

SOME BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN POSITIONS ON THE
NATURE OF THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION
IN THIS COUNTRY

10TH JANUARY 1985

**A FEW REMARKS ABOUT SOME BLACK SOUTH AFRICAN POSITIONS ON THE
NATURE OF THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION IN THIS COUNTRY
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Aims and objectives of the struggle

- Politically speaking there is total agreement amongst all Blacks that apartheid must go and that racism must cease to be an organising principle in South African politics. But there is a great deal of Black heart-searching and there is intense debate about the nature of an alternative society.
- A minority of Black South Africans call for an armed struggle and advocate the overthrow of the South African Government and its replacement by a Government formed out of the successful revolutionary forces. The ANC's Mission in Exile regards the present South African Government as an illegitimate Government and regards itself as a government in exile orchestrating South African history from abroad. They advocate the armed struggle as the primary means of bringing about change and hope one day to overthrow the Government and establish a socialist government under their influence.
- There are those in the country who do not come out in open support of the ANC's Mission in Exile and the armed struggle but who play a supportive role in confrontationist politics, and who regard themselves as being involved in "a softening up process" which will ultimately lead to revolutionary victory.
- No Black leader in South Africa can openly advocate violence and there are some who use this fact as an excuse not to test views about Black tactics and strategies against the will of the people.
- Those who advocate the total isolation of South Africa do so in the name of Black South Africa and get away with it because they at the same time claim that the so-called "real leaders" of the Black community are either in jail or in exile.
- When judging what support there is for calls for the armed struggle and for calls to isolate South Africa, one has therefore to make a balanced assessment of available facts. It is a fact that:

- Inkatha has risen to become the largest Black political constituency ever to have been formed in this country and it is a fact that there is tangible evidence of mass support for Inkatha's call for non-violent solutions, for the politics of negotiation, for more investment in South Africa and for compromises before Blacks and Whites are driven to scorched earth policies.

- In the history of this country, there has never been a successful national strike.

- No Black leader in a grass-root political organisation with demonstrable membership support has ever obtained mass support for disinvestment and the isolation of this country.

- After something like 25 years of endeavour, there has been no progress in the so-called armed struggle and those calling for it are now further than ever from achieving any kind of military success.

Images of South Africa

- The Western world has judged South Africa and condemned apartheid.

- There is no forum which is truly international which does not express this condemnation, and the mass media in virtually every country of the world participate in this condemnation.

- Because apartheid is condemned internationally and regarded by most as a crime against humanity, there is a propensity in the West to laud those Black South Africans who are most vituperative in their condemnation of apartheid, and who are most bold in expressing themselves thus, regardless of whether or not they are being more than rhetorical, and regardless of whether or not they actually exercise leadership to influence events on the ground here.

- Spokesmen like Bishop Tutu are applauded and feted in the West as they boldly proclaim the myth that Black South Africans support disinvestment, support the armed struggle and that this country is on the very brink of radical change.

- They are not judged by history which has condemned this kind of spokesmen again and again.

- They are not judged by the present realities which deny the veracity of what they are saying.

- They are not judged by the extent to which they actually lead grass-root organisations, and the extent to which they

are determinants of that which is taking place.

- They are judged only by the boldness of what they say, and the extent to which they articulate Western guilt for having produced apartheid South Africa, and the extent to which that articulation feeds impractical moral condemnations which do not incur Western responsibility to do something about apartheid.
- Western influences have generated a whole breed of protest politicians in South Africa by rewarding them with acclaim and with donor agency funding. Protest politicians do not have to account to real life constituencies for what they are doing.
- They do not have to be judged by ordinary starving people in democratic organisations.
- They do not have to be judged by long queues of workers lining up outside factory gates every time there are rumours of vacancies.
- They do not have to be judged by heart-broken parents who so desperately attempt to keep body and soul together to educate their children so that their lot may be an improved lot.
- They are judged only by the media in its search for sensationalism and they are judged only by moral indignant Westerners who have no practical hand to lend in our struggle.
- Protest politics goes with political imagery, it goes with posturing, it goes with political impotence, and it so often sheds the responsibility of doing what the people want done.

Responsibility in leadership

- Black leaders who have come and gone are legion in South Africa. Every decade produces crops of leaders who are applauded during their terms of high profile images, but who are forgotten the next decade.
- Leaders who call for the kind of things which Bishop Tutu and others are calling for now have come and gone and they will come and go again after Bishop Tutu has fallen from the limelight.
- The 1976-78 period in this country is regarded by many as the most volatile period seen in a generation. There were high hopes of radical change in the then foreseeable future, but of all the leaders who were prominent then, I alone have survived to be

prominent in market-place politics.

- Inkatha over the last decade has grown from strength to strength and I stand today on the same platform on which I stood in 1976. I say the same things and I advocate the same tactics and strategies as I did then, and support for my leadership and the tactics and strategies I advocate, has grown phenomenally during the very decade in which others have faded into oblivion.

Reality is the arbiter of what shall and shall not take place

- There shall be no successful armed struggle in South Africa. President Machel has seen this and other Frontline States have seen this; Black South Africans have seen this and I have been saying so for years.

- There is no area in South Africa which can be turned into a liberated zone.

- The logistics of the armed struggle make it a pipe-dream.

- South Africa is too powerful in this sub-continent to permit neighbouring States to be used as a spring-board.

- Black South Africans themselves do in fact not support an armed struggle they cannot see succeeding.

- South Africa's 22 million Blacks are entirely dependent on mining, commerce and industry for survival.

- The economic isolation of South Africa which robs Blacks of jobs is rejected by the masses.

- Zimbabwe's 250,000 Whites held the world to ransom for 14 years. South Africa's nearly six million Whites will do so for generations.

- The South African industrial base has already reached the point in development which, if combined with the country's range of mineral wealth will ensure that external economic pressures will stimulate internal economic development, from which Whites will benefit preferentially.

- The future of Black South Africa after liberation depends upon the development now of a robust, viable economy.

- Neither Blacks nor Whites could survive without ever increasing co-operation which crosses racial barriers. This makes the politics of confrontation short-sighted and foolhardy.

- Interdependence across racial barriers creates imperatives for change which must be exploited.
- The hey-day of apartheid is past and the total dependence of Whites on Blacks will ever increasingly give Blacks bargaining strength in the future which they lacked in the past.
- Reality decrees that politics should be about the integration of Black and White interests and not about their division through confrontation politics.
- Black politics should aim to make the de facto interdependence between Black and White a forerunner to political integration, and this cannot be achieved through confrontationist politics.
- South Africa exists in the north/south global axis and its future is indistinguishable from the future of the West.
- Survival itself depends on South African industrialisation reaching development levels which we at this stage can only hope for.
- African experience and Third World experience shows that societies which cannot survive on agrarian revolutions face dismal futures if they avoid becoming working partners of Western industrial countries.
- Vast amounts of wealth will have to be generated from within South Africa if the quality of life of ordinary people can be improved even minimally. This means optimising Western relationships and not threatening them with socialist developments.
- The whole sub-continent of Southern Africa faces these realities and it would be irresponsible of Black leaders in South Africa to defy these realities and to expect neighbouring States to undergo experiences of a generation of deepened poverty and suffering.
- Ultimately freedom and democracy cannot be divorced from economic orders.
- The form that South African politics assumes after liberation and the institutions in social, economic and political life after liberation should be harmonised to produce a South African way of life which draws all the sections of the population together to strive for a common future. All realism determines that this can only be done if

- Spokesmen like Bishop Tutu and others ignore these realities. They ignore the demands of responsibility which these realities place on Black leaders, and they trade responsibilities for passing political eminence and applause now for what cannot be sustained in the future.

- Vitriolic attacks on me and Inkatha are attacks on reality which ordinary Black South Africans perceive.

- Evidence of increasing growing support which I draw because I articulate the aspirations of ordinary people demand that aspirant leaders try to cut their political teeth in exercises of Buthelezi and Inkatha bashing.

- The evidence of Inkatha's strength is evidence that others are mistaken in their interpretation of public opinion, and Inkatha and myself must be attacked in defence of that which is failing.

- When Bishop Tutu attempts to write me off as a so-called homeland leader, he does no more than continue in the direction of political posturing and media politics.

- If ever there is to be a revolution; if ever the final need to overthrow the South African Government through revolutionary means arises; if ever a race war simply has to be fought, God forbid, success will be built on the kind of foundations which Inkatha is laying now. This is the final truth which makes spokesmen like Bishop Tutu ephemeral and an indices of Black frustration, more than representative spokesmen of Black determination to avoid a holocaust from which none will gain.
