

# World geography essay sample



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Discuss South Africa's apartheid policy of 1948. How was it initiated? Provide historical information of the time from the passing of this policy until gaining independence in 1979.

The seeds of Apartheid were sowed as early as 1910, but South Africa's Apartheid policy officially became law in 1948, after the Reunited National Party won the white minority elections on the 28th of May 1948. The Apartheid policy, later referred to as "separate development" was a racial segregation in South Africa. It put South Africans into four racial groups: native, whites, colored, and Asian. The Apartheid policy also included the "petit apartheid" of separated ethnic groups and a "grand apartheid" of relocating black Africans to homeland areas. The black Africans were regarded merely as laborers for the whites and each were assigned to a homeland or temporary urban location. With the enactment of Apartheid laws in 1948, racial discrimination was institutionalized. Race laws touched every aspect of social life, including a prohibition of marriage between non-whites and whites, and the sanctioning of "white-only" jobs.

The system of the Apartheid was also enforced by a series of laws passed in the 1950's. The Group Areas Act of 1950 assigned races to different residential and business sections in urban areas and The Land Acts of 1954 and 1955 which restricted non-whites residence to specific areas. These laws restricted the already limited rights of black Africans to own land, while the white minority's control over 80 percent of South Africa. Another law passed was the Bantu Authorities Act in 1951. It established a basis for ethnic government in African reserves, known as "homelands". All political rights, including voting, held by an African were restricted to the designated

homeland. South Africans lost their citizenship and any right of involvement with the South African Parliament. Africans living in homelands needed passports to enter South African, they were aliens in their own country.

In 1953, the Public Safety Act and Criminal Law Amendment Act were passed, which empowered the government to declare a stringent state of emergency and increased penalties for protesting against or supporting the repeal of a law. The penalties included fines, imprisonment and whippings and these Acts lead to the “ Sharpeville Massacre” in 1960. On March 16, 1960 Robert Subukwe, leader of the Pan African Congress (a liberation movement or PAC), informed the commissioner of police that his organization would embark on sustained by disciplined non-violent campaigns for 5 days. The objective of the march was that African men had to leave their passes (A pass is a document made by the Apartheid government for all black men and women to carry to restrict their movement in “ white” urban areas), at home and present themselves for arrest.

This would result in all the protesters being arrested, prisons would fill up, and the country would come to a halt as no labor would be available, and the pass law would be scrapped. On the day of the march the government declared a state of emergency. The emergency lasted for 156 days, leaving 69 people dead and 187 people wounded and the white regime had no intention of changing the unjust laws of Apartheid. After the Sharpeville Massacre, Nelson Mandela and other ANC (African National Congress) leaders make a public display of burning their passes and urge others to follow their example. The government arrest about 18, 000 protesters,

including the leaders of the ANC and the PAC, and both organizations are banned.

1976 marked the beginning of a sustained revolt against racial segregation, when the school students of Soweto rose up against apartheid education, followed by the youth uprising all over the country. In 1977 the news of the brutal death of Steve Biko, leader of the Black Consciousness Movement, ended the patience the rest of the world might have had with the South African government. Around 1980 people and governments around the world begin boycott South Africa. Some countries ban import of South African products, and citizens of other countries pressure major companies to pull out of South Africa. These actions have weakened the government. Pressure is increasing in South Africa to end its system of Apartheid. As a result some of the segregation laws are reversed and the laws separating whites and non-whites in public places are reversed.

## References

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