

EDITORIAL

The Aftermath of the Referendum

The Referendum of 2 November has come and gone and the majority of our white fellow countrymen have voted overwhelmingly in favour of our perpetual exclusion from political decision-making. From now onwards it will take a lot of persuasion to convince African people that white South Africans genuinely wish that there should be a peaceful resolution of political conflict in this country. This is so because the constitution they have just endorsed will escalate political conflict not only between Africans and whites but also among Africans, Indians and Coloureds.

Constitutional Reform Quo Vadis?

Similarly, it will take a lot of persuasion to convince Africans that the majority of whites, regardless of their ethnic origin, genuinely desire a political dispensation that includes African people. It appears that the majority of whites are prepared to support apartheid and derive maximum benefit from it as long as it lasts. Those white citizens who voted "yes" have been responsible for the elevation of the evil policy of apartheid to the status of a hallowed tenet, enshrined in the constitution of South Africa. The strong support that the Prime Minister received from some prominent industrialists across the political spectrum, also makes the motives of the so-called free enterprise capitalist system suspect as far as Africans are concerned. Is there an un-holy alliance between capitalism and racism? Are Africans being made a captive audience to be readily exploited

by racist capitalism, aided and abetted by the new constitution of South Africa? How does one reconcile the free enterprise system with the Group Areas Act, Influx Control, migratory labour and the harassment of Trade Union leaders by the Security Police? These and many other questions are being posed by African people of all political persuasions. The new constitution does nothing to repeal these laws and do away with some of the above-named undemocratic practices. Yet some industrialists have found it possible to support the Prime Minister during the referendum.

INHLABAMKHOSI would like, however, to pay special tribute to those few white fellow countrymen who upheld the democratic tradition by refusing to say "yes" to a constitution that excludes 72% of the citizens from participating in the political affairs of the country of their birth. We shall always remember them for their brave stand.

The referendum campaign, contrary to government expectations and wishes, also turned out to be about Africans and their future role in South African politics. The dramatic entry of Chief Buthelezi and his brilliant and carefully planned campaign in favour of a "no" vote shocked the government back to their political senses. Every South African worthy of the name now knows that South African politics devoid of African political inputs is mere child's play, and that no viable political solution will ever be possible without black participation. It was Chief Buthelezi, more than any other African

leader or groups of leaders who drove these points home. Chief Buthelezi's call for a National Convention to settle South Africa's constitutional future has been immensely strengthened by his pivotal role during the referendum campaign. Ironically, the biggest meeting in the whole campaign was the multi-racial meeting held at Umlazi on 24 September 1983. This meeting was organised by Inkatha as King Shaka Day and it attracted more than 20 000 people. The meeting was addressed by spokesmen of Inkatha, P.F.P., Democratic Peoples Party, Congress of the People, Islamic Council of South Africa and the Reform Party of South Africa. Mr Norman Middleton, former Deputy Leader of the Labour Party of South Africa, also addressed the meeting.

Save for a few political Rip Van Winkles in our midst, no-one can today doubt the fact that in the event of a National Convention being held in South Africa, Chief Buthelezi will be among the key African delegates to that Convention. In the words of an English Sunday newspaper, which supported the "yes" vote, "Chief Buthelezi has rightly earned his seat at a future National Convention".

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THE PEOPLES' STRUGGLE!
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