

Can South Africa peacefully change?

by Uwe Friesecke

The political conflict in South Africa has reached a decisive phase. Either assistance will be given to the clearly constructive plans in both black and white political camps to bring them to a common breakthrough, or further radicalization

will plunge the country—and with it, the entire region—into chaos, ungovernability, and economic misery. What is particularly important is that the West and the Non-Aligned nations understand who these constructive elements in South African politics are, and under what internal and external conditions they can achieve a common success.

President P. W. Botha and his group of reformers in the National Party, in which high-ranking military figures are also to be included, are seriously following a course with the goal of abolishing the Apartheid system. Chief M. G. Buthelezi, chief minister of the KwaZulu nation and chairman of

Interview: Dr. Oscar Dhlomo

'We will need more and more investment'

EIR interviewed Dr. Dhlomo, the KwaZulu minister of education and culture and secretary general of Inkatha, on May 2, 1986, in Durban, Republic of South Africa.

EIR: Secretary General Dhlomo, could you explain the strategy of Inkatha in terms of the fight against apartheid and the fight for investment?

Dhlomo: We believe that apartheid must be dismantled in this country but we feel that the dismantling of apartheid will only be the beginning of a far richer struggle to set up a structure that will try to redress all the problems that apartheid has brought about. We believe therefore that economic development and foreign investment in this country will be very useful tools in that struggle in the post-apartheid era. That is why we do not support the policy of disinvestment. We feel that we will need more and more investment, a better rate in the economic growth in the country after apartheid has been destroyed.

EIR: How would the call for disinvestment, if it were actually implemented on a large scale in the next months, affect the struggle against apartheid?

Dhlomo: Well, I think that the call for disinvestment would destroy the economy of the country. Admittedly in the process it would destroy the perpetrators of apartheid, but also the victims of apartheid. We therefore feel that in that situation, the people who would be needing more jobs, people who would be needing to be assisted to develop, would suffer if change had come through as a result of disinvestment. The economic base of the country would

be destroyed. We are also worried that in both cases what happens is that under conditions of economic strife there is not any measure of liberalization on the part of the government in power. We see that the government tends to be more reactionary than before, whereas, under conditions of economic growth, the chances for liberalization are enhanced.

EIR: What would be the conditions you would consider essential to then have the ability for successful negotiations with the government? In other words, what would they have to do to prove themselves a worthy negotiating partner for the future of South Africa?

Dhlomo: I would say the first thing they should do is to issue a Statement of Intent which, amongst other things, would include a willingness on the part of the South African government to share political power with all the people of the country regardless of race. We would not even insist how that would be done, just a willingness to do so would be enough. Two, we would ask them to issue a statement to the effect that apartheid was going to be dismantled and coupled to that, we would need an action program with time scales how this would be done. We would also wish that they would devise a way of including all the people in such negotiations, movements that would have to be enabled, to decide if they wanted to be a part of this process or not. Leaders who are imprisoned would also have to be given an opportunity of either accepting or rejecting this offer.

EIR: In terms of what Inkatha has stood for since its founding in 1975, do you think it's possible that if the existing government abandons leadership on the question of economics, that Inkatha now could address the question of an economic policy for South Africa even if you don't have the power yet?

Dhlomo: Well, Inkatha does not have an economic blueprint at the moment. I think it has always been felt that that would need to be left to the people in the post-apartheid era. There are certain elements and guidelines that

the Inkatha Peace Movement, is seeking a practical constitutional solution that, on the one hand, abolishes racial discrimination and, on the other, gives the necessary security guarantees to whites for their future in the country.

Both leaders find themselves in an extremely dangerous domestic change of direction, which is bringing P. W. Botha especially into conflict with the base of his own party. Those politically responsible in the West, as well as those in the Non-Aligned nations of the Third World, who seriously wish to contribute to abolishing the Apartheid system, must understand that the prejudice-ridden attacks on President Botha's

government, on the one hand, and questioning of Chief Buthelezi's efforts on the other, are the best way to preserve Apartheid and bring about chaos and destruction, by weakening exactly those who are working on a serious solution.

The goal of the strategy for southern Africa formulated in Moscow in 1964 is to pull the military ring tighter and tighter around South Africa from the Front Line States and, simultaneously, to make the country domestically ungovernable through terrorist destabilization and prevent a peaceful, pro-Western solution. Both processes have progressed to a dangerous extent.

Inkatha would subscribe to, for instance Chief Buthelezi has said that he does not see that the present economic system, the free enterprise system, could be totally destroyed and replaced by a new system. At best he would want the system to be reformed and expanded so that the deprived people who have never been part of the system for years, the black people, would be part of it fully. We also had some ideas, as for instance in the Buthelezi Commission report, where people are looking at what they call a mixed economy, providing for a manner of state intervention in order to redress the problems of the past. A policy that promotes economic growth whilst at the same time it aims at eliminating poverty. Other than those basic elements, we have not at Inkatha sat down to draw up a detailed economic policy.

EIR: What is the actual political strength of the Inkatha movement, and how do you judge the influence of ANC-related groups in your country?

Dhlomo: At the moment, Inkatha is the strongest and the largest black political movement in the history of this country, a membership of over 1 million, with branches all over the country in the four provinces. The ANC, of course, is banned in South Africa and it operates in exile. There are no visible ANC formations inside the country because of that reason. There is, however, the UDF, the United Democratic Front, which pursues ANC policies. It is not banned, it operates legally in South Africa. The UDF is a loose federation of different political groupings, most of them ethnically based and coming together in this umbrella organization called the UDF.

Now each strength at the moment I know basically, although they would argue at their launch they registered 600 different organizations of different sizes, but some of those organizations were formed just for the purposes of attending the launch of the UDF, and we have never heard anything about them ever since. The UDF has this terminal weakness, in that, unlike Inkatha, it is not a membership based organization. In other words, the UDF has no direct links with its grass roots because people associate

with it via a loose federation. If you are talking to the leadership of the UDF, you are not talking to the affiliates of the UDF, while, in Inkatha, if you spoke to the president of Inkatha, then you are talking to over 1 million members because we are membership based, they are not. The UDF are not membership based. It is therefore an organization of that nature unable to carry out any effective action program backed by the entire membership.

That is why most UDF action programs are never pursued by the movement in its entirety. In Natal, here, if you talk about the UDF, you talk about one or two strong affiliates of the movement which are the Natal Indian Congress. Even the leadership of the UDF in this area of Natal would come from the Indian community and not from the African community. It's not quite possible to compare Inkatha and UDF because of those differing structures, but there is no doubt that Inkatha itself is enormously powerful. It has a potential to influence the developments in this country far more effectively than the UDF which is, as I mentioned, a loosely arranged and federated organization.

EIR: Now recently [ANC leader] Oliver Tambo in Germany attacked your movement very strongly and said Chief Buthelezi would never be part of a solution. What do you say?

Dhlomo: Well I think that is totally wrong and unfounded. The situation in South Africa is such that we are serious in finding a solution. Chief Buthelezi would be a major element in that solution. We don't say, as Tambo is saying, that the ANC would not be part of this solution. All we are saying is that the ANC should stop deceiving the world and making people believe they are the sole and authentic representative of black people in South Africa because that is wrong. The ANC is part of the solution, but it is not the only solution. The ANC can not liberate this country without the input of Inkatha and Chief Buthelezi. The sooner people like Mr. Tambo recognize that, the better it will be for the liberation struggle in this country.

In the last 18 months, the Soviet Union has been able to considerably consolidate its military and political presence in the region, most spectacularly in Angola. With the help of East German advisers and the presence of over 40,000 Cubans, the Soviets have installed a complete radar air-surveillance system and a rocket anti-aircraft system in southern Angola that, together with the MiG-23s of the Angolan Air Force, flown by Cuban pilots, presents a serious challenge to the South African Air Force and limits as never before that air force's sphere of action. Additionally, in the last eight months, the Soviet Union has especially concentrated on massive arming of the Free Angola People's Liberation Army (FAPLA) land strike forces and has brought in modern mili-

troops through Botswana directly to the northern border of South Africa. The second is that pushing through Resolution 435 in the United Nations will open Namibia to the Soviet-controlled Southwest African Peoples Organization (SWAPO), and, as a result of the pullback of South African security forces, Namibia would be overrun by Angolan-Cuban troops, working with SWAPO, all the way to the Orange River.

The consolidation of the Soviet position in the Front Line States has been accompanied by a dramatic escalation of violence in South Africa itself, to which the terrorist violence of the outlawed African National Congress (ANC), under the protective shield of the legal United Democratic Front (UDF), has been the primary contributor. In fact, violence in the townships has increased in the two months since the abolition of state of emergency—the death rate has increased from three to five victims per day. The victims of ANC violence are almost exclusively blacks who, denounced as collaborators with the whites or as traitors, fall into the hands of youth gangs and suffer the terrible “necklace death”; an automobile tire is tied around the victim and set fire.

The terrorism spreads fear and horror throughout the black population, and makes work on practical advances toward overcoming racial segregation increasingly impossible for moderate politicians. The leaders of the ANC do not allow the least doubt about the goals of their strategy. Recently, Winnie Mandela, who in April had a friendly exchange of opinion with the chairman of the German Social Democracy, Willy Brandt, stated that Africa will be liberated with “our matches and with our necklaces.” Oliver Tambo, who functions abroad as head of the ANC in London and Lusaka, has repeatedly declared in the past two months that a revolutionary expansion of violence would be the ANC's next step.

Even though many in South Africa point out that security forces there have not at all, up to now, proceeded against terrorism with all available means, the previous successes of the ANC's terror strategy cannot be denied. In the regions not under the influence of Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha, the local governments of black townships have frequently been destroyed and fallen under the control of revolutionary people's committees. In part, these people's committees have also taken the courts into their own hands, and no one is now safe from one day being condemned as a traitor to death through the “necklace.” The signs of a dangerous escalation of violence are unmistakable. In the last weeks, various large ANC arsenals have been destroyed, and organized para-military terrorist attacks are on the increase.

ANC terror has nothing to do with overcoming Apartheid. On the contrary, it is directed precisely against those who are attempting to create a new constitution in a practical and peaceful way. For that reason, the ANC is attempting, first, to kill moderate black politicians on all levels and to penetrate into the sphere of influence of the Inkatha movement in Soweto and KwaZulu/Natal. Second, the calculated effect of the ANC terror is to create an increasing polarization, pushing the white population toward fanatical propo-

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tary equipment in unprecedented quantities. In Angola today, there are Soviet tanks of the T-62 and T-64 types, and very possibly also T-70s. Neither the pro-Western guerrilla force of Dr. Jonas Savimbi, UNITA, nor the South African Army has anything comparable to deploy against such tanks.

Along with Angola, the Soviet Union has also systematically built up its political and military position in Zambia and Zimbabwe, as well as Mozambique. Bases on the Angolan coast give the Soviet Navy control over the South Atlantic, and bases in Mozambique give it a further solid position on the Indian Ocean. The build-up of military power in the Front Line States to this point not only gives the Soviet Union the necessary cover for its actions in the south, but also puts it in the position to operate toward the north, especially toward Zaire. The Soviet armaments in Angola and the Front Line States are merely a part of a systematic process of seizing influence over the entire African continent.

Two possibilities for a direct Soviet escalation against South Africa are conceivable. The first is that UNITA could be decisively weakened through a major Angolan-Cuban offensive. That would permit the advance of Soviet-directed

nents of Apartheid such as the leader of the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (Afrikaner Resistance Movement) (AWB), E. N. TerreBlanche, who today can already mobilize larger audiences at public meetings, and against moderate white politicians such as Foreign Minister P. K. Botha.

The Soviet terror strategy aims at destroying the possibility of a peaceful solution to the domestic crisis, through the creation of an extreme polarization among blacks and whites. As the Soviets have already demonstrated in other parts of Africa, they are pursuing in southern Africa a strategy of "scorched earth." Their goal is to deny to the West access to the strategic minerals in the region running southern Zaire (Shaba province) south to the Cape, as well as unhindered naval passage around the Cape.

The process of Iranization

As in the case of the destabilization of Iran or the recent case of the Philippines, the Soviets' best allies in South Africa are Western intelligence agencies, along with the majority of Western mass media. It is a known fact that, along with the demonstrated financing and weapons supplies from Eastern sources, the ANC and UDF are primarily supported by Western church circles, and that SWAPO is supported with Western funds from the U.N. In South Africa, the Anglo-American press and the major U.S. television companies are repeating the same scenario they used to topple the government of the Philippines only a few months ago.

NBC and ABC have, with the help of the UDF and the ANC, constructed a well-coordinated information and communication system in the townships. Camera teams are most precisely informed in advance of the time and place of violent confrontations, so that they for the most part learn of those before security forces do. The UDF activists consciously hold demonstrations in such regions where they know the security forces will have no choice but to react harshly. The TV cameras are brought into position beforehand, and, a short time later, pictures of the latest violent measures by the police are widely distributed throughout the world. By this means, the real character of the ANC violence is covered up.

Finally, the figure of Bishop Desmond Tutu is used to sanction the violence of the ANC in the townships in the eyes of the world public. A year ago, when the first black became the victim of a mob that burned him as a traitor, Tutu raised his voice in protest and accusation—today, he offers himself to those who ultimately bring disaster upon the black population of South Africa.

Disinvestment

The international press propaganda against South Africa serves to justify the economic disinvestment campaign. The economic consequences of that campaign are borne primarily by black workers in the townships since export firms, for example, in textiles, hit by the boycott measures, are forced to throttle production and, consequently, either lay off workers or cut wages.

Further, this campaign is not concerned with the abolition of Apartheid, for the results of the campaign work as much for the ANC as for extreme right-wing groups such as the AWB. The disinvestment campaign has a much broader strategic significance. That became clear at the end of 1985, when David Rockefeller's Chase Manhattan Bank suddenly canceled South Africa's credit. Many South African bankers and politicians could hardly believe their eyes and ears as the Wall Street bankers' mafia of the U.S. Eastern Liberal Establishment made it quite clear during debt renegotiations in early 1986 that they intended to obliterate the nation of South Africa from the face of the Earth.

South Africa could be the Japan of the African continent, making a decisive economic, technological, and scientific contribution to overcoming the economic catastrophe of black Africa. For that very reason, South Africa today is being attacked with the same methods with which the Western bankers' faction and the International Monetary Fund have devastated the rest of Africa. Economically, the African continent has already been written off by the bankers. In South Africa, the attempt is being made to manipulate existing racial conflict from the outside in such a way that this still relatively strong African economic power collapses into chaos.

The American State Department is pursuing for southern Africa an Iranization policy on the model of those with which Mexico, Panama, Colombia, and Peru are being attacked and destabilized. U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker has, according to his own statements, never pursued a crisis-solution diplomacy, but rather one of a never-ending crisis management. Therefore, high-ranking South African military figures and diplomats fear today in Namibia that American foreign policy has involved itself in deceptive horse-trading with Angola and the Soviets concerning the withdrawal of Cubans from Angola, and that ultimately the whole of southern Africa will be overrun by the Cubans and Soviets.

In order to meet this threat, the West must fundamentally change its position toward South Africa. First, preventing a military defeat of Jonas Savimbi's UNITA in Angola is absolutely crucial. The West, and especially the United States, must supply Savimbi with sufficient matériel, so that he is capable of withstanding the coming Soviet-directed offensive. Simultaneously, American diplomacy must insist uncompromisingly on the total withdrawal of Cubans from Angola, thus bringing a halt to the short-term military penetration of Soviet influence in southern Africa. Second, a political and, especially, economic, framework must be created for the entire region in which the efforts of reformers of P. W. Botha's National Party and the freedom fighters of Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha, as well as other moderate political leaders, can be successful.

Part II of this series on the political situation in South Africa will discuss the status of the reform efforts of President Botha as well as the role of Chief Buthelezi and the Inkatha.