

A CITIZEN'S PLEA TO THE ANC.

*Dear Sirs / Madams,*

Until the opening of CODESA the actions of ANC members were both understandable and excusable. Violence and sanctions are the politics of desperate men who have no recourse to negotiations. They were, and possibly are still, dealing with a corrupt and amoral Government. But now they are a liberating force in the New South Africa and we look to them to create something better.

Instead, their actions now are beyond comprehension. With the alleged intention of speeding up the process towards a fair and just government they drive the people out onto the streets, fan mass action and employ every tactic to foment the temperaments of an already restless people.

Will this contribute anything towards persuading the youth to abandon their credo of "Liberation before Education?" Will people once again be victimized into conformity to demonstrate mass solidarity? Will this encourage the people to work for what they need rather than taking from the nation's 'haves' by redistribution, which includes looting and murdering? Where do they see a virtue in rendering the country ungovernable and intolerable to most reasonable individuals, by their renewed campaign for mass action?

Now, there are other ways open to them!

There are lessons to learn from history about violent revolutionary change. It exposed the French to the faction fighting of egotistical ruthless men. It exposed the Russians to the tyrannies of a powerful centralized government. Neither of these are examples we should wish to follow. The alternative of negotiating a safe constitution that subdivides power amongst all the racial groups in South Africa is a far more attractive option and one for which the American Constitution serves as a reasonable model.

If the ANC is honest in its attempt to structure the best possible government for all the people of S A, be they white or black, Zulu or Xosa or anything else, why do they reject Federalism and the well proven methods of the Americans, and turn to the unsuccessful tactics of the French and the Russians. Under the American Constitution the power to make laws is vested with the Congress which consists of two separate bodies: the House of Representatives elected by the nation as a whole and the Senate elected by the individual states. Thus a national and a federal system of government is combined. Even the smallest states are represented in Government. The power to enforce the laws rests with the president and the judiciary is separately managed by a Supreme Court which is independent of political change. The main purpose of this constitution, based on the wisdom of

John Locke and Baron de Montesquieu, is to limit the power of the Central government to enable the legislature, the executive and the judiciary to impose checks and balances on one another and to allow as much representation from the people as possible.

The ANC wants a just and democratic constitution, but rejects federalism, demands a powerful central government and demands a hasty transition to power before a reasonable constitution, that is safe for everyone, can be put into place. Does this bode well for the future?

Powerful centralized governments are not accountable to the people. If reasonable men like Mandela and Mbeki head the government, the country may well prosper. But can one say the same of radicals like Chris Hani, Winnie Mandela and other younger members of the ANC? The worst thing we could be exposed to is the possibility of a power clique, excluding Inkatha and steamrolling the whites. This could be followed by interminable violence between those who see themselves as an ineffective minority and those who hold the power.

The whites of South Africa have expressed massive solidarity with the blacks in a referendum which asked if they wanted to share power. The world at large has shown tremendous goodwill towards South Africa waiting only for a sign of responsible and peaceful government to invest in the country and lift us out of a bleak economic depression. But no reasonable white or black man wants to live in a country where he might be subjected to a strong centralized government which is not accountable to all the people whatever their colour or creed; where the people have less rather than more say over local and regional government. No country in the world wants to deal with another country where the people are encouraged to take what they want rather than earn what they can and where violence, mass action and incitement are the language of the people.

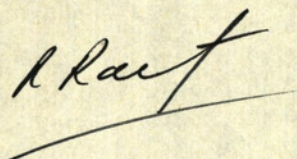
The ANC now holds the key to the future of this country. Either they can show themselves to be genuine in their desire to negotiate a fair deal for all, or they can continue as they now are, to destabilise the country, incite the people to take up arms (as Moses Mayekiso did in his talk to ANC supporters at a May Day rally in Alexandra) and insist on a government which leaves the fate of Inkatha plus every white and black person in the country hanging in the balance.

To claim that the safety of the individual should be enshrined in a Bill of Rights is facile since such a Bill is only as just and impartial as are its managers. It's ironic that countries which have included sections of the United

Nations charter on Human Rights in their constitutions are amongst others, Libya, Haiti and Syria . Does that tell us something about the power of a Bill of Rights?

Democracy is based on reason, compromise and tolerance. The ANC would have our undying support if it embraced these values. If it continues its campaign of mass defiance it will spawn frustration, mistrust and a country in turmoil. Then, only those who know no better, or can be duped by slogans, can support it.

R.Rabinowitz.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'R. Rabinowitz', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.