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From

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Johannesburg

Review from: "Natal Witness"
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ALAN PATON POINTS THE WAY



ALAN PATON

NATAL WITNESS LIBRARY 12 JUN 1970

INSTRUMENT OF THY
PEACE, by Alan Paton.
Collins, Fontana Books.

WHETHER one agrees
with Alan Paton or not,
what must be acknow-
ledged is that his writing is
thoughtful and is always an
expression of his deepest
feelings. Such writing is
sincere and honest.

in the often dark recesses of
human thought.

I did, however, feel that such
a book as this should have been
devoid of political thought.
Malcolm Muggeridge, in his
foreword, links the South
African scene with Nazi
Germany, and says that "a
Christian like Paton, is placed
in an appalling and difficult and
harrowing situation in South
Africa today".

Such thinking and honesty is,
of course, what the world today
requires in order to usher in
the peace that this book is
about.

It would be trite to say that
this work is a series of short
devotional essays. Such a description
would not in any way
portray the message the author
is trying to give.

I felt that the message of
this book would have been
clearer and of greater help to a
greater number of people, many
of whom sincerely and honestly
disagree with Alan Paton, had
the shadows of secular political
thoughts not been allowed to
fall across what is undoubtedly
a sincere collection of constructive
inspired writing.

The book is, in fact, a reflection
of the author's faith and reaction
to spiritual truths that so many people
leave out of their busy
workaday lives.

In a short prologue, Alan Paton
says: "I believe I shall be able
to help some of them". He is
referring to those 'sinners' who
wish to be better, purer, less
selfish and more useful. The
help he wishes to give he admits
comes not from his own strength,
but that of St. Francis of Assisi,
who drew his strength from his
Divine Master.

Individual political opinion
should in my view be forgotten
when reading this book.
"Instruments of Thy Peace"
is a book to be read in quiet
and unbiased moments. It is
unfortunate that the book
itself has a political bias.

H.H.C.

This work is for those who
aspire to be instruments of
God's peace. Such an aim
should be that of everyone
today who, in these uncertain
times, prays for the light of
Divine understanding to shine