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A FEW REMARKS BY MANGOSUTHU G. BUTHELEZI, CHIEF MINISTER KWAZULU,
PRESIDENT OF INKATHA AND CHAIRMAN, THE SOUTH AFRICAN BLACK ALLIANCE

ON THE OCCASION OF A FAREWELL FUNCTION FOR MR. SIMON DAVEY,

HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S OUTGOING CONSUL IN DURBAN, ACCOMPANIED BY

THE HONOURABLE MR. ALAN HOLMES, HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S NEW CONSUL
IN DURBAN

ULUNDI : 25 MARCH 1988

Mr. Davey, this is a sad day for us because we have to formally bid you farewell. On occasions like this when we say farewell to a real friend I always feel terribly torn. Part of me feels outraged that Her Britannic Majesty's Government can remove somebody like you from our midst any time they like. Part of me, however, is glad for you because you will be taking a step forward in your career as a diplomat.

I also face a dilemma on an occasion like this when a friend is leaving and at the same time introducing his replacement. The warmth of our feeling towards Mr. Davey, Mr. Holmes, must not be read as a placing of a question mark over your head. We have not learnt to know you yet, but neither did we know Mr. Davey when he replaced Mr. David Wright. In bidding Mr. Davey a fond farewell, we welcome you Mr. Holmes in our midst.

There are some vocations in life where all that is required is rigorous training and hard work to put that training into practice. There are other vocations, however, where the real essence of a job either comes with the man or it does not. Our experience is that there are good, there are indifferent and that there are bad diplomats. No training in the world can make a bad diplomat a good diplomat. Good diplomacy comes with some kind of quality of being that which a man either has or does not have.

For us, Mr. Davey, you are a born diplomat and you have always managed to make your own unique combination of diplomatic correctness and human warmth. In your term of office here you have seen almost everything that there is to be seen about Inkatha and the KwaZulu Government. Circumstances thrust on us has bared our soul to you. We are surviving a very difficult transitional period in South Africa which has tested the humanity in us. It has tested our every strength and it has pointed out our every weakness. You have seen us in tough circumstances and you ought to know us.

Our experience of your term of office is experience of one who came as a stranger and who grew into a friend. When you walk into our midst, we immediately start relaxing because you enter bearing the kind of trust which demands a return of trust. You enter with the

kind of integrity which demands a return of integrity. It is a rare quality in any person that brings forth in others the best you evidence to them from yourself.

I am quite sure that diplomats have their own particular range of temptations and that the duty of being present at important functions is a duty that can become very onerous. Of all the diplomats whom we have appreciated and grown to like and trust, you have evidenced that rare willingness always to be present. It is a willingness that has, I am sure, a twofold dividend. In the first place it must be a willingness that keeps you more acquainted than most with what is going on. In the second place, it is a willingness which has inspired confidence in us that you have wanted to be with us in everything we do, and that you wanted to know our wants and aspirations from ourselves and not filtered to you only by the media or by some clever-by-half academic, posturing as experts on us, and Inkatha.

Your presence at the very many functions I have to attend has been greatly appreciated. Yours is a familiar face wherever I go in this region to perform important duties. It has been a friendly face, a genuine face and I would like to pay tribute to you for that dedication to duty which alone can put a genuine smile on your face as you do that which you ought to do.

South Africa is in a transitional phase. When you return as I sincerely hope you will some time in the future, you will find a different South Africa. What happens in the future and how South Africa progresses along its path of destiny, depends on a great many factors. They are all, however, factors which have to survive the difficulties and threats which always accompany radical transitions.

Radical transitions will have to be made in South Africa. We cannot survive by making minor adjustments. As a society we have to undergo the trauma of total renewal from within. The best that there is must be retained and the worst that there is must be cut out and discarded for ever. The distinction of what must be retained and what must be discarded, is extremely problematic. The traumas that we have to go through will eventually be seen to be traumas relating to deep divisions of opinion on this question.

We in Inkatha and KwaZulu have a very deep commitment to pursue non-violent tactics and strategies to further the politics of negotiation. The strength of our commitment can be traced to our deep and abiding belief that South Africans will, in the end, triumph over everything to prove that we in this country can set right that which is wrong. I believe in South Africans and I believe that the task of real political leadership is to draw the best out of everybody across all race groups and to harness that best in the service of South Africa.

One <can talk about policies, ideologies and one can talk about tactics and strategies but in the end, it is having justified faith in things that are worthy of that faith that really matters. i 4 want to convey to you, Mr. Davey and Mr. Holmes, that in some significant part it is the best that Great Britain left behind here in this country which most inspires me to believe that all is not lost.

British diplomats who serve in South Africa have an immense historic responsibility of keeping alive that faith in human nature that ultimately justifies an unshakeable belief in democracy. You, Mr. Davey, have done this with distinction.

I have in the past expressed my appreciation for the bold stand of your Prime Minister, Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, in the face of very considerable national and international pressures. She has lived up to every expectation we in this country could have about British political and moral integrity. You yourself, have reflected that integrity in the way that you conducted yourself amongst us.

On this occasion on which we say farewell to you we should, however, not burden you with deep political discussion. We pay tribute to you for the man that you have been amongst us and for the friend that you have been and that we know you will remain.

You have been posted to Prague. That is a far cry ..from Durban. There you will face new challenges but those challenges are in your hands and there is not much that we can do about them. All we can do now is to send you on your way with a sense that you have triumphed over adversity here to achieve the best that a diplomat could achieve in the circumstances. We want you to carry this knowledge with you and ask that our appreciation of the kind of person you have been will be taken as a gift which you carry with you. You must go with the confidence that our love should inspire.

It is natural that what I say on this occasion is dominated by our appreciation for what you, Mr. Davey, have been and what you have done. This does not mean that we in any way downgrade the importance of Mr. Holmes' presence amongst us. We both bid you, Mr. Davey, farewell and we bid Mr. Holmes welcome.

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