

â\200\234Democracy means freedom to chooseâ\200\235

gy INKATHA

Inkatha Freedom Party  
IQembu leNkatha Yenkululeko

PUBLIC MEETING : PORT ELIZABETH

"THUS FAR AND NO FURTHER -  
A DEMAND FOR THE WAY FORWARD"

BY MANGOSUTHU BUTHELEZI, PRESIDENT OF THE IFP

JULY 12, 1993

Mr Master of Ceremonies, ladies and gentlemen, it is with a great sense of honour and confidence that I address you this evening. I am honoured in the sense that by being here you have confirmed that the message that I and my party, the Inkatha Freedom Party, bring holds true for you in this part of South Africa, as it does elsewhere in our country. It is with your support that I am confident that the IFP is well on its way to becoming the largest non-racial political party in our country. -

This evening is the first time the Inkatha Freedom Party has addressed a public meeting in the Eastern Cape. Our foray into this part of the country convincingly illustrates that there are many people around our country who share with us our values of liberal democracy and free market capitalism. In many ways us being here is a victory for common sense, pragmatism and decency which is the hall-mark of the IFP.

It is in the Eastern Cape that the ANC is said to be at its strongest. Yet I have not come here tonight to taunt the ANC in its own backyard but to serve notice that as long as there are people here who wish to hear our message of peace and prosperity then we will gladly come no matter what they might do to stop us.

The IFP is a non-racial, non-ethnic organisation. It is a broadly-based political party which represents the hopes and aspirations of millions of South Africans across the racial and cultural divide. I am humbled by the support that I am getting from my fellow South Africans right across the board. May God give me the opportunity and the strength to prove that I am worthy of your trust.

I am sure many of you are following developments taking place at the World Trade Centre. No doubt most of you are aware of the storming of the centre by the AWB and are aware that last week we walked out of negotiations. These two events might seem unrelated to you, yet behind both our actions is our rejection of the connivance of the ANC and their new-found allies, the South African Government, in bulldozing through agreements which are totally rejected by the majority of decent and peace-loving South Africans, no matter what colour, race or creed they are.

President: The Hon. Prince Mangosuthu G. Buthelezi  
National Chairman: Dr. F.T. Mdlalose

The AWB stormed the World Trade Centre because they felt their calls for self-determination were falling on deaf ears. While we condemned their savage actions, we empathise with their demands. For we in KwaZulu/Natal are equally adamant that we do not want to be ruled by a strong unitary central government, as we have been ruled as a region from Pretoria, where we have not been able to get our fair share from the national fiscus as a region.

We demand that a federal system of government be introduced for our country. A federal government will allow us to be ruled by our own people at regional level and you to be ruled by those who are keenly aware of your needs and aspirations. A federal government will ensure that you keep the money that is raised in taxes in your area and not line the pockets of bureaucrats hundreds of miles away.

While the vast majority of South Africans agree with these sentiments, sadly the ANC and the Government do not. If they did then they would not have imposed upon us their plans for the new South Africa - plans which are sure to lead to a centralised, bureaucratic and unitary system of government. At the heart of their proposals is a plan to hold elections in April next year for a Constituent Assembly which will write South Africa's constitution. This will however only be an interim constitution which could be rewritten not by all parties, but a Constitution which will be written by whichever party is in the majority in that Constituent Assembly.

In the history of constitution-making there are only two examples where a Constituent Assembly has written a country's constitution - the one is India and the other is Namibia. In India the folly of that decision is well known. The chaos which erupted after independence in 1947 has yet to die down. Today we have Sheiks, Hindus and Moslems all killing each other because each feels that they are threatened by the other.

In Namibia, we have had the South African National Party Government handing over the country to the majority Party. This was done on the understanding that the government would later attend to the issue of regions. This has not yet happened. Are we to allow the National Party to hand over our country to the ANC, so as to please the United States, rather than do what is in the interests of the people of South Africa? Or are we to stand up for a negotiated settlement which will give us long-lasting peace and prosperity.

We therefore reject the route that the ANC and the Government is taking us. We say to all South Africans: How on earth can we allow one or two parties to write South Africa's constitution? How can such a constitution last for 200 years or more as we see, for example, with the Constitution of the United States? Constitutions are enduring things, and there is no way that we can expect a constitution which is not the product of multi-party negotiations to last.

Do not be taken in by the assurances that federalism will come to pass in our country. All that these parties advocate is regionalism with federal elements. What this amounts to is a glorified provincial set-up. Knowing where our present provincial set-up has got us all these years, we say no to their plans. I do not suck such a constitution from my thumb. On the 23rd of June we had long-lasting talks with the President of the ANC, Mr Mandela, and he told me quite bluntly that he and the ANC will never accept a federal formula; and that the

furthest they are prepared to go as far as regional government is concerned, is a strong old provincial system, similar to that which was established in 1910 and which the National Party Government has completely destroyed over the last 45 years of its virtual one-party rule.

By agreeing to a Constituent assembly we are throwing away our chances of securing a federal system of government for our country. We did this once before in 1910 with the setting up of the Union of South Africa. Look where this has gotten us. For the rest of this century we have had a government which is answerable only to itself. We have had a government which has ignored the needs of the people, be they the Afrikaner, or Xhosa or English in Port Elizabeth, or the Zulu or English in Natal. We have had a government which has lined its own pockets while South Africans have got poorer each year, and while more and more people had no choice but to resort to crime to survive.

What has South Africa done to deserve the National Party? What will we do to deserve an ANC government? If we are to make the new South Africa a place in which it is safe to bring up our children, then we will need to fight tooth and nail to stop the ANC and the Government from imposing unitary plans on our country.

We will therefore need to oppose these two parties in their plans to set up a Constituent Assembly - a Constituent Assembly which serves only to put the ANC in power, with the Nationalists as their obedient partners, for five years in a Government of National Unity.

The IFP walked out of negotiations after the ANC and the National Party insisted that a date for South Africa's first non-racial elections be set before we have even decided what that election will be for? What will our country look like? And, who will rule from where? Is this unreasonable? Any decent right-minded South African will agree with us. Yet the Government-owned and the ANC-leaning press have condemned our actions. They have incorrectly said that we are afraid of democracy. What poppycock! By us refusing to agree to an election date before we know what those elections will be about, we are ensuring that true democracy will come to our country. We stand firm by our view that the approach followed by the ANC and the Government will not lead us to democracy. We will therefore not resume our place at multi-party talks until we have guarantees for a federal system of government for South Africa. To do anything else will be committing political suicide. Let there be seizure of power by the parties that wish to do this, without being able to say that we also agreed to this political suicide.

We hear about democracy so often it is in danger of becoming a meaningless word. What do we mean by democracy? Democracy for the IFP is a system of government which allows a plurality of political, social and economic bodies - the existence of which will ensure free enterprise and a strong civil society. It is a system of government which allows people to choose for themselves the government of their choice. It means that that government can be voted out of power if the people so wish. And it means that the minority are protected from the whims of the majority through a Bill of Rights and an independent judiciary.

Our view of democracy is not the kind of democracy which is glibly mouthed by the heads of all the totalitarian governments in the world. Our view of democracy is not the kind that has held South Africa hostage to sanctions, to violence, intimidation, stayaways, and to bond and consumer boycotts. If democracy as defined by our so-called liberators is to necklace

your political opponents, then South Africa can do without it. If democracy is to beat up old women because they dared to shop at white owned shops, then you can have it. If it means that those newspapers which do not toe the line are targeted for threats and boycotts, then we don't want it. Yet all this has been done to South Africans in the name of democracy. No doubt in the name of democracy we have more such delights in store for us.

These are the hard facts, the bare truths which are now being kept from you. Now that the SABC board is controlled by the ANC in sympathy with the National Party, we can expect that the attacks on you will hardly receive a mention in news bulletins, and that you will no longer hear of the slaughter of our followers. Last weekend was a case in point. Eight of our supporters were mowed down in cold blood with AK47s. Included in those killed was a women of 70 and a baby of 6 months. This dastardly act barely received a mention in the media, yet the alleged retaliation by our supporters was seized upon as yet another act of aggression by the IFP. That is freedom of the media for you. You have a foretaste of the kind of press freedom we are going to have in the new South Africa.

Biased media reporting does not stop at inaccurate reporting on violence. In terms of negotiations taking place at this moment, we have had glowing reports on how the ANC and the Nats have come together to save South Africa from chaos and anarchy, how peace and stability will be restored if only they be given the chance. Every little gimmick by those chairing various sessions at the Negotiating Council is presented by the media as a big breakthrough!

For far too long the people of South Africa have been subjected to the whims of the National Party and the ANC. By the ANC's insistence many foreign governments have imposed sanctions on this country. Yet at the bequest of this so-called liberation movement, the Black people of our country have been chained to poverty and ignorance. What purpose has sanctions served? Instead of bringing about the overthrow of the apartheid regime, the ANC has now joined hands with that regime for the reward of sharing power in a Constituent Assembly. In the meantime our people are as poverty-stricken as ever before, and our people have lost their jobs as foreign countries pulled out of this country. I know, for example, that this area has a very high unemployment rate, which has no chance of disappearing in the next ten years or more. Things are quite bleak for all of us.

Is the ANC willing to admit they were wrong? Are they willing to admit that they have hurt the very people whom they intended to help? No! Even though our country is on its knees, even though our poor are sinking fast into desperation, even though we are dangerously moving beyond the point of no return, the ANC dogmatically sticks to its policy of sanctions. Even worse still while Mr Mandela calls on the world to maintain sanctions, he pleads with foreign companies to invest in South Africa. Potential foreign investors demand clear-cut policy stands from political parties before they will commit themselves. We can certainly kiss our recovery goodbye if the ANC insists on implementing a reconstruction tax to fund social and economic reconstruction.

A true liberation movement is one which holds the trust of all South Africa's people - be they Black, White or Brown. It is one which will free all our people from economic hardship, from poverty and starvation which they presently face. It is one which will free all South Africans from ignorance, suffering and domination.

A true liberation movement is one which holds the confidence of all a country's people. It is one which is respected and revered, one which holds the allegiance of the people through love and not through intimidation and brutality. How can the ANC and their allies claim that the ANC is a liberation movement as long as it does these things? We want to prevent this becoming a way of life in the new South Africa, not through the barrel of the gun but through your vote in South Africa's first non-racial elections.

If anyone can claim to be a liberation movement, it is the IFP. Our claim is not the rantings of the deluded but is reflected in the fact that we are the party with the broadest support from all our communities. Unlike our detractors, a substantial number of our party officials, members and supporters come from all race groups. Unlike, the National Party the majority of our card-carrying members are Black. In the region of KwaZulu/Natal we have given assurances to our Indian community that there will be no repeat of threats to their communities which have all too often been found in the rest of Africa. As a result our support has been growing. Our Coloured community has not been neglected either. Unlike the National Party we see our Brown brothers as our kith and kin and not some minority which is now courted because their support is needed.

Unlike the Democratic Party we have not gone with the flow. We have stuck to our demands for federalism. The Democratic Party is said to be a staunch supporter of federalism but where were they when we walked out of the World Trade Centre. Where were their objections to the ANC's proposals which are certain to bring about a centralised and unitary state. Somebody needs to tell them that they cannot be all things to all men. Somebody needs to remind them and the National Party the lessons of history which tell us that you cannot cosy up to a revolutionary organisation.

From public platforms in the United States Mr Mandela has also attacked me and my organisation. He said that I have allowed myself to be used by sinister forces and that the IFP is a surrogate of the South African Government. Is this the same man that I recently had a summit with in order to stop the killings of our supporters? Is this the dignified statement of a statesman as he is feted in the United States? Or is Mr Mandela showing his true colours as a chameleon who changes his skin to suit his surroundings. I ask myself whether this is the brother I have loved and respected for more than 40 years. Is this a brother for whose release I campaigned so relentlessly for so long, who is now demonising me in this mean way, just to collect election funds for his organisation? Is brotherhood and friendship worth only so many millions of dollars?

And what of our decision to work together to achieve peace, tolerance and reconciliation. Am I to brush aside these attacks on me? For months I have called on Mr Mandela to meet me in the interests of stopping the killings between our supporters. To prove my sincerity I laid down no preconditions for our meeting. For months those in his organisation who did not want peace did their damndest to prevent us from meeting. During this period the slaughter of my people intensified so as to drive a wedge between us. Yet I did not allow this to stop me. I intensified my efforts. Last month we finally met which ranked as a significant breakthrough for peace. Now the good that came from our meeting has been undone by Mr Mandela's slanderous remarks. While his statements might please the radicals, they have done our country a great disservice. They have set us back in our efforts to promote peace and tolerance in our country.

I would like to extend an invitation to all of you gathered here tonight to join the IFP -  
to  
join us in our fight for true democracy, federalism and free market capitalism.

For those of you who are undecided, I would like you to come on board with us. I would like you to fight with us for our rights to exist as individuals with our own set of values and our own views on what the new South Africa should be like. Help us in our efforts to oppose the setting up of an undemocratic government by the ANC and the National Party. Help us secure a future of which our children will be proud - a future in which we can live without fear or favour and to prosper according to our own initiatives and entrepreneurial abilities.

For those of you who are unconvinced as to my sincerity, I would like you to watch and listen to us with open minds. I would like you to look out for any actions which are inconsistent with our values and principles.

While I sincerely hope that you can join us in our fight, let me remind you that, unlike in other countries, there is no room in South Africa for those who want to sit on the fence. The stakes are too high for that.