

but not for orgy. He had made streaks of dark blood run down their white skins". The "whiteness" here is not of any social relevance, but serves as a foil for the exciting darkness of blood. Like David, Jan uses political phrases to justify his attitudes, but again these are just a cover for more personal needs and motivations. Seeking integration into the anti-establishment culture he has opted for, Jan gets involved with a black woman — an affair which culminates in a disastrous climax; disastrous rather than tragic, because the affair is based neither on love nor on deeply felt ideals, but upon Jan's desire for integration and acceptance in the black community. The woman, Crystal, is for him "the adjunct to a pose".

Significantly, both men achieve their only moments of true integration, of real insight into the cultures with which they have chosen to identify, when they cease to intellectualise their attitudes and respond instinctively and sensually to the essentials of that culture. David, on the Marais' estate, finds that closeness to the land itself awakens in him an awareness of the vital rhythms of an agricultural, rather than a political tradition, and he finds himself meshing with those rhythms. A similar "meshing" takes place between Jan and a Nigerian drummer at a Swazi pop-festival, and this primitive but valid contact achieves what Jan's forced identification with black attitudes and problems never could.

Apart from these brief moments, **The Dark Wood** paints a depressing picture of the choices open in white South Africa today; and the gloom is deepened by the author's apparent lack of affection for any of his characters.

However, the final effect of the whole book is no more tragic than the fate of Jan; partly because the characters are occasionally in danger of becoming caricatures, and partly because there are moments and phrases in the novel which are trapped uneasily between the dramatic and the absurd. Mr Wilhelm's Customs officials "snarl like dogs", and David, hearing from Marika of a previous affair, is haunted by an image of her "as slimy as truth".

Peculiar as the latter phrase is, it is not inappropriate in Mr Wilhelm's work: he does seem to see any truth in a South African context as inherently "slimy". The moments of reckoning for both brothers are ones of degradation, not achievement: Jan's ignominious and futile death, and David's equally ignominious marriage to a girl he has never really loved.

The ending of the book, cast in the form of Jan's dying dream or hallucination, seems to be an attempt at resolving some of the issues raised. The central figure, whether old man, primitive god, or spirit of Africa, seems to represent the older, stronger, and more mysterious African culture which provides both touchstone and perspective for the futile culture-clash which has destroyed both brothers. This is never made explicit, however, and the whole scene seems too nebulous and surreal to provide a satisfactory solution to any of the very real problems that Mr Wilhelm has thrown up. The old man may contain within himself both the corruption and the wholesome energy of Africa (the "rotten meat" and the "milk and honey") but these are not so easily reconciled in present-day society. □

SOWETO

A People's Response

A survey conducted and published by the Institute for Black Research, Durban.

Introduction by Peter Brown

Two weeks after the first outbreak of violence in Soweto in June, 1976, a group of black students in Durban met to discuss these events. They drew up a questionnaire, submitted it to 500 people of all races in Durban. The results were not written up for more than a year because of the banning of leading members of the Institute for Black Research, the organisation behind the survey. The report has, however now appeared. It has lost nothing of its value through this delay. It reflects attitudes which every South African should be made aware of and for this reason, in spite of the fact that the report has been fairly widely reported on in Natal, we quote extensively from it in this issue of REALITY, so that our readers elsewhere know something of the reactions of people in a City remote from those events of June 16th. It is clear that while Durban was virtually untouched by the violence of those days, their impact on its people was profound. Some of the more interesting and important points to emerge from the report were, I thought, these:

Blacks saw the events of Soweto and after in political terms, Whites as an outbreak of lawlessness;
Fear of the police amongst blacks is pervasive;
All groups saw the enforcement of Afrikaans as the trigger to violence — so much for Dr Treurnicht's

"master-mind" behind it all!

Africans are as afraid of a violent solution to South African problems as are the members of any other group. What is more, 80% of Africans who rejected violence in all circumstances, had little or no formal education, thus exposing another white-propagated myth, that of the "uneducated savage";

In spite of this fear of violence a growing number of Africans now see an armed struggle as the only way to change and see that the consequence of such change will be that white domination is succeeded by African domination or an Africanist government.

Most interesting of all is the number of black people who would still prefer to see some kind of non-racial government succeed apartheid. The report should be compulsory reading for all Cabinet Ministers. They would learn from it that they still have time, though not much, to change, before committing suicide. Here are some quotations from the report.

The group administered its questionnaire to 500 Durbanites in an attempt to gain some insight into (1) how they saw the events, (2) what influenced their conceptions, (3) what effects they thought the events would have on government policy and (4) how they visualized change.

"The questionnaire proved both provocative and intimidating. Far more people refused to be interviewed than consented to do so. The result was that a research designed to be random became skewed in the direction of the youthful and less vulnerable section of the population — the more educated, more politicized and the less impoverished."

"Interviewers reported a pall of police fear among Africans and Indians in particular and made such observations as 'People refused to be interviewed saying that they did not wish to become involved'; 'People questioned the motive of the survey and said that if they answered the questions they would get into trouble with the police'; 'Remarks such as "I'll become politically involved", "I'll be put in jail" ' were heard repeatedly."

"Indian women in Grey Street simply put off the interviewers by declaring that they had no education and they knew nothing about the 'riots'."

"Most black respondents, (69% Coloured, 64% African, and 54% Indian) saw the disturbance in political terms — as a rebellion, revolution, mass protest, mass demonstration, boycott and strike. Fifty seven per cent of the whites described it more in terms of violence and lawlessness. In contrast to the other groups, a large proportion of Africans described it as a strike, which is not surprising since in the absence of trade union rights African labour disputes are often subdued through police force. Far more (30% each of African and White, 29% Indian, 28% Coloured) saw it as a powerful and significant protest, rather than as an unlawful act, or a protest that had got out of hand. No African saw it as unjustifiable mass violence, though 4% of Indians and Coloureds, and 11% of Whites saw it in this light."

"THE TARGETS

Most respondents saw whites as the target of black violence. No African saw it as directed against other blacks, though 7% of Indians, 8% of Whites and 3% of Coloureds saw it as including Coloureds and Indians. A very small proportion of Africans, (8%), saw it as directed against institutions rather than against persons. By contrast, 34% of the Coloured, 33% of the White and 31% of the Indian respondents saw institutions as the target of black violence."

"THE POLICE

The overwhelming African response was that the police acted brutally or were trigger happy (76%). Fifty per cent of the Coloureds, 34 per cent of the Indians and 36 per cent of the whites shared this opinion. The majority of whites and Indians (52%) saw the police as having done either a remarkable job, or their duty. By contrast only 10 per cent of the Africans and 15 per cent of the Coloureds saw the police in such positive terms."

"THE ISSUE

All respondents saw the enforcement of Afrikaans on Soweto school children as the fundamental issue in the disturbance. Whites and Coloureds placed greater emphasis on the refusal of the authorities to negotiate with the children. More Africans (13%) saw the killing of the children as the causal factor in itself."

" CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

African respondents discounted the action of external factors, including Black Power, in staging the disturbance. They saw it as spontaneous and unplanned, recognizing the stated reasons and the surrounding circumstances as explosive in themselves to trigger off the mass violence.

Indians and Coloureds were more inclined to see other causal factors — Indians more so than Coloureds. Eight per cent of Indians and Coloureds admitted to the work of unknown agitators, 7 and 3% respectively saw the hand of some underground movement and 10% of Indians attributed it to Black Power. But the majority saw it as

did the Africans — as spontaneous and unplanned."

"The white respondents tended to see it more as a planned affair, which had exploited the issue of Afrikaans to stage an international scandal."

"THE SCENARIO

The most common sequence agreed upon was that the children resented the imposition of Afrikaans, they organized a mass demonstration, the police tried to disperse it and began shooting, thereby wounding and even killing some children. The children retaliated by throwing stones — the police lost control and other unruly elements exploited the situation and escalated it into a general riot on the second day. Whereas the Africans saw the killing of the children as the precipitating factor, the Indians and Coloureds emphasized the enforcing of Afrikaans, and the whites, the refusal of the authorities to listen to the children."

"FEAR

Far more Indians and Coloureds expressed themselves as unafraid or unmoved by the disturbance, 53 and 52% respectively, than Africans and whites, 37 and 40% respectively. Just under a half of the respondents, 47% white, 45% Indian, 44% African and 41% Coloured admitted to being afraid during the disturbance."

"CHANGE — POSSIBILITY, HOW AND WHAT FORM

Effective Means of Change

Indians placed slightly greater emphasis on the use of such non-violent pressure tactics, as protests and strikes, particularly strikes, than did the other groups who emphasized the use of negotiation. Coloureds and Africans preferred direct negotiation with the Prime Minister and his cabinet, to working through the C.R.C. or the Homeland Governments. Indians saw the S.A.I.C. as more effective than direct negotiation. Only 1% of the Indians against 6% of the Africans, 3% of the Coloureds and 9% of the whites saw the usefulness of lobbying through members of Parliament."

"Africans placed greater importance on an armed struggle to effect change than did the other groups — 19%, Indians 12%, Coloureds 17%, white. However more of the groups saw armed struggle as the most effective means for change."

Probable Means of Change

A large proportion of the respondents — (43% African, 21% Indian, 9% Coloured and 25% white) declined to answer how they thought change would come to South Africa. Of those who responded, the largest proportion in each group predicted that change would follow a violence worse than that of Soweto and that would bring down the Government. It is highly probable that those who declined to respond also saw great violence ahead."

"More Indians and whites — 19% saw peaceful change than Africans and Coloureds — 13 and 10% respectively."

"More Indians and Coloureds, 15 and 25% respectively, (than did Africans and whites, 6 and 11% respectively,) saw the Nationalist Government finally abandoning apartheid and negotiating with blacks."

"No Africans saw an introductory stage of Prog./Ref. rule. Negligible percentages of the others — 6% Indian and Coloured, 4% of the whites — saw this as a possibility. Slightly more Africans and Indians — 14%, saw change through foreign intervention than Coloureds and whites — 11 and 4% respectively. Foreign intervention is more of a black than white reality. Indians see America as having the most powerful influence, Africans and Coloureds the Russians."

"FUTURE GOVERNMENT

Respondents were asked to state what Government they saw in power and what Government they wanted to see

in power in the next ten years. There was some relationship between what they saw and what they wished to see."

"While more Africans saw and wished a black or Africanist Government in power — 44 and 46% respectively, a significant proportion saw and wished (20 and 31% respectively), a non-racial, multi-racial federal, socialist or communist Government in power."

"Three whites and one Indian saw a Buthelezi headed government; 3% of the Coloureds and Africans and 2% of the Indians saw a government headed by Mandela and as many Blacks saw one with Sobukwe at the head."

"More whites — 6%, than blacks — Africans 3%, Indians 2%, and Coloureds 1%, saw military rule in the next ten years."

"Generally thus, the majority of Africans opted for an African or Africanist government in the next ten years and saw such a government in power in that time. They were far less inclined to name the first head of a Black

South African government. Whites desired and saw a white government in power in the next ten years. Slightly more desired to see the Prog./Ref. in power (16%) than the Nats. (13%) but considerably more (36%) saw the Nats. in power than the Prog./Ref. (7%)."

"Indians and Coloureds by contrast, wished above all for a multi-racial or non-racial democracy, but were pessimistic about realizing it in the next decade."

"THE INFLUENCE OF EDUCATION AND INCOME ON ATTITUDES

The study shows that there is no significant relation between education and attitudinal response, except in one respect. Eighty per cent of the Africans who rejected the use of violence in all circumstances had little or no formal education. Among non-Africans, the 'pacifists' were well educated." □

THESE ARE THE LAST DAYS

Extracts from an address delivered in Pietermaritzburg at a meeting of the South African Institute of Race Relations.

by Dr Manas Buthelezi

These two last years have made us witnesses of the great dramatic exercises marking the passing of the old order, and the pangs and agonies preceding the birth of the new. There is, however, no guarantee that we shall all live to see the dawn of the new day. Under the firm conviction that the South Africa that lies ahead of us cannot afford to be the same as the old, I am addressing you tonight on the theme "These are the Last Days".

I am saying to you these are the last days for old attitudes. Attempts to create better race relations have been made by many generations of South Africans since 1662 when South Africa for the first time became a multi-racial society. After the banning of the Christian Institute, the Institute of Race Relations is now about the only remaining organisation of its kind and stature. One may ask "Does this mark the beginning of failure to bring about change in South Africa on the level of race relations and attitudes?" Some articulate voices have questioned the wisdom of putting all the efforts into improving race relations on the ground that the deterioration of race relations is only a symptom of the basic problem which is the political setting that divides and polarizes racial groups. According to this point of view, the problem is not just that we should be nice to one another, but that we should remove what polarizes in the first place. Of course, having said this, we must admit that it is important to keep bridges standing. It is important lest people forget, that once upon a time it was possible for blacks and whites to be together without all these floods of laws. This reminds me of what somebody said last year. It was the Reformation Day, and many congregations, black and white, were together. Then somebody stood up, a white farmer, and said "We must really thank the Government that it is now possible for us to have this

kind of service". This shows how people can forget quickly.

In times of transition, while it is difficult to tell what is coming and going, what is passing or permanent, it is necessary to raise these questions. As a Minister of the Church, I am among the first to admit that it is a horrifying spectre to imagine life in South Africa without any form of organised contact between the various racial groups. Maybe some in our society, including politicians, do not have a full impression of what it would mean when groups in South Africa are strangers to one another, to a greater extent than now. How horrifying, how dreadful, and what kind of consequences this will entail.

The more I study the Christian faith, the more I am overwhelmed by its relevance and the far reaching possibilities in the application of its teachings to our contemporary life situation. These are the last days of the old racial attitudes that have come to characterise the South African way of life. What we see happening around us, even that aspect of it which is frightening, is nothing but the manifestation of the death throes of a way of thinking based on racial paternalism and feelings of racial superiority. It is true that those who have laboured most against these attitudes have had their wings clipped. I am persuaded to say that during these last days the occasion will arise when South Africa will openly and officially thank God for having demonstrated through Beyers Naude and those whites whom he represents, that South Africa is not without its built-in redemptive forces. The contribution of the Institute of Race Relations belongs to the same class of constructive effort.

Secondly, these are the last days to old structures. It is a