

GRS 200
UNCLASSIFIED
FM CAPE TOWN 271340Z MAY 1985
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 187 OF 27 MAY
INFO PRIORITY PRETORIA
INFO SAVING JOHANNESBURG, DURBAN (PTA PSE PASS) CAPE TOWN CONSULATE
(ACTIONED)

SOUTH AFRICA INTERNAL.

SUMMARY

1. THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED TO SCRAP THE PROHIBITION OF POLITICAL INTERFERENCE ACT, 1968. POLITICAL PARTIES WILL BE ABLE TO RECRUIT MEMBERS FROM ALL RACE GROUPS. CERTAIN NON-WHITE OPPOSITION PARTIES MIGHT MERGE WITH THE PROGRESSIVE FEDERAL PARTY.

DETAIL

2. THE MINISTER OF CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING, MR HEUNIS, ANNOUNCED ON 25 MAY THAT THE PROHIBITION OF POLITICAL INTERFERENCE ACT WHICH FORBIDS RACIALLY MIXED MEMBERSHIP OF POLITICAL PARTIES, IS TO BE REPEALED. MR HEUNIS SAID AMENDING LEGISLATION WOULD PROBABLY BE INTRODUCED IN PARLIAMENT THIS SESSION.

COMMENT

3. THIS ANNOUNCEMENT WAS EXPECTED, ALTHOUGH THE LEGISLATION MIGHT NOT BE ENACTED UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF THE NEXT PARLIAMENTARY SESSION NEXT JANUARY. ALL POLITICAL PARTIES EXCEPT THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY HAVE WELCOMED THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION.

4. EACH POLITICAL PARTY WILL NOW BE ABLE TO OPEN ITSELF TO MEMBERSHIP BY PEOPLE OF ALL RACES, INCLUDING BLACKS. DR SLABBERT, THE LEADER OF THE PROGRESSIVE FEDERAL PARTY, HAS SAID THE PFP WOULD CONSIDER PUTTING UP CANDIDATES FOR SEATS IN THE HOUSES OF REPRESENTATIVES AND DELEGATES. SUCH CANDIDATES WOULD OF COURSE HAVE TO BE COLOURED OR INDIAN.

5. SPECULATION THAT SOME PARTIES IN THE HOUSES OF REPRESENTATIVES AND DELEGATES WILL NOW MERGE WITH THE PFP IS PREMATURE. BUT THE INDIAN OPPOSITION PARTY, SOLIDARITY, MAY WELL DECIDE TO DO SO LATER THIS YEAR. THE LABOUR PARTY MIGHT ALSO ESTABLISH CLOSE LINKS WITH THE PFP.

MOBERLY

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