



"Democracy means freedom to choose"

INKATHA

Inkatha Freedom Party
IQembu leNkatha Yenkululeko

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NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

MONDAY, 24/25 MAY 2010

DURBAN

I do not suggest that the situation we are facing is all gloom and doom. But even though I have been an optimist all my life I cannot pretend that things in the Party have taken a turn for the better. In fact each day there are negative things which I find disturbing as far as the future of this Party is concerned. I want to reiterate that there is nothing I seek for myself at this stage in my life through the Party I founded. Nothing whatsoever. But we have over three decades invested so much in the Party that I am most concerned to see it going to pieces in front of my eyes. I find that I can do nothing to prop up the Party without my motives being deliberately distorted or being misunderstood. I hate the picture of me that is being portrayed by "the friends of VZ" who have given a golden opportunity to all our enemies to insult and belittle me and my contribution to the freedom of this country and its development. As I have stated before I find myself to be between the Devil and the hard place. I never dreamed that at this stage in my life I would have people I have nurtured to be what they are in the Party turning against me and doing their damndest to portray me in a manner which can only destroy the image of the Party and this Party's legacy. In fact it is this which convinces me that the information one gets through many reliable sources that our opponents are involved in driving the process is absolutely true. No one really committed to this Party and its objectives can be part of what is now going on in the Party.

I hate the image of me that "the friends of VZ" are portraying that I do not want young leaders of this Party to take over from me. And any honest person in the Party who knows that I intended to step down in 2004 and 2006 would know that this is a blatant lie and people who are peddling this around know deep down in their hearts that they are spreading these lies because of malice in their hearts and because they have become tools of our political enemies.

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I am not easily frightened particularly by people I know do not even have the courage to say "BOO" to a duck. But in spite of my courage, I find it extremely difficult to decide on the request by National Council that I "consider" leading the Party for a while until the present 'storms' pass. I realise that this October 2009 decision has since been endorsed by the National Council of the Women's Brigade, the National Executive of the Youth Brigade and by the executive of SADESMO. These are all very important structures of the Party which all of us respect.

Incidents such as Mr Irvin Barnes gate-crashing the Provincial Conference of the Youth Brigade at Esikhawini do compound the problems that we face. They do add to the compounding of the problems that the Party faces. Mr Barnes has written to me asking for forgiveness. His request has not been rejected but we have decided that we will consider his request for a pardon after the general conference depending on his conduct. He knows that for now he is not a member of the IFP and yet he gate-crashes the Provincial Conference of the Youth Brigade which was addressed by myself to humiliate me and further destroy whatever is left of the image of the Party. Mr Barnes is in the thick of canvassing for our National Chairperson and has even sent SMSs to people nailing his colours to the mast. What does one do in this situation? I find myself being tested in a manner that is incomparable with any of the fiery trials I have faced in a public life which spans scores and scores of decades.

I was informed that in Vryheid Councillor Ndlela has been visiting branches at Bhekuzulu Township and elsewhere telling members of the IFP that if the election of the Constituency of Abaqulusi is not started from scratch they must create chaos as happened last time and on more than one occasion. I do not know what one does if senior members of the Party behave in this manner. I recall that at the youth conference at Esikhawini I remarked that if these ructions do not end I do not think we shall have our general conference even by the end of July as scheduled that there were murmurs and moans at the Irvin Barnes corner of that conference. And yet it is quite some time that we were told that it was a considered strategy of "the friends of VZ" that if their members are not elected to be in charge of our structures, the instruction from the top is that they must then create chaos in such a way that such elections do not continue. This has now been proven again and again that the rumours about this strategy of "the friends of VZ" are quite true. I do not know what the wisdom of this structure, the NEC should be in view of these circumstances.

In Johannesburg I got a report that the usual Wednesday meeting of the constituency last week ended up abruptly and there was a trading-off of insults. And expletives were exchanged between ordinary members of the Party and "the friends of VZ." The story was that one young lady reacted to the information that the election was to be re-run by saying: "AKUZE YENA U-MG AZOKWENZA LOLOKHETHO".

This then led to a strong reaction by other members to that kind of reference to me. And the meeting then ended in that chaos. The Party has been bitten by a bug under the name of "the friends of VZ" and it will never be the same again. It is the most tragic mishap we have had to face since 1975, because it is an intra-party conflict. The Mercury had an article last week on this kind of conflict that is taking place even in other parties.

After our last meeting, the National Chairperson of the Women's Brigade Mrs Nzuzi phoned me weeping and she was complaining that she is very upset that the issue of her comments in the 'UKHOZI FM' about the decision of the National Council to postpone the conference to the end of July was referred by this NEC to the National Council. She is very bitter about it and states that she is the first member of the NEC whose matter is referred to the National Council. She further also wrote another letter expressing the same viewpoint. I have tried to explain to Mrs Nzuzi that it is not that we as NEC are just referring the matter to the NEC but the decision to postpone the dates of the conference was taken by the National Council. So it was the decision of the National Council on which she was commenting and not the decision of the NEC. That the matter has been put by her in the public domain and there has been an outcry within the Party as her comments were perceived as her contradicting the announcement of the date of the conference by the Secretary-General. I stated that she has the same right to defend her action as she has in this NEC. After all we have not made a recommendation that she be charged as we have done with others. And there is no way we can sweep her public comments under the carpet. Even if we do not refer the matter to National Council there are other members of National Council who have expressed a decision to have the matter raised at the meeting of our National Council. I have decided to put the matter on the table once more because Mrs Nzuzi feels strongly about this matter as I have since learnt that she also raised it with other members of the NEC. So I did not see that I can just keep the matter where it was during our last discussion when there have been all these developments.

I do not know whether if my memory serves me well, I thought that at our NEC meeting there was also a discussion of Mr Divas Mncwabe. Am I mistaken that there were charges that were going to be preferred against him for some of his actions and utterances at various times including during the Women's Brigade so-called election in the Durban Metro?

Whatever happens at conference I do not wish us to confirm the insults that are hurled at us, as if we are a body led by a fuddy duddy leadership as our political enemies are trying to portray us. We should leave a record of a competent, fearless committee of responsible leaders who could not be frightened by all the noise that "the friends of VZ" are making in the hope of scaring us from discharging the duties imposed on us by the Party.

Mr Duma also received a letter from Ms M M Magagula of Dumbe and her letter speaks for itself. May be this is an issue that should be dealt with by the POC. And I mention it here merely because it was discussed at the meetings of the NEC some time back. Dumbe seems to be one municipality that needs very close attention from the Party at not only the level of the POC, but also that of the NEC and National Council.

We were happy to learn that the installation of our colleague Mr M B Gwala as Mayor of Zululand District Municipality went off well without any snag. Mr Duma confirmed to me what the Mayor himself told me about that meeting. But it does seem to me that Mr Gwala is going to have a very difficult time and this seem to be aimed at setting up this NEC.

The most surprising thing last week was of course the article that my former Secretary Mr Jon Cayzer sent to "the Mercury". I had no option but to send in a rejoinder to try and ameliorate the damage that Mr Cayzer did to my image and that of the Party. The problem is that anything that any fool sends to the newspapers which is damaging does damage us. But it is worse when someone who has been with me for some years does what Mr Walter Felgate did, which is now followed by what Mr Jon Cayzer had done to us. I sometimes say to God I never really understand why it is that all the people I elevate to positions and whom the public both here and abroad would never have known anything about them, do what these kind of characters do to me. Throughout my political career I have been menaced by these kind of incidents just one after the other. The trouble is that when someone has been working with you comes out to comment negatively about you and your organization, his smears tend to have credibility because people say 'well since he worked with him and the Party he knows what happened inside the Party'. This is what makes comments of someone we worked with so damaging because they tend to be credible to the public out there.

What Mr Cayzer did also gives us an inkling of how we are perceived in the DA. The broadcast by their leader in the FM English programme indicates how we are perceived in those quarters.

It is therefore quite plain that Mr Cayzer has done what he has done to placate his new bosses.

I tolerated quite a lot of unacceptable conduct from this gentleman. He stressed me on a daily basis because when I was not in my office in Cape Town he would hardly be found. And often when I phoned him I would only get a voice mail. I do not want to say more things that he did, which would shock you. It is sufficient that the Chief Whip in Cape Town had disapproved his continuing to work with me. But I begged the Chief Whip and asked him to allow him to work for me, on probation, for another year.

Needless to add that I did not complain even when he left me during the very first few months of the year. So much for Mr Jon Cayzer.

I was a bit encouraged to hear that the meeting of the Mangosuthu Buthelezi Museum Committee that took place in Durban of which the Administrative Secretary is a member went off well. One hopes that progress is made there, for my wish is to be able to sort out documentation and other things that need to go into such a museum, while I am still alive.

I thank the National Chairperson for the idea of making my statue because I am told it will now be part of that museum project.

Members of the Mangosuthu Buthelezi Museum Committee are supposed to view the sculpture today. Mr Konigkramer who has seen it says that it is one of the best statues of anyone that he has ever seen. It is not surprising because the people who did it are the same people who made that of my maternal grandfather King Dinuzulu. Thanks again to the National Chairperson. I am grateful to Mr Konigkramer for paying its price to prevent my name being bandied about by our political enemies who were already saying the money to be paid for the statue was taking desperately needed cents from the poorest of the poor. This arrangement shuts them up