

The SA I would like to see

Students from Hilton College, an exclusive private school in Natal, recently asked Chief M G Buthelezi to speak to them on: The South Africa I Would Like To See.

On an evening in September he told them.

The South Africa he would like to see would be blessed with the kind of richness which comes out of diversity, he said.

South Africa would grow strong in its triumph over racialism.

The country's legislative system would value each South African citizen equally as a creation of God.

"If I look to the South Africa which I want to see, I see equality as fundamental to everything decent," he said.

"And if we value democracy as the end product of what we are striving for, then we must value democracy as a weapon to be wielded in the struggle for that which we want."

The only future worth having, he continued, was one which was based on equality. A future based on the equal sharing of the great values in civilised democracies.

A future based on the rule of law; a future based on democratic government; a future based on all things decent.

The world's greatest democratic civilisations had their roots in bloodshed and the turmoil of revolutions and warfare. Decency followed centuries of bloodletting and hatred.

Would this be the case for South Africa?

"I cry out that the answer is no, no a thousand times no. Let us one and all come to that realisation before it is too late.

"If we are going to avoid maiming and killing in the name of justice, then for God's sake let us talk about the politics of negotiation and let us talk about reaching an ultimate goal of final democratic decency through a series of compromises..."

"Compromises which will take us there step by step without leaving in its wake the heritage of bitterness which comes from fighting..."

The willingness to compromise, the willingness of each to meet the other half way was crucial to the future.

To love was to tolerate. To love was to forgive. To love was to persuade and to take your brother by the hand and say: let us reason together.



"Let us talk this thing out," said Chief Buthelezi.

"Let us solve our problems without resorting to violence.

"In South Africa to love is to negotiate and you cannot love in our circumstances without both giving and taking."

The stark, austere, revolutionary mind sought to take by force. The revolutionary had stopped talking and had started dictating.

The future Chief Buthelezi said he saw was one which had been talked

into existence, negotiated into existence and compromised into existence.

That process would be the very process which would join Black and White together.

"We can join that process each from our own positions," he said.

"I invite White South Africans and Black South Africans to work together for the politics of reconciliation which I am sure is God's healing formula for our divided society."