

Press Release

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IRR launches #SaveTheOpposition campaign

The IRR today launches its #SaveTheOpposition campaign in reaction to the dire state of opposition politics in South Africa. The need for such a campaign became painfully clear over the past week, when factional warfare within the Democratic Alliance (DA) flared up in public. The aim of the campaign is to highlight what should be done to ensure that opposition parties remain a check on a dangerous government implementing destructive policies.

Opposition parties have a moral and constitutional duty to be the voice of ordinary South Africans without power.

‘The DA, as the country’s official opposition, must be held to account and saved from being a hijacked opposition,’ said Hermann Pretorius, Campaigns Co-ordinator for the IRR.

The IRR has been accused of interfering in the affairs of the DA. But the politicians accusing the IRR of this know very well that it is the function of a think tank to do so. We ‘interfere’ in the affairs of business, government, and political parties all the time

to win their support for policies that will ensure South Africa's success and the prosperity of all its people.

DA MP Phumzile van Damme, who has triggered racial conflicts within the party and is being investigated by the party for allegedly assaulting a member of the public, took to Twitter to describe the IRR as 'thirsty hyenas'.

DA MP Luyolo Mphithi responded on Twitter: 'The IRR has taken off its mask a long time ago in its attempt to engineer democracy from the backdoor.' Mr Mphithi is the same person who was promoted to Parliament by the DA after he sparked the racial furore in Schweizer-Reneke in January when he falsely accused the teachers at Laerskool Schweizer-Reneke of racism.

Herman Mashaba, who is allegedly being investigated by the DA for racially abusing a colleague, said that '...involvement of the IRR in DA affairs is extremely concerning...so-called liberal narratives being banded (sic) around are a real threat to South Africa's democracy...[to]...keep the ANC in power to keep Blacks poor'.

John Steenhuisen, the chief whip of the DA, also took to Twitter in bizarre fashion last week to attack the IRR. The position of chief whip is traditionally associated with maintaining party discipline, something which Mr Steenhuisen showed very little of last week on social media.

'Events of the past week and the behaviour of these senior public representatives have made it painfully clear how necessary it is for ordinary South Africans – and think tanks like the IRR – to intervene in the affairs of the DA,' said Pretorius

'It is a party without direction, without identity and, if it remains stubborn and deaf to the advice of people who believe in true liberal democracy, without a future.

'By shirking its duty to be an effective and truly liberal opposition party,' he said, 'the DA is failing the people of South Africa.'

According to Pretorius, the IRR firmly believes that the DA must

- expel racist leaders from the party;
- stamp out corruption in the party;
- stop race-based policies;
- end its alliance with the EFF; and

- appoint good leaders.

Join the IRR's fight to make sure that opposition politics in South Africa is saved from self-destructing by SMSing 'voice' to 32823.

Ends