

to offer some sort of a bridge between university and private practice. Naturally the presence of these graduates will enable the clinics to take on a greater workload.

Assistance to the poor

It cannot be disputed that all individuals and groups who feel that they are not dealt with according to law should be able to turn to the legal system to protect their interests. That after all is the function of the legal system — it is the institution provided by society for the resolution of disputes and the settling of grievances. The work which the students and lawyers do in the clinics and the LRC should demonstrate to the public the capacity which the legal profession has for assisting all sections of the community and not only the rich. Hopefully that experience will lead to a greater awareness on the part of lawyers of the problems of the poor — who number amongst their ranks the majority of the black population in this country, to the development of new skills necessary for dealing with such problems, and to an awareness on the part of the people who experience these pro-

blems that some of them can be resolved constructively through the institutions created for that purpose — the courts. □

Footnotes

- ¹ Attorney sb 3 *Oxford English dictionary*.
- ² James Boswell *The life of Samuel Johnson 1831 vol 1 385*.
- ³ Lawyer sb 3 *Oxford English dictionary*.
- ⁴ Lawyer sb 6 *Oxford English dictionary*.
- ⁵ Cited by the Honourable Lawrence H Cooke, Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals of the State of New York in the *Record of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York* vol 34 at 6.
- ⁶ Borosage and others "The new public interest lawyers" 79 *Yale Law Journal* 1072.
- ⁷ *House of Lords debates* 8 February 1979 at 918.
- ⁸ Cited by Borosage and others 79 *Yale Law Journal* 1077–1078.
- ⁹ *House of Lords debates* 8 February 1979 at 894.
- ¹⁰ *Senate report XX.1 (A.1.3)*.
- ¹¹ *Senate report XX.2 (A.1.6) and XX.5 (A.8.2)*.
- ¹² *Senate report XX.2 (A.1.4)*.

APARTHEID, POWER AND HISTORICAL FALSIFICATION

by Marianne Cornevin (UNESCO, 1980)

reviewed by T.R.H. Davenport.

The author of this work, a French historian, tries here to nail apartheid by demolishing the historical myths through which it seeks to justify itself. It is an avowedly propagandist work, which relies almost entirely on secondary (mainly South African) authorities for most of its judgments, and performs a rather crude hatchet job on a piece of timber which others have been cutting into for years.

The pity is that a book like this, which will almost certainly encourage new myths, was probably necessary as a counter to the historical arguments still used internationally to bolster the policies of the South African Government.

I do not have much quarrel with Ms Cornevin's selection of myths for demolition, though perhaps her defence of Shaka is a trifle exaggerated, and certainly not properly substantiated. The synchronic arrival of blacks and whites south of the Limpopo, the myth of the empty land into which the Voortrekkers moved, the notion that land legislation since 1913 has tried to protect black interests, and the suggestion that the Homelands of today actually comprise territorially the limits to which Africans have a valid historical claim, all need to disappear. Even if there has been some movement away from the crude formulations of Theal's 1890 phase, as I think there has been, especially on the archaeological points of which Ms Cornevin makes so much, there

is still a long way to go before official postures catch up with authenticated research. Nor is this a simple case of inertia, which undoubtedly plays a part, for resistance to new interpretations can be shown to have been very very stubborn.

There is little that South Africans can do about the propagation of counterfactuals in the outside world, if we cannot control the outpourings of our public relations officers. But we need to ponder seriously the extraordinary fact that, in a country dominated by a racist philosophy, the only academic debate among historians worth mentioning is that between opponents of racism, the liberals and the Marxists, which has now been moving at a cracking pace for a decade or so without involving the racists at all. Racist historiography still does sit on the ideological distribution points, and Ms Cornevin is right to stress this. School textbooks are of particular significance, as Frans Auerbach was able to demonstrate years ago, though the textbook is not the only, or perhaps even the main, vehicle of prejudice. At bottom, but with the noteworthy exceptions of the Joint Matriculations Board and the Natal Education Department, our high school public examination system encourages the propagation of historical myths rather than their extinction. This is where we need to strike. □