

# Sunday Times

THE PAPER FOR THE PEOPLE

## A break in the storm clouds

NATAL'S Indaba early next month is the tiny ray of hope in steadily darkening skies. Here, emerging from between the violence of the revolutionaries and the ineptness of Government, is an attempt by black and white South Africans to secure their future through discussions without preconditions.

Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Chief Minister of KwaZulu, is with consummate skill thus calling the bluff of both Pretoria and the revolutionaries.

For President Botha has urged the country to negotiate a future based on power-sharing. And Chief Buthelezi is intending to do precisely that in a pilot form. It is an offer the Government cannot logically, and should not politically, refuse.

But the Natal Indaba also confronts the politics of protest with a dilemma. The philosophy that argues blacks' only real political strength lies in repeatedly saying "no" is about to be turned on its head; a black South African leader is heading a process to which the *Government* will eventually have to answer in either the affirmative or the negative.

Chief Buthelezi and Mr Frank Martin, senior Natal MEC, have to all intents and purposes created a mini-convention in the Natal greenlands. The implications of the discussions will inevitably stretch well beyond the Drakensberg.

Those still undecided about participating should accept that from the crucible could well emerge a political and economic model of surpassing importance for the whole country. Those who have summarily rejected participation would do well to reconsider; they run the risk of missing an historic opportunity.

Pretoria's more accommodating line is hopeful. A Government whose political style has been hallmarked by reactive crisis-management now has an opportunity for part-paternity in a brave new initiative. The added advantage, put more cynically, is that it is not obliged to commit less receptive parts of the country to a plan engineered originally by Natalians for Natal.

The province is no stranger to innovation. It was, after all, the Natal Executive which drew up plans for a local government model that the Government took eight years to adopt and now seeks to implement at a time when it has the least chance of success.

Chief Buthelezi was also responsible for initiating the Buthelezi Commission, whose findings were first peremptorily turned down by Pretoria and are now being surreptitiously dusted off. And the Lombard economic proposals for the province of five years ago are still at centre-stage in any discussions about regional development strategies.

Always something new out of Natal-KwaZulu.



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Chief Buthelezi led a delegation to the ANC in 1979. But, unlike Mr Mabuza, Chief Buthelezi did so as a leader of Inkatha and as a leader of the Zulus.

He met with the ANC because of his concern for unity among blacks.

Chief Buthelezi has never spoken or issued statements on behalf of KaNgwane or Inyandza.

Therefore, it is not correct for Mr Mabuza to imply, as he did recently, that the Chief Minister of KwaZulu had spoken on behalf of other leaders. — MKHUMBOLENI JOSEPH BUTHELEZI, Emondlo, Natal

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THE Chief Minister of KaNgwane, Mr Enos Mabuza, has the right to consult with — or even affiliate his Inyandza to the ANC mission in exile.

But it is wrong, unacceptable and dangerous for Mr Mabuza to use the name of our leader, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, to make himself more attractive to the ANC mission in exile.

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