

EXTRACT OF SPEECH DELIVERED

BY DR. F. VAN ZYL SLABBERT, M.P.

AT CLAREMONT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

ON 15 MAY 1984 AT 8 P.M.

Enlightened opposition voters must guard against being stampeded into a premature support of the Government because of recent developments in white politics. On the one hand there are those who, because of the Nkomati Accord and other accords tend to think that the Government is inevitably committed to a programme of domestic reform as far as white/black constitutional change is concerned. Nothing can be further from the truth. Continued probing from the PFP has shown clearly that as far as blacks are concerned, the Government is still firmly committed to a policy which -

denies blacks South African citizenship, and depends on influx control, and population removals.

The consequences for us internally of the Nkomati and other accords will be to highlight the unworkability and unacceptability of this policy and for the need to keep up rather than reduce the pressure for black constitutional reform.

On the other hand, there are also enlightened opposition voters who can be stampeded into a premature identification with the Government because of the hysteria surrounding the Afrikanersvolkswag and the right wing. Nothing is calculated to make the right wing grow more quickly than over reaction and fear. The SABC's coverage of the Afrikanervolkswag is calculated to scare enlightened supporters into the Government camp rather than hold fast and keep up the pressure for reform. Of course the racist doctrines of the right wing need to be condemned and opposed. But that is not the same as willy nilly supporting the Government whose own policies are founded on blatant racist assumptions. We must keep a sense of perspective : In the 1981 General Election the HNP enjoyed 14½% of white electoral support and could not win one seat. Now the combined right wing parties do not even have this percentage of electoral support and there are those who talk of the CP getting 30 - 40 seats and becoming the Official Opposition.

There is only one way the CP is guaranteed to become the Official Opposition, and that is for the traditional enlightened voter to desert his/her role as pace setter for reform and rush into the Nat. lager for spurious political reasons. Now is the time to stand firm and to help the Official Opposition to :-

question malpractices and possible misappropriation of public money;

expose the economic inefficiency and incompetence of this Government and to spell out alternatives to the disastrous policies of Separate Development.

The enlightened opposition voter must ask him/herself a simple question. In the new dispensation which is about to be implemented and about which a great deal of confusion exists, also as regards the role of an opposition - do you prefer an enlightened Official Opposition committed to systematic reform away from confrontation and violence or a right wing racist one that will fan the flames of racial hatred and polarization ? I say again, now is the time to stand firm.

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