

BY VERY KIND PERMISSION

Did you get a licence? It used to be a peculiarly South African joke; now it has become a national obsession.

Opening sports clubs, theatres, churches and some schools to all races is a development most will applaud.

The permit system which seems to accompany each new step away from apartheid risks undermining the progress in goodwill that ought to flow from it.

Church doors are to be opened to all races without hindrance, a move unreservedly welcome. But why diminish the gesture by insisting that some occasions will still require special Government permission?

There can be only two explanations for insisting on Government permits to control racial mixing. The first is that the Government is so fearful of its own right wing that it wishes to pretend that it is not really doing what it has announced it is doing.

The second explanation for permits is that only token mixing is to be permitted — sops to local aspiration and world requirements.

Two things bedevil our relationships internally and externally. One was mentioned by the President of the South Africa Foundation in his annual address this week.

The other is an impression — widely held abroad and here — that South Africa actually has no intention of changing at all, let alone at the behest of others.

These two impressions the Government must eradicate. It can set about doing so by watching its words and actions more closely and keeping its nose out more often.

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Why Gatsha had to go



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NOW HE FACES A DILEMMA OF DIRECTION

Bitter-sweet triumph for Buthelezi...

CHIEF Gatsha Buthelezi's clean-sweep KwaZulu victory has been a bitter-sweet triumph, coming as it did in the same week as his most publicised rejection by some Blacks at the Sobukwe funeral.

This demonstrated to the world a fact that is well-known among Blacks — that there is a range of Black political opinion which criticises the chief for continuing to remain in homeland politics.

It was stressed again on Monday night at a meeting in the Athlone Civic Centre, Cape Town, of Chief Buthelezi and his allies of the Labour (Coloured) and Reform (Indian) parties.

The audience overflowed into the foyer, but it was not entirely friendly.

Chief Buthelezi has been reported as saying of this meeting: "In fact this was one of the best public meetings I have ever addressed in my life".

For the chief's sake, it can be hoped that that is not so.

From most vantage points in the audience, it was clear that a substantial body of people, Coloured and African, were hostile.

Some were criticising him to each other throughout the evening, as well as heckling him. At question time there was a series of hostile and passionate questions from different parts of the hall, and they all attacked his continued connection with the homeland government structure.

Perhaps it is one comfort for Whites that these militant or radical Africans and Coloureds were not anti-White, or racist.

A common shout as the meeting broke up, which it did rather hastily as a result of the tenor of the questions, was one from a youngster who left the hall saying angrily: "The only race I'm part of is the human race".

This is not to say that there are not racist anti-White Black militants, only that they were not in evidence at the meeting.



Gatsha Buthelezi... a difficult choice ahead.

By JOHN MATISONN

Political Correspondent

ence at the meeting. And Whites in the hall were received well by the crowd.

The increasingly evident criticism of Chief Buthelezi by Blacks raises two important questions.

The first is what sort of politics do Black South Africans support? It's the sort of question which is answered in Western democracies at an election, but not in South Africa because the Black political movements that have arisen historically have been organised on a national basis, and concerned themselves with the whole of the country, while the elections that are held for Blacks are divided geographically and ethnically into small parts of the Republic.

Chief Buthelezi's new Black alliance includes the majority parties in the KwaZulu legislative assembly, the Coloured Represent-

ative Council (CRC) and the South African Indian Council (SAIC). There is also the possibility that other homeland parties will join in.

How much does all that represent outside of KwaZulu?

Take the CRC. Of an estimated 900 000 Coloureds over the age of 18 and eligible to vote, only 521 557 registered as voters, of whom 251 631 cast their votes, and 62% of them voted Labour. So about 150 000 out of 900 000 eligible voters supported Labour — about 17%.

Among Indians, despite fines for not registering, the progress with registration has been slow. But after repeated extensions of the deadline it has risen to two thirds of those eligible.

Another area where an election was held relatively recently was Bophutha-Tswana. There the pre-independence election drew only about 12% of voters to the Bophutha-Tswana government, and a much smaller number to the Opposition. Who do the rest support?

"There is always a percentage who feel indifferent to elections anywhere," says Bishop Desmond Tutu, general secretary of the influential South African Council of Churches. "But even so I think there is a very high proportion of Blacks who are non-voters because they will have no truck with the system."

This brings up the second point, one which is at the heart of the anxiety of White South Africans: what are the prospects for a reconciliation of the races, so that Whites have security and a role to play in the country at the same time as Blacks? As early as 1972 Dr Melville Edelstein found after research that 70% of Soweto matric students interviewed wanted multiracial government.

YOUNG BLACKS 'WITH IRON IN THEIR SOULS' WANTED HIM OUT

JENNIFER HYMAN TALKS TO BISHOP TUTU

A BITTER row rages over the eviction of KwaZulu leader Chief Gatsha Buthelezi from Robert Sobukwe's funeral last week and new fuel has been added by Bishop Desmond Tutu, general-secretary of the SA Council of Churches, who believes Chief Buthelezi should not have been on the speakers' platform in the first place.

In a frank and outspoken interview, Bishop Tutu described how he had pleaded with Chief Buthelezi to leave the funeral "for his own sake and for the sake of Robert (Sobukwe)", and refuted the theory that the eviction was carried out by a small group of what Chief Buthelezi has called "political thugs".

Bishop Tutu also identified some of the aims and objectives of the "new breed" of Blacks who, he said, "have iron in their souls".

His views come after author and former Liberal Party leader Alan Paton described the Sobukwe funeral demonstration as "an important political event" which could undermine Chief Buthelezi's position as a leader.

Bishop Tutu told the Sunday Express this week that, in the light of known opposition to the homelands policy, it would have been wiser for Chief Buthelezi not to have been on the speakers' dais at the Sobukwe funeral.

He described the group

which evicted Chief Buthelezi, other homeland representatives, and leaders of the Coloured Labour Party as "a very significant group of Blacks who are totally opposed to separate development".

They had the support of the majority of mourners, he added.

Chief Buthelezi, Mr Sonny Leon, and the Reverend Alan Hendrikse of the Coloured Labour Party, as well as Transkei representatives, were made to leave the funeral at Graaff-Reinet via a gauntlet of jeering, stonewielding youths.

Bishop Tutu said former members of the Pan-Africanist Congress, the banned movement founded by Robert Sobukwe, had also felt that speeches by Mrs Helen Suzman of the Progressive Federal Party and Mr Benjamin Pogrand of the Rand Daily Mail would be "inappropriate".

"They believed — quite rightly — that the funeral was not a private affair; that their leader had been a public figure who belonged to the people; and that they had a say in the drawing up of the programme."

"They were deeply incensed that Mrs Suzman and Mr Pogrand were scheduled to speak when so many of those who had worked with Sobukwe had to be left out."

He said he had a great regard for Mrs Suzman, who "has earned respect as virtually the only opposition politician for such a long time", but believed that, as a politician, she would be sensitive to the feelings of the mourners.

"However, I advised those reorganising the programme to let Mr Pogrand speak. He was a personal friend of Mr Sobukwe and a representative of a newspaper that had always presented him in a positive way."

Bishop Tutu said the funeral had shown an intensification of feeling against the homelands, "which are robbing us of our birthright



by spurious independence and citizenship".

He believes that the display of anger seen at the Sobukwe funeral will be increasingly manifested, and that the authorities are going to become more intransigent and "kragdadig" in their efforts to stem it.

"But I think they are not reckoning with an extraordinary item of reality. We now have a new breed of Blacks. These are young people — quite unlike us in many ways — who have politicised us."

"They are not afraid of the things that used to be bogies to many of us. It's no use trying to frighten them by telling them about the police, about jail and about death."

"It's not that they are reckless. It's just that many of them have experienced what we have not — prison and solitary confinement — and there is iron in their souls."

"There is a determination on the part of many that the deaths of their comrades are not to be in vain."

Bishop Tutu said the position of the young Black was that he no longer wanted improvements to the system but wanted the entire system changed for all people.

"For they are conscious that the freedom of Whites is circumscribed by the same laws and attitudes which circumscribe their own lives."

The longer the situation continued as it was, the greater the likelihood of Blacks becoming embittered — "and, when they ultimately achieve power, the greater the likelihood of them doing the very things that Whites fear so much".

"In fact, by continuing the present oppressive and unjust order, Whites are engaging in a self-fulfilling prophecy."

"For the tragedy of our country is our refusal to acknowledge that we have here, now, just about our last chance for reasonably peaceful change."

Schhhhh! It's the secrets of guess who

OH GOODY — secrets. It's been a lovely week for secrets. As the one Cabinet Minister said to the other on the way to Libertas: "I'll let you tap my phone if you'll let me read your mail."

"You weren't — surely? — surprised to learn from the Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, Senator J P van der Spuy, that the Post Office permits the Security Police to read your letters if they wish."

"I'm not ashamed of it," he told Parliament. "Do you think it does not happen all over the world?"

I expect it does, though it's probably more of a growth industry here than in some places. Perhaps the Public Service Commission has even codified the status of the job.

On the Railways, promising personnel graduate from wheeltapper to all sorts of other exhilarating career outlets. Do Security policemen graduate from phone-tapper to, say, letter-opener? Probably. After all — if De Kok is to judge by his large circle of dubious friends — it can't be totally fulfilling for an ambitious young policeman to spend his days waiting for really subversive conversations which are constantly thwarted by the interminable telephone prattle of teenage offspring.

There ought to be a law against that kind of uncooperative behaviour. No doubt there will be one of these days. Voted for by all those MPs who are absolutely sure their own phones aren't tapped.

Just as it believed the interment during the war of its new managing director was not worth mentioning in the profile of the man it published the other day.

ANOTHER gentleman who tried to keep a secret is the Minister of Agriculture, Mr Hendrik Schoeman, who has thus tumbled into the political fertiliser (though his colleagues would no doubt insist that he has come up smelling of roses.)

Mr Schoeman first tried to pretend that the drilling

ALWAYS anxious to provide a public service, here is the De Kok handy guide to identifying Security Police letter-openers — the elite of the snooping service.

They wear safari suits, usually have a comb in the right sock, and their hands are reddened by their steamy work. Phone tappers can only be identified, by the odd way they cock their heads when anyone speaks.

BUT back to secrecy.

A Nationalist backbencher whose sense of responsibility is so well developed that the Speaker obliged him to withdraw one allegation against the official Opposition, nevertheless came up with another one that was allowed to stand.

This was that the Opposition was too unreliable to be trusted with secret information.

What he actually means, of course, is that no one but a card-carrying Nationalist should really be trusted



An irreverent column by ALEXANDER DE KOK

with any important information, secret or not.

With an attitude like that, he is surely destined to leave his well-earned obscurity for higher things in the party soon.

EVEN trainee Nationalists enjoy the idea of secrecy.

The Johannesburg English-language organ that a colleague has dubbed the "good news newspaper" still won't disclose all the people who have a financial interest in it. Presumably it believes that that is some of the news not fit to print.

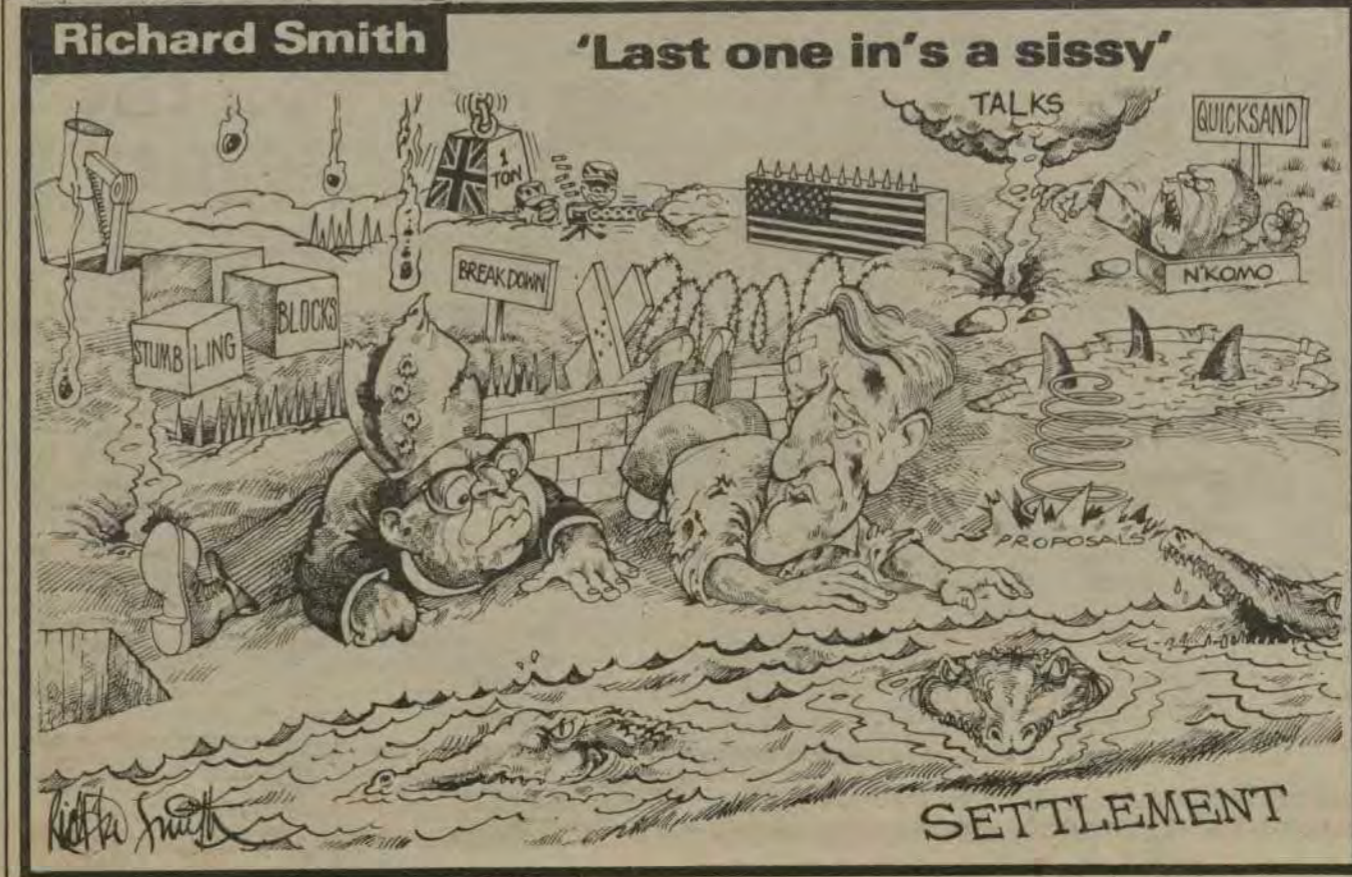
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I FIND the Government's desire for ever-more secrecy and its squirrel-like propensity to keep public information to itself most alarming.

But when one considers the national and international harm done by some Cabinet Ministers when they actually do open their mouths to talk, I suppose we must all just accept that the desire to stay mum has at least one merit to it.



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Robert Sobukwe Papers

***PUBLISHER:***

*Publisher:-* **Historical Papers, The Library, University of the Witwatersrand**

*Location:-* **Johannesburg**

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***DOCUMENT DETAILS:***

*Document ID:-* **A2618-Co14**

*Document Title:-* **Sunday Express: Why Gatsha had to go (original, interview with Bishop Tutu, folio item)**

*Author:-* **Jennifer Hyman, Sunday Express**

*Document Date:-* **19 March 1978**