

Claim 6: Black Disunity

That black South Africans are culturally, ethnically and politically fragmented into mutually-hostile tribes which are each being given separate nationhood in separate sovereign states for their own protection and for the accommodation of their separate cultural and political aspirations.

The Facts

Unlike their counterparts in some countries of the north, South Africa's blacks do not have a tradition of tribal politics. For more than a century, no black political movement of significance has promoted or practised tribalism. Black South Africans have, on the contrary, long condemned tribalism as serving the 'divide and rule' policies imposed by whites. Tribalism is not easily accommodated within the sophisticated political thinking of urban blacks, and South African blacks have, in any case, in the relatively homogeneous Nguni culture (Xhosa — Zulu — Swazi — Ndebele) a lot in common.

Ironically, cultural differences are greater between sections of the white population. As languages English and Afrikaans differ more radically than any of the Nguni languages, yet there is no move to create separate territorial and political institutions to divide the white community in South Africa along ethnic and linguistic lines to protect each group's distinctive culture.

Finally, if the South African authorities really believed their own claim that blacks wished to be divided into ethnic 'homelands' they could have proved this in a black referendum on the policy, instead of having to impose it unilaterally.

Conclusion

That the politico-cultural homogeneity among black South Africans is precisely the reason why Pretoria legislates to divide them into false ethnic and political compartments.