

* the retention of his powerful verligte supporters and the gaining of new support to his left, especially amongst English-speaking people.

There is no logic, although a lot of emotion, in the argument that because Mr Vorster has altered course, one should now support him. Being a pragmatist, Mr Vorster moves under pressure. The sports policy should illustrate this clearly enough. One wonders what sports policy we would have had today if there had not been someone called Peter Hain!

If all enlightened people should join Mr Vorster now, the strongest reason for him to move further and faster would

disappear and his right wing would again grow in importance.

If one therefore directs an appeal to all enlightened South Africans to help build up the Progressive Reform Party into a powerful verligte force, one is not in the first instance motivated by party-political reasons. One does it in the belief that only such a strong force on Mr Vorster's left can force him to scrap his right wing and move more boldly in an enlightened direction.

And, one does it in the belief that the pressure of such a Party will make anyone who is considering establishing a dictatorship, seriously think twice. □

RELIGION AND PREJUDICE

A Review of "Religious Beliefs and White Prejudice" by Robert Buis
Raven Press 1975 R2,40

by Colin Gardner

This is an interesting little book. It records a sociologist's attempt to demonstrate in an objective way his suspicion that the attitudes of white South African Christians are partly affected by the specific nature of their religious beliefs.

He proves his point conclusively. He takes samples of white members of the Dutch Reformed Church, the Presbyterian Church and the Roman Catholic Church, and, having conducted a survey, he finds that the former have a distinctly "less favourable attitude towards blacks" than the latter. The Presbyterians fall in the middle, but closer to the RCs than to the DRCs.

To a layman all this may sound fairly simple; but it isn't. The book is partly an account of the concerns, problems and techniques of a practising sociologist. Mr Buis discusses such fundamental questions as the differences between "attitudes" and "behaviour" and (Weber's distinction) between "ideas" and "interests". He then goes on to consider the exact nature of the beliefs of the three denominations in question, and his ways of determining

these beliefs, and methods of testing the religious committedness of the actual people that he is to interview. He talks also of the different ways of classifying and testing racial attitudes. Then he describes the drawing up of the survey itself, with all its complex checks and counter-checks. Finally there is an account of the carrying-out of the survey (this is fascinating, and at times amusing), and then the conclusion.

Mr Buis is giving us facts and—correctly—doesn't attempt to make large deductions from the facts. But the liberally-minded reader can't help doing so. He finds himself dismayed, once again, at the thought that the Christian denomination that is most powerful among South African whites regards racial separation as an important part of God's plan. But he is distressed, too, that even the "better" denominations—in this survey the Roman Catholics—don't on the whole set a particularly striking example. If Jesus Christ's call that people should love one another were taken **really** seriously by those who consider themselves his followers, racial prejudice—prejudices of every sort—would begin to evaporate like morning mist beneath the splendour of the sun. □