

# FREE MANDELA AND GIVE HIM A CHOICE

gle," said Chief Buthelezi.

"We all know that for a quarter of a century the ANC Mission-in-Exile has been advocating an armed struggle and has done everything that can humanly be done to make the armed struggle a reality.

"The ANC Mission-in-Exile has massive backing from the Soviet Union and some Eastern countries and has had an annual budget which runs into millions of rands.

"And it has failed dismally in every attempt it has made to mount an armed struggle".

Not only had the ANC Mission-in-Exile had this massive backing in financial and material support, but it had also had the moral backing of the Organisation of African Unity and, until recently, the full co-operation of States neighbouring on South Africa.

"After this massive backing and diplomatic encouragement, the ANC Mission-in-Exile could surely have done something effective if something effective could at all have been done..."

People who now talked about the need to employ violence needed to be reminded about the dismal track record of failure of the ANC Mission-in-Exile.

Chief Buthelezi said he called for the "unconditional" release of Mr Nelson Mandela.

"His utterances, as reported in the media, are irrelevant to the considerations which should be weighed up," he added.

"Mr Mandela must be given the freedom to opt for the armed struggle. The State has robbed him of that freedom right now. If he is released and opts for the armed struggle, he would have to do so from abroad.

"But I say he must also be given the choice of remaining inside South Africa and working for negotiated change. It is only his unconditional release which will create the circumstances in which he can make a choice.

"He is now not free to opt for the armed struggle — just as he is not free to opt for the politics of negotiation.

"Until he is given that freedom, we

*"A National Convention is a people's thing and it is a place where people's representatives go. It is a place where all voices are heard and where those who seek the politics of national reconciliation meet to sink their differences..."*

*"Mr Mandela is making a statement from jail in the wake of the State President's refusal to hear pleas from leaders like myself asking him to release him unconditionally ... people serving life sentences for political convictions do not normally talk with the voice of quiet moderation..."*

*"If I were in Nelson Mandela's position I would find it extremely difficult to meet the State President's requirements ... the State President chose to make it very difficult for Nelson Mandela ... and it was not very brilliant of him to do so..."*

must regard all his utterances as utterances under duress..."

Meanwhile, in broadcast after broadcast, the ANC Mission-in-Exile was telling Black South Africans that they must arm themselves for the revolution.

"They are telling us to steal guns from Whites and to ambush police contingents to destroy them and seize their arms.

"They are telling Black South Africans that while they call for the armed struggle, they are quite incapable of providing us with the hardware with which to wage such a struggle."

Even military strategists knew, he continued, that the armed struggle would not succeed in South Africa unless there were viable operating bases which could be used as springboards for attacks on vital installations.

There had to be liberated zones from where a military force could group and re-group in order to make attacks.

"Everyone of us knows that the ANC Mission-in-Exile does not have bases in neighbouring states which it can use as springboards. For 25 years they had such bases and the use of them was so dismally unsuccessful that African leaders like President Samora Machel gave up hope that they would ever succeed.

"There is no neighbouring state that is any longer prepared to provide the ANC's Mission-in-Exile with operating bases..."

It had been in the last couple of years that the SA Defence Force had acted like a "rogue elephant" in Southern Africa — moving into neighbouring countries and attacking ANC bases.

Chief Buthelezi said he understood why Mr Mandela made his statement on violence.

"Mr Mandela is making a statement from jail in the wake of the State President's refusal to hear pleas from leaders like myself asking him to release him unconditionally.

"It is easier to sit in London, Moscow or Pollsmoor Prison and call for the armed struggle than it is to actually get on with the job and do it.

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"Mr Mandela's voice from prison needs to be a strident voice. The people serving life sentences for political convictions do not normally talk with the voice of quiet moderation.

"We must also understand that it is the State President who set this ball rolling. Instead of heeding the advice of leaders who really know what they are talking about, the State President chose to make it diplomatically very difficult for Nelson Mandela...

"It was the State President who attached conditions to the release of Mr Mandela ... and it was not very brilliant of him to do so.

"In idiom, this made Mr Mandela consider having to escape from prison through an act of public submission to apartheid. If I were in Nelson Mandela's position I would find it extremely difficult to meet the State President's requirements.

"The State President was playing to

conservative and right-wing White galleries when he made a conditional offer to Nelson Mandela".

These were the kind of perspectives, said Chief Buthelezi, within which one needed to look at the much publicised statements of Nelson Mandela.

Having refused to renounce violence and having backed up that position by going on to state that there was no room for a peaceful struggle, Mr Mandela would also "necessarily" also reject the notion of a National Convention, Chief Buthelezi emphasised.

"National Convention go hand in hand with non-violent, democratic struggles. There is sometimes confusion about this...

"The Lancaster House talks did not amount to a National Convention. In these talks, parties at war decided to meet with each other because no one could win.

"Mr Mugabe would have had no reason to go to Lancaster House if he was at the very point of a military take-

over of Zimbabwe. A stalemate had developed and what ensued was not a National Convention".

A National Convention was a "people's thing" and it was a place where people's representatives went. It was a place where all voices were heard and where those who sought the politics of national reconciliation met to sink their differences.

Chief Buthelezi said he had always called for a National Convention and would continue to do so.

"I am calling for one in which my brothers and sisters in the ANC and PAC Missions-in Exile are as free to attend as I am.

"That freedom is not divisible. If some leaders and some political groups elect not to participate in deliberations at a National Convention, they must be granted the freedom to stay outside the negotiations.

"If, however, we make it impossible for any group to attend, then we strip the concept of a National Convention of its real meaning."

## Govt. must be bold — Solarz

Chief M G Buthelezi told US Congressman Stephen Solarz that apartheid would be eradicated — he was not concerned that it would survive.

What did concern him was the nature of the society South Africa would end up with once apartheid had gone.

Mr Solarz has introduced a Bill in the United States Congress aimed at sanctions against South Africa.

He visited South Africa recently and had a series of meetings with a wide range of leaders and spokesmen of various organisations.

In an interview with the Weekly Mail he said: "I think the real problems now have to do with the pace of change and the willingness on the part of the government to enter into a genuine dialogue with the legitimate Black leadership..."

"I think that with each passing day the prospects for a constructive accommodation between Black and White will become more difficult.

"But if the government can seize the initiative and be bold enough to move quickly, I think there is still a very real possibility that a formula will be found."

Mr Solarz according to the Weekly Mail, "made it clear" that he did not support disinvestment.

He had, he said, opposed this in Congress in favour of the Bill that opted for limited sanctions against South Africa.

However, he added that in the absence of "real progress towards the elimination of apartheid", his country would move towards sanctions over the next few years.

He also told the Weekly Mail that if the "right steps" were taken, he would reconsider his views on sanctions.

"I think there are a lot of people who think there is nothing



US Congressman Stephen Solarz and Chief M G Buthelezi after their meeting in Durban

that South Africa can do that will ever satisfy members of the legislature like myself. That is flatly untrue," he was quoted as saying.

Moves such as the release of political prisoners and an agreement to negotiate with recognised leaders, the repeal of the Group Areas Act and influx control or an acceptance of a common citizenship for all would be significant enough to bring a rethink on sanctions.

In his meeting with Mr Solarz, Chief Buthelezi said he appreciated the rising tide of American indignation.

However, disinvestment was non-issue.

"We think it is important to conduct our struggle in such a way that it won't destroy foundations for the future," he added.