

LECTURE DELIVERED BY COMRADE OLIVER R. TAMBO... HAT ION
AL
CHAIRMAN.OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, TQ YOUTH A
ND
STUDENTS OF GHANA.

Mr Vice Chancellor; Members of the University Council and Senate; Members of the faculty, staff, workers and student body; In the name of the ANC I greet you all most warmly. I also want to thank you very sincerely for turning out in such large numbers to hear about South Africa. It is indeed always an honour for me to come face to face with the daughters and sons of Kwame Nkrumah.

I shall talk directly to the issue that, I suspect, is uppermost in your minds, right now. I shall do so fully aware that, to talk about the final item in the agenda for Africa's political liberation is to honour the illustrious memory of Kwame Nkrumah.

It was the ANC which initiated the process that led to the creation of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa

(CODESA). It is within this structure that the majority of

South African political formations made the first serious attempt at talking to one another. The hope was that,

together, we could work out a common future satisfactory to

most if not all of our people. We have not lost that hope.

We still want to believe that a peaceful solution to the conflict in our country stands the best chance of enduring, provided it is just and democratic. We remain convinced that the situation in our country is ripe enough to allow serious negotiations to take place. However, we are not wedded to the idea of talking for the sake of talking. It was from this perspective that we decided to engage the ruling National Party and other political organisations in talks.

Yes, we have since decided to suspend our participation in these talks, but our perspective has not changed. Our decision was shaped by our determination to remain true to the letter and spirit of the Harare Declaration of the Organisation of African Unity and the United Nations Consensus Declaration on Apartheid. The fundamental principles and the broad guidelines contained in these two documents continue to provide the essential basis for an internationally acceptable solution to the conflict in South Africa.

In more specific terms, our decision reflects our unwillingness to accept stratagems such as " power sharing " under whose guise the minority National Party seeks to go on clinging to power, regardless of it's political strength. It also signals our unwillingness to go on talking to a party that continues to use it's illicit state power to promote or condone violence.

Apartheid has always been rejected by the overwhelming majority. Their struggle has made it politically, economically and structurally unworkable. Though it remains in place, it is terminally ill. It has become the most costly all-round liability to our country. There is sufficient consensus that apartheid must go. This, however, has, evidently not yet translated into a workable consensus that apartheid must be relieved off its death pangs and consigned to final rest. The National Party still has to be brought into the near consensus that apartheid must give way to the creation of a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa. The National Party must abandon its dubious " power sharing " schemes.

" Power Sharing " is based on the strange assumption that the people of South Africa are a tormented aggregate of incompatible ethnic and racial minorities. In its original form, it postulates that a future South Africa should have a two-tiered parliament with the second chamber serving as the forum for the representation of minority or group interests. It also postulates that seats in this chamber shall be distributed equally among all parties without regard to their real electoral strength. It proposes that decisions of the first chamber should be subjected to ratification by the second chamber before they can take effect. It goes on to suggest that all decision-making shall be by consensus. In practical terms, this means that any dissenting putative minority can prevent the majority from making decisions.

We rejected " power sharing " in this form even before we went to CODESA I. We went to CODESA II hoping that we would emerge from there with enough agreement to enable us to proceed directly to the establishment of an interim government of national unity. This would culminate in the free and democratic election of a constituent assembly to draft a constitution for a non-racial and democratic South Africa. Once again we ran into " power sharing."

We proposed to CODESA II that, in the constitution-making process, decisions on issues of fundamental importance should be taken on the basis of a minimum strength of a two-thirds majority. We further proposed that the distribution of seats in the constitution-making body should be based on proportional representation. We remain convinced that this, rather than the simple majority and winner-take-all system of distributing seats, as used in the past, would ensure a broad enough base of support for the resultant constitution. This is essential for a stable democracy.

The National Party counter-proposed that the constitution-making body should take decisions by the most unusually high majority of seventy-five per cent. This flew in the face of all known precedent. It was far in excess of the two-thirds majority to which the regime had agreed in the comparable situation of Namibia. It was also a radical departure from the fifty-one per cent majority that the regime had successfully insisted upon, in similar situations, in it's

racist parliamentary past. Obviously the National Party was seeking to arm the minority with the constitutional power to veto the will of the majority. It clearly wanted the future constitution to ensure that the minority National Party continues to wield effective power in a post-apartheid South Africa. This is an arrangement which was as certain to be rejected by the majority as we could not have accepted it. It is a prescription for the still-birth for the very democracy we have been struggling for.

There is also the problem of the mounting violence which proponents of apartheid continue to promote in order to obstruct progress. Evidence culled from the press, the hearings of the Goldstone commission and other sources, points to rightwing elements in the regime's security establishment - especially military intelligence, as the source of this violence.

Recently released reports of the Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists, both lay the blame for this violence at the feet of the Pretoria regime and the Inkatha Freedom Party.

The regime's continues to reject evidence of the complicity of its security forces in this violence. It goes on refusing to take action against these elements. It persists in refusing to cooperate with the people in order to bring this violence to an early end. This continues to strength suspicions that it

has a secret agenda which thrives on this violence. This is consistent with its refusal to surrender power.

Our recent National Policy Conference, reaffirmed our commitment to the search for a negotiated solution to the South African conflict. It decided that we must launch a rolling Campaign of Peaceful Mass Actions to:-

- (a) impress a greater all-round sense of urgency to the search for a peaceful solution to the South African conflict;
- (b) help bring the violence to a speedy and decisive end;
- (c) to protest and campaign against the illegitimacy, chronic corruption and scandal-ridden conduct and structures of the Pretoria regime;
- (d) to mobilise and prepare the people to be ready to participate effectively in the electoral process when the time comes.

The regime has since sought to create a climate of fear and hysteria around our campaign. Its hope is that the resultant tensions will flare up into violence. Its private army, the

+ i.

South Africa Defense Force has called up its reserves and conspicuously placed them on alert at strategic points around the country. The purpose of this move is to flex the muscle of the state and to inflame passions. The regime also goes on claiming, in the same breath, that it is our campaign that is likely to provoke further violence.

Our campaign was launched peacefully throughout the country on the 16th of June. It has, up to now, not been sullied by any incidents of violence. However, this did not deter the regime from its sinister agenda.

Despite advanced warning, from the residents of Boipatong to the police, that inmates of the nearby Kwa Madala Hostel were planning to attack them, the police took no pre-emptive action. On the night of the same day, the 17th of June, the attack took place without police hinderance. It resulted in the loss of the lives of close to fifty innocent residents of Boipatong. Many more were left gravely injured. Mouthpieces of the regime were predictably quick to claim that our mass action campaign had provoked the attack. Not surprisingly, the people themselves vividly absolved the ANC.

Several days after the midnight massacre, F.W. De Klerk ventured into the scene of the carnage and was unceremoniously hounded out of Boipatong. Their understandable fury at De Klerk graphically captures the mood of the people against apartheid. It also captures their growing impatience with the National Party's obstruction of progress.

We are faced with a grave situation. Tensions go on mounting. The need for progress grows more and more urgent. The longer a new and democratic dispensation is deferred, the more the violence escalates, the more difficult it will be to reach

agreement. This, in turn, will make it that much more difficult to govern the country in the future. The international community must help exert all necessary pressure on the Pretoria regime so that the search for a peaceful solution to the South African conflict can be put back on track before it is too late.

Meanwhile, we the people of South Africa still have a lot of struggle ahead of us. We intend to use every means at our disposal to wage that struggle to final victory. This is the least we can do to vindicate and honour the sacrifices of our martyrs and heroes. Besides, our gratitude to the people of Ghana, of Africa and the international community must consist of no less than a truly liberated South Africa.