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By Lorna Hahn

WASHINGTON — Despite its policy of grooming its 10 black homelands for "independence," and its assurances that blacks have genuine self-determination in these areas, South Africa recently announced that it would cede to neighboring Swaziland the entire Kangwene (Swazi) homeland, plus the Ingwuvuma district of KwaZulu. The decision, if carried out, would enable South Africa to rid itself juridically of 870,000 Swazis, half of whom live outside the homeland, and 80,000 Zulus. Meanwhile, it has not only caused a bitter confrontation with the country's leading black politician, Chief Minister Gatsha Buthelezi of KwaZulu, it has also united opposition South Africans of all races and political persuasions, as well as the people in the regions directly concerned, while generating unprecedented support for Chief Buthelezi throughout Africa.

As leader of the country's largest ethnic group, the six million Zulus, and of its largest liberation movement, Inkatha, Chief Buthelezi has represented perhaps the best hope for a peaceful solution of South Africa's problems. Believing that liberation is a slow process rather than a sudden event, Inkatha has eschewed violence in favor of strikes and boycotts. Rather than contending that South Africa should belong to blacks alone, it has proposed that all races design a new constitution based on majority rule that would be fair to all. Seeing similarities between black and Afrikaner nationalism, Inkatha has had cordial exchanges with prominent Afrikaners.

The conservative rulers, however, have long wanted to punish Chief Buthelezi for thwarting the grand design of separate development. He accepted the leadership of KwaZulu, then Zululand, in 1970 to prevent South Africa from installing a puppet who would accept "independence." After founding Inkatha YeNkululeko YeSizwe (National Cultural Liberation Movement) in 1975, he defied the Government in 1977 by opening the movement to non-Zulus. The next year, with colored and Indian groups and Kangwene groups, he founded the South African Black Alliance to widen the organized opposition to separate development.

With roughly 350,000 dues-paying members, nearly 15 percent of whom are non-Zulu, Inkatha has become so strong that even military leaders have been flirting with the idea of trying to

strike a deal with Chief Buthelezi. But the Government chose instead to try to discredit him by killing two birds with one stone: unloading unwanted blacks on a foreign country and showing that Chief Buthelezi was powerless to stop it. The move, however, is backfiring.

In the Supreme Court, the KwaZulu government has appealed to stop the cessation based on two points: first, that the Government has no right to deprive a million South Africans of their citizenship and force them to become citizens of another country and, second, that the Government acted illegally when it deprived KwaZulu of the right to administer Ingwavuma by proclamation because such an action can be done legally only by an act of Parliament. On Tuesday, the Supreme Court ordered the Government to return Ingwavuma to KwaZulu control until the appeals court in Bloemfontein hears the case.

In the streets, through petitions and demonstrations, South Africans of all colors and beliefs are declaring that they cannot accept the cession. Conservative Afrikaners are joining Zulus and Swazis in protesting the dissolution of the Kangwene Legislative Assembly and the Ingwavuma governing body, and the imposition of administrators from the Ministry of Cooperation and Development. Perhaps most

important in the long run, blacks who had criticized Chief Buthelezi for being too moderate, notably those in the externally based African National Congress and the internally based black consciousness groups, have rallied around him.

As the proposed cession also violates a sacred principle of the Organization of African Unity, namely that African colonial boundaries should be maintained, Africans are also rallying to the cause. Moves are afoot to have Chief Buthelezi present his case against South Africa to a meeting of O.A.U. heads of state, and Dr. Oscar Dhlomo, secretary general of Inkatha, is arriving in New York on Sunday to arrange a United Nations appearance. He also plans to visit Washington to enlist American support.

The United States should do whatever it can to end what is becoming an explosive situation in South Africa. Morality aside, the sheer illegality of South Africa's actions should be offensive to an Administration committed to law and order. And if, in stopping South Africa, it should make a better start in the rest of Africa, so much the better.

Lorna Hahn, executive director of the Association on Third World Affairs, is information representative of Inkatha in the United States.

Frances Jetter

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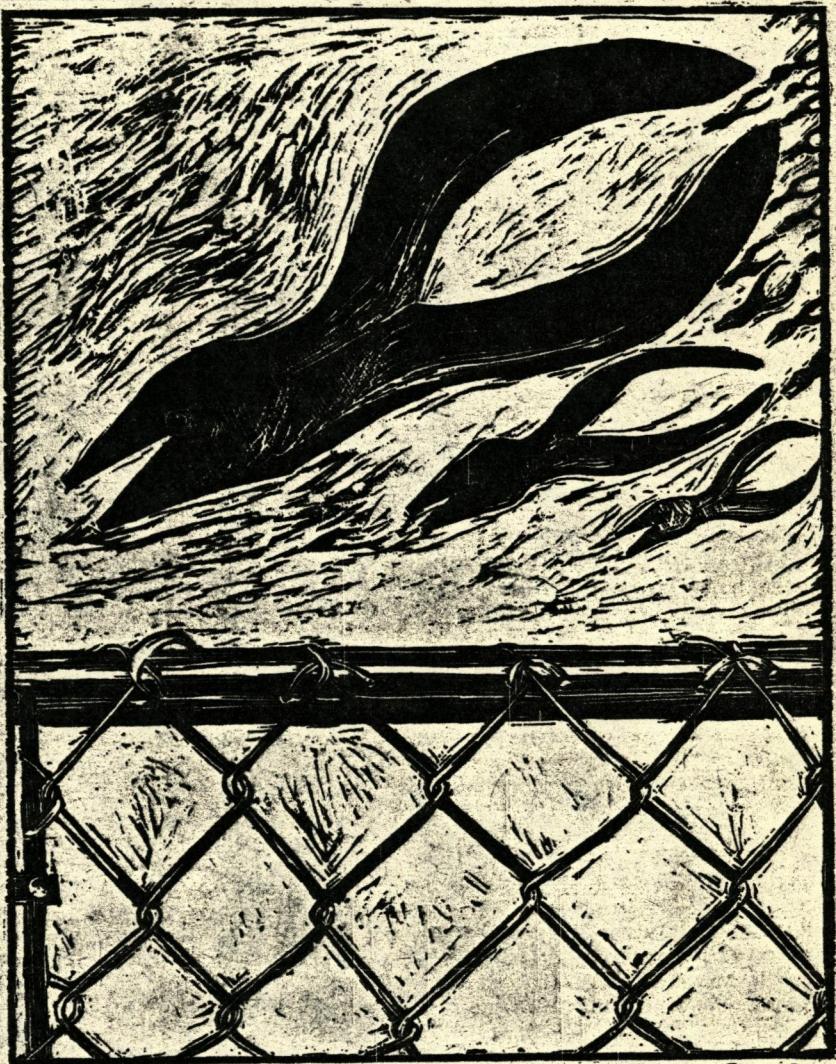
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