

Blacks and Whites slam plan by Oppenheimer

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Tribune Reporter

MR HARRY OPPENHEIMER'S proposed "deal" with the Government to end race discrimination has landed him in hot water with Black and White political leaders.

The multi-millionaire mining magnate proposed a moratorium on criticism of separate development by Government opponents in return for concrete action by the National Party to remove race discrimination.

Mr Oppenheimer, speaking in the Eastern Transvaal this week, called for the deal in the interests of national unity.

The plan landed Mr Oppenheimer in a cross-fire from politicians on the Right and Left.

Dr Andries Treurnicht, the verkrampste Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration, accused Mr Oppenheimer of trying to blackmail the Government and also of caring little for the retention of political power by the White man.

The deal was also publicly rejected by the Leader of the Opposition, Sir De Villiers Graaff.

Black leaders were also incensed by the proposal. Among those who spoke to the Sunday Tribune this week were Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, Chief Executive Officer of KwaZulu, Mr Hlaku Rachidi, president of the Black Peoples Con-

vention, and Mr Mohammed Timol, chairman of the Human Right Committee.

Chief Buthelezi said: "The Government has already undertaken to get rid of discrimination and hasn't fulfilled its promises.

"I would not be doing my duty to my people if I stopped criticising the Government."

Mr Rachidi said: "There is no benefit in having discrimination scrapped. We believe that the whole system should be abolished. Separate development is discrimination, so how can we stop criticising it?"

"Mr Oppenheimer's deal seems to imply that separate development is irreversible. The majority of Blacks reject this system, which divides us."

Mr Rachidi went on: "If he wants national unity, Mr Oppenheimer should have proposed the abolition of the White ruling structure and its replacement by a national convention representing all the peoples of South Africa."

Mr Timol told me: "Mr Oppenheimer's plan for a deal with the Government is not only meaningless, but is insulting to the Black people of South Africa."

"The elimination of race discrimination is not enough. Blacks want a complete transformation of the political, social and economic order in this country."