

EXTRACT OF SPEECH AT UMHLALI PUBLIC MEETING 24 MAY 1985DR. F. VAN ZYL SLABBERT MP

It is encouraging to see that Minister Gerrit Viljoen and Minister Chris Heunis have decided to blow the dust off the Buthelezi Commission Report. It is also encouraging to see that President Botha has had discussions with the Chief Minister Buthelezi and has publicly declared that the agenda for the future of Natal/KwaZulu "is open".

Whilst the enlarged Cabinet Committee is still in the planning stage of its own agenda, I see no reason why the Government should not allow a Natal/KwaZulu Indaba to begin. All the necessary ingredients are there to make such an Indaba a political laboratory for the rest of South Africa to look up to. Farmers, businessmen, politicians and community leaders participated on the Buthelezi Commission to produce a first class Report. In its recommendations lie the recipe for non-discriminatory and non-racial constitutional co-operation which is valid not only for KwaZulu/Natal but for the whole of South Africa. But here in KwaZulu/Natal we have the major interest groups who have declared themselves willing to test this political experiment and it would be a great pity for all South Africans if the Government did not allow this opportunity to be seized so that it can have a demonstration effect for the rest of the country.

I urge this Government : Let the Natal Indaba begin !