



**MINISTRY: FINANCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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The Honourable Donald Lee, MP

National Assembly

Parliament

P O Box 15

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Dear Donald

I wish to apologise for the delay in responding to your letter of 18 February; I had to deal with Budget preparation and follow-through.

I was quite surprised that the letter to me is signed by a Mr or Ms Conradie. I take that as a mark of disrespect, and will admit that in my earlier reading of the letter I was compelled to ponder whether Mr or Ms Conradie was not actually the author.

I do not wish to dwell on the issues of detail, save to say that you are incorrect from first principles. The Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) states, under the Equality provisions at Clause 9(2)

Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination may be taken.

So, the idea of levelling the playing field is not merely a whimsical Trevor Manuel or ANC ‘program (sic) of transformation’, it is a Constitutional imperative. Regrettably if you fail to understand that point, then your claim “I too am familiar with South Africa’s Constitution” is utterly and completely hollow.

You can dredge up every recalcitrant and change averse former player or administrator, it will not change the fact of the matter – we cannot allow the sons and daughters of the historically privileged to be the sole representatives of this nation. Of course there will be some, possibly

including yourself who equate blacks with mediocrity. Fortunately for our offspring, this is a temporarily vocal, but a dying breed.

The future is ours; we have earned it and the present by our sacrifices. Since you would like to take this debate public, I will heartily agree to the release of the correspondence and happily debate the matter with you in any disadvantaged township in South Africa. Since you hail from Port Elizabeth, would you like to debate this matter in Gelvandale, New Brighton, Malabar, Motherwell, Bethelsdorp, or even in town? I am happy to let the people speak, are you willing to listen to them?

Yours sincerely,

Trevor A Manuel, MP
Minister of Finance