

its four Provincial Congresses. There they seem to have been swallowed without a murmur. Not one African person, urban or rural, was at any stage considered as having a view worth canvassing.

It is therefore not surprising that this new scheme has been rejected by every African leader of any consequence. It has also been rejected by the majority party in the Coloured Representative Council and, we have no doubt, is regarded as irrelevant by that large body of Coloured people who refuse to have anything to do with the CRC. Indian leaders have either rejected the scheme or are non-committal.

The proposals, as we see them, are a simple device to draw the Indian and Coloured communities into a white-dominated camp, in which they will be given a semblance of power-sharing, and in which their participation will commit them to support white South Africa in any future conflict which may develop with black South Africa. No doubt there will be some Indian and Coloured politicians who will be drawn by their own fears or the lure of high salaries and big motor-cars to climb on to this bandwagon, but we hope there won't be many, for the whole scheme seems to us to rest on a series of untenable propositions.

The first is that, by putting more power in the hands of one man, the President, our problems will somehow be more

easily resolved. This is a dangerous delusion, especially when that President is destined to be the nominee of that 10% of the population which has drawn up the constitution. The second is that a white-dominated Cabinet Council will continue indefinitely to control 87% of the land area of South Africa and a comparable proportion of its developed wealth. The third is that it is possible to postulate a solution for South Africa's future political shape in which 80% of its population, the African people, have had no say whatsoever.

Mr Vorster will no doubt win the election easily and then tell the world that this means that South Africa stands firm behind him and his constitutional plans. He will probably also tell white South Africa that its future is safe in his hands, for we assume that he will be the President. Both claims will be nonsense. Will he and his supporters never face the simple and, to us, so obvious fact, that the only sure foundation for white survival and acceptance here is by persuading the black people of our country and the continent that a white presence here will be an asset to them both. These new proposals, so contemptuous of African opinion, will not help one bit to do that. All the constitutional contortions that man can dream of will not save white South Africans from one, hard, basic fact of life in Africa. That in the end they will only stay here if Africa wants them to stay. □

3

STOKING THE FIRES

As we have noted often enough before, the Nationalist government seems bent on leading South Africa to disaster and Afrikanerdom to suicide. What other conclusion can one come to when one considers some of the things done recently by its officials in the sacred name of apartheid?

In Soweto, where pupils, parents and teachers have surely made it more than clear that they have had enough of Bantu Education, the sensible thing to do, one would think, would be to sit down with the representatives of these groups and work out with them how to phase out Bantu Education and bring black schools into an integrated education system. Unfortunately what is obvious to everyone else is too often anathema to the Nationalists. So their answer to Soweto's cry for change has been to close down the schools, take them under direct government control, and tell all children they must register again for admission. The result has been that less than 3 000 out of 27 000 secondary school pupils have registered, a mass resignation of teachers has occurred, and another area of conflict has been aggravated.

On the outskirts of Cape Town the demolition of squatters' homes has gone ahead despite all protests. In the middle of one of the wettest winters in memory hundreds of families have sat huddled with their possessions in the rain, watching their homes being flattened by bulldozers. Their offence? They had erected illegal houses on somebody else's land because they couldn't find anywhere else to live. Their other offences? That they had responded to two of the primary injunctions of Christian teaching. The first, that the honourable thing for a man to do is to go out and find work so that he may support his family — which is

precisely what many squatters have come to Cape Town from the Transkei to do. The second, that the right place for a woman and her children to live is with her husband — which is just why whole families have followed their migrant husbands and fathers to Cape Town. Most of these families, having watched their homes destroyed, then disappeared into other people's shacks somewhere else, or into the bushes of the Cape Flats. Some of them were given accommodation on Church property, where government officials again descended on them, usually in the night, charging them with being illegally resident there and chivvyng them on again.

In Natal a directive has gone out from the Department of Bantu Administration to African attorneys telling them they have a year in which to remove themselves from their offices in the centres of towns and set themselves up in the dormitory townships of Kwa-Zulu. Most of these attorneys have practised from their present premises for years. As far as we know this has never led to a single 'incident' of any importance. To the central areas where these offices are situated clients from all points of the compass gravitate, not just people from one township. The principal courts are easily to hand. Advocates and colleagues are close by for briefing and discussion. Reference libraries are available. None of this will apply in a township. The convenience of their clients and the livelihood of the attorneys is to be sacrificed on the altar of doctrinaire apartheid.*

So there you have it, from Soweto, from Cape Town and from Durban, a few more ingredients for a recipe for an explosion. □

* Since writing, this decision has been rescinded.