

WHAT DOES THE WEST WANT FOR SA?

Revolution or peaceful change?

The ANC's primary document about the future of South Africa remains the Freedom Charter. There is nothing in Inkatha's aims, objectives and strategies which can be analytically offensive to the Freedom Charter.

Inkatha rejects the present South African constitution in part and in whole. Chief M G Buthelezi and Inkatha refuse to have any discussions with the SA Government about the future of the country unless the State President accepts that South Africa is one country with one people who have one destiny.

Inkatha insists that the State

President accepts that South Africa should have one government based on universal adult franchise. It insists that the Government recognises that the South African constitution should be devoid of any racist clauses. It insists that black politics should be unshackled and that black political leaders, such as Dr Nelson Mandela and Mr Zeph Mothopeng and others, be released.

This is a radical and total rejection of apartheid; a total rejection of racism and an insistence on an entirely new constitution and a new political process. This is radical opposition to the SA Government.

It is by definition the kind of radical opposition to apartheid

which the ANC in South Africa stood for before it was banned in 1960.

Chief Buthelezi and Inkatha have a long and consistent track record of this radical opposition and can legitimately claim to be striving for a democratic future for South Africa.

The great division in black politics in South Africa is the division between those who support violence as the only effective means of bringing about radical change and those who reject violence because they see it as the most ineffective means of bringing about radical change.

When one looks back over the history of South Africa, one has to conclude that the employment of violence for



Inkatha supporters greet Chief Buthelezi at Jan Smuts airport in Johannesburg on his return from a visit abroad

political purposes does not lay foundations for democratic futures.

It was the violent onslaught of whites against blacks during the last century which laid the foundations for apartheid. Blacks first attempted to meet

violence with violence but at the turn of the century the futility of violence for political purposes began to permeate into black political thought.

Violence had always resulted in mass black suffering and when the African National

Congress was formed in 1912, black leaders from throughout the country concurred that their future struggle against racism should be a non-violent struggle. Throughout its entire existence in South Africa, and until its banning in 1960, the

Does the West legitimise violent revolution?

The External Mission of the ANC and the PAC have been given the opportunity to establish offices in the capitals of the free world. Both are revolutionary movements. The West draws a marked distinction between Baader Meinhof-type revolutionary groups and the ANC and PAC as revolutionary groups. It stigmatises the former as terrorists and the latter as freedom fighters for many and various reasons which are well documented.

Crucially, however, there appears to be scant Western analysis of the combined political and military wings of the ANC and the stated (and hidden) agendas of the organisation and its executive members — many of whom are Communists.

United States Intelligence reports, containing information pooled from all of America's Intelligence agencies, have recently shown that about half of the ANC's 30-man executive are known or suspected communists.

An 11-page study has been sent in two versions (classified and unclassified) to the US Congress after lawmakers ordered it in the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986.

The report found "strong" South African Communist Party (SACP) influence in the ANC. It added that the ANC was "deeply beholden" to the SACP and the Soviet Union, as well as to the Soviet-backed MPLA regime in Angola for its arms and military training.

At the World Peace Council's five-day conference held in Denmark in October 1986, delegates burst into enthusiastic applause when Mr Alfred Nzo, Secretary-General of the ANC, while praising the Soviet Union for "working desperately with their allies in Afghanistan for peace" said: "The African National Congress supports all the peace initiatives of the Soviet Union . . ." The previous month Mr Nzo had told the London Sunday Times that he approved of "necklacing" (placing car tyres filled with petrol around a victims neck and setting them alight) to "eliminate enemy elements."

Support for the External Mission of the ANC adds a distinct dimension to European and American assessments of black politics in South Africa. Assessments that have been made in Europe and America have, in many

ways, given Western legitimacy to violent revolution.

Throughout Europe and North America, there is very distinctive and institutionalised support given to the External Mission of the ANC and the PAC.

Councils of Churches in various countries recognise the External Mission of the ANC, in particular, as freedom fighters and the World Council of Churches sums up the international ecumenical judgement that the ANC is a legitimate revolutionary force which must be given moral, diplomatic and material support.

The ANC has been given observer status at the United Nations, the OAU, Commonwealth meetings and meetings of Non-Aligned Nations. It has a consultative role in organisations like the ILO and it is a reference group for numerous government, semi-government and private agencies when it comes to South Africa.

The international community has in practice legitimised bloody revolution in South Africa.

It is against this background that non-violent organisations like Inkatha have to contend with international propaganda mounted by revolutionaries who are legitimised by the West. It is as though there is some kind of Western mythological charter which sees political purity in violent revolution when people are faced with tyranny.

Liberation theology itself is given credibility in international Christendom and purity in motive is endorsed most fervently when revolutionary groups start talking about holy, "just", wars.

The question of assessments of blacks tactics and strategies in South Africa are confounded by this legitimising of revolutionaries and the prestige "freedom fighters" are given in Western thinking.

Western attitudes and assessments are clouded by rejection of apartheid as abhorrent while tending to elevate "freedom fighters" as the most pure in motive and as the only true opposition to apartheid.

The mythology of "freedom fighters" needs to be examined. The role of Inkatha as a radical opposition group in South Africa needs to be re-assessed.

Is there a place for pragmatism?

ANC rejected violence. The last great President of the ANC, Chief Albert Lutuli, died maintaining the black rejection of violence. He died a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate.

Mr Joe Slovo, a member of the ANC's National Executive, acknowledges that it was only some years after the ANC went into exile that it opted for the so-called "armed struggle."

Black South Africa was never consulted on this issue.

Nobody can now seriously argue that the External Mission of the ANC has the capability — or could even develop the capability — of winning a military offensive against the South African Government. The External Mission has attempted to mount an effective, military force against South Africa for more than 20 years. It has done so with the backing of Moscow.

Its military personnel have been given training by the USSR and the ANC's military command has had the benefit of whatever tactical wisdom is available in the world through Cuba's Dr Fidel Castro and the PLO's Yasser Arafat. It has been advised by Algeria, Vietnam and Libya. It has a close association with the officers who commanded the Frelimo, MPLA and ZAPU struggles. The ANC's military force has been equipped, it has been trained and it has been advised — and yet it has failed dismally.

It is because the ANC has a track record of military failure that it has now started to use internal revolutionary violence. It is the failure of the External Mission's military endeavours which has authored its present tactics and strategies of violence.

Violence is now being geared towards creating a situation of civil war and ungovernability. The kind of violence now being employed by the External Mission of the ANC goes hand in hand with

the politics of intimidation.

Europe and America sees South Africa aflame with violence but one has to stop to ask how effective this violence now actually is and one must come to very sober assessments.

The upward spiralling of violence has left South Africa with a situation in which no single factory, no mine and no commercial undertaking is not fully operational.

The country's transport system is entirely intact. Its electricity and supply systems are entirely intact.

It is, however, in black townships where degrees of abnormality exists because of violence.

Every black township in South Africa is a black dormitory residential area whose inhabitants are cash dependant and who depend on jobs and regular incomes.

Township violence threatens the degree of normality which is required for residents to exist. When this is threatened there is a backlash both from within the townships and from concentrations of government security force activity.

Nobody is winning the battles in the townships. Nobody can.

The kind of violence which the External Mission of the ANC is trying to unleash must necessarily become unmanageable runaway violence over which nobody has any control.

A political weapon that ceases to be controllable is a weapon that must be rejected.

Violence in South Africa is necessarily underground activity. It lacks the cohesiveness of a controlled force because the machinery of discipline and direction simply does not exist.

To spread violence the External Mission of the ANC has to urge people to form themselves into action groups. It urges youth to boycott

schools and it urges residents to refuse to pay their rents and to boycott various shops. It also urges them to confront and assassinate what the ANC calls "the enemy" with whatever is to hand — and this includes "necklacing".

The External Mission of the ANC has now repeatedly broadcast over Radio Freedom the need for blacks to acquire weapons of war. The kind of violence that the ANC is now encouraging bursts out in situations of mob behaviour which cannot be directed or disciplined.

Such behaviour has nothing to do with the strategy of civil disobedience as successfully applied by Mahatma Gandhi. The boycotts are meant to increase violence in South Africa and cannot by any means be equated with forms of civil disobedience as sometimes found in Western countries.

We are now witnessing in South Africa a process in which numerous violent groups are adhering to agendas of their own with short-term objectives.

The best that the External Mission of the ANC can hope for is for runaway violence to reach the proportions of unmanageability and uncontrollability. The ANC is hoping for a situation of anarchy.

In such circumstances, violence ceases to have the kind of objectives which can be supported in Europe and North America. Violence will not soften the South African Government. It will not precipitate a situation of negotiation and it is not a necessary step towards political reconciliation.

Violence has no utility as a political weapon when it takes on the shape that it is now taking on in South Africa.

Violence leads to counter-violence and it is already clear that counter-violence has two



US President Ronald Reagan with Chief M G Buthelezi at the White House

distinct dimensions in the country. Firstly, there is the violence of the State which has led to the counter-violence of the revolutionaries; and the counter-violence of the revolutionaries has led to more violence by the State, and in turn more violence by the State has led to more violence by the revolutionaries. In addition, the violent intimidation in black townships results in violent reaction to that intimidation.

This upward spiralling of State violence and counter-violence can only culminate in both black and white adopting scorched earth policies. When this happens there can be no victors.

There is a hideous situation developing in which violent groups which originated in pro-ANC activity soon generate into mob behaviour for self-gain and for nefarious short-term objectives. We therefore have vigilante violence confronting not only the violence of the External

Mission of the ANC but vagrant mob violence as well. This is not the violence of a noble and "just" war. As long as populations have to be coerced into violent action,

there can be no legitimate violent action. People do not have to be dragooned into holy wars.

The tragedy is that it is the ordinary mass of black South



At 10 Downing Street with Britain's Premier, Mrs Margaret Thatcher.



Mr Oliver Tambo with British Foreign Office Minister, Mrs Lynda Chalker.

Africans who are suffering from these dimensions of violence. This is why they reject violence as the primary means of bringing about change. Inkatha's massive membership of 1.3 million attests to this fact.

Even now while violence is escalating in South Africa, the role of non-violence is vital for the future of the country.

It is often forgotten that the old ANC became indisputably the country's premier black political organisation by

adhering always to the ideals of democratic opposition and non-violent tactics and strategies. The black South Africans who met at Kliptown to adopt the Freedom Charter were committed to non-violence and to the politics of negotiation.

Before and after the banning of the ANC, mass political movements in South Africa were committed to non-violent tactics and strategies. The turbulent years of the early 1970's which produced the Black Consciousness Movement (also committed to non-violence) also produced Inkatha.

Only blatant pro-violence propagandists can argue that the governing class in South Africa cannot be reformed and must be destroyed. Black South Africans seek entry into the country's institutionalised life as free and equal citizens.

There is a rising groundswell demand — by both blacks and many whites — for the country to be normalised.

They seek to participate in a multi-party democracy. They seek to participate in the free enterprise system. They seek freedom of movement. They seek freedom of expression. They seek equality of opportunity. They seek equality before the law and they seek all these things by seeking the vote.

WILL VIOLENCE BRING ABOUT GOOD GOVERNMENT?

Any tactics and strategies which produce a future ungovernable South Africa will be judged to have been wrong.

Assessments of tactics and strategies in terms of whether or not they are effective should be made not then — but now.

Governability depends on the agreement of the population. Violence which leads to both blacks and whites adopting scorched earth policies will destroy the prospects of consensus among South Africans.

Violence can only ultimately lead to a dictatorial one-party state. Even if the forces of violence manage to establish the semblance of a government, the subversive potential of whites will oppose it. Short of destroying the very fabric of South Africa's economic and social system, whites will be left in key positions and with the kind of skills of subversion unmatched in the history of Africa.

If they are to be eradicated from key posts by destroying the very fabric of the country's economic and social life, the country will in any case be made ungovernable by this destruction.

Final failure of tactics and strategies will be measured in terms of the extent to which blacks and whites are reconciled during the struggle for liberation. Only non-violent tactics and strategies can do this.

Europe and North America should de-mistify the struggle for liberation in South Africa. They should become morally pragmatic about what is taking place. They should support the forces of democratic opposition and strengthen the hands of those who are using non-violent tactics and strategies.

