

STATEMENT MADE TO THE KWAZULU LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY BY THE HON. THE
CHIEF MINISTER. FRIDAY, 27TH APRIL 1984

SATV1 last night broadcast a news item in which the Prime Minister was reported to have indicated his willingness to have discussions with me. The Prime Minister's statement was again repeated by the SABC this morning, and today's Natal Mercury carries a story on the same subject.

The Prime Minister has invited me to set aside our personal differences and resume talks with the Government. He added that it was I who refused to break bread with him, and that he was not going to beg me to have discussions with him. The Natal Mercury quotes him as saying: "I am not going to lie down and let somebody trample me."

I feel obliged to make a very clear statement on the question of my relationship with the Prime Minister. For some time now, friends and acquaintances have been expressing their concern to me on what they see as a deteriorating relationship between myself and the Prime Minister. Thus, while I have already referred to the matter in my Policy Speech, I feel that something more should be said at this juncture. It is obviously important for the whole of South Africa that the Prime Minister and I get together to discuss matters of fundamental concern to the country. Impressions conveyed that I am petulant and refuse to speak to the Prime Minister damage the cause of peace and reconciliation in this country. When the Prime Minister

came to Ulundi in August 1979 I welcomed him to our midst and inter alia said: "History has dictated that you are the Prime Minister of South Africa. As such, I acknowledge you as my Prime Minister, regardless of the sad fact that I have been denied by the status quo, the right to participate in your election as such. But even that fact cannot justify any attempts on my part to deny you the fact of your premiership of our fatherland, which is South Africa."

I had already welcomed the Prime Minister to his position when he was first elected. I had already pleaded with the world to give him a chance to prove his mettle and I reiterate again today that fate has decreed that Mr. P.W. Botha is my Prime Minister and I recognise that fact.

Mr. P.W. Botha is without any qualification the most powerful man in Africa. I think therefore it is clear to anybody with even a modicum of sense that I do not delude myself that I can trample over him. I certainly do not expect the Prime Minister to lie down at my feet to enable me to do so. The office of a Prime Minister demands respect and I am quite prepared to afford Mr. P.W. Botha all the respect that his high office demands.

If I respect the Prime Minister and I acknowledge him to be the most powerful man in Africa, and I recognise my need to talk to him, that does not mean that I must do so in humble obeisance. I am entitled to disagree with the Prime Minister. I assume the democratic right to do so. The fact that I am denied a vote and the fact that I am

made stateless by the new constitution does not for me mean that I am not a South African, and, as a South African, standing tall in my patriotic commitments to my country, I have a God-given right to disagree with the Prime Minister and to do so openly and publicly. I have also got a right to mobilise public opinion behind me in support of my point of view.

When I did so during the referendum campaign last year, it was the Prime Minister himself who stooped so low politically as to use the language of my enemies when he told the world that my leadership was created by the South African Government and he also told the world that Inkatha was a Zulu Broederbond. The Prime Minister knows that this is just not the case. Prime Ministers can stoop to petty politicking in the hurly burly of political campaigns. And when the Prime Minister did just this, I reprimanded him with every justification.

The Prime Minister is reported to have said that I refuse to break bread with him. What he did not say was that I did so because of the very particular relationship which should exist between himself and myself. Every Zulu knows that differences of opinion between strangers are not personalised, but that when relationships are personalised, differences of opinion are personalised as well. Every Zulu knows that for us it is culturally wrong to break bread with a man with whom one has experienced personal difficulties which rankle in one's breast. Every Zulu knows that this cultural value is

expressed idiomatically when we say that if you break bread with a man with whom one has rankling differences, tumours will develop in your stomach. I certainly don't want tumours to develop in my stomach because I break bread with the Prime Minister when I should not be doing so.

I would welcome a private discussion with the Prime Minister in which we can sit down as man to man and have the kind of discussion which Christian leaders ought to have. I would welcome being able to pray with the Prime Minister before such a talk, but no matter how much I would have liked to do so, I could not accept an invitation to sit down and break bread with him and other Black leaders while things were rankling in my breast.

Even if I do not have the full might of the State behind me, as an elected leader I represent more South Africans than the Prime Minister himself. I have said before that the ANC's Mission in Exile will never succeed in waging an armed struggle against South Africa if we in KwaZulu are not relied on. And I have said before that the Prime Minister's confederal dream will never come true if we do not support him. I neither support the armed struggle nor do I support any politics which tries to steer this country into a confederal future. I could not see my way clear to becoming involved in the President's Council or in the Black Advisory Council which the Prime Minister wanted to tag me on to it to legitimise it. I did not see my way clear to be involved in the recent Soweto elections, but I do

see it as urgently necessary to discuss the reasons why I could not do these things with the Prime Minister. I think it is urgently necessary for the very future of our country that the Prime Minister and I sit down to discuss the kind of things which we can do together.

The Prime Minister states that the ball is in my court. I deny this. I have stated to the Hon. Minister of Co-operation and Development that I am willing to meet the Prime Minister privately without any fan-fare to discuss an agenda which both of us agree on. The Prime Minister knows in his heart of hearts that he and his Cabinet have set up the Cabinet Committee to make the country and the world believe that in his exclusion of us from Parliament, he is already doing something towards a political dispensation for Africans. During the Referendum, he stated categorically that he has no hidden agenda. He has stated that Africans will never be included in Parliament and that this would not be done in his lifetime and in the lifetime of his children.

The Prime Minister must become a true reformer and show willingness to discuss the future of South Africa outside the four corners of apartheid. We in this House reject "independence" so-called. We reject his confederal formula. All these are cut and dried apartheid solutions for South Africa's problems. I am prepared to talk to the Prime Minister about the future of my children and the future of his own children.

If the Prime Minister gave me the categoric assurance that the Cabinet Committee is free to look at political developments without being confined within the four corners of the country's new constitution, I would wholeheartedly agree to dialogue between ourselves and the South African Government through the Cabinet Committee. The more critical the political situation in this country becomes, the more crucial it is that we do not make fundamental political blunders. I would like to discuss how not to do so with the Prime Minister.
