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WHY I BELIEVE VOTERS SHOULD SUPPORT THE PFP ON APRIL 29

- Dr. F. Van Zyl Slabbert, M.P.  
Leader of the Opposition

Whoever we are : white or black, rich or poor, we know that what South Africa needs more than anything else is real security. Therein lies our strength and our ability to cope with the future. Real security does not lie only in the range of our guns but in the unity of all our people. That is why I say to this Government : Do not divide our people and embitter them with political action but develop a common loyalty and patriotism.

After more than thirty years, all of us are beginning to realise that this Government cannot provide us with real security. Why not? Because their policies depend on dividing and fragmenting South Africa, not uniting it and discrimination such as Pass Laws, the Group Areas Act and the Separate Amenities and Population Registration Acts. Without this discrimination, their policies would collapse completely. If this were not so why does this Government refuse to negotiate with moderate and reasonable black leaders? Why does it even refuse to have blacks on the President's Council? Why does it not accept that every person, irrespective of race or ethnicity, is entitled to full citizenship? I will tell you why! Because for real security in South Africa we need real reform. After more than thirty years of government from this Nationalist Party we need real security that can only come from real reform away from its Apartheid and Separate Development policies. That is why we say to this Government : Do not play around with sham or false reform.

This Government hesitates when it comes to real reform for three reasons. The first is that the Prime Minister has not

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got the courage to tell this country what real reform is all about. The second is that the small and insignificant right wing is more important in determining the pace of change for this Government than the majority of people in this country. Thirdly, the unity of the Nationalist Party is more important for this Government than the unity of our people.

Because this Government fails to provide real security through real reform, this country needs real opposition in Parliament. The PFP is the only real opposition in this election with enough guts to prevent our country from sliding into a one-party state. At a time when the Nationalist Party and right wing parties want to retreat into seige and confrontation the PFP stands clearly for negotiation and co-operation. We are not afraid to say openly and clearly that the representatives of all the people in South Africa must work together to create a new acceptable constitution.

The PFP is the only real opposition in this election that is prepared to fight for what is right. We can go to the voter and say : We are the team that fights for you. We fight against detention without trial; arbitrary arrests and bannings; the forced removal of people from one area to another through the Group Areas Act; breaking up of family life and homes; job and wage discrimination; and racial discrimination of any kind.

We fight for a free press without government bullying; equal opportunity for all in looking for and working in jobs; the right to full citizenship of all people irrespective of race or ethnicity and the right of home ownership and shelter for any person.

This country needs a real Opposition in Parliament to fight for these things because they ensure justice and co-operation amongst all our people.

The PFP is the only real Opposition in Parliament that cares for the individual. We care about the spiralling cost of living and particularly of food - which is why we demand that GST be lifted from essential foodstuffs. We care about the elderly and the pensioners - which is why we hold meetings with them on their rights and problems as pensioners. We care about the housing of the poor and underprivileged - which is why we hold rent clinics and organize protest meetings when people are being exploited or pushed around. And we care about the impact of inflation on families - which is why we demand that the Government cuts back on unnecessary spending.

The PFP is the only real Opposition in Parliament that sets the pace for real reform. Whenever this Government does anything that improves race relations and relieves tensions, it moves in the direction which we stand for. We keep up the pressure for real reform and real security for all South Africans.

But finally, and most important, the PFP is the only real Opposition in Parliament that has a policy that is clear and simple and that can bring about genuine security for us all through a process of genuine, systematic and orderly reform. We do not equivocate about citizenship, political rights or discrimination. We tell it like it is. We do not try to say one thing to the platteland and another thing to the urban areas. We accept as a matter of self-evident fact that there are more than 25 million people living in South Africa; that they depend on the same economy and on each other and that if they get along economically, they must get along politically or destroy themselves in confrontation.