

MULTIPARTY RALLY IN OPPOSITION TO THE POSIB “SECRECY BILL”

BOOYSENS PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE – PORT ELIZABETH

12 MAY 2012

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LEADER: UNITED CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY

1. Democracy demands of us to have open society and be opposed to secrets
2. The ANC as the ruling party should know that the same vehemence they had when they opposed the closed apartheid society we also have. They should know that there is no value in having fought a closed society and then imitating it
3. The ANC led government should take counsel from their buddy Jay Naidoo who is on record as saying that the bill means they could as well welcome Magnus Malan and Adriaan Vlok. He argues that: “The bill fails to realise that transparency is a foundation of the democracy for. The struggle against apartheid was a struggle for voice”
4. In a democracy there should be no cover ups for mistakes in government
5. Nelson Mandela the architect of the democratic order in South Africa said: “Whenever our people are fully informed, you cannot stifle controversy, but this controversy should be welcomed rather than stifled. It is our right to debate issues. This debate is enshrined in the constitution”
6. Without debate, without criticism, no government or country can succeed. Debate informs, reflects on the dangers and opportunities we face, it indicates our crises and choices and

sometimes makes us angry. The ANC led government gets irritated when questioned.

7. Those are people who come from a block mentality; that is why when you ask them questions they get irritated.
8. The public gets better informed when they hold the government accountable
9. By imposing restrictions and censorship, the ANC government will destroy the very fabric of our nation
10. Why should the ANC impose restrictions they themselves fought against? Do unto others as would like them do unto you.
11. We have to watch out as the Secrecy Bill if accepted will see the rise of conservative Authoritarianism and the rise of securocrats – this country is going to be a police state, in fact we saw its beginnings at the opening of parliament
12. We are going back to the days when the mere possession of classified information can be a crime. Sooner or later some literature will be banned
13. If this bill gets into law issues such as the Richard Mdluli case will be discussed in hushed tones only

DEVELOPMENTS ON THE BILL

1. There are new developments however, the ANC has moved an inch towards living up to democracy
2. As late as on Thursday, apparently to try to scupper this rally they made some concessions that do not go a long way however the ANC went on record to say they will include a public interest defence clause to protect journalists and whistleblowers who expose wrong doing in government. This is not enough

3. These are half steps and we are not out of the woods yet. We have continue fighting the draconian provisions still left
4. We want to follow this matter until we are sure that no one will ever be threatened with imprisonment when they seek and expose the truth regardless of who they are
5. The bill still remains flawed