

The mood of black South Africa

“There was a tragic misassessment by the ANC Mission in Exile about the mood of black South Africa in the mid-seventies. They were taken totally by surprise when violence broke out on the scale that it did in 1976 and 1977.

“The militants in the ANC Mission in Exile realised that black groups in South Africa

were stealing their violent thunder. They knew that they did not produce the violence which erupted. They knew that they had under-estimated the drive of black South Africa to do something for itself in the vacuum which the ANC Mission in Exile's failure abroad had produced.

“They did what they could to undermine the Black Consciousness Movement and sought to establish every

possible stranglehold over support for Black Consciousness groups from abroad.

“Then the South African Government did the ANC Mission in Exile's dirty work for it. In a massive crackdown in October 1977, 19 black organisations were banned, thousands were arrested and hundreds were detained or served with banning orders.

“The violent militants in the ANC Mission in Exile were given a breathing space and they became adamantly determined to undermine all black groups in South Africa who were not under their direct control and were there to do their bidding . . .”

— Chief M.G. Buthelezi

The struggle for power — or power struggle?

“Any group in exile which commits itself to the armed struggle resists sharing power. Revolutionary organisations throughout the world, operating from exiled positions, seek to become a totally dominant force and this is what the ANC Mission in Exile had been doing during the 1970's.

“They were saddled with the fact that the OAU had accepted both themselves and the PAC as liberation forces in South

Africa, but they continued doing everything they could to undermine the PAC. The history of hostile relationships between the ANC Mission in Exile and the PAC in exile is widely known in Africa and in the West.

“They did everything they could to block my access to Africa and to the international community. The ANC Mission in Exile sees itself as a government in exile and wants to return as a revolutionary government to take over South Africa.

“The ANC Mission in Exile is not working to establish democratic rights for the people of South Africa to choose whom they will to form a government. It regiments its members ideologically and inculcates in them the view that only the ANC Mission in Exile can be allowed to make decisions and to direct the affairs of the struggle for liberation. It wants to take over and control and it is ruthless in its dealings with those who do not act as fetch and carry boys for it.” — Chief M.G. Buthelezi

Release Nelson Mandela

At every opportunity Chief Buthelezi, Inkatha and the KwaZulu Government have campaigned for the release of political prisoners and for the

unbanning of organisations and people.

Numerous personal representations have been made to the State President, Mr P W Botha, to release Mr Nelson Mandela and other black

political leaders who are incarcerated with him. Mr Botha's predecessor, Mr B J Vorster, was also petitioned.

Chief Buthelezi has adamantly refused to co-operate in the South African

Government's attempts to legitimise the new constitution. He has put the release of Mr Mandela and other leaders beyond party political interests.

Inkatha believes that the democratic process in South Africa is deeply impaired because blacks cannot demonstrate their political choices by electing the leaders whom they think ought to be in the forefront of politics.

It is in the circumstances of jailing, bannings and detention without trial that black politics become confounded by celebrity leaders and self-appointed spokesmen.

There is an urgent need for

black politics to be rooted in constituency politics in which there are the normal safeguards and checks to ensure that leaders represent their people truthfully.

The outside world has an urgent task to perform and that

is to mount every endeavour to persuade the South African Government to normalise black South African politics. State interference in the black democratic process favours the development of violence in politics.

"It is a central argument in my whole political position now that forces working for change in South Africa are being terribly detrimentally affected by the levels of violence we are experiencing. There is now in South Africa a yearning for a normalised society amongst all population groups . . ."

The war against Inkatha

There can be no doubt that the ANC Mission in Exile has declared war on Inkatha. Very senior members of its National Executive, and others, attempt to portray the movement and its leaders in such a way as to encourage their "elimination." ANC publications and radio broadcasts pour forth a steady stream of abuse and outright lies about Inkatha.

Having at every opportunity sought reconciliation and a division of labour approach, Inkatha has either to be intimidated out of political existence or to defend people in the face of the kind of tactics

and strategies which the ANC Mission in Exile is now employing against their fellow black South Africans.

Chief Buthelezi has made it clear that he and Inkatha will not be intimidated out of the political arena. They will not abandon the noble cause of the struggle. They will not step aside and see deep and hallowed values in the struggle for liberation corrupted and discarded.

Chief Buthelezi makes the following point: "I do not speak academically or theoretically about violence. I lead Inkatha as its President in the midst of violence. Inkatha is surviving in violence. It is surviving in

circumstances in which violent onslaughts are being made against it and attempt after attempt is being made to establish no-go areas for it."

Party political differences between blacks give rise to very heated debate. Inkatha is now involved in life and death issues and pursues political aims and objectives within the stark realities of a truly oppressive society where the Government uses Draconian laws to curb opposition.

It can be anticipated that exchanges of views between those in black groups will be strident, but in recent time the stridency of black political debate has assumed very nasty under and overtones.

What is behind the name-calling

In black South Africa there is nothing so hideous as a black who aids and abets apartheid and participates in the subjugation of his or her

people.

When blacks call Chief Buthelezi a "government stooge", a "sell-out", the "lackey of Pretoria", a "Bantustan leader", a "tribal leader in the pay of Pretoria",

their intention is to raise hatred against him and Inkatha and the effect of these accusations is to declare him and Inkatha open game for violence.

In the political context of black South Africa, these accusations are made by groups which do in fact use violence for political purposes. There is a brand of what observers call "protest politics" in South Africa which seeks continuity by violent intimidation.