



BOOK REVIEWS

The Tragedy of Apartheid by Norman Phillips.

Published by Allen & Unwin, London. 18s.

Apartheid and Discrimination by K. L. Roskam.

Published by A. W. Sythoff, Leyden, Netherlands. 21s.

The African Revolution by James Cameron.

Published by Thames & Hudson, London. 18s.

DR. VERWOERD has always wanted to make a monkey of the press: one that saw no evil, heard no evil, spoke no evil and reported no evil. It's an old nervous tic of all tyrants, and during the South African Emergency last year, he, his ministers and hard-working police, must have felt that they were succeeding, with the local press anyway. Police, army and, for some reason, the navy, surrounded the strike-bound African township of Nyanga near Cape Town, for instance, and thus thought that they prevented the press from seeing their evil goings-on there; they eventually cut the telephone communications from the township; they hounded, intimidated or arrested anyone from Nyanga who managed to speak to the press; and they passed Emergency Regulations arbitrarily preventing the press from publishing anything that might cause "unrest". The local South African press, choking uneasily on its gag, published police or official hand-outs almost entirely.

The officials were dismayed, then, to see the uncowed corps of foreign correspondents, busily searching everywhere for facts, and considering themselves free of the ferocious restrictions placed on the local press. An official of the State Information Office said picturesquely, "There is a leakage of news overseas. By public request this will be dealt with."

Shortly afterwards, Norman Phillips, foreign news editor of the Canadian 'Toronto Star', was arrested, without charge or trial; imprisoned for three days and then hastily deported. In his recently published book, he sums up, accurately I think,

the main reasons for his arrest:

- “1. A warning to all foreign correspondents and a threat to their sources of information.
- “2. A vindictive action revealing the jittery state of the white-supremacy Government and the dominant position of its (then) national police chief, General Rademeyer.”

His book is a racy account of the Sharpeville and post-Sharpeville police orgy of terror, and he sums up simply some of the major discriminatory laws and their background; it is a pity—but probably inevitable—that a few minor errors should escape his sharp sub-editor's eye, and it is deplorable that his publishers should slackly sub-title his account: “A Journalist's Experiences in the South African Riots”. Which riots? However, it is a sturdy indictment of apartheid which, I hope, will fulfill his jailers' worst fears by reaching hitherto uninformed millions.

Mr. Roskam's book is a more scholarly document, and one of the most valuable up-to-date reference books on South Africa. It is packed with jewels of verbatim quotes, which will have great historical value:

The African may only reside in towns “when he is willing to enter and minister to the needs of the white man and should depart therefrom when he ceases to minister”. (Stallard Commission, 1922.)

“South Africa is a white man's country and he must remain the master here.” (Verwoerd)

The mass of assiduously collected statistics in Mr. Roskam's book is skilfully analysed: in facts and interpretation it is the necessary supplement to Basil Davidson's unsurpassed but almost ten-year-old *Report on Southern Africa*.

James Cameron's book will taste like a fresh, clear river to anyone struggling through the sandy wastes of contradictory “Western” versions of African changes: that is, revolutionary upheavals throughout Africa. He is incomparable, this writer's reporter, in presenting the most turgid situation in the cleanest and most lilting language. He modestly suggests himself that “purists, specialists and Old Hands” will quarrel with some of his simplifications. It is a beautiful book to quarrel with, though. His book is part of a sort of literary Promised Land: an exciting series on all (his publisher's word) the major social and political upheavals of mankind which can be regarded as turning points in human progress.

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