

What the Constitutional Proposals will mean for South Africa:



Who will make the decisions?

A WHITE parliament. A coloured parliament. An Indian parliament. This is what the government's new proposals will bring us.

In the last issue of Grassroots we described the structure of the new system of government - we said there will be three separate voters rolls, three separate chambers and an executive president who will have the final say over the parliaments. For every Indian elected, two coloureds and four whites will be elected.

Each parliament will discuss matters relating to their own race group. If the Labour Party sits in the coloured parliament, it will only be able to discuss coloured education. It can decide to open all coloured schools to all South Africans but this will not apply to all

schools in the country. And if the executive president is unhappy about this decision, then he can put a stop to it. It is not the coloured parliament but the executive president who will have the final say.

Other matters to be discussed by each parliament will be religion, culture, community planning and development, and aspects of social welfare and health.

In matters affecting all race groups, the cabinet will make policy and laws. The cabinet is made up of experts drawn from business, the military, the professions.

All laws that the cabinet draw up must be accepted by a majority in each parliament. If the proposed law does not get the support of the majority in each chamber, then it will be referred to

a special committee. This committee will be made up of representatives from all three chambers. If they still cannot reach agreement, then the law will be referred to the President's Council who will have the final say.

Matters of common concern will be issues like: finance, defence, justice, security, foreign affairs, labour, and aspects of health welfare, recreation.

The government will function in a way that will leave very little power in the hands of our people. It will be the business-man and men from the army who will help make decisions.

Are they the people who will know our problems?

Can we expect that they will speak for us?

Must we not fight for the right to speak for ourselves?

CALL FOR UNITED FRONT AGAINST PC PROPOSALS

FRANK Chikanyi is from Kageso near Krugersdorp. He is an ex-Apostolic pastor who was expelled from the church because of his political beliefs. When he was expelled, his whole congregation left with him because they agreed with the stand he was taking in speaking out against the injustices in our society.

Frank Chikanyi was a guest speaker at the opening night of Grassroots Annual General Meeting. Speaking as a priest, he told us what he felt about the new constitutional proposals and the Koornhof Bills.

This is what he said: My fellow comrades in the struggle for liberation of the oppressed and exploited masses of South Africa...

"I want to suggest that the struggles of the people are just part of the greater struggle the church is involve in"

struggle. Some 'holier than thou' hypocrites of the gospel believe that you cannot be part of the struggle as a priest. I want to suggest that the struggles of the people are just part of the greater struggle the church is involved in ... to create a new person from this dangerous corrupt society.

Our society is oppressive, exploits others, is characterised by racial, tribal and ethnic prejudice. It is symbolised in the racist minority regime in South Africa.

We want to create a new person, who is liberated from racial prejudice, exploitative tendencies which all result in the exploitation of others. We want to produce a just and peaceful society where all share in the God given resources of

this country.

My subject today is the Presidents Council Proposals and Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill.

The Botha regime rejects the one man one vote demand of the people. Botha, like his predecessors, argue that separate development is the best answer to the one man one vote demand of the people. They say it will result in the oppression of one group by another. So he created Kwa Zulu, Lebowa, Ciskei, and declared South Africa all white to avoid the domination of one group by another.

I want to ask a question: Is Botha's regime not a minority regime dominating the majority of the people? And is this not done at the point of a gun? Four million people are oppressing more than

twenty million. He rejects the Westminster system because it would result in the domination of the minority by the majority.

Let us look at what the PC Proposals say:

- A tricameral parliament constituted on the basis of the ratio of White: Coloured: Indians - 4:2:1

- Electoral College that elects the all powerful executive president. This will be as

follows: Whites: Coloureds: Indians - 50:25:13.

- The Presidents Council which will advise the executive council: 20 Whites, 10 Coloureds, 5 Indians. Also 25 members approved by the executive president.

I won't go further into the regional administrations, provincial councils and the metro-

"They do not meet the basic demand of one person one vote."

politan, for the pattern is the same.

This is what Botha calls the Total Strategy against the Total Onslaught. He knows he can't win by simply meeting strength against the forces of liberation. He has to use political strategies.

Firstly he has to convince the people of South Africa that we are fighting against communists and terrorists.

Secondly he has to co-opt the Indian and Coloured communities to help him fight against the majority of the people of South Africa.

Thirdly, to create and co-opt a middle class amongst African blacks through Koornhof bills.

Ladies and gentlemen, I believe you will agree with me now that we do not need a communist from Moscow to come and tell us what these proposals really are. I believe you will agree with me that these proposals:

- Entrench the policy of excluding the black

majority and strengthening the present structure - It will make the apartheid machine run more smoothly.

- The 4:2:1 representation will ensure that the white vote is the vote that will swing decision. This will give coloureds and indians a mere spectator role in propping up the decisions of the whites.

- They make race and

ethnicity the only criteria for the right to take part.

- They do not begin to change the basic inequalities of our society which have been the result of centuries of oppression.

Botha's attempts at dividing the people is not only confined to dividing us along racial lines but also along class lines. At dividing the workers from those who are better off.

Jerry Coovadia has pointed out that there is a danger of Indians (and Coloureds) being tempted into accepting the new proposals because they will believe

that they would get security and benefits for themselves.

Jan Theron said that the constitutional proposals discriminate against working class coloureds because the voting system will be in favour of those who are better off. The voting system gives three votes to those who own property, two to rate-payers and only one to workers.

The Koornhof Bills is really a more effective way of enforcing the Bantustan system on the millions of black Africans. They declare these people non citizens of South Africa. These Bills will:

- reduce the population of African people who will have rights of residence in the cities.

- ensure that only the government can say who are 'approved' to stay in the cities.

- try and move more and more blacks out of the cities and into homelands.

- to make influx control more efficient for the first time by forcing people to pay severe penalties if they give accommodation or employ the "illegals". This Bill will therefore result in massive raids



Frank Chikanyi, speaking at Grassroots AGM

and prosecutions. It will result in the growth of huge squatter settlements on the borders of the Bantustans. It will result in the increase of rural poverty and suffering. Therefore, judgement must be passed on all collaborators for causing such misery to millions of South Africans.

I want to add my voice to many voices already heard that we reject the constitutional

proposals, because they do not meet the basic demand of one person one vote in a unitary South Africa.

I also want to declare my support to the call for a united front to fight against the Presidents Council Proposals. I also wish to call on all justice loving South Africans and liberation movements committed to bringing about a just society in South Africa. Join hands together!



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