

PFP calls for lifting of the ban on ANC

Political Staff

PARLIAMENT — The Government has been urged in the House of Assembly to consider lifting the ban on the African National Congress, scrap discriminatory laws, and make a clear declaration of intent about its new initiatives.

The proposals came from the Opposition Progressive Federal Party.

They came during the debate on a Private Member's motion by Mr Albert Nothnagel (NP, Innesdal) seeking participation by all the people of South Africa in the Government's initiatives, and unconditional rejection of violence and boycotts.

The Leader of the Opposition, Dr Van Zyl Slabbert, called for a clear declaration of intent from the Government. He said it was needed before the initiatives stood any chance of success.

Dr Slabbert said an important step by the Government was President Botha's announcement that he would consider freeing ANC leader Nelson Mandela from jail if he rejected violence.

He added that he agreed with Mr Nothnagel that violence as an instrument in the political struggle should be denounced.

Dr Slabbert asked why the Government was appointing yet another com-

mittee to investigate the Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act and section 16 of the Immorality Act. The effect was simply to prolong the existence of the laws instead of getting rid of them.

Mr Nic Olivier (PFP, nominated) said a declaration of intent from the Government would help to create a suitable political climate for negotiation about the political rights of blacks.

He said he saw no reason why certain apartheid laws should not be scrapped.

Mr Olivier said there should also be a moratorium on influx control arrests until a Cabinet committee produced new legislation.

Mr Olivier suggested the time had come to consider lifting the ban on the ANC. This could create a climate for political negotiation.

Replying to the debate, the Minister of Constitutional Development and Planning, Mr Chris Heunis, said the willingness of the Government to negotiate should not be interpreted as a lack of will when it came to maintaining order and stability.

Mr Heunis said the Government was not prepared to give a blueprint or an agenda for negotiations with black leaders. If it did, it would amount to prescribing beforehand what the talks should be about.

Collection Number: AK2117

DELMAS TREASON TRIAL 1985 - 1989

PUBLISHER:

Publisher: **Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand**

Location: **Johannesburg**

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