

ARSI T LI G <2

OPENING OF NEWLY CONSTRUCTED WARDS AT ST MARY'S HOSPITAL, MELMOTH

-

~

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

KWAMAGWAZA 30TH NOVEMBER 1991

Mr Master of Ceremonies; the Right Reverend L Zulu Bishop of Zululand; the Reverend Canon C Cebekhulu; the Board, the Medical Superintendent, Matron, Medical and Nursing Staff of St Mary's Hospital; Mr and Mrs David Studholme; the Archdeacon and other clergy present; Senior officials from the Province and from KwaZulu present; other distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

When I look back over Zulu history and then turn to look forward, I see that Zulus are really only at the beginning of their historic time. There will, I am sure, be Zuluness forever. The Zulu culture and that very particular Zulu outlook on life rooted in our philosophy of Ubuntu is indestructibly present in South Africa.

We made our contribution in the "past, we are making our contribution now and we will continue making contributions to the development of South Africa for a very, very long time to come.

This view of Zuluness and Zulu culture and the value of the Zulu contribution to the emergence of modern South Africa and its development now into a democracy, is one in which I see my Zulu background and the blood of the man Zulu that beats in my veins and in the veins of our Bishop, as pre-eminently preparing us to become the best kind of South Africans that we are - who know who they are, know where we came from and know where we are going to, and know all of this knowing also that South Africa comes first and Zuluness will for nought if it is not for South Africa.

Please do not read immodesty in what I am saying here about myself and about our Bishop. I think that in the present confusion in our society these are just the facts of the matter that need repeating almost ad nauseam.

I look back over time and I see two great chapters of Zulu history. 1812 to 1879 is one big chapter. Recorded Zulu history began of course with the advent of the life and times of that very great founding King, King Shaka ka Senzagakhona. Then there was the establishment of the Zulu Kingdom in astonishing feats of conquest and nation-building and wars for the amalgamation of lesser triumphs into greater triumphs and greater triumphs into a great Kingdom.

It was in that first chapter that Whites came and I am very, very proud to say as a Zulu that I see my ancestors being the first South Africans. They actually put Durban aside for White occupation. They kept it that way and they need not have kept it that way. King Shaka himself had that eerie and uncanny gift of looking into the future. He had visions of aeroplanes coming across the sky at a historic point in time when man did not believe that machines could fly.

King Shaka sent travellers all the way to the Cape to meet with Whites and to look at what they were doing. There was an awareness that the advent of the coming of the White man was the beginning of new things which would become permanent.

During that first chapter of Zulu history, there was of course the shaping of the whole of modern South Africa with KwaZulu playing a pivotal role blocking the south with the migration of the Portuguese sphere of interest, blocking the easterly migration of the Transvaal Republic's sphere of interest and in the south blocking the northern migration of the British sphere of interest. On the Black side, the Zulu Kingdom defined the borders of Lesotho and Swaziland.

I recall rightly on this occasion that it was King Mpande ka Senzangakhona who, by his actions, embraced the Christian faith for those of his people who wanted to embrace it, when he granted this land to the Church. He granted land similarly to Bishop Schreuder of the Lutheran Church.

As you remember, he was very much a man of peace and his reign was the most peaceful of all the reigns of his predecessors and that of

. his son, King Cetshwayo, and his grandson, King Dinuzulu. I wonder

whether His Majesty King Mpande, envisaged that there would mushroom on the land he gave to the Church, this Mission Station, which amongst other things has carried on Christ's Healing Ministry for our people for so many decades.

I happen to know that he appreciated western medicine. There is a story that he was a friend of Bishop Schreuder who was a medico and also supplied the King with aspirins or pain-killing tablets for his arthritis. However, to go back to my original theme, let me say the following about his son, King Cetshwayo.

All that great history finally culminated in the Anglo-Zulu War in which British territorial greed and a desire to control the whole of Southern Africa, pushed King Cetshwayo into a war that he did not want. King Cetshwayo did not court that war, he tried to avoid it. Then of course there was the Battle of Isandlwana where heroism on both the British side and on the Zulu side was the very essence of an event of epic proportions.

Before this war, King Cetshwayo had been busy establishing diplomatic links with King Moshoeshoe of Lesotho and with the Swazis. His diplomatic ventures in fact went right up into the Transvaal and right down to the Umzimbuvu River with prongs of influence going down as far as the Caledon River. He was a man of peace seeking Zulu incorporation into a new South Africa which he knew was going to come.

Then of course there was the Battle of Ulundi on the 4th of July 1879, and the exile of King Cetshwayo to Cape Town. And then there was a new era of Zulu diplomacy in which King Cetshwayo himself described the papers he used to formulate pleas and propose negotiated settlements in petitions to the British Crown, as his new spears.

It was at this time of great change in Zulu history that this place KwaMagwaza became the place of Mission endeavour and Christian missionary outreach. It was in 1887 that Bishop McKenzie arranged for Dr James Petrie to open a clinic here at KwaMagwaza.

This was just after the huge disruption of the Zulu War and the terrible attempts at the partition of the Zulu Kingdom into 13 different chieftainships under direct British control. The people who had been defeated by a great British army and subjected to every colonial power possible to divide them and to destroy them forever, however came together again to form one people who were undivided and who were committed to making something out of their existence in a newly emerging South Africa.

It was only after 1913, however, when the Reverend William Lee - who later became Bishop of Zululand and Swaziland - collected donations amounting to four thousand pounds, that a double story hospital was erected here at KwaMagwaza. This building still exists and is now used as a staff house where visitors and single staff and students are catered for. The foundation stone is still there which was laid by Bishop Vivyan in 1913. I am somewhat sentimental about Bishop Vivyan, as he confirmed my late mother Princess Constance Magogo ka Dinuzulu, at St. Mary's, Nkonjeni, where I and my family worship today. These names are important to the traditions that have built up around this KwaMagwaza outreach to mankind. We will record these names and the name of Miss Lucy Mallandaine who was the first matron here.

Then again history intervened to affect the life of this place. The First World War broke out and the staff then serving here returned to the United Kingdom to serve in British forces. After the First World War the Hospital here was re-opened and was named St Mary's Hospital.

Again, developments in this Hospital and in this whole KwaMagwaza centre of humanitarian concern for the people took place in the context of developing Black politics. When this Hospital was built in 1913, the African National Congress was a year old. The planning for that Congress and the planning for this Hospital took place over the same months and preceding years.

How Black South Africa looks at the Church and the State and how Black South Africa has responded to its changing environment, were the product of two great streams of influence. There was Black nationalism and the emergence of the Congress Movement in which Black nationalism was being shaped into a common South African sub-strata of everything that Blacks were. And there was the influence of the Church and the Mission outreach in cities and in towns and in villages and in places like KwaMagwaza.

A study would take somebody a lifetime to complete if it were to really look at the influence of the Christian Church in South African history. I never under-estimate how important the Church is because I see it as one of the fundamental forces that shaped modern South Africa and turned it into what it is.

I see Black South Africa's basic grass-root, deep-down rejection of Communism and apartheid and racism, and that same grass-root society's acceptance of multi-racialism and democracy, as the product of Christian inputs into South African developments.

I would rank the work of a humble missionary out in rural places like KwaMagwaza and Mahlabathini and Vryheid and Dundee and everywhere else, being fundamentally more important than all the councils of the churches, all the Synods of the churches and all the directives of Bishops and Archbishops. The Black man met the Church in the veld and in the streets. It was the missionary and the evangelical clergy whom Blacks met.

No one could dream then that we would, during our lifetime, have two descendants of the man Zulu, . after whose name our Nation is known, becoming Bishops of our Church one after another as has happened with Bishop Alphaeus Zulu and Bishop Lawrence Zulu. Who can say the efforts of the stalwarts of our Church who pioneered God's work here has not borne fruit?

It is therefore with a sense of awe almost that I address this gathering at this very important occasion for St Mary's Hospital.

Again I talk in parallels. As Black South Africans were entering into the modern new world, fighting their way up into participating in the economy and preparing the ground for the epic Black

struggle for liberation, this place was developing on its own lines.

In 1928 an additional three wards had been built here. Nursing training had already begun in 1921 and midwifery training began in 1928. Always the Hospital's expansion has reached out to better meet the people's needs. In 1951 a maternity ward and an operating ward were added. In 1952 a new chapel was built and the first X-ray machine was bought in 1954. In 1969 the demand on the services of St Mary's Hospital was so great that the Hospital Board had no option but to do something, and they built two fabricated wards, one for children and one for TB patients. They still stand here today and they are still being used but they desperately need replacing.

Then as the in-take of patients grew and as the requirements of the Hospital grew, other things had to be done. In 1973 a new dam and water pumps were fitted. In 1974 a new dining room and kitchen were built and fitted out. In 1984 a new complex consisting of a 44-bed male ward, an operating theatre, an out-patient's department, a dispensary, an X-ray department with a brand new machine, and a new administrative block were built.

Those developments on the physical side of the evolution of St Mary's Hospital here at KwaMagwaza were not just things that happened. They were not just buildings that were built and equipment that was placed in them because it was needed. No, those things were the achievements of heroic struggles for money and for people support and for recognition that the people in this area needed these additional things. St. Mary's Hospital serves people even beyond the borders of this district. Everything had to be struggled for and fought for and argued for.

It was not as though the people who made the decisions to build up the Hospital in this way were administrative personnel exercising some kind of routine decision-making responsibilities. They were people who fought for the poor and the sick because they loved them. They were people who achieved these things because their hearts were right and Christ lived in them and walked with them and they with Him.

Just look at the success story in terms of people being reached. In May 1900 there were 12 new patients. In 1988 there were 455 new patients. In 1914 there were 667 out-patients. In 1987 there were 30 810 out-patients. To go back to in-patients, whereas in May 1900 there were 12 in-patients, in 1987 there were 4 545 in-patients.

Now we stand, I on my side and the Hospital staff and its Board on the other side, facing the uncertainties of today in which we must make certain of the South Africa of tomorrow. I want today to pledge my total commitment to the development of this place, whatever happens in politics.

I want to pledge my commitment as a Christian to the service of this place and to other places I like it where Christian traditions reign supreme and where God still calls His sons and daughters to serve.

Inkatha Freedom Party is going to the negotiating table, not to fight any kind of party political battle. We are going there to fight . for . South Africa. We are going there to fight for justice and for freedom and for equality of opportunity for all so that in the end the misery which makes this place so important, will be alleviated as people benefit from the circumstances in which struggling to lift themselves up by their boot-straps really can work.

There are so many things that I as the President of the IFP would like to do but we have so little money with which to do it. I would like to establish a special task force in the IFP which made it their commitment to keep in touch with St Mary's Hospital and places like it, to keep me and the IFP leadership immediately and intimately aware of the needs in these places. I would like that task force to go further and campaign and mobilise national and

international support for the humanitarian work that goes on in places like this Hospital.

It is for me so wrong that such heroic struggles for the little old lady, or the child struck down by malnutrition diseases, or the victim of one or another disaster, is never sung in songs of praise for heroes and heroines.

It is with great warmth, therefore, that I am a participant in today's events in which the Order of Simon of Cyrene was awarded to Margaret and David Studholme by the Bishop of Zululand, on behalf of the Archbishop of Cape Town, Metropolitan of the Church of the Province of South Africa. No couple anywhere in the world of missionary endeavour that I know of, better deserve this kind of honour. We, as your brothers and sisters, have much pride in singing Alleluia with the Angels for what you have meant to us as you serve our people in this hospital with such distinction.

With these few words of homily I now declare the two newly constructed wards officially open.