

STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE BLACK PEOPLES' CONVENTION

Until Gatsha Buthelezi's statement in the Daily News (4/7/73) the EPC refused to be drawn into his latest controversy whilst abroad, and the present challenge on his credibility here.

However, his facile and impetuous statement that Prof. Brutus "graduated from Robben Island" is cause for extreme disquiet. His subsequent reactionary statements are clear indications to the oppressed Black people that such fulminations only prove the impotence of persons committed to working with the oppressor in mapping out the future of Black people in our country.

We would like to believe that the unfortunate statement attributed to Gatsha Buthelezi is a misprint, but by his invidious position within the white oppressor's system - for which he alone is responsible as the choice is entirely his - it is becoming plain that he is increasingly echoing Nationalist propaganda-type sentiment by engaging in suspicious recriminations like these, which no Black person, committed to seeing the true freedom of all Black people, would stoop to.

"Give an opponent a bad name and hang him!" It would be too much to expect a person working within the white system to disabuse his safe position of immunity. Unfortunately for persons of the presumptuous and opportunist ilk of Gatsha Buthelezi, Robben Island is remembered by Black people for claiming some of its best sons who worked uncompromisingly for freedom of Black people from white oppression.

One wonders why it is that Gatsha Buthelezi never fails to remind Black people of his former association with leaders in the Black struggle. Could extending his support in the name of the muted Black movement be the real reason? It will be difficult for Gatsha Buthelezi to find an equal who would reject as a sham something he tenaciously clings on to, and which he ambiguously goes to extreme contradictory lengths in defending and attacking. And, Gatsha Buthelezi should remember when eulogising any member of the white parliament, which is responsible for our present oppressed condition and the various Robben Islands of South Africa, that only Black people are sent to Robben Island!

For someone who takes such pompous and passionate exception to Black people in South Africa supporting our rightful leaders, Gatsha Buthelezi displays an alarming lack of knowledge of the Black struggle and what it means to be involved in it. Robben Island caters for both "political" and "criminal" "offenders" of the racist white regime. Daily about 2,000 Blacks are prosecuted under the "Pass Laws" - representing about one quarter of all cases sent for "trial". The white regime sends our people to the many Robben Islands of South Africa - our people do not elect to go there. This is a cruel daily feature of life in this racist country.

Black people cannot afford to be misled by false hope and vague promises made by system oriented "leaders", the absence of whom would facilitate our freedom from white bondage. The pity is that the news media espouses the cause of the system-oriented "leaders", giving them a bloated sense of their responsibilities and achievements. Because of their kind Black freedom has been delayed in this country. Since the white man set foot in South Africa Blacks have been sold down the drain and the indications are that this trend will continue.

Many arguments for continued investment are advanced by foreign investors with vested interests in South Africa. One of these being that their involvement in South Africa is purely economically motivated and that in principle they do not support the racist policies of South Africa. This, however, is a fraudulent argument and therefore not acceptable to us Blacks.

Harsh reality spells it out to us Blacks. Firms like I.B.M., General Motors, Polaroid (Frank & Hirsch Pty. Ltd.), International Telephone & Telegraph (I T & P), to cite a few, are directly supporting and promoting the oppressive apartheid policies of the White racist settlers in South Africa.

IBM computers, for example, play a major role in the police state system of classification of the people by race in order to control and oppress Black people in South Africa. They are used in the Pretoria Reference ("pass") Bureau in maintaining efficient suppression of Blacks in all spheres of their lives.

General Motors is also actively involved in assisting and promoting the rule by force of the White government by designing, producing and supplying police vans which are used for loading the usands of Blacks for "pass offences" and permit raids. Such assistance by General Motors strengthens police and military power.

Polaroid, i.e. Frank & Hirsch Pty. Ltd., and Kodak are actively engaged in the

racialistic apartheid policies, in that Polaroid cameras and Kodak films are used for producing photographs for "passes", then by making this system efficiently. It is therefore ridiculous to hear Polaroid shouting "We abhor apartheid". Lots of empty noise was made when Polaroid announced that it will continue its business in South Africa and was determined to improve the salaries of Blacks.

This has not been realised as Polaroid still has thousands of its employees being paid salaries well below the "poverty datum line" which according to white standards is R80.00 a month for Blacks.

Some companies like IT & T are assisting the White government's "Bantustan" policy in decentralising industry by establishing so-called "border" industries located outside the major industrial areas. This policy is aimed primarily at impeding the flow of Blacks to "White urban areas"

In these "border" industries Black employees earn as little as R3 a week, as has been revealed in the British parliamentary commission sitting. Businesses located in these so-called "border" areas receive much tax exemptions and are assured of cheap Black labour resources and the resultant huge profits.

Advocates for continued investment in South Africa, such as the "Bantustan leaders" claim that increased investment in the homelands will increase employment opportunities. This may be true to a limited extent, but the fact is that increased foreign investment implies an increase in frustration and exploitation. The availability of cheap labour means an entrenchment of the undesirable capitalist exploitation of Blacks. These advocates of foreign investment are inadvertently or knowingly advocating for a transference of exploitation from major centres to the so-called "border" areas. The inhumanity of this is further aggravated by the fact that some of these so-called "leaders" also support this exploitative economic system by way of dues paid to chiefs by poor people, or by entrenching their vested business interests.

Advocates of continued investment claim that if foreign investors withdrew this would result in large-scale unemployment of Blacks. Withdrawal can only mean the downfall of the Vorster regime! Black people have pledged themselves to fight for freedom whatever the cost. Black people have endured much suffering and cannot suffer beyond this. Black people in general are prepared to suffer any consequences if this means ultimate Black freedom. We have inherited many diseases, e.g. , kwashiorkor, pellagra and other undernourishment and malnutritional diseases from the exploitative and repressive capitalist economic system of South Africa.

Black people at the cost of freedom can no longer afford to be misled by vague promises, which only serve to perpetuate the white status quo.

Then, too, it is common knowledge that foreign investors must of necessity operate within the "laws" of the country. This means operating within repressive apartheid laws such as Job Reservation, the "Factories Act of 1941", the "Physical Planning and Resources Act of 1967", the "Bantu Labour Settlement of Disputes Act of 1953", etc. And as the British Guardian newspaper perceptively points out: "The trouble is that the international community does not yet seriously desire to see change in South Africa."

Foreign involvement in the exploitative economic system of South Africa may be summarised as follows:

1. Foreign investors, by strengthening the economy of the fascist regime make it possible for this minority regime to bolster its military force which is designed for the perpetual oppression of the Black people.
2. Increased investment encourages the flow of immigrants attracted by the prosperity of whites in South Africa. This flow in effect means an increase in unemployment for Blacks. These immigrants occupy jobs which would otherwise be occupied by Blacks.
3. Increased technological achievements result in increased unemployment for Blacks and an efficient oppressive machinery, for Blacks have no training opportunities, and in the main are classed as "unskilled" workers by the whites.
4. Foreign companies support and promote the enforcement over Black people of some form of vicious white law, such as the "Pass Laws".
5. Foreign businesses promote the "Bantustan" policy, which is designed for the perpetual enslavement and exploitation of the Black Nation which is decentralised into separate and warring entities. This is opposed to Black Solidarity and Black identity.
6. Increased investment in South Africa means the exploitation of Black people in the "border" areas.
7. Payment of taxes to the South African white minority govt. and their very presence in our country means the increase in economic power and military strength of whites and this assists in stamping out all opposition and Black liberation movements in South Africa.

With these factors in mind, the first National Congress of BPC unanimously passed the following resolution:

- That this Congress noting:
1. The vital role played by foreign investors in maintaining and supporting the economic system of South Africa,
 2. That this system is designed for maximum exploitation of Black people,
 3. That the riches and resources of this country belong to Blacks as their birthright,
 4. That foreign investors claim that their presence in this country contributes towards the development of the Black community,
 5. That this claim is disputed by the reality of the Black experience in this country;

Therefore resolves:

1. To reject the involvement of foreign investors in this exploitative economic system.
- ii. To call upon foreign investors to disengage themselves from this white-controlled exploitative economic system.

Incidentally, the comment by other self-appointed "leaders" in the Black community on this vital issue do not merit consideration, let alone rebuttal

SIGNED:

- ROY CHETTY - Public Relations Officer
- SIPHO BUTHELEZI - Secretary General
- AUBREY MOKOAPE - Chairman, Durban Central BPC Branch
- HARRI SINGH - Chairman, Overport BPC Branch

Statement issued to ff. news agencies

- ① Natal Daily News
- ② S. Tribune
- ③ S. Times.
- ④ Graphic Leader
- ⑤ Post.
- ⑥ Mercury
- ⑦ Weekend Worker
- ⑧ Natal Mercury

Bruitus: Growth accuses Chief Daily News July 1973

Daily News Reporter

THE BLACK PEOPLES' Convention today called Kwazulu's Chief Gatscha Buthelezi a "reactionary" who was misleading non-White people with "false hopes and vague promises" and claimed his "absence" would facilitate "our freedom from White bondage."

The accusations against Chief Buthelezi are contained in a very long and detailed statement signed by BPC office bearers Mr Roy Chetty, Mr Siphso Buthelezi, Mr Aubrey Mokoape and Mr Harry Singh.

It is prompted by Chief Buthelezi's clash with the exiled Coloured leader, Professor Dennis Brutus, in America and his subsequent clash with the Natal Indian Congress, which had high praise for Professor Brutus, despite the fact that he dismissed the Chief as a "stooge of the Vorster Government."

The BPC's statement says Chief Buthelezi's description of Professor Brutus as having "treasoned" against the "island" is "facile and injudicious" and "is tantamount to extreme disquiet."

IMPOTENCE

"His subsequent reactionary statements are clear indications to the oppressed Black people that such fulminations only prove the impotence of persons committed to working with the oppressor in mapping out the future of Black people-

in our country. "We would like to believe that the unfortunate statement attributed to Gatscha Buthelezi is a misprint, but by his invidious position within the White oppressor's system... it is becoming plain that he is increasingly echoing Nationalist propaganda sentiment by enacting in suspicious recriminations like these, which no Black person, committed to seeing the true freedom of all Black people, would stoop to."

DEFENDING

The statement says it would be difficult to find an equal for Chief Buthelezi who could "project as a sham something he tenaciously clings to and which he ambiguously goes to extreme contradictory lengths defending and attacking."

And in a reference to Chief Buthelezi's recent praise of Progressive MP Mrs Helen Suzman, the statement says:

"And Gatscha Buthelezi should remember when eulogising any member of the White parliament, which is responsible for our present oppressed condition and the various Robben Islands of South Africa, that only Black people are sent to Robben Island."

It claims that Chief Buthelezi's "pompos and passionate exception to non-White people in South Africa supporting our rightful leaders," is proof of "an alarming lack of knowledge of the Black struggle and what it means to be involved in it."

FALSE HOPE

"Black people cannot afford to be misled by false hope and promises made by system orientated 'leaders', the absence of whom would facilitate our freedom from White bondage."

The BPC statement details the movement's opposition to overseas investment in South Africa and says firms like IBM, Polaroid, General Motors and International Telephone & Telegraph "are directly supporting and promoting the oppressive apartheid policies of the White racist settlers in South Africa."