

## **The White to Write, the Right to White (1998)**

### **Raimi Gbadamosi**

In the Sunday Times, News Review section of the twenty-second of November 1998, there was an article entitled 'Fly the Beloved Country' (an unfortunate parody of Alan Paton's book; 'Cry, the Beloved Country'). The article told of the plight of Anne Paton, the widow of the South African novelist.

Mrs. Paton tells of the number of times she has been robbed, and the ways her life has deteriorated by the ending of apartheid. She writes without apparent irony 'we have become a killing society'<sup>1</sup> and has therefore decided to return to England, stating that:

Of course there was a lot of crime in the wicked old days, but nothing like this. It was a police state. If people were wandering around, the police would drive up and say "where is your pass?" and lock them up. Now you can do anything and go anywhere. . . .<sup>2</sup>

After reducing the realities of Apartheid to 'the wicked old days', the piece continues:

The government has many excellent schemes for improving the lot of the black man who has been disadvantaged for so long. A great deal of money is spent in this direction. However nothing can succeed. White people live in such fear. Every available rand (and there is much money available) must be diverted and poured into the creation of a viable police force

We are now reduced to spending more and more (of our own) money on doing our own policing and protecting ourselves. Those of us who have lost the nerve, or have too many fears for the future emigrate if we can.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Paton, Anne. Fly the Beloved Country The Sunday Times, News Review 22 Nov. 1998 p.2

<sup>2</sup> ibid

<sup>3</sup> ibid p.2 brackets mine