

Govt must talk today or rue someday, says Steyn

STAR 16 Nov 1989

If the Government really wanted negotiations about the future to start soon, then it would have to talk to credible black leaders and address their demands, said the Urban Foundation's Mr Jan Steyn.

In an address entitled "Political Progress and Socio-economic Development — two sides of the same coin", the former Supreme Court judge said: "At the very least, this entails urgent and visible attention (being given) to all racially discriminatory legislation, including the Separate Amenities Act, the Group Areas Act, the Land Acts and the Population Registration Act.

"It also means facilitation of a free, open and competitive political debate in which the principles of freedom of association, assembly and the press are respected."

Mr Steyn said leaders of all constituencies would have to rise above "their historic antagonisms".

They would have to become capable, above all, of understanding the demands and constraints under which all the different political programmes in South Africa had to operate and of identifying areas in which rapid progress was possible.

Also to be remembered was the fact that the pace of change could not be determined by one group's requirements alone.

"The expectations and fears of all groups must determine the pro-

If effective political negotiations about a common future for all South Africans are to take off the ground, then the Government will have seriously to address "the demands of black leaders of significance", Urban Foundation chairman Mr Jan Steyn told the Foundation's annual general meeting in Johannesburg yesterday.

KAIZER NYATSUMBA reports.

cess. In turbulent circumstances, optimal speed is of the essence. A prolonged period of uncertainty will serve only to heighten fears and allow expectations to spiral out of control," he said.

Mr Steyn stressed that socio-economic reform had to accompany political change "in such a way as to support it".

The Government had to implement policy changes by entering into "firm commitments" about legislative change, the re-allocation of resources and the development of effective delivery mechanisms.

In his appraisal of the UF's achievements in its 13-year history, Mr Steyn said the Foundation had learnt that the time was long past when programmes could be imposed on black communities without their involvement.

The Foundation had also learnt, he said, that there were widely differing perceptions of many aspects of South African life, and political parties would have to be sensitive to these perceptions.

He said a small but symbolically significant example of this sensitivi-

ty to others' feelings was the official declaration this year of May 1 as Workers' Day.

"Shouldn't we also acknowledge how black people feel about the sacrifices and the suffering of black communities in the struggle for better housing, education and urban conditions by declaring June 16 — already an unofficial holiday — as a day of nationwide dedication to building a new South Africa?"

Mr Steyn said it was not enough to express oneself in favour of "a new South Africa", but it was important actually to work towards realisation of this ideal.

"Having announced that we are a united nation, we must act to give content to that reality," he said.

● Urban Foundation communications executive Mr Stewart Carlyle said the housing scheme announced simultaneously in London and Johannesburg about a month ago would take effect in the first quarter of next year.

Mr Carlyle said people who wanted to build houses for less than R30 000 had to approach financial institutions directly.



Mr Jan Steyn ... leaders must rise above historic antagonisms.

THE next two to five years could see the establishment of a negotiating forum, constituent assembly or other appropriate instrument, facilitative of producing a new constitutional dispensation.

A major question is whether or not SA will enter that phase within an ever-escalating spiral of socio-economic disaffection. Politics, after all, is about people and the condition of their lives.

We need to promote the economic and social adjustments that will support a political resolution of the right kind.

One can identify various socio-economic conditions supportive of democracy.

If economic inequality, and inequality in access to resources and opportunities continue to be patterned in terms of race, SA's hope of reducing the importance of race in political conflict is bound to fail. Racial identities will lurk behind every conflict of political interests.

Recent trends in patterns of employment and in the allocation of state development resources are softening the stark outlines of racial inequality. However, substantially better progress in dismantling racial zoning, in education, in training and in occupational development are urgently necessary.

A persistent racial structuring of our society will weaken democratic processes because it obscures people's real political interests. Interests can be addressed constructively — and shared interests unite people. Race can only divide.

If certain problems in development remain intractable, generating sharp mass-based grievances, it will tend to dominate the debate and will encourage the politics of irresponsible promises a millennial ideologies. Faced with a marketplace of fatuous rhetoric and improbable claims, military authorities are typically inclined to think in terms of coups to induce discipline.

If a society has a large and growing segment of its population unemployed and facing the prospect of being permanently excluded — or at best only marginally involved in the

economic activity — authoritarian administration becomes almost inevitable.

If the concept takes hold (or persists) that individual endeavour is less effective than a paternal, all-protecting welfare state, the urge for one-party socialist solutions, already strong, will grow. For all the good intentions behind comprehensive welfare socialism, we know from a host of failed experiments that it leads to overextended state budgets, chronic inflation, lack of investment in production and, ultimately, shortages of foreign exchange, of the capital goods required for growth and a deterioration in the very circumstances the system was supposed to address.

Governments cannot allocate resources to redress social ills unless private business is allowed to create the wealth that is to be taxed.

These comments about socio-economic development and democracy seem logical to me, and are borne out by experience elsewhere in the world. The arguments, however, clearly do not "sell" themselves to black South Africans. None of the relevant actors on the scene will succeed unless there is effective political advancement.

Just as the international experi-

ence shows the hazards of reform which ignores the socio-economic dimension, so there are telling examples of socio-economic reform that ignores the political dimension.

I would suggest that some of the conditions for effective democracy are:

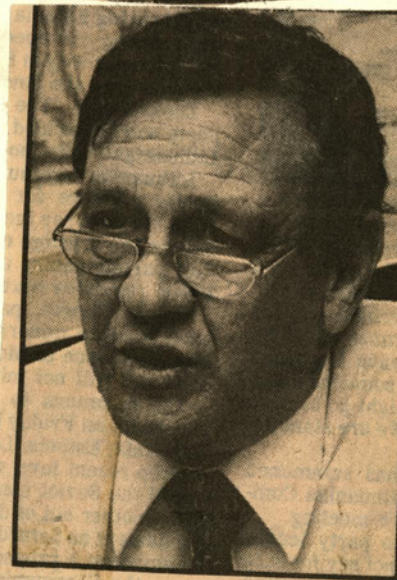
☐ Policies must be concrete. Policy

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must be spelt out in terms of specific intended effects that rank-and-file people can understand and relate to. Ideally, policies should also specify what they will cost and who will pay; ☐ A democracy must allow everyone the fullest access to debate and to criticise policies. Free competition in policy ideas is cardinal; and ☐ It follows, therefore, that there must be freedom to form political parties and to promote alternative

Building the right *BUSINESS DAY* structure to support 16 Nov 1989 political change

JAN STEYN of the Urban Foundation



☐ STEYN

policies. It should be unnecessary to add that there must be regular free elections under an impartial public administration.

The question then is: how to promote a political process that meets these requirements while avoiding the pitfalls involved in fundamental political change?

In the first place, the demands of black leaders of significance must be addressed seriously. At the very least, this entails urgent and visible attention to all racially discriminatory legislation, including the Separate Amenities Act, the Group Areas Act, the Land Acts and the Population Registration Act.

It also means the facilitation of a free, open and competitive political debate in which the principles of freedom of association, assembly and the press are respected.

Secondly, leaders of all constituent-

cies will need to rise above their historic antagonisms. They will have to become capable, above all, of understanding the demands and constraints under which all the different political programmes in SA have to operate and of identifying areas in which rapid progress is possible.

Thirdly, the pace of change cannot be determined by one group's requirements alone. The expectations and fears of all groups must determine the process. In turbulent circumstances, optimal speed is of the essence. A prolonged period of uncertainty will serve only to heighten fears and allow expectations to spiral out of control.

Fourthly, socio-economic reform must accompany political change in such a way as to support it.

The abolition of racial discrimination in the form of controls over movement of black people accompanied by the partial restoration of citizenship has made more urgent the search for solutions to the housing problem and the challenge of urban development. In turn, these socio-economic changes inevitably raise the issues of the racial zoning of land and the development of non-racial city-wide local government.

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BUILDING THE RIGHT STRUCTURE TO SUPPORT POLITICAL CHANGE FROM PG 1

Finally, in the field of socio-economic reform, announcement of policy change is not sufficient. The government must implement policy change by entering into firm commitments about legislative change, the reallocation of resources and the development of effective delivery mechanisms.

The Urban Foundation has no choice, but to press ahead and do what we can to address the relevant fundamentals — socio-economic development and the laws and regulations which inhibit it. High key political prospects are in the air and on everyone's lips, but we dare not neglect the sub-structures that could subvert all our hopes of political progress.

One cannot have good projects in a poor policy environment.

□ Steyn is chairman of the Urban Foundation. This is an edited extract from his address to the foundation's AGM in Johannesburg yesterday.

THE Dutch Reformed Church, the most influential in South Africa, condemns political activism by clergymen. But it has swayed government policy with behind-the-scenes lobbying.

Recently, church head Johan Heyns has spoken to President P W Botha about imprisoned African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela and the fate of the Sharpeville Six, a group of blacks sentenced to hang for participation in a mob murder of a black town councillor.

Heyns, whose church title is moderator, would not reveal details of the discussions. "We are active in these sort of deliberations," but cannot claim credit for the Government's decisions, he said. "The church and state are completely independent."

The church's quiet diplomacy usually is undertaken on a personal level between church leaders and some of their parishioners. Ninety percent of the all-white Cabinet, plus most of the white-dominated parliament, are members of the church.

Two years ago, the church, known by its Afrikaans initials as the NGK, adopted a document called *Church and Society* which declared apartheid a mistake, termed racism a sin and said the church could no longer dictate specific political policies.

Fifty ministers and 30 000 people left the 953 000-member NGK to form a new right-wing church. Within the main church, which represents about 38 percent of the 5-million white population, a conservative league was formed to try to repeal the document.

The document said the church had been wrong to spend decades giving biblical justification to

Govt policy swayed with behind scenes lobbying

THE QUIET DIPLOMACY OF THE NGK

By LAURINDA KEYS
of Associated Press

apartheid and advocating certain discriminatory laws, such as a ban on mixed marriage.

Its new view, the church said, was that the Bible cannot be used to support any political model, either apartheid or integration.

Uphold

Heyns, elected to head the church during the 1986 synod that adopted *Church and Society*, said: "That did not imply we have nothing to say to government. The Bible explicitly tells us there are certain major, universal, applicable, ethical norms which are of paramount importance for political policy."

Church and Society urges the National Party government to uphold scriptural norms, says the withholding of political rights is an affront to human dignity and asks the authorities

"to give on-going and sympathetic attention" to regulations which people find offensive.

Some critics argue the church does get involved in politics — church leaders recently urged congregations to sign anti-sanctions petitions — but that its involvement is tolerated because it is regarded as "the National Party at prayer."

"Some individuals in English-speaking churches see in the NGK a government-supporting church. That worries me," said Heyns. "We do not support the Government, but we have so many members in government we are responsible to them spiritually."

Event

The church is in the difficult position of seeking to represent the interests of its flock, mainly white Afrikaners, although it is officially open to all races — calling for speedier change of policies it once said were biblically justified — and trying not to be seen engaging in politics in a country where, Heyns says, "everything is seen from a political view."

An event in July illustrated the complexities of the church's position.

An editorial in the

church magazine, *Die Kerkbode*, caused a stir by questioning the morality of indefinitely stationing South African troops in Angola.

Confusion developed when Heyns allowed the Defence Minister to release a comment to newspapers on his behalf. The comment appeared to undercut the editor of the church magazine.

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Heyns issued a public defence, saying, "The questions raised... are perfectly legitimate. Those are the questions in the hearts of our people."

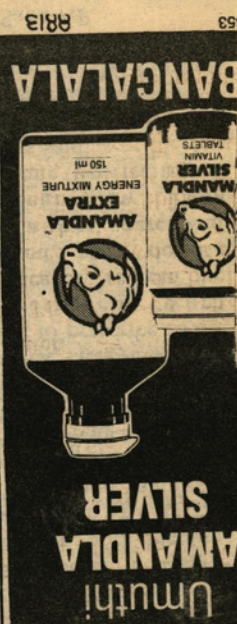
The pro-government English-language newspaper, *The Citizen*, the warned the Dutch Reformed Church in the same tone and phrasing normally uses with Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu and other activist clergy whom the NGK leaders have accused of un-biblical conduct.

The church "should tread carefully when it comes to questioning the South African presence in Angola," said *The Citizen's* editorial. "It is unwittingly contributing to a deliberate attempt by radical and left-wing organisations to break the morale of servicemen and the civilian population."

Two months later, South African troops withdrew from Angola.

A few weeks after church leaders said they had spoken to Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok about detentions without trial, particularly of children, Vlok announced all emergency detainees under 16 had been released.

The Church said that since the Government has made it legal for people of different races to marry, it is wrong not to make provision for them to live together where they choose. Last month, Parliament's white chamber passed a Bill to allow the



16.11.89 Prince Zulu's home burned as he visits Netherlands

EC-40 Supplement to The Mail
by Nomusa Cembu

SENIOR Prince Mwayizeni Zulu from the Zulu Royal family had his house in Nongoma burned on Saturday morning by unknown people.

The Prince was an Acting King for King Zwelithini. He was not in his house at the time of the incident as he had left on Friday accompanied by his wife to the Netherlands at the invitation of the Netherlands Centre for Development Studies.

According to one Durban newspaper, UmAfrika, the station commander of Nongoma Lt H.H. Mncwango has confirmed the incident took place at 1am on Saturday and a case was being investigated under attempted arson, but he could not estimate the amount of damages as the Prince was overseas.

The incident happened five days after the Prince's picture appeared in Ilanga accompanied by a caption which said it was taken at the welcoming rally of the six released ANC leaders. The caption questioned the Prince's role with the United Democratic Front. Ilanga described the rally as being organised by the UDF.

The Prince was quoted in UmAfrika as saying that as a son of Solomon, he had a right to attend any meeting he felt like attending.

The Congress of Traditional Chiefs (Contralesa), of which the Prince is a member, said it condemned the burning. Contralesa president Chief Mhlabunzima Maphumulo said: "It is sad to read from Ilanga that he has joined the MDM and before the end of the week his house gets burned."

"It is still going to take quite some time before we can talk the politics of reconciliation among blacks."

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Homeland leader who talks to the ANC

ENOS Mabuza, Chief Minister of Kangwane, occupies an unusual position in South Africa's political line-up.

He heads a "homeland" government, which should be anathema to the African National Congress. In 1986 he held apparently constructive discussions with the ANC in Lusaka. He still heads a homeland government.

He believes the ANC is the primary black political force in South Africa. But he believes other black political organisations should not be excluded from constitutional negotiations.

These apparently contradictory positions possibly place Mr Mabuza as close as anyone to that point where the arcs of opposing political rhetoric intersect to provide practical as opposed to ideological answers.

On the future of the homelands, for instance, he says they should be dismantled as ethnic political entities. But they could well be retained as administrative structures in a post-apartheid South Africa, as

GRAHAM LINSCOTT
Special Correspondent

the most effective way of bringing services to particular communities. (His government serves a million ethnic Swazis wedged between Swaziland and Mozambique).

He expresses cautious optimism following the De Klerk Government's release of political prisoners and its flexible attitude toward public marches and rallies by the extra-parliamentary opposition.

But the Government still has to take the giant leap of unbanning political organisations such as the ANC, releasing Nelson Mandela and arranging negotiations.

"It is racing against time. There is a need for more action and fewer words."

Mr Mabuza says his concern is to see the different parties in South Africa sit down together to negotiate. He envisages this including minority parties, white as well as black.

He does not regard himself as a facilitator of talks or necessarily a participant.

"I don't see myself as a par-

ticipant, though I would attend if asked and I were convinced that I could play a role."

He says the Government cannot afford to ignore the ANC, which he sees as the primary black grouping.

"They are not the only one but they are without doubt the main political actor."

"There are other groups but they will be marginalised, some neutralised, by the unbanning of the ANC. This is my firm conviction."

He sees the object of political negotiations as the establishment of a just political and economic order in which a Bill of Rights protects individuals rather than groups.

The form of government — federal or unitary — is less important than that it should come about as the result of negotiations and it should be democratic.

On the time span for constitutional change, Mr Mabuza is characteristically pragmatic — no instant solutions.

Five years, he says. He cannot see the Government holding another election on the same basis as the last one.