

COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

U.S.A. FEBRUARY 1985

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Address by Mangosuthu G. Buthelezi  
Chief Minister Kwazulu, President of Inkatha  
and Chairman, The South African Black Alliance

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The South African situation is complex, not because the issues there are more complex than the rest of the world. The fundamental issues at stake in South Africa are the issues of democracy and representative government and the future stability of the country sufficient to maintain the kind of economic growth rate that millions of deprived people so desperately need. The issues are issues of free enterprise as the most efficient mechanism of producing wealth. The issues are issues of racism which have led the present minority government to try and perpetuate minority White control ever since they came into power 37 years ago.

The world's demands on South Africa are simple. The whole world demands a movement away from apartheid to the internationally recognised principles of democracy. The world does not even demand overnight changes; it demands only a convincing and progressive movement towards change.

Strategy and counter-strategy on the part of those involved in the liberation of the country and internal and external misconceptions, are mixed with profound and confused analyses to weave a great deal of obscuring complexity around the question of what should be done and what should not be done to achieve things about which there is such substantial international agreement.

I frequently find myself in a situation where I have to address gatherings such as this and have to unravel the complexities involved. This is time-consuming and stretches audience patience to the maximum. Today I want to talk about only one thing. Americans I believe need to be faced with the starkness of Black South African political choices. Circumstances are emerging which are increasing the starkness of the choices we have to make. When all is said and done, we know that South Africa has to change, that it will change and that it will either change by blood and fire, or it will change by the politics of accommodation. It will have to change as irresistible Black bargaining bases grow and as White political intransigence is broken down by the harsh realities created by the total dependence of the one-fifth of the population who are White on the four-fifths of the population who are Black.

Black strategists in South Africa face a choice of employing violence and the threat of violence to force change, or they face

the choice of tough democratic opposition which could mobilise the strength now evolving in numerous Black bargaining positions promising real power advantages in the future.

As a Black leader involved in practical politics on a day to day basis, supported by a constituency which is counted in millions, I simply cannot afford polemic and academic discussions about political options. I have to look at Black options within the realities surrounding me. When therefore I turn to talk about the violent option, I must do so within the realities of the South African situation. The realities are that the African National Congress before it was destroyed in South Africa by being declared an illegal organisation and having had its leadership jailed or driven into exile, sent a Mission into the world to mobilise international support for the struggle at home. When we talk about violent options in South Africa, we are in fact talking about violence as orchestrated by the ANC's Mission in Exile.

This violence is the violence of a declared armed struggle by a group who conceive of themselves to be a government in exile and conceive of themselves as one day returning to take over the reigns of government. The Mission in Exile is not simply employing violence to aid the struggle at home. It is employing violence to establish itself as the undisputed and triumphant revolutionary government which will overthrow the South African regime and will rule the country.

Informed sources in the United Nations will be aware of a quarter of a century's endeavour to get the Organisation of African Unity, the United Nations, the International Labour Organisation, the World Health Organisation and a wide range of international organisations and agencies to accept it as the sole representative of Black South Africa. It has observer status in the United Nations and OAU and it has achieved considerable success in creating an image of itself being the most legitimate expression of Black South African political opinion and thought. It talks about the South African struggle as the "struggle as led by the ANC."

The External Mission of the ANC received their support from those countries in the world who are communist or at least socialist, and the quarter of a century of dependence on support from communist sources has moulded and shaped leadership in the Mission in Exile. They intend returning to South Africa to establish a socialist country and to establish the kind of political institutions and method of government which is anathema to the West. The major component in the force which the ANC has been attempting to evolve and intends to control is a component antagonistic to the Western industrial world. It is antagonistic to the free enterprise system in South Africa and it is contrary to the values and aspirations of the majority of ordinary Black South Africans.

I do not say these things in moral condemnation and I am not inspired by ideology when I talk as I am talking. I reject the orchestration of violence to establish a communist or socialist state in South Africa because my daily acquaintance with desperate poverty; my awareness of vast backlogs in essential services, housing, education, health services and the development of economic infrastructure in the depressed economic areas of the country, all lead me to the rejection of a luxurious ideological choice which thinks that you can wipe a capitalist slate clean and write on it a survival system in which you do not include the free enterprise system and an almost total reliance on the West as a working partner to make the fruits of revolutionary change meaningful to the people.

The communist world has failed to deliver the goods in post liberation eras of countries across the length and breadth of Africa. They will fail in South Africa and I simply do not believe that with all the good intentions in the world, the West will be able to be meaningful in a liberated South Africa if we as Blacks destroy our country's economic foundations in the process of throwing off the shackles of political oppression. The way we bring about change in South Africa will write a script for the future and if we have to do so through an armed struggle and the employment of violence to the extent that it will be necessary to bring about the downfall of the present regime, we will have to involve ourselves in reconstruction on the battlefields where scorched earth policies have been adopted by both sides.

There is talk inside and outside the country about the need for the South African Government to talk to the ANC's Mission in Exile, and this talk is based so often on the assumption that the Mission in Exile could be brought to a Lancaster House type negotiating table. It is also based on the assumption that the ANC's Mission in Exile will return to South Africa to be good democratic boys and girls and play the game according to Western industrialised political rules.

The Mission in Exile are not prepared to talk about power-sharing and the only circumstances in which they would be involved in talks are circumstances which would establish their political dominance over all other forces of change. The Mission in Exile would most certainly not go to talks prepared to share any power advantages they may have gathered for the people who sent them out into the world to do so. The Mission in Exile's statements about the possible release of Nelson Mandela bear me out. All humane decency and all political sense should have persuaded the Mission in Exile to encourage Nelson Mandela to accept his release and to do whatever he could possibly do to bring about change through non-violent means inside the country. He is, so to speak, one of their prize fighters which they would rather see locked in jail than be released to work for democratic decency through non-violent means.

I make this point without any presumptions in it about Nelson Mandela's own choices. He has the democratic right to walk any road he wishes but because he is the kind of man he is, he could perhaps have been persuaded to employ his staunch patriotism by responding to a call from his comrades in exile to remain in the country to do what he could.

Pretoria commands the most efficient war machine on the continent of Africa. Mr. P.W. Botha is the most powerful man in Africa. The South African economy is the most resilient economy in Africa and the South African security system has a technical excellence unmatched in Africa. In South Africa, there are millions of Whites who are really prepared to die in last ditch stands against a communist or socialist government to be formed by the ANC's Mission in Exile. South Africa is no push-over banana state and it would involve a full scale war with massive international support for the opponents of apartheid before the employment of violence could succeed in bringing about a change in government.

When I talk about violence in the South African situation and talk about the armed struggle, I do so in the context I have outlined. It is just silly for anybody to talk about violence as a justifiable option of an oppressed people when they refuse to believe that in our circumstances the employment of violence is a prescription for the destruction of my country and the establishment of a totalitarian state which is the only kind of state which could be established on the ashes of destruction. A democratic future for South Africa is entirely dependent upon vast poverty being made manageable by the maximisation of the production of wealth, and the future production of wealth is dependent upon not only the preservation of the present economic foundations, but their strengthening and the continued importation of capital, technological expertise and the management which could make this capital and expertise productive.

The United States of America is the world's leading democracy and the world's leading industrial nations know how democracy and industrialism are countersides of the two sides of but a single coin. America's economic interests in South Africa cannot be separated from interests she should have in the development of democratic opposition to apartheid. The current American debate about South Africa and the present Administration's constructive engagement policy should bear this in mind.

The struggle for liberation in South Africa will not be won by marching armies from abroad, nor will it be won by Western manipulative influences. Whatever else it is, it must remain a people's struggle and Black South Africans who reject the armed struggle must in the final analysis be responsible for evolving alternative tactics and strategies. This we are doing, and

American foreign policy makers need to examine their South African priorities very closely wherever those priorities fall in the ranking of American interests. While South and Southern Africa raise issues which do not occupy a great deal of American time, and while for a great many Americans the moral condemnation of apartheid is sufficient, the State Department and the great foundations, organisations and agencies in the United States who are involved in the South African situation need to translate their involvement into tactics and strategies which are realities for the people.

During Senator Kennedy's recent visit to South Africa, he found that Bishop Tutu could not drum up credible support for the his visit in his own backyard in Soweto and he could not even address a meeting in a church hall in Soweto before his departure. One proclaimed here as brave and courageous, and one given the recognition which normally would be given to a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, was unable to get even substantial symbolic support for Senator Kennedy precisely because a not inconsiderable section of Black South Africa is disenchanted with the United States.

The United States must recognise that there is a need to match the input of the communist and socialist world in South Africa. It is the communist and socialist regimes which have ensconced the Mission in Exile in the OAU and in the United Nations. The United States needs to counter these influences at these levels, and it can only do so by championing the Black South African exponents of democratic justice and by championing organisations evolving in the country which are committed to non-violent change and to the industrialisation of South Africa. The State Department needs to match the communist world at the diplomatic level. It also needs to match the many millions of dollars which are poured into the preparation for the armed struggle and into the support for the politics of violence, and it must do this by pouring those matching dollars into South Africa itself. Any cent that America spends outside South Africa is, in liberational terms, half the value of a cent spent inside the country.

If America started matching the diplomatic and material support which is forthcoming from socialist and communist sources, they would do so while enjoying the great advantage of working with Black South Africans in South Africa. The vast millions spent by the Mission in Exile is spent outside South Africa. The tactical advantage of spending money inside South Africa should be recognised.

There is an alternative in South Africa to violence and destruction. The forces of apartheid have already been reshuffled by economic realities and social and political forces flowing from economic realities are already forcing the National Party to abandon the holy cows of yesteryear. Desperate attempts are being made to readjust apartheid to meet current demands. If these

for the armed struggle. If these adjustments become meaningful to ordinary Black South Africans, they will be buying time for democratic decency. The South African Government will under-achieve and we will continue drifting towards the abyss of violence if we under-estimate the need to move now and to move much faster than the National Party could ever dream of moving.

The United States needs to exploit every opportunity of assisting Black South Africa to bring non-violent democratic pressure on the South African Government. American influences and American aid to Black organisations operating inside South Africa are desperately needed to make the South African Government go much further than it wants to go and to start going further much sooner than it wants to go. President Reagan's constructive engagement policy now urgently needs to be made constructive beyond the levels of shuttle diplomacy and the mounting of moral and economic pressure on Pretoria to espouse the cause of real change.

Constructive engagement for us means the doings of things which are relevant to our needs and I believe the United States needs to consider what to do with us and through us in two separate but related fields. First, it must be recognised that both now and in the future Black South Africa will have to become effectively successful in implementing the philosophy of self-help development. Even an economic growth rate which could be realistically hoped for would see an ever-increasing proportion of Black South Africans being drawn into ever worsening poverty for the next generation or two. Economic development in the formal sector simply cannot keep pace with a natural Black population growth which is now running at over three per cent per annum and will continue to do so until social and economic forces found in relatively prosperous communities act to curb birth rates. Morale and the efficiency we need as Black South Africans in the struggle for liberation is undermined by poverty. Africa is witness to the truth that stability and economic growth after liberation is threatened by increasing poverty. I preach the gospel of self-help and Inkatha's nearly one million members, like a great many other Black South Africans, are prepared to strive and to struggle, to labour and to sweat, to bring their life's circumstances up to the minimum conditions in which life and survival are ensured. If the best that can be expected in terms of the growth of the formal economy will be insufficient to raise standards of living to meet minimal requirements, then success in self-help developments must be forthcoming. We need to be helped to help ourselves and there is room for rewarding investments in the kind of human achievement which can flow from our accepted self-help needs.

Self-help is then one field through which American policies of constructive engagement can be made meaningful to ordinary people, and be made relevant to the process of change. The other field is the field of developing knowledge and expertise which would assist Black South Africans to take advantage of the growing power

advantages which are flowing from a mixture of economic necessity and the thrusting around and the floundering of Verwoerdian apartheid.

Where there is a trade union movement, there are things that Americans could do to assist the evolution of Black power advantages and things to do which would assist the developing of skills which would employ those power advantages. Wherever there is a voluntary organisation working for the people; wherever there are prospects of Black job advancement; wherever there are prospects of technical training; wherever there are prospects of developing management skills and an entrepreneurial spirit, and wherever there are prospects of opening up further avenues of higher education for Blacks, there are opportunities for America to become constructively engaged with Black South Africans in such a way that the prospects of achievement-orientated changes can be furthered.

Americans must add bite to moral statements; they must add pragmatic sense to opposition to apartheid, and they must be prepared to do more than is necessary to satisfy the American conscience and to proclaim American repugnance against apartheid.

Above all constructive engagement in South Africa by the United States will be tested by the extent to which engagement with and through Black South Africa is not a manipulative engagement which participates in Black/Black conflicts to weigh the scales in favour of one or another Black organisation. Americans need to be pragmatic. If bursary schemes are to be mounted, they must be located with organisations with the efficiency to run them. If self-help development schemes are to be strengthened, organisations involved in self-help development must be selected as partners. To use American aid money as the substance for Black South African political king-making, and for Americans to use the South African situation as an arena for competitive American party political interests, will retard the process of democratic opposition and undermine the forces of change in South Africa.

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