

BODY BLOWS TO BLACK DEMOCRACY



MR P.W. BOTHA

“I have only formally met Mr P W Botha three times in his near decade in office as head of the South African State. I have nothing at all to say to the man now which I have not already said before.

“The Government of South Africa is now being governed by the National party. It is a de facto government and whatever the world thinks of it, it can continue to govern as a de facto government for a very long time indeed . . .

“We have witnessed the employment of Draconian powers to keep South Africa governable under the National Party.

“The steps taken to neutralise black political groups, and to isolate a number of black leaders, will be effective from the Government’s point of view in the short term but, at the same time, devastatingly destructive to the politics of negotiation in the longer term.

“Non-violent democratic leaders like myself have suffered terrible setbacks by the same action which is seen only as action against some groups.

“The national state of emergency, under which the action was taken, is restrictive of the politics of negotiation.

“Body blows to black democracy anywhere in South Africa are body blows to black democracy everywhere. The shackling of some black organisations is a shackling of all black organisations . . .”

— DR MANGOSUTHU BUTHELEZI.



DR M.G. BUTHELEZI