

ADDRESS BY MNTWANA MANGOSUTHU G BUTHELEZI, CHIEF MINISTER OF KWAZULU AND
PRESIDENT OF INKATHA, AT THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE HOUSING SCHEME AT
UNIT Z, UMLAZI, DEVELOPED BY AMALGAMATED CONSTRUCTION CO. (PTY) MAY 2, 1986

Today is an important day in the development of housing for Black people in
this part of South Africa. I say so not only because the scheme being
implemented is the biggest home ownership project ever undertaken by a single
company in South Africa, but also because it represents, in my view, the
beginning of a completely new trend in the provision of housing for Black
people.

36

Let me deal with the former issue first.

Unit Z forms part of the township of Umlazi founded in the late 1950s. While
the KwaZulu Finance and Investment Corporation did a good job over the years
in financing housing for private individuals, it has always had severe financial
constraints and was thus not able to make really meaningful strides

in the field of housing. The vast bulk of the housing was, in fact provided
by the State, but, in a misguided attempt to stem the flow of Black people

to the cities, the building programme was halted. In Umlazi the State has
not built a single house since 1977, this despite the fact that the population
was swelling steadily to a point where Umlazi's formally and informally housed
population now stands at about 557 000, which is equal to Natal's total White
population. 200\230

Against this background it became clear to my Government, a long time ago that
a way had to be found to meaningfully engage the private sector in the provision

of housing for South Africa's: Black people.

I am aware that the mass of red tape in this country often causes people in the
private sector to throw up their hands in horror and tend to avoid becoming
involved in critical areas because the obstacles are so great.

I should thus like to pay tribute to Amalgamated Construction for doggedly
going battle with the bureaucracy to get this scheme approved. =What you have

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achieved should act as a spur it to others and could well be the forerunner

for many similar projects,

The scheme at Unit Z covers 165 ha and contains just over 1 000 individual sites. Now, while this may appear to some to be a drop in the ocean in terms of the housing needs in this area, the provision of 1 000 houses by a single company against the odds is a very significant achievement.

As I have already said, the major significance lies in the fact that pioneering work has been done and that Amalgamated Construction's scheme can act as a major catalyst,

I should also like to applaud the fact that the company has provided all the finance for the project, including the infrastructure.

Future home-owners will enjoy facilities like tarred roads, full water-borne sewerage and water and electricity reticulation throughout. Community facilities including 2 lower primary schools, 1 secondary school, creches and shopping areas have been planned.

At the start of my address I observed that today's opening was also an important occasion because it represented the beginning of a new era in the provision of housing for Black people.

The manner in which I have presented the details about this scheme -ill have indicated to you that the now beginning relates to private sector participation in housing development.

It is a hard fact of life in South Africa that there is just no way in which meaningful progress will be made in the field of housing without significant participation from the private sector.

I have often said that while I appreciated that a mass of rules, many of which were specifically designed to prevent urbanisation, existed in South Africa, the private sector was not justified in using this as an excuse for

non-involvement. The free enterprise system will not survive in this country

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if the private sector merely cashes in on the consumer spending of the mass of the Black people and then simply ignores what happens to their consumers when they leave the shops and factories.

There is thus a clear obligation to push for reform and also to find ways and means of circumventing the obstacles caused by rules and regulations.

Private sector involvement in housing is also a critical issue for another reason.. I am not an economist but my political instinct and deep knowledge

of Black people convinces me that one of the pathbyGut of the economic depression that is causing untold hardship and misery for hundreds of thousands of people in this land lies in the field of housing development,

Years of neglect and deliberate state policy to block Black urbanisation have caused a backlog in the provision of Black housing that is, quite frankly, frightening. Around this city of Durban, which is the generator of the lion's share of wealth in the province, almost 1.4 million people are forced to

live under the most dehumanising conditions in vast shack areas.

This simply cannot be allowed to go on. Although there are welcome signs that those in authority and leaders in the private sector have come to realise this truth, we must not underestimate the monumental task that lies ahead. '

But I believe that the needs of my people in the field of housing can act as a motor to breathe new life into the bagging economy. Not only will a massive housing programme create jobs and stimulate consumer demands over a wide field, but it could create a new spirit of optimism in this land being torn apart by strife, pessimism and despair.

Since I have made mention of the vast numbers of Black people living on the periphery of our cities, there might be those who will counter my arguments and ask whether it is realistic to embark on projects with the more

expensive type of housing such as we shall see here at Unit Z.

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Firstly, I should like to repeat that we fully accept that the backlog of housing is so great that informal housing schemes will have to form a major component of future policy,

- KwaZulu has done pioneering in this field and I would like to draw attention to the very successful upgrading scheme = we implemented at Woody Glen outside Mpumalanga, A bare minimum of people informally settled were moved to allow us to put in infrastructure like roads and water reticulation and I sincerely believe that we can claim to have a very considerable success with full local support,

Our enemies might then retort and ask why Malukazi was not upgraded instead of being used for more expensive housing. Amalgamated Construction had a taste : of this activism last Sunday from the Sunday Tribune, a matter I shall come back to later in my address.

Let me say that we have to strive for balanced development and that we cannot simply decide that Black people who have gone places in life should be denied the opportunity to live in houses of their choice. We must cater for them too and this is what has been done at Unit Z.

I should also like to draw attention to the fact that the Group Areas Act remains firmly in place and that Black people who could afford to live in other areas of Durban are denied this right by law, It is not surprising, therefore, that the less privileged members of our society might become embittered when they see these houses. What is happening is that all the different income groups are competing for a very scarce resource - a site -

on which to build - and this can lead to conflict., This is one of the reasons why many in leadership roles in urban townships come under such pressure and I hope those in authority realise what implications this has with regard to the Group Areas Act, -)

Malukazi has always been part of the declared township of Umlazi and an area earmarked for formal housing, But I want to emphasise that we remain committed to helping all groups of people and that we shall do all in our power to see that the less privileged people get a fair deal with regard

to housing, s

People who.,..../5

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People who agreed to move from Malukazi were given serviced sites at Folweni, It is true that Folweni is further away, but it must be remembered that we had to negotiate on a democratic basis with the Makhanya people to acquire land. We cannot simply walk in and take land away, Another point that needs to be remembered is that there had to be give and take on both sides, Land made available to us for housing and to be reasonably flat so that infrastructure costs did not become prohibitive,

Let me now deal with the article which appeared in the Sunday Tribune on April 27,

As indicated earlier, our enemies have slung mud at us for a long time over so-called removals from Malukazi., This has been part of an orchestrated campaign in which the suffering of people is exploited by so-called leaders who have hidden agendas,

There can surely be no gainsaying the fact that what the Sunday Tribune did last Sunday was to attempt to portray Amalgamated Construction as an ogre that was somehow in cahoots with the apartheid regime, Not only is Pretoria busy with the hated removals of people for ideological reasons, but the private sector was now also "lending a hand" with this evil practice. For

- good meaï\201ure, my Government is naturally also included,

Now, those who read newspapers will have noticed that the Sunday Tribune has for years been publishing a string of negative reports about KwaZulu and about me in particular.

I would like to pose a few questions to those who control the Sunday Tribune.
- Firstly, what is it that qualifies their reporter to write what are presented as considered reports about what is going on in the field of housing?

Any impartial reading of the report will show that while it is shallow, it certainly does not lack in advocacy. My question then is: Have junior and inexperienced staff got licence to advocate views they hold through selective reporting?

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The consistency of the vendetta against us can indicate one of two things. Either we are being attacked as a matter of policy, or, the newspaper is

out of control and any nonsense that a reporter chooses to write is published uncritically, Is this freedom of the Press or are we dealing abuse of

that freedom?

I would ask that the leaders of business in this country take careful note of the abandon with which even junior staff of newspapers are these days allowed to undermine constructive effort being made to solve this country's serious political crisis, While, for example, those who are at the helm

of the economy of this province are seated around the indaba table in Durban, the Sunday Tribune tells us and the world that the real leaders,

the people that really matter, are absent.

I ask you: What is the Sunday Tribune? Where does it get the insight and expertise that we are apparently all lacking in?

If I were the proprietor of Natal Newspapers I would be deeply worried about the standards - or, more correctly, the lack of standards of professionalism so evident today, It is ironic that in our most serious crisis, at a time when skill and impartiality are so desperately needed in our divided society, major vehicles of public debate should find us, Where are the many talented journalists who wrote with such authority in 1962 gone by?

I also believe that the business leadership of which newspaper proprietors are part - should pay serious attention to the increasing tendency in "newspapers to freely employ the buzz words of the far left in what purport to be impartial reports. If a journalist does not like a particular leader or individual - he becomes a "controversial" person, Those with whom he agrees are accorded the appellation "progressive," Thus I become a "controversial" leader, while COSATU is a 'progressive' movement.

Has the time not come for a little reflection on what these reporters are doing to the credibility of one of our most precious and hallowed institutions - a free press?

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But we shall rise above the small-minded negativism typified by the Sunday Tribune. We are here today to mark the beginnings of great things in Unit Z, Umlazi. Z to the last letter of the alphabet but I firmly believe that this development we see today is for us the start of a new beginning,

Things are bad in South Africa and we certainly face a crisis situation, There is a school of thought to which I suspect some of these journalists

in 'The Sunday Tribune', belong that wants to give our people hopes for a pie-in-the-sky. These are people whose rhetoric suggests that because South African society has not yet been normalised we should fold our arms and not try to correct some of the inequities in our society, until violence takes its logical course and we end up hopefully with a Utopia tomorrow, where everything will be perfect. These people live in posh homes in White suburbs and they would rather have Black people to stew in their misery until their veritable EDORADO dawns after the much awaited revolution. I consider such attitudes to be grossly irresponsible because the backlogs Blacks have in housing and everything else are so vast that we cannot wait for these injustices to last until after the revolution., It is well and good for someone living in a White suburb to suggest to Black people to wait for a pie-in-the-sky after the revolution. It would be criminal to say to people living in squalor and disease that they must stew in such squalor and disease until revolutionaries take over the country and make it perfect withall things going well for everyone. We know now living as we do in Southern Africa, that political freedom does not necessarily cause poverty and squalor to vanish, It would be criminal if we were to wait and not do anything about correcting the wrongs of our South African society until the day of FREEDOM. That is why it is so important to appreciate the importance of what the Amalgamated Construction company is doing for our people here.

In a situation where there is so little hope, it is important that we should as Black people who are the most deprived race group, know that there are people on the other side of the colour line, who are concerned about these terrible inequities of our society. I applaud this modest effort. The fact that we have still got to walk such a long journey before we get anywhere near satisfying the housing needs of Blacks, does not minimise the value of what the Amalgamated Construction Company is trying to do for our people

and with them, ;