

EXTRACTS FROM THE OPENING ADDRESS DELIVERED TO THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE NATIONAL CULTURAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT (INKATHA)

by the Hon. M. G. Buthelezi (President)

We have tremendous problems which face us as Blacks. This machinery gives us a chance of coming face to face with these problems right from the grass-roots. In the past we have tended to hope that we can be helped by others to solve our problems. It is of course true to say that no people stand on their own in the present world. At the same time there are those problems in the history of a people, which only the people concerned can solve. We have tended to hanker far too much for foreign cultural patterns in the past, which in any case were kept by those who brought them for their own exclusive use. It is clear that hopes for only a change of heart, on their part, will not carry us far. This means therefore that this is the time for us to wrestle with our problems of development in our own way through our own indigenous cultural patterns. Western civilisation is impressive in its emphasis on the rights of the individual. On the other hand our culture stresses the rights of the individual as a member of the group. Clearly group survival is of paramount importance in our society, and the individual rights are important to preserve in order to promote the continued existence of the group, rather than just individuals. That is why our extended family-system which is a source of so much banter and sarcasm in Western Societies, is geared towards the survival of the entire group.

In a society such as that of South Africa in which we live, where we are excluded from most of the fruits of our labours and from other privileges, as a racial group, it is quite clear to me that our cultural pattern of reacting to this as a group, is the only answer we have. This is not a situation where our efforts should be geared towards what each individual rakes off for himself. The system which puts us as a racial group beyond the pale of Life's Bounty is a vicious one. It cannot be tackled successfully by individuals or cliques but we have to mobilise each and every individual in our society, be it male or female, be it young or old, if we can hope for any success in the foreseeable future.

Let me emphasise that our efforts are geared towards self-upliftment on all fronts and at every level of our society. They are geared towards correlating our efforts with those of our brothers in the whole of Southern Africa.

It is not good enough to condemn what others do unto us, if we have not learnt not to do the same things to our people in all matters where we have any latitude.

Lest people should think I am talking through my hat, let me illustrate what I mean here by our cultural pattern geared

towards group survival. I will mention simple things such as weeding parties, AMALIMO in which neighbours come together to assist each other in the planting of crops, in the weeding of crops and in harvesting. I can also refer to simple things such as the SISA custom, where a man with more cattle than his neighbour loans some of his cows to a neighbour so that he can also have milk. I can go on talking about these cultural patterns for a long time. The stockfelling parties, although very much crude manifestations of these indigenous cultural patterns, are a modern example of these cultural patterns, and also UKUHOLISANA, where individuals share salaries by giving each others' salaries, or part thereof, on certain month-ends.

It is clear that in our Community-Development unless we join hands we can never hope to survive. It should not be difficult to develop modern co-operative societies, in our communities as these fall in line with our own cultural patterns.

It seems to me that one day we will be faced with the problem of deciding to what extent the people must have a stake in the control of the means of production, and in sharing the fruits of that production. In my budget speech in the Assembly last year it will be recalled that I stated that I believed in free enterprise. At the same time I do believe that in our areas of influence the people must without stifling private enterprise, have a stake. I believe in these things because I am convinced that we have suffered so much injustice and deprivation, that it would be tragic, if we strive for freedom only in order to replace white exploitation, with black exploitation. There are instances where black exploitation exists, where this is the case we must seek to eliminate it. If our efforts are not geared towards them we might as well forget about waging any battle towards the elimination of poverty, disease and ignorance which are hall-marks of our present state of oppression.

I think I need to say these things at the very outset, because I believe it will be a terrible mistake if we emphasised our political problems, to the exclusion of those other problems which keep us in a state of deprivation, about which we can do something even now, to liberate ourselves.

I consider it a pity, that some supposed liberals in mass-media have tried to confuse issues by emphasising the political thrust, in our struggle to the exclusion of the educational, social and economic fronts of the struggle. Whilst

it is the KwaZulu Legislature that has set us up, we would be fools to concern ourselves only with KwaZulu politics, as much as it would be foolish to ignore KwaZulu politics. A fine balance is needed here and this machinery, Inkatha, does provide us with solutions if we use its machinery in a constructive way.

We realise that like throwing a net into the sea, a National Movement of this nature, will draw out all kinds of 'creatures'. They will be some amongst others, who will be thinking of self-promotion and self-gain. I believe that this form of our African people's participatory democracy will eliminate such characters sooner or later.

Inkatha provides the machinery within which the people as a whole have a right to participate in National decision-making at all levels. It provides a forum for african democracy based on consensus. We Zulus have a lovely expression, which sums up this thought very well, when we say, INJOBQ ENHLE NGETHUNGELWA EBANDLA, one Zulu-English dictionary translates this saying in the words—the umutsha is sown in the company of others from whom you may receive 'tips' and advice. In other words only those things thrashed out with others can produce meaningful solutions. This is what we are here to do.

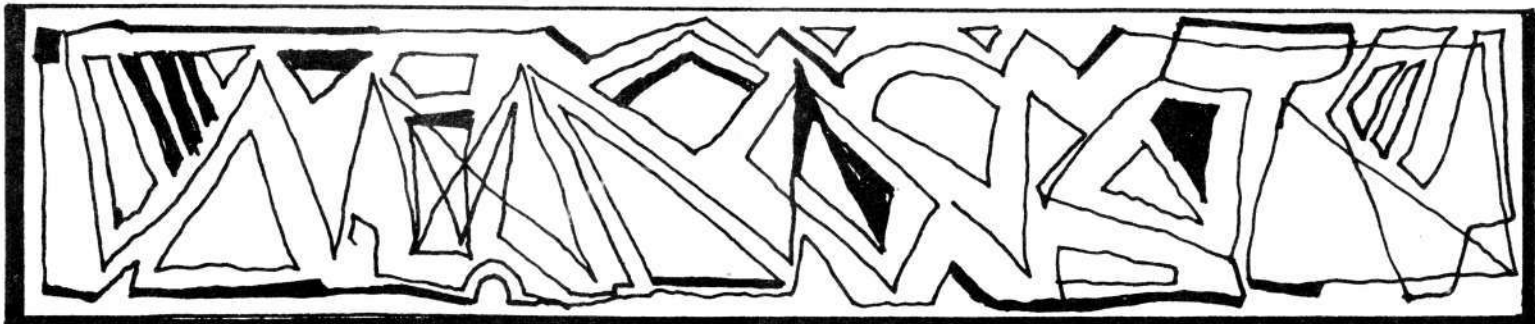
On the political scene I have stated at various meetings of the National Movement, that the system of self-rule worked out for us has run into problems which many of us anticipated. In the first place those who have set us up, as a KwaZulu Government, have done so without being prepared to give us a country where such governing can take place. After the so-called final consolidation plans, we still end up as pieces of separate uncontiguous territory scattered all over our province, which in its entirety was our Zululand. This raises a number of issues. This being the case it has been considered necessary for us to revive the National Cultural Movement in order to enable our entire people to participate with us in thinking through these imponderables. A view has been expressed that we need to walk this 'Separate Development' thing through and through, by demanding independence. The KwaZulu Legislative Assembly has already expressed its view clearly on this issue. They have applauded the honesty of the Nationalist Government in carrying out a promise which was made to Black people in 1936 by the Hertzog Government, to deliver certain hectares of land to black people to increase the sizes of these reserves, now called 'Homelands'. The Reserves were considered even then to be inadequate for the african language groups of South Africa.

A view has been expressed in this connection that we should seek independence. To me and my government, it seems a

farce to ask for independence of separate pieces of inadequate territory for the largest ethnic group in South Africa. This puts to great doubt the sincerity of the government. Although we as the Legislative Assembly have rejected the idea of independence under these circumstances, it is important to know exactly how the people as a whole feel about this issue. The National Cultural Liberation Movement gives us this opportunity of knowing where people as a whole stand on this issue.

We have further suggested a federal formula, as a compromise solution for South Africa, and this has also been rejected out of hand by the government. There are some voices, which want to present me and my Assembly, as not representing the true wishes of the Zulu people on this issue. A spurious comparison is made with the Transkei, when such a comparison does not apply at all. The Transkei is today one geographic block of territory, not as a result of any act of benevolence on the part of the present government. It is such a block by a sheer accident of history. In spite of this, it is still a 64 000 dollar question whether it can be a viable Country, able to stand on its own amongst other nations. It is true that there are many nations that are not economically viable that have got flags, National Anthems and are represented at the United Nations. For us in South Africa the problem is made complex by the fact that we Blacks have contributed towards the growth of the South African economy. Our decision in KwaZulu and elsewhere, must be whether we decide to sign away our claim to this economy, we have helped to develop, in exchange for a flag, a National Anthem and representation at the United Nations, and even a unit of the army which in terms of modern warfare, may be nothing more than a posset of a Police Force. I admit that even we in KwaZulu, need such a defence force. The hub of the problem is whether these things are worth the signing away of what many of us see, as our birth-right? We do not want to appear to be forcing our qualms of conscience on these issues down anybody's throat. This National Movement provides the forum for the expression of our National consensus on these crucial issues.

If we can not reach any meaningful fulfillment through the instruments of Separate Development, what is the next step? A view is expressed by some people that one must have nothing to do with the system. This implies choice. I am not convinced that such choices are open to black people of this land. To pretend that we have open choices, to me amounts to giving the powers-that-be more credit than they deserve. The pressures brought to bear on us to make us conform need no cataloguing by me here, as they are by now too well-known to the whole world. Many questions come to mind for example, after the Republican government has created machinery whereby various taxes paid by blacks



are channelled to the coffers of these Reserves' governments, what does one do? Do we refuse to take the responsibility to work out, as we do now, some kind of budget for the departments assigned to us? This is not an ideal situation even with the additional cash given to us as budgetary subsidies. Do we then miss the opportunity of doing our best out of this whole mess in order to be able to say that we are ideologically clean? Does this eliminate the danger of certain elements assuming authority in our name and presenting Apartheid, to the World as acceptable to us? These are but a few questions that need to be faced in wrestling with these matters. For example for those of us who are hereditary Chiefs, if one wants to "get out of the system", as some people are urging, what does this mean? Does one abandon one's people to the wiles of anyone who may be imposed on them? Or does one suffer and struggle with them in the misery in which fate has placed them at this age and hour?

We need a body like this National Movement where we can come face to face, with these questions and think them through as a National group. If this means action, then we can only take collective action, if we are properly organised. The time for short-lived dramas or traumas is over. Careful thought should precede collective action. If the decision is non-action, we also need to think this one through-and through together.

If we are operating within the system, as we are, what strategies do we adopt, for our people to get optimum benefits, that will enable them to struggle further for their liberation? The National Movement will be an instrument in our hands to put our theories on these matters into action.

It is now accepted that our people will have to help themselves. Where do we find them? Right where they are, I suppose, in these reserves, and in the ghettos called townships and locations. We have not created the reserves or these ghettos, and the fact that the system is abhorrent to us, does not sound a plausible excuse to me for keeping out of the people's struggles, just to be able to say we have not contaminated ourselves with the system. Ideological cleanliness may be a virtue, but to strive for it whatever the cost to one's people may cheapen it to nothing more nor less than a cheap and arrogant vice.

Many divisions have been created between us by many things which are enumerated in our preamble. The National Movement gives us the opportunity to tackle these questions jointly. The black struggle is not something that can simplistically be reduced to a struggle between patricians and plebeians, or between urbanites and peasants or between intellectuals and hoi-polloi. We have no such segmentations in our society except in theory, our colour levels us all up, in a country where racism has been institutionalised almost to perfection. We have one struggle whether we are chiefs or commoners. We have a tryst with destiny to resolve these problems together as people suffering under the same oppression.

As far as our education is concerned, we have set up a Committee to go into the problems. We feel that too much stress on formal education was made in the past. A lot of

damage was also done by some of the Arch-Apostles of Bantu Education when they made remarks such as a statement by Mr J. N. le Roux in April 1945 in Parliament:

"We should not give the natives an academic education, as some people are too prone to do. If we do this we shall later be burdened with a number of academically trained Europeans and Non-Europeans, and who is going to do the manual labour in the country? . . . I am in thorough agreement with the view that we should so conduct our schools that the native who attends those schools will know that to a great extent he must be the labourer in the country".

This further jaundiced our people against blue-collar jobs which are vital if any country is going to develop. There is great dignity in labour, and Blacks need technical training in order to participate in the industrial growth of the Country. Job reservation is not the only barrier stopping us from doing certain jobs. We have no artisans worthy of that name. A new re-think on our whole system of education is called for by these circumstances.



Although only 30 per cent of KwaZulu is arable we need to step up the training of our youth in Agriculture. It is not sufficient to assist farmers through our Extension Officers, we need a more thorough training in Agriculture from form I right up to University. At the same time the Churches have through the Health and Welfare Association gone into Rural Community Development. This is overdue and highly appreciated. We need a complete orientation to face up to this kind of thorough training in rural Community Development. Some people use the excuse that we need not be given more land, because we cannot even use what we have. While this is too oversimplistic a view, it is still true that we can do much better than we are doing at present to produce enough to feed ourselves. These are basic issues, which are the very first things, if one talks about development.

The pilot project in Rural Development should not be something seen as a thing only of local interest. We should all set our eyes on it, as it should set the pattern of our development.

We, think our Womens' Brigade and our Youth Brigade should be seen as segments of the National movement that should spear-head our development at grass-roots, if our Community Development projects are to get off the ground.

As far as this question of education is concerned it is to me, the only issue, apart from the question of land, on which the whole question of government sincerity revolves. I have

reported to many thousands of Africans on how at our meetings with the Prime Minister and the Minister of Bantu Administration, and his Deputies, we as the KwaZulu Executive Council appealed to them in 1973 for our people in urban areas to have their children educated with the same medium of instruction as KwaZulu Legislature has decided should be used in KwaZulu. I have reported at various meetings when I reported back to thousands of Africans in Soweto, in Welkom, KwaMashu and Umlazi, on our meetings with the Prime Minister with other Black leaders. I reported that in March 1974 and January 1975 we jointly raised this issue of medium of instruction in the Urban Areas expressing our wish that it falls in line with the medium of instruction decree by the Reserves governments, that Pretoria has created. At the March 1974 conference attended by all black leaders, the Prime Minister asked the Minister of Bantu Administration, the Hon. M. C. Botha to prepare more information on the issue, for our discussion with them at our next meeting. When we met in January this year, the Hon. Minister of Bantu Administration and Development again spoke of carrying out certain investigations when we raised this question of medium of instruction.



When I asked for the time schedule, in these investigations, as to whether it would take six months or a year to carry them out, the Minister told me that the issue could not be rushed or steam-rollered. We also raised the imposition of a 50-50 medium of instruction in Afrikaans and English by Pretoria, on our children in the urban areas. We were given the same vague promise that the matter would be investigated. In less than two months after these meetings, the Minister has announced that he is going ahead with the Pretoria imposed medium of instruction on our children in the Urban Areas. They did not even have the decency to inform the black leaders that the issue had been decided once and for all by them unilaterally. Just like most of you we read about it in Hansard and in the Newspapers. So much for dialogue and detente within South Africa!

The attitude of the government as displayed through the Minister of Bantu Education, is a direct contravention of article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in that he arrogates to himself, a right which according to this Declaration, is a prerogative of the African parents, to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Apart from the fact that the conduct of Pretoria on this issue is a contravention of the Declaration of Human Rights, it makes Pretoria vulnerable on the question of sincerity. Education is such a basic issue on which we have no self-determination that it is most difficult not to believe that

the whole policy smacks of fraud when one realises that blacks cannot even decide, on the language of instruction for their children. In addition the Government imposes burdens on our children which White children do not bear in South Africa. No white child is educated through the medium of two languages on a 50-50 basis. If this is not evidence of White oppression of black people, then I do not know what the word oppression means.

There are issues such as that of machinery for negotiation and labour relations for our people. We feel that our people should have trade unions, if the trade unions for Whites and other racial groups are regarded as effective machinery for negotiations, as we understand them to be. Trade Unions are not machinery for staging strikes, but for negotiation in order to avoid strikes. A lot is being said about Works Committees. These are not effective in most cases, and the appeal made recently by the Federated Chambers of Industry for Black Trade Unions echoed what is in our hearts on this issue.

In South Africa there is one doctor for every 44 400 Africans. This reveals the extent to which our health needs are not met. We realise that Missionary hospitals attempted to meet these needs in the past. There is now an impressive health scheme with emphasis on preventive medicine, which the Health Department, is implementing. We are impressed with it, but the take-over of Mission hospitals in KwaZulu seems to be a fly in the ointment, at the moment. We have no Health Department at present and have been told when we recently asked for one that we are not ready for it. Our wish was that the take-over of the mission hospitals be postponed until we have a Health Department. We are afraid that we may lose some doctors, if the take over is implemented immediately, which would aggravate a delicate situation in terms of our medical needs. The Health and Welfare Association Community Development project includes a clinic. We in KwaZulu intend seconding some of our nurses and Extension officers as part and parcel of this project.

We are in the process of setting a Red-Cross operation going in KwaZulu. An investigation of how this may be woven with the Brigades, is going to be carried out.

In all these things we need your advice and guidance. We feel that a forum is provided by the National Movement to express these openly, so that our thinking can be one on all these vital issues. (1)

