
Interview: Dr. Frank Mdlalose

Zulu nation fights balkanization threat

Executive Intelligence Review continues this week the series of exclusive interviews with leaders of the moderate black liberation movement *Inkatha*, headed by Chief Minister of KwaZulu, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, whose interview appeared in the June 6 issue.

Dr. Frank Mdlalose, minister of health, KwaZulu government, was interviewed by Executive Intelligence Review's correspondents on May 4, 1986 at Mdadeni, Newcastle, Republic of South Africa.

EIR: Dr. Mdlalose, you have chosen Ulundi as the place for the capital of KwaZulu. Can you explain the reason for this choice?

Mdlalose: Ulundi was an ideal situation because of the geography, but other people said, "No, you must not forget that King Zwelithini lives at Ngoma, so you have to consider that his father lived at Ngoma. That should be considered; Ngoma ought to be the capital." But then there was a counter to this: If you are talking about the past and our culture, in fact Ulundi has it even richer. The great King Mpande, the half brother of King Dingane and half brother of King Shaka, is the one who had an issue. The present king is a descendant of King Mpande, and King Mpande lived and reigned from the Ulundi plains from what, in our language, we call the royal residence.

This royal residence is actually a few meters from the present day Ulundi Holiday Inn and is where, for 32 years, King Mpande reigned over the Zulu empire. He died there and is buried there. His son, Prince Cetiswayo, became king after the death of Mpande and reigned a few kilometers from where his father's royal residence was. Also very important, was the fact that it was at Ulundi that we fought and lost the battle with the English on the 4th of July, 1879.

So Ulundi has a very important cultural history for us, even more important than Ngoma. In addition, the water, terrain, rail routes, and car routes favor Ulundi.

EIR: In front of the building of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly, you are planning to erect a statue of King Shaka. Could you explain to us the significance of King Shaka in your tradition?

Mdlalose: King Shaka, the son of King Senzonagona, son of King Jama, is the one man who welded the Zulu into a

single solid nation. He raised it from the level of what you would call a tribe, by fighting the neighboring tribes and conquering and integrating them into one single nation.

King Shaka put together the Zulu group with the Buthelezis, the Mtetwas, all the other tribal groups, forming a solid nation. His reign extended from a small area which was in the cradle of KwaZulu, near Ulundi in fact, where we have today what we call Mkwakosini, which is the Zulu word for saying, "At the place where the kings stay." A number of forebears of King Shaka are buried there. He expanded from that area to an empire that stretched from the border of Mozambique on the north, right down to what is now called the Transkei; and on the west to the Drakensberg Mountains, and northwest to the Vaal River, where there is now the Transvaal; and bounded on the east, of course, by the Indian Ocean. In all that vast area he reigned.

He was the first man to make the Zulus a big nation, extending their domain over a wide area. He was as well a very powerful man who invented a number of war tactics: the pincer movement, the issue of fighting in waves, and also the use of one, stabbing *assegai* [a light spear which he himself designed], instead of fighting people as a group and throwing *assegais* all over. He revolutionized the Zulus and built them up as a nation. He was a nation-builder. So we of the Legislative Assembly decided that the statue of King Shaka was the only fitting statue to be put in front of the Legislative Assembly.

EIR: Now, setting up this government in Ulundi with new office buildings and a Legislative Assembly is obviously a very important new phase of the liberation struggle of your country. At which point, in your analysis, have we arrived? How do you analyze the reform course of President Botha, and what do you expect to happen in the near future?

Mdlalose: The first thing to stress is this: The republican government of South Africa, under the National Party regime, many years ago set itself on a course of separating ethnic groups into small segments and making them take independence. The government pressured groups to take independence in Transkei, Ciskei, and Bophuthatswana; and the Vendas, independence in Venda. Now they want the Ndebele to become the independent country of KwaNdebele. They would have liked to make the Zulus take an independent kind of KwaZulu.

They wanted to make South Africa a possession of the whites only, wherein the blacks would come in only as laborers from a different country, making them strangers in fact in South Africa. And the effect would have been that 87% of the land belonged to the whites and only 13% belonged to the others, the blacks: the Tswanas, the Ndebele, the Zulus, and others, who occupy up to 13% of the land. The strategy was to separate these groups and let them rule themselves and take independence.

Many people talk as if they are not clear what the whole struggle is about. We realized the South African government



Mangosuthu Buthelezi, chief minister of KwaZulu, addresses 80,000 people gathered at a stadium in Durban for the founding of the United Workers Union at South Africa on May 1.

was dead earnest in pushing everybody to take independence, thereby renouncing all claims to the wealth of South Africa: to the gold mines, the diamond mines, the coal mines, and the industrial developments in Johannesburg and Capetown, Braamfontein, and Durban, and what not. They wanted us to clear out of all the wealth of South Africa, so that we could be confined to arid areas full of stones. Now, we were the ones who decided no, we shall not allow the South African government to do that. We in KwaZulu realized, if we just stay out, fold our hands and say, "We don't agree, we don't agree," we'll find ourselves eased out of South Africa and rendered impotent. The South African government will just put up their stooges to take over the KwaZulu government, which would go along with those stooges to formulate an independent KwaZulu. So what we did, those of us who resisted, we decided to grab the machinery of KwaZulu government and stop South Africa from letting KwaZulu become independent.

That is our position in KwaZulu government. We are, in fact, in the forefront of preventing the balkanization of South Africa, and we maintain that all of South Africa is one. We

are in the forefront of that struggle; that is why we in KwaZulu decided to follow this line. We have now our Legislative Assembly. We are holding it as part and parcel of South Africa; we are holding it as a province of South Africa. Pursuing this strategy, we have gone out of our way to prove that the blacks can coexist and live together with the whites, the coloreds, and the Indians.

Now, we in Natal, in KwaZulu/Natal, were actually facing the situation where if KwaZulu became independent, it would have been an area consisting of 30 little pieces. If you went from one part of KwaZulu to another part of KwaZulu, you would find that you would have to cross borders so many times and take out your passport, showing it to the authorities so many times, that you would never get to your destination in one day. That is very stupid, in our view.

We thought that KwaZulu/Natal is one, which it is. There is such interdependence between the two, that they are really one country, KwaZulu/Natal. In terrain, weather, or any other aspect, it is one and the same. We have set ourselves to prove this to the world. The first thing is, as the KwaZulu government, now having attained both stature and the posi-

tion of having a legislative assembly, we worked with the Natal provincial administration, which is really a white administration in Natal. Voluntarily, we established contact. In health, especially in hospital services, we share many things. We share ideas of where stores may be kept, where to purchase, and how to purchase. We've shared things like ambulance systems, so many things; we are even sharing extra equipment and facilities. We find that, on a voluntary basis, we in the KwaZulu government and the Natal provincial administration, are sharing in all the departments. I mention health, only because I happen to be the minister of health in the KwaZulu government; but the same voluntary sharing applies in culture, roads, education, and in so many other things. That is phase one.

Then phase two, which we established also, was to make the thing realized; so the Joint Executive Authority (JEA) decided that for this to be developed, it had to be done by the republican government of South Africa. We appealed to them and put up what we had worked out as a model on which they could work to formulate the authority we needed to proceed. This model was accepted by the government of South Africa. I think they found that at a voluntary level it worked well. We saved a lot of money in the Department of Health alone. We have saved more than 2 million rand in a year, just by coordinating our activities, even in a non-statutory manner. Such things can be extended to all other spheres. So the Joint Executive Authority is now already in formation and action, but that does not satisfy us.

Phase three has been the coming together of the KwaZulu government administration and the provincial administration, which means the blacks in KwaZulu and the whites in Natal. It cuts off the Indians, it cuts off the coloreds; so we have now initiated what we call Indaba, which is, in fact, a convention, a convention of the peoples of Natal. Coming together are the blacks, the coloreds, the Indians, and the whites, to discuss a way of forming one single legislative chamber, so that in that chamber all these groups can take part. Now we are in the midst of Indaba and have pulled together various political parties in the country as well as various interests like business, chambers of commerce, chambers of industry, agricultural unions, and so on and so on. These groups are together and discussing. Of course, we do have various elements that will not take part.

On the left, led by the ANC [African National Congress] and the UDF [United Democratic Front], those elements will not take part; and also the Natal Indian Congress will not take part, even though they have been invited. Now the extremists on the right, like the Afrikaaner Weerstand Boewegung, the HNP, and the Conservative Party will not take part, because they say this is selling out the country to the blacks. But the mainstream of the people, the clear thinkers, are taking part in such a way that I hope we can reach a consensus and have one region in Natal, as part of South Africa. This is very important to say.



Dr. Mdlalose (l) with a Schiller Institute representative at the tomb of King Shaka (Tshaka).

EIR: Could this Indaba be a model for how things should be worked out on the national level?

Mdlalose: We think Indaba would be an ideal for the rest of South Africa to follow. If we come to an agreement that these racial groups can accept, working together to find a formula of coexistence in Natal, it ought to be emulated by the rest of the provinces of South Africa. Just as we did in Natal, we can do the same thing in the Transvaal, the same thing in the Free State, the same thing in the Cape. Then we would have a situation where the second tier of government in these four provinces would be run under conditions that would be acceptable to all the peoples there, and that would be a stepping stone toward having a central government that would take in all the peoples of South Africa instead of excluding the blacks.