

# What will the State President do next?

In one informal and one formal meeting with President P W Botha, the first in four years, Chief M G Buthelezi has stated the desperate need for power-sharing in South Africa.

Power-sharing within the framework of the present constitution was just not possible, he told Mr Botha. The Government had to declare its intention of sharing power with Blacks.

He was not asking for a statement of intent which was a thinly disguised White capitulation to Black demands, he said. All Blacks required was a commitment to search for acceptable ways of moving towards power-sharing.

In a recent statement to the Kwa-Zulu Legislative Assembly, Chief Buthelezi made it quite clear that, within the framework of what Mr Botha had said in recent speeches and television interviews, there was nothing he could talk to him about.

He said he would only go to Cape Town to see the State President about power-sharing and practical co-operation — to keep the prospects of negotiation alive.

"But, if my going to Cape Town to see the State President is construed as active co-operation in legitimising White supremacist politics, I will in future rather stay here in Ulundi and fold my arms while the government squanders the hope which flows from ... Blacks willing to seek non-violent solutions."

If the State President's (recent) statements reflected all that there was in him, he would rather go "to the people for a massive endorsement of my opposition to him than go to him..."

The State President needed to go beyond "addressing the converted" and he needed to go beyond a forum in which Blacks would have to undertake to talk about the future in terms which would be unacceptable.



President P W Botha

"The crucial questions of Black/White power-sharing needs to be tabled and the State President has avoided doing so..."

In a recent speech Chief Buthelezi said he was "more estranged" from the State President than at any previous time.

He told the annual congress of the Afrikaanse Studentebond at Stellenbosch that he could make no further concessions in the search for a negotiated settlement in South Africa.

He would not describe the sort of system he foresaw, as this would be "prescribing" a solution in the same way as Mr Botha was "prescribing" by rejecting both a unitary and a federal system.

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*"In our circumstances, a government of national reconciliation is urgently needed and both Black and White leaders need to recognise the necessity of moving away from government by racial domination..."*

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However, he believed a federal system with a Bill of Rights which entrenched civil liberties was "one of the things" which should be looked at.

He had been prepared to shelve, for the time being, his ideal of a one-man-one-vote system in a unitary state, but President Botha had created a logjam by also rejecting the possibility of a federal system.

"What is then left to talk about?" he asked.

Asked if he was sure he and Mr Botha were not misunderstanding each other, Chief Buthelezi said he had also had discussions with the Minister of Constitutional Development, Mr Chris Heunis.

He (Heunis) had also dismissed the suggestion of a federal system.

Chief Buthelezi has described this meeting with Mr Heunis as "... one of the most unsatisfactory meetings I have ever had in my life..."

Chief Buthelezi said he believed that there was no such thing as "a classical federation" (rejected in these terms by the government) as no two federations were the same. It could be possible to devise one "peculiar" to South Africa.

In one meeting with the Minister of Co-operation, Development and Education, Dr Gerrit Viljoen, he bluntly stated:

"You are a political opponent ... you oppose what we strive to do and we oppose what you strive to do..."

In another he said: "I have been in politics virtually my whole life ... I want to assure you that my opposition to much of what this and previous governments have adopted as policy is dictated not only by my sense of political morality, but by the harsh facts with which I am surrounded in Black politics."

"Apartheid puts you and I on different sides of a political fence, and I hope that we can recognise this fact — while also recognising that that fence needs to be demolished and that we have to deal with each other while this is being done."