

SUPPORT FOR THE KWAZULU/NATAL INDABA

"The only hope on our dark horizons ..."
Author Alan Paton

"The politics of negotiation must ultimately triumph and it is time now to commence on that triumphant journey by taking local and regional steps towards final national goals . . ." —

Dr M G Buthelezi

The election results have shown the "total historic necessity" for KwaZulu/Natal Indaba-type proposals to establish the region within South Africa as a united, non-racial democracy.

In speeches throughout South Africa, Dr M G Buthelezi says he believes that the time has come to take local and regional steps towards final national goals.

"Reform which is dictated from above can never be acceptable to the majority of South Africa's population," he said.

"Only consensus politics can solve our problems and not Mr Botha's prescription politics."

He told the Central Committee of Inkatha at a recent meeting that "statesmanship" demanded that the Indaba must go on.

It "looked good" to him and that was why "I have jammed my foot in the door." He said he would "not walk through

the door" unless the whole of Inkatha walked through with him.

The KwaZulu/Natal Indaba flowed from the recommendations of the Buthelezi Commission and represents a broad spectrum of black, white, Indian and Coloured parties and interest groups.

There is ample evidence that support for the Indaba is growing.

Late last year the Indaba produced, by consensus and compromise, its constitutional proposals and Bill of Rights for the KwaZulu/Natal region. (See following pages for brief details.)

Dr M G Buthelezi, Inkatha and the KwaZulu Government have always maintained that KwaZulu and Natal should be accepted as one region within South Africa and, further, that given the opportunity to prove that a united, non-racial, system of government in KwaZulu/Natal is generally desired and workable, could

act as an example for the rest of the country.

"I am not saying that the Indaba is perfect," Dr Buthelezi said recently. "I'm saying that it's the best we've got at the moment. The only hope for a peaceful future is if the Government sees fit to authorise some form of legislature for Natal/KwaZulu which could be gradually extended to other parts of the country.

"I believe Federalism is the only way out for us."

The Indaba's high-level support also includes author Dr Alan Paton and international author and philosopher Sir Laurens van der Post. The Oxford Union, the prestige debating forum of Britain's Oxford University, has also recently come out in support of a motion by KwaZulu's Dr Oscar Dhlomo that the Indaba provided the best hope for a democratic South Africa.

"The Indaba is the only hope on our dark horizons," Dr Paton said in a recent interview.

The Indaba group is aware that much has to be done to increase the public's knowledge of the proposals and the director of the Indaba, Professor Dawid Van Wyk, is confident that this can be accomplished.

"We are busy expanding our information campaign and we will continue to ask the Government for a referendum among the people of the

region," he says.

"Nobody can afford this initiative being destroyed."

The Indaba accepted that the region is a single unit and that its second tier government should reflect this reality in its political structure.

Furthermore, that society in the region should be founded upon a free economic system and the provision of equal opportunities for all people. The draft proposals provide for the protection of the rights of individuals and groups.

One of South Africa's leading independent research organisations, Markinor, has investigated public attitudes towards the KwaZulu/Natal Indaba and its results were recently published.

The large sample used consisted of 3 500 adults of all races randomly selected throughout the KwaZulu/Natal region. The sample included people from rural as well as urban areas.

International aid needed

In a recent address to the Central Committee of Inkatha, Dr Buthelezi said international aid of "Marshall aid magnitude" would be needed to make the KwaZulu/Natal Indaba a real instrument of improved living standards.

He said that the Indaba would have to find a formula in which international aid could be translated into the kind of community, local, regional and KwaZulu/Natal-wide mechanism capable of utilising international aid.

"It must give rise to massive job creation, education, training, community upliftment and housing programmes — among others," he said.

	Sample	Heard or seen Indaba
Whites:	1 200	80,6%
Blacks:	1 500	36,3%
Indians/ Coloureds:	800	53,5%
TOTAL:	3 500	42,7%

Overall the research indicated very positive attitudes to the Indaba amongst people of all races.

The following, for example, was a response to various statements about the Indaba by respondents who had heard or seen anything about the Indaba.

"The Indaba proposals deserve to be supported by people of all races living in KwaZulu and Natal."

	Total	Whites	Blacks	Indians/ Coloureds
Totally agree/ somewhat agree	75,9	67,5	82,9	55,0
Totally disagree/ somewhat disagree	9,7	17,0	6,2	16,2
Neither agree nor disagree	12,7	12,6	9,4	28,4
Don't know	1,7	2,9	1,5	0,4
	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

Analysis of the research showed clear evidence that the Indaba and its proposals have strong support amongst National Party, PFP and NRP supporters.

As with any sophisticated research project, the results of the Markinor survey of attitudes of the voting age population of KwaZulu and Natal were subjected to a wide variety of tests for validity (size and quality of sample, answers to similar or opposite questions, and a number of statistical techniques). All of these were designed to determine the quality of the responses at the time they were made by members of various racial groups.

Because the research was conducted prior to the May 6 white election campaign it was possible to gain insight into the current relevance of the survey by comparing political party support in March and actual votes cast in the May election.

First, the breakdown of Natal whites expressing "strong support" for the various political parties contesting the election:

	NP	PFP	NRP	CP/HNP	TOTALS
Percentage	53,4	27,7	8,7	10,2	100,0
Representing X voters	110 000	57 000	18 000	21 000	206 000

Second, the actual results of the election (excluding 1 519 spoilt ballots and 2 531 votes for Independent candidates) in Natal:

	NP	PFP	NRP	CP/HNP	TOTALS
Actual votes polled	119 299	66 885	23 327	25 505	235 016
Percentages	50,8	28,5	9,9	10,8	100,0

It is clear from this that there is little correlation between support of political parties and attitudes toward the Indaba. In fact, all evidence available to the Indaba provides very powerful indications that there is strong support for the Indaba and its proposals amongst National Party, PFP and NRP supporters.