

“WE WILL NOT BEG FOR HELP...”

Attempt to politicize US scholarships slammed.

A dispute between United States Congressional Democrats and the administration of President Ronald Reagan has jeopardised a R5 100 000 scholarship programme for Black South African students.

The State Department Agency for International Development picked the South African Institute of Race Relations to administer the project because of its many years of experience in this field.

The project was designed to place 70 to 75 bursary recipients in the South African university of their choice at the start of the coming academic year.

However, Mr Howard Wolpe, chairman of the House African Subcommittee, and Mr Julian Dixon, a prominent member of the House Appropriations Committee and Head of the Congressional Black Caucus, are blocking the funds.

They claim, according to reports, that the selection of the SA Institute of Race Relations is opposed by certain Black leaders including Bishop Desmond Tutu and Dr N Motlana.

Neither Bishop Tutu or Dr Motlana have publicly backed this claim in South Africa and well-known Black journalist, Mr Percy Qoboza, while visiting Washington recently, apparently tried to change Mr Wolpe's mind.

Mr Wolpe is also said to be “particularly concerned” that the director of the Institute of Race Relations, Mr John Kane-Berman, is “too close to Chief Gatsha Buthelezi and Inkatha...”

They are demanding that the institute's role be taken by the Equal Opportunities Commission on Higher Education and the trust fund for Christian Outreach or a consortium combining these and other groups.

None of these organisations — unlike the Institute of Race Relations — have operating university scholarship programmes.

Senator Nancy Kassebaum, chairman of the Senate Africa Subcommittee is said to be “outraged” by Mr Wolpe's intransigence as his actions could jeopardise the entire project.



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Chief Buthelezi told Clarion Call that he had lobbied for many years during visits to Washington and with influential Americans visiting SA for scholarships for Blacks.

It was obvious that Mr Wolpe had been “got at” by people hostile to Inkatha and who were furthering the cause of Black disunity.

It was “disgusting” that the SA Institute of Race Relations, which had done such outstanding, unbiased work for the country's Blacks across complex political lines, was being used in such a way.

Chief Buthelezi added that he wanted people here and in the United States to know that he and Inkatha would never beg for money for scholarships. Goodwill was a “vital ingredient” when dealing with the needs of the oppressed in SA.

“As deprived as Blacks are in this country, we will be totally doomed if we lose our dignity. We in Inkatha will look after ourselves. We would rather

not share in a cent of it. We will not be dictated to by paternalistic foreigners.

“We are prepared to say that Inkatha members, who may have benefited from the project to be administered by the Institute, will withdraw their applications...”

“The road to liberation is not easy and we will never attain our goal for democracy for all in South Africa if we allow ourselves to be pushed around by people like Mr Wolpe who, quite clearly, hasn't the faintest idea about Black politics in South Africa.

“That Mr Wolpe — for peurile political gain — is tampering with the lives of young Black South Africans, their hopes and aspirations, tells us a lot about the man. He must know that this is what he is doing.

“Education is a precious gift so cherished by struggling Blacks.

“No words can condemn Mr Wolpe's actions strongly enough. One can only hope that, in the end, democratic principles will prevail.”