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## 'More than a look, into a Mau Mau mind'

THE FOLLOWING is a review in Time Magazine of April 14, of Victor Stafford Reid's book The Leopard:

"Most such books shine only a feeble light into an area where burning racial hatred has obscured the underlying questions of right and wrong or else they glare with a Ruark-like, eyewitness sensationalism.

"It may be a virtue of The Leopard that its author, Victor Reid, has never been in Africa.

"Novelist Reid is a Jamaican journalist; his only other novel, New Day, reflected the colour and sensuousness of his native Caribbean island. What he has tried for in The Leopard is more than a look into a Mau Mau mind. It is no less than an effort to glimpse the African soul suffering be-tween felt injustice and the dim knowledge that the white man's impact has ended once and for all the chance of returning to the Eden of primitive ignorance and tribal pride that existed before he

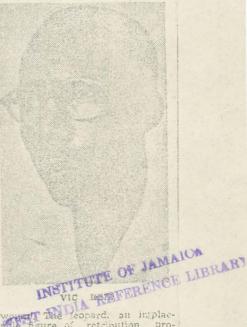
"Author Reid's hero is Nebu. a simple Kikuyu who was once a houseboy for an English planter. Now he is a Mau Mau whose deepest joy comes when a white is made "beautifui", i.e., seen in the final torments of death. The plot is so firmly tied to coincidence as to make it seem slightly ridiculous. After a raid, Nebu drops off from his Mau Mau gang to follow white tracks through the bush. When he catches up to the white man, he finds his old to give his story the quality of boss, and after he has killed him, near myth to make the herorogal. he discovers the white man's son, a crippled boy of ten. The boy is neither white nor black. He is, in fact. Nebu's son by the white man's wife, who had seduced her househoy years before and was herself killed by her husband when he saw the child's colour.

and wants to atone by returning triumph.

The Leopard (159 pp)—Victor Stafford Reid — Viking (33)

"At the present literary rate of exchange, one African satari equals roughly one novel about Mau Mau trouble.

The Leopard (159 pp)—Victor the youngster. As he carries him through the bush trailed by a leopard waiting for a chance to make a double kill, Nebu is formented by his son's presence even more than by his festering



women the copard, an implac-able figure of retribution, pro-vides a horrible ending that blends all the tragic elements of white, black and half-black frus-

near myth to these the terror understandable. No recent novel about the Mau Mau has succeeded as does The Leopard in making clear how the black man rationalises his murderous bent. busehoy years before and was erself killed by her husband hen he saw the child's colour.

"Wounded. Nebu tries to get to white town to deliver the how roll of a lyrical, near-poetic porta white town to deliver the boy rait of a primitive mind with his to his friends. In his uncomplication brutal subject matter. Under the boy rait of a primitive mind with his to his friends. In his uncomplication brutal subject matter. Under the boy rait of a primitive matter to hear a primitive matter.