

# HOW TO CIVILIZE NORTH AFRICA

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THE war has brought about such titanic changes in Asia and Europe during the last few years that it is very difficult to pay attention to any other area. Africa is a lamentable casualty of this geographic preoccupation. The battles for the Mediterranean coastline have given it a certain fleeting topicality, but despite these peripheral contacts with the war, this vast continent, enveloped in a haze of ignorance, misinformation, and indifference, is generally thought of nowadays (except by a few Berliners) as a subsidiary background for campaigns whose objects are more clearly understood.

Nevertheless, the continent is potentially one of the richest prizes of the war which at present seems so remote. But in order to realize its possibilities it is necessary to see beyond its myriad aspects and perceive its essential unity. Besides its specific material difficulties, there are problems of a more general nature which do not depend on the policy of any particular government, but are rather the ensemble of intricacies begotten by the relationship of Africa as a whole to western civilization. The basic problems are inherent in this relationship; the Nazis also would have to face them, and even though they may have different techniques of solution, all their ruthlessness and clear-sightedness will be unable to alter the relationship itself.

The peculiarity of Africa lies in the fact that the gap between the culture of its inhabitants and that of Europe is so great that it has converted the continent into a foreign chattel and reduced its peoples to an impotent serfdom. Its refractoriness and poverty, the flimsy material culture of the inhabitants and their disintegrate character, have always made Africa submissive to conquest and a recurrent prey to colonization. The history of Africa is merely the history of its colonizers.

In the modern era the chief colonizing forces have been Great Britain and France, and their colonial policies have, inevitably, reflected the cleavage in their national temperaments.

## I.

In looking at the world the French have always divided it into a French and a non-French portion, and have generally regarded those unenlightened by the Gallic sun with a great deal of good-humored contempt. But there has never been anything immutable in this relationship: it was extremely easy to become

French. The only thing necessary was the will. French civilization has always been open to all; it could be acquired merely by speaking French and behaving in the French manner.

The British, on the other hand, have always had the Old Testament view of themselves as a Chosen People, elevated above the ruck of humanity, by a felicitous pre-destination. In the division of the world into British and non-British (or even English and non-English) the differences are irrevocable. British qualities are not to be imitated, they can only be aped.

Accordingly, the attitude of the French towards the native peoples has been grounded on a perception that the inferiority of the natives' culture to that of France was merely an extreme variant of the general inferiority of all culture to that of France; the only solution was to apply the torch of the French Revolution and Gallic civilization to the unfortunate (not damned) barbarians and Frenchify them as quickly as possible. Simply put, Frenchification meant civilization.

For this reason, the dominant tendency in French colonial policy has been the Europeanizing of the natives as rapidly as possible. Or rather (to provide this facile surrender to the jargon of French officialdom with some meat) the aim of French policy has been the Frenchification of a native elite, which was to feel itself bound hand and foot to France and the French Empire by an indestructible identity of French culture. It has been the persistent aim of French government to create a Black France in Africa, organically welded to the metropolis.

The British never even dreamt of the possibility of a native's becoming British. The mere aspiration to such an ideal was so grotesque as to be unthinkable. And, since a native could not possibly become British, the next best thing (infinitely removed, of course) was to become the best sort of native the poor devil could. Because of this, the characteristic Anglo-Saxon expedient for dealing with subject populations has been segregation, which was ultimately to lead, theoretically, to the creation of a more or less symmetrical society, black and white harmoniously disentangled from each other and running in separate grooves.

From the French point of view the problem, in a broad way, seemed a simple one, a question of time. In their unsophisticated identifying of French civilization with civilization *per se*, the French have regarded themselves as culture-bearers. (Indeed they have always been characterized by their ability to give an air of matter-of-fact universality to their own institutions. When you go into a café, you are not being French—you are being

civilized. But anyone who walks into a tea-shop is obviously an Englishman, or at least an aspiring candidate.)

The manner in which the British combine this basic condescension with an air of respectful veneration is illustrated by their adjustment to the alien societies under their rule. Since the impulse of Empire is fundamentally material, and since the British are not possessed by the utopian notion of converting anyone to Anglo-Saxondom, it is appropriate for them to keep as remote from their subjugated communities as is compatible with the realization of their desires. This tendency—in essence a standard of efficiency—results in a fixation of the *status-quo* in any given community at the moment the British take control. Despite momentary aberrations, the British ideal of colonial government has always been indirect rule.

The classic example of this, of course, is India. To give merely one instance, at the time Britain took control of Indian life the caste system, a complex and dynamic institution, was in flux. It is impossible to say what would have happened to it without the British, but what they did was to congeal it at once and keep it in full bloom, making themselves the topmost caste. The caste system suited the British very well; the hierarchic structure and rigid stratification of society was ideally adapted to the exigencies of British colonial government.

Indirect rule has had the same object in primitive societies. The British have no desire to upset native authority merely for the sake of upsetting it: the most convenient way to run a country is to interfere with the natives as little as possible. Once a community has been integrated into a certain economic pattern, the British can content themselves with the maintenance of law and order. British policy is amply satisfied with "advising" hand-picked native chieftains, and sending out a corps of administrators to run the apparatus of authority.

The French policy of direct rule in their colonies reveals both the philosophy of assimilation and French businesslike attitude towards the problems of empire. Since the Frenchification of the native élite was merely a matter of time, there was no necessity to interpose an elaborate smoke-screen of native "authority" between the reality of French rule and the native masses. French rule began with the establishment of an elaborate bureaucratic apparatus, centred in Paris, and the direct administration of the colony, with no nonsense. The élite, quickly weaned away from their own masses by precisely this systematic Frenchifying, as a rule become genuinely devoted to the ideals of "l'oeuvre civilisatrice de la France."

In this connection the Arab colonization of Africa after Mohammed provides an historic parallel of striking interest. It combined the haughty exclusiveness of the British with the Roman universalism of the French. The dialectic resolution by the Arabs of the conflicting and even contradictory attitudes which in our era have been characteristic of the British and French permanently altered the face of Africa. It is of especial interest since it is still going on; deep down below the thunderings of the world war the still, small and menacing voice of an Arab Africa may yet make itself heard.

## II.

Before Mohammed the life of the Arabs had revolved around tribal allegiances, based on an ethnic atomization which pervaded the whole of social behavior. Mohammed ran head on against this; the Islam he created was contrary to the entire Arab *ethos* which preceded it. It was his intention to found the life of the Arabs on religious community instead of membership in an ethnic group.

The bickering tribes overcame their differences by means of the unifying influence of Islam, which transformed them into a molten stream that burst through the crumbling dams of the surrounding Hellenic civilizations. The Arabs cascaded out of their barren peninsula, and in the inspiration of their new creed subjugated a whole series of peoples with startling rapidity.

At first, however, despite its ecumenical implications, this new creed was a purely Arab appendage. During the first decades of the Arab conquest, becoming a Muslim meant the possibility of slipping into the exclusive *milieu* of the Arab aristocracy. The Arabs were still acutely race-conscious (*vis-à-vis* all non-Arabs, irrespective of color) and it was the chief function of the early Caliphate to preserve the exclusive character of the parvenu aristocracy by maintaining its ethnic integrity and propping up the state on the monies extorted from the subjugated rabble.

But the levelling tendencies within Islam proved ineluctable. The substitution of the religious community for the ethnic group was carried over to non-Arabs as well. Implications of Islam were clear—henceforth all distinctions were to be based on religion and not on nationality.

The result was that increasing thousands kept joining the Islamic fraternity, and so insinuated themselves into the Arab aristocracy precisely by means of the religion that had originally been its defining prerogative. This transition relieved them of the bulk of their taxes, and enabled them to join in the general

muleting of their brothers who had remained behind, outside the fold of Islam.

At first, appearances were kept up by providing the new converts with Arab genealogies on the old tribal pattern, but their numbers soon made this impossible. The converts streamed into the cities from the land, and their place was taken by the hordes of Arabs who kept pouring out of Arabia to share the rewards for the invention of Islam. These new Arabs were not part of the conquering armies, and their presence in the conquered territories, together with the mass infiltration of foreigners into Islam, eventually threw an intolerable strain on the fiscal structure of the State.

The parallel between the colonial practice of these early Arab conquerors and that of the British in their occupation of Egypt is almost meticulously exact. There was the same rigid exclusiveness of the governing caste, the same indifference to native life, and the same squeezing of the population for the maintenance of a protective military establishment. In the beginning an attempt was made to preserve this indifference to the life of the conquered countries by forbidding Arabs to possess land outside the Arabian peninsula, in order to ensure an attachment to their own rulers, but the successive immigrations created a peasantry which inevitably settled down on the land.

In this way the initially race-conscious conquerors were swamped by a flood of converts to their own beliefs. The economic benefits of Islam proved so great that the Arabs were eventually shouldered aside by peoples their own religion made it impossible to exclude. The fatuousness of the notion that the Arabs imposed Islam at the point of the sword is now generally admitted. The remarkable results of Arab colonization, which drenched whole peoples over unparalleled distances in the Arabic language and the Arab religion, were not the results of a brutal military policy, but the "final consequences of an economic process the Arabs had neither foreseen nor desired."

Islam destroyed the Arabs as a ruling class. Once Islam was accepted by the conquered peoples, they could display the superior civilization they had inherited from the Hellenistic world, and gradually dislodge the cruder Arabs from their positions of authority. The fundamental ethnological result of this mass fraternizing within Islam was racial mongrelization on a hitherto unparalleled scale.

The process of arabicizing was assimilation of a majestic order, of precisely the same sort as has always been the ideal of French and Portuguese colonial philosophy. It indicates with great clarity that the notion of assimilation is the logical negation of colonization.

Of course there were other reasons for the dissolution of the desert Arabs in the population of their conquered territories. Perhaps the most basic was the necessity of taking over the entire bureaucratic structure they found entrenched there. The Hellenic East the Arabs overran was infinitely superior to them in all the arts of civilization as well as in numbers, and inevitably the Arabs accommodated themselves to the long-established administrative devices of the Hellenistic world. The bureaucracy was the heritage of the ancient East, which the declining Hellenistic civilization had assumed in its turn and which it now handed on to its conquerors. In acquiring the administrative apparatus, the Arabs acquired also the bureaucracy and its absolutist summit, that is, the ancient oriental despotism. This despotism provided the growing Islamic state with another levelling tendency, precisely by virtue of its absolutist character. The despot perforce levelled all classes of the population down to a grade infinitely beneath himself, and the Arab prince, previously *primus inter pares* in a brotherly oligarchy perched on the shoulders of the subject masses, now assumed the dignity of an old-fashioned oriental despot, who inevitably found the aristocracy of the Arab colonial state a thorn in his flesh. Since there could be only one master, both Arabs and non-Arabs were debased to a common level of inferiority. . . The technical means by which this was accomplished was the strait-jacket of the bureaucracy, which this levelling tendency dredged up from the lowest strata of the population and used to obliterate the prestige of the former governing caste.

To sum the above up epigrammatically: the Arabs came out of the desert as exclusive English gentlemen, but in the course of exercising dominion found themselves transformed into French humanitarians. After establishing themselves as secular politicians, they discovered that in their spiritual baggage they had brought along a romanizing, ecumenical tendency which destroyed their temporal dominions and replaced it with the infinitely more manifold fruits of cultural assimilation, in which their language became the medium of expression for a rich and variegated civilization and many millions of speakers. The levelling tendencies of Islam destroyed Semitic-Arab racialism

once and for all, and by dissolving the Arab tribes into a mongrel Arabic-speaking community laid the foundations of an infinitely flexible and democratic society.

### III.

But the European colonization of Africa shows another parallel to the history of Islam. The importation of European technique is in its nature a levelling process. Even though this technique may be directed against the natives, it inevitably tends towards a self-contradiction; in order to safeguard its own existence, it must be disseminated throughout wider and wider strata of the population. Even the most brutal and rigidly exclusive colonial administration will be accompanied by persons whose function it is to educate a percentage, even though a small percentage, of the native population. This is so not merely because a highly developed European state which possesses the technical means of achieving material dominion will have certain characteristics of humaneness, but because the dependence of technique on masses of individuals means that some natives will have to be taught the rudiments of culture. This cannot be avoided, regardless of explicit colonial policy. On the one hand, African natives are astonishingly eager to acquire white learning; on the other hand, all administrations must provide for some education. The initial result is the formation of a self-conscious native élite, suspended in a limbo of snobbery towards their origins and exclusion on their part of the superiors they have learned to ape. But a certain fanning out of these acquisitions of European culture is inevitable. Colonial agriculture of even a primitive sort requires some technical knowledge, and industry of course much more so. The gains of western science—writing, hygiene, mathematics, etc.—are inherently universal.

It is at this point that the essentially expansionist dynamic of European culture clashes with the cruder and more immediate aims of private imperialism, and it is at this point that we may elect which course to follow. On an abstract level the question is: Shall we give in to this organic tendency of western civilization to spread, and make the process as easy as possible, or shall we retain our attitude of exclusive possessiveness?

### IV.

In the Anglo-Saxon world the answer to this question has already been given. A theory of segregation has been devised to

accompany and justify the practice of segregation. The most striking feature of this theory is its claim to represent the best interests of the native as well as of the European.

Many groups in the Anglo-Saxon world who show a genuine interest in the natives and native cultures of Africa believe in segregation, and defend it as being prompted by a sincere and whole-hearted concern for their welfare. In refusing to stomach the prospect of assimilating the natives to European life they generally base their aversion to this "way out" for the dilemma of African race relations on grounds of practicality or even philanthropy. In bending over backward away from the former widely held and banal contempt for primitive peoples, these theorists are likely to take the position that native culture is inherently rich and complex, and that it is better to retain its valuable elements rather than indulge in premature attempts at a lopsided Europeanization of the natives.

In the case of the very many anthropologists who support this view it is impossible not to discern an obvious though no doubt generally unconscious strain of occupational press-agenting. It is clearly in the professional interests of the anthropologist to have as copious a proliferation of discrete languages and cultures as possible; the more there are, the longer he can shut himself away in his own microcosm of culture patterns, folk customs, glossaries, "interpretations", and the rest of the paraphernalia of academic anthropology.

Aside from this occupational astigmatism, the notion of segregation is really an expression of a typically snobbish romanticizing of the exotic. Psychologically it is the obverse of a thoroughly malignant racialism.

But these academic abstractions are academic and abstract; the theory is damned by its impracticality.

## V.

What can segregation possibly mean? African diversity is of course notorious, but one trait all the native areas have in common is the comprehensive disintegration of the old native cultures under the absolutely shattering impact of European civilization. These cultures are not merely decaying, they are collapsing. It is true that in the areas where white men form merely an administrative oligarchy the natives retained the bulk of their folkways. But even here the entire economy has been completely Europeanized, and during the past few decades the



basic motives of social action have rapidly undergone a complete transformation. The bondage of the natives throughout Africa has inevitably resulted in the levelling off of differences between the native peoples, as all of them together are squeezed into the same European straitjacket.

It is true that native cultures reveal a very considerable degree of complexity and ability. It is also true that European conquest has generally uprooted the natives from their old ways without giving them an adequate substitute in return.

But in romanticizing primitive folkways it must not be forgotten that these native cultures, are, like our own, merely the achievements of men contending with the crushing forces of Nature—groping, fumbling answers, like our own, to the unknowns Nature has always confronted us with. They are devices, contrivances of man to elude the crushing weight of Nature, and tentative efforts to solve the perennial social problem. In this respect we are all brothers.

It is precisely this symmetry of intent, this common subservience to Nature, which makes the pitiful inferiority of the native cultures so manifest. This material inferiority and its consequences have enabled us to shatter their whole system of life; backward and divided, they have been pulverized by the infinite ascendancy of industrial civilization. And in the face of this flamboyantly obvious platitude we are told by professional exoticizers that the native has shown considerable cultural aptitude after all, that he has shown ability, that he is not incapable of progress, and *therefore* we must segregate him so that he may develop his indigenous institutions in peace! In reality this "defence" of the native is an underhand form of patronizing.

It is not a question of patting ourselves on the back, or naively assuming that we are somehow superior innately because of our superior control of Nature (this is, of course, the basic philosophic justification of oppression). But when it comes to controlling Nature, we *can* control it better than anyone else. It is not as though natives were indifferent to material questions; on the contrary, their whole life is spent in a vain wrestle with the baffling forces of Nature. Natives are interested in growing things; we can outgrow them. Our technique is simply better.

And the philosophical foundations of our advanced techniques are superior. Scientific method is a great achievement. It is merely nonsense to hold up a native belief or complex of beliefs and say (with condescending interest and good-will): "Very interesting. This should be preserved. It expresses the

native soul." The "soul" of the people has nothing to do with it. The tissue of errors which constitutes a primitive *Weltanschauung* cannot be said to express anyone's soul, it is simply a melancholy cul-de-sac in the attempt of the human race as a whole to orient itself in the universe. Most native beliefs are merely incorrect. They are naive approximations. They miss the mark. They are inadequate.

But the fact that we possess technique and its prerequisites does not mean that we are superior human beings. Technique is a thing—it can be acquired. The inductive method can be acquired. It is an historical accident that these things were hit upon by the West of Europe (itself the result of half a dozen different civilizations.) Principle is universal in its nature.

When segregation is spoken of as an opportunity for native cultures to develop along their own lines, what can this possibly mean? Natives are agriculturists, who grow food. Is it reasonable for them to go through some obviously preposterous rigmarole in order to propitiate the gods of rain? Irrigation is better. Is it reasonable to recite magical incantations to heal a sick man? Modern medicine is an improvement.

No one who sincerely desires the welfare of the natives can tolerate the so-called independent development of native culture. Of course, this question of sincerity merely indicates that none of these "cultural" discussions touches on the basic principle underlying race relations in Africa, the factor of subordination. The relationship between the European powers and the natives is such that the natives are constrained within a mold which has been constructed to suit the Europeans' convenience, whether it suits the natives or not. In essence, the theory of segregation, regardless of the good-will of many of its protagonists, is merely a device to give a philosophic whitewash to the straitjacket of subservience which is designed to maintain the economic and social life of the continent within their own privileged hands. When well-meaning men speak of native and European culture living side by side in harmony, each influencing the other and benefitting from it (this "each other" is the epitome of disingenuousness), what they are doing is defending a system which is in its nature a regime of exploitation. It is not possible for native culture to "influence" European culture; it is not possible to preserve native culture unless it is desired to smother the natives in a quagmire of antiquated, primitive, and manifestly doomed beliefs, with the ulterior design to elevate white privilege beyond questioning.

There is no need to belabor the flagrant deficiencies and impossibilities of our own culture. They are notoriously indefensible. No doubt in the realm of personal relationships and social organization the natives are in no whit inferior to us. Indeed, one of the tragedies of the exploitation of Africa has been the substitution of the most brutal and primitive of our own institutions in place of native customs which can be held up only as examples of social kindness and cooperation. A more amusing instance of the advantage our material strength gives us is provided by the missionaries, whom the prestige of the West enables to palm off on the natives ideas which any western metropolis would laughingly dismiss as the last word in obsolete stuffiness.

Of course it is indefensible to impose those of our institutions on the natives which are dubious in value and manifestly inappropriate or even vicious. But a genuine concern for the welfare of primitive peoples means that they must acquire as quickly as possible the solid, material foundations of western culture—which in the beginning may very well be its soulless, impersonal elements: writing, the sciences, technical skills, etc.

## VI.

There can be no question of the collapse of the native cultures. Testimony is unanimous on the point; there can be no hope for the really primitive old folk-ways. They are bound to be annihilated by the spread of western ideas. Of course, there is no reason to doubt the ability of the native people of Africa to impose their personality on the common fund of western ideas, and force these common ideas into a specifically native mold probably more distinct from the West of Europe than the difference of European nations among themselves. But the specific coloration they give western culture will be a trivial matter compared to the profound revolution in their lives.

The confusion, rancor, and prejudice which prevails in race relations generally, and especially in Africa, make it difficult to discuss the matter without bias. But it is in the nature of things for the universalizing tendencies within European culture to permeate all societies having contact with it, sooner or later, and any theory which justifies the attempt to fix an essentially unstable *status-quo* must inevitably founder. It can only envenom the change without preventing it, increase individual suffering, and lead to nothing but bitterness and apathetic resignation.

The process which has already substituted European technique for the material culture of the natives has given them nothing in exchange for their spiritual life but a stifling hopelessness. They are making the worst of both worlds. The brutally explosive proletarianization which was so revolting a feature of our own Industrial Revolution is being repeated in Africa far more tragically: a spiritual impoverishment is accompanying the economic serfdom, which will have a permanently vicious effect on the future of the continent. The natives are being squeezed out of their old patterns into a spiritual limbo; they are excluded from European culture on its more humane levels, which might eventually succeed in endowing their folk life with integrity and cohesiveness, and simultaneously are being riveted to the most menial positions in an alien economy.

One often hears it said that good Africans are better than bad Europeans. Aside from being offensive, this cliché is simply meaningless. There is nothing in the African's nature which makes it impossible for him to enjoy the acquisitions of European culture. This disingenuous antithesis is contrived to cloak the subservience of the native in some perverted theory of natural rights, and so to give balm to the conscience of people who otherwise may be quite fairminded.

## VII

We may detect the Satan in our own natures more clearly if we hold our colonial social practice up to the German mirror. With their characteristic consistency and clear-headedness, the Nazis have elaborated their own theory of dealing with the natives. Their theory is our theory idealized—in reverse—perfected, and carried to its logical conclusion. After the mealy-mouthed self-justifying condescension of some of our own apologists it is relatively refreshing to see the Germans frankly admit that they are making Africa a business proposition. There will be no question of the "rights" of the natives, or any similar sentimentality. They are to be made into a permanent chain-gang to serve as the bulwark of *Grossdeutschland* in Africa, and rigorously excluded from European culture on its higher levels, not because the Germans (for all their race-theories) have any doubts as to their ability to assimilate European culture—on the contrary—but precisely because of the conviction that they will assimilate it all too well and too quickly for German convenience. This chilly rationality and unblushing self-interest

gives us a clearer perception of what segregation really means when purged of missionary and academic rubbish.

The Germans have a notorious love for "concepts" and "ideas", and this love emerges with especial clarity in their discussion of British colonial practice. Just as Hitler raved not against the "injustice" of the Versailles Treaty but against its "senselessness", German colonial theoreticians attack the British system in Africa not for its oppressiveness but for its incoherence. They are determined to give the natives an "idea" at the basis of the colonial structure, an "idea" they will be able to comprehend, an "idea" that will be as simple and clear-cut as a knout. The theory of segregation, at present frayed, sketchy, and slipshod, will be thrown into high speed and streamlined.

### VIII.

Nowadays, somehow, purely ethical arguments no longer seem compelling; it is fashionable to demonstrate that even unselfishness is materially profitable. In this connection it must be said that apart from all moral considerations the most damning thing about colonial practice hitherto has been its appalling wastefulness and essential impracticability. It is not possible to imagine a more uneconomic relationship between man and nature than that displayed by present-day African economy. The enormous potentialities of the continent are simply being neglected.

Aside from the hardships inherent in the toughness of the land and the climate, most of the economic problems of Africa may be reduced to functions of the labor supply. The most outstanding fact in Africa to-day is its acute underpopulation. Its enormous area contains no more than 150 million people, an infinitesimal number in comparison with its potential capacity, the lowest estimates of which run to something more than one billion. The savannah area alone, on the analogy of similarly fertile areas in India, could support about half a billion people, to say nothing of the more fertile regions of the tropical rain-forest, and those with a moderate climate like Abyssinia, Angola and Tanganyika.

At present, of course, such a figure sounds chimerical, but the only obstacle to its attainment is (to put it in baldly economic terms) the mismanagement of the labor supply—another way of describing the chronic labor shortage, the squandering of natural

resources, the almost total absence of modern hygiene and medicine, the extraordinary sickliness of the vast masses of the population, and the extreme technical ignorance.

That is what is meant by the "native" problem. This "problem" is the impossibility of exploiting the continent economically with a population we refuse to fit for the task. The expansion of Arab culture in Africa, which seems so remote (to be sure no recent episode of colonization warrants contemplation), has taught us one thing; not only does the imposition of culture imply its generalization, but in the long run even those narrow-minded conquerors who oppose this generalization derive infinitely greater benefits from it than economic parasitism alone can ever produce. And the Germans can teach us another thing, we might borrow that breadth of view which is characteristic of them, and learn to regard Africa as one tremendous unitary area which we must initiate as quickly and as completely as possible into a civilized commonwealth of nations. As long as we continue a perverted policy of colonizing instead of civilizing, we shall be neglecting the majestic opportunities Africa offers and bartering the future of an entire continent for the tuppenny-ha'penny profits of a feudal oligarchy. Africa may yet be a reservoir of bounty for the world, if we cease our fragmentary, haphazard, egotistical, and shortsighted treatment of it, and substitute a wise policy of *real* exploitation, in which the native peoples shall participate as economic equals, not as uneconomically exploited bondsmen in a lopsided apparatus for private pillage.