

SPEECH DELIVERED BY DR F VAN ZYL SLABBERT MP AT THE LAUNCH
OF THE VAN ZYL SLABBERT TRUST IN CAPE TOWN 14 OCTOBER 1985

THE PROBLEM - APARTHEID

1. (a) Political Apartheid = Racial domination
(b) Social Apartheid = Forced racial segregation
(c) Economic Apartheid = Racial economic exploitation.

2. This system is the ROOT cause of conflict in South Africa
- it is aggravated by economic problems, racial and ethnic divisions, but these problems are even more difficult to deal with because of the structure of an Apartheid society.

3. The Apartheid system by its very nature has to use force to keep it going and this heightens the potential for conflict and they resort to violence to counteract it.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE ?

1. REFORM ? WHAT DOES IT MEAN ?
 - (a) It cannot mean incremental adjustments to the Apartheid system;

 - (b) It cannot mean negotiating a new position in the old Apartheid structures;

 - (c) It cannot mean vague and ambiguous rhetorical noises about reform, citizenship and universal suffrage at Party Congresses;

(d) In short : Apartheid cannot be reformed and you cannot negotiate improvements to it;

(e) Reform means to get rid of Apartheid completely and finally and then to negotiate a new and democratic alternative.

Therefore : effective reform = dismantling Apartheid
Politics of negotiation = negotiating an alternative to it.

2. Is the Government prepared to bring about this reform and to engage in such negotiation ? If it is, it will have no problem in answering YES to very simple and fundamental questions relevant to the South African situation :

(a) Are you prepared to allow people to freely choose where they wish to live and send their children to school, irrespective of race or ethnicity ?

(b) Are you prepared to allow people to freely look for jobs and economic opportunities, irrespective of race or ethnicity ?

(c) Are you prepared to allow people to freely choose which political organization they wish to support, to organize meetings for such parties and to choose the leaders they wish to represent their interests ?

3. These are not complicated and involved questions, but they go to the heart of Apartheid society. If this Government is not prepared to say YES to them, then no amount of pious commitment to reform or babbling about the need for negotiation will convince the people who suffer because of Apartheid that the Government is serious.

4. (a) That is why the State President cannot say he is serious about reform and insist that the Group Areas Act is non-negotiable.

- (b) He cannot say that the Immorality Act, Mixed Marriages Act, Political Interference Act can go, but the Population Registration Act must stay.

- (c) He cannot say he wishes to negotiate with democratically elected leaders, but then bans organizations, prohibits meetings, detains and jails political leaders without trial.

To do these things and still talk about reform is to discredit reform and the politics of negotiation and to reinforce the idea that Apartheid is essentially non-negotiable for this Government.

5. I have come to the conclusion that the Government cannot give a straightforward answer to any of these questions. It is bogged down by the Apartheid structures of the past and is milling around within the paradoxes and inconsistencies that these structures have created. Because of this the potential for escalating violence; the violence of repression and revolt grows by the day.

THE ANC AND THE ARMED STRUGGLE

1. The PFP made it quite clear that we are opposed to violence whether from the State or against it to bring about change.
2. The ANC stated that the armed struggle was decided on as a last resort when all constitutional and democratic forms of protest had been banned and Apartheid was being forcibly applied.
3. I think it is futile to expect the ANC to abandon the armed struggle if the conditions which led to the armed struggle persists. For them the continuation of Apartheid and the armed struggle are inextricably linked. Therein lies the tragedy and potential violence of the future.

4. That is why a positive answer to those questions has to come from within South Africa if we are to avoid and undercut violence in South Africa. This is the major challenge facing all of us who believe in non-violent change in South Africa.

Can we demonstrate clearly and effectively that we believe Apartheid must go so that negotiations for a new South Africa can begin ?

THE ROLE OF THE PFP

1. In Parliament
2. Outside Parliament
3. Outside the country