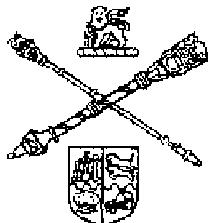


PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



PO BOX 15, Cape Town 8000, South Africa; Posbus 15, Kaapstad 8000, Suid-Afrika;
iBhokisi yePosi 15, iKapa 8000, iMzantsi Afrika

SPEECH BY DONALD LEE MP DA SPOKESPERSON ON SPORT AND RECREATION STATE OF THE NATION DEBATE

15 FEBRUARY 2005

“The ANC is re-racialising South African sport”

Madam Speaker,

In 1971, the ANC stood before the United Nations and called for South African sport to be boycotted.

Speaking on behalf of the ANC, Abdul Minty made the following argument:

“The moral position is absolutely clear. Human beings should not be willing partners in perpetuating a system of racial discrimination. Sportsmen have a special duty in this regard in that they should be first to insist that merit, and merit alone, be the criterion for selecting teams for representative sport.”

In concluding he stated:

“All links with racialist bodies should be abolished until sport inside South Africa is conducted on the basis of merit alone and not of colour.”

But today, under the leadership of President Mbeki, the ANC has turned this ideal on its head.

Today that principle of non-racialism has been cast aside in favour of racial engineering.

Indeed, today I stand before an ANC so obsessed with race that it is now threatening to re-introduce legislation imposing racial quotas on South African sport.

The very same ANC that once said sport should be conducted on the basis of merit alone, now says sport should be conducted on the basis of race.

Mr President, the people of South Africa would like to know, which is it - merit or race?

As ever, the consequences of the ANC's hypocrisy is hardest felt by ordinary people - the sports men and women who represent our country and the supporters who stand by our teams.

The ANC has left behind the people who count the most.

In 1960 Basil D'Oliveria left South Africa because he had grown up under a system which outlawed him from reaching his potential in his own country.

And yet today – in a new South Africa – we find ourselves facing the exact same situation, players like Kevin Pietersen, along with many others, feel that they too cannot reach their full potential and have moved elsewhere

It is South African sport that suffers the consequences.

And all of this, simply because the ANC believes politics should dictate how our sport is administered.

In 1997 the late Steve Tshwete said, “*There is going to be interference by government in every sphere of life in South Africa, including sport.*”

Interference is simply another word for the ANC's political agenda of transformation.

By prioritizing racial representivity ahead of talent and ability the ANC has shifted our sporting emphasis away from being the best, toward being the most demographically representative.

Which is it Mr President, sport or politics?

Mr President last Friday you spoke about creating “*a winning nation*” but in March 2002, you stated “*For two to three years let's not mind losing international competitions because we are bringing our people into these teams*”

Mr President, how can we create a winning nation when the ANC's obsession with racial quotas means we must first be prepared to lose, simply to accommodate the ANC's political agenda?

More to the point, Mr President, perhaps you can tell us who “our people” are?

The DA believes all South Africans are equal, we should all have an equal chance and equal opportunity to be the best we can be.

So which is it Mr President, winning or losing?

It seems the only game the ANC is interested in winning is a racial numbers game - one that rewards party loyalty at the expense of ability and talent.

In doing so, the ANC has moved the emphasis away from the development of our up-and-coming talent, where it should be.

Mr President, you and your party are doing all the people of this country a disservice.

As in every area of life, sporting success requires dedication, opportunity and time. These are all hall marks of success.

If they are by-passed you only succeed in taking away a person's full potential.

If anyone in this House is still in doubt as to the difference between the DA and the ANC, it is now quite apparent – where the ANC has chosen race, politics and losing – the DA advocates merit, sport and winning.

I thank you.

[678 words]