



KWAZULU

MINISTRY OF THE CHIEF MINISTER,  
ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND FINANCE

POLICE

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22nd May 1984

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter of the 7th May 1984 in connection with your experience during a meeting at Empangeni on Saturday, 5th May.

I have seen press reports and I have had a number of first-hand accounts of the events that took place at the above meeting and yet I do not know exactly what happened and what sparked off the trouble, nor do I know who was involved in the unfortunate event. There are only conflicting accounts, as is natural in unfortunate events of this nature. I have no reason to believe that the reported attacks on you were made by Inkatha members. Wherever you hold a mass meeting, there are bound to be Inkatha members present, because we are such a very well-represented movement wherever you may go. In fact during your first visit to the same area, our Chairperson of the Women's Brigade, Mrs. Mchunu, spoke from the same platform as yourself, and other Inkatha members were present. There is, however, no indication that Inkatha can be held responsible for what transpired. Members of the public were present who may or may not have been members of Inkatha, but what happened was certainly not organised and planned by Inkatha. I issued a statement even before I had all the facts condemning the alleged use of violence on you and others who were reported hurt.

Whoever responded to what was being said was obviously provoked into some or other reaction. I find it difficult to believe that you were: "Subjected to abuse and unprovoked assault." I say this because it is common knowledge that UDF spokesmen go out of their way to insult me and Inkatha at public meetings. My support at the grass root level is very widespread and any insults hurled at me will necessarily produce reactions amongst members of the public, whether or not they are members of Inkatha. Provocation there must have been and I say this without condoning what happened. I deprecate the violence which was used by whoever used it. But I deprecate it as provoked violence and firmly assert that Inkatha does not use violence for political purposes.

Inkatha has suffered from violent attacks. Members of Inkatha have been stoned, assaulted, their cars have been burnt, their houses have been burnt and they have been subjected to all manner of abuse. Violence was used against our Youth Brigade at the University of Zululand last year, and we certainly did not provoke that violence. Violence has been used in emotionally laden circumstances where Blacks have gathered on many different occasions over many years. The attempt by yourself and the United Democratic Front to cast Inkatha as a violent organisation and to hold Inkatha responsible for every outburst of Black anger is totally unfair and amounts to a calculated political vendetta against me and Inkatha.

I do in fact sympathise with you. It must have been quite a harrowing experience to find that what was being said on a platform on which you sat provoked the kind of anger which resulted in what subsequently transpired.

I wrote to you in November last year suggesting that we meet to discuss the whole question of Black unity. These unfortunate kind of events about which you have now written to me would certainly have been greatly reduced and perhaps eliminated had we got together as South Africans concerned with unity in the struggle for liberation. Black/Black conflicts have been endemic in this country long before Inkatha came into existence and it is my earnest plea that you now heed what I say and distance yourself from the kind of provocation which leads to Black/Black conflicts. It would greatly assist in creating the right climate for Black/Black reconciliation if you were to admonish those using UDF platforms to make unprovoked attacks against me and Inkatha. I realise that the very nature of the United Democratic Front is such that you as President only exercise indirect control over your affiliated organisations and their spokesmen. I realise that you cannot control your constituencies, but admonishments from you as President will contribute towards an improved climate.

I again extend my hand to you in brotherhood and I again urge upon you the need for you to come and see me to talk about these matters on a personal level, rather than attempting to correspond about them. My doors are always open to those who are genuine and who seek the kind of brotherhood which the struggle for liberation demands.

I hope that we can meet soon, as I suggested in my letters to you last year.

Yours sincerely,

MANGOSUTHU G. BUTHELEZI



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