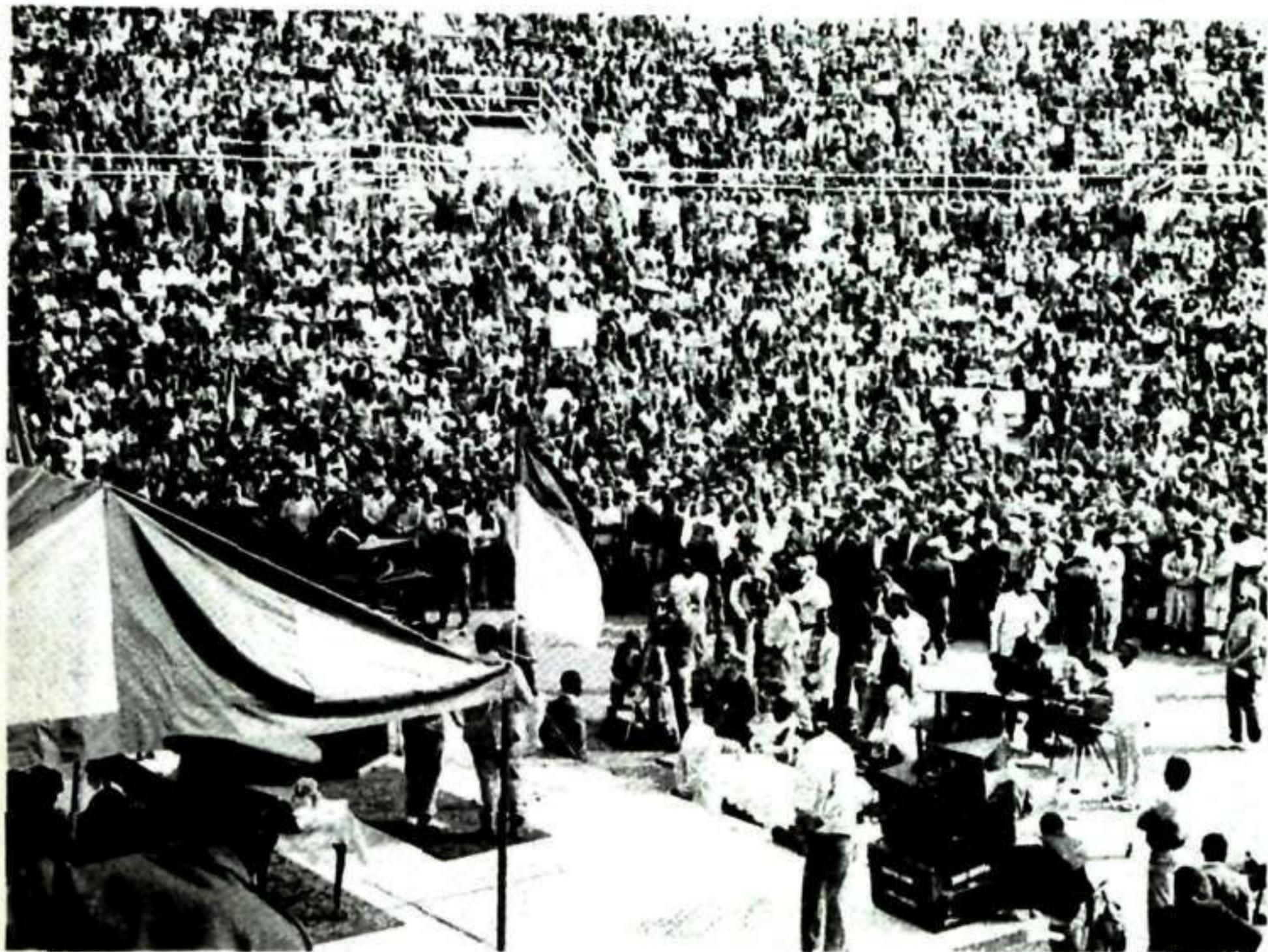


# BLACK UNITY

## *the crucial factor*



*Inkatha rally in Soweto, June 1986*

**I**nkatha has attempted to unify black South Africa both formally and informally. Unfortunately, decades of divisive apartheid rule has left black politics bitterly polarised.

White domination in South Africa thrives on black disunity.

Inkatha, with its clearly defined policy of non-violence and a multi-strategy approach

towards the attainment of black liberation, has offered its hand of friendship to numerous organisations. It sees black unity as a crucial factor in the struggle.

Chief M G Buthelezi and Dr Oscar Dhlomo as President and Secretary-General of Inkatha respectively, have in recent years, written and telexed the President and Secretary-General of the External Mission of the ANC offering to meet its leaders "anywhere and at any time".

There has been no response, as yet, to these communications.

There is a perception that Inkatha is hostile to the External Mission of the ANC. This is not the case. While Inkatha and the External Mission quite clearly differ in tactics and strategies, Inkatha bears the ANC no ill will.

Chief Buthelezi summed up Inkatha's viewpoint when he said: "We are a host of freedom fighters each using the means at his disposal for the

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destruction of apartheid . . ."

Inkatha aspires to serve black South Africa as a whole and it welcomes divergent views and respects the right of everyone to present his views to the masses and to establish a movement with aims and objectives in support of his views.

This is, of course, clearly consistent with the principles of democracy.

Inkatha does not begrudge anybody the right to be part of a democratic search for the best and most effective amongst various alternative solutions.

The movement is on record as having attempted to unify black South Africa and the proposed Black Unity Front in 1977 was its first endeavour.

The South African Black Alliance was established in 1978. While this alliance was originally formed between Inkatha, Inyandza, the Indian Reform Party and the Coloured Labour Party (the latter having split following its decision to participate in the tri-cameral Parliament), it will accept any movement which works within the broad objectives of democratic opposition to apartheid.

Beyond these attempts to establish formal links between black South African political groupings, Inkatha has sought to establish links through informal means.

Prior to Steve Biko's death, Inkatha was engaged in discussions with both the External Mission of the ANC and the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa in an attempt to establish a united front.

Inkatha is engaged in on-going moves to keep alive contacts with a wide range of organisations and their leaders. It believes that it is fundamentally undemocratic and unrealistic to exclude any

black constituencies from participating in black unity.

Inkatha is aware that even those so-called homelands which have opted for unacceptable Pretoria-type "independence", have constituencies of millions of black South Africans who cannot be jettisoned by the democratic process.

***Inkatha does not begrudge anybody the right to be part of a democratic search for the best and most effective amongst various alternative solutions . . . it welcomes divergent views and respects the right of everyone to present his views to the masses and to attempt to establish a movement with aims and objectives in support of his views.***

Every black South African, be he in jail, exiled or banned, is a rightful participant in the struggle for liberation in South Africa.

Critics of Inkatha both in South Africa and abroad misunderstood and misinterpreted Inkatha's strategy of black unity. For instance, Inkatha's eagerness to co-operate with any organisation whose main goal is black liberation in South Africa, is sometimes interpreted as a sign of weakness.

The fact is that when Inkatha calls for this co-operation among black liberation movements in South Africa, it does so from a position of

immense strength. It is the largest black liberation movement in the history of South Africa, and it has a unique capacity to mobilise people on a scale never before witnessed in the country.

Therefore, there can never be any political solution in South Africa — now or in the future — which excludes Inkatha.

Another misunderstanding arises when Inkatha speaks in support of alliances with movements like the External Mission of the ANC. Some observers feel Inkatha is attempting to gain credibility by using the ANC. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The fact is that the External Mission would benefit from any political alliance with Inkatha for the simple reason that Inkatha is in total contact with the oppressed masses in South Africa on a day-to-day basis.

It stands to reason that a movement like the External Mission of the ANC, whose leaders have been out of the country for more than 25 years, cannot hope to effectively influence the political situation in South Africa without cooperating with influential and powerful internal movements like Inkatha.

This is why it is regrettable that the External Mission of the ANC spends much of its time vilifying Chief Buthelezi in their publications and radio broadcasts. The negative attention that the ANC gives to Chief Buthelezi has further polarised black people in South Africa.

The External Mission of the ANC is fighting an armed struggle from abroad in which it needs to capture the hearts and minds of the people within South Africa who are expected to give shelter to guerrillas in the field.

Surely this is not done by insulting the leader of the largest membership-based political grouping in the country — and encouraging ANC supporters and other organisations within the country to do likewise.