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Vir die aandag van:
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SALPCB 15

KOMMENTAAR OP KONSEPWETGEWING VIR TAALPRAKTISYNS 2013:

Die konsepwet is, soos vele voriges, swak beplan en uiters onbevoeg bestuur. Die Parlement moet daarteen waak dat sulke ondeurdagte ingrypings in 'n sogenaamde demokratiese bestel, as drakonies gesien word wat net nog bydra tot die vermorsing van belastingbetalersgeld, die verryking van 'n klein (meesal swart) bestuurslui wat tien-teen-een nie self bevoeg is om as 'n taalpraktisyn in welke formaat te praktiseer nie. Die energie en geld kan eerder bestee word aan die bevordering van veeltaligheid onder alle landsburgers, selfs Parlementariërs!

Die haas waarmee die konsepwet deur die Staatsbestel deurgejaag word, het die potensiaal dat dure en onnodige regsaksies kan volg, weer eens vir die rekening van die belastingbetaler!

My rede vir die negatiewe siening lê genestel in die vele vrotsige wetgewing van die nuwe regering en die mislukkings in die toepassing van wetgewing deur die ANC-beheerde regering, wat gereeld in die howe bevraagteken en betwis word!

So kon die regering ná bykans 20 jaar byvoorbeeld nog nie daarin slaag om die skakelbedryf (wat 'n groot omset ten opsigte van die taalpraktyk lewer), dis nou die skakel- en reklamewese) te "reguleer" nie - veral as daar na die swak gehalte van regeringswoordvoerders (wat telkens sonder om te skroom openlik vir die media en Jan Publiek lieg, asook die weiering om in openbare belang kommentaar te lewer en dies meer) gekyk word.

Hier het instellings soos die Openbare Skakelinstituut van Suid-Afrika (OSISA), nou net operasioneel as "The Public Relations Institute of South Africa" (PRISA), gruwelik gefaal om die bedryf te professionaliseer en te reguleer.

Met die Taalpraktisynskonsepwet krap die Regering soos telkemale waar dit nie jik nie. Pleks daarvan dat die Regering eerder sy eie huis in orde kry deur nie die argwaan van landsburgers op die hals te haal nie deur lagwekkende swak en selfs onverstaanbare taalgebruik in regeringsadvertensies, skolevraestelle, skoolhandboeke en dies meer te produseer. Dalk moet die regering dit oorweeg om eerder 'n Taalpraktisynsorganisasie vir homself in die lewe te roep om sy taalgebruik te monitor. Maar dit blyk dat die Regering eerder ander (lees: meer bevoegde en effektiewe) taalpraktisyns wil reguleer.

Die konsepvoorstel word myns insiens ook in haas deurgedruk, so asof die Regering 'n verskuilde agenda daarmee het. Dit kan lei tot die persepsie dat die Regering weer eens die onafhanklike entrepreneur (meesal blank) wil beperk, beheer of verbied! Die beoogde ondemokratiese optrede, nes regstellende aksie wat eerder tot ontstellende en mislukte beheer lei, sal gewis in die howe draai en burgerregte-organisasies sal weer eens die ANC-beheerde regering met verleentheid, 'n vermorsing van tyd en energie en groot uitgawe vir die belastingbetaler laat!

Daar is nêrens sprake van dat private en onafhanklike taalpraktisyns om kommentaar genader is nie. Hulle behoort betrek te word by die Raad en behoort die meerderheidstem te hê!

Ook is die optrede van die Portefeuljekomitee verdag omdat hulle nie deurentyd met belangegroepe beraadslaag nie, en wysigingsvoorstelle probeer deursmokkel asof dit almal se goedkeuring wegdra, soos dié van die Suid-Afrikaanse Vertalersinstituut (SAVI). So ook erkende opleidingsinstansies wat taalstudie bied.

Ervare taalpraktisyns (vertalers, redigeerders, proeflesers, transkribeerders, woordskeppers) het nie 'n Raad nodig om aan hulle voor te skryf hoe om effektief te praktiseer nie. Hul ervaring, opleiding, studie en kennis behoort eerder benut te word as om beheer en beperk te word. Die Regering probeer heers met wetgewing wat hulle meesal nie kan toepas nie.

Ek stel voor dat 'n "Oupa/Ouma-klousule" oorweeg word waar taalpraktisyns met 'n seker hoeveelheid (byvoorbeeld 10 jaar) ervaring vrygestel word van eksamens / opleiding en aldus 'n verlaagde lidmaatskapsgeeld betaal, indien so 'n Raad werklikwaar van die grond af sou kom.

Met internasionale toegang tot taaldienste en taalpraktisyns sien ek nie hoe enige Raad beheer sal kan uitoefen en praktisyns kan verbied. Wat nog van ander voorskrifte soos tariewe, standaarde ens. neerlê?

Wat is volgende: Gaan die Regering wetgewing inbring om alle tipe skrywers te beheer in die land? Dis so belangwekkend soos hierdie Taalbeheerwetgewing op die oog af blyk te wees!

Myns insiens is die Konsepwet vir Taalpraktisyns 'n vroteier wat net tot 'n reukklankie van ondeurdagtheid en die bevordering van selfs vrottigheid in die bedryf gaan lei.

Die konsepwet is uit wese uit doodgebore!

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(*Translation of Afrikaans letter follows.*)

[For attention:

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Portfolio Committee on Arts and Culture

Parliament

Cape Town.

COMMENTARY ON DRAFT LEGISLATION FOR LANGAUGE PRACTITIONERS 2013:

This draft legislation, like many before, was badly prepared and has been managed extremely incompetently. In a so-called democratic dispensation Parliament should guard against such ill-considered interventions being viewed as draconic and merely adding to the squandering of tax payer's money, and the enrichment of a small (mostly black) management corps who themselves are ten to one unqualified to practise as language practitioners in whatever form. This energy and money should rather be spent on the promotion of multilingualism among all citizens, even parliamentarians!

The haste with which this draft Bill is being rushed through the political system holds the potential of subsequent costly and unnecessary court actions, once again to the account of the tax payer!

My reason for this negative view lies in the many worthless pieces of legislation from the new government and the failure in putting such statutes by the ANC-controlled government into practice, as they are often queried and challenged in court!

This is why, after nearly 20 years, the government has still not succeeded in "regulating" the public relations industry (actually the public relations and advertising industry), which produces a large turnover in respect of the language practitioner's work – especially when one considers the poor quality of government spokespersons (who openly lie to the media and the public without blinking an eye) as well as the refusal to provide commentary in public interest, et cetera.

This is where institutions such as "die Openbare Skakelinstituut van Suid-Afrika" (OSISA), which now only operates as the Public Relations Institute of South Africa (PRISA), have failed dismally in professionalising and regulating the industry.

With this draft Language Practitioners Bill the Government is, as always, meddling in affairs that do not concern it. Instead the Government should rather get its own house in order and stop raising the citizen's mistrust by producing such a ridiculously poor and even unintelligible use of language in Government advertisements, school examination papers, school text books, et cetera. Perhaps the Government should consider establishing a language practitioners' organisation for itself whereby to monitor its own language usage. But it is clear that the Government would rather regulate other (read: more competent and efficient) language practitioners.

To my mind this draft proposal is also being rushed through as if the Government has a hidden agenda in this regard. This can lead to the perception that the Government is once again attempting to restrict, control or ban the independent (mostly white) entrepreneur. This undemocratic course of action, like affirmative action, which rather leads to unnerving and unsuccessful control, will definitely find its way into the courts and civil rights organisations will once again leave the ANC-controlled Government embarrassed, with a waste of time and energy and with a big expense for the tax payer!

Now mention is made of private and independent language practitioners who were approached for commentary. They should be referred to by the committee and they should have the majority vote!

The portfolio committee's conduct is also questionable because they are not in constant deliberation with interest groups and are trying to sneak through amending proposals as if they carry the approval of everybody, such as that of the SA Translators Institute (SATI), as well as acknowledged training institutions that offer language studies.

Experienced language practitioners (translators, editors, proof readers, transcribers, word originators) have no need of a council to prescribe to them how to practise efficiently. Their experience, training, studies and knowledge should rather be utilised than controlled and restricted. Government is trying to rule through legislation which they themselves mostly cannot implement.

I propose that consideration be given to a "Grandfather/Grandmother Clause", where language practitioners with a certain amount of experience (say, 10 years) are exempt from examinations/training and therefore pay a reduced membership fee, if such a council were actually to get off the ground.

With international access to language services and language practitioners, I don't see how any council would be able to exercise control and ban practitioners, never mind other regulations such as tariffs, standards etcetera.

What next? Is Government going to introduce legislation to control all kinds of writers in the country? That is of as much importance as this legislation would appear to be, at a glance!

In my view the Draft Legislation for Language Practitioners is a rotten egg that will merely lead to an odour of rashness and the promotion of actual rottenness in the industry.

This draft legislation is basically stillborn!

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