

AL83

Rev "AL 83"

NO
vember
2

Why you should vote NO!

VOTE NO

THE Black Sash has a long and proud history of saying "NO" in South Africa. We first said "NO" when the government removed the Coloured people from the voter's roll by a series of constitutional tricks in 1950. Since then, we have said "NO" to.

- The banning of organisations and individuals by Ministerial decree.
- The detention, prosecution and imprisonment of political and community leaders under so-called security legislation passed by a parliament which represents a minority of South Africans.
- The removal and resettlement of millions of people in the name of apartheid.
- The influx control laws, which divide families and force productive farmers off the land and into wage labour; which allow people to be "endorsed out" to the impoverishedbantustans when their labour is no longer required for the white economy.
- The establishment of so-called "independent homelands", which deprive the majority of South Africans of citizenship in the land of their birth.

Now we are saying "NO" to the government's Constitutional Bill — and this is why.

MYTH

PEOPLE should vote "YES" because the proposed new constitution is the basis for political change and reform in South Africa.

FACTS

The Constitution Bill entrenches apartheid and racial divisions. The new constitution cannot exist without race classification. This is fundamental to the new local authority and parliamentary structures.

- 70 per cent of the South African population is excluded from any say in a government which will make decisions affecting their lives. Clause 93 of the proposed Constitution Bill says:
The control and administration of Black affairs shall vest in the President... He could declare any Black person to be a non-South African citizen, or unlawfully resident in a white area.
- Parliament will be divided into three racially segregated houses.
- There will be three racial Councils of Ministers. The Councils will be in charge of Departments whose work affects one race group only. They will have no power to change the apartheid laws.
- Clause 89 of the Bill ensures that all discriminatory laws will remain in force.
- The Group Areas Act which forces people to live in racially segregated areas is the cornerstone of the new constitution. The system cannot work unless different race groups live in separate areas.
- The Population Registration Act which demands that all South Africans be registered and classified according to their race is entrenched in the proposed new constitution.

COMMENT

'Reform', 'Power-sharing', 'a step in the right direction'. all these terms disguise the true nature of the proposed constitution, which is to entrench racial segregation and the power of the ruling Nationalist Party.

This is not a 'new beginning' for the people of South Africa but the 'final solution' of the architects of apartheid.

MYTH

By allowing Indians and Coloured people to participate in government, the proposed constitution is a 'step in the right direction' and therefore it should be supported.

FACTS

The Indian and Coloured representatives elected to their separate parliaments will effectively have NO power at all. They will not be participating in the government of the country.

• Only the President's Council can make law and here the whites (25 chosen by the all-powerful white President and 20 chosen by the majority party in the white parliament) will outnumber the Indians (5 chosen by the Indian parliament) and Coloureds (10 chosen by the Coloured parliament).

• The white dominated President's Council will decide what matters will be dealt with by the parliaments.

• If any dispute arises between the three parliaments it will be settled by the white dominated President's Council.

• There is no possibility of an Indian or a Coloured person being elected President. He or she will be chosen by an electoral college of 50 whites, 25 Coloureds and 13 Indians.

• Government of the country will be in the hands of the white President and the Cabinet which will be appointed by the President and whose members do not have to be elected members of Parliament.

• The white President will decide which decisions of parliament are referred to the President's Council for a binding decision.

• The white President has the final say over what can be decided in the parliaments — whether the matter is an 'own' affair in which case it will be dealt with by the parliament for one race only or whether it is a 'general' affair in which case it will be dealt with by all three parliaments. Remember, if there is any dispute here, the white dominated President's Council will settle it. The white President's decision on this is final and there is no appeal to the courts.

• The white President is able to amend any law and to regulate its application or interpretation without reference to parliament.

COMMENT

A surprising number of influential English-speaking people, including important businessmen and editors of major newspapers are supporting a 'yes' vote because they claim that the proposed constitution is a move towards political reform.

How can this proposed constitution, which moves away from democracy and towards strengthening the structures of apartheid, be better than the present situation?

The political situation in South Africa is more fluid than it has been for a long time. The signs of Government floundering are our best hope for real change in the future.

MYTH

A 'yes' vote is necessary to support P.W. Botha against the right wing. If there is a majority NO vote in the referendum P.W. Botha and his government will amend the Constitution Bill in such a way as to placate the right wing.

FACTS

- * The present government's position is not at stake in this referendum. P.W. Botha has said that if he loses the referendum he will not resign as Prime Minister.
- * The Conservative Party and the Herstigte Nasionale Party are not in a position to win any election at the moment.

COMMENT

- South Africans who sincerely want to do away with repressive and racist legislation will vote NO in the referendum.
 - People of conscience and integrity will vote 'NO'
 - The official opposition is campaigning for a NO vote.
- It will be impossible for political analysts and commentators to maintain that the NO vote comes only from the C.P. and the H.N.P.

MYTH

Abstention is the moral solution for people who do not accept the constitution but who do not wish to risk being associated with white party politics.

FACT

Abstentions will not be counted at the polling stations. If there is a resounding NO vote from liberals, progressives and conscientious South Africans there is no risk of that NO vote being seen simply as a reflection of party political intentions.

MYTH

A 'qualified yes' is the best solution.

FACT

There is no such thing as a 'qualified yes' in this referendum. If you vote 'yes' you vote for the proposed new constitution as a whole.

ARE LIBERAL BELIEFS AND OPPOSITION TO APARTHEID AMONG WHITE ENGLISH-SPEAKING SOUTH AFRICANS JUST ANOTHER MYTH?

Have we found it convenient to hide behind Apartheid and Afrikaner-dominated government? Do we only pretend to care about democracy while we take good care of our privileged life-style?

IS P.W. BOTHA CALLING OUR BLUFF?

If you vote 'yes' on November 2

- * You align yourself with the Nationalist Government and with apartheid
- * You accept the possibility of dictatorship
- * You are prepared to tell the majority of South Africans that you do not want them to participate in government; that you do not care about democracy
- * You are not a discerning consumer. You are buying a badly designed and untested product.

CALL P.W. BOTHA'S BLUFF

VOTE NO IN NOVEMBER

Issued by: Black Sash, 2 Central Court, 125 Gale Street, DURBAN.

Printed by: fpu printers, Durban

Collection Number: AK2117

DELMAS TREASON TRIAL 1985 - 1989

PUBLISHER:

Publisher: **Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand**

Location: **Johannesburg**

©2012

LEGAL NOTICES:

Copyright Notice: All materials on the Historical Papers website are protected by South African copyright law and may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, displayed, or otherwise published in any format, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Disclaimer and Terms of Use: Provided that you maintain all copyright and other notices contained therein, you may download material (one machine readable copy and one print copy per page) for your personal and/or educational non-commercial use only.

People using these records relating to the archives of Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, are reminded that such records sometimes contain material which is uncorroborated, inaccurate, distorted or untrue. While these digital records are true facsimiles of the collection records and the information contained herein is obtained from sources believed to be accurate and reliable, Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand has not independently verified their content. Consequently, the University is not responsible for any errors or omissions and excludes any and all liability for any errors in or omissions from the information on the website or any related information on third party websites accessible from this website.

This document is part of a private collection deposited with Historical Papers at The University of the Witwatersrand.