

MESSAGE TO CHURCH LEADERS

“INKATHA NOT TO BLAME FOR SPIRALLING VIOLENCE”



In a hard-hitting memorandum delivered to a South African Council of Churches delegation in Ulundi, Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi urged Church leaders to speak to the REAL perpetrators of violence — the ANC and its alliance partners. Dr Buthelezi accused the SACC of having joined in Party political vendettas against Inkatha.

He bluntly told the delegates — who included Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Catholic Archbishop Denis Hurley and SACC general secretary, the Rev. Frank Chikane: “You are probably wasting your time here because it is to Dr Mandela that you should go. It is to Mr Harry Gwala you should go. It is to Mr Walter Sisulu you should go. It is to Dr Mji you should go. Go to these people who have re-committed the ANC to intensify the armed struggle.

“Go to the people who are calling for more killing and training cadres for more killing if you want to stop the killing.”

And Dr Buthelezi accused the ANC of pulling out of the proposed peace rally he was to have addressed jointly with Mr Nelson Mandela “because they are too frightened to talk peace” — just as they had pulled out of the April 11 talks with the South African Government.

“They will be exposed for what they are — hypocrites — who claim to have the following, but will be shown to have no following when people do not heed calls for peace. Dr Mandela made his call. What did it help?”

UDF tactics and strategies were

now coming home to roost, said Dr Buthelezi. "It was the UDF call for liberation now and education later which is maturing into hideous violence . . . Go to the townships; see the kid wearing Mandela T-shirts with his face cut out because he called on them to throw their guns, knives and pangas into the sea."

The Inkatha president vowed to continue with his peace initiatives. "I still stay that Black leaders should lead up front and they should go to stop the killing where the killing is taking place.

"I still say it was hideously wrong and cowardly of the ANC to stop Dr Mandela from sharing a platform with me so that we could

stop the killing.

"Go to the ANC I ask, tell them to get off their political backsides and organise a meeting with me so that we can address the people in Pietermaritzburg together?"

Dr Buthelezi also made a strong plea to the SACC delegation on the question of refugee centres for the victims of Natal/KwaZulu violence.

"ANC PROVOKED EDENVALE VIOLENCE" INKATHA MEMBERS ATTACKED ON WAY HOME FROM RALLY

The contrasting behaviour of Inkatha and UDF supporters at two separate rallies was cited by Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi to forcibly illustrate to the church delegation where the blame for violence really lies.

He said Inkatha people were being intimidated and killed — merely because they were Inkatha members.

These are the facts as outlined by Dr Buthelezi to the church leaders.

When Dr Nelson Mandela held his peace rally in Durban on February 25, the Inkatha leadership made strong appeals to its members to attend in large numbers and not to interfere with people attending the rally. This followed an anonymous pamphlet which threatened bloodshed against those attending. There was not a single incident as a result of these appeals.

Then when Dr Buthelezi called a Thanksgiving rally in Durban on March 25 — attended by tens of thousands of people despite the rain — people were waylaid and murdered on the way home. It was this, said Dr Buthelezi, that sparked off the hideous levels of

violence which appalled the world.

He said the rally was preceded by intimidation aimed at producing a stay-away action to commemorate the Sharpeville shootings in March, 1960.

This intimidation set the tone for what subsequently happened.

The day before Sharpeville day, UDF supporters attacked KwaZulu transport buses at Georgetown and Vulisaka. The passengers were Inkatha supporters travelling to their homes at Taylors' and Elandskop. There were also many attacks on buses travelling through UDF areas.

Next there were attacks on buses taking Inkatha supporters from Elandskop, Sweetwaters and Gezebuso to Durban to attend the Inkatha rally — particularly along the Edendale main road. Later the same day, when the buses were returning from Durban, more than 100 of them were diverted. But some of them could not be diverted and 14 buses were attacked when

they were returning from dropping off Inkatha supporters. That was the start of the heightened tension.

By Tuesday, barricades were being erected along Edendale road (which runs through the UDF area). As the situation worsened, the KwaZulu transport company was forced to withdraw all buses from the area. That left a great many workers stranded in the city who had to return home through UDF-dominated areas. This further heightened the tension and when on the Wednesday, the UDF again erected barricades, there was a mass public reaction which was basically spontaneous and rested upon the 'enough is enough' sentiment.

Dr Buthelezi told the church delegates: "When you look at everything involved, it was Inkatha members who were attacked to and from work on and before Sharpeville day. It was Inkatha members who were attacked to and from the rally I held on March 25. It was Inkatha members who were isolated from their jobs and homes.

"Inkatha was not the aggressor in any of this. It was not Inkatha which attacked Inkatha when they were coming home from the rally.

"It was ANC/UDF/COSATU who did the attacking."

MESSAGE TO

WHY BLAME INKATHA?

QUOTE: "It was not Inkatha that started planting bombs in restaurants, supermarkets and night-clubs. It was not Inkatha which planted bombs on street corners . . . it was not Inkatha which started the 'necklacing' in this country . . . Why this hideous misrepresentation of Inkatha as the perpetrator of violence?"



The Chief Minister with Archbishop Desmond Tutu.



Archbishop Denis Hurley.

He told them: "There are lost and broken souls out there fleeing before violence, fleeing to Inkatha because Inkatha is their home. We urgently need to care for these broken and displaced people."

The Chief Minister urged the churchmen to support an Inkatha application to establish refugee camps somewhere in the Greater Pietermaritzburg, Umzumbe and

Ndwedwe areas — to which areas the refugees have been fleeing.

"Help me care for the maimed and the broken and then we can talk a lot more meaningfully about what we can do together to reconcile warring factions."

Dr Buthelezi reminded the church delegates that last year, Inkatha held more than 100 meetings across KwaZulu/Natal to

urge people to stop the killing. And he had personally visited the worst affected areas to hold prayer meetings among the people to urge a halt to the killing.

He said: "I will never forget my feeling of desolation and Christian isolation when right in Imbali, right next door to the seminary, I held a prayer rally for peace and not one single Christian from the

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seminary staff came to stand by me and support my call for peace.

"I am human and I burn with indignation when I am confronted with the enormity of this hypocrisy in the churches and among churchmen."

Dr Buthelezi recalled that last year, he received a delegation of bishops sent by the Anglican synod. As a consequence, the joint UDF/Inkatha initiative was set up.

These talks between Inkatha and the UDF/Cosatu were still ongoing. In June last year, after a meeting of the joint peace initiative group, it was decided there should be a meeting of the Presidents of the

organisations involved in the violence. Dr Buthelezi said he immediately wrote to ANC President Oliver Tambo giving him dates. Mr Tambo subsequently fell ill — but the ANC did not even

bother to acknowledge the letter until late March.

Said Dr Buthelezi: "While people are dying, there is no room for this hypocrisy of calling for peace and doing nothing about it."

KILLING NOT TOLERATED

QUOTE: "KwaZulu is a free place where there is free politics. The only thing that is not tolerated by the people of KwaZulu is the killing of Blacks by Blacks. That the people set their hearts and minds against."

PEACE TALKS WITH CATHOLIC BISHOPS IN BID TO END VIOLENCE

In a reconciliation move with the Catholic church aimed at hastening an end to Black-on-Black violence, Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi had talks recently in Ulundi with a group of Catholic bishops.

The Catholic group comprised the Rt Rev M.B. Biyase, Bishop of Eshowe; the Rt Rev P. Mngoma, Bishop of Mariannhill; the Rt Rev G. Ndlovu, Bishop of Umzimkulu; the Rt Rev D. Khumalo, auxiliary Bishop of Durban; and the Rt Rev P.Z. Mvemve, auxiliary Bishop of Johannesburg.

The Inkatha President and KwaZulu Chief Minister said he hoped the discussion would be the beginning of a new era of dialogue between him and the Catholic church. There had been "crossed lines and misunderstandings" in the past and certain points which concerned him.

Dr Buthelezi listed these as:

- Diakonia (an inter-church organisation in which the Catholic church was prominent) had hosted his political enemies and given succour to them.

- The New Nation newspaper was reportedly financed by the South African Bishops Conference. Umafrika, a newspaper with a previous good reputation for news coverage, had been turned into a "party-political rag".

Dr Buthelezi said he was concerned that these publications were being used to stir up ill-feelings and to stoke up Black-on-Black violence.

"The SA Catholic Bishops' Conference has endorsed the policies of my political enemies. At this time of hope, it is my sincere desire that we together grasp the golden moment of history to add to the process of reconciliation which I see as so important a responsibility of the Church," Dr Buthelezi said.

And Dr Buthelezi took the opportunity to re-emphasise that Inkatha does not use violence for political purposes.

He told the Bishops: "Inkatha has more to lose in situations of violence than anybody else and would not therefore court it. Inkatha has less to gain, even if violence does succeed, than any other political organisation would gain if violence succeeded for them.

"I abhor violence of all kinds — and I most abhor violence when it is violence against what really amounts to women and children, when they become the victims of political wars in which they want no part and from which they suffer most."