

SA 'could lead' in race peace

The Star Bureau

LONDON — Time may show that the presence of different races in South Africa has been a blessing and not a curse, says Mr Rajmohan Gandhi, grandson of the Mahatma.

Writing in *Himmat*, the Indian weekly which he edits, he says: "Nowhere else in the world are Blacks, Whites, the mixed and Browns gathered together in such generous proportions.

"Long regarded as being behind the times, South Africa has the chance — in spite of the history, in spite of the odds — to be ahead of the world in racial co-operation."

Mr Gandhi sees Mr Vorster "of all people" as the man who played the key role in the "sudden outbreak of peace" in Southern Africa.

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Perhaps a sense of realism helped to bring about the recent changes, he thinks, not necessarily a change of heart.

"But realism too deserves credit, and Mr Vorster and Mr Ian Smith should get it, especially when some Whites in Rhodesia have attacked the change as a sell-out."

Mr Gandhi noted that Mr Vorster firmly resisted attempts to support the White revolt in Lourenco Marques. This convinced Zambia and Tanzania that he wanted detente, not confrontation, with Black Africa.

He said that changes noticed by visitors to South Africa such as the discouragement of petty apartheid, might have come too late or did not go far enough to avert racial war.

"But hope can be fed if we take into account the steady if noiseless change taking place in a number of influential minds."

The Dutch Reformed Church, for instance, was now admitting new and bold thoughts. One of its ministers, the Rev George Daneel, was asking his people to re-examine their views. And men like Daneel were no longer lone voices.

They had been helped by many Blacks who had rejected the reverse apartheid that would seek to make South Africa exclusively Black.