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ZULU

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A NEW WAY TO
SAVE A NATION

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ZULU

HOW SOUTH AFRICA'S STRONGEST TRIBE IS FIGHTING APARTHEID

The only mass black political movement in South Africa is Inkatha yeNkulukelo yeSizwe, the 'national cultural liberation organisation' of the Zulus. (This member of the Women's Brigade is speaking at an Inkatha congress.) Its leader is Chief Buthelezi, whose success has been to resist hollow offers of 'independence' for kwaZulu – the 'land of the Zulus'. Instead, he is building an organisation based on self-help and non-violence. Today and next Sunday we examine South Africa's policy of separate development. On page 61 JOHN KANE-BERMAN reports from kwaZulu. Photographs by DAVID GOLDBLATT





Chief Gatsha Buthelezi (with loudspeaker) amid a group of warriors commemorating Zulu battles against the British a century ago – a ritual occasion, symbolic of past glory. Today, the rebirth of Zulu power is being built around Buthelezi's organisation 'Inkatha', which has enormous support, even in urban, non-Zulu areas like Soweto. Right: crowds of young people wait to hear Buthelezi speak at a rally in the Jabulani Stadium in Soweto. For Buthelezi, Inkatha's aim is 'to restore to the black man the dignity which conquest and oppression took away from him'







This family works the fields of Matiwane's Kop - a farm of 8,225 acres (far right) bought by a Zulu clan in the 1870s. There are now some 10,000 black people living there. But the farm, labelled by the South African Government as a 'black spot', is in an area designated 'white', so forced removal to a resettlement area - with no land for grazing or ploughing - is threatened. The community is adamant that it will not move: 'They will have to bring guns to push us out or bury us here'



One of South Africa's most beautiful landscapes is kwaZulu, the place of the Zulus. Here, 102 years ago, black resistance to white settler encroachment on their native land was broken, the Zulu king Cetshwayo captured, and the kingdom that Chaka had welded together, dismembered. Ever since, the Zulus, like other blacks in South Africa, have been ruled as a conquered people.

Life in kwaZulu today is utterly different from the image often put about of an idyllic pastoral scene, a place of retreat for old people after a lifetime of service in the gold mines, the farms or the industries of South Africa.

Stress and high blood pressure, for example, are normally associated with big-city executives, not rural people. But many people in kwaZulu suffer from them. Mrs Dorothy Dlomo, chief nursing officer in the department of health and welfare of the kwaZulu regional government, explains: 'Many of our health problems here arise from lack of jobs, lack of money, lack of accommodation. Some people are predisposed to high blood pressure, and this is precipitated by stress. There must be stress when people can't buy enough food for their families.'

The tourist who drives through to one of the famous battlefields, stopping only to buy fruit from a barefoot child or a carved hippopotamus from a colourfully dressed woman at the roadside, would not notice what the landscape too easily conceals – that too many people packed on too little land is the dominating physical feature of kwaZulu and a problem that is worsening daily.

The pass and influx control laws designed to minimise the number of black people in the 'white' areas of South Africa have effectively locked many of them into kwaZulu and the other parts of the country designated

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ZULU *continued*

by the authorities as the black 'homelands'. Today it is a crime for 'homeland' residents to leave to settle in the 'white' areas or even to hunt for work there. Workers may enter the 'white' areas only if they have been formally recruited, and then only as 'single' men for one-year contracts, at the end of which they must return home before signing a fresh contract. South African law forbids these workers to take their wives or children with them, so that one finds in kwaZulu many women who see little of their husbands, and sons and daughters who hardly know their fathers. Recent tightening of the pass laws makes illegal entry to the 'white' areas even more hazardous than before, despite the inability of the 'homelands' to provide jobs for more than a third of the youngsters who each year become old enough to work.

The second cause of overcrowding in kwaZulu and on adjoining land, later to be handed over to it, is Pretoria's policy of mass population removals in pursuit of territorial apartheid. The number of black people removed from the 'white' areas to the 'homelands' runs into two or even three million. KwaZulu is the reluctant recipient of many of the victims. Dr Oscar Dhlomo, Minister of Education and Culture in the kwaZulu Cabinet, says his Government is totally and implacably opposed to removals 'since we believe that black people have the fullest right to live and work wherever they wish in Natal and the Republic'. But it has no jurisdiction to stop them.

'The resettlement experience is extremely traumatic,' says Dr Dhlomo. 'It must be borne in mind that the people being resettled are generally illiterate. Whatever degree of mastery they have over their environment, they have acquired as a result of experience and tradition. To be uprooted, bundled on to a truck and driven to a new environment of which they have no experience, precipitates extreme stress for most, if not all of these people.'

Mass resettlement under very overcrowded conditions causes health problems; there are frequent typhoid epidemics, and tuberculosis is rife. The tin huts and tents provided temporarily by Pretoria offer little protection against winter, and young children and old people often die of respiratory infections. And most of the resettled people, who previously were able to get casual jobs, had land available to grow maize or who owned livestock, are forced to get rid of their animals when they are resettled, and are given no land to farm. 'Thus,' says Dhlomo, 'they have no alternative but to join the ranks of the unemployed awaiting recruitment as migrant labourers.'

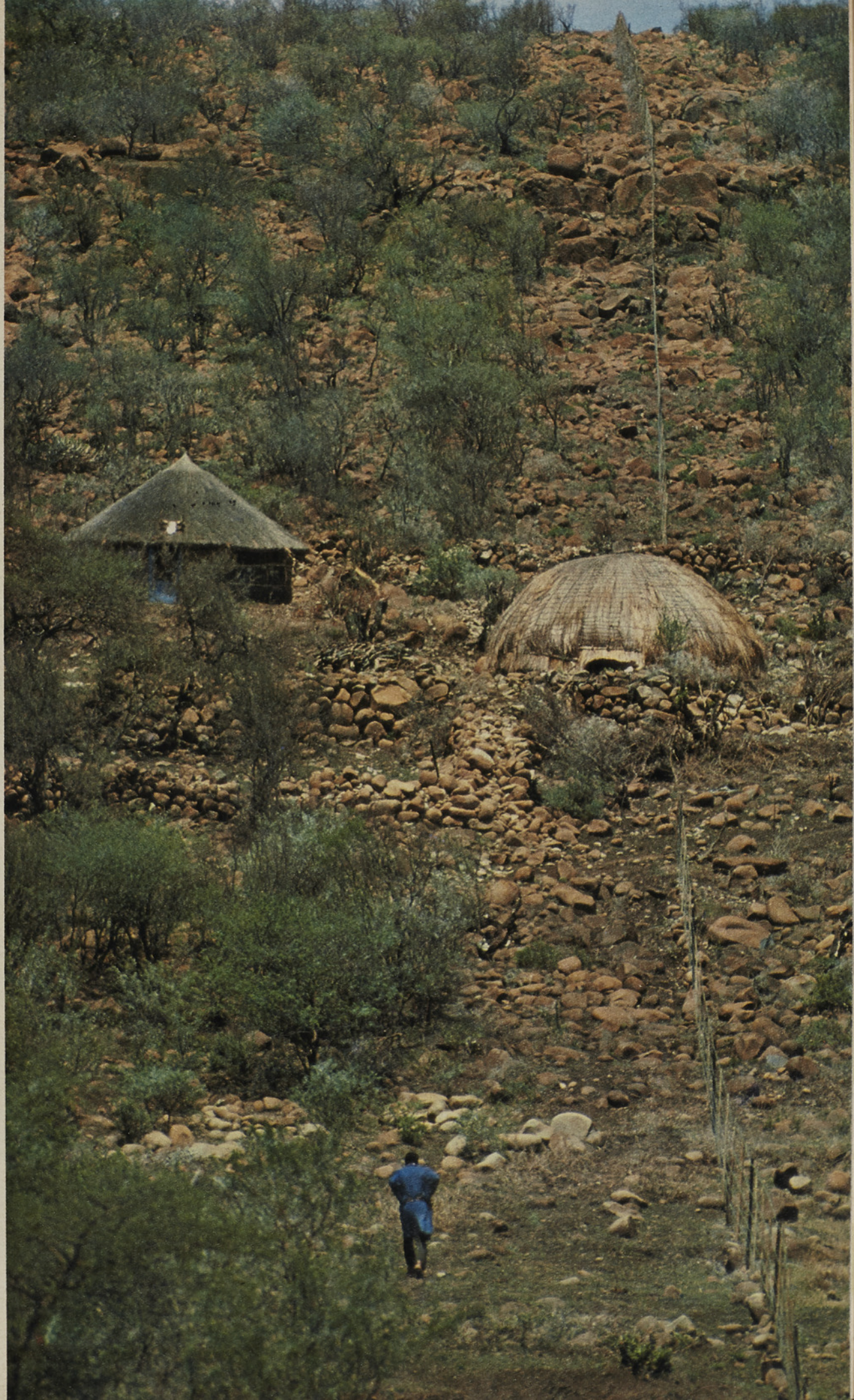
Another big-city problem is found in kwaZulu: alcoholism. In the old days,



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White greed means that thousands of black families are under threat of losing their land and livelihood. This fence (right) was erected by a white farmer who decided to straighten the border between his farm and a black area. It goes straight through the homes of a number of tenant farmers who can, in law, be evicted. In this case, Chief Buthelezi brought pressure on a local magistrate who instructed the farmer to lift the threat of eviction. Many are not so lucky. Left: Neil Alcock works with 'removal people' on self-help projects in the already overcrowded Msinga district of kwaZulu. Above: these women are working on a dam. They used to contribute their labour free, but a drought has brought desperation. For a time, work on the dam was paid for in food donations, but these too have dried up





Homecoming in kwaZulu. A migrant worker kisses his son watched by his wife. She has not seen him for six months, but while the photographer was present they did not touch. There is no work in kwaZulu, so like hundreds of thousands of other black South Africans, this man works and lives in 'white' areas, like Johannesburg. His family are not allowed to be with him so he stays in a hostel for 'single' men. Recently he obtained forged papers - bought with bribes - to make his position in Johannesburg marginally more secure



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ZULU continued



Women learn to set up farm co-operatives from Eileen Nkosi (right)

certain communities or on feast days only. 'Now all rural areas have a bottle store. Carton beer is delivered everywhere. Drinking and the other problems are all related to one another.'

The Minister of Education is worried about an even more serious problem: 'Forced resettlement of disoriented, displaced and dispossessed people on our borders threatens the stability of the rural areas. People in neighbouring kwaZulu areas are bitter and resentful towards those moving in, as inevitably they will compete for jobs, for land, for places in school, for fuel, for water, in fact for everything that the rural communities have at their disposal.'

Since many resettled people are on land still owned by Pretoria, the kwaZulu Government is not, technically, responsible for them. It does not in any event have enough for the needs of its own people. But those in the resettled areas look to the kwaZulu administration for some of their needs and the Zulu homeland ends up sharing its meagre resources with them.

Acute land hunger threatens to erupt into a crisis of catastrophic proportions. Already, in some parts of kwaZulu, notably the Msinga district, 800 people have been killed in conflicts between established residents and people simply dumped on top of them. With no opportunities for subsistence farming, illegal growing of dagga (marijuana) in the mountains has become the single most profitable economic activity.

These devastating social consequences aside, the removals are, in Dhlomo's view, 'simply reinforcing the resolve of the people who are resettled to belong to Natal and the Republic'. In this, of course, they are fundamentally at odds with the South African Government, which aims to make kwaZulu and all the other 'homelands' constitutionally independent and at the same time strip all their nominal citizens of their South African citizenship. Three 'homelands' -

the Transkei, Bophutatswana and Venda - have already been hived off into this independence (though they remain economic satellites of Pretoria every bit as subservient to it as is most of Eastern Europe to the USSR), with the fourth - the Ciskei - due to take the plunge on 4 December.

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The instrument through which the Zulu people control the kwaZulu Government, which was set up by Pretoria, is Inkatha yeNkululeko yeSizwe, 'the national cultural liberation movement'. It was founded seven years ago by Chief Buthelezi, great-grandson of Cetshwayo and now chief minister in the kwaZulu Cabinet.

Inkatha is more than a party with political aims. It is equally important as an organisation devoted to economic development and spiritual uplift. The spirit of sharing shown, for example, to the victims of population removals is nothing new in black communities in South Africa. The Inkatha constitution refers to it as 'African humanism'. Inkatha seeks to regenerate self-reliance. As Buthelezi told a local meeting of Inkatha in September, 'Inkatha's aim is to restore to the black man the dignity which conquest and oppression took away from him.'

And with the appalling economic situation, the only thing standing between these people and starvation is their ability to support themselves and each other. Inkatha, in seeking to foster that ability, thus has a critically important role to play.

Inkatha is the largest black political organisation in the history of South Africa. Equally important, it straddles rural and urban areas, the only black organisation to do so. Its keynote is what Chief Buthelezi calls 'constituency politics', which implies organisation and discipline at branch level and responsiveness by the leadership to grass-roots opinion.

With some 300,000 paid-up members, 700 registered branches and support even in non-Zulu areas such as

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Chief Buthelezi: 'If there is nothing left but violence, I would not run away'

Soweto, Inkatha is the only political mass movement among blacks in South Africa. Apart from the non-racial trade union movement – which has grown apace in recent years and won several major victories over the Government – and the banned African National Congress (ANC), which is waging a campaign of insurgency directed from outside the country, Inkatha is the only black anti-apartheid organisation that can claim to have a strategy for ridding the country of that policy. The strategy is not confined to the political, but also involves helping the people in kwaZulu, whether born there or dumped there, solve the many economic and other problems that face them.

Jordan Ngubane, a black elder statesman who returned recently to Ulundi, seat of the kwaZulu Government, after 19 years in exile, said Inkatha had transformed kwaZulu from a segregated 'homeland' administration to a weapon against racism: 'Whenever I asked concerned Zulus what they would do with this power, they almost invariably gave me a reply I had never heard before: "We are waiting for Chief Buthelezi to tell us when and where to attack." I heard variations on this from angry young militants who complained bitterly that

Buthelezi was refusing to give the order to reduce South Africa to ashes.'

What Inkatha will do with black power is an important question. Buthelezi and his colleagues may be the last generation of black leaders willing to negotiate constitutional power-sharing with whites. Even so, they believe that Pretoria will not negotiate until blacks mobilise and compel it to do so.

Inkatha is the means to that end. 'There is no politics outside of organisation,' Buthelezi constantly reminds his followers. Recalling the history of the ANC, Buthelezi notes: 'It was the dream of every leader of the ANC to produce in this country a black political organisation which could not be hammered into the ground by intimidatory jackboots and dogs' teeth. Inkatha has emerged as the black man's hope because it has succeeded in establishing a black platform which cannot be dismantled at the whim of any Minister. It is an indestructible element of the South African political scene.'

There are, no doubt, those in Pretoria who would like to see Inkatha banned. Buthelezi believes that in 1977 the then Justice Minister Jimmy Kruger was planning action against it when he warned – to no avail – against Inkatha opening its ranks to non-

Zulus. Buthelezi's critics argue that Inkatha has been useful to Pretoria in curbing potentially destructive school boycotts in the black townships around Durban. But the ability to curb violence is equally the ability to unleash it, and probably the most important factor in restraining Pretoria's hand is fear of what might happen were it to act against Inkatha. 'Afrikaners know power when they see it,' says Buthelezi. 'The truth is that the Government doesn't quite know what to do with me.'

Buthelezi is accused of collaborating with Pretoria in accepting the position of Chief Minister in the kwaZulu Government. But unlike any previous black participants in an institution set up by Pretoria, he has succeeded in turning the tables against Pretoria. Though the Government has tried to promote rival parties against it, Inkatha has captured total and probably impregnable control of the kwaZulu legislative assembly and turned Pretoria's creation into its own instrument. For example, in the 1978 kwaZulu election, which was turned into a virtual referendum on the independence issue, Inkatha won a triumphant mandate to reject independence and the automatic loss of South African citizenship that this would have entailed for the Zulus.

Buthelezi can thus claim that Inkatha has blocked the implementation of a prime objective of Government policy. Nor would he be tempted into independence by being given the white parts of Natal: 'Even if they gave us the whole of Natal, what do I do about black people in other parts of South Africa, or, if I want to be ethnic and talk about the Zulus, what do I do about the Zulus in Soweto and other places?' Buthelezi has told the Government that if he were forced to take independence at the point of a gun, then, 'I will reply with a gun.'

Buthelezi's stance on violence is pragmatic, not that of a pacifist. 'We stand for non-violence not only because this is a noble cause, but because we have seriously weighed up the consequences of going to war.' Recalling how mistaken he was at the time of Sharpeville when he thought, 'This is it,' he says he was much more cautious during the Soweto upheavals in 1976. 'We have never said that the time may not be ripe one day for a successful armed struggle, but for the moment the odds are stacked against it.'

The development of strategies that work is what concerns the Inkatha leaders now. Says Buthelezi: 'Pretoria is not a Jericho where marching, shouting protest will bring about the collapse of apartheid.' Neither does Inkatha believe that whites will ever share power voluntarily.

It argues that consumer boycotts and strikes are the only real non-violent weapons blacks have to force whites to

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the bargaining table. 'The black consumers, if banded together, could destroy vast industrial and commercial empires if they chose to do so. The white man can no longer do without your money,' Buthelezi told a mass rally in Soweto.

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For the first five years of its existence, Inkatha concentrated on recruiting. Now its priority is to improve its organisation and mobilise members in a wide range of activities which go beyond simply blocking some of Pretoria's plans. Essential to this strategy is economic development in kwaZulu itself.

Inkatha thus employs organisers to teach skills and organise activities at local level. A third of the annual membership fees that Ulundi collects is now returned for use at branch level. These are some of the local activities: the cultivation of vegetable gardens, some of which are now producing a surplus; the setting up of markets to sell the produce; home industries - like candle-making - for sale to consumers; driving schools run by the Inkatha Women's Brigade to improve the employment opportunities for women; literacy programmes; and savings clubs and credit unions.

Women play a vital role in rural development. Indeed, says Buthelezi, they are 'the backbone of the movement'. At any one time, about 275,000 men, who by law are forced to leave their families behind in kwaZulu, are working as migrants in the 'white' areas. Says Mrs Anastasia Thula, secretary-general of the Inkatha Women's Brigade: 'It's the women who live closest to the problems the men often leave behind. Historically, women have been seen by men to belong in the kitchen. We are actively breaking down that prejudice, with the support of Chief Buthelezi. We have persuaded the kwaZulu Government to allow women into the Cwaka agricultural college, where 12 of our members have been studying this year.'

Says Buthelezi: 'Women here are in the forefront of food production, which is the very guts of the liberation struggle.' He explained to peasants who brought produce to a small agricultural show in Nongoma: 'We have our worker power. We cannot use this strategy successfully so long as we fail to produce a few bags of maize, or to store it in such a way that when we flex our muscles as black workers, whites do not starve us to death within a few days. We should be able to force whites to get to the conference table with us; and food is at the centre of any success.'

But Inkatha faces three major problems. Firstly, the economy and ecology of kwaZulu itself are under such great strain that its development work among the unemployed and the dispossessed is a task of immense proportions. Secondly, black politics within

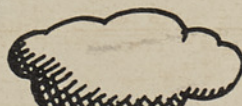
South Africa are so rent with fratricidal strife that building the unity which Buthelezi sees as the indispensable condition of mobilising worker and consumer power will be an equally immense task. Buthelezi's third major problem, of course, is Pretoria. He has bent over backwards to be conciliatory, calling on blacks not to judge Prime Minister Botha by the failures of his predecessor but to give him the chance to translate the liberal rhetoric which characterised his first year as Prime Minister into practice. He even went so far as to call Botha 'My Prime Minister'. But he is now profoundly disappointed at the political paralysis that appears to have overtaken Botha. An Inkatha insider says Buthelezi is

desperately worried that he is running out of time. So far he has been able to curb black anger from spilling over into what he believes will be suicidal violence and to dam it up instead for constructive use. Buthelezi says that he has been under strong pressure from young people to take up arms, and although young revolt erupted all over the country in 1976 and 1977, Inkatha believes that 'the deepest anger and discontent exists among sections of the black population that have not yet given any expression to their frustrations.'

Buthelezi says: 'While I'm committed to non-violent change, I have always stated that my people's options are my options. If there is nothing left

to do but violence, I would not run away from that responsibility. If the people feel it is time to die, then that would be my choice. People often forget that black people did resist white encroachment here and that thousands of black people were killed here. Our people were not afraid in the past to fight whites with their bare hands. I can't say that will never happen again if something snaps within us.'

NEXT WEEK
Ciskei: the latest
'independent'
homeland



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