Lee on apartheid

Race problem has economic basis

By BARRY KAPLAN

A chilling picture of suppression and enslavement and grim prospectives for resolution of the Africans' plight were painted by Franz J. T. Lee of the Alexander Defense Committee, instituted to defray legal expenses of political prisoners in the Republic of South Africa.

Speaking in Hanszen commons last night, Lee presumed a total ignorance of the situation on his listeners' part.

Proceeding from an "Africa is not the travel agent's sales-pitch" opening, Lee described the problem of black and white from a basically Marxian outlook. The problem of race, he suggested, is more a problem of economic exploitation than one of simple prejudice.

Flywheel

Mining, "the flywheel of South Africa's economy," is kept in motion by the labor of blacks whose life expectancy is 37 years, while the white population enjoys "the fourth highest standard of living in the world."

Keeping the blacks available for work has been aided by legislation, Lee said. A hideous and cruel police state has reduced the African to the status of "non-person." Suppression is enforced by the largest per capita police force in the world. "One South African in 234 is in jail," he claimed.

Brutality

Instance after instance of brutality was cited, and the abject state of a people who constantly bewail the loss of their infants, arrest of their menfolk, and tangible confinement in a land no longer theirs by any right was hyperdramatically set forth.

Asked about the assassination of Verwoerd, Lee launched into an assertion of the inconstancy of the world as set forth by Heraclitus. Praising revolution as a good thing in any situation, Lee cited the lack of reaction to technological "revolution" as approbation for social change.

With a shrug, he dismissed the possibility of nonviolent aid from the free nations, who have a $4 billion stake in the South African status quo. He spoke with high hope of a large and presumably violent resistance growing among the blacks, and among "Africans of all colors," and ended the talk with an appeal for donations to the Alexander Defense Committee, that the leaders of the revolt might be someday released.

On this note, the lecture dis-