

MEMORANDUM FOR PRESENTATION TO DR MOSES ANAFU AND THE
COMMONWEALTH OBSERVER MISSION

BY MANGOSUTHU BUTHELEZI, CHIEF MINISTER OF KWAZULU
AND PRESIDENT OF INKATHA FREEDOM PARTY

ULUNDI : MONDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER 1993

Dr Anafu and members of the Commonwealth Observer Mission, it is a great pleasure to welcome you to Ulundi. I welcome in particular those members who have recently arrived from abroad to join the Commonwealth Observer Mission. I am here to answer your questions, and assist you in your violence monitoring programme in the most constructive way possible. I am deeply grateful to the task team members of your observer mission and the noble work you have done towards achieving peace in our troubled country.

Dr Anafu, it is to you personally, that I must extend a special thanks. Your vision and your commitment as the leader of the Commonwealth Observer Mission has produced outstanding results. I have been informed of the achievements you have made in the districts of kwaNdwalane, kwaMavundla, Ezingolweni, Ndwedwe and Umbumbulu, and your foresight in including tribal leaders directly into the peace process.

There are various political groups in South Africa who denounce the legitimacy of traditional structures in the rural areas. The Amakhosi (Chiefs) in KwaZulu/Natal in particular, have been earmarked for slanderous attack. There are accusations that these leaders are puppets of the apartheid government, used to secure the National Party's oppressive control over the people. This defamatory propaganda, as you know, could not be further from the truth.

Zulu culture and the Zulu heritage under the protective reign of our distinguished King, King Zwelithini Goodwill ka Bhekuzulu, and his loyal Amakhosi, is one of the oldest and most resilient forms of effective and respected authorities in South Africa. And until the final vestiges of apartheid have been removed and a new, democratic order has been established, Zulu chieftainship will remain one of the only legitimate forms of general control this region has, which has stood the test of time.

Hereditary leaders throughout South Africa and the TBVC states epitomise the social fabric of our communities. For the people the chief is all things in one - he is a religious leader, a fair judge, a peace-maker, a law enforcer, the protector, the administrator, and above all, the symbol of unity over his people. Yet while the Amakhosi are vested with these wide-ranging powers, he has the overwhelming responsibility to exercise these rights for the benefit of the people as a whole.

What is so quickly forgotten, by certain political organisations is that many South African liberation movements were established by people with these hereditary leaders, and the role played by these leaders in constitutional formation goes back many years.

In Natal, our heroes of the past - King Shaka, King Dingane, King Cetshwayo - all significantly impacted on the political life and constitutional development of this country, despite their exclusion from the White political process.

It was the great hereditary leaders of our past who fought a war against colonial invasion, battles where the land of the African people was taken away. Our leaders contributed much to the fight against apartheid. If the national negotiating forum is to contribute positively to the process of normalising politics in South Africa, with the Black people becoming part of the decision-making process, and our land returned to our people, the Amakhosi of our regions once again have a vital role to play.

The demand that His Majesty, the King of the Zulus, and other hereditary African leaders be represented at the Multi-Party Negotiating Forum goes beyond a simple demand by the rural people in either KwaZulu/Natal or in any other region in South Africa. Our King and Amakhosi are the true representatives of over 8 million people, Zulus who stretch across the nation, irrespective of their political affiliation or their degree of urbanisation. The same can be said of the Amakhosi in other regions and their vast followings in South Africa.

The territories governed by the Amakhosi are not controlled by any single political grouping. A vast proportion of these respective populations have no political affiliation at all. These people rely on their Amakhosi to protect their interests. Their voice must be heard, their needs and aspirations must be identified by their hereditary leaders. Our Amakhosi must be given a rightful place in shaping our future in the constitution-making process in South Africa. Without the full representation and participation of all groups in South Africa, whether big or small, there will be no peace in this land. The future South African government will not be inclusive or representative enough to take on the mammoth task of democratic nation building.

No one in South Africa can ignore the relevance of the Amakhosi and the crucial role they must play in the unification of the Black people during the unstable period of transition. Dr Anafu, you did well by recognising the fact that without the full participation of these hereditary leaders in the peace process, the chances of achieving stability in this country are remote. As you yourself have correctly pointed out, chiefs, as fathers of the community take the lead. The people in the regions look to their chiefs for guidance and affirmation. The function of the chiefs as caretakers of the spiritual well-being of the communities is a vital one, and one which can be used constructively in the peace process itself.

The background behind the opposition to hereditary leaders in their Councils, strikes at the very heart of the political crisis we are in today. The Zulu nation and the King's government administration in KwaZulu have been the focal point of attack, and the closer we get to elections the more intensified this attack will become.

In the countdown to elections the ANC, in particular, is desperately fighting for political supremacy. Their actions reveal a concerted attempt to marginalise the IFP, KwaZulu and the Zulu nation in the future governance of this country. While the ANC claim they are the sole legitimate leaders of the Black people of South Africa, they know that when it comes to elections, the falseness of this allegation will be rudely exposed, depending of course on whether we will have a free and democratic election.

They have targeted the KwaZulu/Natal Region for their destabilisation strategy. Unfortunately the ANC is fighting for a one-party state in a unitary government, and they will not tolerate opposition of any sort. So, therefore, the power-base of the IFP in KwaZulu where it was founded, and its massive following in the Zulu community, is a thorn in the side of the ANC and its political allies.

The attacks against the Zulu people are aimed at dividing our nation, to weaken our bonds of unity and destroy our will to resist. Events at CODESA revealed an open attempt to undermine the power and support-base commanded by the IFP and the KwaZulu Government. This was followed through to the new Negotiating Forum where even more glaringly obvious moves have been made to break the ranks of the Zulu nation. The ANC, together with the South African Government, have openly manipulated the decision-making structures of the Negotiating Forum to obtain support for this goal.

In the first instance, the IFP had to fight for the full representation of the KwaZulu Government on the Negotiating Forum, despite King Zwelithini's uncontested leadership role in the Zulu community. The same applied to the membership of other hereditary leaders. After this battle had been won, the ANC and the South African Government pitted their strength against Ulundi itself, and intend to use the Transitional Executive Council Bill to dismantle the KwaZulu Government.

Rather than level the political playing fields, this Transitional Executive Council Bill being passed through the current session of Parliament will be vested with the powers to dismantle the KwaZulu Government, take away all its powers, collapse its administration, and subjugate the Zulu people and the Zulu King to central government rule.

It is not possible to accurately assess what type of powers will be exercised by the Transitional Executive Council, for the Transitional Executive Council has been entitled to absorb whatever legislative and administrative function it best sees fit by virtue of its authority to amend and modify its enabling legislation at will. This legal monstrosity has the practical effect of concentrating potentially unlimited administrative and legislative powers in the qualified majority of the members of the Transitional Executive Council with no protection for dissenting minorities. Attempts to crush the spirit of the Zulu people through violence and intimidation have so far failed, so now the constitutional process is being exploited in an attempt to legislate the Zulu nation out of existence.

The Transitional Executive Council and the pending elections do not auger well for the future of peace and stability in South Africa. If the Democratic Party gets thrown out of townships, what is going to happen if the National Party, or even worse, the Conservative Party, enters them? A civil war? But if the Nationalists are not permitted to campaign in Soweto, or the Democratic Party in Guguletu, how do you have an election based on an informed choice rather than dictated to by an army or a street committee?

Elections in this country would be a mockery if radical organisations had to declare certain key areas 'no go zones' for the conducting of polls, to all but its own supporters. International intervention can do little to stop the tide of intimidation and brutal violence that surrounds elections in a country fraught with conflict and hostility. Foreign observers were present in Angola, but nothing was done to appease the victims when the polls appeared rigged.

This is why the IFP has demanded the entrenchment of rights and civil liberties in the constitution before elections are to take place. Elections should not take place before the freedoms of speech, assembly and movement are guaranteed to all. We need to constitutionally entrench a voting system which will remain consistent with accepted democratic practices. A constitution must be in place to protect our citizens against the intimidation and ruthless domination we are witnessing in our townships today.

Your greatest challenge as objective violence monitors lies before you if elections go ahead before the finalisation of South Africa's future constitution. Much of the progress you have made will be destroyed in the coming process. By making the electoral process centre-stage before true consensus has been reached, you oblige political leaders to communicate and persuade their followers to toe the line up-front, in whatever way is most effective. And what is more effective than the threat against the safety of your homes and family?

Elections before a negotiated political settlement will also widen the divide between dissenting parties, forcing parties to move away from democratic consensus and compromise, to hard-line politicking. When the difference between power and no power lies in the tally of each vote, there is a much greater likelihood of breaking up the meetings of opponents, and killing rival supporters.

No-one can expect the Commonwealth Observer Mission to make a breakthrough in this present climate of violence in South Africa, but it is sincerely hoped that the role you play in the run-up to elections will serve as a restraining influence on politically militant figures and perhaps inhibit war-talk and intimidation. The presence of an international monitoring team, and the certainty that you will document what you discover, still remains the strongest incentive for political leaders to discipline their supporters into acceptable, non-violent behaviour.

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