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PASSING OUT PARADE

Address by Mangosuthu G. Buthelezi
Chief Minister of KwaZulu, President of Inkatha and
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EMANDLENI MATLENG CAMP
ULUNDI

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The time has once more come to hold a Passing Out Parade for the Amabutho who have come here to learn to serve their people. This place is a place of promise and it is our role to translate promise into reality. A Passing Out Parade is normally a time to do two things. One normally looks at what has been achieved and what young people leave this place with. The other thing that we must do at a Passing Out Parade is to look at the purpose of what we are doing. We must therefore ask ourselves how successful we have been and remind ourselves of why we are striving for success. Emandleni-Matleng Camp is at the foot of the hills which overlook the Ulundi plain which is so filled with history. It was here at Ulundi that the great British army made the final onslaught on mighty warriors of King Cetshwayo.

The first message I want to give you today is that the Battle of Ulundi was a battle in Africa. The British army made an onslaught against the sons of Africa. At Emandleni-Matleng Camp we look around and see hills in all directions. Those are the hills of Africa. The air we breathe is African air. We are Africans in Africa and we will never be anything else. After centuries of terrible suffering, Africa is now faced with the task of gathering its strength to meet the demands of the modern world. Our past is an African past, and our future will be an African future. As the sons and daughters of Africa, we are charged with the responsibility of raising Africa up to be a mighty continent in which the dreams of Africa come true.

In Africa we yearn for peace and prosperity. We yearn for a society in which people are not dehumanised by progress. The spirit of Ubuntu-Botho lies deep in our souls. Our hearts and our minds are the hearts and the minds of Africans striving after an African idiom in our world as we modernise it. We gather our strength to acquire the wisdom which future generations will one day so badly need us to employ now. Our vision here at Emandleni-Matleng Camp is an African vision and I think it is important for us to pause at this Passing Out function to look at what our African vision really is.

We who are Africans know the meaning of hardship and suffering, and we know that man was created by God to strive for the things that

make life worthwhile. The birds of the field do not sow nor do they reap but we Africans have known for centuries that unless we sow and we reap, we die. Africans in South Africa today know that we must not only liberate our country from poverty, ignorance and disease which follows in the wake of apartheid; we not only know that we must destroy apartheid; we not only know that we must gain the political victories which will enable us to take our rightful place in the Government of our country but we also know that we must do these things in such a way that political victories lead to social and economic victories. This we know deep down inside us and the great vision I have for Emandleni-Matleng Camp is an African vision which regards everybody as important. In our African idiom we believe that every human being is as important as every other human being. We respect our elders, whoever our elders are, however rich or poor they may be. In the same way, our elders respect each other and they respect our youth. The idiom of person to person respect is the idiom of Africa.

When I look at the struggle for liberation in South Africa I see it is a struggle in which leaders should be striving to give every man, woman and child a role to play in the liberation of their country. We are a proud people and we do not want others to come and fight our battles for us. We are a courageous people. We do not hide behind trees while others go out in front of us to do the things we should be doing. We are also a people with wisdom who know that there are no magic overnight solutions to our problems. We know that liberation is not going to fall down like manna from heaven. There will be no quick victory in South Africa and this is something which I believe the impatience of youth sometimes has difficulty in accepting.

Those who come to you and tell you that there are quick victories lie to you. There are some who expect you to die for them and they come with a lot of glib talk about how noble it is to die. Africans know that there are things far more valuable than their own lives. We do not have the cowardice in us which makes us shirk from danger, but we also know the futility of dying for nothing. We in this part of South Africa have warrior blood beating through our veins. Our whole history is a history of courage and valour, but it is sheer stupidity to march to make other people sound important to the world even if everything they do leads to ruin and failure. The tactics and strategies which cause our young people to die, or to go to jail, which do not result in tangible results for the people is criminal. A wise general in an army is trusted by his men because they know that he leads them to victory. There can only be mutiny in the ranks of an army where generals lead people to unnecessary failure.

The vision we have of Africans is a vision where we see ourselves succeeding, and a vision in which we succeed because in the spirit of Ubuntu-Botho we give everyone a role to play. As a Black leader I am terribly proud of our youth. I am proud of you. You have come to Emandleni-Matleng not only because you want to improve yourselves; not only because you are looking for training. You have also come here because you want to serve your people and to

participate in the glorious struggle for liberation by doing the things that our youth can do to pursue noble ends.

You the youth who have come here during the first years of Emandleni-Matleng's existence will be seen as the pioneers one day of a unique development. We are doing something here which has never been done before in the history of South Africa, and it has not been done anywhere else in the whole of the country. This Camp is not a place simply to which youth come and then leave after learning what they have learnt. This Camp is a vital link between the youth of our country and the struggle for liberation. It is a place where you have begun a long journey. It is the beginning of new things, and every one of you should leave this place, knowing it is your place. You should leave this place but you should remain in our midst. You should leave this place but continue the struggle with us wherever you go or wherever you may be sent. Emandleni-Matleng is not just a little school in the bush. It is a place which should become more meaningful to more people as the years pass. It is a place from which we perceive the needs of the people and a place where we prepare ourselves to meet those needs.

You are our young pioneers doing new things in a new way, and I believe it is necessary to say some things very simply and to say them honestly. Emandleni-Matleng Camp has experienced teething problems and we very soon learned that we cannot run before we walk. We are learning how to walk a new road here, and there are those who do not understand how difficult it is to put something new together and to make it vital, and to generate in it the massive power that our youth need as a base from which to operate. There is a feeling amongst some of our youth that they must smash, they must burn and they must kill. That feeling is not our feeling. Our feeling is the feeling of being true Africans, true sons and daughters of Africa. We have a feeling which rises from our acceptance of the awesome responsibilities which history has settled on our shoulders.

We Blacks in South Africa have suffered longer than any Blacks on the continent of Africa from White political oppression. We will be the last to be liberated from racist government. That gives us advantages, and in particular, it gives us the advantage of the opportunity of learning from history. All African people on the continent of Africa who have gained their political victories, have had to realise that political victory is but the first victory; that the political battle is the first battle and in fact it is the easiest battle of all. The real battle is the battle to make life worthwhile for ordinary people after victory. Armies which go out and conquer do not produce miracles for the people whom they liberate. Hunger remains; sickness remains; poverty remains and this is the story across the length and breadth of Africa, and across the length and breadth of Africa, millions of children are dying of starvation. Millions of people live in abject poverty because during the struggle for liberation, they did not do that which we are starting to do here at Emandleni-Matleng. You are the young liberators of our country, but because you have been here you are liberators in the true African idiom. You will participate in the process to liberate South Africa as caring young people. You

should leave this place with the responsibility of employing the skills that you acquire not to make yourself comfortable in life; not to make yourself richer; not to make yourself more important. You have acquired skills here which you are expected to put at the service of the people.

Wherever you go in South Africa, you will find Blacks living in desperate poverty. You will find Blacks living in areas where there is just not enough land to plough. You will find Blacks living in areas where there are not enough houses, where there are not enough jobs, where there are not enough hospitals or schools. These are the things the people need, and they need them now. They need them because the South African Government is a Whites-only government, and because they rule our country for the benefit of Whites. That we will change. There is no doubt about that. We are totally sure of a political victory against White racist oppression. There is no doubt in any of our minds about that fact. We must therefore start looking further than political victory, and my message to you today is that Blacks must care for Blacks in the idiom of Ubuntu-Botho. Where White authority has not cared, we must care. We must go into communities where people suffer desperate poverty because the people there are our people. They are our kith and kin. There are like us the sons and daughters of Africa. You must go out into the communities and labour there with the people in their poverty, and you must take with you the skills that are needed to vanquish poverty and to build up the morale of the people and salvage them from despair. Despair leads to failure; courage is undermined by despair; poverty produces despair. Those who go out to labour with the people to overcome their poverty raise the strength of the people.

As pioneers you have passed through this place while we were yet preparing it for the task it will have to play in the future. Everywhere around you, you see development. You see the development not only of buildings but you also see the development of the study courses which we are developing to meet the needs of the people. You have been with us as we have been grappling with the problems of starting something new, and it is my deep hope that each and every one of you will return to this place from time to time, and that each time you return, you will participate in the new things that will be coming. I sincerely hope that in future there will be follow-on courses to prepare you even better for the tasks that you have to perform. This place is not like a school which you go to learn something and then leave. This place is going to be a place where there will be a constant source of new knowledge for you. It is your place where you belong, and to which you should return from time to time.

This place is not a school. We are Africans in Africa and we have got the guts and determination to face up to the fact that we live in a Third World situation. We face the fact that more than half of all Africans in South Africa are 15 years old and younger. We face the fact that our population is increasing at three per cent per annum. We face the fact that there are millions of Africans who will be seeking new jobs during the next two decades. We face the fact that for these two decades, and perhaps even longer,

economic growth in South Africa will not be fast enough to create jobs for everybody. Our youth have to rally to the cause of Africa, and this place - Emandleni-Matleng - is a springboard for our youth. It is a place where we do something about our situation. It is a place where we learn how to fight hunger and desperation, while the struggle for liberation continues, and while we continue creating a new South Africa.

The impatience of youth, the courage of youth, the determination of youth, and the anger of youth, are great assets of the nation, and the youth must employ these assets by preparing the groundwork for self-help development in African communities. Ignorance, poverty and disease disables our people. It robs them of the vitality to fight for justice, peace and prosperity. When our youth become involved in fighting ignorance, poverty and disease, they become involved in strengthening the Black struggle for liberation. That is why this place is not a school. That is why we do not teach school subjects here. Just look at the subjects we do teach:

1. Community Agriculture and Housecraft
2. Youth Leadership
3. Good Citizenship
4. Credit Unions and Co-operatives
5. First Aid and Health Education
6. Community Development techniques

These subjects are not academic subjects and in my vision, I see those Passing Out today going out to employ the learning and the skills they have acquired here. I see you all working in communities with the poorest of the poor and keeping in contact with Emandleni-Matleng here at Ulundi so that your experience out in the communities can be fed back here to the courses we teach. We will attempt to help you overcome the difficulties you meet, and we will train those who come after you to meet those difficulties. Again you are pioneers doing new things, and after some time, it is my sincere hope that you will be able to return to this place for further courses to strengthen your arm in what you are doing.

The importance we attach to this place is shown by the kind of money that we are spending to get it off the ground. You have seen the magnificent progress that we have made in our building programme this year. By next year we will have dormitory accommodation for 200 Amabutho. The dormitories and kitchens will be completed by the end of January 1986 and the administration block will be completed by March 1986. Next year we will be spending something like R250 000 just on running the Camp. The buildings and improvements to the Camp have already run into millions. By March 1983, we had already spent R2 903.437 on building and the acquisition of furniture, fittings and equipment. By March 1984 this figure rose to R3 030 633. This year we committed ourselves to an expenditure of over a million rand in further developing the Camp, and the budget for next year for the Camp runs to another one and a half million rand. These figures talk of the massiveness of our commitment.

I am mentioning these figures because I want each and every one of you to understand that we did not spend this money for it to lie wasted here at Emandleni-Matleng. Every cent we used in the development and the running of this Camp is a cent we could not use to build houses, or hospitals, or class-rooms. Unless we pull together to make this Camp work and fulfill the demands of our vision, this will be wasted money. A very awesome responsibility rests on our shoulders to turn this place into a massive success that the people so cry out for.

I speak to you today as one who has been in politics all his life. The great founding father of the ANC, Dr. Pixley ka Isaka Seme, was my uncle. I spent many a long hour on numerous occasions talking about the struggle for liberation with Dr. A.B. Xuma and with Chief Albert Lutuli. I knew people like Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, Zami Conco, M.B. Yengwa, Oliver Tambo, J.K. Ngubane and Joe Mathews personally. I was a member of the ANC's Youth League. Dr. Mdlalose, our National Chairman, was a member of the ANC Youth League with me at Fort Hare University, and the Rev. C.J. Mtetwa was a member of the ANC in Johannesburg.

I am a product of the struggle for liberation. I am fashioned by it and I assume in my politics the wisdom of generations of endeavour. I am both the product of the struggle for liberation and the product of the very history of our country. My beginnings date back before even the existence of the National Party and my ending will date forward beyond every expression of apartheid.

When I sat for many hours at a time, as I did, with Chief Albert Lutuli and when I exchanged thoughts and views with people like Robert Sobukwe, Nelson Mandela and others during the 1950's, we talked about tactics and strategies and about the wisdom of the people which had supported the old ANC for decades. In the 1950's there was a false sense of victory just around the corner. Too many saw the demise of apartheid as imminent and when after the National Party smashed the ANC and the PAC by banning them and jailing their leaders, the euphoria of the 1950's continued into the 1960's. For a full decade Black politics in this country virtually came to a stand-still as people waited looking over their shoulder for the return of the ANC External Mission in a triumphant march across our borders. Only a few of our brothers and sisters established the External Mission of the ANC. Thousands of us who were members of the organisations remained inside to oppose apartheid as we have done all these years.

Long weary year after long weary passed and as the years turned into a decade, Black South Africans started looking around them in the realisation that it is we here in the country on the ground who would have to wage the struggle for liberation. Black South Africa began realising that liberation would not come from across our borders and that victory would not be showered on our heads like some manna from heaven. The struggle was our struggle and we had to wage that struggle even with our bare hands if necessary. History itself then authored two different Black political strings. Inkatha arose in the early seventies finally to be formed in 1975 as one of the mainstreams of Black politics. Inkatha gathered

together the products of the history of the struggle and welded them together in a renewed commitment to the traditional ideals of Black South Africa.

There are sections amongst our youth who have been persuaded to deviate from the noble struggle that Blacks have conducted for generations. They do not know the history of the struggle and they want to try new things because South Africa is not free and they blame the older generation for that. They do not understand the realities around them. They do not understand that there is no easy victory and that it is only endurance and lasting courage which will finally win. Imagine that you stand now before a great dense and dangerous forest and you have to find your way through that forest, and there are around you people who have attempted to go through the forest who have been mauled by dangerous animals and who nearly died of thirst and hunger, because they took the wrong route. And imagine yourself in a conversation with your friends, and one of them says: "Because other people have been mauled going into the forest, we must not go where they went. We must find a new path, a new way." And another of your friends say: "No, that is exactly what these people did who got mauled by the beasts and who nearly died of thirst and starvation." Is it not better to ask them where they met the trouble and dangers, and then to proceed to near that point and from there explore new ways of crossing the forest? Which counsel would you think is the wisest? Those who have failed before you, have acquired a wisdom how not to fail. There are valuable lessons to be learned in the struggle for liberation and because our struggle has so lasted so long, and it has been so bitter, some would tell you that we as Blacks should abandon this tactic or that tactic but they are the people who cannot learn from others.

Every young Black South African today should understand and understand clearly that there is no easy victory. They should also understand that there is no quick victory, and they should further understand that the victory will ultimately be won by those of us who have the courage to endure. If there are no quick victories, and all there is to do is to persevere right through to the end, then that is what we have to do. I will not abandon the noble causes in the struggle for liberation because we are now witnessing the extent to which the traditional values in our struggle for liberation are beginning to win.

Inkatha is the largest Black political movement ever to have emerged in the history of South Africa. We have united more people in common action than any organisation has ever done before. We have evolved a power which no Black organisation has evolved before. We have mass support amongst ordinary Black South Africans because we are true to the struggle for liberation. We do not deviate with new-fangled ideas, but on the other hand, we constantly change our tactics and strategies within the framework of the hallowed traditions of Black South Africa, and by doing so, we constantly move nearer to victory. The great spirit of Ubuntu-Botho is in whatever we do. We pursue the politics of decency. Our strength is employed for noble ends, and we refuse to be drawn into the terrible internicine Black on Black violence which so

bedevils our country today. Black on Black violence retards liberation. We defend what we believe in. We defend our right to do what we are doing, but we refuse to become dehumanised. We refuse to abandon the people, and this Camp of Emandleni-Matleng will play an ever-increasingly important role as an instrument of liberation.

Remember my words when I say this place is your place, and as you go from this Camp this year, go determined to keep in contact with Emandleni-Matleng. Return each year and you will see vital growth, you will see new improvements and you will see that in years to come, that you were the pioneers of a great new thing.

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