

NMO/OW/224/20

THE CITIZEN, Johannesburg,

21 June 1991

Apartheid still exists, says DP leader

CAPE TOWN. — Although "the pillars of apartheid" had been repealed, apartheid in a number of fields had still to be eliminated, said Dr Zach de Beer, Democratic Party leader, in an interview about this year's session of Parliament.

"The end of the 1991 session leaves one with the feeling that things have gone well inside Parliament, and not really so well outside.

"An impressive list of major apartheid laws have been repealed. We welcome this and have, naturally, given support and approval to the process.

"It should, however, be remembered that there is much apartheid, particularly in education, which flows from the Constitution and has not been repealed. And, of course, the Constitution itself sets forth an apartheid structure for South Africa — one which must be eliminated as soon as possible."

Dr De Beer said the Conservative Party had fought the progressive legislation with all its might. These laws created a society in which the CP would retain little or no real power.

"The more South African society becomes non-racial, the less influence the CP can have."

The Labour Party had survived its own troubles, but the fact that it had experienced defections to the National Party was itself but a symptom of "the impending disintegration of the system", Dr De Beer said.

"All eyes will now focus on the ANC conference in July, and after that all of us will look forward to an early multiparty conference.

"This conference should produce a narrowing of the gap between the ANC and the Nats. The ANC will need to revise its thinking about a constituent assembly and an interim government.

"The government, in turn, will have to find the means of building trust between itself and the ANC so that the process can go ahead.

"As for us (DP), it is heartening to see how our principles and policies emerge more and more clearly as the only possible basis for a peaceful and prosperous South Africa.

"We shall go forward in the faith that we can play a valuable part in that future," said Dr De Beer.

ANC upset with Kenya

THE ANC is "disturbed" and "unhappy" about Kenya's moves towards normalising some ties with SA, ANC leader Walter Sisulu said in Windhoek yesterday.

He said there had been no irreversible changes yet in SA which permitted the ANC to consider the lifting of certain sanctions.

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THE ANC-government row over political prisoners took a new turn yesterday.

The Minister of Justice and of Correctional Services, Mr Kobie Coetsee, intended to take steps to clarify the ANC's "misunderstanding" over the numbers of remaining political prisoners, his Ministry said.

It had noted an ANC media release regarding an "agreement" reached last Thursday on this matter with the "relevant government structures".

The ANC said it had been agreed there were 987 remaining political prisoners and it found "Minister Coetsee's statement that all political prisoners who qualify for release in terms of the Pretoria Minute have indeed been released, quite incomprehensible".

The Ministry said it was "completely at a loss" as to the basis on which the ANC had made its Press release.

During meetings between Mr Coetsee and members of the ANC executive, and others, the only firm arrangement was that the Audit Committee, with the Human Rights Commission as an element, had no further function and that the

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Audit Committee's guidelines — were still in jail.

"Of the remaining 678, all those who had less than a 12-year sentence were to be released immediately in terms of the agreed formula of remission of one-third of the sentence, plus two years and eight months.

"The cases of those prisoners who do not fall into this category would be looked into as a matter of urgency by the Scrutiny Committee established for this purpose," the statement said. — Sapa.

ANC themselves would take care of their own interests.

"Hence the establishment of a possible committee to scrutinise certain applications for release."

In its statement the ANC said of the 987 political prisoners behind bars, 15 "clear-cut" cases of Umkhonto we Sizwe cadres and another 284 prisoners — identified as having been involved in mass activity, but who qualified for immediate release in terms of the

New dispute over prisoners



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Washington defines 'political prisoner'

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration had a "private estimate" of the number of political prisoners in SA whose release would trigger the repeal of most US sanctions, White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said yesterday.

He defined these prisoners as those held for their "political views or expression of those views", but not "those who commit acts of violence for political reasons".

He made clear that although the administration intended to consult ANC deputy

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president Nelson Mandela further, it would stick by this definition even though the ANC did not agree with it.

Inkatha president Mangosuthu Buthelezi, who met President George Bush yesterday, has told US political leaders he does not believe Pretoria is still holding any prisoners who fit the US definition.

Fitzwater declined to disclose the administration's estimate of the number of

prisoners amid widespread speculation that Bush would sign an order lifting sanctions on July 15.

The State Department said it had been decided to leave the task of monitoring prisoner releases to the US embassy.

Bush also met the Rev Leon Sullivan, author of the Sullivan fair employment code, yesterday to discuss sanctions. Sullivan, who advocated corporate withdrawal from SA, is now planning a meeting of US executives to discuss investment in SA.