

REPLY TO QUESTIONS FOR THE LEADER PAGE ARTICLE, SUNDAY  
TRIBUNE BY DR. F. VAN ZYL SLABBERT, M.P.

Q1: HOW THEN WOULD YOUR PARTY HAVE HANDLED THE NYANGA SQUATTER PROBLEM WITH REGARD TO THE CONDITIONS (HOUSING, UNEMPLOYMENT, ETC.) WHICH LED TO THE PROBLEM AND HOW WOULD YOU HAVE HANDLED THE PROBLEM ITSELF?

A: The first thing to realise is that the Nyanga squatter problem is a symptom of a more complex situation. It is a symptom of over-urbanization and lack of planning. My Party's position concerning the problems of urbanization is the following :

- (a) Accept that as part of the Third World, urbanization is an inevitable process;
- (b) Try to anticipate as rationally as possible where people coming to the cities can be accommodated best - in other words, make use of labour bureaux, housing boards, etc., to rationally relocate people concentrating in metropolitan areas. Do not let them over-concentrate in one area and under-concentrate in other urban areas;
- (c) Accept that, for the foreseeable future, you are going to have overcrowding and demands for housing, jobs, education facilities, etc.;
- (d) Do not assist with housing policies totally unsuited to Third World urbanization; have a differentiated housing policy in which there can be a variation from controlled squatting to economic housing units being built;
- (e) Intelligently plan beforehand land/population ratio patterns. If you know that people are going to come to the cities, start looking at the land-use patterns and set aside land for differentiated housing right from controlled squatting to economic units;

- (f) Remove all obstacles that can prevent an informal economy from developing in your new housing areas in the metropolitan centres. The informal economy can provide some form of subsistence and employment to a large number of people who cannot find accommodation in the formal sector of the economy where you have unemployment.

In addition to all this

- (g) start with processes of urban deconcentration and decentralization in order to decongest the existing metropolitan areas. It is well to remember that such deconcentration and decentralization will follow the normal rules of economic development - in other words, the private sector must see that it is worthwhile and in their interest to deconcentrate and decentralize. We know from experience that, in South Africa, for example, it is highly unlikely that you will have successful deconcentration more than 50 kilometres away from the existing metropolitan areas;
- (h) In addition to deconcentration and decentralization, a systematic and scientific programme of rural redevelopment has to be initiated. This is simply another way of trying to win back the agricultural potential of the rural areas. At present, we have resettlement programmes which, I believe, are contributing to the destruction of our natural resources in the rural areas as well as intensifying the need for urban migration. The correct ratio between people, livestock and land has to be found in the rural areas so that they can become growth points in the future. In this way, in the distant future, we can look forward to the possibility of people gradually trickling back into the rural areas simply because life there then in more pleasant. This is not the case now.

Now, if all these policies and strategies had been followed systematically over the last thirty years, the problem of Nyanga would never have arisen in the first place. To ask me now what I would have done about Nyanga, given the fact that these policies were not followed, is, to a certain extent, an unfair question. Nevertheless, confronted with the reality of present Nyanga in the absence of these other more sensible policies to be followed, I do believe that the Nyanga problem could have been treated in a far more humane and sensible manner. For example, one should have accepted the fact that these people were here. One should also have accepted the fact that many of them were gainfully employed, even though technically illegal. One should also have accepted the fact that, as families, they were more stable in being together than by being apart and therefore temporary accommodation could have been made available for them here and, in the interim, they could remain where they were whilst longer term planning could have been engaged upon in order to provide them with permanent housing and permanent residence in the Western Cape area. We are going to have to do this kind of thing in any case and in larger numbers in the future, so we might as well start planning for it right now.

Q2: GIVEN THE FACT OF AN ARMS BUILD-UP IN SOUTHERN ANGOLA AND THE BORDER SITUATION VIS-A-VIS SWAPO, HOW WOULD YOUR PARTY HANDLE THE SITUATION THERE?

A: This is a very delicate situation and one which should not be discussed in terms of short-term party political gain. At this stage in the negotiations concerning the bringing about of an internationally acceptable solution to the Namibian crisis, I believe that two things are of fundamental importance :

- (a) That South Africa makes it quite clear that it is earnestly seeking an internationally acceptable solution to the Namibian situation; and
- (b) That it has no intention whatsoever of getting locked into an escalating military confrontation on foreign soil. Wherever military considerations make pursuit or pre-emptive strikes necessary, such activities must be calculated very carefully against the possible political and international costs as far as settlement is concerned. I have no doubt in my own mind that part of the Russian strategy towards Southern Africa, and particularly the Namibian/Angolan area, is to create a situation of almost semi-permanent destabilisation. One way of achieving this is to pull the South African Defence Force into an escalating military conflict outside her borders. This becomes possible when Swapo, FAPLA and Cuban forces inter-mingle or share the same bases. I think South Africa should make it quite clear that it has every intention of defending its own territorial integrity and that it would repulse any infiltration or strike against it. But equally we must make it as clear that we have no intention of militarily intervening or acting in a militarily aggressive manner towards our neighbouring countries. We claim the right for ourselves to arm ourselves defensively in order to prevent

incursions from outside our borders. We should also be prepared to grant the same right to our neighbouring countries but always keeping a sharp look-out that defensive armament does not subtly or quietly change to offensive arms build-up.

As far as Namibia is concerned, I believe that the general rule of thumb should be that we should support all moves and developments which can contribute to a speedy internationally acceptable settlement in that territory.

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Q3: HOW WOULD YOUR PARTY, WERE IT IN POWER, DIFFER FROM THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT'S REACTION TO THE HIGH INTEREST CURRENTLY BEING SHOWN BY THE AMERICANS TO EVENTS IN SOUTH AND SOUTHERN AFRICA? HOW WOULD YOU GO ABOUT DERIVING THE MAXIMUM BENEFIT FOR SOUTH AFRICA AND FOR NAMIBIA FROM THE MORE SYMPATHETIC REAGAN ADMINISTRATION?

A: To the extent that the present South African Government welcomes the new policy of constructive engagement on the part of the American Administration we would not differ from it.

However, we would differ to the extent that we would not delude ourselves that this new policy of constructive engagement can in any way be seen as a condonation of the internal domestic policies of the South African Government. If we were to be in power, which is what the question asks, obviously we would systematically have removed all forms of statutory racial discrimination; we would have been working towards a constitution in which all South Africans could participate, irrespective of race, to where there would be no domination of one group over another; we would have been working towards a situation where we would have had an independent judiciary with a bill of rights and an entrenched constitution. This would be a vastly different South Africa to the one we have at present and, of course, would mean that we would not only have a different relationship with the United States but most of the countries of the Free World. We would use this new relationship of South Africa with the international community to the maximum benefit of all South Africans by trying to forge new international links on all levels of activity, sporting, economic, political, etc, and in particular we would try and extend our contacts into Africa itself where I believe that in Sub-Saharan Africa South Africa could become the powerhouse in this sub-continent.

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