

VIOLENCE

"Killing is evil and it must stop..."

"How can we negotiate when one of the negotiating partners is still recruiting black South Africans – kids who should be going to school – to train them for military duty in Umkhonto we Sizwe? How can we negotiate when there are caches of arms scattered around the country and when trained military cadres are being infiltrated into the country to use them?"

– *Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi, speech, Ladysmith, November 1990.*

South Africa has been a violent society. Apartheid was thrust on black South Africa with unbelievable State violence. It was State violence that put hundreds of thousands in jail each year for one or another period of time because they were in the wrong place with the wrong bit of paper, or with no bit of paper.

The Pass Laws and Influx Control Regulations made anything to do with police and law enforcement swear words for millions of black South Africans.

Violence begets violence. State violence spawned revolutionary violence, it encouraged black disunity. Apartheid proceeded, socio-economic and political conditions worsened for black South Africans. Violence and disunity spread and the escalation of violence began consuming more and more of that which was most valuable.

"Accusations are easy to make. They are also very cheap at times because foul and violent accusations are very newsworthy. I say quite simply that on no occasion have I, as the President of the Inkatha Freedom Party, ever made any decision to act violently and on no occasion have I ever presided over any Inkatha meeting in which violent action was planned. We want progress through peace. Violence is death. It is not only death to life but it is death to hope."

Then of course beyond the violence with which apartheid was forced on South Africa, and behind the violence with which it was resisted, there was the violence which flowed from all violence, any violence – revenge violence, blood-feud violence, hate violence, pre-emptive violence and finally criminal violence.

First there was the 1976-78 explosions of violence. Then there was the violent clamp-down on violence. Then there were the early 1980's in which nothing could hold down the lid of violence. And finally there was the very brink beyond which the upward spiralling of violence could not be curtailed.

Throughout this total devastating decade and a half of violent developments in South Africa, Inkatha has never, on any occasion, ever doubted that violence would achieve nothing. It is appalled that its members and supporters have been the victims of violence and that some have become embroiled in violence.

*It is not the Inkatha Freedom Party which trained for violence, called for an "armed struggle" and placed bombs in supermarkets, on street corners and in restaurants and bars;

*It is not the Inkatha Freedom Party which called for South Africa to be made "ungovernable" and for political opponents to be "deprived" of their social bases and eliminated;

*It is not the Inkatha Freedom Party which sought to establish military camps in which it trained its members for violence;

*It is not the Inkatha Freedom Party which targeted town councillors, policemen and others for assassination as "enemies of the people";

*It is not the Inkatha Freedom Party which has caches of arms and ammunition.

*It is not the Inkatha Freedom Party which is recruiting members for a private political army which can be brought in to the fray whenever negotiation arguments are lost.

*It is not the Inkatha Freedom Party which



"South Africa is a place where all the people of South Africa, from whatever ethnic origin, no matter what political persuasion, should find a common commitment to each other because whatever politics does, and however South Africa and Southern Africa develop, all the people of the country have but one destiny... For me politics and the State should be bent to the prime purpose of making South Africa a safe, just place in which people can actually pursue their God-created ability to improve themselves..."

bludgeons and intimidates black workers to comply with calls for forced work stayaways and consumer, rent and services boycotts;

*It is not the Inkatha Freedom Party which ever thought that violence for political purposes can achieve any kind of democracy.

The Inkatha Freedom Party recognises a fundamental truth behind revolutionary political violence in South Africa: revolutionaries are not in the habit of employing violence to achieve circumstances in which others can gain power. Violence by the violent is brutal, direct and the shortest route possible to grabbing power.

The current violence that has been occurring in black townships and on black bus routes and on black taxi rank routes is not of Inkatha's making. The Inkatha

Freedom Party does not violently impose boycotts and strikes and stay-aways. In all its history, there is no one single call by Inkatha for people to stay at home on pain of death if they ventured forth.

There has not been one single boycott, stay-away action, strike action of any significance which has not been achieved without political intimidation taking place. It is not Inkatha's way of life to force poor black ladies to eat detergents they have bought in defiance of a consumer boycott.

The President of Inkatha has publicly voiced his deep concern that the IFP and the African National Congress are not working together to still the violence wherever it occurs. There have been ongoing discussions – in the form of two delegations – between the IFP and the ANC about violence and the need to do something about it.

The ANC has recently called further discussions off sine die.

"They do not want to talk peace with us," says Dr Buthelezi.

Marauding bands of young "comrades" continue to set the scene for hideous confrontations in black townships and violence for political purposes is still being used against the Inkatha Freedom Party and its leadership in efforts to try to break the IFP's centrality in the negotiating arena.

To date the Inkatha Freedom Party has had more than 130 branch leaders systematically assassinated and several thousand of its members murdered.