In the last few days, people throughout the world have been shocked, horrified and dismayed by reports of unhappy events that have occurred in South Africa.

It appears to me that recent happenings in South Africa have aroused a greater measure of indignation than other events which, in terms of killed and wounded, were so much worse. I want to try and see why this is so.

To us, looking at this problem from a distance, it seems that the deaths of several Africans in riots in that country are a direct consequence of a policy of apartheid that has been pursued vigorously over the last few years.

It seems to us that the South Africans have pursued this policy without regard for human suffering and for the human feelings of a great number of coloured people in their country. It seems quite clear that they have been doing all in their power to deny the coloured peoples of the Dominion of South Africa the normal political liberties which we of the British heritage place so dear. It seems also that the policy of apartheid stems from a false belief that one people are more important than another.

Although the happenings in South Africa are no worse and, indeed, not as bad as similar happenings that have occurred in many other countries over the last 10 to 15 years, the events in the Dominion of South Africa have been taken by the world as a symbol of the struggle of un-developed people and that, therefore, these events have aroused greater anger, greater hostility and greater apprehension for the future than other events in which more people lost their lives in other countries.

I do not recall the same feelings being aroused over the Kow Kow activities in Africa in which 13,000 people lost their lives; or when Russian tanks brutally quelled the rebellion in Hungary at the expense of many thousand Hungarian patriots. I don't recall the same feelings being aroused when the Chinese Communist Armies first suppressed Tibetan religious freedom, and then caused the Dalai Lama and his most intimate followers to flee for their lives into India.

The difference in opinion which has been aroused throughout the Free World may, perhaps, be accounted for in this way.
We know what the Russians and the Communists have done in the past, and we do not expect them to behave on the same high principle that we expect people of the British Dominions and the English speaking world to accept and to adhere to.

The Russians and the Communists have, in the course of this century, perpetrated so many brutalities, destroyed so many lives and purged so many people that when those things happen again in the Communist countries we tend to look upon it as very nearly the ordinary state of affairs. However, when an incident in which sixty people lose their lives happens in a country of the British Commonwealth, our anger and horror are aroused much more than by similar and worse happenings in other countries because this sort of happening seems to deny all the teachings and all the heritage which have been evolved through centuries of free democratic self-government.

Furthermore, hostility seems to be aroused in greater measure over this matter because the South Africans have done little to try and explain their policies to the world. In addition to this, they seem to be solving the problem of multi-racial society in a way which is anathema to us all. They appear to be trying to solve this problem by suppressing the coloured people whereas the British in the rest of Africa and whereas we, in Papua and New Guinea, are doing what we can to educate the whole native population so that they may gradually, at some time in the future, be masters of their own destiny. We are gradually teaching them how to guard their political liberties, how to cherish their freedom, and how to take part in their own democratic self-government. The South African policy of apartheid seems to be the reverse of these other accepted policies which most enlightened countries are pursuing in relation to coloured people.

There are, then, three main reasons why this matter has aroused much greater hostility and apprehension than events in other countries which have, in the past, resulted in much greater loss of life and in much greater misery. They are, firstly, the fact that the struggle in South Africa seems to have been adopted by the free people of the world as a symbol of the struggle of undeveloped people.
Secondly, the South Africa policy of apartheid seems to be the very opposite of the policy that other people are pursuing in relation to undeveloped peoples. They appear to us to be the very opposite of the policies which we, for instance, pursue in Papua and New Guinea. The fact that South Africa is not, to our way of thinking, marching with the times, arouses anger and disappointment. And thirdly, and this may be the strongest reason for us as a member of the British Commonwealth, we are most disturbed to think that that sort of thing can happen in a self-governing Dominion of the Commonwealth, especially in a self-governing Dominion that is ruled by white people.

All this means that our judgment on these matters tends to be a biased judgment. When looking for answers to these problems, we should try to treat the matters similarly, whether they occur in what is ostensibly a Democracy or whether they occur in a Communist country. I do not think we have done that over the last few days.