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Liberal given radical drubbing by Buthelezi

Is liberalism in South Africa undergoing nge to a point where many of its former erents are embracing radicalism? We believe that there are clear signs that this is the case. Remember that curious statement made

by Nadine Gordimer? She was not a liberal. she said, she was a radical! And how many have noticed that Reality, the well-known journal of "liberal opinion", has added the words "and radical" to its front page?

But if there has been a shift, we do not be-

lieve it to have great significance, because by theoretically shifting their ground, these former liberals have lost touch with reality. It seems their political impotance has created a type of frustration that leads them to applaud radicalism, even if it is mindless, because this provides them with psychological satisfation underscoring their belief in the untenability of White-imposed political philosophies.

Much of the thinking of these people has become fossilized. They wander about in a mental cul de sac unable to digest the dynamics of current politics, because they are mesmerized by the bygone era of Sobukwe and Mandela. and the recurring nightmare of their own failure in politics.

They seem to believe that the only acceptable method to oppose repugnant race policies is to articulate anger and to indulge in dramatic gestures of defiance.

A good example of this type of thinking was published recently in Reality. It was written by Peter Brown, a well-known figure who was banned for a long time following political activity in the Liberal Party. It was based on his reflections of the Graaff Reinet incident. He virtually accused the president of Inkatha, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, of being a political opportunist, of lacking in political perception and stopped just short of suggesting, through the use of innuendo, that he believed in "racist" dreams.

We reprint below Chief Buthelezi's re-action to the article and hope to be able to reprint Mr Brown's original article in next week's Zulu Voice.

I have great respect for Peter Brown for what he suffered for his poli-tical views, and for living for so long under banning orders which were served on him by the Nationalist government. Mr Brown is former top-ranking ial of the Liberal official

wish however to place on record my as-tonishment at the naivety of his interpretation of the Graaff Reinet incident, the Graaff Reinet incident, in the latest issue of Reality. First of all, the estimates of the group that demanded my ejectment at the Sobukwe funeral was between 100 and 200. I would say that they were 100 or less. It was

was attended also by black journalists on the eve of the funeral. The journalists were also from Soweto, and members of the black consciousness movement. There were no appeals over the microphone of any sort as stated by Mr Brown, I have people who were there and my Secretary has a recording which he made of the whole affair.

By stating that I am lucky to get out there alive, I wonder what point Mr Brown is trying to make by it. Attempts were made to stab me from the back and to stone me. One did not need to have the reception of a white liberal of Brown's ilk to know that I escaped death. The people concerned shouted in Xhosa: "Makabulawe!"—meaning "Kill him."

Anything which God has not decreed will never happen. So the question of courage does not come in because if I was not protected by God's hand, the people concerned who wanted to murder me would have done so. This was not unique. King Shaka was murdered, Mahatma Gandhi was murdered. Dr. Martin Luther dered, Dr. Martin Luther King was murdered as were many saintly people

not a crowd as stated by Peter Brown. My Oxford dictionary defines a crowd dictionary defines a crowd as a throng, dense multitude. This was not a spontaneous gathering. The whole thing was discussed at Regina Mundi in Soweto by members of the black consciousness movement. It was also discussed in the Cape at another meeting which was attended also by black journalists on the eve of

with whom I could not compare myself. They did not deserve what they got because of their

But the real crunch of

in the system.

Mr Brown's ilk when it folded up. If this was the

calibre of its top leader-ship, it was just as well that people were saved from the kind of misanaly-

sis inherent in these naive statements by Mr Brown

I have a photograph in my office taken by Mr

my office taken by Mr
Benjamin Pogrund a few
years ago, of Robert Sobukwe and myself. Benjamin Pogrund was a close
friend of Robert Sobukwe
and he published the
photograph whilst he was
alive. That is my answer
to Mr Brown's question:
Would he have regarded

Would he have regarded it as an occasion for heal-

ing rifts? What rifts is Mr Brown speaking about? He can ask Mr Nzimande

the attorney who articled Mr Sobukwe if he wants

to know. He phoned me about Sobukwe's death as

about Sobukwe's death as soon as he had heard about it, because he knew in what high esteem Sobukwe told him he regarded my efforts. Incidentally even when I met him, he praised what I am doing. Sobukwe was great for what he suffered, and not for what he did.

in his article.

But the real crunch of Mr Brown's comments comes when he displays arrogant presumptuousness when he thinks that he as a white man has more perception of black politics than Sobukwe himself or his followers in exile, who asked me to attend. Sobukwe himself never thought of me in the never thought of me in the light in which I am suddenly seen by Mr Brown. Nor did Executive members of the Pan-Africanist Congress think so. To say that the PAC officials were out of touch with present political tensions within black society for inviting me would be ludicrous, if it was not so disappointing that a Liberal of Mr Brown's stature should be guilty of such a gross misanalysis of black politics. All the nonsense that black people attending the funeral were bound to be people who went to pay tribute to Sobukwe for the stand he had taken against apartheid from outside its institutions illustrates the dismal ignorance of my position and leadership role by a member of an old Natal family, who was once an aspiring political leader. Did Robert Sobukwe have a higher status than Albert Luthuli as a political leader? If the answer is no, how does it come about that at Chief Luthuli's funeral I was asked by his family, and the banned African National Congress to deliver an oration on behalf of black people of South Africa? Does Mr Brown know Mr Sobukwe better than his own brother Bishop Sobukwe, who when he heard I was attending the funeral, requested me to speak? Or is it again because Bishop Sobukwe is black that Mr Brown should understand these things better than he does? Does Mr Brown know more about African culture, when it comes to funeral rites than Bishop Sobukwe?

Mr Brown may have been banned and we respect that price which he paid for his views, but I do not think it entitles him to write all the rubbish he writes in this article about "working within the system." Who is not working within the system? Did Mr Brown give up any white privileges to which his white skin entitles him under the system to prove his commitment to a just It is like adding insult to injury for Mr Brown to write that Sobukwe's vision was not a racist dream. Whose vision is a racist dream? Is Mr Brown that ignorant of my own views and vision? When Mr Brown states that he came away with the feel-ing that Sobukwe's vision was still valid for most black people, which black people does he mean, the ILANGA, MAY 18-20, 1978

bunch of thugs who were have not heard of one single white liberal who has done so. Anyone who prompted by the black consciousness group to murder me? did so would in my opi-nion be entitled to speak It is moreover a lie for

ex cathedra as Mr Brown does, about working with-Mr Brown to say there was no feeling in these showgrounds of being a white speck in a sea of black hostility. Whites May be Mr Brown is too much out of touch with the political pulse in the black Community to understand were called "pigs". Whites were called "pigs". Whites were told by the demonstrators "we will meet you in the bush". A song "Boers are dogs" was sung long before the funeral. The American American American was reported to that for me to go to So-bukwe's funeral was hobukwe's funeral was honouring Sobukwe and his
memory, not the other
way round. Why would I
need Sobukwe's corpse togive me any political credits, as stated by Mr
Brown. To go on and state
that a clash of some sort
could hardly be avoided,
makes me think it may
have saved many people
who were members of the
Liberal Party a lot of misguidance from leaders of
Mr Brown's ilk when it bassador was reported to have left the funeral, ostensibly as he could no longer stand what was going on.

tha and the Black Alliance which Mr Brown states

we have suffered as a re-

we have suffered as a result of my attempted mur-der in Graaff Reinet, exists only in his own mind. This is a pathetic liberal day dream, which will not materialise in the foreseable future. Mr Brown goes on to ponti-ficate about what he calls my serious international embarrassment particular-ly in Africa. I wonder which part of Black Afri-ca he has visited, When I visited Tanzania for the first time in 1973, I was met by members of TANU ruling party with placards of welcome at the Airport. I was asked to address students at the University of Dar-Es-Salaam, and Mr Gora Ebrahim a South African exile started a demonstration against me. I was accompanied by the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Elias Elinawinga, when I visited the University. I was received by the President of Tanzania Dr Julius Nyerere with great warmth and he received me again last year. It surprises me that a display of juvenile political thuggery of the kind that was seen at Graaff Reinet should be seen by Mr Brown as something that is going to cause me any international embarrassment. I have received messages from many parts of the World since Graaff Reinet. I have had five in-vitations to address audiences overseas this year alone. It is really surpris-ing that a former leader of the Liberal Party, should not think my rally of about 20 000 Africans at Jabulani Amphitheatre in Soweto on the 9th of April, is more important in defining black feelings

ganised attempted murder in a small Karroo town of Graaff Reinet on March

Mr Brown states that

there are a growing num-ber of black urban areas in South Africa where Inkatha and the Black Alliance could not rely on having friendly public meetings, unless the area has a large Zulu popula-tion. I challenge Mr Brown to name even just three of these areas. I ad-dressed a meeting with thousands of blacks at Nyanga, a day after Sobukwe's funeral. The majority of them were not Zulus and there is no large Zulu po-pulation in Cape Town. I addressed with other lead-ers of the Black Alliance a very successful meeting at Athlone on the 13th March. The most volatile and cosmopolitan black township in South Africa is Soweto, where I had a big and successful rally on the 9th of April. I have black people of high sta-tus such as the Rt. Revd. Dr Zulu who were pre-sent on both occasions to bear me out.

Lately it is cocktail chatter in white suburbs that when I defend myself as I do from these white sneers and these kind of smears, that I am being oversensitive. I will do so each and every time white liberals indulge in the dangerous day dreams such as Mr Brown was in dulging in, in his article on the Graaff Reinet incident. This incident has however taught me a lot about fair-weather friends as distinct from stormy weather friends. The nub of this whole question is how many of these liberals ever attend even one political meeting that I ugleni i-Independence ylangope ekhuluma enku-

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