

MEMORANDUM FOR DISCUSSION WITH THE BEL AIR GROUP - A TEAM OF
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MINISTERS FROM SANTA BARBARA CALIFORNIA, U.S.A.
BY MANGOSUTHU BUTHELEZI, CHIEF MINISTER OF KWAZULU
AND PRESIDENT OF INKATHA

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I have long argued that apartheid is doomed and long before Mr.
F.W. de Klerk, the present State President took office - and even
before he assumed the leadership of the National Party - I was
arguing that the ANC's cry that apartheid could not be reformed and
had to be destroyed was palpably wrong.

For some years now I have been detecting and saying that there was
a rising groundswell demand for the normalisation of South Africa
as a modern, Western-type democracy. People in this country are
tired of violence and they are tired of the threat of more violence
to come. They want a normalised South Africa and I believe that
electoral history will yet show that I was right and that moves now
being made to abolish apartheid and establish a multi-Party
democracy based on a system of universal adult franchise will be
supported by the White electorate.

There will be the political backlashes from the far right, just as
there will be backlashes to the far left to any negotiated:
settlement in which extremists do not again control the powers of
government.

There will be a teething period and there will be the difficulties
that are bound to arise in a programme of radical transition in a
society such as there is in South Africa. There will be these
things and the going will yet get tough, but I am absolutely
certain that apartheid is doomed and that it will be wiped off the
face of the earth for the scourge that it is.

This conviction has ever-increasingly led me to say that we do not
have to involve ourselves in political adventurism. We have to
come together as sane and sensible people and charter a course
which will take South Africa into a new political era.

For some time now, I have also been pointing to the fact that
institutionalised South Africa has for some years now moved ahead
of any reform thinking in the National Party and the Government to
prepare for a multi-racial post-apartheid era.

I say simply that these views which I have often expressed in recent times are totally incompatible with the images of Inkatha that Inkatha's political enemies have tried to impose on it.

It would be suicidal of me to be attempting to ally myself to the perpetrators of apartheid if I know - as I indeed do know - that apartheid is doomed and not only doomed but doomed in the short to medium term.

It would be suicidal of me to be employing the politics of violence if I was attempting to ensure a position as a prime negotiator in non-violent tactics and strategies. It would be suicidal of me at this juncture of my own political career, and at this juncture of Inkatha's political development, to be leading in the employment of violence for political purposes.

Inkatha more than any other black political organisation inside South Africa has most to lose in the violent conflicts into which it has now been dragged.

I want to say quite categorically that I as a political leader have never once in all my life advocated or directed the employment of violence for political purposes. Both as a political leader and as a Christian I know that noble ends cannot be achieved through foul means.

I am hideously attacked by my political enemies because right from 1976 onwards I would not participate in anything that would be likely to lead to the kind of confrontation which would inevitably end up producing violence. I have avoided not only violence itself, but I have avoided the kind of tactics and strategies which in our South African situation have always been precursors to violence.

I have been hammered because I have not held my peace when it has come to the question of the armed struggle. I have not been able to approve of the armed struggle on first principles as a Christian, but most certainly I have not been able to approve of an armed struggle which could only be defended if it was a last resort option when I myself know that victory will come about through non-violent means.

I now see myself being proved correct and I now least of all have any need to use violence for political purposes, and more than all others condemn violence as counter-productive.

I see Mr. F.W. de Klerk as a South African State President who has nowhere else to go other than forward into a new political era and the only way he can go forward is to carry ever-increasingly Black support with him.

I am not in the least bit interested in furthering Mr. de Klerk's political career and I say that his only way forward is to gather Black support around him for what he is doing because I believe that the best way to bring about the reconciliation of South Africa's race groups is for this country to govern itself into a new democratic political dispensation.

I believe we need the continuity that will come from rejecting the worst that there is in this country and safeguarding the best that there is and I say we need that continuity because without that continuity we would not be able to bridge the chasms that apartheid has created and we would not be able to bring about the reconciliation of Black and White.

Apartheid has left behind it a polarised society in which violence is ever lurking below every social, political and economic surface and is breaking out so hideously from time to time.

Unless we today begin on the process of racial reconciliation, we will never have the will across all race groups either to establish a democracy or to make democracy work after it is established. The employment of violence for political purposes now is totally counter-productive to anybody who sees the need to establish reconciliation during the process of eradicating apartheid and establishing a new democracy.

Violence really is a hideous thing once it takes root in intense political situations. It spreads; violence begets violence and begotten violence demands retaliatory violence, revenge violence, violence in blood-feuding and very tragically pre-emptive violence. The hideousness does not stop here because when all this kind of violence establishes itself in a tense community, there is always added to it criminal violence which is so often so indistinguishable from other violence.

I will distribute to those of you present, a list of the names of Inkatha's leadership which have already died in the violent onslaughts to which we have been subjected. This list is not exhaustive. We have only recently begun gathering the names to present the impact of violence on Inkatha to the world. The list will grow. These are the leaders of Inkatha who have been attacked because they are the leaders of Inkatha.

And I am not talking about attacks in the past tense. The attacks continue. Only last week Mrs. D.D. Ngcobo's house was attacked and totally gutted and destroyed, simply because she was a member of Inkatha's Central Committee and she was a past Inkatha Woman's Brigade organiser. And again also only last week, the home of Mrs. Dlomo, the Chairlady of Inkatha's Soweto Branch was petrol-bombed.

These attacks against these ladies represent ongoing violent opposition to Inkatha which is totally unjustified.

I have recently again and again appealed to Dr. Nelson Mandela to stand up and to be counted with me in the name of peace. I have repeatedly invited him to talk with me and I have repeatedly said to him privately and publicly that if he and I stood up together and went forth together to be among the people to call for peace and reconciliation between Inkatha and the ANC, nothing any combination of any black leaders - no matter how many were involved, - would have the same impact.

I again and again say to Dr. Mandela that for me the struggle always has been about the struggle for democracy. For me in a multi-Party democracy there is always room for many Parties. For me there is now the need for Blacks to come together and to work for the great new South Africa, regardless of their own exact political persuasions.

I say to Dr. Mandela that when there is a democracy after apartheid, there will be many Parties. When that time comes, I say, Parties will relate to each other in civilised ways and compete with each other for electoral support by ways and means which are compatible with democratic norms. I say we must begin practising for a future multi-Party South Africa now while we prepare for it.

I reject the politics which can be classified as all-or-nothing politics. In our South African circumstances above all else we need reconciliation. We will not only need a national will to establish and maintain democracy, but more importantly we will need a national will to roll back the huge backlogs that have accrued in the provision of education, housing, health and welfare.

We will need a national will to generate the kind of wealth that any government after apartheid would need to govern successfully so that the people know they are governed wisely because their lot improves.

I say that we will not have the will to go on beyond political victories to achieve victories against poverty ignorance and

disease if we do not start the process of reconciliation now. That means we must now have a tolerance for different political views to be expressed in different political organisations, and we must now have a tolerance for different leaders seeking different mandates from the people.

Inkatha is going to make a vital historic transition from being a broad based liberation movement into becoming a national political Party. We know that nothing we do, just like nothing the National Party can do, and just like nothing that the African National Congress can do each on their own could ensure a new democracy for everybody. The transition from apartheid to democracy must be made by a multi-dimensional, multi-Party and multi-racial effort.

Inkatha's transition to a national political Party committed to bring about a new democracy is vitally important. This commitment is totally incompatible with the employment of violence for political purposes.

In any event Inkatha has never needed to employ violence for political purposes. When Inkatha came into existence in the mid-1970s black anger was rising and after June 16th 1976 the violence which erupted in Soweto spread rapidly across the whole country. It was in this climate in which the politics of confrontation so arose to spread violence so widely that Inkatha began its pattern of phenomenal growth. Inkatha was supported because it was non-violent. I was battered by the media and by many black leaders because I would not lead in the politics of confrontation.

If you had the time I would send people to take you to black community after black community where you would hear at first hand how violence was imported into areas where Inkatha was busy living and letting live. I attach to the list of Inkatha's leaders who have died recordings of interviews with Inkatha's members and supporters who have suffered grievous loss by political attacks from the ANC/UDF/COSATU supporters.

Violence has a hideous propensity of spreading and when you read through the kind of detail that is recorded in these interviews, you can see why this is the case. Still I have called on Inkatha members never to confound their priorities and never to put violence against their political enemies at the top of their agendas. On the contrary, I have told Inkatha members to strike violence off their agendas.

I am terribly aware of the extent to which history is now presenting us with what really is the last opportunity of putting a democracy together in South Africa through non-violent means. We are now going through a rare golden moment in history in which we can actually put the past behind us, become reconciled and move into a really meaningful and stable democracy.

In making the transition from being a liberation movement into becoming a national political Party, Inkatha is set to make a major contribution to the establishment of the kind of free, democratic, non-racial, reconciled, multi-Party society which we all know will benefit all the people of this country. Inkatha has set itself four major tasks:

TASK I. To establish an open, free, non-racial, equality opportunity, reconciled society with democratic safeguards for all people..

To harness the great resources of the country to fight the real enemies of the people, namely: poverty, hunger, unemployment, disease, ignorance, insecurity, homelessness and moral decay.

To re-distribute the wealth of the country for the benefit of all people, and to establish political and economic structures that encourage enterprise and create the wealth all governments of the future will need.

To ensure the maintenance of a stable, peaceful society in which all people can pursue their happiness, and realise their potential, without fear or favour.

It cannot achieve the kind of aims and objectives enshrined in this definition of the tasks to which we put our hand unless we remain totally committed to employing non-violent means to achieve political ends.

Violence in South Africa has peaked in two separate waves of violence. There have always been sporadic outbreaks of violence as people in different parts of South Africa felt their cup running over with bitterness and said enough is enough. However, in the 1976-79 period, violence peaked to new heights and assumed an altogether different kind of character. It was spontaneous violence which became organised violence which was deliberately spread ever further afield in a concerted effort to put the South African Government on the run.

This violence was crushed after numerous organisations had been banned or declared unlawful and hundreds of leaders were detained or Jjailed. However, a second modern phase of violence starting erupting in the 1983-84 period and the violence which we now are experiencing in KwaZulu/Natal is a continuation of this violence.

If you looked at the detail of what the ANC were broadcasting in 1983 and 1984 you would find that the fanning of the flames of violence was a deliberate attempt to translate the armed struggle into a people's war which would end up making South Africa ungovernable and thus end up putting the South African Government on the run and ensconcing the ANC as the government of the day.

I do not make a Party political statements. I ask only that you establish what the ANC itself said in broadcast after broadcast week in and week out to the people of South Africa. I ask you only to read what the ANC itself wrote in its official journal 'Sechaba'.

urging people to spread violence. The call was for arming the people, the call was for people to attack Whites to get the guns Whites had, and the call was to kill anybody whom the ANC stigmatised as "working within the system" or working for apartheid.

In other words, the call was for the death of the ANC's political opponents. I, for example, was described as "a snake that must be hit on the head." Those are ANC words, not mine and they typified the developing attitude in the latter part of the 1980's which sought to annihilate my leadership and Inkatha entirely.

When you bear in mind that I am referring to what the ANC itself said and what it itself wrote, and you bear in mind that it is the ANC which declared the armed struggle and it was the ANC which said that its involvement in non-violent internal democratic opposition to apartheid only detracted from its commitment to bring about the armed struggle as a primary means of liberating South Africa, you understand why I am so dismayed that it is Inkatha that is accused of being violent.

You cannot make South Africa ungovernable by playing marbles, as I have often said before. Now that we are going through this golden phase of South Africa's history in which it will be possible to put the past behind us and in which it will be possible to bring about a grand, new, democratic political era through non-violent means, the ANC is still insisting that the armed struggle is an essential component of their weaponry.

I say, however, that it is more important for all those who are locked in violence to get together to establish peace than it is to point fingers and allocate blame. However much I know that it is the ANC's revolutionary commitment to violence and their determination to use the politics of intimidation to establish their political supremacy on the ground in this country, I say we have to put the past behind us and we have to get together.

That is why I in 1988 I established a Peace Initiative of my own while we were still talking about peace to the UDF and COSATU.

Numerous attempts had been made to establish Peace Accords and numerous meetings were called by people who regarded themselves as intermediaries or facilitators of peace. Meeting after meeting came and went and we got no further and in the end, I said that I would at least start a peace initiative on the ground while we talk about joint action. I personally held mass rallies in the worst of the areas where killing was taking place.

Before the year was out Inkatha had held over 100 prayer rallies for peace. Inkatha has always stood for peace and it worked to establish peace to shame political violence out of existence.

A Joint Peace Committee was finally established between Inkatha on the one hand and UDF/COSATU on the other hand. This Committee of five-a-side met on a number of occasions and finally reached agreement that we should call what was called a 'Four Presidents Meeting' - a meeting between myself and the Presidents of the ANC, the UDF and COSATU.

Tragically, differences of opinion emerged and it appeared to Inkatha's Central Committee that the UDF and the ANC contingent just could not address issues effectively and remove the real stumbling blocks to peace.

I personally took the step at the time of writing directly to Mr. Oliver Tambo suggesting that we should meet urgently to salvage the

Peace Initiative from what appeared to be failure. I wrote to him on the 11st August 1989. Unfortunately he fell ill and was not ultimately responsible for the fact that my letter remained not only unanswered but not even acknowledged. It was only in fact

acknowledge on the 5th March this year.

In the end because peace was so important and because we were so concerned to address the problems which the Joint Peace Committee was confronted with that Inkatha's Central Committee called for a moratorium on further developments until the outstanding issues had been dealt with.

Even so I kept the contact going and the Joint Peace Committee continued to meet on a two-a-side basis just to make sure the door was not finally slammed on peace.

Now this year that Mr. F.W. de Klerk has made his momentous speech to Parliament on February 2nd and now that he has followed up that speech with the release of Dr. Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, and the unbanning of organisations and individuals, Inkatha's Central Committee has called for the resumption of the Peace Committee.

We have to respond to the changed circumstances, and in particular we have to respond to the circumstances in which the ANC is now free to come and go and to do its political work on the ground openly. I suggested that the five-a-side Peace Committee should be resumed and early on in their new series of sittings, a fresh course should possibly be chartered into the future which takes into account the changed face of South African politics.

I have spoken at fair length and could say a great deal more, and indeed I could say it profitably. But time does press and I would like there to be ample time for discussion.

In conclusion, I again make the point that we can put aside the question of who was right and who was wrong and to what extent they were right and wrong, in favour of grasping this golden moment of history now today and making a fresh start that will turn into a peace initiative which shames violence and saves lives and limbs.

I again call on Dr. Mandela here in your presence to meet with me. I call on him to go forth with me so that we can call for peace together. I call for the resumption of the Joint Peace Committee and I call for a re-think in it to make the initiative the most effective initiative possible in the circumstances which are now prevailing.