

## Sombre warning

OFFICIALLY there are some 4½ million Africans living in what are wrongly termed White urban areas. These people are the backbone of our economy, but they are also, in the language of the Government, temporary sojourners with few or no rights, except in some far off homeland which many have never seen nor want to see.

Over the years the Government has ignored repeated warnings that these urban communities constitute a potential flash-point and a breeding ground for foreign and dangerous ideologies. Now there has been yet another warning — this time from a renowned African leader who is both a moderate and a realist.

In an interview with the Nationalist Sunday newspaper Rapport, Dr William Nkomo, newly-elected president of the Institute for Race Relations, has pointed out that although there is a fund of goodwill in the townships, there is also growing impatience. Loss of freehold rights, lack of amenities, influx control and many other disabilities are partly responsible. But it is the temporary sojourner status and the neglect of the urban African in favour of the homelands that is causing the greatest harm.

He calls for urgent dialogue between the Government and the urban African and recognition of their permanency as the solution. And he is backed by the newspaper itself in a leading article. Clearly, this is a warning — couched in the most moderate terms — that the Government should not brush aside.