

THE COLOURED PEOPLE—Continued

servatives who had been prepared to welcome concessions for Coloureds (they never materialised, of course) had themselves been doubtful of strings being attached. When Dr. Verwoerd finally rejected concessions for Coloureds, he turned them away, probably for ever, from their dubious link with White South Africa.

From this stage (November 1960) Members of Parliament started expressing alarm that Coloureds might be driven to a link-up with Africans. Some "Coloured representatives" pleaded in the Assembly that Coloureds had stood by the side of Whites in the face of internal crisis, but this fell on deaf ears.

To understand the Coloured man's position, one must realise that he is tired of the perpetual dead-end in industry and commerce. He is tired of being an office-boy, messenger, menial factory worker or general labourer, though he might possess a junior or even a senior certificate. He is tired of "Coloured" wages, bread-line survival, of living in crowded slum conditions, of being regarded as an inferior—tired, in fact, of second-class citizenship. Do you know of one Coloured architect, engineer or pharmacist?

Who can be content with such a lot? With a separate-roll vote, what can four representatives do—except plead—in a 157-seat White Assembly?

Maritzburg Conference

The All-African Conference at Maritzburg—and the ensuing decision of the National Action Council to ask all Non-Whites and sympathetic Whites to participate in a three-day stay-at-home protest at the end of May met with an enthusiastic response from Coloureds throughout South Africa. It resulted—although indirectly—in the proposed Coloured Convention in June to be attended by 500 delegates from political, religious, cultural, social and sporting bodies.

The wide social and economic barriers amongst Coloureds themselves have been the cause of disunity in the past, but recent events have changed all that. Dr. Verwoerd has himself changed it—and speeded up the Coloured awakening to its present-day mood of militancy.

In the Transvaal, Coloureds have formed themselves into a strong organisation (Transvaal Association for the Advancement of Coloured People) to combat apartheid and link up with the Africans.

In Durban, former Coloured sectionalists have joined the Convention movement. In Port Elizabeth there is full solidarity between Coloured and African. East London, too, has joined the common Non-White Front.

A stand is being made for full citizenship rights

ABOLISH COLOUR BAR

THE movement initiated by leaders of Coloured opinion to unite the Coloured community in working for the abolition of the colour bar and full citizenship for all South Africans was welcomed by the Black Sash in a public statement.

The national president, Mrs. E. Stott, said: "We would be glad to offer them all the assistance we can in their efforts to call a national convention representing all races, to seek agreement on the terms upon which all races can live and work peacefully together in South Africa."

for all South Africans irrespective of race, colour or creed; Coloureds now will not accept any concessions offered to their exclusive "group" at the expense of Africans or Indians.

This "no concession" line was demonstrated by men such as Dr. Richard van der Ross, Mr. M. A. Gierdien, Progressive Party executive member, and Councillor George Peake, at their much-publicised "secret talks" with worried Afrikaners at Stellenbosch recently. This "rebel" front of Whites, disturbed about the disastrous deterioration of race relations, sought a lead from the eight Coloured leaders present at these informal talks. The Coloureds told them: "You are partly responsible for the grave political situation in South Africa to-day. Do something about it from within your ranks."

Pleas by the Afrikaners present for the proposed three-day stay-at-home to be called off "because the Republic is so dear to us" were rejected. The Coloured leaders stated firmly that they could accept no concession for Coloureds only, could not call off the strike and could not attend further talks unless African leaders were present.

This firm stand by both moderate and militant Coloureds represents the present political mood: equality for all.

Meanwhile, the Coloured People's Congress has made dramatic strides since March this year to capture the Coloured rank-and-file throughout the country. Coloured People's Congress officials are also on the Planning Committee of the proposed Coloured National Convention.

Cape Moslems have joined the political movement—Islam has no place for discrimination.

Coloureds have not become anti-White but they are indeed bitter—bitter about apartheid signs, in buses, trains, post offices, bitter that they must pay equal rates for separate but unequal amenities, bitter about group areas. It appears to them unquestionable that their destiny lies with the African to present an irresistible challenge to the present system of racial discrimination in South Africa.