

## The Black Sash Die Swart Serp

A remark to the effect that there is no starvation in South Africa, made publicly by M. C. Botha and echoed privately by many well-fed whites... a feeling that as long as the market picks up... we will be back on our golden road to prosperity and all the black bogies will go back into their proper places... out of town and out of sight... which is of course where they belong and are most happy. Yes, we think that we are wonderful in the way that our generous hearts respond to appeals for money for poor black children, we're fantastic in the way we find money for a poor old black man who has been defrauded of his life's savings. Perhaps you are one of those who feels that given a little more elastic approach on the part of the ruling powers, a little less of the petty apartheid game, and a little uplifting of the harmless black middleclass man, and a distant hope that one day he might be allowed a bit of say in things and all will stay the same in our dreamy white world. Well, times have changed and its too late. The big fraudulent apartheid game is on its way out too. And no watered-down version will ever convince the world that it could work or is intended to work, because though the news may not have filtered through to everyone yet, the mood has changed, and if you want to be in and around at that time you had better make some pretty rapid adjustments. On a public platform in Johannesburg recently, a respected churchman said that the black hand was still extended in friendship to the white man. We feel that he is rather optimistic. Of course there may be a corner

of this country to which the evil fruits of this governments policy have not spread, but it is doubtful. We strongly doubt that there is a remote enough a rural area which still has the semblance of a village where the men are paid enough on the spot not to have to take their labour to the white cities where it can be exploited more successfully. We doubt too that in any rural area there is adequate food, schooling or prospects. And in the towns we should be familiar with the scene, of violence through frustrated ambitions, of a total contempt for the whitemans law which is based on the whitemans own interest in keeping the blackman forever in an inferior position... so we find it a little naive to imagine that the blackmans hand is still in the outstretched position. If we could be in the black situation for several months, and feel what it was like to be powerless and black in a white orientated power system, to have suffered the ignomy of being less than a man in the eyes of others, a mere "boy", have felt the daily pains and frustrations... perhaps then we might feel a bit less confident as to whether his black hand was still offered in friendship, and even not too sure that he would want to take our white hand either. Its time to rid ourselves of the presumption that we have got forever in which to do our adjusting, that in five years time it'll be much the same as it is now, outside pressures are increasing, and inner pressures are mounting, stop seeing the blackman as endlessly benevolent to you because you are white and prepare yourself for the day when you will have to accept change on his terms.

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