

ONE-SIDED STORIES

Bias in some sections of the media

THE FIGHTING GOES ON — IN SPITE OF THE "PEACE PACT" *Violence in South Africa's Natal province continues*

By EPD correspondent Hans Brandt

QUOTE — EVANGELICAL PRESS SERVICE (EPD),
West Germany, November 15, 1988:

... "We have reason to believe that certain warlords want to seize power," says Roy Ainslie, regional director of the liberal Progressive Federal Party. He adds: "It appears to be a well co-ordinated campaign." ... At this moment 11 Inkatha members are on trial in Durban ... It is uncertain, however, whether the notorious Inkatha "warlords" in Pietermaritzburg are prepared to relinquish the power they gained by violent means ..."

QUOTE — ROY AINSLIE, REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF
THE PROGRESSIVE FEDERAL PARTY, INTERVIEW
WITH CLARION CALL, November 24, 1988:

"The Evangelical Press Service has misquoted me. At no time have I linked Inkatha with "warlords" and would never do so. When I refer to so-called "warlords" I refer to unknown elements linked to vigilantes. I am very careful about this, I do not link "warlords" to Inkatha."

The Evangelical Press Service (EPD) in Germany is an influential news and information agency received by opinionmakers throughout that country and elsewhere in Europe.

The EPD plays an important role in determining public attitudes towards issues in South Africa and there is no doubt that the views expressed by the EPD also play a major part in determining how many millions of DM are allocated by church bodies in Germany to (for the most part) various anti-apartheid organisations as well as church and welfare agencies in South Africa.

It is significant, however, that access to this funding is more often than not given to organisations approved of by the External Mission of the ANC or their supporters. It is as if certain organisations in Germany are not aware that there are many other organisations who oppose

apartheid but who do not necessarily wish to follow the dictates of the pro-violence ANC.

Inkatha is one of them. Precious little German church money comes its way. Inkatha has refused to become a surrogate of the ANC or support the armed struggle, sanctions and disinvestment.

The ANC, by its own admission, is out to "destroy" the movement, and when one notes the attitudes of certain church organisations in Europe towards Inkatha one has reason to query whether they are wittingly or unwittingly aiding the ANC to achieve this end.

It would appear that some church leaderships in Europe

Inkatha group attacked by over 50 youths

DURBAN. — More than 50 Black youths on Wednesday night attacked a vehicle carrying six members of Inkatha as they returned from a court hearing involving UDF members.

The six, including the chairman of the Elandskop branch, Mr David Ntombela, had a lucky escape when a petrol bomb lobbed through the window of the van failed to ignite.

The attackers hurled rocks and bricks through the open passenger window.

The six were returning to Elandskop from the Durban Regional Court

where a case involving three UDF members was being heard.

They stopped at a shop in Edendale at about 5 pm and, Mr Ntombela said, "I was just pulling off when a large group of youths attacked the van. There were more than 50 of them."

He said a petrol bomb was thrown through the open window, missing him but hitting the windscreen, which shattered.

A passenger, Mrs Caroline Sosibo, received slight cuts to her legs as the broken bottle which held the petrol fell to the floor. — Sapa.

The Citizen: November 4, 1988

These two newspaper clippings published in South Africa clearly reveal how both the so-called "sides" are tragically caught up in the Pietermaritzburg conflict and are exposed to criminal behaviour. Some reports published abroad, however, present the situation as if only one side is primarily on the receiving end of the violence and the other is the aggressor.

Why are certain Church agencies failing to act as conciliators?

have problems with a liberation movement, *separate from the ANC*, which has its own structures and political agenda and calls for a *multi-party* approach to the elimination of apartheid.

The following question therefore needs to be asked: Do some church leaders and organisations in Europe and elsewhere prescribe to the view that the ANC and only the ANC (including organisations approved by them) are the "*sole and authentic*" voices of black liberation in South Africa?

If not, why does it appear that every effort is made by some to besmirch Inkatha's name?

The EPD report of November 15 is a classic example. Nowhere in the report does the correspondent give evidence of hostility directed by other groups *towards* Inkatha apart from noting that nearly 1 000 people have died in the overall "fighting".

Why not, when there are numerous examples?

In mentioning a recent case in which *alleged* Inkatha members had allegedly murdered UDF sympathisers, why did the EPD correspondent *fail* to note (for example) an equally recent case in which a senior COSATU official is standing trial on terrorism and attempted murder charges involving members of Inkatha who were the alleged victims?

Fortunately, the EPD *did* quote Inkatha Secretary-General, Dr Oscar Dhlomo, as welcoming the "peace pact" and the promotion of "the concept of peaceful co-existence."

The reporter, nevertheless, took the trouble to inform EPD readers in an obvious slant that, in his view, it was "uncertain" whether Inkatha members would comply. He concluded with an emotive description of an alleged murder by alleged Inkatha groups.

The EPD has reported on the violence in Pietermaritzburg on many occasions. Their stories are almost invariably negative regarding Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the KwaZulu Government and Inkatha.

A one-sided and biased impression is constantly given by the EPD to its readers who, many thousands of miles away from South Africa, must invariably conclude (if they have no other untainted access to information) that Inkatha is *the* problem.

Surely it is time, when so many lives have already been lost, that this kind of reporting ceased. Objectivity and balance is crucial.

Nobody is denying the violence. Leaders of organisations said to be involved, including Inkatha, are attempting to stop it. Inkatha's leadership vehemently denies instigating or supporting the violence — as does the leadership of the UDF and COSATU.

All sides are burying their dead.

The EPD report is highlighted because it typifies the kind of biased reporting which to date has encouraged black (and white) disunity and further exacerbates tensions.

Inkatha and KwaZulu see church bodies playing a conciliatory role in line with Christian values. Thankfully many are attempting to do this. Regrettably, some others are not.

City Press: November 6, 1988

Mpumalanga terrorised by vigilante hit squads

GANGS armed with shotguns are spreading terror in Mpumalanga near Hammarsdale where they are killing and intimidating UDF supporters, according to residents of the township.

They say the gangs, about four or five members strong, arrived in the area two weeks ago.

Local news reporters said they saw three such gangs this week, casually dressed, some in shorts, but all carrying shotguns.

The reporters found spent cartridges in one part of the township where youths had been shot earlier in the week.

Residents said the gangs were spreading terror throughout the township and related horrifying stories of how members of their families had been shot at, whipped and beaten.

They said they feared for their lives.

One woman said she slept under her dressing table at night. Another said she was too frightened to send her children to the shops for fear they would be attacked.

Residents who spoke asked not to be named for fear of reprisal by the gangs, but said they were willing to make statements to the police.

One man, who asked to be named, Joseph Majola, told how his 15-year-old brother, Thulani, was killed in Unit 1 South on Tuesday.

Majola, 31, said he had seen a gang armed with shotguns arrive in the area and then shoot his brother, who had been talking to some friends in the street.

"Thulani was wounded in the head. I ran to his side but the gang stopped me," said Majola.

"They then called another man who shot my brother again, killing him. The man then rolled Thulani's body over with his foot and asked me: 'What do you think now?' I replied: 'It is enough. You have killed him.'"

Another victim of the gangs, Sizwe Dlomo, 18, said he was shot in the arm and legs on Tuesday. Dlomo said he had been standing outside his house with his brothers, Maxwell, 20, and Muzikayise, 22, when four men armed with "pumpguns", arrived.

The Dlomo brothers ran away, but were fired at from behind. All three were wounded and Maxwell was still in a serious condition in King Edward Hospital, he said.

Members of one gang threatened to shoot a reporter when he took photographs of them on Friday. The incident was witnessed by lawyers from the Legal Resources Centre in Durban who made statements to the police in Hammarsdale. — Sapa

The overwhelming majority of blacks in KwaZulu-Natal support power sharing between all races in South Africa, with only a small minority favouring a black-only government.

They also support the free enterprise system, continued patience on the part of the black majority and a combined government for KwaZulu-Natal. They oppose the violent overthrow of the white government, sanctions, consumer boycotts and organised anti-government labour action.

These are among the final findings of a recent scientific study commissioned by the KwaZulu-Natal Indaba.

Asked to respond to the statement "Power sharing between all races in South Africa is the best solution", 90 percent of the sample agreed, as opposed to only four percent who disagreed, with the remaining six percent undecided.

Asked which specific group or groups should rule South Africa, respondents answered as follows: All races together, 40 percent; black and white, 15 percent; only white, seven percent, don't know, 27 percent.

Further statements in the survey sought to ascertain what type of political future and society were desired by respondents. The statements and responses were:

- "When apartheid goes, free enterprise should continue and people should be given the chance to start and run their own businesses" — agree 78 percent, disagree three percent, don't know 19 percent.
- "The government of KwaZulu-Natal should be combined or made one with the government of Natal" — agree 65 percent, disagree nine percent, don't know 26 percent.
- "Different areas and groups of people must be allowed to rule themselves in the best way for them" — agree 61 percent, disagree 16 percent, don't know 23 percent.

Attitudes towards possible

strategies to be pursued towards change were explored in further statements seeking responses.

These were:

- "The removal of apartheid laws will allow for peaceful progress" — agree 90 percent, disagree three percent, don't know seven percent.
- "The black majority must be patient and wait for the white government to make changes" — agree 51 percent, disagree 28 percent, don't know 21 percent.
- "Consumer boycotts are not a good way to bring about change" — agree 43 percent, disagree 28 percent, don't know 19 percent.
- "Violent overthrow of the present white government is the only way" — agree 16 percent, disagree 53 percent, don't know 31 percent.
- "Blacks should support sanctions as a means of political change in South Africa" — agree 11 percent, disagree 63 percent, don't know 26 percent.

Attitudes towards potential agents for change were explored in a concluding section of the survey. The statements and responses were:

- "The church has an important role to play in the solution" — agree 51 percent, disagree 24 percent, don't know 25 percent.
- "Black labour can force the white government to accept black majority rights and rule" — agree 22 percent, disagree 43 percent, don't know 35 percent.

Respondents were highly sceptical of the ability of white political parties to solve the country's problems, with only 18 percent of respondents believing any of them could do so, 35 percent disagreeing and 47 percent uncertain.

Commenting on the research results, Indaba communications director Peter Babcock said the organisation was heartened by the confirmation that blacks were firmly committed to equitable

power sharing.

"The survey proves that by a large majority of blacks favour peaceful power sharing and are firmly opposed to violent solutions and radical strategies for change," he said.

The survey was carried out by the market research firm Research International during the period July-September this year and involved an area-stratified random probability sample of 802 black adults who were interviewed personally in their own homes in the language of their choice.

The accuracy and validity of the survey has been attested to by Caroline Harben, managing director of Research International.

"Great pains were taken to design a sample which could be broadly representative of the attitudes of blacks in KwaZulu-Natal and would guarantee statistical validity and reliability," she said. "I am satisfied that the questionnaire was objective and met the stringent standards demanded by socio-political work."

Own priori

BREAD and butter issues far outweighed political aspirations among black people in KwaZulu-Natal, a survey commissioned by the Indaba has discovered.

Research International carried out the survey by interviewing 802 adults in their homes in the language of their choice in July, August and September to build a picture of their lives.

Questioned about their needs and aspirations, 59 percent rated owning their own homes as the top priority.

Other priorities in their needs and aspirations were: financial security 51 percent of respondents, a good job 43 percent, educating themselves and their children 37 percent, infrastructure 35 percent, equality in education and pay 31 percent, owning a car/TV 28 percent.

A desire for political rights was rated at 8 percent of respondents.

"However, it is clear that the desire for political rights rose sharply once these primary needs