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OPERATION HUNGER'S BUSINESSMEN'S ACTION COMMITTEE

Address by Mangosuthu G. Buthelezi
Chief Minister KwaZulu, President of Inkatha
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"IS THERE PROGRESS TOWARDS MEANINGFUL CHANGE?"

HOTEL BRAAMFONTEIN : 24TH JULY 1985

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I thank .Operation Hunger's Businessman's Action Committee for inviting me to share a few perspectives with you as your fellow countryman.

I have very great respect for the social conscience which our South African businessmen have increasingly displayed from the turbulent spell we had after the 1976 Soweto massacres. There have been some great changes in the thinking of businessmen, and I know that I share a great concern with the business community about the future of this country. In this sense, we share also a common goal.

The concern of the business community of our country about the state of the nation gives one hope for the future. I know that this comes out of a realisation that the state of our nation poses important challenges for the private sector. I know that I share a concern with the private sector about the violence which has engulfed our country in the past months more than ever before. The state of emergency now declared by the State President underscores the need for a greater commitment to, and involvement with, the reform process in South Africa by the business community.

It is quite noticeable that the pattern of unrest is dictated by different levels of deprivation in our various regions. Much of the violence has occurred in areas of extreme social and economic deprivation. These pockets of greater instability are located more often than not in those areas where the Government has neglected to plan for, and come to terms with, the inevitable urbanisation in South Africa. The great illusion that the protective devices of influx control and inadequate housing would stem the urbanisation process, has now been finally shattered. If this is so; it is appropriate that the private sector should, as a matter of great urgency and with a unified voice, urge the design and development of a positive urbanisation strategy to replace the coercive controls on Black mobility.

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From the foregoing, it is quite clear that the complexity and uniqueness of the South African situation creates unique opportunities for the private sector in terms of its social responsibility. These circumstances clearly make a more dynamic approach towards the concept of social responsibility imperative. The private sector has no choice about exercising this responsibility in addressing national interests, rather than to be just self-serving.

in .. this country starting with the Church right up to other organisations which promote social, economic and political change aimed at securing long-term stability, we have tended to look across our borders for funding. That is why we have a body like the South African Council of Churches depending for more than 90 per cent of its funding on foreign donations. The problems which this has created for us are well known to all of you. The same is the case with many White churches with roots in Europe or the United States. The emergence of more organisations which promote fundamental social, economic and political change within our country, is a very healthy development. The emergence of the Urban Foundation is a good example of an indigenous development which owes its emergence to the private sector. I see the work of Operation Hunger in the same light.

The dilemma we face concerning the state of emergency which is far from desirable, is that it is a fact that there can never be any peaceful negotiations unless we create an environment of true stability. Unless there is that stability, contentment and legitimacy, neither peaceful governability, nor a functioning free enterprise system, can survive. That is why I am grateful for the support which we see for those organisations which promote reform in South Africa, which they receive from the private sector. The private sector has a great responsibility for promoting stability and for creating an atmosphere for peaceful reform. It is extremely important that the private sector should not only relieve the suffering of our deprived communities, but that they should also address themselves to the causes which underlie so much of the present instability and violence which has led us to this state of emergency. This is not the function of just the Government alone. It should be clear from this that organisations which promote stability, and which create an atmosphere for peaceful reform in South Africa, need more funding today than was ever the case before, because of the crisis situation in which we find ourselves in our troubled land.

The question of whether or not there is progress towards meaningful change in South Africa today is surely a question which gives rise to very wide controversy. The State President has declared a state of emergency in 36 magisterial districts, and in doing so showed a

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reliance on police and army action which can only be the concomitant of failing politics. The country at large simply does not know where the Government is leading it to, and the inability of any Government to make known its medium and long-term plans is surely highly indicative of confusion and lack of consensus about what ought to be done.

I simply do not buy the argument that the State President will not say more about the future because he does not want to prescribe and wants to negotiate. That is political balderdash because he has prescribed and prescribed in such a way that negotiations cannot get off the ground. He has prescribed that South Africa cannot be one country, with one Government, with one people whom history has declared will face a common destiny. The State President has publicly rejected a one-man-one-vote system in a unitary State, and he has publicly rejected the concept of a single South Africa, even under a federal formula. On no single occasion has the State President talked about the right of each cultural group in the country to retain its identity and direct its own affairs, outside a framework within which White South Africa controls 87 per cent of the country, all its wealth and therefore its fiscal policy and its domestic and foreign policy. The State President on no single occasion has talked simply and made statesmanlike statements about power-sharing. He talks only about the division of power between Black and White and the need for consultative mechanisms in a divided society.

The Special Cabinet Committee has been in session since the beginning of the new political dispensation, and the country at large has seen no evidence of the fruits of their labour. The State President has announced an enlarged Special Cabinet Committee and has invited all parties to co-operate in it. That is over three months ago, and we have heard nothing more about it since. At the beginning of this Parliamentary session, the State President announced the establishment of a non-statutory negotiating forum, and nothing at all has happened on that front either. A short answer to the question of whether or not there has been progress towards meaningful change in our country must be negative.

As a practical politician, I am aware that the stage is being prepared for meaningful change. I am aware that the State President has had the courage to lead the National Party into a break with the past, and he has done so to the extent that South Africa will never be the same again. I am aware that the State President has had the courage to admit to National Party blunders in the past, and that he sees the need to once and for all to break the upward spiral of violence in politics. I am aware that the National Party caucus supports the State President in a radical departure from previous Government thinking, and I am aware that some of the reforms that have been introduced are meaningful to

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millions of Black South Africans. And I must again repeat that the State President has pointed his feet in the direction of statesmanship.

As a practical politician, however, this is all stage-setting activity, and has given me no reason to proclaim that real change is under way. Preparing to change is not changing. Enhancing conditions under which positive changes can take place is not bringing those changes about, and in a very real sense, those things which are positive and those reforms which are meaningful could so simply have been introduced under the old Parliamentary system. And with this thought in mind, I must comment that the stage-setting that has taken place has taken place with the accompaniment of political fanfare noises and posturing and political rhetoric. There has been more noise about change than change, and Black South Africa stands distanced from what is threatening to become a White political and constitutional circus act.

I have been put under tremendous pressure to join in the deliberations of the Special Cabinet Committee, to enter the non-statutory informal negotiating forum, and I was also put under tremendous pressure to enter into Black local council developments. Had Inkatha thrown its full weight behind Black local government developments during the last three years, the history of our country would not have changed and Black local government would still today be in the chaos in which we find it. Eminent men and women did their damndest to persuade me to enter Black local politics across the length and breadth of the country at the level of Council elections. They were blind to that which I saw so clearly. During the referendum campaign, the Government made it clear that the exclusion of Blacks from the country's Parliamentary system was a permanent exclusion, and that Blacks in urban areas could only aspire to involvement in local government politics. The fundamental fatal error of judgement, and the reason why there is widespread chaos in Black local politics, is that the State President and the National Party caucus expected Blacks to accept their exclusion from the country's Parliamentary process. I refuse to put Inkatha into a position in which it would be mangled by Government constitutional blundering, and I continue to refuse to do so.

It is dangerous to reduce complex situations to simple central elements but it is equally dangerous to ignore fundamental things. I say bluntly to White South Africa that while we have a Parliamentary system in which Whites retain the final decision-making powers over 87 per cent of the country and all its wealth, and over its fiscal, internal and foreign policies, there will be no real movement towards meaningful change in South Africa. We need to thrash out constitutions. We need to bridge the chasms

which apartheid has created between group and group. We cannot even make a beginning step in this direction unless everybody agrees that South Africa is one country and that the problem we face is to give constitutional expression to this fact. While the State President refuses to accept that South Africa is one country with one people, and while he refuses to negotiate even about federalism as one possible answer to our dilemmas, politically speaking there is nothing that I have to say to him. Politically speaking, there is nothing Black South Africa has to say to him, and politically speaking, our country remains locked into a national impasse.

The new constitution was not a first step in the right direction. It was a major blunder and will have to be scrapped as the constitution of South Africa. It cannot be amended; it must be changed and changed radically.

& have spent a full decade building Inkatha into a mass organisation with a power-base unparalleled in the history of this country. Inkatha has over a million paid-up members and I have

built up this mass movement on the ideals of democratic action and with a commitment to the politics of negotiation and the use of non-violent tactics and strategies. I have mobilised a massive Black South African political force, and I have directed the anger of Inkatha's members towards constructive politics. Inkatha is a cross-section of Black South Africans. It is dominated by workers and peasants and it is as representative of people in urban areas as it is representative of people in rural areas; and it has attracted in its membership representatives of every class of South African society. Inkatha is a Black organisation, led by Blacks, pursuing Black aims and objectives, and as the elected President of Inkatha I speak with the voice of millions of people.

Beyond this vast Inkatha constituency, I am also the elected leader of the 2Zulu nation which is no creation of the Government's homeland system, and I represent over six million people in that capacity alone. When I say that Inkatha, its membership and all the rungs of Inkatha's leadership, its National Council, its Central Committee, and its Annual General Conference, perceive there to have been no real meaningful progress towards fundamental change in our country, South Africa must hear me. When I speak as the Chief Minister of KwaZulu, and I speak on behalf of my Cabinet colleagues, and the whole of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly, and in that capacity I say the same thing, then South Africa must hear me. Black South Africans will only begin talking about meaningful change being real when changes are changes towards power-sharing between Black and White. There is a mass Black South African rejection of the new constitution and there is a mass Black South African rejection of the notion that the Government has taken steps towards bringing about meaningful change.

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I can stand before you and say honestly that I have no blue-print for the future, and I am very sincere when I say that I do not indulge in blue-print speculation because I believe that no leader, no organisation and no South African Government is capable of authoring a beautiful new South Africa. A new South Africa must emerge out of a political process on the ground among the people. That is why I plead for the devolution of power. Black and White South Africans have to learn to live with each other, and we must cease thinking in terms of describing how they should do this. We must start thinking in terms of normalising South Africa and producing the circumstances in which Government by consensus is distilled out of the freedom of people to author their own future.

Both Black and White in South Africa yearn for a normalised society and ordinary people are far more capable of producing that normalised society than all the National Party theoreticians past and present put together.

We cannot have a people's response to the problems of South Africa unless democracy is set to work. For 35 years the National Party has interfered with the democratic process by which Black South Africans elect their leaders and choose amongst the options they face. We are now reaping the whirlwind which this interference in

democracy sowed. Inkatha as a mass democratic organisation which really does represent the will of millions of Black South Africans, must be given freedom to express Black goodwill in politics. It lacks this freedom under the constraints of the new constitution. It will lack this freedom under the controlling powers which will be introduced in the new first and second tier government machinery which has been announced.

Inkatha lacks the freedom to move towards consensus politics in Natal/KwaZulu as a region of South Africa because the Government continues to refuse to sanction political exploration along the lines recommended by the Buthelezi Commission. Inkatha lacks the power to express the will of the people while its members are subjected to influx control regulations, the Group Areas Act and the Population Registration Act. The political rug is constantly pulled from beneath my feet by the State President and his Cabinet colleagues, when they refuse to negotiate with Inkatha as 1Inkatha in geographic areas where Inkatha is by far the most dominant political force. :

I am receiving disquietening reports that Government sources are trying to popularise the idea that meaningful things are taking between myself, the State President and Mr. Chris Heunis, and that behind the scenes the Government is forging ahead successfully in negotiating with me. If the minimal contact that has taken place between myself and the State President with one formal meeting in

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four years, and the minimal contact that has taken place between myself and Mr. Chris Heunis in but a single meeting since he took office, are regarded as meaningful in terms of negotiation between Inkatha and the National Party, then heaven help South Africa. I have attended a number of meetings at which Mr. Chris Heunis was present to talk about practical affairs but there has only been one person to person consultation with him about the future of this country and that was one of the most unsatisfactory meetings I have ever had in my life.

Organised mining, banking, commerce and industry in South Africa want the same things as I do and Inkatha does. We all want change and we all want meaningful change in the here and now. The ASSOCOM report, the HSRC report and the Buthelezi Commission report read together produce a consensus about the need for change and also about the direction of meaningful change; and I plead for an understanding that until such time as the State President and his Cabinet colleagues recognise publicly the need to move towards power-sharing, we will all remain frustrated in our hopes for meaningful change. When I say that the draft Declaration of Intent which I drew up as a discussion document needs to be considered very carefully at every level of South African society, I must be taken seriously. Were the State President to issue such a statement of intent with Black leaders as would sign it with him, a

massive bridge of goodwill will be built across what is now a political chasm. I ask you all to look at this draft statement, and I plead with you to recognise the need for such a document and to debate it amongst yourselves, and then to put pressure on the State President to take this very simple step into the future with Black South Africa.

DECLARATION OF INTENT

We the wundersigned hereby declare our commitment to serve God in obedience to His divine will for our country and together:

Recognise that:

The history of mankind shows the need for adaptive change among all peoples and all nations.

Nations which have managed to avoid the use of violence in the achievement of national objectives are the nations which have grown in wisdom.

Both mistakes and lessons not yet learned led to errors of judgement in the mainstream politics in both the Black and White sections of our society.

The South African people are a family of mankind, seeking to live in harmony in the African community of nations and seeking to do so by expressing civilised ideals in the practical social, economic and political affairs of our country.

The South African constitution as it is now written is by force of history and reality a first step in constitutional reform which urgently needs the second step to be taken of enriching the constitution to make it as acceptable to the broad mass of African opinion as it has been made acceptable to the broad mass of White opinion.

The Westminster model of government was not ordained by God to be the only form of good government.

We therefore accept:

The need to make the preamble to the South African constitution of equal value to all the groups and peoples of the country by enriching the clause: "To respect, to further and to protect the self-determination of population groups and peoples" to include the notion that this can best be done by sharing power. We need to share power in such a way that no one group can dictate to any other group how to express its own self-determination, and we also need to share power in a formula within which

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the hallowed values of good government are not compromised.

The need to preserve the constitutionality of the adaptive democratic process on which we will jointly rely in being subservient to the divine will for our country.

We will therefore together seek:

- To negotiate as leaders to amend the South African constitution to make it acceptable to all groups.

To find an alternative political system to that which the world at large understands by the word 'apartheid' and also to seek an alternative political system in which universal adult suffrage is expressed in constitutional terms acceptable to all the peoples of South Africa.

To give expression to the common citizenship of all South Africa's peoples without qualifying the meaning of citizenship for any group.

To wuse the opportunities presented in practical politics at first, second and third tier levels of government to fashion national unity by deepening the democratic process, and to use the democratic process in explorations of what needs to be done to get the people to legitimise the instruments of government.

We therefore pledge ourselves:

To express national pride and patriotism by insisting that South Africans will decide South Africa's future in the acceptance of each other as individuals and groups and the acceptance of each other's cultural rights to be who they are.

To start where we find ourselves in history and to move from there to build on all that is positive and valuable and to change that which is negative and undesirable.

Each to work in our own constituencies to develop a South African pride in managing our own South African affairs

in harmony with internationally accepted standards of civilised decency without being dictated to from without.

Having thus declared we stand together to defend our right even

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with our lives to take the steps and the time needed to establish consensus between groups and to win support for our joint efforts in the South African family of nations.

And furthermore to stand together to defend South Africa from external onslaughts and to stand together to resist any use of violence which threatens the politics of negotiation aimed at national reconciliation.