time may come when we can all sit down to the
table, however meager, knowing that the bread we
eat is also shared by every other living human being,
and that we have not robbed any single human soul
in order to eat our daily bread.

From “The Need for a Program of
International Economic Aid” address at a
1959 conference of the North Atlantic Treaty
Organization in London:

…we are divided in our minds today by moral
habits which have descended from the colonial
system which we have not yet been able to overcome.
We present an equivocal picture in what we are doing
now. The under-developed peoples of the world have
only to look at Africa to see how divided our minds
are. On the one hand we see the noble British one by
one freeing their peoples from the colonial yoke,
freeing them deliberately, supporting them in their
freedom, and inviting them in their freedom to come
back to your mother country which is now for you
no longer an empire but a commonwealth. Every
now and then we see the noble French rise with a
passionate gesture and say to their peoples, “Are we
holding you? Then be free,” and then under their
breath they say in prayer, “But do come back. We
want you to be with us.” The other day we saw a
declaration from the Belgians saying, “This pathway
of freedom is what we intend to pursue. Our plans
are in the making and will be ready.” But you look at
Africa, it is magnificent to see that some 70 million of
the peoples have been freed under these circumstances
by members of this organization. But there are 110
millions of Africans who are neither free nor under
mandate, still dominated politically, still having their
natural resources exploited, not for their good but for
the good of those who exploit.

We see on the shores of Africa instances of the most
deliberate and cruel segregation and discrimination of
the inhabitants of the country on the land of their
fathers and in the presence of the graves of their

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From a 1952 address, “The Heart of the
Matter:

We think in America that what men hunger for most
of all is to achieve economic success so that they may
own cars and houses and travel and dress beautifully.
We are mistaken, because down at the bottom of the
human heart there is a hunger that goes deeper than
that. That hunger is expressed in the Lord’s Prayer in
the New Testament, when this Jewish young man
who saw into the depths of human nature prayed,
“Give us this day our daily bread.”

What “us” did he mean?
He meant every human child in all of the periphery
of this earth.

What he was praying for was this, that the struggle
for existence which makes animals roam the
wilderness and tear one another to pieces, and which
up to this time has also characterized the human race
— that this thing shall be done away with and that the
mothers. Nobody can look at Africa without knowing that we are divided in our minds and that we have not yet been able to summon either the political power or the moral power to overcome that division. Though the God of our fathers has vetoed the colonial system and closed the open gates of the world against it, we are still reluctant to turn it loose, and we may yet shame ourselves by admitting one more venture to reopen those gates.

May I say to you again, we have as yet been able to put no great world-encircling concept in the place of the colonial system to which we have been devoted for some 500 years and which is now fallen. What greater idea do we have now of a world encircling nature that we can offer these underdeveloped peoples of Asia and Africa, of which they can be members just as we, in which they can be respected just as we, they can move freely out of their own spontaneous enthusiasm just as we? I suggest to you that we do not yet have one. There are no great words coming from us today regarding that city that hath foundations that was made for the whole human race of one blood; and because we do not have it we are in some difficulty in approaching these Asiatics and Africans.

... We are not morally prepared. We are not purely prepared in our hearts in their orientation towards the thing that we want to do for these people. We are not committing ourselves to any long-range purpose when we know that it may take years and years to develop the economies of these people. We have no great central organization for talking with them, for listening to their ideas or exchanging ideas with them, for approach in cooperation with them, for applying a fit measure to them.

... The British know what I mean; you great Frenchmen, who pioneered the Illumination, know what I mean; you great Germans, who have meditated upon Socialism long before the idea was born among the Russians, you know what I mean. I mean the thing that Abraham Lincoln meant when he said, “Government of the people, for the people and by the people, dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal, all men.” And he said, “I have never had a political idea in my life that was not based upon this great proposition, and when I read that proposition I not only see the slaves set free but I see the last tyranny lifted from the back of the last man.”