
STOP PRESS

Chief Minister lambasts Government, UDF, COSATU

IN his 1988 Policy Speech to the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly, the Chief Minister condemned the Government's restrictions on the UDF, COSATU and other organisations as detrimental to the politics of negotiation — but also strongly criticised the UDF and COSATU for stupidly following the course which led to the action.

“The action taken against the UDF, COSATU and other organisations is action which will be detrimental to the politics of negotiation. I make the broad point that for as long as the South African Government thinks that it can control black politics by coercive power on the part of the State, the basis on which violence continues to spiral upwards will remain intact. The only answer to the politics of violence is the liberalisation of political control and the unshackling of black democracy.

“Mr Speaker, I am in a difficult position of not wanting to kick an organisation which is down. I cannot rejoice that the UDF, COSATU and other organisations are crushed under a jackboot of the State. On the other hand, I cannot hold my tongue in criticism of these organisations for using ordinary people, and children even, as cannon fodder and for bashing their heads against a solid brick wall.

“They have stupidly attacked the South African Government where it is strongest and their noses are now bloodied and it is their fault. They tried the impossible and failed.

“We as Black South Africans will be seen as politically stupid if we do not avoid, as much as possible, inviting the Government's predictable action by continuing to follow

tactics and strategies that have failed us in the past.

“The problem always is that when the politics of violence leads to the annihilation of a political organisation on the ground here in this country, the whole struggle for liberation is set back. For a decade now black politics has under-achieved in this country as the strength of black South Africa has been dissipated on our street corners in black-on-black confrontations and in futile attacks on the military and police might of the State.

“Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are times when one cannot count one's words. I do not count my words today when I say that unless black politics is purged of the kind of leaders and organisations which blunder and blunder again at the cost of the struggle, the people's suffering will be continued. There is one black body politic and the defeat of any one part of it makes the whole of it suffer some loss. The annihilation of SASO and BPC in the 1970s is still fresh in our memories. All the brave talk in the world by the leaders of these organisations at the time did not help these organisations survive to fight another day.

“I want to make no predictions about what will happen to the UDF, COSATU and other organisations. I am merely pointing to the fact that in the history of this country black group after black group has become annihilated on the ground because of the stupidity of its leaders who blundered until they ceased to be relevant, by following tactics which play into the hands of the minority Regime.”

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