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Apartheid's bounds increase

THERE ARE IMPORTANT DATES in South Africa's calendar in the second half of 1966. Three of these will illuminate the continuing wretchedness of the human condition in the subcontinent, left behind when the rest of Africa won its freedom in the years before.

Two of these dates, 30 September and 11 October, mark the independence of Botswana (Bechuanaland) and Lesotho (Basutoland). At a vaguer date, presently believed to be "about the end of September", the International Court of Justice at the Hague is to decide whether South Africa is in breach of its mandate to administer South-West Africa, if, indeed, it reaffirms its 1950 advisory opinion that the old League of Nations mandate is still in force.

The free nations of Africa remained linked in complex ways with the countries that had ruled them. In every case the links were voluntarily kept up and in most the country's international relationships were diversified. The people of Africa have been launched into the world community, from which their previous colonial status had barred them. For Lesotho and Botswana the process is to be sadly different. Britain is to go and South Africa, on whom both are economically dependent, is to move in. Britain's mood of withdrawal, and the United States refusal to clash seriously with South Africa, mean that even a favourable verdict at the Hague will not free the South-West African people from continuing under South Africa's 47 years of oppression.

South Africa has been invited to attend the Botswana independence celebrations at Gaborone, and doubtless will be represented at Maseru 11 days later. And who can seriously believe that the Hague judgement will mean, on its own, a change in South Africa's colonial-type rule from Windhoek, unless it is towards tightening South African control?

The tragedy for all three states is that apartheid is the price of their dependence on South Africa. And apartheid is not simply segregation, it is certainly not "separate development", the plan South Africa has tried to promote in its place. At home, it is now called "*Eiesoortige ontwikkeling*" — "*own-sort*" development. This means that the rulers of South Africa decide that their black subjects will develop, not as full human beings in the world community, but "along their own lines", these lines being carefully drawn for them according to their rulers' assessment of their character and capabilities.

Apartheid means the subversion of the minds of its victims, the development in them of a conception of themselves as a different species from the next of mankind, and, the social climate of South Africa being what it is, inherently an inferior species. For those few who refuse to accept them there is exile, Robben Island, proscription or death.

Africa and the world must know the meaning of independence for Lesotho under the conciliatory Chief Leabua Janathan's minority government, and for poverty-stricken Botswana they must know the price of failure to free South-West Africa from South African oppression. It is the enslaving of men's minds on a scale and with a thoroughness unequalled since the slave trade or since Nazi Germany. All who stand by and let this happen are as guilty as those who undertake it.