

# RACISM

## A WORLD ISSUE

By  
Edmund Davison Soper



*ABINGDON-COKESBURY PRESS*  
*New York • Nashville*

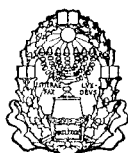
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*TO MY SONS*

ROBERT and HERBERT



## PREFACE

This book can scarcely be understood without knowing something of the process of its preparation. The task was begun with no thought that a book would be the outcome.

A seminar on "Race" was conducted in Chicago during the autumn and winter of 1942-43. This was in preparation for a conference on "Christian Bases of World Order" to be held in Delaware, Ohio, March 8-12, 1943. There a report based on papers prepared by members of the Chicago seminar was presented. In the autumn and winter of 1943-44 ten seminars on the theme "Racism and World Order" were held with topics, leaders, and locations as follows:

Urban Minorities in the United States	Lynn J. Radcliffe	Oak Park, Illinois
Rural Minorities in the United States	Merrill R. Abbey	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
The Far East	Russell W. Lambert	Rockford, Illinois
India	Paul Burt	Urbana, Illinois
The Southwest Pacific	Lowell B. Hazzard	Bloomington, Illinois
South Africa	Otto Scott Steele	W. Lafayette, Indiana
Russia	Oscar M. Adam	Madison, Wisconsin
Germany	E. Burns Martin	South Bend, Indiana
Brazil	William W. Sweet	Chicago, Illinois
Spanish-speaking Latin America	Charles S. Braden	Evanston, Illinois

The reports from these seminars furnished the basis for the discussions at a conference on "Racism and World Order" held at Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Illinois, March 16-20, 1944.

Having conducted the original Chicago seminar and having been responsible, with my wife, for the general direction of the seminars in the Chicago area, I was given the task of using the mass of material produced by the seminars and the material

gathered in my own study to prepare a book for general use. This volume is the outcome. During the writing of the first draft of the manuscript I conducted a seminar on "Race" four hours a week for one quarter in Garrett Biblical Institute and profited by this contact with the student mind.

The original draft was written during the first six months of 1945. This was revised, and sent out in mimeographed form to a hundred experts in various parts of the country. In October, 1945, I spent a week in New York meeting seven small groups of these experts who had read the relevant chapters or the whole of the manuscript. The composition of these groups was as follows:

*Negroes in America*

- George E. Haynes, executive secretary, Department of Race Relations,  
Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America  
William Stuart Nelson, professor in Howard University, Washington,  
D. C.  
Leslie Pinckney Hill, president, Cheyney Training School for Teachers,  
Cheyney, Pa.

*China*

- Timothy T. Lew, educator and author  
B. A. Liu, Chinese News Service, New York

*Africa*

- Jackson Davis, associate director, General Education Board  
Emory Ross, Africa Committee, Foreign Missions Conference of North  
America  
Thomas S. Donohugh, associate secretary, Central and Southern Africa  
Division of the Board of Missions of the Methodist Church

*Latin America*

- Alberto Rembao, director, *La Nueva Democracia*  
Huberto Rhoden, Brazilian author  
B. H. Hunnicutt, president, McKenzie College, Brazil

*India*

- Eddy Asirvatham, professor, Madras University  
B. N. Gupta, Indian importer, New York

## PREFACE

### *Germany*

Paul J. Tillich, professor, Union Theological Seminary, New York  
Frederick J. Forell, refugee pastor from Germany, now in New York

### *Entire Manuscript*

L. S. Allbright, International Missionary Council  
John C. Bennett, professor, Union Theological Seminary, New York  
J. W. Decker, International Missionary Council  
Wynn C. Fairfield, Foreign Missions Conference of North America  
Daniel J. Fleming, professor (retired), Union Theological Seminary, New York  
Charles T. Iglehart, professor, Union Theological Seminary, New York, returned from thirty-five years in Japan  
E. C. Lobenstine, former secretary, National Christian Council of China  
R. E. Diffendorfer, executive secretary, Foreign Division, Board of Missions of the Methodist Church

Not only did I have the advantage of these penetrating and unhurried conferences, but many whom I was unable to consult face to face communicated with me by letter. I cannot enumerate all of these but feel that I must list the names of a number who sent me their careful criticisms both favorable and unfavorable. In this group are the following:

Will W. Alexander, director for race relations, Julius Rosenwald Fund, Chicago  
Albert E. Barnett, professor, Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Illinois  
Martin H. Bickham, chairman, Illinois Interracial Commission  
Ina Corinne Brown, professor, Scarritt College, Nashville, Tennessee  
Paul Burt, director, Wesley Foundation, Urbana, Illinois  
H. T. Chu, Chinese News Service, New York  
Clarence Tucker Craig, professor, Oberlin Graduate School of Theology  
Earl Cranston, professor, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire  
R. B. Eleazer, General Board of Education, The Methodist Church  
Jay C. Field, Kennedy School of Missions, Hartford, Connecticut  
Lewis O. Hartman, bishop, Boston area, The Methodist Church  
Eugene B. Hawk, dean, Perkins School of Theology, Dallas, Texas  
Edward H. Hume, secretary, Christian Medical Council for Overseas Work, New York

## RACISM: A WORLD ISSUE

Paul Hutchinson, managing editor, *The Christian Century*

Carol Jacobson, The American Russian Institute, New York

Corlis Lamont, The American Russian Institute, New York

Kenneth Scott Latourette, professor, Yale Divinity School, New Haven, Connecticut

Murray H. Leiffer, professor, Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Illinois

Leroy Loemker, professor, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia

Alice Rigby Moore, Woman's Division, Methodist Board of Missions

T. Otto Nall, managing editor, *The Christian Advocate*

Malcom Pitt, dean, Kennedy School of Missions, Hartford, Connecticut

Robert Redfield, dean, division of the social sciences, University of Chicago

Thelma Stevens, Woman's Division, Methodist Board of Missions

Ernest E. Tuck, superintendent of the Philippines, Methodist Board of Missions

These men and women are mentioned because in a peculiar sense their contribution entered into the process of making this book. I hereby convey to them my deep appreciation of the time and energy they have put into this task. The book could never have been what it is had it not been for their criticisms and suggestions. I think I may be permitted to say that they did not agree at all points. That was inevitable, but at a number of important points it placed upon me the burden of deciding on which side of the fence I would come down.

The guiding genius of the entire project from beginning to end was Dr. Ralph E. Diffendorfer. It was he who caught the vision of the Delaware conference on "Christian Bases of World Order" and who planned the holding of the seminars in the Chicago area and the conference on "Racism and World Order" at Garrett Biblical Institute. He invited me to share in the carrying out of these seminars and conferences, incited me to prepare this volume, and has stood by with counsel, sympathy, and financial backing to pay necessary expenses. Without him the book would never have been written. And may I say that, once having started me on the task, he has kept hands off, so that, for weal or woe, the hundreds of decisions which had to be made are mine?

## PREFACE

I wish also to express gratitude to my wife, who typed the difficult first draft, and President Horace Greeley Smith, of Garrett Biblical Institute, for unfailing encouragement and the courtesy of providing for the third typing of the manuscript.

So I send this frail boat out on the waters. Far more than in other books I have written I have in the nature of the case been dependent on the expert opinion of others. All that I can say is that, so far as time and strength and the press of other duties permitted, I have tried to present a correct picture of racism as a world issue, knowing full well that in a world changing as rapidly as the one in which we live it is impossible to be sure that new facts might not change the picture almost overnight. I have had the experience of realizing that this manuscript would not stay revised even in the very process of revision.

Only one other item is necessary. I have deliberately quoted from unpublished seminar papers and have felt justified in doing so in view of the high quality of many of these papers, based as they are on recognized authorities. Copies of these papers are now available in the Missionary Research Library, New York, and the library of Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Illinois.

E. D. S.

*Garrett Biblical Institute  
Evanston, Illinois*



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## Chapter I

# Races of the World

According to the latest trustworthy figures the population of the world is approximately 2,169,868,000.<sup>1</sup> This population is unevenly distributed over the five continents and in all the greater and many of the lesser islands of the seven seas. The inhabitants of the earth are divided into many differing groups, for which for the first time in the year 1749 the term "race" was employed. The French scientist Buffon, in his work on natural history, made use of the term to differentiate the six groups into which he more or less artificially divided mankind.<sup>2</sup> It is very difficult to define the word "race" and even more difficult to group humanity into racial divisions which are significant in the attempt to differentiate and evaluate the various peoples and nations of the world. But with all the criticisms which the term has received it may still be used as a convenient designation of the groupings of mankind found scattered over the earth.

Scientists are agreed that all the races have a common origin. In generations gone by, a conflict was waged between the "monogenists" and the "polygenists," those who believed that mankind came from one human stock and those who held that each race had a different origin. Some went so far as to claim that the different races were really different species and not differentiations of one species. This conflict has long since died down among scientific investigators, the only persons holding the theory of

<sup>1</sup> *League of Nations Statistical Year Book, 1940-1941*, which contains data as of Dec. 31, 1939, as quoted in *The World Almanac 1945*, p. 284. The statement is added that "in many cases the exact population of countries is not known and the population figures are more or less uncertain and even hypothetical."

<sup>2</sup> M. F. Ashley Montagu, *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race* (2d ed., rev. and enl.), p. 18.

separate and distinct origin being the vociferous propagandists of the racial superiority of the white race, special pleaders who on political and national grounds find it necessary to make so extreme a claim. It was the theory held by Hitler and the Nazi leaders in Germany. To them it was an essential dogma of the Nazi creed. But in the world of science the conviction is strong that all the races came from one stock and that the differences have come about through long ages of dispersion and isolation in different parts of the earth.

At this point modern science and the biblical and Christian viewpoints coincide. The early chapters of Genesis present mankind as being called into existence in a single creative word by the voice of God, all the later families and tribes and peoples being descended from the first single pair, Adam and Eve. In the New Testament, to use only one passage, the words of Paul in Athens carry the same thought: God "hath made of one blood all nations of men" (A.V.). The word "blood" is not to be found in a number of the ancient Greek manuscripts, so we have the rendering in the Revised Standard Version, "And he made from one every nation of men." Moffatt's translation uses different words to the same effect, "All nations he has created from a common origin." What they indicate is that all human beings are descended from the same basic stock.<sup>3</sup>

Many attempts have been made to classify mankind and place human beings in different racial groups. At best these attempts have not been conspicuously successful. That is, no investigator seems able to make a classification which satisfies his fellow workers in the field. The bases of classification are so indefinite and insecure that confusion cannot be avoided no matter what conclusions are reached. One of the sources of difficulty lies in the various meanings which the word "race" has been made to carry. At times it has been made identical with nationality—then there are as many races as there are nations. This use however would

<sup>3</sup> Ruth Benedict and Gene Weltfish, *The Races of Mankind*, pp. 3-5; now also included as an Appendix in Ruth Benedict, *Race: Science and Politics* (rev. ed.).