

WINNIE MANDELA CALLS FOR BLACK UNITY

Is there hope?

In calling for Black unity, Mrs Winnie Mandela, wife of imprisoned ANC leader Dr Nelson Mandela, had added to hope that constructive relationships could yet emerge between the real ANC and Inkatha, says Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

The Inkatha President was responding to a newspaper report in March quoting Mrs Mandela as saying she was prepared to meet Dr Buthelezi in an attempt to unite South Africa's feuding Black factions.

Dr Buthelezi said Mrs Mandela was the wife of one of the most outstanding Black leaders in the country who had already suffered more than 20 years of martyrdom in jail.

"It is befitting Dr Mandela that his wife speaks to recapture the idiom of his leadership," he said.

A great deal of affection existed between himself and Dr Mandela which went back a long way.

"I enjoyed his and Mrs Mandela's hospitality on many occasions when I visited their home in Orlando when he was still free to be active in politics.

"Throughout his term in prison he has from time to time found it possible to convey messages to me and my family. When the Commonwealth Eminent Persons group was in South Africa he told them through General Osesagun Obasanjo that I would have to be included in Dr Mandela's company and the company of Mr Oliver Tambo in the solution of South Africa's problems.

"On no occasion has Dr Mandela made the kind of hideous attacks on my integrity and my political motivation which have so frequently come from the ANC Mission in Exile in



Mrs Winnie Mandela

recent years.

"There is hope yet that the real ANC will re-emerge to be the pragmatic, constructive, political organisation it was before it was banned.

"Statements like those of Mrs Winnie Mandela add to my hope that constructive relationships could yet emerge between the real ANC and Inkatha."

Dr Buthelezi said the Black struggle for liberation dated back a very long time. It was history that had written the hallowed values of the struggle in the hearts and minds of the people.

The struggle itself had shaped hearts and minds and there was a deep-down commitment among the masses in Black

South Africa to continue upholding the timeless values of the struggle for liberation and to pursue the objectives which were commensurate with them.

Black political disunity was a more recent phenomena but those who benefited most from it would least stand the testing of time. Time-honoured values would constantly re-emerge after each set-back in the Black struggle for liberation to put the struggle back on its correct footing.

It was therefore not surprising that Mrs Mandela had called for Black unity and had said she was prepared to meet him.