

INKATHA / KGARE FUND-RAISING DINNER

Address by Mangosuthu Buthelezi
Chief Minister of KwaZulu and President of Inkatha

ULUNDI HOLIDAY INN. 23RD JUNE 1990

In coming to this dinner tonight, you have added your voice and your support to the politics of reason. Inkatha is not a wild Party deeply involved in political adventurism. Inkatha is rooted in the realities of our common South Africa and has sought over its decade and a half of existence to evolve a set of responsible positions on crucial national issues.

Above all else, we want to eradicate apartheid for the scourge that it is and to replace it with a democracy that really works.

We do not want just any democracy that sounds nice and looks nice. I emphasise - we want a democracy that works and we believe we need a stable, enterprise-driven growth economy if we are going to bring benefits to all the people of this country and to future generations.

We in Inkatha believe that democracy is essentially about freedom of choice. We know that no single group, whether they are Black, White, Coloured or Indian, can author a new future which benefits all the people of this country. We can only bring about a future in which we can all share if we now share the responsibility of doing so. We believe that Inkatha is there in the centre-stage of South African politics as one of the three major political organisations. The other two are of course the ruling National Party and the African National Congress.

Inkatha is a responsible large membership-based black Party. Some would term us 'moderates' but I reject that notion because we in Inkatha are committed to bring about radical changes in this country. The real difference between us and the ANC is, of course, that as a hitherto Black based Party, we have rooted everything we say and everything we do in the realities around us.

Inkatha is now facing up to the new South African situation. Firstly we are opening up our membership to all race groups so that

we can make an all-inclusive South African effort to eliminate the last of apartheid and establish a real democracy. Secondly, Inkatha is now transcending the barriers which demarcate a widely based liberation movement from an election-winning focussed national political Party.

There are many good reasons why Inkatha should be backed. It really is even today the largest political Party that has ever been established in the history of South Africa. Inkatha is led by leaders who have been lifted up to their positions in democratic procedures by a mass movement. Inkatha is democratic; its leaders are elected; it does pursue objectives set by the people and it does so with tactics and strategies which the people themselves author.

Inkatha can be trusted because the people of South Africa can be trusted. It is they who have made Inkatha what it is and it is they who will take it into the future as one of the country's political Parties.

Inkatha can be backed because it has consistently led opposition to apartheid from inside South Africa. It is not dictated to from abroad; it is not pronounced upon from on high. Inkatha has led from within.

Inkatha has led in the fight against the homelands system. It has fought successfully for the release of political prisoners. It has rejected political violence and it has espoused the politics of negotiation.

Inkatha is backable because it is practised in the politics of negotiation. It started that practice in its own structures and in its own make-up. It continued in that practise in establishing the Buthelezi Commission and in participating in it successfully. It continued again in the politics of negotiation as I and my colleagues negotiated with the then Natal Provincial Administration to establish a Joint Executive Authority. It again continued in that practise by participating in the establishment of the KwaZulu/Natal Indaba and participating in its proceedings.

Inkatha can be backed because we believe in establishing a multi-Party democracy and because as a fully effective, well organised, democratic, political Party we will be as consistent as you know we have always been.

Inkatha is backable because it is constant in its commitments to time-honoured democratic values and practises. Inkatha does not chop and change and blow this way and that way with every different wind. Inkatha progresses by making its own political way. It can

be backed because it does a lot more than ride the crest of whatever waves of euphoria sweep the country.

Inkatha is dedicated to harnessing the great resources of the country and it is dedicated to carry the South African struggle beyond the establishment of a democracy to the campaigns that will be needed to defeat the real enemy of the people - poverty, hunger, unemployment, disease, ignorance, insecurity, loneliness and moral decay.

Inkatha can be backed because it has the wisdom to know that it must work with others and that South Africa needs a combined political front to achieve the successes that are needed.

Inkatha can be backed because there will now be a new Inkatha rising above the ash and the dust of past apartheid.

At last, in the final decade of the twentieth century, those of us who live in South Africa can see the glimmers of common sense and common decency returning to our land.

It has been a long haul with some terrible moments, in which we have experienced both horror and shame at the actions of our fellow men. Our experiences have been watched closely by the rest of the world, often with sympathy, and sometimes with understanding. But we know that no one can share with us the depth of feeling that comes from direct and often personal experience of the degrading impact of apartheid on people's lives and minds.

In more recent times we have seen South Africa descend even further into the abyss of killing and intimidation. In this plunging into violence it is particularly the innocent and the invariably poor black people who have suffered the most. The politicians whose slogans and irresponsible speeches have incited this latest and most unnecessary stage in the history of our country, have much to answer for. And yet these are the very same people who make the noisiest pronouncements about claiming leadership in the new South Africa. Moreover, they are the people who are least tolerant of other people's views particularly if they do not coincide closely enough with their own ambitions.

You do not hear these politicians talk much about the real problems of the people either. They seem more concerned about power than they do about the suffering of the people whose support they will, presumably, be canvassing in a democratic electoral system. The voters will remember this callousness and this neglect of the real priorities.

I find that there are far too many people around me who think that once the politics of intimidation has smashed resistance and established an ANC/UDF united front as a controlling force in a particular locality, that Inkatha has lost.

People can be intimidated; they can be battered and bruised and they can refrain from gathering together as Inkatha members because reprisals are just too awesome, but this does not mean that the battering and the bruising has changed their political convictions. Inkatha is far stronger in many areas battered by violence than people ever think of.

Inkatha does have problems. There are those who have been battered beyond endurance and there are those waverers who are really confused and who will follow whoever is blowing the trumpet. But my friends, let me tell you that Inkatha remains a centre-stage force of great significance in South African politics. This despite the battering.

It is vital therefore that voters are given the full opportunity of recording their rejection of political opportunists. It is vital that they should be given choices so that they can vote for those they really feel will get on with the job of using the great strengths of this country to tackle the real problems.

The problems that must be tackled include poverty, hunger and deprivation. They include the soul-destroying and pride-destroying lack of jobs. They include the need to improve opportunity and the need to improve medical facilities so that disease as a curse of the poor can be tackled. The problems that need to be tackled include the elimination of ignorance that comes from the lack of educational facilities. We could go on and on and on to talk about problems related to the shortage of decent homes, the destruction of community life in poverty-stricken areas and the gross sense of insecurity which flows from bad legislation and bad government.

I say tonight that we do not have to wait until after apartheid is destroyed and we do not have to wait until there is a new democracy before we can start exercising our choices. We can choose now to back the forces that will create the democracy that we will one day have. We can choose now to back the forces that will make sure that the apartheid White oligarchy is not replaced with a one-side Black dictatorship.

The choice before us is not between some form of continuation of apartheid in a new re-packaged form on the one hand, and the ANC and its allies - the UDF, COSATU, and the South African Communist Party on the other. There is a new path and it is already becoming visible. It is the path towards the politics of negotiation and Inkatha has the very distinct advantage of being a pioneer in this field.

If we ensure that our new democracy is built upon multi-party as well as multi-racial foundations, and if we provide for an economy that is enterprise-driven for growth, then there is a real chance that the wealth of our country will be allowed to continue to grow, and that the enormous scale of the real problems will, in fact, be met and ultimately overcome.

The real choice, that we must all work to ensure is before the people, is between those committed to the full structures of democracy, and those that have already shown that they are willing and able to sacrifice human beings to achieve their own political ends, and on the way, to put in jeopardy the very means of solving our economic problems.

Inkatha is totally dedicated to building not destroying; Inkatha is totally dedicated to democracy in all respects, and in particular to the competing multi-party system; Inkatha is totally dedicated to an enterprise driven economic system that will create the wealth we need to solve the people's real problems; Inkatha is totally dedicated to achieving its political aims peacefully, because it has respect for the individual, and respect for human life, believing that this is the only basis for building true democracy.

If this position stands in stark contrast to that of the ANC and its allies, this should not surprise us. At a time when many African leaders who are respected throughout the world, are discarding the one-party system for a multi-party system, and at a time when the whole East European Communist world is moving into democratic and alliance based systems of democracy, it is strange for us to see the ANC and its allies clinging on to policies and ideas that are already discredited. Could it be that they, like some of the still communist linked parties and governments in Eastern Europe, are fearful that the true democratisation of this country will leave them with a much smaller power base than their propaganda machine likes to claim?

It is said that the more that some people feel unsure of themselves, the more they resort to hitting out at their opponents rather than dealing in rational argument. The ANC and its allies have had a long time to produce the plans that will save this country, but it is significant that little of these have appeared in public, and what has come into the open - nationalisation, for example - has been a resounding flop! Perhaps this is why they are happy to continue to let their thugs do their politiking for them. They may temporarily beat good ordinary people into submission, but they won't win their hearts, and silent acquiescence can turn into outright rejection when the secret ballot box is there for people to say what they really want.

That is why there has to be choice for there to be democracy. Inkatha gives choice a real chance in South Africa. That is why Inkatha is standing up to be counted now, and asks for your support, either directly or indirectly. Inkatha is as interested in allies as it is in members.

Ladies and gentlemen, those who know me fairly well could assure you that I could talk for a great deal longer but I feel that I must now stop talking because I must also say thank you to you all for coming here tonight. You have come from far and wide and I am encouraged by the sacrifices you have made to be here. I know it has cost you at least R200 per couple and it has cost some of you double that because you are uncoupled. I sincerely hope it has also cost some of you a great deal more as you put your hand deeper into your pocket to support what we are doing for you and South Africa.

The programme devisers have, I believe, been very wise in separating what I have to say from the questions that you will be asking and the discussions which will follow, with an interlude of music. They have, I should imagine, hoped that the music will sweeten the questions.

Ladies and gentlemen, I again say thank you for coming. I again say thank you for your support. Let us go into the future together and let us make sure that the future is one we can enjoy together.

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