

THE CHANGING

FACE OF APARTHEID

ONE of the major aims of the new constitution is that the government begin to enlarge and strengthen support for itself. This would be done by granting limited political rights and economic concessions to sections of the oppressed — Coloureds, Indians and members of the urban African population.

But in the 1940's and 1950's taking the vote away from the Coloureds and Indians was a Nationalist priority, because they feared that black votes could be used against them. So why has the government changed its tune and decided to re-admit Indians and Coloureds as junior partners?

It is not hard to find a reason for this. We all know that since the 1976 uprisings Apartheid faced the growing threat of instability. Therefore the Government has sought new ways to maintain its hold over society because

old methods have failed to work. For example the SANC election could not maintain more than 10% of the people and the impressive Anti-SANC campaign produced a 90% stay-away. Therefore the government is fearful of an alliance which would unite Coloureds, Indians and Africans.

What does this new constitution mean for our community?

If implemented, the proposed constitution will result in creating three parliaments. The main in terms of members is the White, Coloured and Indian chambers would be 4:2:1 with Africans having no representation in the new system. Hence this system is clearly designed to restrict specific sectors of the oppressed community to make it easier for the government to impose its white rule and supremacy. This process of co-optation could

only have the effect of dividing and weakening our people.

The most serious danger facing Indian South Africans today is that a certain collaborationist grouping and those whose economic position is favourable can be enticed into accepting the constitutional proposals. Wealthy business circles, in particular, may gain short-term advantages and not long term security. The majority of Indian people will not derive any benefits from a constitution which makes no attempt to create less inequality and provide more material security. The present proposals therefore pose a great

danger and act a recipe for the division of our people from the African people who are totally excluded and given no say whatsoever in the affairs of this country.

Group Areas will remain

By no means housing is concerned the Group Areas Act will remain in force. The government claims that it has fulfilled its responsibility, and will no longer build homes for people. In accordance with the principle of autonomy, the state will no longer be responsible for the shortage of houses that exist.

Individuals will have to erect their own dwellings with their own funds or finance from building societies, banks, and employers. Housing for rental and economic housing on lease ownership schemes will no longer be provided by the state. The government will only develop the infrastructure and make service roads available to individuals. In short we will be faced with less houses and more overcrowding. The total amount allocated for the provision of housing decreased by R57 600 000 last year.



Housing Shortages will get worse



Our demands will not be met

Education still inferior

IN the field of education the situation just forward still remains within the scope of discriminating and segregated education. There is no basis to argue that the quality of education will improve, in fact it can get worse. The recent white paper of the government into education made a clear case for a reduction in the length of formal education, as well as shifting the responsibility for finance from the state to parents, employers and the individual. Only the first 3 years of a child's schooling will be compulsory and free.

What does this mean for the educational life of our community?

In effect the poorer people in our community will not be able to afford educating their children after high school.

Furthermore, middle-income homes will have to survive as they will have to pay for what was previously provided by the state.

Different government departments will mean that inferior and separate education will remain.

measures will be elected in such a way that the rich will surely benefit. Votes will be counted in bulk.

All those over the age of 18 will have one vote.

All those who own or occupy property above a certain value will have two votes.

All those who own businesses or industries will have three votes.

Places like Hongkong will thus have more votes than all the Indian and Coloured communities put together.

Moreover the local councils will have to be self-financing. This will mean that our communities, who are already having difficulties in paying their rates, electricity bills and transport costs etc., will have to dig deeper into their already barely empty pockets to pay

for education and other facilities and bureaucratic services.

So, we can see quite clearly control or autonomy is meaningless unless there are financial resources to back this up. In fact what the Government is doing is shifting the burden onto the communities themselves. Power will be in the hands of the white councils. All that is happening is that the Government is providing institutions which exercise its aid and power. It is an attempt to undermine the role of the civic organisations which have demanded a re-allocation and re-distribution of Croydon's finances.

The Government is already introducing autonomy through the back door, as the greater delegation of powers to the Langa Management Committee recently proved.



SOUTH AFRICA is a land of truth and justice changes are being made. If you listen to the radio, watch T.V. or read newspapers you will soon notice obviously that the government is speaking with a different tone. It is even declared at times that Apartheid is dead. For so the immediate question is not simply to discuss these claims. An examination of these proposed changes clearly shows that the constitution does not in any way advance the road to democracy. In fact government has adopted a two-pronged strategy, that is repression by force, intimidation and reform by constitutional proposals. It is a carrot and stick approach. On the one hand the Government tries to bribe us, and if this does not work, it will use force to force us to concede to its rule.



The Nationalist Party relies on the police, security, etc. to suppress the African and Coloured people. The white army is necessary for the survival of white rule. South Africa today is experiencing a war against black and white South Africa and the army is involved in this civil war. The new constitution will increase this civil war by reinforcing white domination and privilege. To maintain this domination we want to see Indian and Coloured troops build.

South African Defence Force requires Coloured and Indian youth. A crucial problem is recruitment. There are under a million white men that both the military and the economy require. If the military draws on these for larger numbers it would worsen the already existing skill shortage in the economy.

The call up is also an attempt to pacify the Nationalist Party followers. They want to show white Indians and Coloureds get the vote they merit at the same time "bear the responsibility" of defending the country. P.W. Botha and Magnus Malan, the Minister of Defence, have already stated they need Indians and Coloureds. They call-up would affect all Indians and Coloureds males. Those who are 18 years will have to do their national service for 2 years. In addition, all males from 18 to 25 years will have to spend 6 weeks every year on army duty.



Workers will suffer

For a growing number of breadwinners increasing unemployment and retrenchment, decreasing take-home pay and inflation is seriously undermining their ability to survive. As unemployment increases, trade unions force workers which in turn weakens their bargaining power. This is what you can expect from a constitution which gives the corporations and big business the freedom to do what

they want by promoting free enterprise. While the government will spend less on welfare by restricting public expenditure it will spend more on defence. The savings, donations, harassment of trade unions and their leaders prove the repressive nature of the state. By increasing U.S.T. to 7%, workers will be hardest hit, since this is a tax they cannot avoid but have to pay.

Denial of Human Rights

The constitutional proposals reject the concept of South Africa as a single society and instead stretches race and ethnicity. In other words, the Nationalists see South Africa as being an

The Government refuses to accept the 20-million African people as citizens of this country.

ETHNIC PLURAL society. This means a society made up of different ethnic and racial groups (e.g. Xhosa, Zulu, Tswana, White, Indian and Coloured). This is an approach which emphasises division rather than unification. In its crystallised form this policy has resulted in the creation of ethnic homelands.

African people have been restricted to 17% of the land in South Africa, which have been given the status of "independent countries" however these bastions like Transkei, Bophuthatane, Ciskei, Venda, etc. do not have any industrial development and are totally dependent on Pretoria. All its citizens have to find work in white South Africa.

It is on this basis that the new constitution rejects the inclusion of Africans.

None of these bastions are recognised by any country in the world, except for Pretoria and Israel.

Our problems will get worse

It is quite clear that the South African state is in a crisis. A crisis occurs when long term political and economic problems reach such a point that the stability of the entire system is threatened. When this happens the state has to give up its old ways and develop new methods and strategies to maintain its rule. Therefore we can see that it is not Apartheid that is changing, but only the form of Apartheid, i.e. Apartheid is changing its face. It is not of the crisis in the economy and political system that a new approach is developing. This new approach is one which attempts to reduce the middle class Indians and Coloureds with selective concessions. Magnus Malan, has made it clear that the Government must attempt to win the "hearts and minds" of people. This article has shown that in terms of the new constitutional proposals, nobody will benefit, because conflict will escalate in this country.

There are various ways and means open to us to stop the new constitution from being implemented. We need to consider all these and make sure that we advance our struggle and not retard it.

If the main aim of State policy at the moment is to win our support, we must make sure that we deny that opportunity to the State. As in the past, we have enjoyed ordering alliances with the African and Coloured masses. Therefore to allow the State to break our alliance today which has taken years to build and cannot be like committing political suicide. More than that, to commit ourselves to the new constitution for a few concessions is a high price to pay — the price is military conscription. Today, more than ever before, we need to address ourselves urgently to stand together, in unity and show our oppressors that the crisis that they have created is their doing and will only deepen the conflict and civil war in the country.

We must ensure that we remain true to the ideals of freedom, and not collaboration. Our demands as outlined in the Freedom Charter for a non-racial and democratic South Africa is not satisfied under the new constitution. The new constitution does not meet with our aspirations, and our community must reject the new constitution as a fraud.