

# PERCY'S ITCH



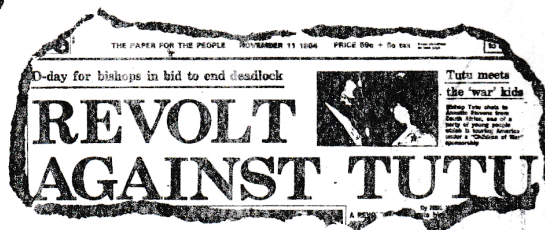
# Bishop Tutu

BISHOP Desmond Tutu is really driving white South Africans around the bend.

No amount of superlatives can do justice to the level of hatred his style and leadership have evoked.

They were still reeling under the shock when he won the Nobel Peace Prize, when, like a bolt of lightning, he became the first black churchman to be elected Bishop of the Diocese of Johannesburg — one of the most important posts in the Anglican Church.

The first indication of the deliberate program of vilification against the internationally respected church leader came in the form of a lead story in a national Sunday newspaper, which reported that there was a "revolt"



against Bishop Tutu's nomination for the position of Bishop of Johannesburg.

What is more, the report gloated about the fact that the divisions in the alleged revolt were clearly along racial lines.

Reading between the lines, it was suggested that most of the bishops were sick and tired of Bishop Tutu's political antics and would, therefore, like the position to be

taken by a less controversial figure within the church leadership.

In what seemed to be a blatant electioneering stunt, the newspaper report even went as far as nominating its own candidate.

Nix — the clerics bounced back. They flayed the newspaper report — casting aside their ecclesiastical dignity, they dug into the report with unusual gusto.

# is a reality

And just to prove that there was nothing in it, they then retreated to the Orange Free State, a province sweltering in the heat of racism, and gave their overwhelming judgment — Tutu was the new Bishop of Johannesburg.

The choice was, so to speak, the voice of the people.

Given the history of this country's reaction to its noble sons and daughters, there is a great need for the Government to take stock of its own attitude towards Bishop Tutu.

The Government must accept the fact that he is a fact of their lives.

To continue treating him like a leper only contributes to raising his stature to incre-

dible proportions.

To think that this Nobel Prize winner and now Bishop of Johannesburg, is storming the global community with a passport that says his nationality is undetermined, must rank as history's most bizarre acts.

It only goes to highlight the shortsightedness and insensitive nature of this country's government.

His nationality undetermined? Just what are they talking about? Of course his nationality is known.

He is as South African as the nagmaal in Pretoria and the braaivleis in the Free State.

Unfortunately, the right to that nationality does not come through the generosity

of the Nationalist Party, but directly from the hand of God — the God that Tutu has served and continues to serve with humility and distinction.

I am not in the process of canonising Bishop Tutu — I do not have the worth to do that. And neither am I about to sit in judgment of his actions and utterances — his Creator has the sole right over that.

I am merely appalled that white South Africans refuse to accept Bishop Tutu for what he is — the darling of his people and the voice of moderation and sanity in an insane world.

Or is this asking for something that borders on a miracle? I sincerely hope not.