



The State President, Mr PW Botha. "... open discussion to improve communication ..."

PW BOTHA ANNOUNCES NEW BLACK FORUM

AT THE opening of Parliament at the end of January, the State President, Mr PW Botha, acknowledged that there were "certain problems" which led to frustration in Black communities.

He said that from deliberations of the Cabinet Committee it had become clear that "communication and mutual trust" between the population had to be improved if peaceful constitutional development was to be successfully pursued.

Mr Botha went on: "In my personal capacity as the person with the final responsibility for matters affecting the Black communities I have therefore, after consultation with those concerned, decided to supplement the activities of the Special Cabinet Committee by establishing an informal, non-statutory forum in which interest groups and representatives of the government bodies concerned will participate on an ad hoc basis and by invitation."

The forum, he said, would be chaired by the Minister of Constitutional Development and Planning. There would be open discussion on a wide range of constitutional and related matters to "improve communication" between the Government and Black communities and to create a "favourable basis for negotiations aimed at arriving at mutually acceptable development steps in the constitutional field..."

In his opening address Mr Botha also made it clear that "... it remains the Government's point of departure that, because of the diversity of South African society, it is neither desirable nor practicable to accommodate all communities in the same way..."

BUTHELEZI SLAMS PLAN AS "A TALKING SHOP..."

REACTING to the State President's proposed forum for Blacks, Chief Buthelezi said it was clear that leaders like himself who rejected so-called "independence" had nothing yet to talk about with the Government.

"The forum which the State President talked about looks no more, no less, than a talking shop meant to divert all our attention away from seeking full political rights with Whites, Indians and Coloureds," he said.

"While we accept the principle of give and take in negotiations about our future, there is no way in which we as the African majority can accept being fobbed off with such lousy political crumbs."

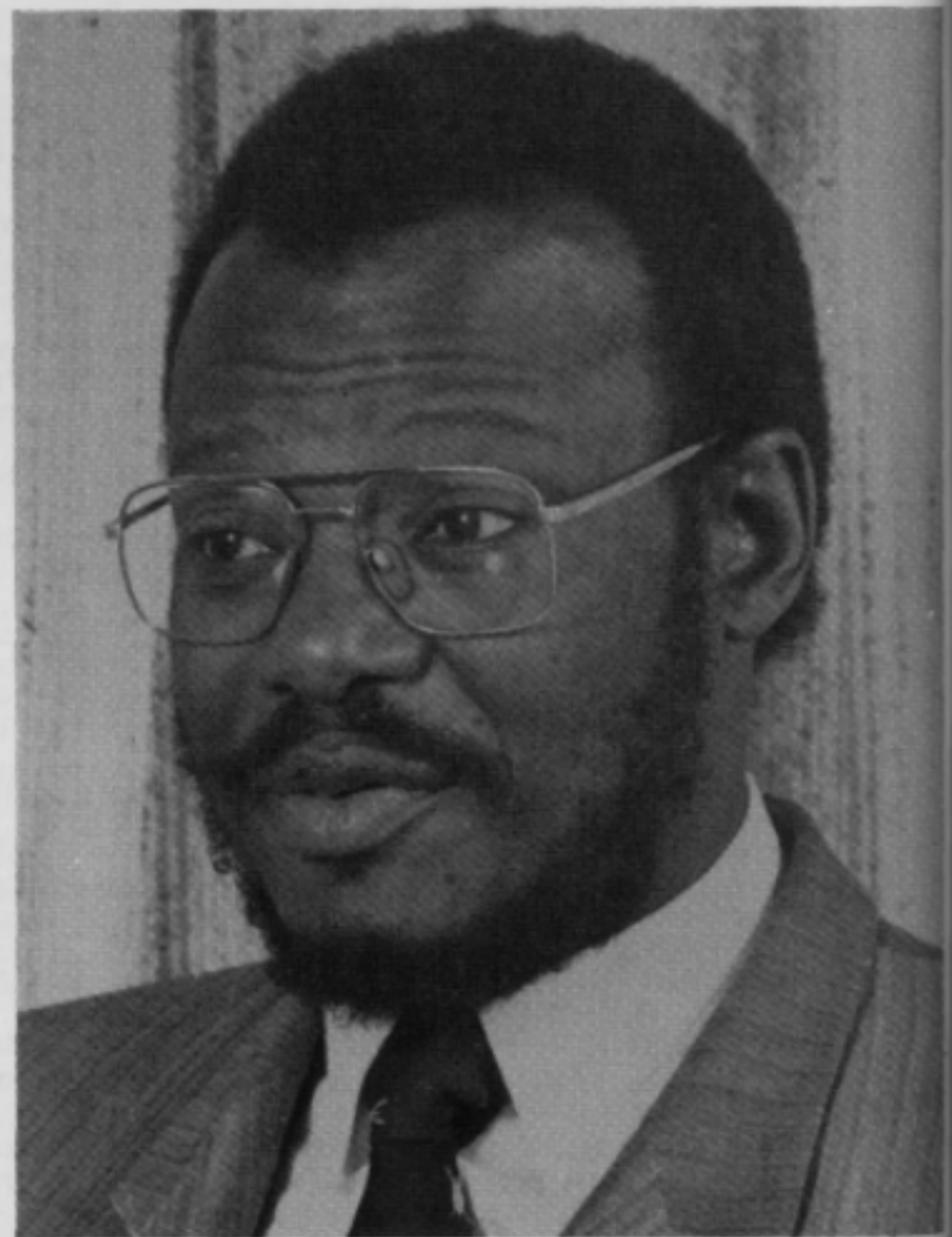
Chief Buthelezi said Blacks had extended a hand of co-operation many times and could no longer understand why they alone should always be called upon to co-operate all the time "without any suggestion from us being given even a cursory look by the Government..."

He added that it would be "extremely irresponsible" to give the Government the wrong impression that "we can co-operate in our own political suicide by going into things like the so-called forum, which looks like a toothless bulldog or at most a talking shop..."

Chief Buthelezi said the time for prescriptions by one race group for "the rest of us" had gone and would never return.

"The sooner this is realised the better the prospects for peaceful change in South Africa," he added.

"We reject the whole idea of splitting up the African people into those who are in the homelands and those who are outside."



Chief M G Buthelezi "... we are being fobbed off with lousy political crumbs..."