

'Release Mandela'

Chief M.G. Buthelezi spells out his terms



West German Foreign Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher

The proposed National Statutory Council would have limited legitimacy for as long as Dr Nelson Mandela and others like him were in jail, Chief Buthelezi told West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher at a meeting in Bonn.

He said there was enough consensus in South Africa to provide a mandate for the kind of reform which would gain national acclaim and international acceptance.

The bottleneck in the reform process, he said in a memorandum for the meeting with Mr Genscher, was the State President's dependence on his Afrikaner constituency.

He had always acted as though the African, Coloured and Indian people were outside his constituency and he had confined his power-base in the first place to Afrikaners and only in second place to English speaking South Africans.

If he continued to do this, he would fail in his endeavours to bring about radical change.

Until the Government moved towards meaningful power-sharing between Black and White and sentenced the present constitution to death, Black leaders with any significant fol-

lowing would not negotiate with him.

Chief Buthelezi said he was prepared to look at a Federal Model for his country's future as well as at minority group protection within a constitution with a truly free and independent judiciary which could be entrusted with the protection of group and individual rights.

But neither he nor any Black leader worthy of the description would submit to permanent White domination or ever agree to making race divisions permanent constitutional features.

He warned that violent confrontations in South Africa would not produce a democracy. All political history cried out for the recognition, in these circumstances, that the violent overthrow of the government would result only in the establishment of a one-party state trying to rule where the foundations of economic growth and social and political stability had been destroyed in the process.

Chief Buthelezi called on the West to provide support for Black organisations working for radical change through non-violent means and who recognised the need to engage the South African Government itself in the process of bringing about such change.

What will replace apartheid?

Black politics in South Africa was primarily about the kind of society that would replace apartheid, Chief Buthelezi told members of France's opposition Gaullist Party at a meeting in Paris.

When listening to the cacophony of conflicting views expressed by the country's Blacks, the international community should bear in mind that politics the world over was about the acquisition of power.

South Africa was a democracy in the making and Blacks who had been excluded from the parliamentary process for 75 years — since the Act of Union — were now faced with the options various political groups now represented.

Western observers all too frequently expressed dismay at the extent of

Blacks' differences over the "hows and whos" of what should be done, Chief Buthelezi added.

They seemed to have an underlying assumption that suffering people should be united by their oppression. They disregarded the fact that the very intensity with which Blacks participated in politics dramatised differences of opinion about life and death issues.

Black concern was firstly about what would replace and, secondly, about how to overcome institutionalised oppression by a minority regime with the most powerful army in Africa and with Draconian laws enforceable by highly trained, efficient police, surveillance and security machinery.

As far as he was concerned, Chief Buthelezi added, those who oppose

apartheid should be concentrating on normalising South Africa as an industrialised democracy which could take its rightful in the Western hemisphere of interests.

There was huge groundswell of Black support for negotiated reform and rejection of the concept of overthrowing the government by revolution.

The already existing economic interdependence of Blacks and Whites made the politics of negotiation a looming reality. Blacks need not only involve themselves in the politics of despair and violence.

"We need only to keep our heads and drive the South African Government step by step towards the negotiating table."