Who Settled South Africa First??

South Africa's white have strong economic reasons for wanting to maintain their grip on the country. They are trying to justify them-selves by arguing that they were in the area first. It is true that Dutch settlers came there 300 years ago, but it is not true that blacks appeared afterward.

There were Bantu people in the agricultural areas of South Africa a century and a half befor the first Dutch settlers founded Cape Town in 1952. Other black groups, the Hottentots and Bushmen, were there too, some as long as

2,000 years ago.

The whites' agruments are to justify their minority rules are fictions. Their strategy for keeping power is a tough reality. It depends on two basic policies. The first is to deny all political rights to blacks. The second is to "di-vide and keep conquered." This part of the sys-tem is a major obstacle to black advancement.

Here is how the government keeps the people disunited. First, through apartheid, it segregates all racial groups. There are separate living areas, separate schools, and universities for whites, blacks, coloreds, and Asians.

The coloreds (mixed) get somewhat better treatment than the blacks -- better jobs and less severe restrictions in everyday life. The most important part of the policy is the setting up of "national homelands" for blacks.

The government claims that these homelands called "Bantustans," are based on tribal divis-

ions. Their territory altogether is only 14 of South Africa, and the Bantustans cut this 14 percent into many small areas. Rhese territorial divisions foster political rivalries, which is what the government wants.

In addition, the Bantustans allow the government to abolish civil rights for blacks. The government decreed in 1970 that blacks are not citizens of the Republics of South Africa but citizens of their Bantustans.

The Bantustans are an application of an old divice used by the former colonial govern-ments. On today's map of Africa you see small countries where larger units could have been established. The larger units would have made better sense.

They would have been more efficient economically, and bettter able to function politically. But then they would have been harder for the former colonial powers to handle.

The excuse for dividing up African lands into small units was always that the divisions followed tribal or historical boundaries. But actu-

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ally the boundraries cut across tribal groups.

There is just as much tribal diversity within some countries as there is between countries so ethnic unity within countries doesn't explain

the political map.

True, there are real tribal differences. Some have led to bitter enmities. In spite of everything, coloreds have now thrown in their lot with blacks by demonstrating in the streets. Blacks have organized major industrials strikes and have won pay boosts.

The most recent outbreaks represent growing militancy. The issues are now now only economic rights, but basic civil rights. Recent demonstrations and strikes have involved more than the industrial workers -- the have included stu-

dents and school children.

All this increases the urgency of Secretary Kissinger's peace-making efforts to southern Africa. Kissinger knows that time is running out in Rhodesia, in Mamibia, and even in South Af-

So far, the white minority governments in Rhodesia and South Africa have been able to rely on black policemen and black soldiers to help maintain their rule. Some day, maybe soon, black soldiers and black police officers may turn against their governement employers and side with their brothers.

On that day, the present Rodesian government will fall by violence. And Kissinger's nightmare of Communist penetration into Rhodesia

and South Africa may come true.

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