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TO: DR FRITZ GAUM, FAX NO. 021-235522
EDITOR, DIE KERKBODE
TYDSKRIFTE MAATSKAPPY
CAPE TOWN
8000. 22ND SEPTEMBER 1992
FROM: DR. MG BUTHELEZI FAX NO. 0358-202070

CHIEF MINISTER OF KWAZULU
AND PRESIDENT OF INKATHA FREEDOM PARTY

The following is in response to your Questionnaire dated 16th
September 1992:

QUESTIONNAIRE RECEIVED FROM TYDSKRIFTE MAATSKAPPY

1. Dr Buthelezi you are a Christian. How do you personally feel
about the current situation in South Africa?

In talking about my leadership, I must say two things. The one is
about the historic determinant of my leadership, backed up by
choices of the people to hold me to my historic obligations. The
other is that I am a Christian. I lead because I am a Christian,
feeling the burden of a calling to bring Christianity into the
politics of our strife-torn land, and I lead recognising that
however man proposes - it is God that disposes.

I have no doubt at all in my mind that were it not for the force of
love and prayer that Christianity represents in South Africa, we
would not now be at this golden moment of history in which we are
being given an absolutely undeserved opportunity of putting right
that which politics and racism kept wrong for so long.

I constantly grapple with the problems of the day in desperate
attempts to interpret the gospel to myself in today's
circumstances. As a Christian I know that I must find the meaning
of the cross in every situation into which I am thrust. I feel a
deep need for fellowship and the guidance of the Church.

In listening to my own conscience, and in listening to what I hear
as the message of the Gospel, I can understand how some of the
Churches lost faith in the established Churches and sought new
theologies and new approaches to solve problems which seemed so
intractable. It is my fear that too many church-thinkers, too many
theologians and too many church leaders have gone too far ahead of
their congregations, as they earnestly sought a Christian answer to
this country's problems.

I do not believe that those who drew up the Kairos document could
at the time actually predict that Mr de Klerk would make his
February 2 address to Parliament. And they would not have
predicted the possibilities of the dynamic reform from within South
Africa which flowed from Mr de Klerk's position.

There was the hand of God moving history in it. There was the
force of the Spirit moving us towards a divinely appointed end.
There was the mercy of God giving us an undeserved opportunity of
coming together in faith and obedience, to repent and forgive and
to make amends.

2. Do you have any hope for the negotiations that are taking place in South Africa? Is it possible to find a way for peaceful co-existence in South Africa?

I have no doubt in my mind whatsoever that we will in the end establish a new South Africa, and that we will find a way of co-existence which will make it possible for South Africans to live together as neighbours in terms of the meaning of the New Testament.

I am, however, very sadly aware of the difficulties which we now face and I am daily being made aware of the price that the people are already paying to make the transition from apartheid to the new South Africa.

The enormity of the attack against the IFP is just not perceived by the average South African. There is a concerted political attempt being made to destroy KwaZulu as such, and to topple me as a political leader. I have the details of IFP leaders who have died because they have been targeted for assassination.

One must add realism and actualities to one's Christian thinking. I ask you to pause, then tell me how the ruling National Party would have responded if the ANC had killed over 200 party branch chairmen, branch secretaries, branch treasurers and organisers over the last two years?

Those were actually party office bearers who have been targeted for death because they were party office bearers. For every one office bearer killed, there are five - six - seven, or eight ordinary IFP members killed. We are talking about deaths at a level justifying the analyses which conclude that we are at the beginning of a low-level civil war, which has in it all the ingredients of rapid escalation potentials.

I really do not know how ordinary Black South Africans can tolerate more violence than they are now experiencing. All I know is that we must be very close to one or another human threshold beyond which people being killed are going to say enough is enough, and take the law into their own hands.

3. The ANC said that one of the barriers for peaceful co-operation is because the Zulu-nation carries traditional weapons. Would it be possible to put this aside to further the negotiations and co-operation?

The ANC has conducted what is for the negotiation process a very destructive campaign to discredit the IFP and KwaZulu. The cultural weapons issue was raised in an atrociously worded open letter to the State President, signed by Dr Mandela, in May last year. Ever since then, the ANC has tried to turn the issue of cultural weapons into a national, political crisis.

All objective research has produced findings which show that it is the firing power of AKâ\200\231s, and it is the bullets from other guns as well, which are responsible for the slaughtering of our people. It is just not true that the carrying of traditional weapons amounts to a security threat for the country. The campaign against cultural weapons is part of a wider campaign against the existence of KwaZulu and against my leadership.

The IFP stands four-square in the path of the ANC which wants to proceed through elections tomorrow for an elected Constituent Assembly the day after, as a power base from which they can move on to establish total control in South African politics.

It is the IFPâ\200\231s existence which is going to guarantee a multi-party democracy, and it is the IFPâ\200\231s existence which is ultimately going to force the ANC to the negotiation table.

If you look at the history of the ANC campaign to discredit KwaZulu and the IFP, by raising the cultural weapons issue, you will see that it is culminating now in a very ugly way.

The ANC walk out of CODESA and totally destroy its negotiating base and go onto mount mass action tactics and strategies in which dozens of people die, and then the ANC come back to Government and say that they are prepared to enter the negotiating chamber provided that the Government accedes to their demands on the total prohibition of cultural weapons and the fencing in of hostels and turning them into what really amounts to be controlled concentration camps.

We have said that cultural weapons are not the cause of death, and we have said that hostel dwellers are the most attacked and most targeted people in South Africa. We have said that hostels with communities around them form a unity in dozens and dozens of places and that it will be totally destructive of prospects of peace in the townships concerned if the Government fences the hostels in, which is what the ANC is pointing to.

I answer your following question in the course of answering - this question regarding traditional weapons, because the two hang together. One of the things that I must add to what I have already said about cultural weapons and hostel dwellers, is that violence

is deeply evil precisely because violence begets violence. Of course, hostel dwellers have been drawn into violence. Of course, IFP members have been drawn into violence. But you only have to

look at the casualty figures to appreciate the realities that I am pointing to.

Admitting that Zulus are human beings and seeing the hideousness in which violence draws them into conflict situations, and looking at what violence does when it escalates, is no admission that Zulus

are more to blame than anybody else. In fact, they are less to blame. I do not have a private army. I do not have arm caches in which there are stockpiles of death-dealing AKâ\200\231s across the length and breadth of the country. I am not even now recruiting young Black South Africans as new recruits into a private army as the ANC is doing for Umkhonto. The IFP does not embark on mass action to force its political will on the people. Peaceful mass action is a

contradiction in terms. The IFP understands this.

People said that the hostels in the townships are the starting place for problems that lead to unrest situations. Do you as a Christian feel that the fault lies only with the other side or also with the Zulus living in these hostels?

(Answer covered in 3. above)

5. If the ANC do march to Ulundi, what will your reaction be?

I said all that needs to be said on this matter when I was interviewed for the AGENDA programme on Sunday evening, 20th September. I said that if the ANC marched on Ulundi I would not lift a little finger to stop them. I have my roots in that part of South Africa. I was born there, I grew up there. I know the area, and I know the people.

I know the anger that exists, and I have quietly and seriously made it quite clear to the Government and the ANC, that a march on Ulundi to topple me would have awesome consequences which would make the march on Bisho look like a kindergarten party by comparison. I have added that it could be the kind of event which would catapult a low level civil war into a devastating confrontation.

6. How strong does the church stand in the Zulu-community?

The Church stands very strong in KwaZulu. I would go as far as to say that the Zulu people are a Christian people. The Zulu people laid down arms after the Bambatha Rebellion, and I am quite sure that they only did so because of the influence of the missionaries of the day. Zulu people have admired the Church, for the schools and the hospitals and the practical care which they introduced to the area. The IFP never begins a meeting - large or small, committee meeting or mass meeting - without prayer, and every meeting ends with prayer. We are fighting a battle for justice and reconciliation and while it would be presumptuous to present ourselves as doing so for the Church, it is certainly true that we are doing so because of the Church.

7. Does Christianity show any growth in your community or not? What would the reason be?

There is certainly the growth of Christianity in KwaZulu. I can obviously not give you statistics in terms of converts and church going numbers. I can say this though - and I say it with confidence - every day I hear and see fresh evidence of the extent to which the difficulties into which we are being thrust are turning people towards understanding the extent to which they will have to rely on God, if justice and peace are going to prevail.

8. How do you interpret "freedom of faith"?

I have never posed as a theologian and I have always stood at the feet of my fathers in Christ when it comes to theological matters. I would therefore not wish to comment on the meaning of the term "freedom of faith".

I say only this. One of the driving forces in my Christian life is the realisation that Christ lives and that I have to discover the meaning of the Gospel for me and my people in my day and age. Faith

must be free to do so. Faith must have the tolerance which comes from knowing that you yourself cannot discover the meaning of the Gospel. Faith must have the charity of knowing that you do not

have all the answers and the discovery of the meaning of the Gospel thrusts you into situations of give and take, where you have to be as prepared to learn from others as you should be prepared to teach them.

9. Do you think that South Africa should state in our new constitution anything about Christianity or the Holy Trinity or should the constitution be neutral?

I most certainly believe that we in this country are so dominantly Christian that we should proclaim our commitment to Christ in the Constitution. Theology today is so aware of the all-embracing love of Christ that the leadership of the Church would find it possible to so formulate the wording of our Christian commitment in the Constitution and so open up space in the Constitution for the wording which other faiths would want there, that I do not foresee a problem.

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