

CLAMP ON 18 ORGANISATIONS

Another blow to democratic opposition

The KwaZulu Government and Inkatha have condemned the action of the SA Government in effectively closing down 18 extra-parliamentary organisations including the United Democratic Front, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, the Azanian People's Organisation, the Detainees Parents' Support Committee and the National Education Crisis Committee.

Curbs on the organisations were imposed in terms of sweeping new powers the Government has taken to prohibit specified activities of any organisations or individuals it may name and which also provide for the confinement of individuals to specified districts or to the premises in which they live.

These amended emergency regulations were signed in February by the State President, Mr P W Botha, and published in the Government Gazette.

The Secretary-General of Inkatha, Dr Oscar Dhlomo, commented in a speech to the Youth for SA / Inkatha Youth Brigade joint conference at the Rand Afrikaans University in April that the Government had provided Inkatha with yet another list of pre-conditions to negotiations.

"Surely the Government should have known that by restricting the UDF, COSATU and AZAPO and other organisations it was simply adding more pre-conditions to Inkatha's already long list of pre-conditions for negotiation," he said.

"Hence, instead of calling for the release of political prisoners, the unbanning of banned organisations, the lifting of the State of Emergency and so on, we now also call for the derestriction of the UDF, COSATU, AZAPO and all the other restricted organisations and internal leaders.

"People are there to be talked to and

not banned or restricted."

The Caucus of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly noted that it perceived South Africa to be in a "crisis situation as the politics of violence races against the politics of negotiation ..."

The S A Government's recalcitrance in the face of legitimate internal and external demands to scrap apartheid, fanned the flames of Black anger and stimulated the upward spiralling of violence.

The Caucus said it was "appalled" by the action taken by the Minister of Law and Order in restricting the organisations and certain of their leaders.

"We remain convinced that the South African Government is trapped in a situation of its own making and is attempting to ensure law and order which the majority of the people of this country want by taking high-handed unilateral action which the majority of the people of South Africa reject."

The Caucus was convinced that there would be no need for the ruling State of Emergency if Black democracy was unshackled and if Blacks were free to support the leaders and the parties of their choice.

The freedom to choose leaders and parties was a counterside of the freedom of leaders and parties to freely campaign amongst the people for acceptance. Anything short of this basic democratic practice would leave the Government in a position of having to dictate who could be supported and who could campaign for support.

The KwaZulu Government had always supported Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi's call for the release of Dr Nelson Mandela, Mr Zeph Mothopeng and other political prisoners.



Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Chi



Mr Elijah Barayi, President o



W. Zulu and President of Inkatha



Dr Oscar Dhlomo, Minister of Education and Culture, Secretary-General of Inkatha.

The South African Government's denial of basic political rights for Blacks was a denial of the responsible nature of the country's Black body politic. The curbing of Black political leadership in some organisation was a curbing of black political leadership in all organisations.

The KwaZulu Government remained convinced that the combatting of the upward spiralling of violence by harsh legislation and restrictive regulations could only lead to the raising of the stakes for those involved in violent conflict and in increasing their will to be violent.

"The State President must now accept the need to de-escalate violence by removing the circumstances in which he has to lead the Government under a State Emergency. He must now introduce the kind of reforms which would gain Black support," the Caucus added.

"The growth of Draconian legislation has always been disadvantageous to the emergence of the politics of negotiation. Escalating violence for political purposes has been just as detrimental. One is the concomitant of the other and both must be excised out of our South African way of life.

"Only then will the people themselves be able to ensure that the politics of negotiation succeeds in creating a situation in which all race groups are governed the way they are willing to be governed."

The Caucus passed the following resolutions:

- To convey to the South African Government our deep disquiet about its refusal to tackle the fundamental issues facing South Africa and the Government's consequent reliance on the army and the police to do what the electorate themselves should do.
- To call on all Black South Africans to recognise that it is in the politics of negotiation alone that they can attack apartheid where it is most vulnerable and to call on them to have cool heads in the face of the latest Government action against Black South African leaders and organisations.
- To call on the international community to recognise that the South African Government will not be brutalised either from within or from without into moving away from the kind of harsh measures which it has now again used, against Black organisations.
- It is only solid support for Black democrats harnessing real Black bargaining power, employed in the politics of negotiation, which can bring about the end of apartheid and the continuing upward spiralling of violence and counter-violence.
- In the interest of our common cause we appeal to many people within the International Community, who are opposed to apartheid, to stop playing off one Black organisation or one Black leader against another.