

# **“Why I established Inkatha,”**

*by Chief M G Buthelezi*

**W**hat are the differences between the ANC Mission in Exile and Inkatha? Why did Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi launch Inkatha?

In recent evidence to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons, Chief Buthelezi explained these fundamental issues.

*“In 1974 when I set about gathering leaders together to establish Inkatha in 1975, I set about doing so with the clear intention NOT of subverting the ANC Mission in Exile — but of proving to them that democratic opposition to apartheid and non-violent tactics and strategies were still possible.”*

Chief Buthelezi said he believed that if the ANC Mission in Exile had understandably opted for violence, then it was incumbent on black South Africans to prove that democratic opposition could be productive.

He wanted to avoid the prospect of the military failure of the ANC Mission in Exile which would inevitably result in them turning towards “bloody and destructive” civil war.

“I rallied black South Africa under the national colours of black South Africa — black, green and gold. I brought together a very considerable constituency which had provided the old ANC with grass-root support while it was in the country.

“We sang old freedom songs and in every possible way identified with the ANC Mission in Exile. I told my people we had sent them there; that they were our brothers and sisters and that we should wage



***“I wanted democratic forces emerging in South Africa to accept a multi-strategy approach and offer to work in harmony with the ANC Mission in Exile. It was incumbent on black South Africans to prove that democratic opposition to apartheid and non-violent tactics and strategies were still possible and could be productive — and avoid the prospects of the military failure of the ANC Mission in Exile . . .”***

***CHIEF M G BUTHELEZI***

# INKATHA AND THE ANC

a struggle in harmony with them . . .

"I defied all laws prohibiting the quotation of banned organisations and persons . . ."

He explained that "on every possible occasion" he kept in



Mr Oliver Tambo, President of the External Mission of the ANC

contact with the ANC Mission in Exile and he liaised with their offices in Swaziland. His emissaries had frequent meetings there with ANC Mission in Exile personnel.

"I sent emissaries abroad charging them to argue the merits of a multi-strategy approach with them, and to offer co-operation in those projects where Inkatha's aims and objectives coincided with the ANC Mission in Exile aims and objectives — and where tactics and strategies were not mutually hostile . . ."

There was one issue about which Chief Buthelezi made his views abundantly clear.

*He and Inkatha had never accepted the unilateral decision which the ANC Mission in Exile made to commit black South Africa to the armed struggle as the primary means of bringing about change.*

He said: "I established Inkatha as a black liberation movement in the sincere hope that the dangerous divisions in black politics could be breached.

"I could not side with the Black Consciousness rejection of the ANC Mission in Exile. I understood the grave difficulties which the ANC Mission in Exile had been facing in the outside world.

"Both in South Africa and abroad I then argued in public that the ANC had been driven underground by South African police brutality and that it was understandable that in an exiled position where they were rejected by the West, the Mission in Exile should seek recourse in violence.

"I accepted that the ANC Mission in Exile, having been rejected by the West, would naturally seek alliances elsewhere. It was for me understandable that they should start thinking in terms of the application of force against apartheid.

"I, however, never accepted

the unilateral decision which the ANC Mission in Exile made to commit black South Africa to the armed struggle as the primary means of bringing about change once they were in exile.

"They never consulted black South Africa about this very fundamental step. They made the decision unilaterally only after they had been in exile for some years."

**The armed struggle — does it have a mandate from black South Africa?**

Chief Buthelezi quoted Mr Joe Slovo, a member of the ANC Mission in Exile's National Executive and head of Umkhonto weSizwe, its military wing, who acknowledged:

"The attempts, particularly in the West, to question this policy and to influence the ANC to consider the adoption of a 'peaceful road to change' is nothing less than a recipe for submission and surrender of national liberation aims. We must bear in mind that the ANC was declared illegal long before it adopted a policy of armed struggle."

Chief Buthelezi noted that "the old ANC" had sent a Mission into exile to mobilise international opinion to aid the struggle at home.

"I rejected the argument by prominent members of the ANC Mission in Exile that any involvement they may have in democratic opposition in South Africa would detract from their main purpose which was to pursue the armed struggle."

Chief Buthelezi said he rejected this because it was "patently clear" to him that it

**"I know of no society in the world where the kind of violence now employed by the ANC Mission in Exile has produced an open, democratic, society. I have again and again said bluntly that if the ANC Mission in Exile is allowed to continue much further along the road they have chosen to walk, white South Africa will adopt a scorched earth policy and unleash the kind of state violence which we have not even yet begun to see."**

**CHIEF M G BUTHELEZI**