

MEMORANDUM FOR DISCUSSION WITH A DELEGATION FROM THE NEDERDUITSE GEREFORMEERDE KERK IN AFRIKA BY MANGOSUTHU G. BUTHELEZI, PRESIDENT OF INKATHA YENKULULEKO YESIZWE, CHAIRMAN OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN BLACK ALLIANCE AND CHIEF MINISTER OF KWAZULU, ULUNDI, 31ST AUGUST 1982.

It is always for me an important occasion when something happens for the first time. In public I am primarily a politician and

in public I try to be a Christian politician. When I therefore say that it is not only an important occasion because it is the first, it is an important occasion because today is a Christian event. Centuries of anguish are behind man's attempt to discover exactly what Christianity is. One presumes it will be an eternal quest of mankind to fathom the Almighty's will for them in their total circumstances.

I therefore approach today's discussion with some humility and in these few remarks which I make, I hope to indicate a need for discussion such as that which we are having today. I regard today's discussion as an initial discussion because I hope we will meet again and that

we can establish some ongoing form of communication between the NG Kerk in Afrika and Inkatha, and with the KwaZulu Government.

I think I must make what to me is a crucially important point right at the outset. This is the point that I do not believe the problems of this country are soluble if the solution is to be sought in the hands of any one person or in the custody of any one organisation. There is no political redeemer in

South Africa and there is no exclusive movement which alone monopolises truth. Absolutism in South African politics is out. No single strategy will win and we must all have the humility to participate in a broad stream of South African forces which together will sweep the horrible evils of apartheid and racism out of our industries, our homes, our minds and our souls.

The NG Kerk ooniv. /2

The NG Kerk in Afrika has got a role to play and it cannot play that role in theological debating chambers only. It cannot campaign for a just world in theological and church issues only. You, gentlemen, are theblogians. I am basically

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a peasant and the wisdom of a peasant tells me that we need

a greater unity between church and people before the will of God can be done. That may simply be a view out of my peasant background but it might be the genius of Black South Africa

that I am alluding to.

In this part of the world people have always been important

and ultimately justice was in the hands of the people. It would be presumptuous of me to lead a detailed discussion

on the relationship between church and State. I am convinced however, that if there is an urgency attached to questions

of church and State in this country, the urgency can only be discovered and underpinned by joint ventures between organs

of the church and organs of the State. The church/state separation inherent in the Christian philosophy is not simply

a question of church domains with no-man's-land buffer zones between. Again, I speak as a peasant politician and I leave you gentlemen to look at theology, but in my experience as

a Christian politicians I recent very much the active politicians in the Church who support the South African way of life and

are its religious propagandists. We have many such pious activists who pray for our land and pray for peace and prosperity and pray for our boys on the border. When this is done, many blacks think that they are in fact praying that God blesses apartheid with which they identify. It is a deep-rooted thing in our churches. The formation of the South African state

in the name of the church gives rise to the pernicious doctrine of apartheid.

This laid the foundations for the artificial separation of church and State in this country, in which the church is expected to provide the religious-and doctrinal underpinning

of party political and Afrikaner sectarian interests.

The:church did. /3

The church did this and has taught that this is right to successive generations in prayers and in hymns. The church -

is an organ of the State in this country.

We need to note that it is these very people who cry loudest that we must not mix church and politics. I must therefore applaud both the NG Kerk in Afrika and the Sengingkerk for by and large having evolved an African awareness of what the church and state debate is really all about. I wish I knew how to

mix religion and politics because if I did, I would be very much further along the political road than, I now am.

The church I would perceive as that which demands my soul

and bends my will is the church as the domain of Christ, not the instrument of man, and I am at war with the demands of the church and with the demands of politics, and I have to

reconcile two demands which appear to me to be conflicting

and can only be synthesised by a living Christ.

I stand on the interface between church and state and as an active politician I resent those who use the authority of the church to restrict the people who work with me. The separation of the church and state is not possible. As a black involved in the struggle for liberation, I have talked to most of the contemporary Christian leaders who are accused of mixing politics and religion and if I had to adjudicate between these people and the people who make the accusations, I would say to the people who make the accusations, you mix the church with politics in the affairs of man. By the very location of the NG Kerk in Afrika a heavy onus falls on you as part of its leadership to unshackle apartheid where the shackles are religious shackles, where there are doctrinal shackles and

shackles relating to common Christian usages and practices.

I cannot come into your house and tell you how it should be regulated. I cannot tell you to relate what I am saying

to your situation. I cannot tell you how to deal with your White brothers, who are perceived by many blacks as little more than the apostles of apartheid. I cannot tell you how to deal with the NG Kerk which is intertwined with a political system

which culminates

I have sent working parties into the Ingwavuma area from the beginning of this thing and even then until today they are there

amongst people. I have called for prayer meetings. I myself have gathered the people together in the city halls of Durban

Pietermaritzburg and Johannesburg. I have gone beyond all this. I have protested to the late King Sobhuza II myself. I sent emergency messages to African heads of state. I sent my lieutenants out into the world with these appeals. I have

appealed actively and in detail to the Organisation of African

Unity and to the United Nations Organisation. I have briefed foreign Governments. I have fought the issues in the courts of

our land and driven this legal battle so hard that it has now finally ended up in the Appellate Division at Bloemfontein. And

I am telling you today that I did not do it for Gatsha Buthelezi.

I did not do it because I am getting some political mileage out of it: If this were the depth of my politics, I would nevertheless have done it. I did all these things because the event for me

is a watershed event. It is a threshold beyond which we dare

not let the white man go because beyond that threshold there is

a rapid escalation of racism and the obliteration of hope.

Now I ask you gentlemen in love and in Christian fellowship, where was the NG Kerk in all this? Did the active concern of the church manifest itself in the Ottawa discussions? I am not here to tell you how your representatives should have conducted themselves at those discussions. I can ask whether Dr Allan Boesak's election to high office is a church victory or is it a victory for the people? I ask you how do we make the NG Kerk in Africa a

momentum which must now surely increase more relevant to the people? Is there something which Inkatha and the NGK in Afrika can do in partnership amongst the people. We have a very active partnership between the South African Government and the white

NG Kerk. It is a partnership which gives them a great strategic and tactical advantage over who struggle for liberation.

This discussion

which culminates in horrific laws and deaths in detention.

I cannot tell you how to chastise, scold, love and even cast
aside 5 church so identified with the impediments of the state.

As a Black, I am aware of the fact that in every little conservative
town there is a tall steeple of a white Church who regards us

as their Black foundling in their Custody.

From my own point of view, I can see a number of things I cannot
tell how you should treat others. I cannot tell you how to put
youe own house in order. I cannot write your theology for

you but I can appeal to you about that which is mine. I can
share with you that which I feel charged with. I can ask

you to expalin that which bewilders me. Let us take a context
within which I can ask these questions without any offence

being given to anybody. Let us take the Ingwavuma/KaNgwane
issues. We have here a situation in which something like a
million Black Seuth Africans are going to be excised from South
Africa by a White political scalpel and dumped in a neighbouring
territory where there is poverty, where there are no prospects
other than that which depends on White hand-outs, where there is
no constitution in operation, and where there is rule by a power-
hungry nepotist clique. In the history of this country we have
had no equivalent to the body politic of South Africa receiving
such a foul blow.

I have protested vigorously to Dr. Koornhof and called him names
which offended the Cabinet. I also protested to Mr Pik Botha's
face and an another occasion also called-him names which offended

the South African Cabinet. A fact conveyed to me by the Commissioner
General. I have protested to the Prime Minister. I went there
to thr epople both in Ingwavuma and KaNgwane. 1 stood:in their
midst and wept with them and shared their anger and rallied them.

I have sent .;..../5

This discussion of ours is an initial discussion, and I think

I have said enough to indicate that we have business to do together. I have said enough to indicate that there is a

place which will remain empty in the things that I have to do if you as Black brothers do not step in where you are invited to do so, I have spoken, and I now stand back to listen.