

they could have ameliorated and softened such legislation had they made a different choice, but one equally valid from the legal viewpoint.

The points I have mentioned are merely a few plums pulled out of an exceptionally rich pudding. As well as being constantly fascinating, the whole work is characterised by moderation, fairness and understanding and is lightened by touches of irony and wry humour. Professor Dugard is never snide.

The writing is limpid and beautifully logical. Jargon — legal or otherwise — is refreshingly absent, and the author has a happy instinct for the right word.

The critics quoted in the blurb do the book an injustice. It is not of great interest only to legal scholars and students of South African affairs. It is imperative reading for anyone — lawyer or not — wanting a coherent and unemotional picture of the South African legal order.

Princeton University Press, hard cover, R17,95

SOWETO — BLACK REVOLT, WHITE REACTION, John Kane-Berman

This is an exceptionally vivid account of Soweto and the events preceding and following June 1976. The author's aim is to elucidate the coherent purpose behind the system of apartheid, which makes of black daily life 'a Pilgrim's Progress through a world invented by Kafka'.

The reader is made to see how blacks interpreted events, and accounts given in the 'white' press, even the English press, are frequently readjusted and counterbalanced. One is directly confronted with black bitterness and black anger. One telling placard protesting against Dr Kissinger's visit to South Africa in 1976 read: 'Kissinger, your visit to Azania is bullshit. Even animals are angry'.

One of the best chapters in the book is chapter 5 which searchingly and movingly conveys the taste and texture of life in Soweto. In other chapters Mr Kane-Berman is not afraid to analyse such sensitive subjects as the motives behind the burning of libraries and clinics. He is particularly interesting on the poor record of the South African business community in rectifying the situation, despite its protestations and material gestures of concern.

This is a vigorously written book which should not be missed. It forces even the 'liberal' to recognise the futility of merely tinkering with and speechifying about change. At our peril do we hide behind an unwillingness to face unpleasant but fundamental facts, an unwillingness based on 'the fear that any real attempt to respond constructively to the totality of black demands for change would involve great material sacrifices'.

J. S.

Ravan Press, soft cover, R8,50

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Perhaps this poem should have been called 'Ag shame!'. I wrote it in mild amusement because Sash is so often accused of Northern Suburbery or else told to get out of things it doesn't understand and get back to its kitchen.

Eleanor Anderson

small talk

(on the impossibility of pleasing everyone)

*Each day I took a cheering pot of soup
And fed it some hungry kids
Who seemed to like the stuff.*

*Then someone said, 'But don't you see
That tiny, single schemes like this
Are nothing like enough?'*

*And so I sought the company of those who strive
to sooth,
As best they can, the road for those
Who find the laws too rough.
Till someone told us, 'When a nation's heart
grows cold
No strivings of a group like this
Can ever be enough.'*

*Oh well. Ah well. I guess I'll take my pot of soup
And feed it to some hungry kids
Who seem to like the stuff.*