

# TRADE UNION LEADERS SLAMMED FOR NOT CONSULTING MEMBERS

CONCERNED groups of Black workers have expressed their dissatisfaction with what they claim is a "dangerous" lack of consultation between union leaders in South Africa and rank and file members.

Chief Buthelezi acknowledged at his last Soweto rally that he had received delegations from workers who were extremely unhappy about the situation.

The Chief said he had supported trade unions all his life and had always championed trade unionism.

"I have done so because I see workers and peasants as the salt of the earth and trade unions as vital to the struggle to liberate this country from social, economic and political oppression.

"I stand behind trade unionism but, some leaders are destroying union power in vain and stupid and costly mistakes.

"... some boast that this country can be reduced to ungovernability by violence and rioting ..."

He said Inkatha's nearly one million paid-up members and many thousands of others who supported Inkatha, represented a cross-section of Black South Africa.

Many were members of a wide range of other organisations, including trade unions, in addition to belonging to Inkatha.

Hundreds of thousands of Inkatha's members and supporters were therefore members of organisations whose executives had affiliated to the United Democratic Front (UDF).

"And yet the UDF attacks Inkatha," said Chief Buthelezi.

"In attacking Inkatha they attack the sentiments of the very people they claim to represent... and I am getting a constant feed-back from Inkatha members who are deeply disturbed about what the executives of some of the other organisations they belong to are doing ..."

Chief Buthelezi went on to say that Inkatha's executive had learned over many decades that "... leadership that cannot be disciplined by members



*Not one major union in South Africa is known to have consulted or obtained a mandate from its rank and file members on the disinvestment issue.*

have always led people astray ..."

"They have always done things which in the end people reject," he added.

"The United Democratic Front and some of the executives of its affiliate organisations act high-handedly.

"Who, for example, elected the members of the Transvaal Stay-Away Committee?

"Who was consulted about the tactics and strategies that the committee adopted? What procedure was used to appoint its chairman?

"How much consultation was there between the UDF's national leadership and its affiliate organisations before the UDF threw its weight behind the stayaway?

"There was a glib orchestration and an under-hand power-play to deceive the world that the stay-away was democratically decided.

Chief Buthelezi said all Blacks knew of the hard work which had gone into forming trade unions to represent them.

He said: "Now that the workers of this country have achieved something at last, there are those who come jealously to snatch the fruits of their struggle from them.

"Trade union organisations which are used for purely political purposes will cease to benefit workers.

"Black political forces which move in, like jackals and vultures, to feed on the success of workers, must be rejected.

"There must be consultation between political forces and work forces. There must be combined strategies, but whatever workers do through trade unionists, they should do through trade unionists...

"We all know that there was no proper consultation between workers and those who called for the stay-at-home (work boycott) demonstration.

"We know that the unions themselves were outmanoeuvred and that the rank and file workers are now left to suffer the consequences that flow from ill-conceived action ..."