
South Africa at a Turning Point

Botha: 'Apartheid is outdated, and we have outgrown it'

The historic speech given before the South African parliament on Jan. 31 by President P. W. Botha has been blacked out or distorted—and certainly not published—in the press of the Western world. But it has the British Commonwealth hysterical, the U.S. State Department speechless, the Kremlin and its minions in the African “liberation struggle” perplexed and befuddled. The first reaction of the British Commonwealth was to dispatch British Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe to Lusaka, Zambia, to hold secret meetings with the Moscow-controlled leadership of the African National Congress (ANC). The ANC perceives, quite correctly, that Botha's move has pulled the rug out from under their efforts to unleash civil war in South Africa, and permanent destabilization among the countries of the southern cone of Africa.

President Botha proclaimed the end of the hated apartheid system, which he described as a vestige of British colonial rule. He announced a series of constitutional reforms, based on the premise of “one citizenship for all South Africans, implying equal treatment and opportunities,” and laying the foundations for a multiracial, republican, unified nation.

Elsewhere in this feature package, we document how the black African liberation struggle was infiltrated and subverted by the communists, to the point that today the ANC functions as a lever of Soviet policy. We also point the way to the kind of economic development policies which will allow the Republic of South Africa to spark the rapid development of the entirety of southern Africa, in its own interest and that of its neighbors.

We publish here the full text of President Botha's speech.

The founding of the Republic of South Africa a quarter of a century ago severed the last remaining ties with our colonial past.

Through this important step to further the ideal of South African nationhood, we set the stage for the remarkable progress which has been made in major areas over the past 25 years.

In a world where freedom is becoming increasingly rare, our country today is a symbol of the expansion of freedom, of the upholding of freedom of religion and free enterprise, sustained by equal rights before an independent judiciary.

The Republic of South Africa is therefore a powerful bastion against communist domination and enslavement. The Republic is also an important supplier of expertise, development aid, technology, and necessities of life to Africa, and strategic minerals to the world. Should this republic perish, a one-party dictatorship will sever this artery and destroy these freedoms.

Yet, the campaign against the Republic of South Africa from abroad has greatly intensified. On the one hand, it has taken the form of an increased armed threat. This is proven by, among other things, the stockpiling of advanced armaments in certain neighboring states and terror attacks across our borders. On the other hand, there were intensified attempts to isolate us in all spheres.

There are various reasons for this campaign. One is the fact that evolutionary reform does not serve the designs of leftist revolutionaries. The campaign is sustained by calculated lies about the South African realities which have with doubtful motives been spread across the world for so many decades. Attempts are continually being made to belittle each step forward and to brand all government initiatives as merely cosmetic, while conditions more appalling than those ostensibly prevailing in South Africa are sanctimoniously tolerated elsewhere in the world.

Nevertheless, we reaffirm our continued commitment to peaceful international co-existence through cooperation and negotiation. This applies to all nations, but particularly to Southern Africa.

In this regard, I wish to emphasize that there can be no peace and stability in our region as long as countries knowingly harbor terrorists who plan and execute acts of terror against a neighboring state.

South West Africa

As far as South West Africa is concerned, the Republic of South Africa remains prepared to implement resolution 435, provided agreement can be reached on Cuban withdrawal from Angola. Only then will the Republic of South Africa reduce its troops in terms of the agreed arrangements. In this area, lasting peace, progress and freedom can only prevail if terrorism gives way to negotiation and constitutional development such as desired by the internal parties.

Agreement

I once again extend a hand of friendship to our neighbors. Let us come to an agreement on the specific rules of the game regulating the conduct of neighbors towards one another, rules that are honored by all civilized nations.

These include the withdrawal of foreign forces from the region, the peaceful settlement of disputes, regional cooperation on common problems, an unequivocal ban on support for violence across international boundaries, and tolerance in the region.

The governments of this region should give tangible expression to such a common desire for peace and stability.

I want to propose, therefore, that we give urgent and serious consideration to the establishment of a permanent joint mechanism for dealing with matters of security, particularly threats to the peace and prosperity of our subcontinent.

It makes no difference in which capital the secretariat of such a body will be located. What matters is that the countries in the region should find a way to promote our joint security, to everyone's advantage.

Should this offer by the Republic of South Africa be ignored or rejected, we would have no choice but to take effective measures in self-defense to protect our country and population against threats.

Southern Africa—and the Republic of South Africa in particular—can play a key role in these last 15 years of the 20th century in unlocking the resources of Africa.

The untapped reserves of our country and our region have the potential to give new life to the whole of southern Africa. We have the natural resources and a strong economy. With the additional potential of our population, we also have the ability to promote peace and progress in the region.

We accept unequivocally that the Republic of South Africa is part of the international community. We have no wish to isolate ourselves from the world, particularly not from Africa of which we form an integral part.

Regarding pressure from abroad against the Republic of South Africa, we accept that not all the pressure is necessarily malicious. Indeed, every country in the world has the right to give priority to its own national interests. We also reserve that right for ourselves.

But I wish to make it clear that we do not need pressure to walk the road of reform and justice.

We do it out of conviction. We have the capacity, the will and the faith to meet our challenges.

As we develop the tremendous potential and goodwill in our various communities, and the talents of our people, we will help create a powerful future for southern Africa.

It is so that we have had to deal with unrest within the country which has unnecessarily claimed lives, and has inflicted too much damage on this country.

Allow me once again to express my sympathy with the suffering of all those affected. No government can permit

such violence, which has often resulted in the brutal murder of innocent men, women and children. We were therefore obliged to declare a state of emergency in about 13% of our magisterial districts.

I am greatly encouraged by the greater calm that is beginning to return. Naturally, there will be further efforts unrest in 1986. The leftist revolutionary elements which are controlled from abroad, will develop and attempt to implement new strategies and tactics.

We will continue to maintain order within the framework of civilized norms. Our security forces have strict orders in this regard. Thus we will promote a climate in which new hope for all our communities can grow and the need for emergency measures will decrease.

The institutions of government that came into being in terms of the 1983 constitution proved within a year that our various communities can take part effectively and peacefully in joint decision-making at the central level.

Through their contributions, the representatives of the colored and Indian communities were able to assist in ensuring that problems in their respective communities received the necessary attention. They were personally involved in the active alleviation of such problems.

Our multilateral cooperation agreements in various fields with neighboring states are also proving successful.

I welcome this positive attitude.

Education

I should like today to repeat the government's commitment to equal provision of education for all population groups. The process of reform, aimed at achieving this, is in full progress in the education field.

One of the most important steps was the establishment of a single education department for general policy for all communities. Through the mediation of this department, after comprehensive consultation, the overall guidelines for the provision of education, are being laid down. These include the equitable allocation of resources to the various communities.

Real progress has also been made in the quality of education for black communities.

Investigations and projects which have been launched, cover, among other things, the improved provision of education for pupils in rural areas, management training for principals and heads of departments, a bridging period to bring children to school-readiness, a system to promote career education and a comprehensive effort to improve the academic and professional qualifications of teachers.

Programs aimed at active progress towards the goal of parity in the provision of education will be announced in the foreseeable future. This will exert substantial pressure on the treasury in future.

During the coming year measures will be taken in order

to extend the participation of all concerned in education. Further announcements on the continued reform of our educational system can be expected shortly.

The government, in consultation with leaders in the field of education, is furthermore determined to create structures during this year which would soon release equal standards of examination and certification of qualifications for all communities.

The economy

In the economic field, 1985 was, in many respects, not an easy year for the Republic of South Africa. The instability of the agricultural sector was exacerbated by the drought of the past few years.

In addition, the restrictive economic and financial factors resulted in small profits and a higher debt and interest burden for some sectors of agriculture.

We have been heartened by the abundant rain in most regions which have now brought improved prospects.

Although the current conditions are more favorable, it is essential that the agricultural sector be built up again to ensure an adequate food supply for a growing population.

The adaptation of the traditional land-use practices in the self-governing states should also make a substantial contribution to this.

There were positive developments on the economic front that should make us all more optimistic.

An outstanding highlight in this field was the excellent export performance achieved during 1985. The latest trading statistics reflect the sharp upswing in our exports. The estimated increase in the volume of exports for 1985 (gold excluded) is about 24%, compared to the corresponding period during 1984. In contrast, the volume of imports for the same period declined by about 15%. The current account of the balance of payments recovered from a deficit of 1.4 billion rand in 1984 to a surplus of about R7 billion in 1985.

The Republic of South Africa still places a high premium on the role of exports in its economic growth and development process. The government continued to promote our status as an important and reliable trading partner. This entails not only maintaining and strengthening existing multi-lateral trading agreements, but also the promotion of bilateral and counter-trading transactions.

The success thus far achieved with monetary and fiscal policy is reflected in, among other things, the considerable improvement on the current account of the balance of payments and the decline in interest rates. In this way a new basis has been provided for economic growth.

The latest indications are that the business cycle reached its lowest point in the second half of 1985 and that a new growth phase is now beginning.

The government is concerned about the high rate of inflation, and the combating thereof continually receives attention

at the highest level.

The government is aware of socio-economic difficulties still facing some communities. Nevertheless, good progress has been made in alleviating these circumstances during the past year.

This is evident, among others, from the reforms implemented in the labor field, and the emphasis placed on the provision of housing, the upgrading of black residential areas, and the advancement of entrepreneurship.

The legislative program

The proposed legislative program and other planned actions for the coming season, confirm the government's commitment to the creation of a framework for equal opportunities.

Among the most important matters that will be translated into legislation during this session, are the following:

- Restoring South African citizenship to black persons who permanently reside in the Republic of South Africa, but who forfeited their citizenship as a result of the conditions of independence of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, and Ciskei;

- Extension of the powers of the self-governing states;
- The involvement of black communities in decision-making;
- Freehold property rights for members of black communities; and

- A uniform identity document for all population groups.

Proposed legislation which will affect all communities, extend democratic processes, and promote free enterprise, include the following:

- The amendment of the immigration selection policy by repealing discriminatory preference provisions;

- The restructuring of the system of provincial government to involve all communities; and

- Legislation authorizing the lifting, suspending, or amending of unnecessary restrictions on entrepreneurship, particularly with regard to the informal sector.

In this regard, I requested that a bill be presented to parliament this year, which will empower the state president to facilitate the participation of the small entrepreneur in the economy through the suspension of unnecessary restrictive measures.

Any action in this regard will be restricted in scope and subject to parliamentary approval. It is intended only to be applied in the interest of economic progress, competition, and the creation of job opportunities.

Other measures that will follow shortly include the following:

The drafting of legislation to remove existing influx control measures which apply to South African citizens in the Republic of South Africa. The present system is too costly and has become obsolete.

The government is in favor of measures which will facilitate orderly urbanization. Influx control is closely linked to urbanization, and in this regard the government has noted the contents of the report of the President's Council on an Urbanization Strategy for the Republic of South Africa.

A white paper is being prepared in which the government's reaction to the recommendations of the President's Council will be set out, and guidelines will be formulated for a clear and workable strategy in relation to urbanization.

Socio-economic development

I have given instructions that the highest possible priority must be given to the formulation of a socio-economic development plan for the less developed areas and communities. Such a plan, to be submitted to me, is being drawn up in

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consultation with the communities and the government departments concerned.

In order to promote our economic development, our export trade, and the creation of employment opportunities for our people, white papers concerning the refining of South Africa's minerals, and our energy policy, will be tabled during this session.

The first regional services council will be established in the near future, through which joint decision-making between all communities will be expanded, and the development of the less developed areas will be stimulated.

Framework for the future

In addition to these concrete reform steps, the government has through the process of negotiation also become conscious of more black aspirations and needs.

This has placed the government in a position where it is possible to outline the framework for further constitutional development to broaden the democracy. This entails the following basic guidelines:

- We accept an undivided Republic of South Africa where all regions and communities within its boundaries form part of the South African state, with the right to participate in institutions to be negotiated collectively.

- We accept one citizenship for all South Africans, implying equal treatment and opportunities.

- We believe in the sovereignty of the law as the basis for the protection of the fundamental rights of individuals as well as groups. We believe in the sanctity and indivisibility of law and the just application thereof.

- There can be no peace, freedom, and democracy without law. Any future system must conform with the requirements of a civilized legal order, and must ensure access to the courts and equality before the law.

- We believe that human dignity, life, liberty, and property of all must be protected, regardless of color, race, creed, or religion.

- We believe that a democratic system of government, which must accommodate all legitimate political aspirations of all the South African communities, must be negotiated.

- All South Africans must be placed in a position where they can participate in government through their elected representatives.

We have outgrown the outdated colonial system of paternalism as well as the outdated concept of apartheid.

The peoples of the Republic of South Africa form one nation. But our nation is a nation of minorities. Given the multicultural nature of South African society, this of necessity implies participation by all communities, the sharing of power between these communities, but also the devolution of power as far as possible and the protection of minority rights, without one group dominating another.

Committed as we are to these norms and values, we will have to defend the South African society against the forces of anarchy which seek to seize a monopoly of power and ultimately rule this nation, through the use of force, by an exclusive political clique. That will make a mockery of liberty.

Liberty is a cornerstone of true democracy and manifests itself on three different levels in our society.

Firstly, on the personal and individual level, respect for and the protection of the human dignity, life, liberty, and property of all.

In no comparable country of the world has so much been done for the socio-economic upliftment of underprivileged communities as has been the case in this country in the short space of a few decades.

Secondly, liberty on the group and community level, which implies respect for and the promotion and protection

of the self-determination of population groups and peoples, whether on a regional or national basis or whether under rural or urban conditions.

In an Africa plagued by civil war and genocide, the Republic of South Africa stands as a symbol of hope for all minority communities.

Thirdly, liberty on the state and national level, to safeguard the integrity and freedom of our country, and to secure the protection of our citizens through the application of civilized standards of justice, order, and security. True democracy for the Republic of South Africa and all its peoples, individually and collectively, must recognize each of these components of freedom. The absence of such recognition will diminish, and not increase, the freedom of our peoples.

I have already stated that I am willing to consider the restructuring and the functions of the president's council to make provision for the participation by leaders of black communities, should the need exist among them to participate in that council.

I now wish to announce that I intend to negotiate the establishment of a national statutory council, which will meet under my chairmanship.

I propose that this council should consist of representatives of the South African government, representatives of the governments of the self-governing national states, as well as leaders of other black communities and interest groups.

Pending the creation of constitutional structures jointly to be agreed upon for our multi-cultural society, this council should consider and advise on matters of common concern, including proposed legislation of such matters.

This council can meet under the chairmanship of the state president as often as needed.

Conclusion

It is common cause that we have not yet fully achieved all these goals to which I have referred. Yet we have undeniably made significant progress, as evidenced by major on-going constitutional and socio-economic reform.

Those who oppose this approach of evolutionary reform know that the alternative is revolutionary chaos. Fortunately, between them and such chaos, stand moderate and reasonable South Africans.

Let there be no doubt, however, regarding our sincerity and dedication to fulfill our commitments in accordance with the dictates of these norms and values.

We shall do so despite the criticism of those who underestimate or refuse to acknowledge the complexity of our realities.

There are no easy and simple solutions to our challenges, and no ready examples and models for us to reproduce. In addition, the South African government has to prove that true democracy is capable of application in our multi-cultural society. We are determined to address our challenges. We sincerely believe in cooperative coexistence for all South Africans. Let us unite to make this possible.

Mr. Speaker:

It is my prayer that the blessing of Almighty God will guide and support you in your work and deliberations.

I now declare this third session of the eighth parliament of the Republic of South Africa duly opened.

On Nelson Mandela

Honorable members will be aware that I made an offer last year which could have set Mr. Nelson Mandela free. The principle involved in this offer was not designed as a particular condition for a particular person. It applies equally to all of us and it is assumed that the principle is subscribed to in all civilized countries of the world. The principle simply proscribes the use of violence to achieve political objectives. Mr. Mandela is therefore, in effect, being jailed by the South African Communist Party and its affiliate, the African National Congress. For obvious reasons, it suits them that he remains in prison. They have much to gain while he remains where he is. In the meantime, the continuation of violence in South Africa affects all South Africans. The government cannot abdicate its responsibility for maintaining order and ending violence and the government does not intend doing so whether Mr. Mandela is released or not.

I am conscious of the fact that Mr. Mandela has been in prison for a long time and that he is now in his sixties. I have given this matter much thought. I stated last year that, in principle, I would be prepared to consider his release on humanitarian grounds.

But I think also of Captain Wynand Petrus Johannes Du Toit at present held in an Angolan prison.

I think also of persons like Andrei Sakharov and Anatolii Shcharanskiy. A significant difference between Mr. Mandela and Andrei Sakharov, for example, is that unlike the acts of violence and sabotage of which Mr. Mandela was found guilty, the acts which Mr. Sakharov committed were non-violent expressions of opinion. Mr. Sakharov has, moreover, indicated that he would agree, if allowed to leave the U.S.S.R., not to criticize the Soviet Union on any sustained or major basis.

For many years, Anatolii Shcharanskiy was the subject of continuous harassment, surveillance, and interrogation by the Soviet authorities. In March 1977, he was arrested by the Soviet secret police and detained in Moscow's Lefortovo Prison until his trial in July 1978. Convicted on charges of "treason" and "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda," he was sentenced to thirteen years in prison and labor camps. His present state of health gives rise for serious concern.

I should now like to pose the following very important question:

If I were to release Mr. Nelson Mandela on humanitarian grounds, could Captain Wynand du Toit, Andrei Sakharov, and Anatolii Shcharanskiy not also be released on humanitarian grounds?

A positive response to this question could certainly form the basis of negotiations between interested governments.