we know it today.

Because of the activity of the ubiquitous land-jobbers, the white colonists now began to suffer from land hunger which they could not satisfy as all the productive areas had already been settled. They now began to demand the expropriation of more land in the occupation of the Africans. Pressure was brought on the Cape Parliament for the enforcement of stricter labour laws.

Disputes among the Africans themselves revealed the acute land shortage. Too little land in South Africa does not necessarily mean a shortage in terms of size. Very often, indeed, the Africans suffered in spacious areas which were utterly barren, in areas of low rainfall cut off from waterways and fountains.

By 1877 it was estimated that the majority of able-bodied men of the Eastern Province were dependent upon wages, in money or in kind, as an important source of income. Their increasing needs forced them out. They were forced to part with their cattle to buy essential articles. Many, again, had to buy back at double and treble prices the crops
they had sold in good seasons, when famines came.

The purpose of taxation was not only to force Africans to work. It was to encourage them to buy European goods, to relieve the white landholder from paying his due share and help in the cost of administering the reserves and locations. In the Cape Colony and Natal a hut tax of 10/- and 7/-, respectively, was imposed on the inhabitants of each reserve. To prevent them from settling on Crown lands, Natal imposed a charge of 1/- per hut on all Africans living on them. In the Cape 10/- was charged for the same purpose.

To check squatting on private lands in the Cape, the Act of 1876 imposed a tax on both landowner and African, but it exempted Africans "in the bona fide employment of the owner of the land." Many landowners preferred to clear off their tenants rather than pay. Others simply increased the rentals of their African tenants.

In 1876 the hut tax of 7/- was doubled in Natal. Indirect taxation also contributed. Thus the cheap goods imported for African consumption were more heavily taxed than the goods intended for the European market. The Bill introduced in the Natal Legislature was welcomed in 1880 because it forced Africans to wear European clothing in certain localities to promote a civilised standard and increase the labour supply by forcing the Africans to go out to earn money to buy clothing. Because of these measures, Lieutenant-Governor Musgrave was able to state in 1873: "...it is my firm conviction that more than half of these (43,000 adult males) are always employed in the services of the Whites in some capacity."

The introduction of individual land tenure in the Cape aimed at undermining the tribal communal system and forcing the Africans to get the wherewithal to buy land and thereby reduce the bulk to landlessness, not only because few could afford to buy allotments, but because there was not enough land. It was welcomed by the colonists as it promised to end "the give and take protective system of tribal life." Writes the "Standard and Mail" in 1879: "...it cannot be denied that the land question is, with reference to native affairs at the Cape, one on which the position of the Colonists depends. When tribal tenure is allowed to exist in extensive areas occupied by a numerous population, that population may attain a certain degree of prosperity and make some advance in civilisation, but they will soon multiply, find their lands too narrow, and get in between the Colonists in such numbers as ultimately to get the better of them and push them back, whereas the Colonists are debarred from getting any of the lands held by native tribes ... The introduction of individual tenure ... is the remedy for this evil." Land monopoly as a result of industrialisation had forced the colonists to look to the reserves to relieve their appetites for more fields.

Rhodes clearly revealed the real intention of the Glen Grey Act (1894) when he introduced it in the Cape Parliament. "You will," he said, "remove them from that life of sloth and laziness. You will teach them the dignity of labour and make them contribute to the prosperity of the State, and make them give some return for our wise and good government." The peculiar feature of the Glen Grey Act is that it did create a large peasantry, not as an end in itself, but as a means of forcing those people who could not buy land out of those areas where individual titles were granted. Fifty thousand individual titles were finally registered. It was introduced at a time when, because of land shortage, the grant of every individual plot reduced many others to complete landlessness, forcing them to work to pay the labour tax of 10/-.

The purpose of the tax was clear enough when it was stated that Africans who were in regular employment were excluded from paying it.
Between 1894 and 1911 the system of individual holding was extended from the Glen Grey district to seven others. The provision of "one man," one lot" was strictly enforced to drive the members of each family with individual holdings on to the labour market. Moreover, they could not sell their allotments which were confiscated if they were found guilty of rebellion or anti-government activities. It could confidently be said towards the end of the century: "There is no more vacant land for the young swarms to hive off into now. Thus the land question is bound up with the labour question. The man who has no land and no trade must work for some one who has."

As a result of the wars between the Free State Boers and Basutos, the latter were reduced to landlessness and forced to go out to work. From no other territories did they go out in greater numbers. Over 6,500 passes were issued for Basutos in 1874. Many could come home for only short periods and then go out again. Not enough could be grown to feed them, to pay their fines and taxes, buy ploughs, saddles, blankets or pay for imported merchandise. Their small allotments made pastoral farming "impossible. We can't even want to live in," complained a Basuto chief. "At present our cattle herds have to stand all day huddled close together round the gardens; there is no room for the stock - no open pasturage."

In Natal the eyes of the colonists were on the rich lands of Zululand. Not only did they require this area to ease their land shortage; they were clamouring that Zululand be changed from "a man-slaying human military machine" into a "useful class of native labourers." They had to be "emancipated from an unnatural restraint upon their freedom to be labourers."

The Transvaal Boers had already begun to encroach on Zululand and received "legal" recognition of their expansion into the Blood River territory when Cetewayo, the Zulu chief, ceded it to them. The ceded territory became an area of landless Africans and its boundaries began to drift into Zululand. Panda, Cetewayo's father, then complained: "In a little while the Boers will not leave me room enough in which to stretch my legs." After the Zulu War of 1879, the territory was divided into 13 reserves.

6. The Land Speculators.

In 1870 Griqualand consisted of 30,000 square miles. Here the Griquas were gradually deprived of their farms by the colonists and speculators. Farms of 3,000 morgen were expanded by "jumping" land on either side. Thus farms of 8,000 morgen were not uncommon. In many cases the land occupied by the Griquas was useless when the Europeans controlled the frontage to rivers and springs or deliberately diverted them.

The land hunger was aggravated by the activities of the speculators. They even espoused the cause of the Griquas in the latter's disputes with the Europeans. They knew that the Griquas would more readily part with their farms by attaching their signatures to a meaningless document. In the Land Court of Griqualand, Judge Stockenstroom was heard to comment on this procedure: "All who have watched the evidence during the proceedings must have been struck with the marvellous facility with which those who had gained the confidence of these natives can induce them to append their signatures to any document upon a mere statement of its alleged contents." He had given 150,000 acres to the Europeans, but in 1875 they had increased this total to 420,000, while the Non-Europeans had a mere 100,000.

In the Transvaal the land sharks hired freebooters to loot the tribes, carry off cattle, kill the game and annex the expropriated areas for them. The Bechuanas were soon impoverished.
The land monopoly of the speculators caused an artificial land shortage and artificial over-population, to say nothing of absentee landlordism. They "held land in close proximity of towns and along the main roads of commerce; these desirable sites of settlement are not only kept from the hands of those who could turn them to advantage under a system of small culture, but they are also kept as barriers against the occupation of more remote districts, drawing around such districts wide corridors of desolation." Over 5 million acres of land in Natal belonged to private companies in 1874, and these were occupied by Africans. The European settler also began to suffer from land hunger.

In the Transvaal immense tracts of the best lands had passed into the hands of those who also hoped to profit by selling at high prices when land values rose.

It is one of the cardinal features of the land policies of South Africa that the right to unfettered ownership was severely restricted for Africans. Until Union, only in the Cape and Natal were they allowed to own land. In the Free State no African was allowed to own individual titles to land. In the Transvaal the Republic held land in trust for them. But in 1905 a Supreme Court decision established the right of Africans to own land.

By the turn of the century, there was a general feeling among the whites that Africans were successfully evading the laws designed to force them to work. Many had the money to squat on private and Crown lands. Others, again, were buying farms in the Cape, Natal and the Transvaal. It was to deal with this tenacious resistance to the process of transforming them into labourers that the Inter-Colonial Commission of 1903-5 made a number of important recommendations to arrest the growth of a property-owning class among them and drive them on to the labour market.

"Purchase by Natives," it observed, "should in future be limited to certain areas to be defined by legislative enactments." It went on to say: "...the time has arrived when lands dedicated and set apart as locations, reserves or otherwise, should be defined, delimited and reserved for the Natives by legislative enactment" and "that this should be done with a view to finality in the provision of land for the Native population...thereafter no more land should be reserved for Native occupation." The Commission proposed the following: "The creation, subject to adequate control, of Native locations for residential purposes near labour centres or elsewhere on proof that they are needed," and "that the right of occupation of the land so defined and set apart shall be subject to a condition of forfeiture in case of rebellion."

The Report went on to say: "If this process (the buying of land by Africans) goes on, while at the same time restrictions exclude Europeans from purchasing within Native Areas, it is inevitable that at a not very distant date the amount of land in Native occupation will be undesirably extended...They will buy land at prices above its otherwise market value, as their habits and standards of living enable them to exist on land that is impossible for Europeans to farm on a small scale."

There was, indeed, an outcry against the so-called rapid buying up of farms by Africans in the Transvaal ever since the Supreme Court decision of 1905. Thus according to the Minister of Lands, there were in 1913 some 73 African farms registered in the Transvaal covering 144,416 morgen and valued at £94,907.

To arrest the growth of an African peasantry and transform cultivators into labourers, the Native Land Act of 1913 was passed. The solution of the labour question was to