



The Sword and the Pen: Six decades on the political frontier

Allister Sparks

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Allister Sparks joined his first newspaper at age 17 and was pitched headlong into the vortex of South Africa's stormy politics. His autobiography, *The Sword and the Pen: Six decades on the political frontier*, is the story of how as a journalist he watched and chronicled and participated in his country's unfolding drama for over half a century, covering events from the premiership of DF Malan to the presidency of Jacob Zuma, and witnessing at close range the rise and fall of apartheid and the rise and crisis of the new South Africa.

In trenchant prose, Sparks has written a remarkable account of both a life lived to its fullest capacity as well as the surrounding narrative of South Africa from the birth of apartheid, the rise of political opposition, the dawn of democracy, right through to the crisis being experienced today.

'Anyone who tries to understand what is happening in South Africa today without first digesting Allister Sparks' lucid, sensitive and comprehensive exploration of the country's multi-faceted mind, does so at his own peril.' - André Brink, on *The Mind of South Africa*

'His special strength is a writing talent which combines precise reportage with shrewd analysis and unusual stamina ...' - *The Observer*, on *Tomorrow is Another Country*

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