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# EDITORIAL

## THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

It's amazing the things you can see if you want to. Not long ago the Minister of Internal Affairs, Mr. Chris Heunis, went on an apartheid-boosting trip to the United States. There he is reported to have said "The majority of Afrikaners have matured and become more inclusive . . . . . this heralds a beautiful new dispensation for all of us . . . . . it is a dispensation where the principal of self-determination remains non-negotiable, but, at the same time, aims at the institutionalisation of multi-nationalism on a non-discriminatory basis."

Within a week the Indian community had decisively rejected its designated role in the beautiful new dispensation. In the first national election for the South African Indian Council a boycott campaign organised by those opposed to apartheid institutions, and led by the Indian Congress, resulted in a poll ranging from 2,07% in one seat, to 27% in the seat which recorded the highest poll.

The national average was just over 10% . Some government spokesmen and candidates in the election have blamed intimidation for this massive stay-away. It would need a quite extraordinary campaign of intimidation to persuade 90% of an enthusiastic electorate not to vote in an election anywhere in the world. Who seriously imagines that, in South Africa, our Security Police would sit back and watch it happen in an election for the chosen vehicle of government policy, and not lay their hands on anyone? Yet as far as we know there wasn't a single prosecution for intimidation throughout the whole campaign.

The truth of the matter is that the Indian people were not an enthusiastic electorate and they do not want separate representation in a multi-national institution. Even those who stood in the election insisted that they were only doing so in the hope that it would be a step towards an effective say in the central Parliament.

The Coloured people don't want separate institutions either. Those of them who tried to use the Coloured Representative Council closed it down to make that very point.

Most African people don't want separate representation either. Kwa-Zulu doesn't want it, to say nothing of the urban population whose numbers increase by the day. Nor do a growing number of white people, if increasing PFP support and the recent Constantia vote to throw that area open to all races mean anything.

The new dispensation Mr. Heunis was telling the Americans about is really the same old policy in slightly different clothing. It only looks beautiful from inside the Nationalist Party, for the benefit of whose members it has primarily been constructed. Other people, who bear the burden of laws which are necessary to sustain it, know that there is nothing beautiful about them. What the Indian people said to the Government on November 4th was that the present dispensation is no good. We doubt if that message will be received in the Nationalist caucus yet, but we still hope it will one day. □