The old antithesis between “idealism” and the various brands of “realism” (such as Realpolitik and dialectical materialism) has plagued social science from the days of Hegel to the present via Marx, Weber, Pareto, Mosca, Parsons et al. The safe, eclectic, compromise position inherent in the model of “multiple and reciprocal causation” has by now become one of the most common escape mechanisms to this dilemma, as indeed to most other dilemmas in social science. But unless one disentangles the amorphous causative cobweb created by the model of multiple and reciprocal causation and delimits the sphere and level of operation of the various factors, one cannot hope to proceed beyond the platitudinous statement that “it all hangs together”.

The present paper is a modest and crude attempt to disentangle the “idealist” and “realist” strains in South African Nationalist policies since 1948, with special reference to the “colour policy”. The latter has been interpreted with equal plausibility and onesidedness as either an honest (if misguided and impractical) attempt to solve the South African “colour problem”, or as a deliberate, cynical, plot to divide and rule. Both interpretations lead to the inescapable conclusion that apartheid is despotic. The first interpretation draws a somewhat more palatable picture of obsolete, paternalistic, benevolent despotism, whereas the second view evokes the spectrum of ruthless Fascism using “ideal” apartheid as an ideological smoke-screen. Evidence for the two views can be found in the two recognized currents of Nationalist thought: on the one hand the “ideal”

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1. Leo Kuper contributed valuable suggestions to this paper but the responsibility for the views herein expressed is entirely our own.
apartheid of SABRA intellectuals and the Dutch Reformed Churches, and on the other hand the "practical" apartheid of the government.

Both extreme views are, in our opinion, inadequate. The "idealist" view fails to account for the instruments and methods used in implementing apartheid, for the brutally repressive aspects of the policy, and for cynical and blunt remarks made by prominent politicians. The "realist" view does not account for the purely gratuitous or the self-defeating aspects of Government policy such as the antagonizing of the English-speaking Whites over the Republican issue, the estrangement of the completely westernized Coloured population, the discouraging of White immigration, and the extension of African primary education.²

Our argument is that both the "idealist" and the "realist" strains, both the benevolent and the Fascist forms of despotism are found in South Africa since 1948. But the apparent incompatibility between the two strains is resolved insofar as they each operate at a different level. The answer lies in the old dilemma of means versus ends that is inherent in the exercise of power. The ideology of Afrikaner Nationalism is a complex blend of provincialism, isolationism, xenophobia, pastoralism, egalitarianism within the Herrenvolk, and deeply ingrained colour prejudice with a touch of condescending benevolence so long as the master-servant relationship is unthreatened.³ The nostalgic and idealized vision of the Golden Age of the Boer Republics in the 19th century (which vision was the heritage of defeat in the South African War) was translated into reactionary policy when the National Party came to power in 1948. The ends of Nationalist policies are the restoration of the Golden Age. Nationalist ideology is despotic, obsolete and reactionary, but not Fascist.⁴ It does not for example idealize the supremacy of the State at the expense of the individual or stress the Führer principle with a rigid hierarchical delegation of power in the State. However the means to re-establish the bygone utopia have increasingly become those of modern Fascism. The choice of these means, given the ends of apartheid, is predetermined by internal South African conditions of advanced technology, industrialization and urbanization, as we shall try to show later.

2. African education is, of course, rigidly controlled by the State since 1954, but why should the Africans be allowed to receive any education at all, if apartheid were purely repressive ?


4. The Ossewa-Brandwag is the only large-scale Afrikaner organization with a distinctly Nazi ideology, and it began to fade away in 1942 after a bitter struggle with the National Party under Malan from which Malan emerged victorious.
We must first disclaim any adherence to two extreme views. The first is that apartheid in the restricted sense of segregation and discrimination on the basis of colour originated in 1948. The absurdity of that view is obvious. The second and opposite point of view is that the United and National Parties hold basically to the same colour policies. This latter statement has almost become a dictum in "liberal" circles, and is incorrect or at least misleading.

Parliamentary opinion in many modern democratic systems of government is organized into parties which can be ordered in a continuum from "right" to "left" with the "center" standing for gradual reform and ordered meliorism. Conservative and reactionary parties are lumped together as belonging to the "right", and radical parties form the "left". In South Africa, the disenfranchisement of the 80% of the population most likely to vote "left" has restricted the parliamentary spectrum to the "right". "Center" groups such as the Progressive, Labour and Liberal Parties have either been absorbed into the "right", hardly gained any parliamentary foothold, or been in a highly precarious position. Leftist opposition has, of course, always been extra parliamentary. It is quite correct to say then, that both the United and the National Parties are right wing parties, and fundamentally agree on many issues such as White supremacy, but this does not mean that the two parties play a similar role.

The United Party is conservative i.e. stands for the status quo, whereas the National Party is reactionary i.e. stands for change. As is generally the case, the status quo party has been on the defensive and has lost ground, and the change party has been on the offensive and has gained ground. At the same time, the status quo party has tended to move (with a time lag) in the direction of the change party, or in other words to accept the new status quo as modified by the change party. As in most parliamentary systems the South African judiciary has played the conservative role of slowing down change, in this case reactionary change. The South African cycle of cumulative reaction is the opposite of the more familiar Western European cycle of gradual and cumulative reform, but the basic mechanisms are the same in both cases. Very simply, whether the change party is "left" or "right" of the status quo party will determine the direction of change.

Let us now turn to the first part of our central argument, namely that Nationalist policies attempt to turn the clock backward to the Golden Age of the Boer Republics. It is obvious, indeed platitudinous,

5. This is, of course, a logical evolution for a status quo party to undergo. Indeed, the evolution is inherent in the definition of a status quo party, for, if this evolution did not take place, then the status quo party would become either reactionary or radical depending on the direction of change.
to remark that ever since Malan's split from the old Nationalist Party of Hertzog, the rise of the "purified" Nationalist Party has meant the increasing ascendancy of the defeated Boer Republics, the gradual elimination of the compromise of Union, and the ever more militant embodiment of extreme Afrikaner nationalism. The outward symbols of such nationalism (from national anthem to the design of stamps and of flags) are a constant reminder of this trend. Yet, as regards colour policy, the argument is often heard that apartheid is merely the logical continuation and intensification of the policies of previous governments. If apartheid is defined narrowly as racial segregation and discrimination, the argument is of course correct. It is also true that all governments since Union have unequivocally stood for perennial White supremacy. But apartheid is much more than that. It is part of a broader Weltanschauung which looks on the Boer Republics, or rather, on an idealized and mythical version of conditions in the Boer Republics as the Golden Age of South Africa. In the words of the Prime Minister on May 31, 1960: "We should control the future of our State and people in the same way as it was controlled for us by our forefathers."

The relative simple pastoral society of the Boers in the 19th century saw itself threatened by two enemies. On the one hand, the Bantu tribes were a constant threat to immediate survival. On the other hand, the British Empire and all it represented (capitalism, urbanism, liberalism) challenged both the political autonomy of the Republics and all the values that the Boers considered basic to their way of life: isolationism, austere Calvinism, a deeply rooted colour prejudice against all dark peoples, an idealization of the free, simple, wholesome pastoral way of life. These threats were, and still are, too realistic for the Afrikaner fears to be called paranoid. The outside world is and has always been hostile to the Afrikaners with the exception of the short interlude of the South African War when the Boers aroused the world's sympathy for the underdog, that same sympathy that is now turned against them. Capitalism, urbanization, the uitlanders, liberalism have indeed spelled the doom of the Republics and now continue to undermine Nationalist policies.

Evidence of Nationalist xenophobia, isolationism and attempts to revive the political structure of the Boer Republics is too clear to need elaboration. However, the extent to which Nationalist non-European policies also endeavour to reproduce pre-War conditions is not as apparent. Whatever case may be made for "positive" apartheid in relation to the Africans, Nationalist policies towards the Indians have been entirely negative and repressive. To quote from a Party brochure: "The Party holds the view that Indians are a foreign and outlandish element which is unassimilable. They can never become
part of the country and must therefore be treated as an immigrant community." From the Nationalist point of view, Indians symbolize everything that the Afrikaner Volk opposes. They are not only a non-White group, but they are also uitlanders, a city people, and, as far as the Transvaal Indian community is concerned, a trading people. They only began to appear in the Transvaal by the close of the Golden Age, hence they are an alien, superfluous, unassimilable group to be eradicated from South Africa. Since attempts at "repatriation" of the Indians to India have failed, Asians must be systematically uprooted and ruined by the discriminatory application of the Group Areas Act.

Nationalist policy towards the Coloureds has always been characterized by ambivalence. On the one hand they share for the most part, the language, religion and culture of the Herrenvolk. But, at the same time, they are only a second-rate "bastardly" off-shoot of Afrikanerdom and the product of a shameful process of miscegenation. They are valuable insofar as they identify with the Europeans no matter how much they are deprived of privileges, or at least remain politically passive. Since they did not enjoy the franchise in the Boer Republics it is clear that they should be deprived of their rights in the Cape. Beyond the fact that the Government intends to keep the Coloureds apart from all other groups and accord them a status somewhat higher than the other non-Europeans, Nationalist policy towards them is unclear; no "national home" for the Coloureds is being contemplated.

Nationalist policy towards the Africans, in contrast to Coloured policy, forms a well-integrated programme of reaction. The ascendancy of its main architect to the post of Prime Minister indicates the important place that "Bantu policy" takes in the government's vision of the future (and by the same token of the past). The Boer Republics had to deal with basically two types of Africans: on the one hand the serfs or "apprentices" furnished the basic agricultural labour force of the Boers and lived in close contact with them, and on the other hand a number of Bantu tribes surrounded the White settlement. The policy of the Trekkers was to limit the former category to the minimum necessary labour force, and to push back the latter, defeat them militarily and render them harmless. By 1880 the Bantu tribes had ceased to be a military menace to the White settlers. The African population of the Republics now consisted of subservient helots in the service of the Boers or of broken, impoverished and dispossessed tribes of "raw kaffirs". The heroic phase of the Trek was over and the

6. Quoted in Thought, Johannesburg, S.A. Institute of Race Relations.
conquerors could now enjoy the fruits of victory... until the discovery of gold on the Rand spelled the doom of the quasi-feudal Republics.

Let us now examine the fundamentals of Nationalist Bantu policy and show that all of them attempt to reverse developments since the turn of the 20th century and revert to the Golden Age of the Republics. The main elements of the policy are:

1. permanent and complete denial of civic and political rights in the “European” state,
2. permanent and complete disarmament of the Africans, and White monopoly of the use of armed force,
3. influx control,
4. migratory labour policy,
5. development of tribal “Bantustans” under White control,
6. revival and idealization of tribal institutions,
7. segregation of Africans from other “races” and between Africans of various ethnic groups,
8. state controlled education in the vernacular.

All these elements are related to one another in a highly coherent programme. Some of those elements have been present in the African policy of previous governments, but only as disconnected and unsystematic measures to retard the development of a multiracial industrial society. Only with the present government have all of these elements been combined into a grand scheme of reaction. The first element follows simply from the postulate of inherent black inferiority. The principle of inequality and disenfranchisement was already clearly stated in the Constitution of the South African Republic: “The (Afrikaner) people will suffer no equality of whites and blacks either in state or in church.” It is clear therefore that the franchise policy of the British liberals and missionaries at the Cape must be reversed. By now the last vestige of African representation in Parliament has disappeared.

The second element is the product of a long period of frontier warfare between Boers and Bantu. From that history the notions emerged that guns are part of the treasured heritage of “Western Civilization”, that armed Africans are dangerous, and that only the British would think of arming Bantu. Any semblance of military organization among the Bantu must be smashed. Only then can the

8. As the cruder expressions of racialism have recently become unfashionable even in Nationalist circles, most leading Nationalists will outwardly deny any belief in inherent black inferiority and maintain that discrimination is based on cultural differences. If that were the case, then the Nationalist Party and the Progressive Party should be in basic agreement.
White man rule indefinitely. As a reluctant concession to the practical task of controlling the African masses, African policemen are armed with sticks, or, under the pressure of extreme necessity, with spears.

Influx control and the migratory labour policy with the whole complex machinery of pass laws are attempts at minimizing the number of permanently urbanized Africans. Ideally, there should be no city Africans at all, because the cities are "White", and because the urban African loses all the good qualities of the "raw tribal kaffir". He becomes an idler and a criminal, he absorbs all the dangerous notions put into his head by liberals, tsotsies, agitators, the English press, etc. . . . , and he loses his respect for the White baas. In short, he "forgets his place" as drawer of water and hewer of wood. Unfortunately, however, his labour is indispensable. As a reluctant compromise with economic realities, the minimum number of Africans is allowed to live in the "White" cities, but only temporarily and in menial capacities. In the words of Mr. Schoeman, Minister of Labour: "pick and shovel work is the natural work of the Native . . . the Native has a special aptitude for repetitive work".

Under no circumstances must Natives be allowed to compete with the Whites. Job reservations must be extended to cover all fields of employment; African labour must not be permitted to strike and African labour unions must not be recognized as bargaining instruments. The state knows what is good for the Natives and must be the sole mediator in labour disputes. Redundant Natives, idlers, tsotsis, agitators, etc. must either be sent to secret labour camps or deported to rural areas and be made to work at low wages for platteland farmers. The Europeans must be ready to make sacrifices in dispensing with African labour wherever possible and paying the cost of developing uneconomic ventures in border areas to decentralize industry. Urban Africans must live miles away from their places of employment, in ghettos carefully prevented from contaminating the White areas by buffer zones, brick walls, barbed wire, rows of trees, etc. To make cities even more unattractive to the Africans, the latter must not be allowed to own land in urban areas. Where they did, they must be deprived of their freehold rights. They must be made to carry reference books ("for their own protection", of course), to seek permits to seek employment, etc. They must be forbidden to drink any alcoholic beverage except "kaffir beer" brewed by the municipality and sold to them at a profit. Since all these vexations and disabilities still fail to deter Africans from coming to towns, they must be further

harrassed, intimidated and beaten by the police (again in their own interest, of course, to protect them against “tsotsis”).

In a nutshell, cities are bad, corrupting places, particularly for “childish” people like the Bantu. The fewer Africans in cities, the better, even at the cost of heavy economic sacrifices. Africans in “Europeans” areas must remain indefinitely a transient, menial, subservient, powerless, unorganized, undemanding proletariat.

The other side of Government Bantu policy is the development of the Bantustans. If Africans are discouraged from settling in the “European” areas, they must be encouraged to settle in the Native Reserves. If their urbanization is to be reversed, tribalism must be revived. The overpopulation and poverty of the Reserves make these areas inadequate to support even the 38% of the Africans still living there, much less an increased population. The fact that Africans continue to migrate to the cities is evidence enough of that inadequacy. It is also clear that vastly greater sums would be required to develop the Reserves than the government has spent to date or is likely to spend in the future. But here we are concerned more with the intent of the Bantustan policy than with its practicability. The intention of the policy is to recreate a set of semi-autonomous “tribal homelands” where Africans will lead a happy, idyllic rural existence sheltered from the evil influences of the cities, and under the wise and benevolent guidance of the Minister for Bantu Administration and Development (who knows what is good for the Bantu better than the Bantu himself). In 1951, Dr. Verwoerd has allayed any fears that these “tribal homelands” might be independent: “Now a Senator wants to know whether the series of self-governing Native areas would be sovereign. The answer is obvious . . . It stands to reason that White South Africa must remain their guardian.” Since then, the Prime Minister has outwardly reversed that position by stating that those “states” would in due course be developed towards complete self-government when they would become fit for it. One must however believe that the Prime Minister had such a long period of time in mind as to make his statement meaningless.

Clearly the intent of the Bantustan policy is to recreate a set of agricultural “states” rendered perpetually harmless, and under perennial White suzerainty such as existed towards the end of the Golden Age. Where tribal authorities and customs have long disap-

10. The same Nationalist concern applies to the platteland Afrikaner who “drifts” to the cities, loses his Afrikanerdom, and is in mortal danger of becoming anglicised and of voting United Party.

peared, they must be revived for "the best Bantu is the raw tribal one" with an "uncontaminated" mind. The tribal way of life is idealized as "best for the Bantu" in the same way as the Great Trek and the Golden Age of the Republics is idealized. Tribal dancing and festivals are encouraged as safe and wholesome pastimes. White officials playing the role of "Great White Father" condescendingly pat on the back of tribal puppets who gravely assure the government of their undying gratitude and servility. As each Volk must develop "along its own lines", each language group must be segregated from all other language groups. Children must be taught in their mother-tongue in government schools where they will learn to be satisfied with their humble lot. The elite will even be granted the privilege of attending bush colleges, safely away from the cities.

It would, in our estimation, be a distortion of the facts to believe that Nationalist policy towards the Africans is purely a conscious, sinister, machiavellian plot to divide and rule. The element of condescending benevolence and conviction that "we know what is good for them" cannot be disregarded. Neither can one ignore the Nationalist's projection of his own narrow provincialism on to other people who, far from struggling to preserve their ancestral culture, want to assimilate Western culture. Certain aspects of government Bantu policy even bear the stamp of paternalistic magnanimity within the rigid framework of master-servant relationships. From the point of view of material welfare, the Nationalist government has probably "done more for the Bantu" than its predecessor, partly under the interesting delusion that economic well-being (such as exists) is a substitute for political rights and for human dignity.

Kuper has lucidly shown that the present South African government is doing exactly the opposite of what social scientists have shown to improve race relations. That Nationalist policies have in fact immeasurably worsened race relations in South Africa has been abundantly and tragically illustrated by recent events. This is of course an unwanted consequence of Nationalist policies. The government is attempting to eliminate racial frictions in a competitive industrial society which, with Nazi Germany, is the most virulently racialist that the world has seen. The absurdity of the attempt, however, lies in the fact that the formula used is not only unethical by modern Western standards, but also obsolete. The government endeavours to recreate a paternalistic master-servant or suzerain-vassal relationship such as existed in the Golden Age of the pastoral Republics at a time when African Nationalism emerges victorious everywhere, and when overseas

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hostility steadily mounts. Apart from external pressures, the reaction scheme is being forced through under internal conditions of advanced industrialization and urbanization which doom the attempt from its inception.

So far, we have been concerned with the ideology of apartheid, not with its implementation. Now we must show how internal conditions predetermined the mode of implementation. Why has South Africa evolved toward a modern Fascist totalitarian state as Keppel-Jones so lucidly predicted?¹³

The ideology of Afrikaner Nationalism and of the Boer Republics is one of benevolent despotism rather than Fascism. Fascism is logically incompatible with the rugged individualism and the egalitarianism (within the Herrenvolk) of Boer frontier society. The difference between the organization of Hitler's Wehrmacht and that of the Boer Commandos of the 19th century, between the Nazi state and the loose patriarchical Republics should make it clear that the spirit as well as the reality of the Golden Age was not Fascist. Yet the South African state since 1948, while still falling short of Nazi totalitarianism, is steadily moving in that direction, as even a casual reading of the Public Safety Act or the Suppression of Communism Act cannot fail to convince one.

It is our contention that any attempt to implement the ends of apartheid, given a modern, technological, industrial, urban society must use the means of Fascism. The control of an increasingly educated and politically conscious non-European population of twelve millions (which are either actively or passively opposed to apartheid) is a different matter from the control of a few hundred thousand Bantu divided into tribal groups on the fringes of 19th century White settlement. More than one third of those twelve million people is concentrated in cities where it is exposed to outside news and "subversive" currents of thought. Modern communication systems make for the almost instantaneous spreading of mass resistance as witnessed in 1952 and 1960. These movements can only be repressed, not by the hasty and improvised gathering of volunteer Commandos as during the Golden Age, but by a highly centralized (if not very efficient) machinery involving a large bureaucracy, a secret police, a vast system of prisons and "labour camps", a mobile military force equipped with modern weapons from aeroplanes to armoured cars and machine guns, in short the arsenal of totalitarian repression.

Furthermore the executive branch of the government must be supreme and unhindered by the judiciary or the legislative branch. Rigging of the electoral system must ensure and perpetuate minority

rule, and give the government the power to change the Constitution and pass repressive legislation while keeping a façade of legality. If the courts rule against the government, new laws such as the Separate Amenities Act are promptly passed to close the last remaining loopholes. Legislation entrenching police powers of arbitrary arrest, search without warrant, etc., effectively suspend the rule of law under the specious appearance of legality. Other statutes outlaw such forms of peaceful opposition as strikes and passive resistance.\textsuperscript{14} Schools, broadcasting and the Afrikaans press are used as propaganda instruments for the ruling Party. The Party itself is tightly controlled by its secret and unofficial “executive committee”, the \textit{Broederbond}.

In short, then, internal conditions in South Africa have pre-determined the use of Fascist \textit{means} to implement an ideology which, in itself, is not Fascist. Fascism is a product of the 20th century, whereas Nationalist ideology is a revival of 19th century paternalistic despotism. Apartheid, the youngest child of this obsolete ideology is doomed within the near future. Even if apartheid were not an anachronistic white elephant accomplishing the opposite of its avowed aims, even if South Africa could isolate itself from world indignation, even if policies were applied in the most benevolent fashion by sincere and dedicated men, apartheid would still be an unethical monstrosity in its attempt to reduce men to the role of Aldous Huxley’s Epsilons. No amount of hypocritical denial can convince one that apartheid is anything but unmitigated \textit{baasskap}. If any doubt should remain on this point, the words of the late Prime Minister, Mr. Strydom should clarify the Nationalist position once and for all: “Our policy is that the Europeans must stand their ground and must remain \textit{baas} in South Africa.”\textsuperscript{15}

It is in the nature of tyranny that it can only be maintained by the ever increasing use of repressive force for which an ever more staggering price in money, fear and suffering has to be paid. The only question is whether this deepening whirlpool of insanity can still be broken short of bloody revolution. In any case, Dr. Verwoerd’s prediction of “hardships” facing South Africa\textsuperscript{16} will, one may safely forecast, be remembered as one of the greatest understatements of the 20th century.


\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Treatment of Indians in South Africa}, Washington, Government of India Information Services, p. 5.

\textsuperscript{16} Speech at Bloemfontein on June 30, 1960.