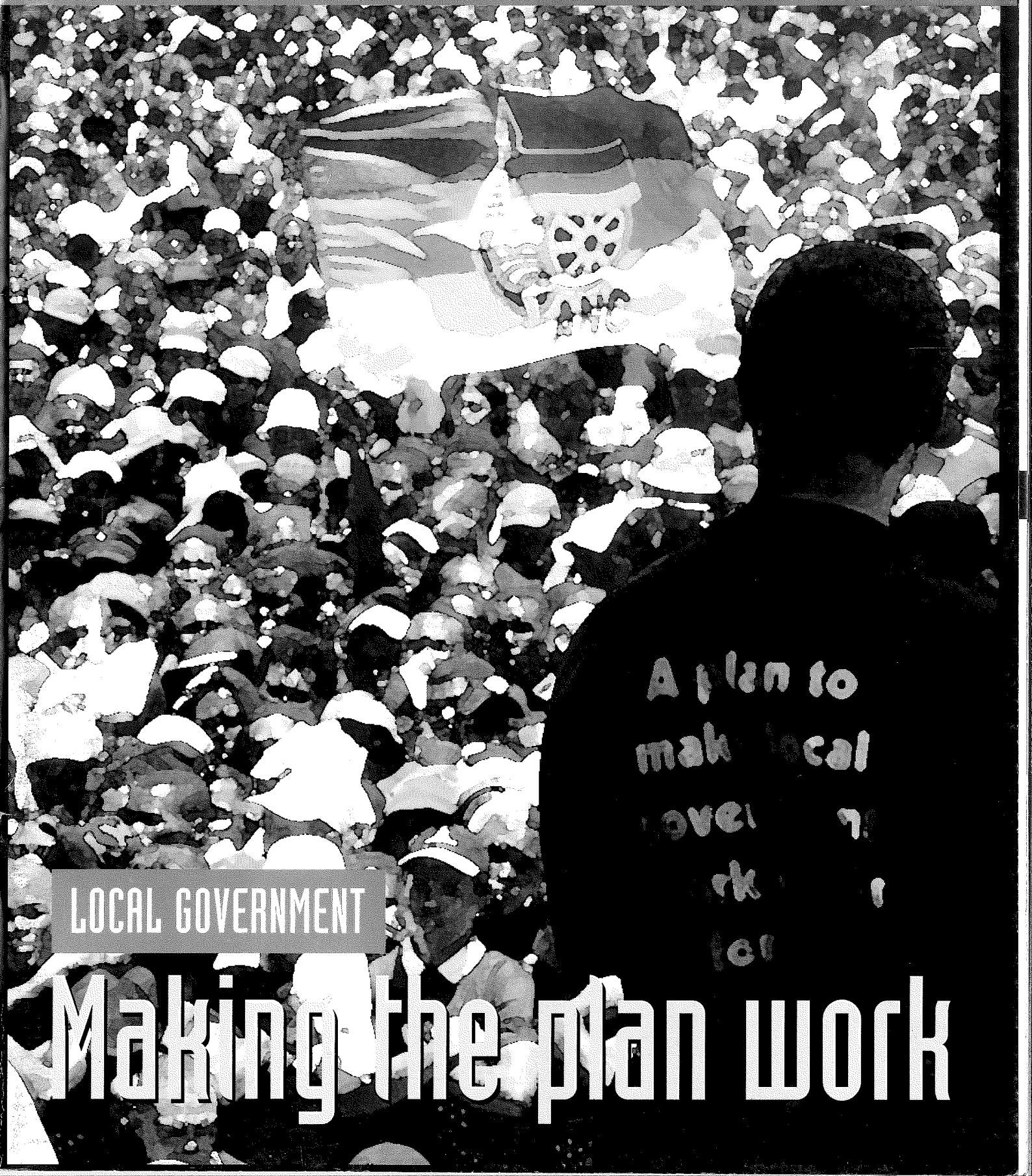
NUMBER 25 MAY 2006

ANC

# UMRABULO

LET'S TALK POLITICS




LOCAL GOVERNMENT

# Making the plan work

# UMRABULO

**NUMBER 25** MAY 2006

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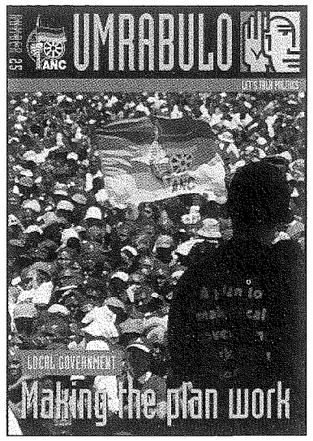
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# Editorial

## *Make local government work better*

The 2006 local government elections have, correctly, been hailed as a great victory for the African National Congress and the democratic movement. In the face of predictions of mass desertion of the ANC by voters, the people of South Africa were emphatic in their support of the ANC as the leading force for meaningful change at local level.

On almost every indicator, the ANC's support grew across the country. The organisation received more votes, won more seats and secured more councils than ever before in a local government election. In this edition, we explore the results in some detail, situating them within the context of previous election outcomes. In doing so, we are able to identify the trends which we need to consolidate and the developments which will pose challenges to the movement as it moves forward.

The election results might have been the culmination of a long and hard-fought campaign. But more than anything else, they are the start of a new era in local government. What takes place after an election is far more important than what takes place before. For this reason, we have focused on some of the key tasks and challenges before the ANC in the fulfilment of its mandate to make local government work better for all.

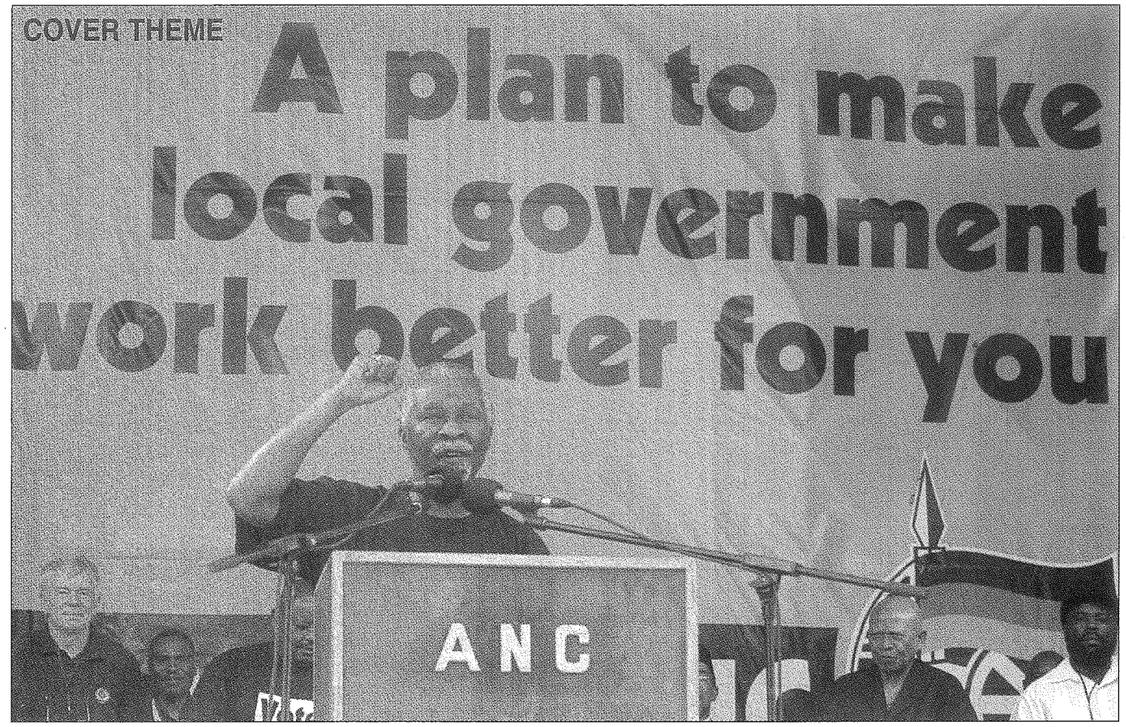
There is always a temptation to place the task of implementing an electoral mandate solely on the shoulders of the newly-elected councillors, municipal officials and other spheres of the state. National government has made a firm commitment to strengthen local government, through, among other things, Project Consolidate and the provision of greater resources for local infrastructure development. These are important and critical interventions. But they cannot be the extent of our effort to make local government respond more effectively to the needs of the people. The branches, members and other structures of the ANC, together with the structures of the Alliance, need to be leading agents for local democracy and development. It is not sufficient for the ANC and Alliance only to organise and mobilise in communities during election campaigns. The ANC is not merely an election machine, simply taking responsibility for getting its public representatives into office and turning its policies into government programmes. The ANC is a mass-based national liberation movement, responsible for mobilising South Africans to be active agents of their own liberation.

Therefore, any post-election plan must start with the branches of the ANC. As discussed in this edition, one of the most important immediate tasks of the movement is to revitalise and enhance the political life of ANC branches, including taking steps to ensure they are engaged in mass work among the communities in which they are located. This requires far more than simply addressing some of the negative tendencies which manifested themselves during the course of the list process. It means that an Alliance-wide programme of ongoing local mass mobilisation needs to be implemented, with the same focus and dedication that characterised the 2006 election campaign.

It means also, as President Thabo Mbeki indicates in this edition, that the newly-elected ANC councillors need to be given the support of the movement in the execution of their duties. Not only do they need to be reminded of the responsibilities they bear, but they need the practical assistance of branches and members in meeting those responsibilities.

The 2006 local government elections have signalled the beginning of a qualitatively new era in South African local governance. They have signalled the opening of a new front in the struggle to end poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment. The message we must now send is clear: **All Cadres to the Front!**






# Responsibilities of the people's local representatives

*The newly-elected ANC local councillors must not only be good politicians. They must also be good developmental activists, ready to lift pick and shovel side by side with the people to end poverty and underdevelopment, writes* ***President Thabo Mbeki.***

The mayoral appointments made by our movement following the 2006 local government elections constitute an expression of our confidence that the comrades concerned, regardless of gender and age, will properly discharge their responsibilities as the leaders of government in their municipal areas.

Among other things, this means that these ANC mayors must make it a point to study and understand our 2006 Local Government Election Manifesto, so that they are fully aware of the commitments our movement made to the people as we asked them to vote for ANC municipal councils and governments.

Together with the other ANC councillors and the local structures of our movement, our mayors must work to translate the vision and plan contained in the national manifesto into specific visions and plans for the metro, district and local municipalities, to ensure that the undertakings we made nationally find full expression at the local places where our people live and work.

Our mayors should also immediately familiarise themselves with the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) adopted by the outgoing municipal councils, the critical assessments of these IDPs made by teams deployed by the Department of Provincial and Local Government, and the Project Consolidate reports relating to their areas.

They should then assess all this against the commitments we made in our local government manifesto. All this will help our mayors, councillors and the local structures of our movement to make proper preparations for the popular and inclusive Growth and Development Summits (GDSs) they must hold in their areas by the beginning of June 2006.

Our mayors must ensure that these summits truly involve the people in their areas, so that from the very beginning of their terms, our councils get used to the critical importance of regular

interaction between themselves and the masses of the people, and the implementation of the people's contract to create work and fight poverty. The mayors must therefore ensure that our councils learn to work properly with both the local structures of the movement and the ward committees that will be elected.

In some areas of our country, the process of the selection of our candidate councillors brought us face to face with an ugly reality of hunger for power by some people within our ranks. On many occasions before, our movement has drawn attention to the danger that our political victory, which created the possibility for us to exercise state power, would draw people into our ranks intent to use this power for their selfish ends, including their personal enrichment.

During our candidate selection processes we experienced a number of unacceptable incidents, when some people resorted to foul means to secure selection by our branches and other structures as candidate councillors. To stamp out this criminal behaviour alien to the values of our movement, disciplinary action will be instituted against any of our members known to have engaged in activities that are at variance with our constitution, regulations and values.

In his Organisational Report to the 2005 National General Council (NGC), ANC Secretary General Kgalema Motlanthe drew our attention to the need for us to maintain and continue to nurture the revolutionary morality that must continue to guide the actions of all our members during the current phase of the national democratic revolution. Among other things he said:

"Our review of the functioning of branch, provincial and national structures of the ANC has identified a number of problems that need to be addressed. These problems point to an erosion of the revolutionary morality that has characterised our movement for decades, and which infused the volunteers of the Congress of the People campaign with a burning need to serve the people. The reasons for such erosion are not hard to fathom...

"In many of our branches there are no sustainable political programmes and community campaigns. They are conflict-ridden and unstable and in many instances fraught with fights over leadership positions, selection and deployment of councillors, tendering and control of projects and recruitment of membership in order to serve factional or selfish interests.

"In many cases, the reasons for division and the resulting lack of coherent and consistent branch organisation are not rooted in ideological differences. Rather, these problems rest primarily on the preoccupation on the part of public representatives with securing access to and control over public resources. This in turn leads to tensions between cadres deployed in ANC structures and those in government and undermines the effectiveness of our public representatives...

"The central challenge facing the ANC is to address the problems that arise from our cadres' susceptibility to moral decay occasioned by the struggle for the control of and access to resources. All the paralysis in our programmes, all the divisions in our structures, are in one way or another, a consequence of this cancer in our midst...

"The problem lies in the fact that, in our efforts to make up for the debilitating weight of apartheid, many of us appear only too quick to sacrifice the moral and ethical standards that have characterised our movement. Moral degeneration, linked to the accumulation and control over resources, is not a consequence we can accept, since it threatens to extinguish the torch of freedom that our people have carried for so long. Because of their hopes and aspirations we are duty bound to act, as the ANC, in the vanguard of the struggle against moral decay and corruption.

"These problems are not confined to a particular sphere of government or geographic area. Their pernicious influence and unacceptable consequences are apparent at local, provincial and national level."

We are confident that the mayors we selected are comrades who are inspired by the "revolutionary morality that has characterised our movement for decades, and which infused the volunteers of the Congress of the People campaign with a burning need to serve the people".

They will therefore occupy their positions as servants of the people, committed to advance the agenda of the national democratic revolution at the local level. But as we have also made clear, our movement will, within the context of the law, take action to withdraw any of our mayors and councillors who betray this commitment or otherwise consistently violate the oath which all our councillors pledged to honour.

Beyond this, our mayors will have to take the lead as the kind of "new cadre" that the 2000 NGC directed us to develop. When we opened this NGC we spoke about "the need for us to develop new cadres to meet the demands imposed on us by the victories we have scored as we have pursued the objectives of the democratic revolution" ...and therefore "the need for us to implement a programme focused, among other things, on the development of cadres who are truly politically committed to the all-round success of the new democratic South Africa, and properly prepared with regard to the skills our country needs to achieve that success."

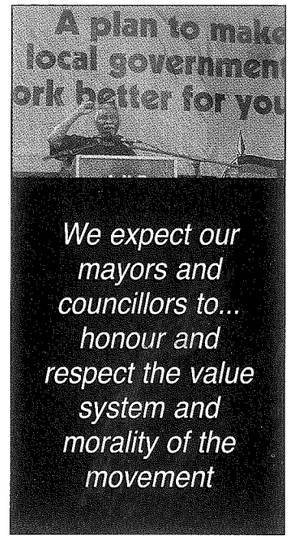
In this context, the NGC resolved that we should "expand our political school and [implement] a human resource programme that ensures the continual reproduction of cadres in terms of political, ideological, cultural and moral training; academic and skills development to take on the diverse tasks of transformation (including expanding economic literacy) in a range of spheres of society and adapt the methodology and content of our political education to meet the challenges of the current phase".

The NGC said: "Within the ANC we need to build a corps of cadres capable of implementing required programmes and carrying forth the traditions of the movement. Our deployment structures must be able to draw on cadres who are committed, capable and innovative; cadres who are rooted among our people, and are dedicated to working with them to realise their aspirations."

It went on to say: "At the centre of our programme is the urgent need to entrench the ethos of a transformative morality, discipline and caring among our members, our people and our country as a whole."

What all this means is that we expect our mayors and councillors to:

- study and fully understand our movement's vision of fundamental social transformation focused on accelerating the advance towards the achievement of the objective of a better life for all;
- put in place practical and realistic programmes to transform this vision into reality;
- honour and respect the value system and morality of our movement and its unwavering commitment to serve the people of South Africa;
- maintain constant contact with the people to give expression to our commitment to a people-driven process of change;
- improve their understanding of the managerial, professional and technical requirements necessary for the effective delivery of goods and services by our system of local government; and,
- constantly review, monitor and evaluate their work so that they are able to correct any mistakes quickly and use their successes further to accelerate service delivery and development at the local level.



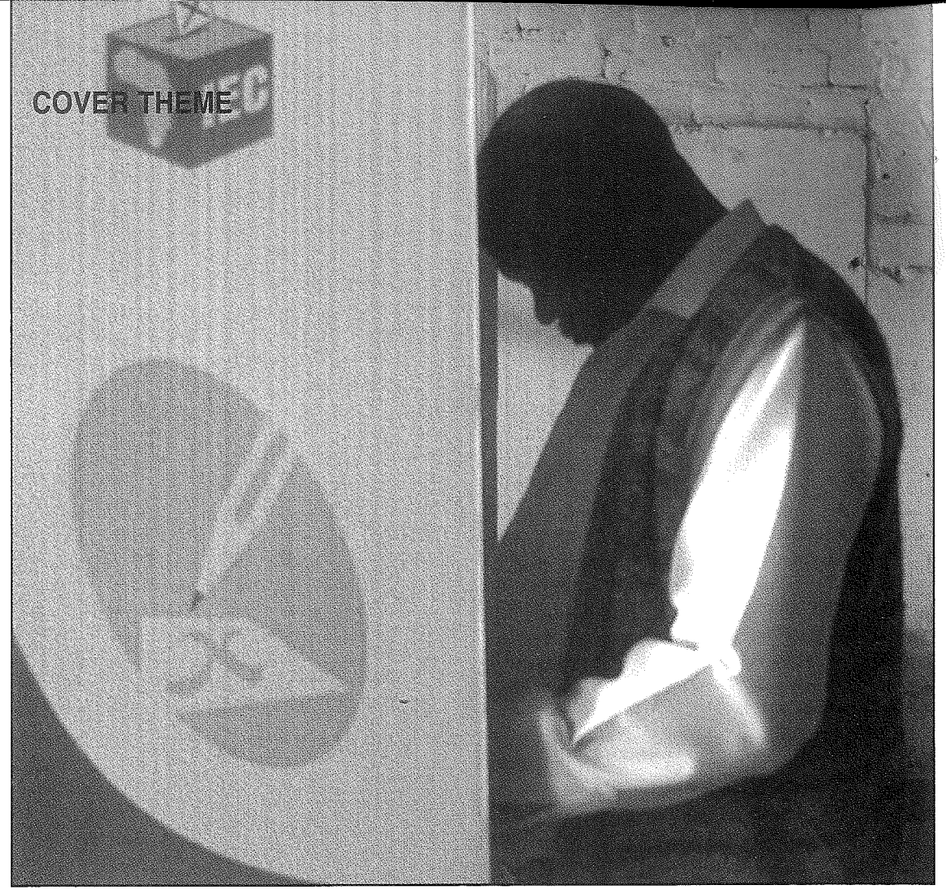

The results of the 2006 local government elections have once again confirmed the confidence of the masses of our people in our movement as the best representative of their hopes and aspirations. They expect that the new municipal authorities will build on the progress made since 1994 further to accelerate the advance towards the achievement of the central objective of a better life for all.

Our cadres deployed at the national and provincial spheres of government must also understand they have an obligation to work with, and assist the municipalities to meet the expectations of the people. We should therefore not only make demands on our mayors and councillors, but should also assist them to access the human and material resources that will enable them to discharge their responsibilities to the people.

Thus the new cadres we require for the current phase of the national democratic revolution must not only be good politicians. They must also be good developmental activists, ready to lift pick and shovel side by side with the people to end the blight of poverty and underdevelopment that continue to afflict many of our communities and millions of our people.

---

**THABO MBEKI** is President of the ANC. This article first appeared in *ANC Today* Vol 6 No 10, 17-23 March 2006.






# Once the votes have been counted

## *Implementing the plan to make local government work better for all*

*To fulfil its 2006 election manifesto commitments the ANC needs to improve the coordination of its local government programme, step up the support provided to local councillors and strengthen the political life of ANC branches.*

The outcomes of the 2006 local government elections have underscored the confidence of the South African people in the ANC as the leading force for meaningful change in South Africa. They have also highlighted the critical responsibility the ANC bears to work with the people to bring about a better life for all.

The results represent a significant victory for the democratic movement: the ANC's overall share of the vote has increased in every province in comparison with the 2000 local government elections. More councillors are from the ANC and more councils are controlled by the ANC. These results are consistent with those of the 2004 elections.

This means that in the most recent national, provincial and local elections, the people of South Africa have given the ANC a clear, unequivocal and unprecedented mandate to accelerate the transformation of South Africa.

This places a profound responsibility on the ANC to meet people's expectations. The people have placed their confidence in the ANC, and now they expect it to prove itself worthy of their support.

This means that, in addition to the work already being done, the ANC needs to identify and undertake those specific tasks which will enable the ANC to steer the implementation of the plan to make local government work better for all. Some of these tasks relate to the coordination and monitoring of the work of local councils, while others relate to the organisational life of the ANC and the involvement of its branches in building local democracy and driving local development.

The lessons of the first five years of democratic local government, the issues that have arisen from government's *izimbizo* programme in municipalities, and the interaction with residents during the course of the election campaign, all point to the fact that the ANC needs to improve its capacity to support, monitor and intervene at a local government level.

Most importantly, the ANC needs to give consistent, programmatic support to its cadres deployed at local government level.

The ANC has made clear commitments to the people to improve the performance of local government, and to ensure councillors are effective and accountable. As we do this, we also need to provide the newly-elected councillors with a clear sense of an ANC programme for local government.

This will need to include improved mechanisms at national and provincial level to coordinate and monitor implementation of the ANC's local government programme in every municipality. These mechanisms need to take account of the multitude of government structures and stakeholders that interact with local government – providing direction, making demands, setting frameworks and delegating implementation. It is estimated that municipalities produce around 40 monthly reports to different government departments, yet there remains a sense that the ANC, as the leading party in the majority of these councils, does not have a clear sense of specific areas of problems.

At a national and provincial level, government has developed benchmarks against which to measure its performance on a regular basis. This approach needs to be extended to all municipalities. At the same time, the ANC needs to develop mechanisms to measure progress against the commitments made in the 2004 and 2006 manifestos.

The support will involve an induction and political education programme for all ANC councillors. This is not only to acquaint incoming councillors with the skills and understanding to ensure the smooth-running of councils, but also to politically equip them to understand their responsibilities and political tasks as cadres of the movement charged with important developmental objectives. Consistent cadre development is the first line of defence against non-performance and corruption at a local level.

One of the features of the ANC 2006 manifesto that attracted a lot of attention and elicited a favourable response from communities was the ANC councillor code of conduct, which requires all ANC councillors to work hard and listen to the people. In addition to the role that individual communities must play in holding their councillors to account, the ANC will need to put in place clear mechanisms for monitoring adherence to the code of conduct by all of its councillors.

A comprehensive review of the performance of each ANC councillor – as was conducted prior to the 2006 list process – will need to become a regular feature of the monitoring process. There will need to be an annual review of the performance of every ANC councillor. Where necessary, corrective measures will need to be taken.



*The ANC has made clear commitments to the people to improve the performance of local government, and to ensure councillors are effective and accountable*

### Political life of the branch

While there is much emphasis on providing support to councils and councillors, one of the most critical elements in the implementation of the plan to make local government work better is the ANC branch. In identifying the tasks of the movement in meeting people's expectations, the challenge of building active ANC local structures cannot be overemphasised.

The election campaign saw the revitalisation of the political life of ANC branches. The branch-based activity associated with election campaigns needs to be sustained beyond the elections period into other campaigns and community-based programmes.

Among other things, this means that some of the key features of an ANC election campaign should be replicated in the planning and implementation of the national campaigns of the organisation. Some of the features of the ANC election campaign which we should seek to reproduce in campaigns between elections include:

- The identification of specific immediate outcomes requiring a particular action from community members. In an election, community members are asked to vote on election day with the specific outcome of an ANC victory. In a campaign on local democracy, for example, community members could be asked to participate in ward committee elections with the specific outcome of the establishment of ward committees in all wards;



*The organisation should work with its Alliance partners towards an approach which ensures that mass work takes place between elections*

- extensive planning, strategising and message development, engaging all structures of the movement in preparations for the campaign;
- ongoing coordination, monitoring and support at national, provincial and regional level;
- the deployment of national, provincial and regional leadership and all public representatives to do mass work for the duration of the campaign;
- most importantly, the mobilisation and training of campaign volunteers from among the membership of the branch to undertake door-to-door work in communities.

This means that serious consideration needs to be given to the ANC's approach to mass-based campaigns outside of election years. The organisation should work with its Alliance partners towards an approach which ensures that mass work takes place between elections; that ANC branches have a structured mechanism to interact with communities; that branch members are active and engaged in political activity; that leaders are interacting with branches; and that progress in local development can be monitored over time.

It is clear from this campaign that direct engagement with communities remains the most effective form of campaigning and mass mobilisation. The ANC's great strength, which is unmatched by any other political formation in the country, is its capacity to engage directly with residents where they live. We need to ensure that opportunities are created to ensure such engagement is more regular, and is approached more systematically.

This form of engagement needs to be used to advance the theme for 2006 of 'The Year of Mobilisation for People's Power through Democratic Local Government'. Specifically, it needs to be used by ANC branches to assist councillors in better serving communities and responding to their needs.

A successful national campaign requires the involvement of national, provincial and regional leadership in coordinated, focused mass work. The involvement of leadership and public representatives in mass work serves a number of functions. It raises the profile of the campaign among the broader public; encourages and enthuses branch members; and provides leaders with greater insight into the state of the organisation and the challenges facing branches.

There therefore needs to be a more systematic approach to the deployment of leaders and public representatives to branches for mass work. This should incorporate some of the lessons learnt in coordinating the deployment of leadership for the 2006 election campaign.

Work has begun to develop improved systems and procedures for coordinating and monitoring the deployment of national and provincial members to branch work. These systems will also need to provide mechanisms for deployees to feed information back to the Secretary General's Office and Provincial Secretaries on their activities and the state of branches and regions to which they have been deployed. Leaders should be organisers.

One of the challenges which these deployees will need to confront together with branches is the apparent breakdown in communication – and sometimes trust – between communities and councillors.

Despite the ANC's good showing in almost all municipalities – including in the ward ballot – a recurring theme in interaction with residents during the campaign was dissatisfaction with the performance of councillors and concern about their honesty and integrity.

A major challenge going forward is therefore to rebuild the relationships between communities and councillors. At one level, this requires work to counter some of the perceptions of councillors – whether real or imagined. The ANC and government have some responsibility in this regard, making sure that we desist from talking councillors down or blaming them for lack of delivery. At another level, it requires a concerted effort to ensure that councillors remain in constant contact with communities, and that they are supported and empowered to effectively implement the mandate they have received.

## Correcting the problems

The ANC list process is unsurpassed by any other in South Africa in terms of its extent, thoroughness, popular involvement and democratic character. The list process has evolved over the course of six elections to become an important exercise of the popular will of the ANC membership. This element of an oft-maligned process needs to be highlighted, profiled and deepened. Through review and refinement, the organisation needs to build on the achievements and experiences of past processes.

We need to start using the list process more effectively to strengthen democratic organisational practice and use it as a tool for building unity and cohesion.

However, the list process also served to highlight some of the chief problems affecting the internal functioning and, therefore, community activism of ANC branches.

In many areas, branch activities revolve primarily, if not solely, around the selection of candidates for public office or the nomination of people to regional, provincial or national leadership structures.

The list process has exposed the lack of political activity in many branches. Branch General Meetings (BGMs) are often convened for no other purpose than to make nominations for conferences or select candidates for public office. For many ANC members, their first and only experience of branch life consists of such elections.

The pursuit of personal advancement and enrichment is undermining proper organisational processes, values and discipline. The list process saw a number of instances of ill-discipline and undemocratic behaviour in many parts of the country. Some BGMs were disrupted; some ANC members clashed violently; and there were even instances where ANC members hijacked others responsible for registering candidates with the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC).

In most cases, these acts were the consequence of a competition for positions and resources. They were not the result of political or ideological differences.

As identified by the 2005 NGC, this poses a major challenge to the movement, which requires an intensive and sustained programme of political work among our members and leadership. While some work can be done in reducing the potential for such tendencies through improving organisational systems and procedures – through, for example, closing loopholes in the membership system – this problem can only really be addressed through the inculcation of revolutionary values and a progressive political consciousness among all members and leaders.

Branches need to be engaged in a consistent and ongoing political programme, which includes the involvement of the general membership in mass work, political discussion, cadre development and sectoral outreach.

The 2006 election has pointed the way ahead for ANC branches and local government structures. It has also provided important lessons on what organising tactics work, which don't and what internal problems will need to be overcome if the democratic movement is to be effective in making local government work better for all.

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This article is based on a discussion at the ANC National Executive Committee meeting of 24-26 March 2006 on the lessons and tasks arising from the local government elections.

# The plan to make local government work better receives decisive endorsement

*The local government election results confirm the growth in the ANC's support and, as in 2004, reflect that opposition parties are fishing from a shrinking pond.* ***Michael Sachs*** *analyses the results.*

Not only did the ANC significantly improve its percentage support in the 2006 local government elections, and increase the number of councils it controls, but it did so in the context of a much higher turnout of voters in absolute numbers than in 2000 local elections.

Nearly 1.3 million more people voted for the ANC in 2006 compared with 2000. In contrast the Democratic Alliance (DA) saw its overall vote drop by 320,000. The Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), United Democratic Movement (UDM), Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and former Bantustan parties all saw their number of votes drop significantly.

The ANC controls more councils than it did in 2000. In five provinces the ANC controls all councils outright. The exceptions are Gauteng, where one council (Midvaal) was won by the DA, the Eastern Cape (where two councils are hung) and the Western Cape and KwaZulu Natal.

Of the 303 municipal structures in the country, the ANC has outright control of 228. The IFP controls 4 district councils and 23 local municipalities. The DA controls 4 local councils. A further 40 structures are 'hung', where no party achieved more than 50% of the vote.

Comparing overall council control with 2000 reveals the extent of the DA's decline and the ANC's gain. Out of the 237 local councils and metros, the DA controlled 12 outright in 2000, including eight in the Western Cape, three in the Northern Cape and one in the Eastern Cape. In 2006 it was reduced to only eight, losing control of all its councils in the Northern Cape and controlling only two councils in the Western Cape outright, with the rest being hung. The IFP also took a significant hit, being reduced from control of 33 councils in KwaZulu Natal in 2000 to only 23 in 2006. The ANC was the beneficiary of all of these shifts, increasing its control of councils from 162 in 2000 to 179 in 2006.

## TURNOUT

As a percentage of registered voters, turnout was slightly higher in 2006 than in 2000 – 48.4% compared to 47.6%. But the number of citizens who voted was significantly higher than in 2000. More than 10 million South Africans cast their ballots in 2006, up from 8.8 million in 2000. This amounts to a growth in participation of more than 16%.

The growth in turnout was across all provinces, with Limpopo, North West, KwaZulu Natal and Eastern Cape recording the largest increases. The Eastern Cape had the highest percentage turnout, at 56%, while Gauteng had the lowest participation of registered voters, at 43%.

Aside from the Eastern Cape, the provinces with the largest turnout were those in which there was significant contestation for power among parties: KwaZulu Natal, Western Cape and Northern Cape. This pattern is reflected at the municipal level, where the areas with the highest turnout are largely in these four provinces.

The lowest turnout in the country was in Merafong. Aside from the unique situation there, municipalities with the lowest turnout tended to be the large urban areas including Johannesburg, Tshwane, Ekurhuleni and Ethekwini. Rustenburg, which had the lowest turnout in 2000, maintains its claim to lowest turnout in the country (excluding Merafong).

## OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF PARTIES

In terms of proportional representation (PR) votes, the ANC attracted 1.3 million additional ballots in 2006 compared to 2000. The ANC's overall percentage of the vote was 66% in 2006, with the Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and Limpopo all giving the ANC in excess of 80% of ballots cast. The ANC is the largest party in every province.

In general the ANC's vote increased in almost all municipalities. Some of the largest increases were in KwaZulu Natal, where the ANC's vote increased significantly in every council. In Ethekwini the ANC's vote increased by 115,000. Large increases in votes for the ANC can also be seen across the Eastern Cape.

However, there were a number of municipalities where the ANC's vote declined. This includes Merafong and Groblersdal, where

Overall Council control

| | Metro | Local Councils | District Councils | DMAs | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ANC** | **5** | **174** | **34** | **15** | **228** |
| **IFP** | – | 23 | 4 | 2 | 29 |
| **DA** | – | 4 | – | 2 | 6 |
| **HUNG** | 1 | 30 | 8 | 1 | 40 |
| **TOTAL** | **6** | **231** | **46** | **20** | **303** |

Turnout in 2000 compared with 2006

| | 2000 | | | 2006 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Registered Voters | % Poll | Votes Cast | Registered Voters | % Poll | Votes Cast | Changes in Votes Cast |
| Eastern Cape | 2,552,287 | 54.5% | 1,391,019 | 2,908,106 | 56.1% | 1,630,284 | 239,265 |
| Free State | 1,227,578 | 49.0% | 601,911 | 1,318,408 | 47.2% | 622,815 | 20,904 |
| Gauteng | 4,375,372 | 43.2% | 1,889,974 | 4,785,955 | 42.5% | 2,033,073 | 143,099 |
| KwaZulu Natal | 3,508,154 | 46.4% | 1,629,356 | 3,964,817 | 50.6% | 2,005,007 | 375,651 |
| Limpopo | 1,758,593 | 42.0% | 737,923 | 2,145,186 | 44.8% | 959,970 | 222,047 |
| Mpumalanga | 1,419,315 | 44.4% | 630,429 | 1,546,728 | 46.4% | 716,908 | 86,479 |
| North West | 1,263,004 | 44.5% | 562,638 | 1,554,864 | 45.6% | 709,484 | 146,846 |
| Northern Cape | 452,218 | 56.1% | 253,736 | 528,657 | 53.5% | 282,884 | 29,148 |
| Western Cape | 1,955,454 | 57.3% | 1,120,495 | 2,301,371 | 51.8% | 1,191,880 | 71,385 |
| **TOTAL** | **18,511,975** | **47.6%** | **8,817,479** | **21,054,092** | **48.4%** | **10,190,180** | **1,372,701** |

NOTE: Total number of votes is based on the average of PR and Ward votes

Local Government Elections 2006 Voter Turnout

| HIGHEST TURNOUT | | | LOWEST TURNOUT | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **MUNICIPALITY** | | **% POLL** | **MUNICIPALITY** | | **% POLL** |
| NC081 | Mier [Mier] | 73.8% | NW405 | Merafong City [Carletonville] | 25.2% |
| WC052 | Prince Albert [Prince Albert] | 70.5% | NW373 | Rustenburg [Rustenburg] | 36.1% |
| WC042 | Hessequa [Heidelberg/Riversdale] | 68.2% | NP361 | Thabazimbi [Thabazimbi] | 36.8% |
| WC033 | Cape Agulhas [Bredasdorp] | 65.5% | GT483 | Westonaria [Westonaria] | 36.9% |
| WC051 | Laingsburg [Laingsburg] | 64.9% | NP334 | Ba-Phalaborwa [Phalaborwa] | 38.0% |
| WC013 | Bergrivier [Velddrif] | 63.9% | NP354 | Polokwane [Pietersburg] | 39.7% |
| NC075 | Renosterberg [Phillipstown] | 63.8% | JHB | City of Johannesburg [Johannesburg] | 40.4% |
| EC121 | Mbhashe [Idutywa] | 63.7% | NP03a5 | Greater Groblersdal [Groblersdal] | 40.6% |
| EC123 | Great Kei [Komga] | 63.2% | TSH | Tshwane Metro [Pretoria] | 41.2% |
| EC105 | Ndlambe [Port Alfred] | 62.8% | MP307 | Govan Mbeki [Highveld Ridge] | 41.3% |
| WC047 | Bitou [Greater Plettenberg Bay] | 62.6% | NP341 | Musina [Messina] | 41.4% |
| WC053 | Beaufort West [Beaufort West] | 62.6% | KZ275 | Mtubatuba [Mtubatuba] | 41.5% |

NOTE: These figures are based on PR votes only

Number of PR votes for various parties in 2000 and 2006

| | 2000 | 2006 | Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| African National Congress | 5,208,058 | 6,469,420 | 1,261,362 |
| Democratic Alliance | 1,938,991 | 1,608,154 | -330,837 |
| Inkatha Freedom Party | 794,495 | 744,486 | -50,009 |
| Independent Democrats | – | 217,761 | 217,761 |
| United Democratic Movement | 234,198 | 129,047 | -105,151 |
| United Independent Front | – | 31,018 | 31,018 |
| African Christian Democratic Party | 103,440 | 128,990 | 25,550 |
| 'Small Christian Parties' | 9,027 | 10,283 | 1,256 |
| Africa Muslim Party | 8,056 | 9,749 | 1,693 |
| Pan Africanist Congress | 115,827 | 109,816 | -6,011 |
| Azanian People's Organisation | 25,865 | 30,321 | 4,456 |
| 'Small Left Parties' | 7,450 | 9,611 | 2,161 |
| Vryheidsfront/Freedom Front | 7,436 | 93,921 | 86,485 |
| 'Small Rightwing Parties' | 3,231 | 4,060 | 829 |
| United Christian Democratic Party | 85,697 | 62,459 | -23,238 |
| Dikwankwetla Party of South Africa | 10,206 | 9,477 | -729 |
| Ximoko Party | 10,814 | 8,610 | -2,204 |
| Minority Front | 26,499 | 42,530 | 16,031 |
| National Democratic Convention | – | 35,899 | 35,899 |
| Independent Civic Organisation of SA | 3,890 | 11,090 | 7,200 |
| African Independent Congress | – | 10,345 | 10,345 |
| Local Groups, Ratepayers, Civics, and Residents | 75,850 | 44,206 | -31,644 |
| Other Parties | 20,127 | 29,804 | 9,677 |
| **TOTAL** | **8,689,157** | **9,851,057** | **1,161,900** |

NOTE: These figures are based on PR votes only



cross-boundary issues had an effect. The ANC's vote also declined in a number of municipalities in the Western Cape. It is worth noting that in many of these areas the Independent Democrats (ID) or independent civic organisations, especially those organised primarily in the coloured community, captured a significant number of votes. The ANC also saw a significant decline in votes in Nxuba, where the Adelaide Residents Association netted more than a third of the PR vote.

In terms of the percentage vote by province the most stunning advances have been made in the Northern Cape, where the ANC received only 49% of the vote in 1995, but advanced to 64% in 2000 and 70% in 2006. KwaZulu Natal, Free State and Gauteng have also seen a significant increase in ANC support over the last ten years, while the remaining provinces have largely retained their overall support. In the Western Cape, the ANC's support increased by only 0.1% since the last local government election.

In 2006 the ANC received fewer ward votes than PR votes, by an amount of 155,000. This is a small amount, accounting for only 2% of the ANC's vote. Nevertheless, it does indicate that strategic voting may be a factor in certain wards and municipalities. In general, all of the larger parties received more PR votes than ward votes, with the balance going to local groups and independents.

Compared with 2000, the Democratic Alliance got fewer votes in most municipalities and lost 330,000 votes overall. The largest absolute declines in DA support were in the metros, where 171,000 fewer people cast their ballot for the party. The largest decline was in Cape Town, taking the DA from higher than 50% of the vote in 2000, to only 42% in 2006.

Outside the metros, the DA's decline in votes was most apparent in the Western and Northern Cape. It is likely that many of the voters that previously supported the New National Party (NNP) – and thus the DA in 2000 – shifted towards the ID or similar organisations. Nevertheless, the DA remains the largest opposition party in all provinces with the exception of KwaZulu Natal

The Independent Democrats emerged as the third largest opposition in both the Northern and Western Cape with 8.4% and 10.5% of the votes cast respectively. In Gauteng the ID scored 1.3% of the vote and everywhere else less than 1%. In the Eastern Cape, the ID managed to secure more than 5% of the vote in Kou-Kamma and Baviaans. It did not achieve this in any municipality outside the Western, Eastern and Northern Cape.

The decline of the Inkatha Freedom Party accelerated with this election. While the party gained additional votes in much of its rural heartland, this was more than offset by huge declines in support in the small towns and urban areas. At the same time the ANC significantly

Percentage support for the ANC in three municipal elections

| | 1995/96 | 2000 | 2006 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Eastern Cape | 80.9% | 74.0% | 81.7% |
| Free State | 67.3% | 72.4% | 76.7% |
| Gauteng | 52.8% | 59.5% | 62.5% |
| KwaZulu Natal | 32.6% | 35.2% | 46.6% |
| Limpopo | 86.2% | 80.4% | 84.0% |
| Mpumalanga | 76.0% | 80.5% | 80.6% |
| North West | 74.3% | 72.1% | 76.6% |
| Northern Cape | 49.0% | 64.1% | 70.0% |
| Western Cape | 37.1% | 40.1% | 40.2% |
| **TOTAL** | **58.0%** | **59.4%** | **63.3%** |

DA performance in the metros (PR votes)

| | 2000 | 2006 | Change | % Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cape Town | 377,885 | 305,048 | -72,837 | -19% |
| Ethekweni | 137,970 | 101,412 | -36,558 | -26% |
| Ekurhuleni | 156,806 | 135,173 | -21,633 | -14% |
| Tshwane | 146,286 | 132,413 | -13,873 | -9% |
| Nelson Mandela | 81,980 | 68,433 | -13,547 | -17% |
| Johannesburg | 199,905 | 187,116 | -12,789 | -6% |
| **TOTAL** | **1,100,832** | **929,595** | **-171,237** | **-16%** |



increased its votes across the province, in both rural and urban areas, taking control of a number of councils formerly run by the IFP.

The National Democratic Convention (Nadeco) does not appear to have made much of an impact, despite the decline in the IFP's support. It failed to get 10% of the PR vote in any municipality, and only scored more than 5% in Mtubatuba, Imbabazane, Newcastle and Dannhauser. The party won 24 of the 1,651 seats in KwaZulu Natal and one in Gauteng.

The Vryheidsfront did not stand in most areas in the 2000 election, but gave support to the 'Alliance 2000+'. Compared with the combined performance of the two in 2000, the VF+ made significant gains in 2006. It has emerged as the third largest party in Gauteng and the Free State in terms of seats won, and has a presence in all the other provinces except Northern Cape. The VF+ also achieved more than 10% of the vote in three municipalities in Limpopo (Mookgopong, Modimolle and Thabazimbi).

The African Christian Democratic Party experienced moderate growth in votes cast. However, the party failed to make more than 1% of the vote nationally. But the party managed to win a number of seats in Western Cape, Gauteng, North West and Limpopo.

The United Democratic Movement lost control of King Sabata Dalindyebo, but still managed to poll 25% of the PR votes in that municipality. Other municipalities where the party got more than 10% of the vote were Mbhashe, Mnquma, Mhlontlo and Engcobo in the Eastern Cape and Richmond in KwaZulu Natal.

Interestingly, the United Independent Front (UIF), which split away from the UDM prior to the election, made an insignificant impact in the Eastern Cape, but won the majority of UDM seats in Limpopo, getting 14 seats in that province against the UDM's eight. This may indicate a further narrowing of the UDM's base towards its ethnic heartland.

Former Bantustan parties, such as the United Christian Democratic Party (UCDP), Dikwankwetla and Ximoko all remain players on the local government scene with pockets of support, but with reduced representation.

Independents did not emerge as a significant force in this election. Only 2.68% of the ward votes cast in 2006 were cast for independent candidates. However, independents organised into political parties did achieve some successes. Notable among these is the Independent Civics Organisation of South Africa (ICOSA), which became a force in the Western Cape outside the metro.

Proportion of elected ANC Councillors who are women

| | Overall % | % Ward | % PR |
|---|---|---|---|
| Eastern Cape | 45.6 | 37.3 | 54.6 |
| Free State | 45.0 | 38.7 | 51.8 |
| Gauteng | 51.0 | 45.2 | 57.9 |
| KwaZulu Natal | 35.0 | 21.4 | 48.8 |
| Limpopo | 48.8 | 47.3 | 50.5 |
| Mpumalanga | 48.1 | 43.2 | 53.5 |
| North West | 50.5 | 49.1 | 52.2 |
| Northern Cape | 54.1 | 55.6 | 51.9 |
| Western Cape | 39.7 | 31.4 | 49.7 |
| **TOTAL** | **46.1** | **40.5** | **52.4** |

## GENDER

The ANC has elected more women councilors than ever before, and more than any other party. Nevertheless, we have failed to meet our target of 50% women public representatives at local level. Only three provinces – Gauteng, North West and Northern Cape – succeeded in meeting the gender parity target. In particular the Western Cape and KwaZulu Natal did poorly in this respect.

There are a number of factors which contributed to the shortfall. Some provinces did not manage to achieve a consistent distribution of women candidates across all municipalities. While the province as a whole may have achieved 50% representation of women among its candidates, this was not the case in all municipalities.

While it is relatively straightforward to achieve the quota in the outcome of a proportional representation vote, this is not the case for the ward vote. Because it is not possible in advance to know which wards are going to be won, there is greater scope for the proportion of women ward candidates elected to be lower than the proportion of women ward candidates standing. That explains why women constitute 52.4% of ANC councillors elected on the PR ballot, while only 40.5% of ANC ward councillors. This imbalance is compounded by the fact that, as a consequence of the formula used to allocate PR seats to parties, the ANC has more ward seats than PR – 3,035 to 2,683.

In seeking to ensure gender parity in future local government elections, the ANC will need to take proper account of some of these 'technical' factors and develop approaches to address them.

**MICHAEL SACHS** is the outgoing research coordinator at ANC headquarters.






# Western Cape results support national trend

*The ANC's position in the Western Cape continues to improve, while the Democratic Alliance loses ground, mainly to the Independent Democrats, writes* ***James Ngculu****.*

***Part of the large crowd that turned up for the launch of the ANC elections campaign at Athlone Stadium, Cape Town***

The 2006 local government elections confirmed once gain the assertion that the ANC continues to grow and is increasingly becoming the dominant force in the Western Cape. The election also proved to be a major breakthrough for the organisation, as the ANC made significant gains across the province and in the city of Cape Town.

The election results confirm that confidence in the ANC is growing. This is particularly significant if one considers the environment in which the elections were contested, characterised by a hostile and negative media; dissident groups, mainly from the ANC, given to political intolerance and threats of violence; and a sustained negative and racist campaign by the Democratic Alliance (DA).

## THE ANC STRATEGY

The ANC campaign strategy in the Western Cape was basically in line with the national strategy framework and message. It avoided deviating from the core message of the ANC, and approached the election from a positive perspective. This meant identifying where ANC voters were and getting them to vote. The core strategy involved mass mobilisation and door-to-door work in African base areas and identifying coloured voters through door-to-door canvassing with a special emphasis on rural coloured wards and those wards in the metro identified as winnable.

The ANC put up candidates in all 105 wards in Cape Town, and engaged vigorously in the poster war with message and candidate posters. The ANC also contested print and electronic media in a hostile media environment. It also focused on former New National Party (NNP) supporters in coloured areas utilising former NNP leaders. Sectoral work was done especially in the religious community and to some extent in the broader Afrikaans-speaking community.

While the ANC campaign saw a massive and successful mobilisation of the movement's

cadres across the province, the list process exposed starkly the weaknesses in our branches. In many areas the only activities our branches are engaged in are list processes and preparations for Branch General Meetings (BGMs) and conferences. Problems found in our structures are not based on any ideological differences but more on competition for positions and in particular those positions that result in some form of remuneration. Levels of discipline and tolerance in some of our structures have plummeted to low levels. The level of political education and therefore political consciousness must be addressed at all levels of the movement including in the Alliance.

## THE DA STRATEGY

The DA saw Cape Town and the Western Cape as areas which could be wrestled from the ANC. They therefore ploughed massive campaign resources into the province. They ran a sustained and widespread poster campaign, flighted thousands of radio ads, and maintained a daily advertising campaign in the press. In the tabloid newspapers, they concentrated their adverts on page three, where these papers publish pictures of semi-naked women. From the perspective of nation building, the DA campaign can be characterised as racist, negative, destructive and counter-productive.

The core focus of the DA was in the white and coloured areas. In Cape Town they focused on the call for the largest turnout in white areas by, among other things, portraying the city management and political leadership as corrupt and incompetent. The DA ignored the African areas, except for some sorties meant to counter the accusation that their campaign was racially exclusive.

Their campaign in these areas was largely limited to postering. Most DA ward candidates in African areas stood in more than one ward, indicating that they had no structures or support in these areas.

The core messages of the DA revolved around the notion of 'Take back your city', which was directed at whipping up emotions among the white community, particularly if taken to its logical and barely-disguised conclusion: '...from these inept Africans'. Still focused on the white community was the poster, *'Bly getrou'* (Remain loyal), suggesting that whites should stand together against Africans.

These two slogans – 'Take back your city' and *'Bly getrou'* – are reminiscent of the slogans used by the Conservative Party in the 1980s to rally the white *'volk'* against the *'verligtes'*. The Conservative Party's version of 'Take back your city' was *'Klou aan wat joune is'* (Hold on to what is yours).

The other version of their election campaign was particularly targeted at the coloured community, with slogans like 'Stop ANC racism'. DA mayoral candidate Helen Zille was even more crude when she said in the Cape Times of 28 February 2006 that the ANC-led council was "...applying rigid racial quotas for city contracts and employment...".

"It makes no sense, for example, for the ANC to apply national demographics to government appointments and contracts in this region... Individuals have been identified as a group, on the basis of their skin colour, and singled out for privileged access (or exclusion) by government policy."

In the Cape Times of 2 February 2006, she said: "In order to meet employment equity targets that reflect national rather instead of local demographics, municipal employees are pushed out for having the wrong skin colour." She goes on to say: "In housing allocations, the decision to build the N2 Gateway in Langa was an indication to many coloured residents that they were being left behind because of their race."

The theme of the 'incompetence' of Africans was evident in the DA's response to the electricity outages in the Western Cape, where they tacitly blamed 'highly-paid' black managers for the outages the city was facing. A DA councilor, Ian Neilson, was quoted in the Cape Times of 22 February 2006 as saying: "There may be numerous competent people at a mid-management and lower level who knew something was needed, and said so, but the problem is that in most cases, their new managers no longer have the depth of technical understanding of the problems... That is what Cape Town faces now. Three years of ANC government with a year of low-tech senior managers... have led to inadequate performance." A 'new' manager is code for 'African' managers, all of whom, according to Nielson, lack the competence to undertake the running of a city like Cape Town.

The DA used, in particular, the allocation of land at Big Bay and the issue of Jewellery City to claim corruption in the ANC-led metro council. Yet it was the DA that sold the Big Bay land without tender to a specific company below its real value and in disregard of black economic empowerment policy.

The DA used a crude radio advertising and pamphlet campaign to claim that coloureds were not white enough during apartheid and now not black enough in the free and democratic South Africa. They mixed their message with a sustained attack on the Independent Democrats (ID) telling coloured voters in particular that a vote for the ID was a vote for the ANC.



## THE ICOSA STRATEGY

The Independent Civic Organisation of South Africa (ICOSA), though registered in the Free State, was mostly active in the Western Cape, focusing on coloured communities in the rural areas. It started growing in Knysna but spread to other areas. It used various methods: in some areas, such as Beaufort West, Knysna, Mossel Bay and Kannaland, it campaigned as ICOSA; while in other areas, such as Oudtshoorn and Laingsburg, became an ally with civic groups.

The organisation ran a racist campaign in these areas based on ethnic mobilisation of coloured people. As part of its campaign, ICOSA volunteers wore t-shirts bearing the slogan, "Still no Freedom" – a clear attempt to portray coloured people as still being in bondage.

One of their candidates, Truman Prince, also used his dismissal as municipal manager of Beaufort West for the benefit of this racist campaign, attributing his dismissal to what he called "Africanists".

In the first local government election in 1995 the ANC in the Western Cape decided to work with a number of civic organisations in Oudtshoorn, Beaufort West, Mossel Bay and Kannaland, which were mainly based in coloured areas. Some of the individuals involved in these organisations – such as Truman Prince, Jeffrey Donson, Michael Carelse, and Angeline Le Kay – later joined the ANC. However, it would seem that they never imbibed nor assimilated the ANC ethos or policies, especially the principle of non-racialism. These were exactly the same people who, when they were not happy with the outcomes of the list process, decided to stand against the organisation.

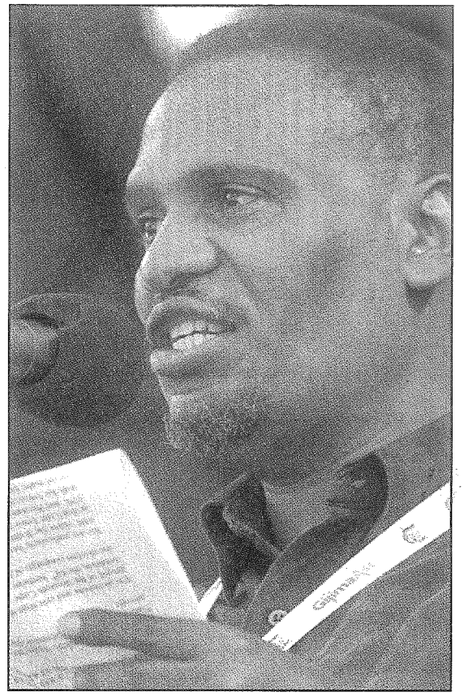
## ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

The ANC made significant gains in the Cape Town metro and in rural towns, while the DA suffered significant losses.

In the 2000 local elections, the ANC received 40% of the vote or 444,883 of the total PR votes cast in the province. The ANC controlled four councils – Bitou, Beaufort West, Matzikama and the Central Karoo District.

In the 2006 local election, the ANC increased its share of the vote to 40.13% with actual numbers increasing by 16,298 to 461,181. The ANC is now in control of 19 municipalities, 11 together with the ID, 6 with the DA and 2 outright.

On the other hand the DA experienced a dramatic decline from 51.58% to 40.25% or a decline of 109,328 votes. The DA registered



*ANC Western Cape Provincial Chairperson, James Ngculu*

declines in all municipalities, save for Swartland (Malmesbury) where it remained static at 58%. The DA suffered significant losses in 19 municipalities.

The ANC registered significant gains in 12 municipalities even gaining a majority in municipalities where the DA was previously in absolute control. The ANC suffered significant losses in only three municipalities – Beaufort West (21%), Laingsburg (24%) and Oudtshoorn (11%). These losses should be understood in relation to the emergence of ICOSA.

## CAPE TOWN METRO

The Cape Town metro represents the most important area of elections in the Western Cape, where over 70% of voters in the province live.

There were 1,486,781 registered voters in Cape Town compared to 1,269,582 in 2000, of which 737,234 voted compared to 717,365 in 2000, representing a 3% increase. The voter turnout in 2006 was 50% compared to 57% in 2000.

The ANC marginally increased its support from 38% in 2000 to 39% in 2006 – an increase in numbers of about 6,531. In 2000 the ANC had 71 seats and the DA 103 seats. In 2006 the ANC increased to 81 seats and the DA dropped to 90 seats. The number of DA votes decreased by 72,837.

The DA didn't just suffer losses at a macro level. Its decline is equally and even more telling at ward level. Out of 105 wards in the metro, the DA dropped in all but 16 wards:

- In wards 71, 103 and 104 the DA gained over 1,000 votes. In ward 71, which covers the suburbs of Tokai, Constantia and Bergvliet and is

wholly white, it gained about 3,800 votes. In ward 103, which covers the suburbs of Durbanville and Kraaifontein and is mainly white with some coloured votes, it gained about 1,500 votes. Ward 104, by contrast, is more mixed, covering the suburbs of Table View, Parklands and Du Noon. After a special effort by the ANC, the ANC won the ward with 56.9%.

■ In wards 5, 8, 9, 35, 36, 69, 72, 73, 78, 96 and 105, the DA's growth is negligible. In ward 9, which is in Bellville South and is mainly coloured, the DA won by a margin of 852 (47.69%). In ward 69, which is in Fish Hoek and mainly white and includes Masiphumelele, the DA won by a margin of 1,378 or 52.55%. The ANC ward candidate, from Masiphumelele, got over 3,400 votes to the DA candidate's 4,814.

However in the rest of the 89 wards in the metro, the DA suffered significant reverses, with the DA's votes in wards 2, 26, 28, 29, 66, 82 dropping by over 2,000. The DA failed dismally to make any inroads in the African areas.

On the other hand the ANC maintained its strong support in African areas, getting 95.36% of the vote in Phillipi, 95.91% in New Crossroads, 92.72% in KTC, 94.59% in Nyanga, 87% in Langa, 75% in Lwandle, and between 74.5% and 93.15% in areas of Khayelitsha. The ANC polled significantly well in Khayelitsha notwithstanding the most virulent opposition from independent candidates and those within the ANC who supported these independents.

The Independent Democrats (ID) are new to contesting local government elections. The election results suggest the white former NNP supporters recoiled to the DA and their coloured supporters mainly went to the ID, with some split between the ANC and DA.

This analysis is borne out by a comparison of DA and ID votes at a ward level. We have already shown how the DA lost significant numbers of votes in the metro, especially in its base, white and coloured areas.

In ward 7, which covers Northpine and Scottsdene and is mainly coloured, the DA lost around 1,000 votes and the ID gained just over a 1,000. In ward 13, which cover Delft and Lyden and is mainly coloured with Africans in Lyden, the DA lost around 1,200 votes and the ID gained exactly the same number. The ANC won the ward.

In ward 29, which is a coloured ward in Mamre, the DA lost over 2,000 votes whereas the ID gained around 1,800 votes, though the ANC won the ward. In ward 66 the DA lost over 2,000 votes and the ID gained around the same number and won the ward. In ward 79, in Mitchells Plain, the DA lost around 2,000 votes and the ID gained over 2,000 votes. Exactly the same occurred in ward 82, also in Mitchells Plain.

These wards reflect a pattern across the Cape Town metro, with DA losses in predominantly coloured areas being mirrored very closely in the ID's vote.

## ANALYSIS OF NON-METRO RESULTS

As indicated, the ANC now controls more municipalities than it did in 2000. The ANC won the Bitou and Hessequa councils with an overall majority – Hessequa for the first time.

The ANC is the largest party in the following municipalities:

■ Beaufort West, beating ICOSA by 5%;
■ Prince Albert, getting more than 50% of vote for the first time;
■ Matzikama, with 6 seats out of 13;
■ Cederberg, with the ANC becoming the largest party for the first time with 6 seats out of 12;
■ Bergriver, with the ANC being the largest party for the first time (6/13 seats);
■ Saldahna Bay, with the ANC being the largest party for the first time (9/23 seats);
■ Drakenstein, with the ANC the largest party and the DA second (26/61 seats);
■ Stellenbosch (16/37 seats);
■ Breede Valley (Worcester)(18/39 seats);
■ Breederiver Winelands (Robertson), with the DA losing control and the ANC becoming the largest party for the first time (9/20 seats);
■ Witzenburg (Ceres) (10/21 seats)
■ Theewaterskloof, with the ANC replacing the DA as the majority party (10/23 seats);
■ Cape Agulhas, with the DA losing control and the ANC becoming the largest party (5/10 seats);
■ Swellendam (4/10 seats);
■ Knysna (7/16 seats);
■ Bitou, with the ANC maintaining control (7/11 seats)
■ Hessequa, with the ANC winning for the first time (9/15 seats)
■ Kannaland (4/9 seats).

This is a demonstration of the strides made by the ANC in this election. However, because the ANC does not have an outright majority in most councils, it is bound to negotiate with other parties to form council executives.

As indicated, the Independent Civic Organisation of South Africa (ICOSA) positioned itself as the group to frustrate ANC advances in coloured areas outside the metro. It is possible to assess how it managed to achieve this objective and how the ANC faired in this situation by looking at some of the key councils:

■ **Beaufort West** became a focal point in the ICOSA campaign and among the media and observers. All seven wards in Beaufort West were contested by ICOSA. The ANC won three wards – two in African areas and one in a coloured area. ICOSA won three wards, two of them comfortably and the other with a margin of around 120 votes. All these wards were in coloured areas, where Truman Prince has a significant profile. The DA won the other ward in the white area.

■ **Laingsburg**, also in the Karoo has no wards. Only PR votes are counted. There are 6 PR seats in the council. As a result of internal ANC problems, individuals in the ANC formed a civic party called the Laingsburg Gemeenskap Party (LGP). Like those in ICOSA who had left the ANC, these individuals had behaved in a repugnant manner and been a continuous embarrassment to the ANC. One, a former ANC councillor, was the first person to have his car confiscated by the Asset Forfeiture Unit for repeated drunken driving offences. Following the election results, the ANC, DA and LGP each got 2 seats with the latter being the largest party, with 40.25%. The LGP is in close alliance with Prince and they assisted each other in their campaigns.

■ In **Mossel Bay**, ICOSA tried to make inroads in the coloured area of D'Almeida. It won one ward seat and two PR seats. The ward seat had previously belonging to the NNP, then to the DA, but the ANC won it back during a by-election.

■ It was in **Oudtshoorn** that the first signs of the nature of 'coloured ethnic' parties were to emerge, with the Oudtshoorn Civic, which has links with ICOSA. It did not win a single ward and got two PR seats. The ID won three wards.

■ **Knysna** has eight wards, of which the ANC took five. ICOSA collaborated with the Knysna Community Forum (KCF), which comprises former ANC members with a history of ill-discipline. The overall percentage of ICOSA was very low and only got one PR seat.

■ In **Kannaland**, ICOSA's chief candidate was former ANC mayor Jeffrey Donson, whose behaviour is well recorded in the ANC and in the media. Donson won a ward seat and ICOSA one PR seat.

There are five district councils and one metro in the Western Cape. The Boland, Karoo, West Coast and Overberg district councils are controlled by the ANC and other parties. The South Cape district is controlled by the DA.

The local government election results in the Western Cape conforms to the national picture, captured in a statement by the ANC National Executive Committee of 26 March 2006 that "the ANC's overall share of the vote has increased in every province in comparison with the 2000 local government elections. The ANC has more councilors elected in 2006 than in 2000".

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**JAMES NGCULU** is ANC Provincial Chairperson in the Western Cape.

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# The search for faster growth and meaningful redistribution

*South Africa has the institutional capacity to accelerate growth as envisaged in the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative (ASGISA). It is less well placed to share that growth, writes* ***Michael Sachs****.*

At the ANC's National General Council in June 2005, the commissions on Theory of Development reported that: "The central challenge our movement faces in the Second Decade of Freedom is to defeat poverty and substantially reduce the level of unemployment. This means that the ANC and government must produce a coherent development strategy. Elements of this would involve identifying where we need to move to and what strategic leaps we need to get there."

At the beginning of this year, in his State of the Nation address, President Thabo Mbeki unveiled the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA). He made it clear that ASGISA was not a 'development strategy'. He explained that "ASGISA is not intended to cover all elements of a comprehensive development plan. Rather it consists of a limited set of interventions that are intended to serve as catalysts to accelerated and shared growth and development".

Further work is clearly needed to develop the type of economic strategy that the National General Council (NGC) proposed. But while not completing the work of the NGC, ASGISA does take us forward in defining the kind of programmes we require to substantially reduce unemployment and poverty. It proposes a framework for economic intervention in pursuit of broadly defined targets such as 6% growth.

Therefore, whether ASGISA is described as a set of programmes, or a policy package, it represents a clear set of choices, which rest on particular assumptions about the character of South Africa's current stage of development, and which will impact on South Africa's development trajectory into the future.

This article aims to raise some of the questions posed by ASGISA about South Africa's broader

development path as a contribution towards further debate.

## QUANTITY, QUALITY AND INSTITUTIONS

At the centre of the ASGISA programme is infrastructure investment. In essence, this aims to:

- Reduce significant infrastructure backlogs that constrain economic growth. We have all become aware of the need for energy investments. The lack of adequate transport infrastructure, for example in Gauteng, is another critical constraint on faster growth.
- Reducing the 'cost of doing business' especially for our core export industries, such as unprocessed and semi-processed resources, which still account for the bulk of export revenue and which require easy and reliable access to efficient ports located at some distance from the resource rich interior.
- Increase the quality of the stock of social capital available, especially to poorer communities, through municipal infrastructure development.

The ANC's 2006 local government election manifesto envisages R400 billion of infrastructure investment over the next five years. The most immediate contribution towards fighting poverty and unemployment will emerge from the 'multiplier effects' that this vast quantity of state expenditure will generate. The state's direct contribution aims to raise the overall level of domestic investment in a manner that 'crowds-in' private sector investment. And by stimulating demand throughout the economy, and by directly creating jobs in certain sectors such as construction, ASGISA will have an immediate economy-wide effect on the levels of growth.

However, this expenditure cannot be taken for granted. Roll-overs and under-expenditure on government's capital budgets mean that questions about the 'capacity to spend' (rather than the availability of financial resources) will increasingly come to the fore.

The indirect and longer term impact of the investment programme will depend not so much on the quantity of investment but on its quality. The quality of our investment depends to a large degree on our institutional and micro-economic environment, rather than the broad aggregates of macro policy and budget allocations. It also depends on critical political and social choices that will influence the trajectory of development into the future.

Where institutions are weak, the quality of investments is likely to be sub-optimal. This raises the problem of state capacity in general, and the capacity of local government in particular. Whereas many of the parastatals, national and provincial departments which will drive economic investment have strong capacity, our weakest institutional link is at the local level, where the bulk of social investments aimed at improving the capital stock available to poor and marginalised communities will be executed. ASGISA's investment programme aims to both accelerate growth and ensure it is shared. But it could be argued that the best quality institutions are those concerned with acceleration, while those tasked with ensuring it is shared are somewhat weaker.

The qualitative investment choices we make will also influence the overall trajectory of development. We have already noted that much of the emphasis of economic investments envisaged by ASGISA to 'reduce the cost of doing business' are targeted towards the costs of exporting primary commodities. Hopefully, as well as increasing investment and innovation in these industries, the upgrading of rail, port and other infrastructure will benefit other sectors of the economy by improving access to overseas export markets. And it cannot be doubted that building the mineral and energy core of the economy is essential to accelerating growth.

However, we should also not forget the point made by the NGC commissions that:

"South Africa's economy has been historically dependent on the resources sector, particularly mining. The pattern of development that this has generated continues to constrain our economic growth. This results in challenges that affect every aspect of our economic transformation and development strategy.

"Addressing the challenges of poverty and unemployment requires us to lead the economy toward a new pattern of development, involving a diversified industrial base."

The sectoral strategies identified do speak to these priorities, by seeking to build non-core sectors such as the creative industries, tourism and others. But the relationship between South Africa's growth path, and its historic dependency on minerals and energy has certainly not been resolved.

## DEVELOPMENTAL CAPACITIES

There is continuing debate about the notion of a developmental state in South Africa. In its contribution, the NGC noted that: "The developmental state must be conceptualised in concrete terms. It is a state with a programme around which it is able to mobilise society at large. It is also a state with the capacity to intervene in order to restructure the economy, including through public investment."

If we are to conceptualise the developmental state in 'concrete terms' it may be more useful to consider developmental capacities of our particular state, rather than try to envisage an entirely new form of state that we would call 'developmental'.

Some states emphasise regulatory capacities, for example competition policy and the regulation of state and private monopolies, environmental and social regulations and institutional arrangements to ensure financial sector stability. In other states, welfare capacities are highly developed: government has established the institutions and capacity to tax and transfer a significant proportion of the country's income towards those excluded by the economic system. Also important for the welfare state are active labour market policies, which oversee the conditions of employment and reduce inefficiencies in the labour market arising from imperfect information.

Developmental capacities refer to the ability of the state to mobilise and target a coordinated set of micro interventions that lead to cumulative changes in the structure of the economy. This includes identifying broad economic goals, mobilising the state and society behind these goals and leading in the implementation of the developmental programme.

Part of these capacities include sectoral targeting, or a concern with "which industries ought to exist and what industries are no longer needed" (Johnson). Another capacity associated with developmental states has been an ability to lead indicative planning as a mechanism for mobilising society around a common medium term objective, such as accelerating growth, or restructuring of the economy.

In South Africa, the post-apartheid democratic state has made significant achievements with respect to its regulatory and welfare capacities. Much of the ANC's first term of office was devoted to a root and branch transformation of the regulatory and policy architecture, and creating the regulatory institutions needed to manage this architecture. The last fifteen years have also witnessed a massive expansion of the welfare state, including through direct transfers to the poorest people and active labour market policies.

The ASGISA initiative may not change our government into a remodelled 'developmental state' (and it makes no claim to do so) but it certainly does take us forward in building the kind of developmental capacities that we have neglected. This indeed may be ASGISA's main long-term significance. Building our developmental capacities means ensuring better coordination of economic policies between departments, spheres of government and parastatal enterprises. It means improved prioritisation of economic programmes based on the identification of key constraints, as well as an ability to mobilise society in general behind an economic programme.



*Probably the greatest ambiguity within the ASGISA project is the definition of what exactly is meant by 'the second economy'*

For the first time since democracy we have set a growth target (of 6%). Many commentators have had much to say about whether this is too ambitious or too humble. Either one may be the case, but more important than the percentage chosen is the use of targeting per se. It is the target which has animated engagement with ASGISA; and it is around this target that consensus can be built, with both labour and capital, about the concrete nature of resources that must be marshalled to realise the target. This has shifted us away from the shopping list approach to economic development that has characterised previous attempts at a social compact.

ASGISA also places sectoral targeting and industrial policy much more firmly on the state's agenda than at any time in the past 12 years. Once again, debates about the sectors chosen or the instruments employed may rage on forever. But by taking a particular view, by selecting particular sectors and by embarking on concrete programmes to realise its view, government has taken an initial small step, which must always be the first act of any long journey.

## CAN GROWTH BE ACCELERATED AND SHARED?

Probably the greatest ambiguity within the ASGISA project is the definition of what exactly is meant by 'the second economy'. Given that ASGISA is not an overarching strategy but a set of programmes, it is probably beyond its own scope to define this elusive concept. The absence of a commonly accepted definition of the second economy tends to confuse discussions, both within the Alliance and among the broader policy and academic community.

In many respects, ASGISA's second economy interventions appear as an 'add-on' to the investment and growth programme. Rather than regarding the gross inequalities as the central problem that developmental interventions should solve, the programme appears to emphasise that growth of the 'first economy' will generate the resources that will then trickle down into the 'second economy'. We should recall that, in the words of the NGC, "there can be no Chinese wall between interventions in the first economy and the second economy. Our interventions should aim to restructure the economy as a whole".



*Another important structural feature of our economy, on which dualism rests, is the highly unequal distribution of assets among the population*

ASGISA's 'shared' component is focussed largely on assisting those in the 'second economy' with the capital, human resources and other assets that will enable them to participate effectively in the first economy. To some extent, this approach obscures the structural faults which sustain South Africa's dualistic economic structure and diverts attention from initiatives that aim to 'restructure the economy as a whole'. For instance, ASGISA identifies the highly monopolistic and concentrated character of South Africa's markets, but proposes little in the way of addressing this constraint. We wish to promote small business, which is a very good idea, but neglect to address barriers to entry, which monopolistic agents consciously erect to keep out small business.

Another important structural feature of our economy, on which dualism rests, is the highly unequal distribution of assets among the population. While accelerated land reform is mentioned, there is little focus on this or broader questions related to redistribution of assets.

International evidence suggests that an equitable distribution of land is closely correlated with shared equitable growth (World Bank). Noting this fact, and since we have committed ourselves to redistribute 30% of agricultural land over the next 10 years, one would have thought that, alongside reducing unemployment and poverty, agrarian reform would have been a central component of ASGISA, with the explicit intent of overcoming the two economy divide creating an asset-base for shared growth. This raises the thorny question of the relationship between agrarian reform and industrial development. Arguably, this is the question that has traditionally been at the heart of debates about economic duality, or the two economy divide, in other countries.

Among the developing countries, it was the Bolsheviks who first had to confront the apparent contradiction between agrarian reform and industrial development. Alec Nove, an economic historian of the USSR, writes that: "This kind of dilemma has been faced in other developing countries. There is a tendency for the same people to demand both land reform and industrialisation. Yet land reform often has the effect, at least in the short term, of reducing the volume of marketable production, and sometimes of total production, because egalitarian land redistribution strengthens the subsistence sector..."

It should be remembered that an increase in subsistence production may very well result in less inequality, greater food security for poor households and reduced poverty. But since Gross Domestic Product (GDP) measures only the value of marketed goods and services, a strengthening of the subsistence agricultural sector would stand against the logic of accelerating growth, at least in the short to medium term.

It is worth noting that all the East Asian developmental states initiated rapid economic growth only after completing significant land reform. Redistribution preceded growth, and none of these East Asian states implemented both at the same time. Nevertheless, having completed significant land redistribution, these states ensured that the growth that subsequently emerged was equitably shared.

Land and agrarian reform are mentioned in ASGISA, but do not constitute one of the main priorities of the programme. Perhaps the reason for this is not lack of interest in agrarian questions, but rather that an implicit trade off is being made in favour of accelerated growth, and against shared growth.

As we develop the overarching developmental framework proposed by the NGC, we should pose the question: are our job creation and poverty reduction targets in contradiction with our land reform objectives? In other words, can growth be simultaneously accelerated and shared?

## ANIMAL SPIRITS IN THE AGE OF HOPE

There is another factor, which may require us to trade redistribution for accelerated growth. This relates to the question of perceptions of the future, which John Maynard Keynes identified as central in the determination of the overall rate of investment in any economy:

"It is safe to say that enterprise which depends on hopes stretching into the future benefits the community as a whole. But reasonable calculation is supplemented and supported by animal spirits, so that the thought of ultimate loss which often overtakes pioneers... is put aside as a healthy man puts aside the expectation of death.

"This means... that economic prosperity is excessively dependent on a political and social atmosphere which is congenial to the average business man. If the fear of a Labour Government or a New Deal depresses enterprise, this need not be the result either of reasonable calculation or of a plot with political intent; – it is the mere consequence of upsetting the delicate balance of spontaneous optimism..."

When unveiling ASGISA, President Mbeki made reference to opinion polls which indicate that "our people are firmly convinced that our country has entered its Age of Hope. They are convinced that we have created the conditions to achieve more rapid progress towards the realisation of their dreams. They are certain that we are indeed a winning nation".

He went on to say that government is committed to "play its role to give new content to our Age of Hope. I am honoured to have this opportunity to announce some of the elements of the programme of our government to honour this commitment". This programme is ASGISA.

The 'Age of Hope' is therefore integral to the success of ASGISA. If state-led investment is to 'crowd in' the private sector, an Age of Hope must be inaugurated, in which the pessimism of white business (both local and international) about the future of an African republic is decisively overcome. This entails that measures aimed at redistribution, or radical transformation of social relations, would need to be put on the backburner, since they would certainly generate adverse consequences for the need to create a "political and social atmosphere which is congenial to the average business man".

Furthermore, ensuring that state-led investment 'crowds in' the private sector means that intensified and closer partnerships are required by the state and the owners of private capital.

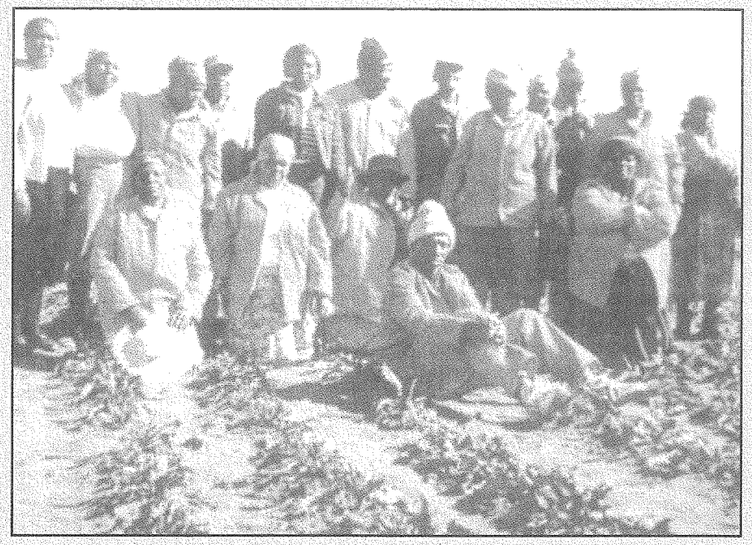
What does the need to build an Age of Hope and to intensify partnerships between the state and capital mean for the political alliance on which the legitimacy of the state is often assumed to depend? The NGC answered this question as follows: "In many international cases, the developmental state has been characterised by a high degree of integration between business and government. The South African developmental state has different advantages and challenges. While we seek to engage private capital strategically, in South Africa the developmental state needs to be buttressed and guided by a mass-based, democratic liberation movement in a context in which the economy is still dominated by a developed, but largely white, capitalist class."

It remains to be seen how the state will respond to these questions, and whether the vision outlined by the NGC commissions is a realistic one.



*If state-led investment is to 'crowd in' the private sector, an Age of Hope must be inaugurated, in which the pessimism of white business (both local and international) about the future of an African republic is decisively overcome*

**MICHAEL SACHS** is the coordinator of the ANC Economic Transformation Committee. He writes this in his personal capacity.



**AT A GLANCE**

# *Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA)*

**The South African government** was mandated in 2004 to halve poverty and unemployment by 2014. These objectives are feasible because of steady improvement in the economy's performance and job-creating capacity. Yet, these goals will not be achieved without sustained and strategic economic leadership from government, and effective partnerships between government and stakeholders such as labour and business.

## BINDING CONSTRAINTS

Sustainable growth at around 6% requires measures to address a number of 'binding constraints'. These include:

- Volatility and level of the currency.
- The cost, efficiency and capacity of the national logistics system.
- Shortage of suitably skilled labour amplified by the impact of apartheid spatial patterns on the cost of labour.
- Barriers to entry, limits to competition and limited new investment opportunities.
- Regulatory environment and the burden on small and medium businesses.
- Deficiencies in state organisation, capacity and economic leadership.

Countering these constraints requires a series of decisive interventions. These fall into six categories:

## 1. INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

Public-sector investment is planned to rise to around 8% of GDP. Government and public enterprise investment expenditure between April 2005 and March 2008 is planned to be about R370 billion.

Of this, about 40% will be spent by public enterprises, mainly on power generation, power distribution, rail transport, harbours and an oil pipeline. The general purpose is to improve the availability and reliability of infrastructure services in response to rapidly growing demand.

Key areas of government expenditure, incorporating all spheres, are: provincial and local roads, bulk water infrastructure and water supply networks, energy distribution, housing, schools and clinics, business centres, sports facilities, and multi-purpose government service centres, including police stations, courts and correctional facilities. Electronic communications as a key commercial and social infrastructure will be one focus of priority attention.

## 2. SECTOR STRATEGIES

To promote private-sector investment, sector strategies are being prepared for implementation. A broader National Industrial Policy Framework will be submitted to Cabinet during this year.

Two sectors have been identified for immediate priority attention: business process outsourcing (BPO) and tourism. A third sector, biofuels, is being finalised. These industries are labour-intensive, rapidly growing sectors worldwide, suited to South African circumstances, and open to opportunities for broad-based black economic empowerment and small business development.

A number of other sectors constitute the next rank of priorities, including:

- Metals beneficiation, including the capital goods sector,
- Creative industries (crafts, film & TV, content and music),
- Clothing and textiles,
- Durable consumer goods,
- Wood, pulp and paper (as mentioned in provincial projects).

## 3. EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The single greatest impediment is shortage of skills, including professional, managerial and technical skills. Responses range from medium-term educational interventions to raise the level of skills in areas needed by the economy to immediate measures to acquire skills needed for the implementation of ASGISA projects.

Educational responses include a programme aimed at achieving high levels of literacy and numeracy in the lowest grades; doubling the number of maths and science high school graduates by 2008; upgrading Further Education and Training colleges; and ramping up the Adult Basic and Education Training programme.

A short-term project is the development of a scarce skills database based directly on the expected needs of over 100 individual projects.

The Joint Initiative for Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA) has been established to identify urgent skills needs and quick and effective solutions.

## 4. ELIMINATING THE SECOND ECONOMY

Government has already initiated interventions to address deep-seated inequalities and target the marginalised poor. ASGISA includes some specific responses to the challenges of exclusion and the Second Economy.

The increased levels of public expenditure will be used to promote small businesses and broad-based empowerment. Private companies will be persuaded to engage in affirmative procurement and the implementation of the relevant provisions of the BBBEE Codes of Good Practice and the relevant sector empowerment charters will be closely monitored. Infrastructure projects will be labour-intensive where feasible.

Attention will be paid to expanding and accelerating access to economic opportunities for women, including skills development and finance. On the youth front, one intervention is to target unemployed graduates for jobs or learnerships.

All of the sector strategies will have elements addressing development goals in the Second Economy. Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment will be leveraged to support shared growth. Steps will be taken to improve the regulatory environment for small businesses.

## 5. MACRO-ECONOMIC ISSUES

Areas where macroeconomic policies or implementation can be improved are in reducing the volatility and overvaluation of the currency; ensuring fiscal and monetary policy work together to produce sustained and shared growth; and improving budgeting and expenditure management in government. One innovation to be introduced in 2006 is the development of a new capital expenditure management information system by the National Treasury.

## 6. GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL INTERVENTIONS

Institutional interventions are costly and should be kept to a minimum. Where possible, existing institutions should be levered into new functions and responsibilities.

The social partners should seek, in the context of ASGISA, to make progress towards realisation of a people's contract on economic matters. Skills problems with respect to local government and service delivery are being addressed through Project Consolidate.

The Cabinet Committee for Investment and Employment would now have ASGISA as a standing item for regular reports and problem-solving at its monthly meetings. Government will review the functioning of the development finance institutions so they may be more effectively employed in our developmental efforts. Government will ensure that investors have access to a one-stop trouble-shooting centre, probably located at Trade and Investment South Africa.

## CONCLUSION

The implementation of ASGISA has already begun. Government will regularly review progress in implementation. Where necessary, the programme will be amended or supplemented.

*Source*: www.info.gov.za

# Understanding the tasks of the moment

## *The South African state in the context of social transformation and globalisation*

*The South African state is a collective instrument captured in struggle, which must be wielded to serve the objective of creating a democratic society. This, writes **Joel Netshitenzhe**, should be the starting point for understanding and responding to the immediate challenges facing revolutionaries in constructing our nascent developmental state.*

The issue of the character of South African state has been discussed extensively in the Tripartite Alliance with strategic agreement on critical issues and some differences on detail.

The most seminal work in this regard was the Alliance discussion document, *'State, Property Relations and Social Transformation'*, developed in 1998 by a joint team in preparation for an Alliance Summit. The document identifies a critical methodological approach that can be summarised as follows:

Firstly, the state is an overarching organism in the management of social relations, representing class interests. It is a concentrated expression of social relations; and to the extent that revolutions are about transformation of social relations, transfer of state power is the first, most visible and critical expression of revolution.

Secondly, and in the context of the above, the document defines the apartheid state as illegitimate, representing the interests of whites in general and, in class terms, monopoly capital, other white capital, white middle strata and white workers. Its mission was to defend a crime against humanity and it subverted rules of decency and sensible social mores to meet its objectives.

The document further asserts that the democratic state is an antithesis of the apartheid state, rising in the wake of the destruction of the apartheid state through a process of transformation. It represents motive forces of social change: workers and the rural poor, black middle strata and the real or aspirant black capitalist class.

However, compared to the apartheid state, it operates as a state of the people as a whole in terms of equality of citizens before the law. It is for this reason that the Freedom Charter asserted, among others, that all would be equal before the law, and that all would enjoy equal human rights.

This raises two categories of critical questions that are of profound theoretical significance.

The first of these is about constitutionality and liberal democratic precepts. Are these so-called liberal freedoms associated with bourgeois democracy an anathema to a National Democratic Revolution: freedom of speech and of the media, equality before the law, majority rule through democratic elections, separation of powers, rule of law and so on? Would it be correct to characterise them as achievements of human civilisation critical to human freedom in general?

How do we relate these issues to the concept of dictatorship of the proletariat in the case of Socialist Revolution – was it correct for the working class to characterise the immediate state expression of its own revolution as a dictatorship of the proletariat? What about the bourgeoisie who, though in strict scientific terms set up a state that represented a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, presented theirs as being in the interest of all the people?

We raise this first set of questions because even the South African Communist Party (SACP) in its programme argues that socialism would be achieved through democratic elections, and that a socialist system would include these elements of "liberal democracy". So, in examining the evolution of human civilisation in terms of management of social relations, we need to ask ourselves whether there are positive things in bourgeois democracy that are universal and central to the expression of human freedom in general.

This is besides detailed questions about the content of our Constitution, in the context of the NDR, which includes second and third generation rights.

The second category of questions is related but not integral to the first; and this is about the nature of our transition and the trajectory of our transformation of the state. Ours was a negotiated transition. As such we did not and do not have, in classical and physical terms, what manifested itself in other countries as "red terror" responding to "white terror". We had to transform and still have to continue transforming the state to reflect the interests of the majority and to operate in a manner that serves the interests of the motive forces of the NDR.

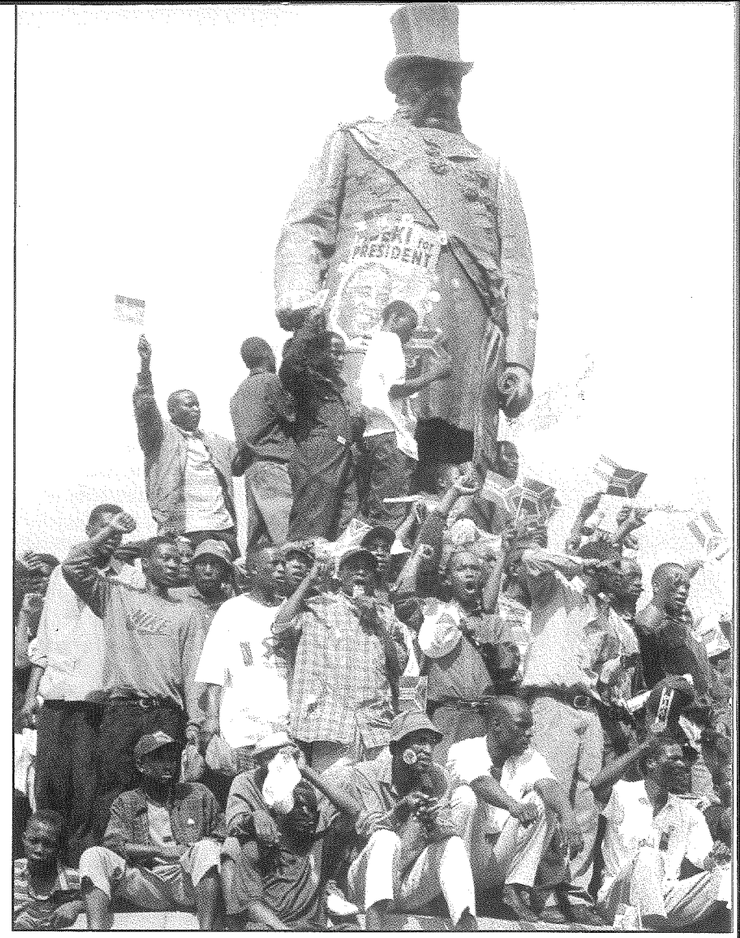
But, would it not be correct to argue that a critical element of the nature of our transition is that we made a choice to rely on openness and transparency, even during a transition, to consolidate the hold of the democratic movement on state power? In other words, are we in a unique manner using human rights as an instrument to attain human rights: with the end-state and the mechanism to achieve it both wrapped in one?

A good example of this is the multiplicity of objectives that were served by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) process. On the one hand, it was aimed at establishing the truth and through that to encourage reconciliation among erstwhile contending socio-political forces.

However, on the other hand, consciously or sub-consciously, the TRC also had a critical outcome, which was to help expose the networks of apartheid repression that still burrowed in our midst. In this regard, it made a critical contribution in the battle against counter-revolution. Further, the processes under way on how to handle prosecutions in the post-TRC period should further help to expose any such networks and secure the democratic transition.

We are also agreed that ours should be a developmental state, a state that should have, as its primary mission improvement in the quality of life of all, especially the poor. The core attributes of such a state in our own situation should include:

- popular legitimacy, deriving from democracy, popular participation in processes of governance and transparency, as well as deliberate programmes to promote social partnership among all role-players in various areas of social endeavour;




***Freedom in our lifetime: crowds gather at Church Square to celebrate Freedom Day***

- utilisation of state resources to promote growth through public sector investments, the creation of an environment for higher rates of private investments and ensuring that such growth benefits society especially the poor;
- promoting social cohesion by defining a growth trajectory that ensures social inclusion and by promoting national unity, reconciliation and pride.

Further, a developmental state in our situation also has to be a strong state. Besides issues of legitimacy which relate to strategic capacity, such strength should also derive from technical and administrative capacity, which can be defined as: "the ability of the state to undertake collective actions at least cost to society... [which] encompasses the administrative or technical capacity of state officials... [and] also includes the deeper institutional mechanisms that give politicians and civil servants the flexibility, rules, and restraints to enable them to act in the collective interest". (World Bank 1997 World Development Report, quoted from *Political Studies: 2004, Vol 52, Conceptualising State Capacity...* Sally N. Cummings and Ole Nørgaard)

How far have we gone in achieving these objectives? The brief answer is that we have just started, and we still have a long way to go in transforming the state. The observation in *'State,*

*Property Relations and Social Transformation'* that ours is a state in transition is apt even today.

Besides tasks pertaining to capacity, there are still many challenges with regard to the composition of the state machinery, including such areas as forensic investigators in the police service, air traffic controllers and pilots in the SANDF and civil aviation, the judiciary and so on. This applies both to gender and race demographics. Further, much more still needs to be done in terms of ensuring that the new doctrines we have introduced, informed by our Constitution, are fully observed in all machineries of state.

A related issue that has arisen in stark form in the recent period is the question of the power of state organs over citizens, and the implications of any abuse of power by these organs. Can we legitimately call for rule of law when state organs are not sufficiently transformed?

This question speaks to the issue of the strategic choice that we made about an orderly transition in relation to the integrity of the state, even as we transformed it. Related to this are the structures and systems we progressively put in place, including the precepts of the Constitution itself, to ensure accountability of these institutions and afford citizens the mechanisms of recourse if in terms of administrative justice and other ways, they felt hard done by, by state institutions. These include the Human Rights Commission, the Public Protector, the Constitutional Court, the Judicial Services Commission, the Gender Commission and so on.

In this context, we sought to ensure universal legitimacy of the new state in gestation, to force even counter-revolution to play by the rules regarding the integrity of the state.

As revolutionaries we proceed from the premise that consistent adherence to the rule of law by citizens and state institutions alike is in the interest of transformation, in the interest of the success of the NDR. This is not merely a matter of democratic niceties. When all is said and done, if in a real sense, rule of law were to collapse, the working class would be the main loser. History is replete with instances where national liberation revolutions aborted with ensuing collapse of rule of law, and the first and main target as a result were the working class and the left.

## MANAGING TENSIONS IN TRANSFORMATION

It is in this context that we have to manage a variety of tensions and challenges that attach to a nascent democratic state. I will identify only four of them, and draw the international dimension in this context.

### Mass movements and state power

The first challenge is about combining the power of what Professor Manuel Castells refers to as three identities: the 'legitimising' identity, which is about the state as a representative of the majority at the service of all; the 'resistance' identity which is about mass organisation and mobilisation; and the 'project' identity which I would define as capacity to implement policies decided upon.

We have already referred to the first and third identities. What I wish to raise as a challenge is whether South African progressive mass movements have adequately adapted to the new strategic terrain in which we operate.

This strategic terrain is defined by the profound impact of our accession to political power in terms of the arsenal of instruments that we can use to promote change. In the past, underground work and armed struggle were tactical instruments that had profound strategic implications. Today, state power enjoys a similar status: a tactical instrument with profound strategic implications.

Along with this profound change in the strategic terrain, occasioned by the democratic breakthrough in 1994, are instruments of political and economic power that civil society and the trade unions in particular can use to promote their interests – in addition to the terrain of mass mobilisation.

These include Workplace Forums and the capacity of labour to influence production and other decisions on the factory floor; the labour relations regime and the capacity of unions to intervene strategically to determine enterprise decisions in case of threats of closures and mass retrenchments; the Pension Fund Boards and the activism or lack of it on the part of representatives of labour; the Sector Education and Training Authorities and processes around economic sector strategies and whether the working class is playing its vanguard role in this regard.

In other words, besides mass action that will become necessary from time to time, are we also utilising the new instruments that we have laid hold of? This is what Black Consciousness adherents used to refer to as "an attitude of mind and a way of life"; or what we now call, a question of paradigm.

The same issue arises in relation to progressive trade unions within the state: do we merely relate with this revolutionary state as our employer, or do we also relate to it as a partner in transformation, in delivery, against arrogance, shoddiness and corruption?



### Social cohesion and social coercion

The second area of tension starkly thrown up by recent developments is one about a revolutionary state as an instrument of social cohesion and social coercion.

A revolutionary state in a national democracy has to play an activist role as a leader in forging national identity, culture, pride and civic education including through educational curricula. While it is quite true that many of these things cannot be achieved by decree, and while it should be acknowledged that civil society also has a leading role to play in this regard, the state cannot confine its role merely to creating and protecting the environment in which these attributes are acquired and promoted: it has to be in the frontline of the ideological struggle.

On the other hand, the state commands the power of security and other agencies and institutions of justice precisely because it also has to act as an instrument of coercion. Such coercion would include deciding on and enforcing regulations that apply to the operation of various business sectors; setting the tax rate and ensuring that all who are eligible actually pay; defining parameters of legitimate and legal social behaviour, including in mass protests, and ensuring that these are observed.

As such, when train coaches are torched for whatever reason, and when property is destroyed in the name of senseless boundary disputes – when in Dante's words the people say 'death to our life and life to our death' – the state has to resort to these instruments of coercion.

### State capacity and state limitations

The next area of tension and challenge is about the capacity and the limitations of the state. This matter was extensively canvassed in the Ten Year Review conducted by government at the end of the First Decade of Freedom.

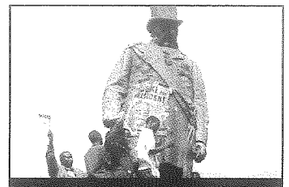
In brief, the argument here is that, whatever the level of its legitimacy, the state is most effective in areas in which it can act directly: such as providing subsidised housing, water, electricity, sanitation and so on. Indeed, it is in these areas where, in the first ten years of democracy, we made maximum progress.

On the other hand, in areas such as investment by the private sector, which is in control of most of the national resources for such investment and job creation, the state can create an environment, put in place regulations and provide infrastructure, but this does not guarantee that the private sector will invest in productive activity.

This is one example of the state's limitations, which brings to the fore the critical question of a People's Contract and ultimately the question whether South Africa – especially the social partners – should actively be pursuing the notion of a social compact. In other words, with the state as lead campaigner, a vision and concrete means to achieve it should be identified, and each of the social partners should commit to specific actions to attain that vision.

### State as manager of contradictions?

Another area of tension is the conceptualisation of the state as a representative of the motive forces of the revolution: we have argued, quite correctly, that a state that emerges in the NDR has to reflect, in its doctrines, accent, demography and so on, the preponderance of the motive forces of change.



*"Our task as the ANC, the task of the national democratic revolution, is to eliminate the basic causes of the national grievance wherever and in whatever form they manifest themselves."*

**STRATEGY & TACTICS**

Yet a profound challenge emerges from this: These motive forces include black workers and black capitalists. The NDR does not and is not meant to resolve class contradictions. Therefore it should be expected that contestation between these two contending classes will continue, in turn affecting the state and the leading organisation in the process of change, the ANC.

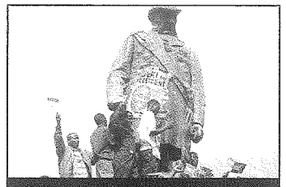
Beyond contestation among the motive forces themselves, there is a recognition that the ANC and the state have to relate to all of capital in a dynamic of unity and struggle, incentive and coercion, enticement and regulation.

In its Strategy and Tactics document, the ANC does recognise this; and though the formulation is somewhat obscure, it does capture this tension:

"We seek to create a social order in which the many positive elements of the market dovetail with the obligations of citizens one to the other. Through its elected representatives and other avenues, society should ensure that those who are indigent are accorded a humane and respectable quality of life.

"In this sense, such a society is neither a clone of an idealistic capitalist order which is hostage to rampant so-called market forces (particularly in an economy dominated by a few conglomerates), nor an egalitarian utopia of mechanical social parity. Indeed, within the context of a mixed economy, in which market forces have an important role to play, the state has the critical task of ensuring economic growth and development, of meeting people's social needs and of providing the requisite environment for the safety and security of citizens.

"While we are confident that consistent imple-



*...the state led by the ANC would from time to time be called upon to abandon the trench of immediate class identity and act in the collective interest...*

mentation of these principles will go a long way in resolving most of the basic contradictions of South African society, we cannot claim that this is the panacea. Nor can we predict all the new challenges that the process of transformation will throw up. Our task as the ANC, the task of the national democratic revolution, is to eliminate the basic causes of the national grievance wherever and in whatever form they manifest themselves. Indeed, as we succeed in doing so, new social dynamics will play themselves out, redefining the challenges of the given moment as well as the political permutations that are consonant with these new challenges."

It is therefore unavoidable that the ANC and the state it has spawned have to manage the class contradictions thrown up by the realities of the capitalist system.

On the one hand, this requires pursuit of the people's contract and social compact referred to above – in other words identifying the common interest and winning over all the players to pursue these.

On the other hand, specific circumstances may call upon the ANC and the state to act in a kind of "collectivist, revolutionary Bonapartist manner" (as distinct from interpretations that attach Bonapartism to individuals). In other words, the state led by the ANC would from time to time be called upon to abandon the trench of immediate class identity and act in the collective interest – which interest, it can be argued, should be to the long-term advantage of the working class and the poor.

### State capacity, limitations and globalisation

The issue of capacity and limitations arises also in the context of globalisation, defined as narrowing of time and space in the production process combined with massive trade, communication, migration, travel and other manifestations of the global village. Note should be made here that globalisation is defined in this, its objective form, to differentiate it from the subjective expressions constructed or pursued by those who wield global economic and political power.

The one consequence of globalisation, for a state such as ours, is the growing tendency towards narrow identities, reflected in pursuit of narrow interests for instance in World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations, and worsened in the past four years by the twin right-wing dogmas of Christian and Islamic fundamentalism. The one claims a clash of civilisations defined in religious but also racial terms; the other emerges and behaves as if in tow, to justify the former. This impacts global security and discourse on the critical questions of poverty and underdevelopment; and in the main it confounds the fundamental issues of the day.

The other consequence of globalisation, deriving from its more objective expressions, is the reality of the centripetal tendencies towards more interdependence among nations and regions of the world. It is in the context of the recognition of this reality that Africa has been arguing, quite successfully, that its development is in the interest of the whole of the global village. It is in this context that there are attempts and some progress, at creating a global consensus around matters of development such as the UN Millennium Development Goals. It is in this context that democracy and people-centred development should be pursued as common, universal human values.

In a sense, the consequences of underdevelopment, migration, marginalisation and alienation as shown in the recent violent demonstrations in France and Belgium, aptly capture the challenge of globalisation for all humanity.

On the other hand, in the current global milieu a closed economy is not an option: while there may be limited room for manoeuvre, including speed humps for portfolio capital, leaning against the wind in exchange rate management, some trade barriers and so on, the general movement is towards openness.

Also attached to globalisation are novel ways of manifestation of interference in domestic polities of the weak. There may no longer be armadas and gun-boat diplomacy (as long as you are not part of the Axis of Evil), but other more subtle platforms are used. These include the media, aid, HIV/AIDS grants (some of which are disbursed so as to by-pass sovereignty of states), financial markets as means to beggar economies, and a variety of methods that are used to influence electoral processes within parties and nations.

## IMMEDIATE CHALLENGES

In light of all of the above, what are the immediate challenges facing the South African nascent developmental state and the revolutionaries who are constructing this state?

In answering this question, one proceeds from the premise that the state is a collective instrument captured in struggle and which must be wielded to serve the objective of creating a united, non-sexist, non-racial and democratic society.

### Conscious construct: swimming against the tide

The first of the immediate challenges derives from the fact that the NDR is a conscious construct. Unlike with revolutions leading up to the emergence of the capitalist socio-economic formation, the NDR (and of course the Socialist Revolution) requires conscious activity to construct new political, economic and social relations.

In other words, to build our new people-centred and people-driven democracy, to reconfigure utilisation of the fiscus and state capital for the benefit mainly of the poor and to deracialise ownership of wealth and income, requires a strategy, a programme and institutions consciously developed and promoted by advanced members of society.

The task of building a cadreship to lead this process becomes even more critical when measured against the backdrop of the fact that the society we seek to create is a caring one, and yet the socio-economic formation we operate in encourages greed, conspicuous consumption and cut-throat competition.

Of course we need to encourage drive and initiative; but conspicuous consumption and greed do exert a very powerful pull effect, threatening to consign the very cadres required to build a caring society in the mire of corruption as they are tempted to live above their means.

### State as captive of single motive force?

The second immediate challenge arises from the notion that the state has to mediate the very real class contradictions that exist among the motive forces, and across society. How in this situation do we avoid a situation in which the state becomes captive of a single section of the motive forces?

In particular, questions have been raised, and the Strategy and Tactics document does pose this challenge, about the danger of a bureaucratic bourgeoisie reliant solely on state patronage. Such a bourgeoisie in turn will seek to transform state employees and public representatives into vassals at its beck and call.

In the end, this can precipitate a situation in which battles in state institutions as well as in and among the ANC, COSATU, the SACP and SANCO could as well be skirmishes among proxies representing factions of the bourgeoisie. And some among the black sections of the capitalist class may in fact be acting as extensions of foreign or local big capital: a compradore bourgeoisie.

Attached to this is the very legitimate issue that has been raised about the class composition of leadership structures of the ANC. We have quite correctly intensified the efforts to address the gender question. But without a conscious effort on the part of the liberation movement, and activism by workers within structures of the ANC, this may end up as a marriage among male and female elites, with minimal impact on the fundamental questions of poverty and underdevelopment.

### Are the motive forces corruptible?

The third immediate challenge is about the possibility of political office and general incumbency corrupting the very leading cadres among the motive forces of change.

The reality is a simple one: the working class and the poor are the core motive forces of the NDR, and many of them are unemployed. This means that positions in government as public representatives – councillors, MPLs and MPs – also serve as employment opportunities. By the stroke of a pen and taking an oath of public office, individuals previously mired in poverty join the ranks of the middle strata.

Thus objectively, but also as a consequence of low levels of political consciousness, bitter battles for selection into these positions become the order of the day. To quicken the benefits of such office, public resources are then plundered, directly or in partnership with the bureaucratic bourgeoisie.

The 'Operation Phuma Singene' Syndrome then becomes the stock-in-trade, with each nomination process for public representatives becoming a rat race to displace others so individuals can get "jobs" and even plunder the public purse.

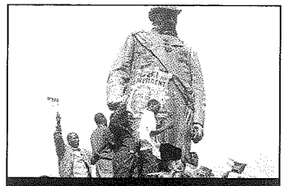
This is not limited to the working class. Also ensconced within the state bureaucracy is the spectre of asset-starved new middle strata, with their backs bent by the weight of debt and in control of institutions taking decisions affecting billions of Rand.

### Can incumbency corrupt revolutionary traditions?

The fourth immediate challenge is how to build the ANC and the Alliance in such a way that unity, internal democracy and theoretical engagement are not corrupted by access to state power.

In *'Through the Eye of a Needle'* (UMRABULO 11), the ANC identifies two tendencies that do emerge in the context of incumbency: firstly, for those with power of patronage to reward only those who agree with them even on issues of detail; and secondly, for those who want to be noticed and rewarded to censor themselves and not state their genuine views during debates.

About this issue of the negative impact of incum-



*The answer for us is to build a strong ANC and a strong Alliance as a leader of the state...*

bency, one is struck by the observations of Richard Gillespie of the University of Warwick in his analysis, *'Factionalism in the Spanish Socialist Party'*. Some of these observations seem appropriate:

"Conflict within the PSOE (Spanish Socialist Workers' Party) is far more concerned with 'power, careers, spoils and rewards' than with 'strategy, policy or ideology', and what appears to be ideological confrontation is often little more than a façade for battles designed to redefine the internal distribution of power." (p3)

"...there is a strong element in both cases of internal democracy being campaigned for only when Socialist officials have suffered personally from a loss of patronage or have become victims of party disciplinary procedures." (p5)

"The standard means of securing party unity was to offer activists the alternative of rewards for loyalty or harsh penalties for dissidence. In a... party seeking to fill an expanding number of public positions, which formed the basis of political, administrative and managerial careers, activists who echoed the official line were rewarded with posts very quickly, even in the case of former Communist Party people. Those who dissented found only a small, hostile audience for their views within the party, while for them to seek external sympathy constituted grounds for exclusion under the party statutes." (pp13–14)

The answer for us is to build a strong ANC and a strong Alliance as a leader of the state, not the inverse, while leaving space for those in positions of authority within the state room to exercise creativity. We should encourage healthy ambition and drive, but these should be informed by the commitment to serve the people.

Above all, we should all strive to understand the tasks of the moment: in the immediate period in our situation, to implement the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative (ASGISA), mobilising all of society to identify in the objectives of the NDR their own true self-interest.

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**JOEL NETSHITENZHE** is a member of the ANC National Executive Committee. This is an edited version of an input at the COSATU Summer School, November 2005.





# 'Blank pages in history should not be allowed'

## *The role of revolutionary intellectuals*

*Comrade Mzala, an outstanding political commissar of the 1976 generation, left a lasting and inspiring legacy that we should draw on to better understand the qualities of revolutionary intellectuals, writes* ***Jeremy Cronin****.*

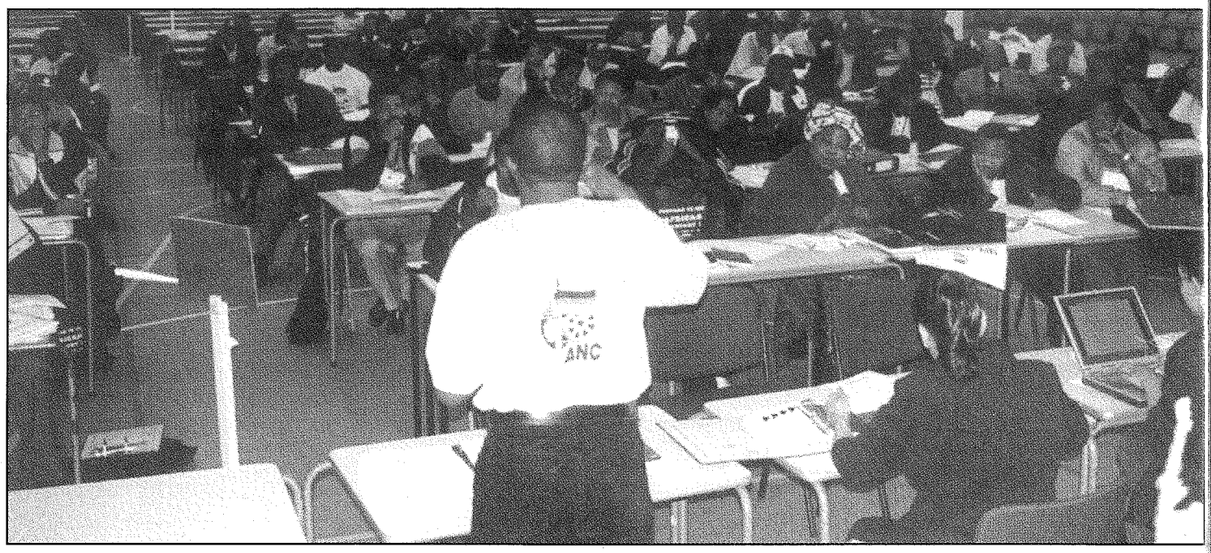
One of the most outstanding revolutionary intellectuals of the 1976 generation, Jabulani Nxumalo (popularly known as Comrade Mzala), died 15 years ago in London at the age of 45. He was born in Dundee, Northern Natal in October 1955.[1] His parents were both school teachers, and they inspired in him a life-long love for books. Mzala attended school at Louwsburg, then Bethal College in Butterworth, and he matriculated in KwaDlangezwa in Empangeni.

In 1972, at the age of 15, he was detained without trial for his role in a school boycott. The following year he was arrested again and charged with public violence for his part in student and worker strikes. Mzala attended the University of Natal (Ngoye), where he studied law and he was active in the South African Student Organisation (SASO). In 1976, like thousands of his generation, he fled the country into exile.

He connected up with the ANC and received military training in Angola. He was part of the famous June 16 Detachment of Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK).

In the midst of his training and organisational responsibilities, Mzala was always intellectually active. In 1977 he was working on a simplified book on Marxism-Leninism in Zulu. Unfortunately, The text seems to have been lost. He was also in the habit of writing up his thoughts and pinning them on notice-boards for others to read and respond. His intellectual energies were recognised in MK and already in 1976 he was political commissar for Luanda. In 1979 he was deployed to Lusaka, where he acted as coordinator of commissariat structures. In 1980 he was sent for advanced ideological and political training in the German Democratic Republic.

In 1983 he was deployed into Swaziland, disguised as a reporter ('Jabulani Dlamini'), working on the Swaziland Observer. Mzala was detained by the Swazi police in 1983. In December of the same year, with a new identity,




***ANC political education workshop***

he returned to Swaziland, but this time to the Shiselweni district in the south of the country. He served as commissar for the Natal rural machinery, a network that was later to become central in the establishment of Operation Vula. While in Shiselweni, and out of his own initiative, Mzala crossed over the border into Natal, and set up an MK unit based in Ingwavuma. In 1984 he was again arrested by the Swazi police and deported to Tanzania.

In Tanzania he worked for Radio Freedom and the Amandla Cultural Group. In 1987 he moved to London where he worked for the international committee of the SACP. He was deployed to Prague as the South African representative on the World Marxist Review, but his health was now beginning to falter, and his stay in Prague only lasted two months.

Throughout the 1980s Mzala was extremely active as a writer. He published regular articles in the journals of our movement – MK's *Dawn*, the ANC's *Sechaba*; and the SACP's *The African Communist*. He sometimes used the pen-name Khumalo (derived from his actual surname, Nxumalo), as well as the name by which he was known by most comrades in the movement, Mzala. (He acquired the name, because he was fond of addressing everyone as "mzala, mzala".) He also wrote several major articles under the name Sisa Majola. One of his most important and polemical contributions on our armed struggle was entitled "Cooking the Rice Inside the Pot", and it was signed Mzala. When no-one responded in *Dawn*, he published a polemical rejoinder to his own article! It was titled: "Preparing the Fire Before Cooking the Rice Inside the Pot", and it was signed Alex Mashinini.

During his time in London he published (as Mzala) a book, "Gatsha Buthelezi, Chief with a Double Agenda" (Zed Books, 1988). During the London period, while working for the SACP's international committee, he also contributed an excellent and regular column to *The African Communist* ("Africa Notes and Comment"), under the name Jabulani Mkatshwa. He was so prolific, it is quite possible there are other pen-names under which he wrote, but about which we are as yet unaware.

His death in London on 22 February 1991 was a huge loss to the SACP, the ANC, and to the African and internationalist struggle. When he wrote his articles, or when he pinned provocative notes up on the notice-board in camps in Angola, Mzala was not looking for admiration or praise. He was trying to provoke engagement, responses, debate, umrabulo. There is no better way of honouring his memory than by reflecting on the topic: "The role and importance of revolutionary intellectuals".



## THE ROLE OF REVOLUTIONARY INTELLECTUALS

There are several key qualities that mark out a revolutionary intellectual. In seeking to elaborate on these qualities I would like to draw upon the inspiring legacy of comrade Mzala.

■ **To be a serious intellectual requires effort and work**. There is a popular misconception that all that is needed to be an intellectual is to lie back on a couch and dream. Comrades who were with Mzala in MK remember that he used every spare minute to read books, magazines, reports, anything he could lay his hands on. His articles are full of references to a wide variety of sources, and not just to writers of his own persuasion. For his book on Buthelezi, he read all of the speeches of Buthelezi that he could trace. In his writings on the national question, Mzala cites Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) writers, Black Consciousness writers, US think-tanks, and European academics. In his "African Notes and Comment" it is clear that he is tracking political events in a wide range of African countries.

■ **Revolutionary intellectuals are activists**. All serious intellectuals (progressive or conservative) understand that intellectual work requires research, study, disciplined effort. But revolutionary intellectuals are also activists. Like the outstanding revolutionary intellectuals before him (Marx, Engels, Lenin, Luxemburg, Gramsci, Mao, Ho Chi Minh, Castro, Che Guevara, Cabral, and many more), Mzala was an intellectual, but also an activist. There needs to be a constant unity of theory and practice. Practice without theory is blind. Theory without the constant test of practice is liable to be dogmatic, formulaic, and just plain wrong.

■ **Revolutionary intellectuals are part of a collective**. This activism is not individualistic activism. Mzala's activism was embedded within the organisational structures of a broad national liberation movement. The unity of theory and practice that he fostered was a collective theory and a collective practice. His intellectual activities were, in the first place, interventions in the context of the programmes, the strategies, the key documents, and the internal debates of a movement. And the practice by which he sought to illuminate and critique this collective theory was primarily the collective practice of the movement and its mass base. This is not to say that Mzala never wrote for a wider audience, or never studied other struggles, but his positions and perspectives were always rooted in the collective of the South African liberation movement.

■ **Revolutionary intellectuals are not dogmatic or elitist**. The dangers of intellectual dogmatism and elitism are, indeed, real, not least in organisations that regard themselves as vanguard formations. There is always the danger that theory will be used to show-off or bully and intimidate. Many of us will have had the experience of comrades who quote from the "classics", or use jargon, not to illuminate a point, but to display their "superior" knowledge. We will all be familiar with the dogmatic invoking of an "authority", the unchallengeable word of this or that leader, or of "headquarters" – not to assist a discussion, but to silence debate. Everything about the way in which Mzala conducted himself challenged these negative tendencies. He sought to translate Marxism-Leninism into Zulu, so that it would be accessible to those who were not necessarily adept in English. His intellectual work was not just articles and books, but also radio broadcasts and provocative statements on notice-boards. Mzala was one of the leaders of the ANC delegation to the International Youth Festival in Cuba in 1978. When he returned, he didn't keep the experience to himself. He moved around to all MK camps in Angola, to provide a report-back and to discuss and debate what he had learned. As we have seen, when Mzala's article in *Dawn* didn't get a critical response, he responded polemically (as Alex Mashinini) to his own original intervention. Mzala never imagined that his own inputs were infallible and timeless truths.

The struggle against intellectual elitism and dogmatism is particularly important in a society emerging from centuries of colonial oppression. Certain brands of Marxist elitism, for instance, can easily become very Eurocentric, and can lead to the underrating of the dialectical and revolutionary values and wisdom embedded in all of our cultures, and in our rich, collective struggle traditions. Such neglect risks becoming disdainful of the ways in which revolutionary knowledge is reproduced, not just through books and magazines, but also in the oral culture of our struggle (in songs, in speeches, and stories). Needless to say, the over-rating of certain forms of knowledge reproduction and dissemination tends also to be neglectful of the intellectual contribution of tens of thousands of women comrades.

■ **Revolutionary intellectuals are partisan, but they are also critical**. Mzala's intellectual work was deeply embedded within the organisational traditions and discipline of a national liberation movement and of a communist party. He was always partisan to these organisations. But he did not allow this loyalty to become uncritical. He was not prepared simply to recite dogmas, or to repeat 'the line'. He would not have appreciated what we sometimes hear these days – that "the policies are all fine, we must just implement". However, if Mzala was prepared to be critical, it was never criticism for criticism's sake. He was not oppositionist, or factionalist. Factionalism is usually dogmatism in another guise, the mechanical alignment with one side and the dogmatic rejection of another.



*Getting the balance right between organisational loyalty and critical thinking is not always easy*

Getting the balance right between organisational loyalty and critical thinking is not always easy. It might be useful, therefore, at this point to consider an example of Mzala's critical partisanship. In 1988, Francis Meli published an important history of the ANC.[2] Mzala reviewed Meli's book in *The African Communist* ("To Whom Does South Africa Belong?", 4th quarter, 1988). The same text, but in a more extensive version, is included in a longer paper which Mzala wrote for the Open University[3]. Meli was Mzala's senior within the movement. Meli was on the ANC National Executive Committee and the SACP Central Committee, and was editor of the ANC's official organ, *Sechaba*. In his appraisal of the book, Mzala is appreciative of a history of the movement written from inside, and by an African comrade. Among other things, he appreciates Meli's defence of the early leadership of the ANC against attacks coming from anti-ANC writers like Mokgethi Mothlabi who dismissively claimed that in its early years the ANC was simply "a Congress of defeated people" involved in "obsequious representations and cap-in-hand deputations" to Britain. Mzala agrees with Meli that this kind of portrayal is extremely a-historical and one-sided.

However, Mzala argues that Meli goes too far in his attempt to defend the honour of the early founders of the ANC:

"[N]ot everyone would agree with Meli either when he suggests that deputations were 'part of traditional African political custom' considering the record of two centuries of uninterrupted military resistance (and not deputations) against the colonisers up to the 1906 Bambatha Rebellion...

"Partisanship becomes a problem when it is no longer tempered with objective realism... blank pages in history should not be allowed. Everything should be told... Wishful thinking cannot replace the hard facts of life, otherwise an exercise at history writing is reduced to sheer political propaganda for one's organisation.



*The fundamental objective of being a revolutionary intellectual is to develop a concrete analysis of the concrete situation*

"No shame should be associated with the admission of the fact that the tactics employed by the early leadership of the ANC were thoroughly reformist, or even that their version of nationalism was somewhat cautious, timid and non-confrontationalist."[4]

These passages illustrate Mzala's critical partisanship in two ways. He is prepared to engage critically (but constructively) with his senior in the movement, and his loyalty and respect for the ANC does not lead him into believing that his organisation is above all criticism.

■ **Revolutionary intellectuals (at least some) write with style and skill**. Maybe this sixth quality is not an essential quality for an effective revolutionary intellectual, but it helps. Since Mzala is such a wonderful example of a writer who deploys brilliant images and memorable examples, it is difficult to resist including this quality here – mainly as an excuse to quote some more from his writings.

For instance, in a polemic with those who argued that Inkatha was really in "opposition" to apartheid, he writes that Inkatha fits "into the apartheid strategy like a plug into a socket".

In an article arguing for a more effective integration of the ANC in exile with the struggle at home (a topic to which we will return below) he writes that we must "begin a process of de-exiling ourselves... we must fight our way back into our country... Yes, let us always remember that while we engage ourselves in building pyramids in Egypt, the main task is still to cross the Red Sea back into our own land."

Mzala's writings are full of striking images and examples like this. His intellectual alertness, his dialectical approach was never content with recycling the same old deadening phrases.

■ The fundamental objective of being a revolutionary intellectual is to develop a concrete analysis of the concrete situation. It was Lenin who wrote of the importance of "the concrete analysis of the concrete moment". And it was Lenin who was, perhaps, the most outstanding practitioner of this revolutionary art. Mzala, too, never wrote an article, or a book, simply for the sake of it. His writings are thoroughly interventionist, directed towards helping the collective to act effectively within a concrete conjuncture, to seize the moment.

## SPEAKING INTO THE CONCRETE SITUATION

In the concluding part of this paper, we will look at three key issues on which Mzala wrote fairly extensively. In doing this, we will seek to illustrate how Mzala was always trying to produce a concrete analysis of the concrete situation.

### The role of Buthelezi and Inkatha

In re-reading Mzala's 1988 book, "Gatsha Buthelezi, Chief With a Double Agenda", it is important to remember the context. Mzala did not spend some two years of his life writing a book on this topic simply so he could put another publication down on his CV. Nor did he write about this topic simply because he came from Natal and had a particular axe to grind.

In part, the project (which did not enjoy support from all quarters of the ANC) was an intervention into a debate within the movement itself. There were those who believed that Buthelezi was "essentially one of us", and that he should be handled with "kid gloves". Mzala believed passionately that, whatever strategy was adopted towards Buthelezi, it should be based on the truth, and not on an opportunistic fudging of reality.

But a more important target for the book was an external audience. By the second half of the 1980s it was clear to the major imperialist powers that the end of white minority rule in South Africa was fast approaching. There was, therefore, a desperate hunt for a "credible" black leader in South Africa who could pre-empt an ANC victory. Particularly in German and US ruling circles, Buthelezi was identified as the favoured candidate for this role. As late as 1993 at the multi-party negotiations the vestiges of this strategy were still evident in the National Party's insistence on a troika of revolving presidents for a new South Africa.

It should also be remembered that in other negotiated transitions away from right-wing autocratic regimes that were threatened by popular revolt, the imperialists sometimes had considerable success in inserting a "moderate", thus pipping the progressive forces at the post. An example of this is the Philippines, where the popular movement was denied the fruits of its struggle against the Marcos regime, by the electoral victory of the US-backed Corazon Aquino.

In short, Mzala's thorough, well-researched book, which was published by Zed Press in the United Kingdom and US – to reach a wide audience – was timely and essential. It meticulously uncovered the true nature of Inkatha, with its politics of rural warlordism and patronage, and its deep complicity with the apartheid regime. No wonder Buthelezi banned it outright in KwaZulu – thus confirming the very point Mzala was making: Buthelezi was no democrat.

### The National Question

In the last years of his life Mzala also devoted considerable energy to engaging with the "national question" in the South African struggle. Again, the context of this engagement is important to recall. Inside South Africa the mass struggle had thrown up two significant groupings within the broad mass movement - the so-called "workerists" and "populists".[5] The one current ("workerists") argued for the relative insulation of working-class organisations (particularly the trade unions) from popular, community-based formations. This current also tended to be suspicious of the ANC-led movement, arguing that "after independence nationalist movements always sell-out the workers". The rival tendency, argued for much greater integration of worker struggles and community struggles, and it tended to be sympathetic to the ANC.

Each tendency had its own inherent dangers. The "workerists" tended not to appreciate how much the sense of national collective grievance and of national collective power (amandla ngawethu) shared by the black majority constituted a critical revolutionary motive force. But the "populists" ran the danger of failing to appreciate the diverse class interests at play within the black majority, or within particular local communities. Mzala, like other leading theorists of the time (for example, Joe Slovo) was at pains to show the important inter-linkages between the national question and class, within the concrete situation of South Africa. He continuously sought to underline the national dimension of the class struggle, and the importance of class within the national question.

While these general points remain valid in the present, clearly our own concrete situation has shifted along considerably. However, what has become even more relevant in the present, are Mzala's warnings about a nationalism that fails to sufficiently foreground class. In criticising certain brands of pan-Africanism in South Africa, Mzala recalls that one of the early 20th century intellectual founders of the pan-Africanist current, the African-American, Marcus Garvey: "even suggested...that the development of the African bourgeoisie was the end desire of the Pan African movement. He wrote: 'Why should not Africa give to the world its black Rockefeller, Rothschild and Henry Ford? Now is the opportunity. Now is the chance for every Negro to make every effort towards a commercial, industrial standard that will make us comparable with successful businessmen of other races.'" (Mzala, The National Question in the writing of South African history).

When he quoted this passage from Garvey in 1988, Mzala was holding it up with a sense of scorn and dismissal – as if views of this kind were almost unimaginable.

But less than twenty years later, from within our own movement, and from seasoned comrades who know better, we are now hearing similar things. For instance, a recent director general in the Department of Labour, and then in International Affairs, and now a businessperson, Sipho Pityana has this to say:

"In our society, there has to be space for as many seriously wealthy black individuals as possible... We must build a culture that celebrates individual financial success... and we must not allow this to be portrayed as violating the principles of the struggle." (*Business Report*, 12 February 2006)

What Pityana (like Garvey) is conveniently forgetting is that the function of capital, the role of a Rockerfeller, Rothschild or Henry Ford (black or white), is not some socially neutral function, simple individual entrepreneurial acumen that deserves celebration. Nor is the role of a Rockerfeller open to every white person, let alone "every Negro". Capitalist wealth is always the result of the intensified exploitation of millions of working people.



*In every decade since its launch in 1912, the ANC has confronted challenges and sometimes serious external and internal crises*

### The matches, the pot, and the fire

In every decade since its launch in 1912, the ANC has confronted challenges and sometimes serious external and internal crises. It is easy to lose sight of this, imagining that the history of the ANC and its movement is simply a triumphal march from one victory to the next. This is neither accurate nor empowering for activists dealing with the complexities of the present.

In the 1980s, for instance, the ANC found itself in an exceedingly challenging situation. There were both objective and subjective problems. The leading organisational structures were in exile. It was an exile that had been long scattered across many countries and continents (from the late 1950s), and almost always distant from home. For most of the three decades of exile our leading structures were located, at best, several countries away, and not just on the other side of a border. Tens of thousands of young (and not so young) MK soldiers, who had left the country in the 1960s, 70s, and early 80s, fully expecting to

find themselves back home with arms and training within a matter of months, were bottled up in camps in Angola and elsewhere. The frustrations of exile were particularly sharp given the fluidity and dynamism of the rolling wave of semi-insurrectionary struggles back home.

These objective realities gave rise to a number of subjective tendencies. At the best of times, exile is not an easy reality – most liberation movements in exile have split and fragmented. The ANC remained remarkably united, notwithstanding the particularly complex nature of our exile. But exile creates inevitable tensions between the survival requirement of putting down roots, of establishing routines, bureaucracies, offices, and employment where you find yourself, while still trying to remain focused on the home-front. With an army dislocated from its mass base there are the dangers of militarisation and stagnation. Are you accumulating a conventional army that you will simply take out of the box once liberation has been achieved? Or is the point of a people's army to merge actively with the people's struggle? Dealing with a mass of exiles and their families, supplying food, shelter, clothing and even education, can result in bureaucratisation.

It was in this context that Mzala wrote several extremely important articles. As we have seen, he called for "a de-exiling" of the movement. He insisted that the rice had to be cooked in the pot, that is, the struggle had to be fought primarily at home. The leading structures of the movement needed to orient themselves for this task. Mzala's articles were part of an important ferment within the movement that led to the historic 1985 Kabwe Conference, which resulted in a major overhaul of the organisation.

It was in this context, that Mzala also reviewed (at some length) Mikhail Gorbachev's book, "Perestroika – New Thinking for Our Country and The World".[6] When we remember Gorbachev now, we tend to think of him as the erstwhile general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union who unilaterally dissolved his own party, and who, in the face of a serious setback for socialism opportunistically abandoned class analysis in the name of "universal" human values. However, as Mzala's review article reminds us, in the late 1980s Gorbachev's Perestroika book was received enthusiastically, almost with a sense of relief, by many militant left intellectuals in our movement. Mzala, like many others, had personally benefited and appreciated the selfless solidarity of the Soviet bloc countries. But he had also experienced, at first hand, the many signs of stagnation, bureaucratisation and administrative commandism about which Gorbachev was now so open. This is certainly part of the reason for Mzala's enthusiasm for Gorbachev's move to glasnost ("openness").

But Gorbachev's critical appraisal of the Soviet Union also had a strong resonance for Mzala and others as they thought about the challenges confronting our own movement in the late 1980s. In his review article, Mzala quotes at length from Gorbachev: "Government and Party leadership gradually became alienated from the ordinary working people; they formed an elite that ignored the opinions and needs of ordinary people. From the side of the leadership there came the propaganda of success, notions of everything going according to plan, while on the side of the working people there was passivity and disbelief in the slogans being proclaimed by the leadership... the leadership organised pompous campaigns and the celebration of numerous anniversaries. Political life became a move from one anniversary celebration to another."

It would be entirely wrong to imagine that anything like this level of stagnation in the CPSU was replicated in the ANC of the late 1980s (or is being replicated in the ANC-led movement now). But, Mzala clearly saw warning signs in the 1980s, and it would not be wrong to see them now again in the present. The Secretary General's Organisational Report to the ANC's July 2005 National General Council is refreshingly frank in its critique of the negative tendencies in our movement.

It is also possible to recognise in some of the immediate events of the present – such as the Transnet strike, the Khutsong demarcation dispute, and the ANC local government list process – syndromes of a dislocation of our forces, of an absence of the ANC as a political movement at the heart of events – a new variation of Mzala's pot, stove and rice not being in the same place.

In the case of the Transnet strike we have comrades in the Department of Public Enterprises and in Transnet (the pot?), we have comrades in SATAWU (the stove?) leading the strike action (along with three other trade unions), and we have millions of Metrorail commuters, the great majority of them ANC supporters (the rice?). The comrade state-managers and the comrade trade-unionists are deadlocked and there is a serious break-down in communication. Millions of comrade commuters are spectators in a process that leaves them stranded at railway stations. What is our unified political vision of transport as the ANC-led movement? How do we provide political leadership to state/parastatal managers, to trade unionists and to communities? How do we unlock and unify the knowledge, expectations and aspirations of progressive public sector managers, trade unionists and communities into a common transformational programme of action for transport? We cannot do this if we conflate ANC policy with the managerial perspectives of those in the commanding heights of the state and parastatals. Above all, there is no way that we can develop a common transformational programme for transport if the ANC and its alliance partners are not actively involved in mobilising and engaging communities around the challenges of transport.

Too often we tend to think of political education as a relatively abstract lecture on the Freedom Charter, or the National Democratic Revolution. No doubt, this is an important component of political education. But equally important, perhaps the most effective way in which to develop cadres, is to weave Charterist and NDR values into the practical task of, for instance, list nominations. No doubt, coming back to a branch to explain why their favourite for ward councillor is no longer in top spot on the list can be a time-consuming and contentious business. But this goes to the heart of building political awareness and democracy.

### Mzala the commissar

We have been looking at the role and character of revolutionary intellectuals, and we have used the inspiring example of Mzala. He was, above all, a commissar. It would be a mistake to think of a commissar only in a military, or quasi-military, context. The commissar's role is above all political. It is about introducing political discussion, democratic debate, umrabulo, learning from each other in the midst of every situation – whether in an isolated camp in Angola, or a prison cell in apartheid South Africa, or a base-camp in a cave in Ingwavuma.

Now, more than ever, our movement requires tens of thousands of Mzalas, commissars working away in state departments, parastatals, trade unions, branches and communities.

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### Notes

1. The biographical information is derived from Eddy Maloka's moving tribute, "Mzala: a revolutionary without kid gloves", *The African Communist*, 1st quarter, 1994, p.61-66
2. A History of the ANC: South Africa Belongs To Us (Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare; James Currey, London; & Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Indiana)
3. The National Question in the writing of South African history. A critical survey of some major tendencies, Development Policy and Practice, Working Paper 22, The Open University, Milton Keynes.
4. The National Question in the writing of South African history, p.40
5. These were terms that were not generally used by the tendencies to describe themselves, rather they were terms that were applied polemically against each other. The so-called "populists" called their rivals "workerists". And the so-called "workerists" called their rivals "populists", in return.
6. See "Perestroika and Class Struggle. A comprehensive review of Mikhail Gorbachev's book 'Perestroika – New Thinking for Our Country and the World', by "Sisa Majola", *The African Communist*, second quarter, 1988, p.91ff



# The role of intellectuals in our movement and society



*The ANC needs to develop an environment within the movement, within society and on the continent that stimulates and encourages the involvement of intellectuals in mapping the way forward, writes* ***Mandla Nkomfe****.*

The debate on the place and role of intellectuals in our democratic transformation has been in the public discourse in recent years. Intellectuals have played a pivotal role in the struggle for freedom and are continuing to shape ideas in the organisation and in society.

Intellectuals play an important role in helping to articulate and couch the terms of our struggle to achieve a broader appeal. For instance, the fact that our struggle was seen in the context of human rights helped to mobilise a wider support for our cause. Achieving this required people who could remove themselves from the immediate concerns and imagine a broader goal of freedom. Thus is the role of intellectuals is in bringing about social change.

Intellectuals help to analyse the events, processes and implications of each stage or phase of our struggle. Each phase of our struggle has required strong men and women who had clarity of thought and vision. This includes people who could read and interpret the development of the productive forces and subjective factors. The incorrect reading of these factors could make a person irrelevant and they could be left behind by historical developments.

Intellectuals invented ideas that went beyond the immediate concerns of the masses. While the need to respond to objective realities was important, the role of intellectuals was that of assisting the nation to look at ideas beyond the pressing issues of the present.

In South Africa's past, the emergence of newspapers like *Imvo Zabantsundu* and *Ilanga lase Natal*, the printing of the Bible and religious songs by missionary printing houses, and development of the productive forces of the economy helped the intellectuals of the time – like WB Rubusana, John Langalibelele Dube, Sol Plaatje, Charlotte Maxeke, Sefako Makgatho and JT Gumede – to conceive of the struggle not only in regional but in national terms.

For instance, intellectuals conceived the idea of the nation as distinct from tribal or ethnic responses to colonialism. This allowed the emerging national liberation movement to embrace the notion of a common society and thus the need for a united front to advance the struggle. This bold assertion militated against the objective reality of the tribal and ethnic space. It forced people to think differently of themselves and more as South Africans. In this sense they fitted into Benedict Anderson's notion of imagined communities.

## PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS

Public intellectuals have always been defined by their inclination to speak truth to power and thus seek to humanise it. In this category are people who observe society's functioning at all levels – in community, political, economic and spiritual matters. In days gone by, praise poets would be regarded as public intellectuals. Writers, musicians, lecturers and artists are arguably playing a role of public intellectuals. They observe and interpret reality as they see it, irrespective of consequences. Their role is always to challenge the abuse of power and excesses of the powerful. In many ways they are seen to be standing for universal values of humanity. Even if the driving forces are the ideals mentioned above, they do take sides with regard to oppression, economic injustice, negative impact of globalisation, etc. Public intellectuals see themselves as committed to the cause but not obligated to its agency, which could be political parties or government. They operate within the realm of human rights and justice.

To do this, they utilise their skills of speaking and writing to denounce injustice. These public intellectuals are said to have no affiliation to politics (in specific terms) or political parties. They function and trade their skills in the public sphere.

The intellectual stratum performs important functions in society, such as shaping public opinion and investigating social, political, economic and philosophical questions. To do this requires that intellectuals should be skilled of engagement and inquiry. This means that a lot of resources are put in place within our organisation and in universities to raise people to the level of intellectual engagement.

In the context of South Africa, intellectuals have come from various backgrounds. The missionary colleges, universities, trade union schools of the 1940s and 50s, the night schools of the Communist Party of South Africa, the Party Schools of the USSR, Cuba and German Democratic Republic, political education on Robben Island and the political education classes of the mass democratic movement of the 1980s have all combined to create organic and public intellectuals. They have empowered a number of people with the necessary tools of analysis to explain and chart the way forward.

Every epoch has its own organic intellectuals. Their purpose is always to work for the mode of production. The ANC is a collective organic intellectual. It must articulate vision, strategy and tactics and the new civilisation of our times. This conception can move beyond the ANC to embrace most people in society to play the role of organic intellectuals. These should include teachers, academics, preachers and civil society formations.

## THE PERSECUTION OF INTELLECTUALS

The degeneration of progressive struggles the world over started when those at the helm of state power used their might to persecute intellectuals. The examples of persecution can be found all over – Africa after independence, Pol Pot in Kampuchea (1975-1979), the Cultural Revolution in China (1965-1975), Chile (1973) and the systematic killings of communists in Indonesia (1975). In the early days of the socialist revolution in the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin began a systematic attack on intellectuals such as Leon Trotsky and Nikolai Bukharin.

This persecution started inside political parties and movements and broadened into wider society. Some areas where intellectual persecution occurred include:

- **Africa**: The decolonialisation period was followed by a period of relative peace and tolerance of opposing views and a respect of democratic values. The rise of dictatorships in places like Nigeria, Uganda, Zaire and the Sudan and authoritarian regimes in places like Kenya, Malawi began a process of intellectual persecution. In the last 40 years many African scholars have left the continent. This has effectively set the continent back in terms of academic, economic and cultural input. Makerere University in Uganda used to be the hub of intellectual engagement for academics and politicians from across the world. The rise of Idi Amin put an end to this vibrant community. Its able and gifted professors (including Ali A Mazrui) were forced to leave the country. In Kenya, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Ngugi wa Mathiri and others were also pushed out of the country. The successive military dictatorships in Nigeria made it impossible for intellectuals to do their work and consequently the universities were neglected and began a long process of decline.
- **China**: Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution was systematically aimed at the intelligentsia. Its central theme was a campaign against "bourgeois values". This programme was launched after the failure of Mao's Great Leap Forward campaign. Intellectual giants such as Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping were the first victims of the Cultural



*The idea of promoting intellectualism and the appreciation of ideas within the ANC-led liberation movement is critical for the survival of the organisation*

Revolution.

Liu Shaoqi died in prison in 1969 and Deng Xiaoping was banished to the countryside. Young people were recruited into the Red Guards to sustain and implement this programme. They were a law unto themselves. Intellectuals of different sorts were identified, criticised and isolated. This included teachers, university lecturers, and other professionals. Intellectuals were subjected to public criticism and physical abuse Most intellectuals were sent to the countryside for so-called rehabilitation. Part of the rehabilitation was doing hard labour in the rural areas. The 11th Party Congress in 1977, officially put an end to the cultural revolution. The Gang of Four; (who spearheaded the campaign) was arrested. Deng Xiaoping and others were brought back to lead the Party and thus started the modernisation project.

■ **Kampuchea**: In 1975, the Communist Party of Cambodia (Khmer Rouge) overthrew the Cambodian government. The party started a campaign of massive evacuation of people from urban areas into the countryside. They closed schools and factories in the cities. People were forced to work in communal farms. Intellectuals and other professional strata were killed under the guise that they had connections with the previous government and foreign powers. Intellectuals were not the only targets of Pol Pot. Others included religious communities such as Christians, Muslims and Buddhist Monks. It is estimated that some 3.3 million people were killed in the process. In 1978, the Vietnamese troops invaded Kampuchea and defeated the Khmer Rouge in 1979. A new regime was put in place with the assistance of the Socialist Government of Vietnam.

The persecution of intellectuals has had negative consequences for the political, economic, spiritual and societal development of the African continent. For four decades, the continent has experienced a brain drain due to the political, administrative and academic harassment of intellectuals. The brain drain continues due to factors such as the declining quality of education in most countries, social unrest, political conflicts and war. Other contributing factors include lack of research and other facilities, inadequacy of research funds, and lack of professional equipment and tools.

The shortage and lack of skills in Africa is directly related to the persecution of intellectuals, compounding the effects of colonialism. The impact of the brain drain means that most universities are deprived of the necessary attention such as research funding and experienced professors. Most departments of African Studies are located outside the continent. Most universities are forced to offer courses that are sub-standard and not relevant to the development of the continent because of the lack of capable teachers.

## AFFIRMING AND PROMOTING THE ROLE OF INTELLECTUALS IN THE MOVEMENT

The idea of promoting intellectualism and the appreciation of ideas within the ANC-led liberation movement is critical for the survival of the organisation. The use of the anticipated ANC Policy Institute to establish linkages with society and public intellectuals, and the use of the Political School to ensure that members of the organisation benefit from this discourse (within the ambit of the ANC's objectives) will go some way in promoting intellectual work within its ranks and attracting the intelligentsia in general.

Organic intellectuals are to be found in the broader liberation movement. They have been selected, educated and nurtured by the ANC-led liberation movement. They come from a variety of backgrounds. Some come from institutions of higher learning while others were produced by the movement's programme of political education and ideological training. In the course of events they became the articulators of the ANC's vision and worldview.

Intellectuals of the national liberation movement have not restricted themselves to just helping to analyse and reveal emerging trends and future destinations, but were direct combatants in the freedom struggle. Comrades David Rabkin, Jack Simons, Ray Alexander, Chris Hani and Duma Nokwe, among others, were very much part of Umkhonto we Sizwe. Our intellectuals could not afford to see themselves within the limited notion of being politicians, but in a wider context of national liberation. In a sense, apartheid-colonialism provided a wider platform for intellectual commitment and critique. In the same way that intellectuals had to take a stance against fascism, they also had to do the same with regard to racialism in South Africa.

In this sense they could not be seen only as leaders of political parties but participants in the struggle to achieve goals of justice, equality, freedom and the eradication of oppression.

The strategic objectives of our national liberation struggle are of a universal character. The universal and internationalist character of the ANC is influenced firstly by the democratic ideals of the 19th century (such as the need to establish democratic institutions of representative democracy) and supported by the notion of individual human rights. It is influenced secondly by the social justice sentiments embedded in the goals of the socialist and social democratic revolutions, and thirdly by the ideas of national liberation as articulated in the Bandung Conference of 1955 and the Non-Aligned Movement.

The ANC's moral, ethical and intellectual capacity has historically ensured that the movement inspired our people to an idea of a just and fair society. The ANC led national liberation is thus a reference point of public discourse. Our policies, actions and inactions on a range of issues continue to generate discussions in South Africa and abroad. To come to where the movement is today in terms moral and political leadership required principled representation and articulation of the deepest aspirations of our people.

The role of the ANC-led movement as a collective organic intellectual force is not to be taken as a given. We have an obligation to defend and advance this tradition in the ANC.

As a modernist organisation, the ANC incorporated progressive ideas such as non-sexism, non-racialism, resistance to the abuse of power, opposing tribalism and ethnicity and a principled stance on corruption. Any retreat on these ideals will weaken the capacity of the ANC to take a moral and ethical stance on issues that relate to corruption in our society. It deprives the ANC of its claim to be a collective intellectual force of our times. If the ANC is weak and is seen to be promoting unethical behaviour on the part of its cadres, it thus cannot mobilise the intellectual strata and other popular forces behind the programme of the reconstruction and development of our country. It would have no moral and ethical standing to continue to lead.

In the present phase of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR), we need intellectuals who will, by the strength of their training, continue to enrich our democratic process. Together with other motive forces they can deepen, probe, and generate alternative visions for our country. Intellectuals should help our democratic system by continuing to question the frames of knowledge that are dominant in society – including neoliberalism, greed, individualism and excessive displays of affluence – and develop creative solutions to the problems of our world.

This perspective is taken further by Karl Marx's observation that, "The philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it". In this sense both the so-called organic and public intellectuals have a role to play in changing the world. As intellectuals their role is to question and probe developments in our country. They should reflect on where we come from and the progress of our struggle and point us to solutions that are beyond the dominant neoliberal ideology. Intellectual inquiry will help confirm that a humane and civilised world is possible.



*Intellectuals of the national liberation movement have not restricted themselves to just helping to analyse and reveal emerging trends and future destinations, but were direct combatants in the freedom struggle*

The idea of a just and humane society is the ultimate value for progressive intellectuals as well. Intellectuals are involved in the task of extending the frontiers of freedom and human emancipation. The ANC and its allies are pursuing this agenda via the strategy of the national democratic revolution. Their relationship to this strategy which has public value is what separates organic intellectuals from the public intellectuals. In pursuance of this public value, public intellectuals see themselves as operating in the public sphere that is not constrained by party political considerations and other related issues.

## CREATING SPACE FOR INTELLECTUAL WORK

Our movement and government should continue to look at ways of broadening this area so that intellectual life is robust. The ANC needs to create and sustain an environment in which intellectual work is appreciated and promoted. For the ANC, this means the establishment of a Policy Institute that will promote research, interaction with different intellectual perspectives and policy positions, and employ professional researchers to do this work. This can constitute an important ANC platform to link with other intellectuals in society.

The ANC should continue with the establishment of the Political School which will help its members with the necessary skills of intellectual engagement. These tools of analysis should take into account the latest developments in the areas of communication and information. A political school will contribute to the realisation of a shared ideology of achieving the objectives of the NDR in the context of the 21st century.

Our movement and government should look at ways of interacting with intellectuals inside and outside of the ANC. Specific questions need to be answered:

■ Do intellectuals in general feel engaged and

appreciated by the democratic dispensation?

- How do we manage disagreement in our society?
- Is the tone of disagreement such that it generates negative sentiments?
- How do we cultivate a sense of robust discussions without feeling that our exchanges are unequal given our respective positions in the political, economical and societal standing?

With regard to society in general, it is important to support institutions of higher and to fund research work. In particular, we need to ensure that there is enough capacity to produce knowledge that will advance our civilisation. We also need to look at the funding of research institutes whose aim is partly to promote public intellectual life. This should focus on long-term research on public policy issues.

**INTELLECTUALS AND THE REBIRTH OF AFRICA**

African intellectuals played a leading role in the emancipation of Africa. WB Du Bois defined the basic question that would occupy the minds of the world as that of colour line. Against this backdrop, African intellectuals were inspired to mobilise for the liberation of the continent. By their actions and visions, they demonstrated that a new and better world is possible. This bold vision was undermined by the new post-independence African elite.

The confluence of political, economic and military factors (at the end of the last century) resulted in new possibilities for the rebirth of the continent. We have moved with speed to reorganise our political, economic and educational institutions. The African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) have become beach-heads in an all-round struggle to rebuild our continent. We have stable political institutions and peace in most parts of the continent. Intellectuals have a critical role to play in ensuring that we do not go back to where we were forty years ago.

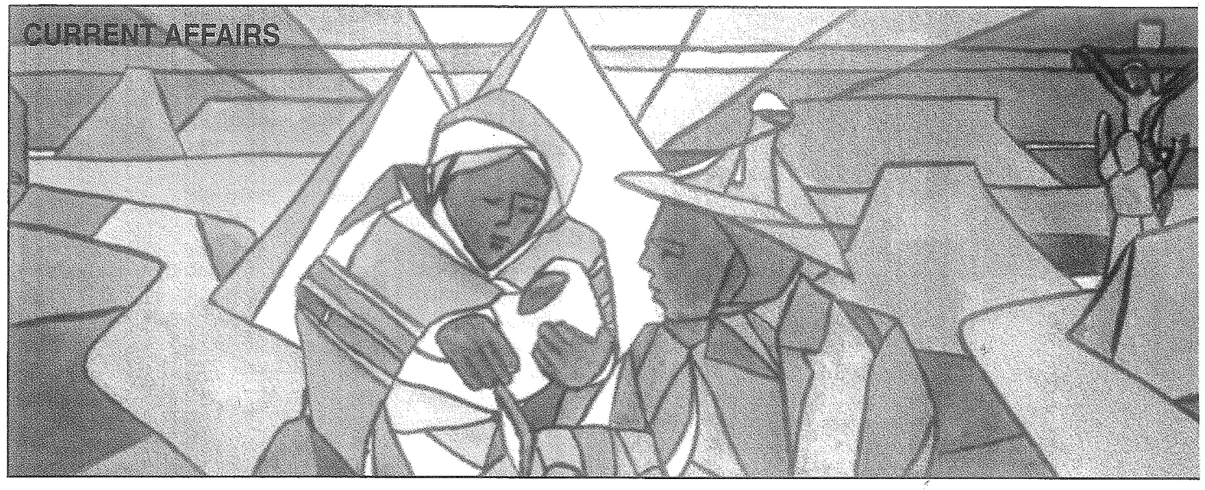
The performance of our political and economic leaders should be carefully monitored. As we do that, our intellectuals should be driven by a sense of progress and informed by the history of the continent. The challenge is not to romanticise the past to the extent of African nativism that glorifies reactionary ideas and our supposed unchanging nature – glorifying the past as if Africans have an innate and unchanging form. The contributions of the African continent to the development our world should be understood within the challenges posed by globalisation.

The greater mobility of intellectuals is a challenge for the African renaissance. The call for them to come home and contribute to the development of our continent is not enough. The main issue is to answer the question of redirecting their academic and intellectual efforts to the African cause irrespective of where they are located in the world. Access to information, and being in a robust intellectual community, is important in the life of an intellectual. Intellectuals will always go where they think there is a positive and conducive climate for intellectual work. In this regard, most African countries are found wanting.

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# Something new out of Africa

## *The challenge to transform country and continent*

*Africa's communal experience of life and sprituality offers a way forward to South Africa, the continent and the world in responding to the destructive effects of Western individualism and transforming our societies.*

This article examines the secular interface between politics and religion as Africa seeks liberation from western domination. The problems which assail us are essentially 'spiritual', affecting both believers and unbelievers. Western civilisation promotes individualistic and dualistic ways which are often anti-human. We need to recover the understanding of society known in basic communities, prophetic religions, and the traditions of Africa. This view is holistic, communalistic, and recognises and responds to a vital force within humanity. It embraces some religious insights, but is a secular spirituality, the pursuit of vision and values which overcome the lures of becoming little westerners, and makes citizens to transform a suicidal acquisitive society into a functioning ubuntu community.

Nelson Mandela has analysed the problems we face: "...the corruption of public servants by the private sector; the low level of tax morality; white collar crime and the subversion of business ethics; venality, theft and fraud within the public sector; corruption in the criminal justice system; the uninhibited commitment to unbridled self-gratification which underlies such crimes as rape and child abuse; disrespect for human life and the inviolability of the individual person and the easy resort to the use of force in the ordering of inter-personal relations; the acceptance of robbery and theft as a means of personal enrichment and advancement; mendacity in the conduct of public affairs; contempt for the law and the state; and the virtual collapse among the Africans of a system of social behaviour informed by the precepts of humanism which, historically, have informed African culture."[1]

These are moral and ethical challenges demanding spiritual guts. 'Spiritual' does not mean weird, spooky, superstitious, religious, or unearthly.

We are people of body, mind and spirit living in community. Our spirit directs our minds and bodies. It is the drive and vision of the vital force inside us.

A positive spirit spreads love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, loyalty, humility, and self control.[2] Others have a proud, lustful, jealous, angry, greedy, selfish or lazy spirit. So spirituality is a highly secular concern, having political, economic, social and religious elements.

'Spiritual' life is usually assigned to the religious sphere, which is under the jurisdiction of religious institutions (such as the National Religious Leaders Forum, SA Council of Churches, Muslim Judicial Council, Jewish Board of Deputies, Hindu Maha Sabha, and other bodies). But many 'believers' are clearly not cop-

ing with the spiritual challenges.

In this post-religious age many reject religion, including thousands of our intellectual, money-eyed, political, leading citizens. They need not apologise: all humans are spiritual, but not all are religious. Agnostics are moral people. Others, who retain a strong personal faith, have also withdrawn from organised religion for various reasons. This rejection of religion does not mean neglect of the spiritual and the moral. But many 'unbelievers' are clearly not coping with the spiritual challenges.

Believers and un-believers all live in social environments: empires, nations, cultures, institutions. Some societies promote anti-human structures, policies and theologies, including colonialism, apartheid, slavery, racial superiority, sexism, corruption and unethical priorities. Others encourage positive behaviour.

But people are not good because they know they ought to be good. The 1998 Moral Summit of political and religious leaders did not change society. So how can the spiritual moral character of believers and unbelievers be developed in society today?

## THE WESTERN APPROACH

Western civilisation is considered enlightened, and is promoted by the media, schools, entertainment, religion and many politicians. But the Western approach is individualistic. Neville Richardson writes of "the entrenchment of the moral sovereignty of the individual in Western consciousness".[3]

"The individual has become the focal point of our sense of identity and morality. How can the moral agent be anything but the reasoning individual? It says: 'I am the centre of my life and deserve all I can get out of it'."

As WE Henley wrote:

"It matters not how strait the gate,
how charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul."

The West keeps different elements of society in their place. Don't mix religion and politics, or business and pleasure. This dualism manifests itself in other ways: human – divine; physical – spiritual; sacred – secular; government – civil society; personal – social; faith – politics; Christianity – 'other' religions.

Individualism and dualism are destructive divisive elements in society and promote many of our problems.

It affects the economy. The structure of the global economy makes most people poor, and this is evil, anti-human, destructive. People say: "So what? That's the way the world is. I am responsible for profit, not for the environment." Personal wealth is all that matters: the worship of Mammon.

It affects sex. Sex is marvelous, but deadly when it ignores social factors. Lust and promiscuity dominate the media, film, TV, advertising, and much behaviour. Free sex is very expensive for the whole society. Overpopulation is irresponsible.

It affects politics. The quest for personal power at any price is undemocratic, unjust and immoral. It twists thinking, as Bertrand Russell observed.[4] National and financial goals are destroying global life and progress, and promoting violence and terrorism. All weapons for the mass Destruction of humanity are evil.

It also affect theology. Right wing fundamentalism destroys the spirit and truth of both historical and pentecostal religions. Life is cursed by individualistic superstition, and by dualistic speculation about after-death. The Church Theology once castigated by the Kairos Document now rules many religions; prophets are rejected; many think religions are bankrupt; they are primarily interested in themselves, and are responsible for producing the 'post-religious' age.

Western civilisation has a crisis of orientation which Hans Kung says is not freedom but meaninglessness: nihilism.[5] It needs to be challenged directly and rejected. A different understanding and approach is required if humanity is to succeed.

## THE COMMUNAL APPROACH

A different understanding of society appears in the primal beliefs of humanity: American Indians, Inuits, Siberians, Maoris, and Asiatics. It runs through religions from the Hindus to the Taoists, from the Old Testament to Jesus and Mohammed, from the Aztecs to the Ancestors. This communal approach reaches a critical mass of public opinion in Africa. Cooperation is life: competition is death.

"Africans recognise life as life-in-community. We can truly know ourselves if we remain true to our community, past, and present. The concept of individual success or failure is secondary. The ethnic group, the village, the locality, are crucial in one's estimation of oneself," writes Mercy Oduyoye.[6]

Apartheid in any society lacerates humanity. Our pairs of opposites are a unity. They work together. Two sides of same coin. We need two feet to walk.

'God' is not a religious construct, but a factor in the political, economic, social and secular world. Liberating ourselves from imported colonial dualistic theology leads us to a uniting, coherent, holistic approach to life: "It is for the good of all, not only the good of me. I am responsible for others – not just to myself." We belong to one realm of being; life is a whole.

Social systems must have a positive influence on the welfare of others. Community is the arbiter of morality and spirituality, not personal entitlement.

Community is the measure of what is right and good, not personal ambition.

Joe Slovo said: "The all-round development of the individual and the creation of opportunities for every person to express his or her talents to the full can only find expression in a society which dedicates itself to people rather than profit."[7]

Poverty is the problem of society, not of the poor. It puts communal need before personal greed. The spiritual moral character of humanity is worldly, not heavenly.

For John Mbiti this is encapsulated in the concept of Ubuntu: "I am because we are, and because we are, I am."[8]

The love, joy and peace of religions are community-centred activities not self-centred. Environment, ecology, economics, justice and politics are communal activities. Real personal fulfillment is in communal fulfillment.

Communities respond to a concern for the whole life situation, not just souls. A Vital Force is the ground of our being. People have different concepts of 'God', but the word is shorthand for both believers and unbelievers who recognise the Vital Life Force, within the community. The truth is greater than the myths which convey it, and goes beyond individuals.

"Divine reality is not alien, but is part of ordinary human reality," writes Andre Van Niekerk.[9]

Barney Pityana writes: "There is a universal character to virtue and values, whatever cultural system one inhabits. These are the virtues of goodness and honour, and the values of justice, peace and family solidarity... All moral principles, ultimately, must be subjected to the moral principle of how they serve the well being of the family and the community."[10]

There is a motivating spiritual force in the evolution of secular human society; and it is only in the secular that the spiritual can be discovered. Jesus' objective was to proclaim the Ruling Power of God (Kingdom) in human community.[11]

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me; he has sent me to announce good news to the poor; to proclaim release for the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind; to let the broken victims go free; and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." *Luke 4.1*



*Liberating ourselves from imported colonial dualistic theology leads us to a uniting, coherent, holistic approach to life...*

The Ruling Power, or Vital Force, is linked to a nitty gritty love in all the great prophets:

- "Let a man overcome anger by love, let him overcome evil by good, let him overcome the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth." *Buddhism.*
- "Only by love can men see me, and know me, and come unto me." *Hinduism.*
- "What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others. *Confucious.*
- "To the good I act with goodness: to the bad I also act with goodness. To the faithful I act with faith: to the faithless I also act with faith." *Taosim.*
- "You must love your neighbour as yourself." *Judaism.*
- "Love one another as I have loved you." *Jesus.*
- "None of you is a believer unless he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself." *Islam.*
- "God is love." *Gospel of John.*
- "The true revolutionary is guided by a great spirit of love." *Che Guevara.*

Love is the vital political and social force found in human community. Not in the sky.

The original name of the Kairos Document was '*Challenge to the Church*'. Its prophetic theology rose in the height of apartheid oppression in 1985: "We need a bold and incisive response that is prophetic because it speaks to the particular circumstances of this crisis, a response that does not give the impression of sitting on the fence but is clearly and unambiguously taking a stand."[12]

This response can be prompted from various sources: upbringing, culture, Marx, Jesus, Mohammed, Gautama, Zoroaster and others. The focus is on a conviction to stir both reason and will. But how?[13] How can we harness the vital force, which prompts the holistic and communalistic answers in our society?

## AFRICA'S ANSWER TO THE CHALLENGE

We see the communal approach through the eyes of Africa. South Africa has a holistic and communal thrust of a secular spirituality. It is a vision and set of values to free ourselves from Western individualistic intellectualism. "Our theology must be brewed in African pots," says Bishop Ivan Abrahams. So must our politics and economics.

Many South Africans living together today recognise they share a common spiritual vision. We are no longer colonial Christians promoting the religions of imperialist Britain, Roman



*We are a community of South African people of faith, through whom the winds of change have blown*

Catholicism, Christian National apartheid, German Lutheranism, or the products of right wing America.

We are no longer Hindus from India, Buddhists from Tibet, Muslims from the Far or the Middle East, Bahai's from Persia, Jews from Europe, or Communists from Russia, Cuba or China. Our experience of liberation goes beyond the colonial cultural apartheid we inherited.

We are a community of South African people of faith, through whom the winds of change have blown. We have our own vision of human society. Various spiritual riches from the past are now rooted in the soil of our own current experience, and a new indigenous knowledge system is growing among us.[14]

Our vision and values lie deep in our history and experience. The priorities of the Freedom Charter still ring true: "These freedoms we will fight for, side by side, throughout our lives, until we have won our liberty."

The values of the SA Constitution are hailed world wide:

- democracy, social justice and equity;
- equality, non-racialism and non-sexism;
- ubuntu, an open society, responsibility;
- the rule of law, respect, reconciliation.

The Moral Summit's code of conduct for persons in positions of responsibility, the Moral Regeneral Movement's Charter of Positive Values, and many others agree.

The actual experience of liberation in a community loud-mouthed by self-centredness leads to the trauma of transformation. There is a vision here of society driven by generosity, caring and sharing; enjoying a new culture; of government and civil society cooperating on political and social points of agreement; establishing a new cooperative economy; and undergirding the African Union and New Partnership for Africa's Development.

It is holistic, communalistic, driven by a Vital Force within us; and needs motivating. It goes beyond the fatal limitations of western politics, economics and religion and is rooted in African experience.

At the heart of it is a huge challenge. The western world wishes to ensnare us in its toils, as people subject to its financial, political and religious domination.

"The forces of privilege want us to be so weak that they can control the national agenda... they want us to be weak so that we are unable to bring about the fundamental social transformation of our country," says President Thabo Mbeki.[15]

Steve Biko warned us years ago that the oppressor's greatest weapon is the mind of the oppressed. Daryl Balia puts the challenge clearly and brutally:

"What is required is a more comprehensive and dynamic approach to the contextual reality so that the whole person becomes the object of theological discourse. Blacks will increasingly find themselves in influential positions, and the critical issue will be whether they will buttress the imperialist ideology of cultural domination or foster a sense of community and return to the vision of a displaced world view."[16] Whites too!

How do we engage the Vital Force behind our vision and values? The Vital Force comes through action, response, practice and emotive words. Faith comes through works. The harvest of the spirit comes after planting and nurturing in secular ground. Liberation and Transformation come through joining the struggle for positive values and against the greed of capitalist dictatorship, and the superstitions of right wing fundamentalism. The Vital Force is within humans; its spiritual power is released through secular involvement. It transforms us from a suicidal acquisitive society into a functioning ubuntu community.

Releasing the spiritual power in Africa has many elements:

- ***Land and Politics***. The ANC quest has always been for unity, not group power. At the opening conference on 8 January 1912, Pixley ka Isaka Seme said: "We have called you to this conference so that we can together devise ways and means of forming our national union for the purpose of creating national unity and defending our rights and privileges." All tribes, and then all races.
- ***Wealth***. South Africa is not a cog in global capitalism; it is seeking a new understanding of humanity. We must move from the devil of greed to the blessing of generosity.
- ***Our language***. We should be more precise: from deploring poverty to denouncing greed; from a vague capitalism to the dictatorship of the wealthy system; from socialism to the common ownership of shared wealth; from class and gender to oppressors.
- ***Health***. This includes changing our attitudes to sex and condoms, to reviewing traditional healing and euthanasia.
- ***Relationships***. We seek a community consciousness about sex, inter-human relationships, marriage, domestic strife, divorce, and celebrations.
- ***Education***. This needs recasting for culture not jobs, and embraces a new Religion Education.
- ***Religion***. This should seek not to promote this or that institution, but a shared secular spirituality, that liberates the imported colonial religions and recovers the prophetic role.

Both believers and unbelievers are seeking a new society, together. It needs to be proclaimed clearly and fearlessly as a new focus for Africa. We need to motivate a new global progressive movement. The vision of a new type of society in Africa can turn the world upside down.

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This is a discussion document prepared by the **ANC COMMISSION FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS**.

**Notes**

1. Nelson Mandela at 1997 ANC Conference.
2. Paul of Tarsus: Gal.5.19-23.
3. Neville Richardson. 1998 .Questions about Life and Morality. JL van Schaik. 39.
4. See Russell on his 'political discovery.'
5. Hans Kung.
6. Mercy Odoyuye. 1992 The Value of African Beliefs and Practices for Christian Theology.
7. Joe Slovo. Has Socialism failed? Inkululeko Publications. January 1990.
8. John Mbiti. 1969 African Religions and Philosophy. Heinemann p.108-109.
9. Andre Van Neikerk. 1998 Questions about Life and Morality. JL van Schaik. 264
10. African Renaissance: The New Struggle. p.144.
11. It is interesting but neither conclusive nor very helpful to speculate about the origin of the Vital Force on Earth. It thrusts through humanity in religion, music and art, architecture and literature, as a major social concern. It is, and it is here.
12. The Kairos Document. 1985.
13. This motivation forms communities of people with a shared identity, who develop a common memory, hope, shared by human stories. The personal stories must be fitted into the greater story that unites – by listening to their stories. Charles Villa-Vicencio.
14. See Harvey Cox in Many Mansions 1992 Beacon Press p10.
15. Cosatu Conference 2000.
16. Daryl Balia. 1991. Black Methoists and White Supremacy. Madiba Publications. 99.

# Contextual considerations in addressing challenges of leadership

## *Reflections of the NEC Political Education Committee*

*As it prepares for its 52nd National Conference, due to take place in 2007, ANC structures should begin discussing issues around the trajectory of the National Democratic Revolution, including issues of organisational renewal.*

The ANC will hold its 52nd National Conference in December 2007. The Conference is critical from two angles. It will be the first assembly of the ANC's highest decision-making body in the Second Decade of Freedom, after 13 years of democracy and a government led by the ANC. It will precede, by two years, the stepping down of the current President of the ANC as President of the Republic.

In this respect, therefore, this will be one of the most decisive moments in the ANC's history, marking a confluence of three critical undertakings:

- an ANC that will be 95 years old, called upon to start, in the light of a century's experience, defining a vision for its own evolution in its second century of existence;
- an ANC that can, with the advantage of more than a decade of experience in governance, confidently chart out a trajectory of the country's development far into the first century of the third millennium;
- an ANC that will in broad terms be managing a generational transition as most of the stalwarts of the campaigns of the 1940s and 1950s bow out of formal political leadership structures.

All these three matters require strategic, dispassionate and honest reflection in the ranks of the movement. At the core of such reflection should be the critical issues of content – a self-assured self-definition by the ANC in the context of a long-term vision.

Deriving from this would be the identification of the kind of leadership the movement needs to carry out these tasks. The two issues are intimately linked. Both within and outside our ranks and even among those opposed to the ANC, the contestation around these issues has been joined. And the ANC itself has to give leadership.

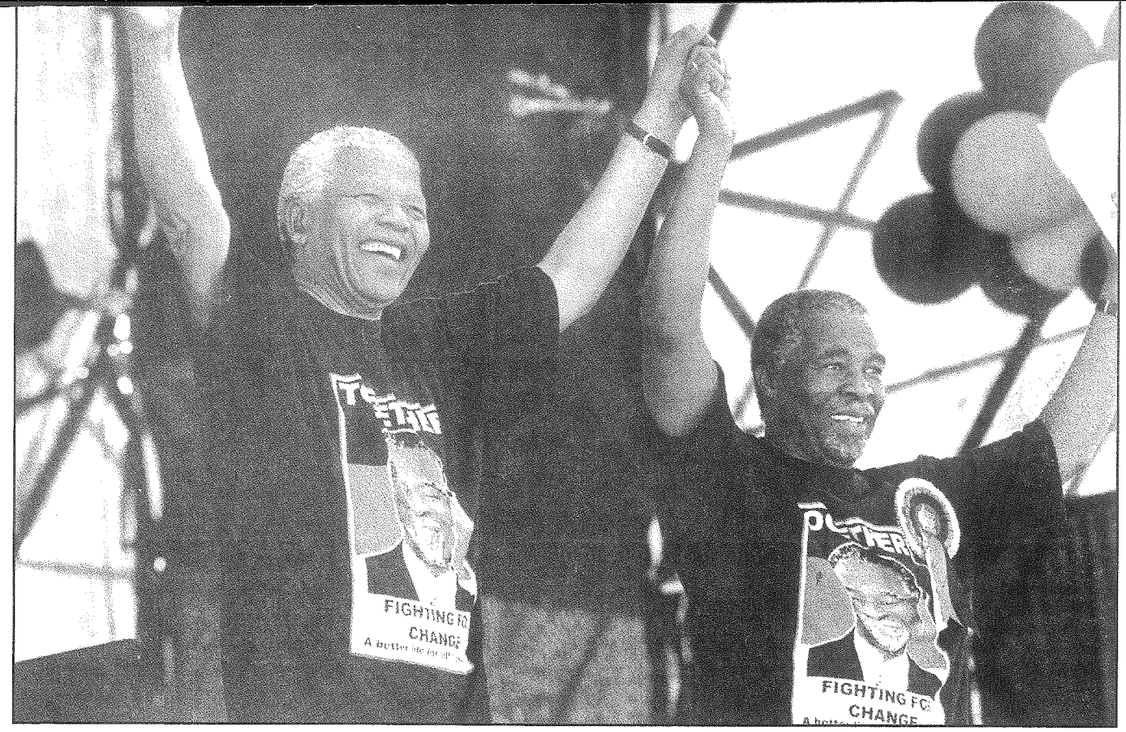
### ENGAGING MATTERS OF CONTENT – STRATEGY AND TACTICS

The current strategic thrust of the ANC is set out in a *Strategy and Tactics* document that was adopted at the 1997 National Conference, in Mafikeng, some 10 years ago. The 2002 National Conference, in Stellenbosch, conceded that new developments dictated an update of the movement's Strategy and Tactics, but asserted that these were of such a nature that they did not require an overhaul of the document. A Preface was then appended to address this issue.

Quite clearly, there will be need at the 2007 National Conference to reflect on and adopt a new document. Work on this will need to start as urgently as possible, so that there is sufficient engagement in our structures with the critical issues at hand. This will in itself serve as an important political education campaign.

Some of the issues that require such reflection were identified during discussion in preparation for both the 2002 National Conference and the 2005 National General Council (NGC). Since the NGC a number of practical developments have raised profound conceptual issues. Some of the questions that have been thrown up by developments in the past 5 years are outlined hereunder.






***ANC Presidents Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki during the 1999 election campaign***

### Characterisation of the NDR

*The tasks of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) in respect of the fundamental question of property relations*: this relates both to the de-racialisation of ownership and control of wealth and the more thoroughgoing challenge of eradicating poverty. In other words, how do we theorise the interrelationship between reducing social inequality and the rise of a black middle strata and business class; how do we deal with the danger of the perpetuation of Colonialism of a Special Type, with the majority of black people excluded from any significant participation in the economy and few blacks co-opted into the courtyard of privilege!

*Pursuing the ideological struggle in the context of the ANC aspiration to create a society that cares*: given the fact that we operate in and are in fact managing a capitalist system, how do we ensure that the outlook of society and posture of both the ANC and the state reflect a correct balance in the delicate relationship between encouraging entrepreneurship and individual initiative, and a promotion of the collective needs of society!

*Managing contradictions that are bound to express themselves between the two contending classes, the workers and the bourgeoisie*: as previously asserted, the NDR does not aim to eliminate this core antagonism of a class society. The ANC is therefore called upon to manage the expression of these contradictions, proceeding from the perspective that its core constituency is the working class and the poor. Further, this reflection should impact our understanding of the character of the NDR (what it seeks to achieve) and its motive forces (the combination of social drivers of fundamental change)!

*Construction of a democratic state as an instrument of the people as a whole*: how far have we gone in transforming the state and how should the ANC relate to such a state? Attached to this is our principled stand on critical precepts contained in the country's Constitution such as the separation of powers, equality of all before the law, arms-length relationship between the ruling party and various state institutions in a law-governed society, and so on!

*International balance of forces and building alliances across the globe*: besides the obvious consolidation of a unipolar world and socio-political globalisation, it can be asserted that there is an emergence of a perspective that takes on board universal human values around issues of democracy, equity in global relations and solidarity to improve the human condition. Yet arrayed against this are the mutually reinforcing tendencies of right-wing religious fundamentalism, militarism and terrorism!

### National Democratic Transformation

Related to these issues are new matters of policy, not adequately elaborated in the Strategy and Tactics document, which should help inform the programme of National Democratic Transformation. At the 2005 NGC, these were identified as follows:

- In relation to interpretation of the Freedom Charter, have the objectives of a "united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic" society been adequately defined in our Strategy and Tactics, and should we find positive expressions in the place of "**non**-racial/**non**-sexist"? For instance, with regard to the economy, are we limiting ourselves to "de-racialisation" and "genderisation" of the commanding heights of an inherited eco-

nomic structure, rather than addressing its transformation?

■ The concrete definition of the objectives we pursue in the Second Decade of Freedom is contained in the 2004 Election Manifesto, which elaborates the popular mandate for the coming period – how should this find expression in the Strategy and Tactics document?

■ How do we characterise the type of state required to pursue developmental goals, beyond the phrase, "developmental state", particularly in relation to economic challenges?

■ Having gained experience in the operation of our governance system, what are the strategic interventions required to ensure more effective implementation of our programmes, including the relationship among the three spheres of government?

■ What approaches are required to deal decisively with the legacy of the spatial manifestations of apartheid, in both social and economic sectors?

Further, work done in recent years brings out in bold relief the challenge of eliminating systemic and racialised underdevelopment through spear-heading accelerated, sustainable and shared economic growth. Underdevelopment is both a historical legacy and a reality reproduced by many entrenched features of the current economic system. This includes a limited national market, advanced but skewed and inefficient infrastructure, a developed but excessively concentrated First Economy, and a skills deficit and import dependence combined with excessive export orientation. The Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative (ASGISA) seeks to address these constraints. But does it go far enough in defining a growth path that is job-creating, productive and fosters skills development, regional integration and the development of a vibrant small, medium and micro sector, including cooperatives?

## ENGAGING MATTERS OF CONTENT – CHARACTER OF THE ANC

Clarity on the tasks outlined above will help inform how the ANC defines itself in the current conjuncture and how it shapes itself as an organisation of the future. Some of the issues requiring serious reflection are outlined hereunder, and most of these were not sufficiently canvassed during the 2002 National Conference and the 2005 NGC.

The ANC is still at one that it is by definition a liberation movement with the primary mission of dealing with the contradictions that were thrown up by the system of apartheid colonialism. Using various terrains of struggle and centres of power – mass organisation, the state, economic centres, ideological struggle and international work – it has the central task of organising and mobilising the motive forces of the NDR to realise their common and disparate interests.

### Unity and Diversity

As the ANC defines the trajectory of its own evolution well into its second century of existence, it has to take into account trends that have started to manifest themselves in the political terrain. The first category of these trends includes:

■ besides its own theoretical self-definition, composition of its branch structures and its conduct of government policy, the ANC's assertion that it is an organisation whose primary constituency is the working class and the poor has repeatedly been borne out by electoral results;

■ that this class content is informed by the national question in our country is reflected in the fact that those whose station is improving as a consequence of democratic change – the emergent black middle and upper strata – have also remained loyal to the ANC, and see themselves as allies of workers and the poor;

■ at the same time, as the ANC succeeds in changing the country for the better, to the benefit of more than just its narrow constituency, more and more sections of the white community are identifying with the broad objectives of change and some even with the ANC as an organisation: in a sense, the ANC starts to assume the character of being a representative of the people as a whole.

However, arrayed against these trends are strong centrifugal tendencies some rooted in the legacy of apartheid:

■ some forces within South African society retain their adherence to a racist outlook, and define themselves as not being represented by this state, let alone the ANC as an organisation;

■ in a vibrant democratic system such as ours, organisations that base their mobilisation on narrow issues are bound to multiply as part of civil society – the challenge is when such issues (including conservative interpretations of religion, 'family values', attitude to sexual orientation, narrow focus on HIV and AIDS) start informing the constitution and main programmatic positions of political parties;

■ how the ANC manages this dynamic can impact upon the political terrain in a fundamental way, re-ordering the content of electoral contestation in a manner that can condemn South Africa's core issues of class and race to a secondary status;

■ while the movement has succeeded over the years, within its own ranks and across society, to exorcise the demon of tribalism, the urge among some to use this for opportunistic political ends continues to play itself out – but besides this negative source, the ANC needs to weigh the long-term implications of a correct policy to encourage pride in language, culture and history on the resurgence of ethnic chauvinism.

It can be asserted that the centripetal pull is stronger than the centrifugal tendencies. Thus, going forward, it should be expected that unity around the national principles enshrined in the country's Constitution will strengthen. To the extent that the ANC represents the progressive expression of the Constitution's values, broader forces than its historical constituency will gravitate towards it. The question, though, for the medium- and long-term is whether this tendency, as it applies to the ANC, is sustainable: can the movement continue to present itself as all things to all people?

### Challenge of self-definition

These questions do not lend themselves to easy answers. The natural tendency for any organism is to grow and annex space. Yet, if the ANC in its evolution into the future merely responded as an unthinking object of natural selection, it may become soulless and rudderless – a dinosaur so shorn of ideological rooting that what defines it are battles for leadership positions within the movement and in turn within government. In addressing this challenge the following issues should guide our approach:

■ *The ANC should continue to consolidate its leadership of the motive forces of the NDR in their totality, proceeding from the premise that its core constituency is the working class in particular and the poor in general.* However, it should be noted that a significant layer of these core motive forces do reflect a level of marginalisation and alienation that should be cause for concern – for example, violent protests and significant non-participation in elections.

■ *The ANC should clearly define its ideological relationship with the working class.* An amorphous expression of leaning towards workers and reference to pro-poor government policies is not enough: there should be clarity in more positive terms about the kind of society (and indeed the kind of economy or even capitalism) we seek to create.

■ *The ANC should more clearly define the organisational and structural relationship it seeks to forge with organised workers.* This should involve a much more proactive and strategic engagement with the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and its affiliates. Related to this should be the guidance the ANC gives to the evolution of the trade union movement – should we actively promote unity of the organised working class, and should political conditions be attached to this!

■ *The ANC should "grow" with the emergent black middle strata and capitalist class – devising ways of organisation, ideological leadership and definition of each sector's tasks in line with the core strategic objectives of the NDR.* This is proceeding from the premise that these sectors have a direct interest in transforming the structural features of our society and economy. This challenge also applies to winning over strata and classes from the white community. It is the task of the ANC to weld these and other forces around the programme of transformation.

■ *The ANC should devise creative ways of capturing the imagination of the new generation of young people.* These young people are to be found across the spectrum of classes and strata in society, including workers, middle strata and entrepreneurs. Defining their personality, though, is that they grow up under conditions in which old forms of organisation and mobilisation are patently inadequate.

■ *The ANC should adopt clear and formal constitutional and structural mechanisms to reflect the reality of being in office.* This relates to formalisation of ANC government collectives (executives, legislature caucuses and so on) within the movement's constitutional structures. This should be combined with addressing challenges of accountability and dispassionately managing the negative effects of incumbency such as careerism, competition for status, corruption and so on.

■ *The ANC should forge a cadreship through programmes that relate to the actual challenges that these members face in their daily lives.* This requires a deliberate combination of politico-ideological education and skilling to lead processes in government, the private sector and civil society in general. Especially in this environment of political incumbency and opportunities in the private sector, it would be the height of folly on its part for the ANC to live in the hope that cadres selflessly committed to the people's interests will emerge without conscious preparation.

■ *The ANC should ensure deliberate processes to assemble leadership collectives that reflect its core mandate and tasks.* This means ensuring, among others, that its leadership structures reflect the national, class and gender content of the NDR as well as appropriate balances between cadreship in and outside of the governmental terrain.

What does this mean in terms of the broad orientation of the movement in a changing social environment?

## Implications of evolving social structure

In the coming years, as the programmes of transformation unfold, the changes in alignment among the classes and strata in our society will intensify. The number of employed workers, including highly-skilled workers, is bound to increase; the ranks of the middle strata are bound to swell; more black people will rise to the higher rungs of the corporate sector as professionals, managers and owners. Acculturation across the apartheid fault-lines is bound to intensify.

Yet at the same time, we should accept that there will be a sediment of the poor who will remain marginalised - the 13% unemployed in 2014 if we succeed to halve unemployment – who will feel more marginalised and alienated! This will in part be an objective consequence of progress, which may include growing income inequality between the top-most and lowest rungs in the socio-economic ladder, and deepening feelings of 'relative poverty' among the unemployed and the poor. It will also be a reflection of the obduracy of challenges of underdevelopment and unjust global relations in which we are located.

The ANC should conduct its mass and ideological work and define itself to ensure that the working class, professionals and the middle strata, and a significant section of the capitalist class find common cause under its wing. The defining character of such coalescence should be a left agenda to build a caring society, in line with the best and most progressive traditions of social democracy.

It should however be expected that there will be two extremes that may not fit into the net:

- *Sections of poor communities with a sense of marginalisation and alienation*: if recent experience is anything to go by, these sections will organisationally be nebulous in character, presenting as issue-based protest within the broad democratic movement. The appeal and intensity of such protest across the broader working class will depend on whether there are conscious efforts to fan the flames of conflagration by organised formations with sufficient credibility. It will also be affected by any tendencies to technocratic aloofness and bureaucratic neglect within government. How each component of the Alliance deals with this and how the relationships within the Alliance are handled will define not only the behaviour of these sectors, but also the evolution of the Alliance itself.
- *The more conservative and callous among the rich and the middle strata*: these are forces which protest any transformative steps taken including legitimate and law-governed redistribution of wealth and resources, affirmative action, levels of progressive taxation, women's emancipation, rights on sexual orientation and so on. These can easily be addressed as an obstinate residue with anti-transformation sentiments but with a right all the same to exist and find political expression. How strong this tendency will be, will define the evolution of the Democratic Alliance (DA), African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) and other mainly white-based parties.

As the ANC develops its strategic and tactical approaches, it should maintain a personality based on its history of struggle and the years of experience in governance. But this should be a personality that shows conscious adaptation to new realities: particularly in relation to organising and mobilising the new generation of youth and the emergent middle and upper strata, and forging common bonds among these sectors and the working class and the poor. The ANC should be the driver of a potent social contract.

The abiding strength of the ANC historically has been its ability to organise and mobilise millions of ordinary South Africans around their immediate grievances and long-term aspirations, and to provide intellectual leadership on critical social issues facing the country. This has been underpinned by strong organisation, an attribute that puts the ANC head and shoulders above all other parties. In the evolving socio-political terrain, this strength should be backed up by better utilisation of legislatures as high-profile defenders of ordinary people's interests, more creativity and relevance in its work among the new generation of citizens, better nuance and sophistication in relating to the emergent elite, and more discipline and authority in the ANC's articulation of its standpoint on critical issues.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR ELECTION OF LEADERSHIP

All these considerations, and perhaps many others, are fundamental to the debate on national leadership as we prepare for the 52nd National Conference. In this critical period, the ANC cannot afford a situation in which the outcome in composing the National Executive Committee (NEC) including the Officials is left to chance, and thus more likely to become a product of machinations of forces outside of, or even inimical to, the movement.

Necessarily, we should ensure that the balances in the composition of the national leadership are informed by our immediate programmatic challenges. But, in this period of a major transition, a period in which decisions we take will define the movement's personality for at least a decade, it is critical to appreciate that what we shall be putting in place are the stepping-stones towards a new evolutionary trajectory for the movement in its second century of existence.





'Through the Eye of a Needle' ...places quite a high premium on the integrity of the democratic processes within the movement

## General principles: Through the eye of a needle

The constitutional requirements and culture of the movement in dealing with the issue of choosing leaders is comprehensively dealt with in the document, 'Through the Eye of a Needle' (*Umrabulo 11*). This document, prepared in the build-up to the 2002 National Conference, should be used as a basic resource. In brief, it deals with the following methodological and organisational issues:

- It describes the character of the ANC as a revolutionary democratic movement which within itself should reflect the unitary, democratic, non-racial and non-sexist society that we seek to create.
- It outlines the basic principles of organisational democracy that are fundamental to the character of the ANC, including elections, collective leadership, branches as basic units of the organisation, principles of consultation and mandates, criticism and self-criticism, and subordination of lower to higher structures.
- It elaborates attributes that are expected of leaders including understanding and application of policy, self-improvement by learning from mistakes, avoiding populism, leading by example including revolutionary morality, and subjection to the will of the collective.
- Its description of the political environment within which leadership election processes were taking place then is updated in earlier sections of the current document.

In terms of the ongoing challenges that individuals in leadership positions face, 'Through the Eye of a Needle' is instructive in identifying the following issues: *"The struggle for social transformation is a complex undertaking in which at times, personal interests will conflict with the organisational interest. From time to time, conflict will manifest itself between and among members and leaders. The ultimate test of leadership includes:*

- *"striving for convergence between personal interests – material, status and otherwise - and the collective interest;*
- *"handling conflict in the course of ANC work by understanding its true origins and seeking to resolve it in the context of struggle and in the interest of the ANC;*
- *"the ability to inspire people in good times and bad; to reinforce members' and society's confidence in the ANC and transformation; and*
- *"winning genuine acceptance by the membership, not through suppression, threats or patronage, but by being principled, firm, humble and considerate."*

'Through the Eye of a Needle' also places quite a high premium on the integrity of the democratic processes within the movement. This includes the fact that election processes start within the basic unit, the branch. Where nominations are made, there should be clear motivation and discussion of such; and candidates for specific positions become such only when formal nomination has taken place and, in relation to national conferences, when the Electoral Commission has certified and confirmed such nomination (as distinct from speculation in, and lobbying through, the media). Such motivation and discussion should dispassionately factor in the performance of individuals and the collective as a whole during their term of office. Also critical are considerations of all-round capacity and development of the new cadres being proposed for leadership.

The document further warns against negative tendencies that have started to manifest themselves in the context of the ANC being in political office. These include the danger of using positions with power of patronage to suppress debate or for individuals to censor themselves and hide their own genuine views to please 'seniors'; corrupt practices which include "buying" of ANC membership cards to load conferences with "voting cattle"; business interests sponsoring candidates so as corruptly to benefit when "their people" are in government; and an intense display of factionalism and even tribalism especially when government positions are at stake.

## Overall leadership collective

How should all these issues – political and organisational – inform the process of selecting leaders going forward? In a sense, 'Through the Eye of a Needle' and the earlier parts of this current document do help in identifying the broad considerations for the election of a new National Executive Committee. However, as indicated at the beginning of this document, the 52nd National Conference in 2007 will need to address the question of the relationship between the Presidential transition in government (in 2009) and the constitution of the ANC's leadership in 2007.

Whatever permutation in terms of the

Presidency of the ANC, a general point needs to be made in respect of the overall leadership collective:

■ *The collective in its totality should reflect a better balance in terms of leadership in and outside government*: the ANC is left the poorer when virtually all of its national leadership comes from one centre of power.

■ *The NEC should include a fair representation of young people, and start to evince a better reflection of the generational and cultural changes happening within society as a whole*: while this should naturally imply graduation of young cadres from the ranks of the Youth League, the reality is that a significant section of young cadres are either not part of or are alienated from the Youth League itself.

■ *There is consensus within the movement that there should be better gender balance in the NEC, beyond the one-third achieved at the last National Conference*: however, as to whether this should translate into a binding 50/50 constitutional requirement – thus ruling out and marginalising young male cadres – is a matter that should be further debated.

■ *The trend in the past few years is that the NEC has evolved to consist of only the middle strata and business, a consequence of political incumbency and opening of opportunities in the private sector*: it would be a travesty of its own express orientation if the ANC's national leadership does not include working class cadres.

■ *Over the past few years, there has been a weakening in balanced racial demographics in leadership structures, a matter that needs to be consciously addressed*: this is even starker in relation to the Nation Working Committee (NWC) which is made up only of Africans.

With regard to these and other issues, it will be critical as early as possible to start debating changes that may need to be introduced to the ANC Constitution in order to address a number of adjustments. For instance, consideration may need to be given to increasing the size of the NEC from the current upper limit of 93 provided for in the constitution (including at most 5 'co-optees') to a maximum of 120. This would help accommodate the following considerations:

■ 80 directly elected members plus 6 Officials,

■ if agreed, introduction of the 50/50 gender representation without necessarily displacing young male cadres who are acquitting themselves well in various capacities,

■ provision for 10 coopted members to allow for regional, demographic, class, governmental deployment and other balances,

■ four additional positions in the NEC reserved for individuals nominated by the trade union movement (COSATU), even if some trade union leaders may have been directly elected,

■ over time ensure that strategic political leadership positions in national government are occupied by elected or coopted NEC members, and the need for extended NEC meetings is reduced.

## The Presidential transition

In respect of the ANC Presidency, two options present themselves: continuation of the current President as President of the ANC, or election of a new President. While strictly speaking this should be separated from considerations relating to Presidency of the Republic, it is unavoidable that decisions taken would have to take the 2009 scenario into account. For reasons outlined below, the decision should therefore be taken as a package, with the following options:

■ ***Option I***: the current ANC President is elected to continue and a Deputy President is also elected. In this consideration, the question regarding the President and Deputy President of the Republic in 2009 would be left open. The Deputy President of the ANC could become the country's President (Option Ia) or someone else selected through the list process (Option Ib), and that person would select their Deputy President in government.

■ ***Option II***: a new ANC President is elected and a Deputy President also elected. A consideration in many cadres' minds and the public perception would be that the ANC President would become the movement's 2009 Presidential candidate. In 2009, the ANC Deputy President (Option IIa) or anyone else (Option IIb) would be appointed as Deputy President of the country.

What are the pros and cons of each option? Attached to these are general conceptual issues as well as, unavoidably, matters that relate to personalities and all kinds of sensibilities.

If Option I is adopted, the following issues will need to be addressed in order to deal with the disadvantages:

■ There will be a need very clearly and very firmly, possibly as a resolution of National Conference, to assert that the ANC is not considering amending the country's Constitution to provide for a third term.

■ While unconventional and not provided for in the ANC constitution and processes, the NEC may wish earlier than the list processes to designate the ANC Deputy President (or whoever else) as the movement's candidate in the 2009 elections, and ask branches to endorse.

■ The experience of some countries, in particular Tanzania, is that, due to pressures of time, and the fact that a former state President is required to fulfil intense functions beyond the country itself and to develop a profile broader than the political party, they are forced after a few years to relinquish the party position. In this instance, this could be allowed to happen after the 2009 elections (with the proviso that in 2007, the ANC Constitution can be amended to allow for the ANC Deputy President to act as President until the next Conference or NGC).

Option 1: Presidential continuity

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---|---|
| Ensure continuation of active leadership with experience and proven capabilities | Leaves open question of ultimate leader of movement (and by extension of government) and introduces uncertainty among the public, investors and even ANC members, including new suspicions about a 3rd government term |
| Incumbent helps to guide new leadership and ensure smooth transition, possibly to new generation | Sets in train intense lobbying and competition for nomination to country's Presidency with machinations within and outside movement |
| Consolidates ANC as ultimate centre guiding cadres in all areas of deployment | Deepens tensions and renders list processes in build-up to 2009 elections so intense and so divisive that movement is paralysed |
| Avoids perceptions of 'lame duck' State President which those opposed to the ANC would invoke to undermine authority of movement and government as a whole | Does not allow incumbent in government time and space to gradually bow out, while at the same time assisting the new ANC President to establish appropriate profile before election campaign |
| Ensures continuity in terms of established style, culture and conventions | Engenders a psychology of dependency in the ANC and across broader society |

Option 2: New President elected

| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|---|---|
| Affords ANC to give sense of new beginning to society and to communicate notion of change within broader policy continuity | Given fragility of movement in the current period, sudden change may worsen tensions |
| Ensures certainty within ANC and among the public with regard to most senior leadership of the country post-2009 elections | Sudden change may lead to disorganisation and dislocation, and tendencies may emerge to undermine former ANC President and state incumbent |
| Ensures better management of list processes in the build-up to 2009 elections | May introduce a false sense of resolution of the issue of electoral Presidential candidate, whereas list process itself could result in a different outcome |
| Allows incumbent to assist new ANC President to learn the ropes in relation to governance | Entrenches psychology of 'lame duck' State President within government, undermining implementation of ANC policies |
| Eliminates psychology of dependency and allows for possibility of overall generational change at the high profile level | Results in traditions of the movement and institutional memory being erased in a hasty clamour for new way of doing things |

## Some implications of the Options

In addition to the observations above, the following needs to be kept in mind:

■ For both options, there will be a need to reflect on the issue of continuity in government, particularly at the senior-most level within the Presidency. Although this is a matter that will be decided upon by the new President of the Republic, and will depend in part on the outcome of National Conference, the point needs to be made that total discontinuity may negatively impact upon the implementation of government policies.

■ For Option II, a consideration will need to be given to formalising and ensuring implementa-

tion of the decision of the movement that a former President takes active part as an ex-officio member of the collective of Officials, NWC and NEC. Consideration can also be given to electing a former President, in this case at the 2007 National Conference, as Chairperson of the ANC. This would help restore the status of this office as the custodian of ANC decisions, an impartial centre that can play a role of "speaker" and "ombuds". Other considerations may include: introducing a 2-term limit for the ANC Presidency; and formation of a Council of Elders to put to good use the wisdom of senior experienced leaders not located in formal structures.

Both options imply the emergence of a new leadership team at the highest level: new state President and/or new ANC President and the possibility of new Deputy Presidents in both the ANC and government. The membership of the movement will therefore be called upon to take momentous decisions on choices of individuals. Naturally, this should be left to the democratic process; but this does not equate to leaving such crucial matters to chance. The argument in this discussion document is that the following should be kept in mind as these processes unfold:

- The characterisation of the current balance of forces, the trajectory of the NDR and realignments in the class structure of our society should determine what personality the ANC defines for itself. The senior-most leadership identified, weighed and finally elected should be the foremost expression of this personality.
- The qualities of leadership described in 'Through the Eye of a Needle' apply even more to those who will be required to occupy the pinnacle of responsibilities within the ANC and in government.
- In deciding this vexed question, the movement also has to ensure that it does not limit itself to considerations of intellectual capacity, style of work and public profile that it has become used to in the current milieu. Continuity should be encouraged. But the recent history and current experience of the movement's Presidency (Albert Luthuli, Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki) does show that, working as a collective, the movement is able to adapt to and utilise to maximum effect the unique attributes and value addition that a given personality brings to this responsibility.

## CONCLUSION

It is a matter of principle and convention that matters relating to election of leadership are managed internally and at the appropriate time within our ranks. Their resolution is the responsibility of branches and ultimately delegates at the National Conference. However, this does not mean that the ANC should leave the field open to cultivation by others – mainly forces outside of, or opposed to, the movement.

Issues raised in this document pertaining to the trajectory of the NDR including organisational renewal should be canvassed in the context of the drafting of the new Strategy and Tactics document. As early as possible, as part of preparations for the National Policy Conference, the broader issues canvassed in this document should be introduced into debates within the branches. At the same time, ways should be found to manage the broader public discourse, and avoid shallow, personality-driven and sensationalist treatment of these critical matters.

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This is a discussion document prepared by the **POLITICAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE** of the ANC National Executive Committee.







# The golden thread of women's emancipation

*In the year of the 10th anniversary of the adoption of our Constitution,* ***Kader Asmal*** *reflects on the priority that has been given to the rights of women and the challenges that remain in achieving the total emancipation of women.*

International Women's Day is a day for applauding women's achievements and for focusing attention on the tasks which lie ahead. It is a day for reflecting on how far our society has come, and how far we still have to go. We have not, in some cases, gone very far.

The South African Constitution, and its Bill of Rights, are widely acknowledged as among the most progressive and inclusive in the world today. How did South Africa evolve from a country notorious for its human rights abuses to one that is today a leading light for other countries grappling with issues of oppression in its many forms.

We should ask ourselves: how is it possible that out of the evil system of apartheid, we could adopt a Constitution in 1996 whose Founding Provisions describe our country as a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist state. No constitution anywhere else has identified such core values.

This recognition of the special nature of women's disabilities and the need for specific gender equality did not appear because of the liberal hearts of the drafters of the Constitution. It was the result of nearly four decades of struggle, agitation and activism led by women and supported by men. And it was the particular genius of the ANC, which established the foundation on which we built the palace of 1996.

We merged the theory with the practice, recalling Lenin's injunction that theory without practice is sterile, while practice without theory is blind. Our eyes were open and were able to persuade our opponents on the correctness of our positions.

The human rights tradition of the ANC has

been a history of expanding the scope of inclusion within which human dignity is affirmed. Although the Bill of Rights in the "Africans' Claims in South Africa" in 1943 clearly applied to both men and women, its primary focus was on eliminating racial discrimination. However, there were two proposals – apart from being way ahead of the times – which reflected the gender free approach of the drafters. The first was the demand of universal suffrage for all adults and the second concerned the revolutionary concept of equal pay for equal work.

During the early 1950s, the ANC developed new initiatives to assert women's rights as human rights. The Women's Charter of 1954 was a landmark in this process of asserting the rights of women and demanding freedom from discrimination on the basis of gender. But long before that, Charlotte Maxeke in an extraordinary speech at a conference in Fort Hare in 1930 described movingly and vividly what became known subsequently as the triple oppression of black women. It is the most remarkable analysis of the migrant labour system and its effects, especially on the young and women. She ended with an insight that was truly precocious: "If you definitely and earnestly set out to lift women and children up in the social life of [Africans], you will find that the men will benefit and, thus, the whole community, both Black and White."

The emancipation of black women, therefore, will liberate men, she implied, from the shackles that imprison them.

In the founding constitution of the ANC of 1912, women could not be full members with voting rights, but could be auxiliary members. In 1943, the year of the publication of the Africans' Claims, the ANC finally extended to women full membership in the movement, the first liberation movement to do so.

From the beginning, women participated in the Bantu Women's League, formed in 1919 under the leadership of Charlotte Maxeke, and the ANC Women's League, launched in 1948, which mobilised women in campaigns against pass laws, poor working conditions, high food prices, and the enactments of apartheid. During 1954, the ANC Women's League played a leading role in the formation of the Federation of South African Women, a non-racial organisation that drafted the Women's Charter at its inaugural conference. This powerful formulation of women's rights, which still stands as a reference point in contemporary efforts for the liberation and empowerment of women, made a major contribution to expanding the scope of the ANC human rights tradition by insisting that the quest for human dignity must be not only non-racial but also non-sexist.

The Federation of South African Women realised Charlotte Maxeke's vision of a non-racial organisation of women. The Federation also embodied her militancy, emerging in the context of the large-scale mobilisation of women during the 1950s in towns and rural areas in protest against pass laws and other forms of apartheid oppression. Accordingly, the demands of the Charter were based in a rich history of struggle against all forms of oppression and gender discrimination. The Women's Charter called for the right to vote, the right to full employment opportunities, equal rights with men in relation to property, marriage and children and for the removal of all laws and restrictive customs that deny women such equal rights. The Women's Charter called for compulsory and free education for all children and removal of laws that restrict movement and all oppressive laws.

In all of these legitimate demands for women's rights, the Women's Charter of 1954 profoundly shaped the character of the human rights tradition of the ANC and the nature of the democratic dispensation in a liberated South Africa.

We celebrate this year the 50th anniversary on our Women's Day, 9 August, the famous march on the Union Buildings by over 20,000 women. It is best known for the slogan, "Strijdom, you have struck a rock". Although the march was organised to oppose the extension of the pass laws to women and for the repeal of all pass laws, the petition ended in the language of rights: "We shall not rest until we have won for our children the fundamental rights of freedom, justice and security".

The Freedom Charter of 1955, as we all know, produced a major programme for political social and economic emancipation. It became a beacon for women and men united in a common struggle for dignity, equality and social justice. All rights, the Charter laid down, are indivisible.

But the ANC had not forgotten that a general approach of rights for all ignored the specific disabilities that women only suffer from. Building on the Women's Charter of 1954, the negotiating stance of the ANC reflected the need for specific references to women's rights. In 1988, as a response to the need to clarify the ANC's negotiations stance, we produced the 'Constitutional Guidelines for a Democratic South Africa'. The clarion call, with its first reference to affirmative action, was as follows: "Women shall have equal rights in all spheres of public and private life and the state shall take affirmative action to eliminate inequalities and discrimination between the sexes."

Women were no longer invisible. No political party could claim such a striking commitment which was strengthened and expanded, on the eve of real negotiations, when the ANC adopted in April 1991 the 'Constitutional Principles for a Democratic South Africa'. We bore in mind Oliver Tambo's declaration that we shall not be free if one half of our people continue to be oppressed.

It is worth quoting in full the provision headed in the Principles as Non-Sexist, the first time such a phrase was used in the constitutional negotiations:

"The new Constitution must reflect a commitment to full, free and equal participation in the new South Africa. Law and practice keep South African women out of their rightful place in helping to build democracy and enable a new nation to evolve and deprive them of their human rights as individuals.

The new Constitution must therefore:

- Guarantee equal rights for women and men in all spheres of public and private life;
- Create mechanisms whereby the discrimination, disabilities and disadvantages to which women have been subjected are rapidly removed;
- Give appropriate recognition to reproductive and birth rights;
- Guarantee constitutional protection against sexual violence, abuse, harassment or defamation;
- Ensure that women are heard in all issues and participate actively in all levels of society."

This has been a golden thread, a continuum, in the road map for the route to the liberation of women we followed. A better life for women demands our commitment to the programme for full emancipation.

For those who are contented, whether outside court houses, in boardrooms, as fathers or as husbands, as traditional leaders, as employers or in Parliament, I draw attention to the stirring call of Ben Okri, the Nigerian writer:

*They are only the exhausted who think*
*That they have arrived*
*At the final destination*
*The end of the road*
*With all their dreams achieved*
*And no new dreams to hold.*

We have not arrived at the final destination. We have moved from struggle to freedom. But we still have a long way to go towards the total emancipation of women internationally and at home.

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**KADER ASMAL** is a member of the ANC National Executive Committee. This is an edited version of a speech in Parliament on the celebration of International Women's Day, 8 March 2006.

# 'We will remain together until we have liberated Palestine'

*The Palestinian people are determined to follow South Africa's steps towards freedom, sovereignty and independence, writes* ***President Mahmoud Abbas****.*

The Palestinian people are proud of the historic and strong bonds of relations with the people of South Africa. They are looking towards South Africa as a model from which we draw lessons and inspiration, to continue our march to achieve a just and comprehensive peace and regain our rights of self determination and establishment of independent state of Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital.

I would like to reaffirm our deep pride of the historic relations between our two peoples, which were established many years ago during our common struggle for justice and freedom, which gave birth to the new South Africa.

South Africa's policies against all forms of human rights violations and its role in support of political and economic stability and conflict resolution in Africa is testimony to the leading role of South Africa and its leadership.

South Africa's great achievements in lifting the injustice perpetuated against your people, marked by the historic defeat of apartheid, is a unique human achievement which lead to political and economic stability and equality regardless of colour, race and religion.

The Palestinian people have and still continue to sacrifice and suffer tremendously to obtain their freedom. The Palestinian people are living under extremely difficult and dangerous conditions, where they are subjected to all kinds of torture, siege, suffocation and confiscation of land by Israel, the occupying force. These aggressive and illegal practices are aimed at establishing its illegal settlement in our land and to undermine the peace process and all the regional and international initiatives to revive it.

It seeks to destroy our National Authority and the recent Israeli military aggression against the city of Jericho. Its crime of kidnapping the Palestinian prisoners is clear evidence of Israel's intentions to ignore and disregard all the signed international agreements.

The participation and advice [of South Africa] is essential under these complex and difficult circumstances and we are confident that, with our dear friend President Thabo Mbeki and members of his government, we can reach common positions, through which we can push towards reviving the peace process in our region. We Palestinians are very keen and interested in learning more about your experience that will help us to advance the political process in the Middle East.

We welcome any effort that your government would make and we assure you, that despite all our suffering, we will remain committed to all peace initiatives and continue to be responsible and objective in positively responding to all regional and international efforts and initiatives aimed at reviving and protecting the peace process, despite Israeli obstruction of the negotiation process to replace it with the iron fist and unilateral policies, which we vehemently reject. We demand that these policies cease immediately as they intend to draw and define the final solution unilaterally.

We have agreed to the Road Map sponsored by the Quartet Committee. The government of Israel, however, has put forward 14 reservations on this plan and has relied on its force and influence to continue expansionist policies and oppression against our people. It has misled the world by creating the impression that there is no Palestinian partner to negotiate with.

We are ready start the negotiations immediately and to implement all the United Nations (UN) resolutions and signed agreements. The real obstacle is the obstinate Israeli stance from the one side and the lack of effective intervention by the international community from the other.

It is unacceptable to use the victory of Hamas in the elections of the second Palestinian Legislative Council as an excuse to increase the Israeli aggression against our people and punish our people for their democratic choice.





***Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas addresses supporters following the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, August 2005***

I would like to call upon all peace and freedom loving people in the world to exert all necessary efforts to stop the Israeli aggression and to implement all the signed agreements and the relevant UN resolutions. That will lead to the establishment of our independent Palestinian state in all the territories occupied by Israel in June 1967 – so as to accomplish the desired peace, which can ensure stability and security to all the people in the region, including Israel, and would allow our people to live freely, with dignity, sovereignty and independence on its Palestinian soil.

We have learned from your struggle that peace is possible when justice and equality prevail. No matter how powerful the enemy is, it cannot defeat the will and determination of the people to live free and dignified. As much as we wish to live in peace with our Israeli neighbours, we are determined in upholding our national rights in our country, to reach the day when we have a free, independent and democratic Palestine, which will contribute towards the stability and prosperity or the Middle East.

The extent of the suffering of our people is beyond imagination and words, either on the economic level, [with respect to] freedom of movement, or the ghettos that are being imposed on our people, who live in isolated areas surrounded by either Jewish settlements or by the Israeli military forces. Specific roads and routes are being designed for settlers that are forbidden to Palestinians.

May I once again congratulate you for your achievements in South Africa. We are determined to follow your steps towards freedom, sovereignty and independence. We will remain together until we have liberated Palestine and we will defend the freedom of others as we defend ours.

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**PRESIDENT MAHMOUD ABBAS** is Chair of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and President of the Palestinian National Authority. This is an edited version of his address to a joint sitting of the South African Parliament on 31 March 2006.

# The state of the State

*While there are various ways of conceptualising the current form and role of the South African state, there are certain basic requirements if the objectives of the national democratic revolution are to be advanced, writes* ***Siphelo Ngcwangu****.*

The contradictions that have emerged within this transition period have required varying tactical manoeuvres aimed at formulating a basis for a sustainable development path. However these contestations have also opened the space for a meaningful debate within the movement about the resources, measures and mechanisms necessary to building a state capable of responding to the legacy of apartheid and colonialism.

Three forms of cynicism have emerged to criticise the development path chosen by the ANC. The first cynicism argues that the ANC government is creating a 'technicist' approach to governance, meaning that all policy is reduced to technical jargon and bureaucratic reasoning. The second cynicism argues that the masses have been left out of the development agenda due to the prevailing bureaucratic rationality. Thirdly, a rather tired argument by so-called 'new social movements' that the ANC is advancing 'neo-liberal' policies. Interestingly this voice also finds expression within the broad movement itself. Given that neo-liberalism calls for a minimalist state, it is not possible to characterise the development path of the ANC as neo-liberal. We now have greater consensus that in certain areas we actually need to widen the capacity of state to deliver services to our people.

What are the implications of a purely pragmatic approach? Is it not too soon to discount the possible benefits of a capacitated technical bureaucracy that could lay the basis for a future strong democratic state? What are the limits to the 'stabilisation' paradigm? To what extent has deepening democracy through people's participation been construed? Are structures set up for this task, such as ward committees, effective? Is this not an integral phase of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR)? Consequently how do these debates impact the different structures of the ANC and the debates ensuing in these structures?

The current approaches to the debate are all inherently problematic because they engage with the formation of the state from a perspective of a closed experiment. Whereas, as was argued by Zita (2002), you cannot approach an experiment as something that is closed, you should of necessity be open-ended.

Varying methods of conceptualising the state exist. The South African state is a capitalist state, while the government is democratic.

## 'WEAK' vs 'STRONG' DEVELOPMENTAL STATE HYPOTHESIS

The proponents of the 'weak' vs 'strong' developmental state hypothesis suggest that the weak state approach privileges the power of globalisation over that of the state while the strong developmental state approach privileges the agency of the state. Overwhelmingly both schools of thought emphasise the structural factors influencing state formation.[1] In other words the 'weak' state succumbs to the dominance of global capitalism and is therefore 'hollowed out' as it is forced to conform to the dominant global reality.

The weak state is therefore unable in the face of rampant capitalism to provide the necessary potential for a possible alternative solution to underdevelopment. Therefore the South African state cannot be seen as 'weak' due to the current development trajectory that seeks to improve and rehabilitate the state machinery to deepen democracy and development. However this project cannot of necessity neglect the possibility of mobilising certain elements of capital that could strategically support our own developmental path, with the long-term goal of solidifying the state's resolve in driving the development programme.

On the other hand a 'strong' developmental state, it is argued, is formed by the emergence of an internal consensus that sees an advancement of the productive forces to the extent that the state is able to drive the development project itself. Theorists view the 'strong' developmental state as having potential to avert the negative implications of globalisation with the likelihood of creating exit strategies in the face of globalisation's advance. The South African state is emerging out of a process of democratisation that has seen an institutional reform aimed at building strong democratic bodies that can drive the initial phase of the development project. This has been supported by extended social measures such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), extended social welfare systems, free basic education, free water and electricity supply to the indigent, etc. These are intended to give meaning to the democratic transformation process with the intention of adding socioeconomic value to the democratic ideals enshrined in the constitution.

Viable states require a minimum of administrative capacity. Contrary to a pervasive mythology, the popular goodwill which the South African government still enjoys is based partly on relative (albeit uneven) success in delivering public goods to citizens denied them in the past.[2] Although sometimes discounted as 'technicist' the state-building project in South Africa in certain areas will rely on a strong technical base to ensure a trajectory of sustainable development. This should not however be read to mean a teleological approach, which sees the building of capacity as an end in itself.

The current phase of the NDR is subject to these contestations. Ensuring that the capacity is built into governance structures will consolidate the gains that have been made in the last twelve years. However, as the Spanish experience showed in the 1990s, what can start off as a stabilisation project may well have unintended consequences in as much as what starts as a popular project could end with conservative outcomes. Such is the paradox of consequence.

The underlying logic should not see economic stability as an 'end' but rather as a 'means' to deepening national democracy. Therefore capacity in the state is necessary to facilitate the emergence of national democracy accompanied by socioeconomic meaning for our citizens. Even the emerging protests by communities do not challenge the legitimacy of the government nor its class bias. A well-functioning public service could drive the delivery and expansion of those services while democratic structures adequately carry out their tasks. Therefore a narrow dichotomy of weak or strong does not answer the question effectively. The path towards building the state and the complexities it engenders is where our debate should currently be situated.

## POLITICAL ECONOMY OF TRANSITION

How clear is our programme on international capital? What role will or can state-owned enterprises play in the development project? Are we clear about the 'line ofmarch'.[3] We have realised that consolidating the state in the face of advancing capitalist globalisation may well be a challenging task. Thus it becomes necessary to outline which mechanism we wish to put in place to regulate the activities of international investment. Until now our policy has been crafted around an approach of 'positioning' South Africa in a hostile global market as an investment destination.

However as the latest UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) report on foreign direct investment suggests investments should be linked to the idea of strengthening the local economies of host countries while contributing to sustainable livelihoods. For example, Joseph Stiglitz argues that foreign banks with their greater size may 'crowd out' domestic banks by offering terms which local banks may battle to compete with, thereby challenging the approach government has adopted in transforming the financial sector. This is an exemplar of the ambivalences of social change in a democratic South Africa. At the level of providing banking services to the 'underbanked', the Mzansi account campaign has been a success, but increased investments and participation in our economy by foreign banks could well undermine the gains made through the transformative initiatives in place. The state's position within that framework becomes crucial, specifically as it relates to policy formation. The regulatory instruments we have in place should be consolidated to ensure that the bias towards the poor is sustained.

The State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) therefore have an important role to play in improving infrastructure, not merely to attract investment, but as a conscious effort to ensure a broader production base is laid for greater fixed investment. The idea should be to avert the possibility of the state being unable to drive the regulatory framework within which capital operates. Following the Growth and Development Summit we have consensus that SOEs should actively pursue a development focused approach to ensure the democratic forces greater leverage over the overall thrust of the productive forces in the country. The ideas presented so far illustrate that the South African reality and state-formation can't be interpreted through 'grand narrative' approaches.

The path necessitates that the class character of our society (and our movement) be played out and contested at all levels of government. The NDR seeks to mobilise the working class, the statist element and capital with the intention of playing out the ultimate society we want to build in South Africa. In the short to medium term, as argued earlier, a bureaucratic core of cadres will emerge to implement that reality. The emphasis

should be on that cadre not to be oblivious to the values and historical mission of the democratic movement. As such the debate of 'bureaucratisation' of the movement should not be shortsighted but consider the concrete reality and the political environment in which we operate.

## THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Mass mobilisation is integral to ensuring the success of our programme. It's only when the masses are organised at the community level to be both a bulwark for the NDR and also sustain the local level as a site for political engagement that our development path will have meaning. This is an inherent part of the goals of the ANC. It is well within reason for the ANC leadership to view with skepticism the emergence of extra-parliamentary voices, as they quite, often do not necessarily challenge the development thrust of the government but primarily raise the leadership component at the local level. More broadly centralising power in the movement allows for greater control over the expediencies of local leaders and ensures greater accountability to the working class. This should not be interpreted to mean that local democracy is not necessary, and local communities are distrusted, but a measure of coordination at the centre ensures the ANC is able to give strategic guidance to its leadership at the local level.

The strategic framework therefore has to negotiate the basic pillars of the NDR, consolidate the capacity of the institutional framework (including the regulatory environment), ensure popular participation at all levels and devise policies that play out the class character of our society with a bias to the working class, the poor and the landless. Representative democracy would then clearly be a means to an end and not an end in itself. Electoral politics may not provide a substantive politics, but it does guarantee an important principle of the Freedom Charter that 'the people shall govern'. The people have a chance to determine their own future and choose who their leaders should be.

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**Notes**

1. Hobson, M & Ramesh, M (2002) Globalisation Makes of States What States Make of It: Between Agency and Structure in the State/Globalisation Debate, New Political Economy Vol.7 No.1
2. See Friedman, S (2000) Beyond Consolidation: State and Democracy in Contemporary Africa, Centre for Policy Studies
3. Jordan (2003) Launch of Chris Hani Institute, Johannesburg.





# Motive forces and the ANC

*The tendency to describe the ANC as a "broad church" is part of a broader effort to deny the working class bias which must characterise the ANC's understanding of its tasks and its analysis of the motive forces, argues* ***Zwelinzima Sizani****.*

The national liberation movement appears to be undergoing a metamorphosis. This metamorphosis takes the form of the coining of terminology that is said to be depicting the "true" nature of the ANC, in particular, and the national liberation movement, in general.

The ANC is described and characterised as "an omnibus, a broad church". Lurking behind this form, and, now, content, is a very serious assault on the character of the ANC, one that those who habour such ideal seem to be winning. This is an unplanned change of the ANC's official principle of recognising the working class as the social class to lead today's revolutionary process, given the fact that the dominant socio-economic system, even today, is capitalism.

History, and the movement from one socio-economic system to a new and higher one, can only be led by the working masses, with the other classes and strata – much as they have to be mobilised and organised under the revolutionary banner being mobilised to play a supportive and a complementary role. The role of other classes and strata should be complementary, because it is the working masses who bear the brunt of economic marginalisation and capitalist accumulation, and for whom the laws governing the movement from one socioeconomic system to another have a direct historical bearing.

## DEFINITION OF THE MOTIVE FORCES

The motive forces have been defined differently by various people within the liberation movement, informed largely by knowledge systems of idealist tertiary institutions.

The *Dictionary of Philosophy* (Progress Publishers, p.280) describes the motive forces thus:

"Motive Forces of the Development of society, essential, necessary and lasting factors society's functioning, progress, development. Idealists identify the motive forces with ideal motives and incentives of man's historical activity, see their origin in immutable human nature, in outside nature, or supernatural powers, or in mechanical combinations of various factors. The classics of Marxism-Leninism proved that man's historical activity is impelled by material factors. They proved that the latter are primary and determining in relation to political and intellectual factors, that they are active and relatively independent. They showed that the working masses are the real makers of history. The Motive Forces of the development of society, in a broad sense include social contradictions as an ultimate condition of self-development and self-motion; the progressive activity of social subjects, which resolve these contradictions; the motivation for this activity (needs, interests, etc.) According to their composition and function the motive forces of the development of society are divided into natural (demographic and geographic) and social factors; the social into material and economic factors, socio-political and spiritual, objective and subjective. The major general historical motive force is the Mode of Production of material goods. The main specific motive force for all antagonistic socio-economic formations is the class struggle..."

What has become dominant in the ANC is the idealist definition captured in the second sentence of the above definition of the motive forces. This is the result of defining the ANC as "an omnibus, a broad church"; interpreted as saying that the ANC is open to influences from any quarters, including elements that may, quite consciously, want to downplay the space that has to be created for the working class to undertake its role (much as membership statistics may indicate otherwise) of moving society to a national democratic revolution (NDR) stage. Without a conscious working class bias in the thrust of our revolution's trajectory, capitalist and racist relations will continue to beset our society.

On the whole, capitalist relations are inherently discriminatory, and have, in our society's past, been used to discriminate against the black majority. The ANC submission to the World Conference Against Racism (WCAR) discussed this: "At a societal level, racism exists in the context of social institutions, economic relations and patterns of political power, which reproduce

themselves and change over time. Prejudice and the commission of discriminatory actions reflect a historically specific system that legitimises and, in a perveted sense, gives moral sanction to the political oppression, economic exploitation, and inequitable treatment of a segment of society. It entails the exercise of political, economic and social power and control over racially defined categories of people by a dominant racial group." (*Submission of the ANC at the World Conference Against Racism*, NGO Forum, 2001)

The implication is not that the working class have to go it alone in changing society. The other classes have to be mobilised and organised by this very same working class under its black, green and gold banners.

This seemingly insignificant issue, of how we define the motive forces of this revolution, has very serious implications for how we map tactics for the future and in the short to medium term.

This issue reflects an assault on the character of the movement. This is not articulated forthrightly, but is couched even in documents of the movement. The *ANC Gauteng 2004 Base Document* (pp.21-30), prepared as a discussion document ahead of the provincial conference, relegates the working class to a third priority after women and youth. This is perhaps presented under the guise of the fact that Gauteng has more young people (two-thirds of the population is under the age of 35). Compared to other provinces this is not particularly high; in South Africa as a whole 70% of the population is below 35.

To identify the motive forces "with ideal motives and incentives of man's historical activity, [and to] see their origin in immutable human nature, in outside nature, or supernatural powers, or in mechanical combinations of various factors" is an unmitigated conscious effort to underplay the importance of the working class. When this was being contested at the time of the drafting of this document, the argument was that we should be pragmatic – the population of the province is young, and therefore our focus should be on this strata (albeit one that is not directly involved in creating wealth for the country or in the movement of society from one socioeconomic formation to a higher one).

The argument that we need to focus on the youth because they are the future of our country is ageist, simplistic and didactic. It does not recognise that we have to start now in putting the main motive force at the centre of the NDR, and start now to create a seamless environment for this class which bears the future of humanity to be the actual driving force of this revolutionary process, as against the present national democratic dispensation.

The focus on the well-being of non-core strata like the youth, the middle class and the emerging black bourgeoisie is misplaced. It shifts attention to the development of policies that are unmindful of working class interests and needs.

Every effort should be made to ensure we produce a youth that is well-rounded and conscious of the role that the working class has to play in the NDR.

The material basis of apartheid was the economy. We should therefore focus our overwhelming attention to the majority class' needs and interests, without being sidetracked by economic issues that 'benefit' individuals.

## MOTIVE FORCES AND THE GAINS OF THE REVOLUTION

The working class is pivotal in the resolution of the social contradictions that propel society to a higher stage (in our case, for now, the NDR). Since the working class comprises the majority in society, addressing their needs and interests contributes to the betterment of the lives of the majority of our people.

With regard to the present challenges of the South African revolution, we cannot but begin to put the working class, the black one in particular, at the lead stage of whatever we do, to address all of society's needs and interests.

As we remain committed to the implementation of the Freedom Charter we must improve the mobilisation of this class – an historically necessary catalyst for social revolution. The central pillar to the success of the NDR in our country will always be the black working class in particular.

Why is this so? The ANC's WCAR document says: "At a societal level, racism exists in the context of social institutions, economic relations and patterns of political power..." This implies that there can never be any significant change to the racist and exploitative systemic relations that continue to engulf our people unless we address the material conditions of our people. The definition of the National Question in the 1997 ANC National Conference resolutions is a concise guide to the strategic importance of the working class in the transition to the maturation of our NDR.

"The Strategy and Tactics document defines the motive forces as the black masses, those classes and strata that objectively and systemically stand to gain from the victory and consolidation of the national democratic revolution..." The following sentence only then, "identifies the working class and the poor – in both rural and urban areas – as the core of these forces, the sectors whose material conditions and social position impel them consistently to pursue thoroughgoing change".

The *Strategy and Tactics* document is innocently worded to give space to an approach that talks of the masses as separate from the working class – as if one ceases to be part of the masses when one dons overalls at a place of work.

In the development of policy and solutions we tend to mechanically separate the symbiotic connectedness of the black masses and the working class and the poor. This affects the manner in which policy implementation plans are then developed. It then looks as if there is a serious ideological disjuncture between ANC policy frameworks and government ones. This may sound insignificant, but it is a problem that is deepening and may end up rupturing the dialectic relations of a governing party and its government, leading to actual policy frameworks that are at discord with those adopted at ANC Conferences. This situation needs to be arrested.

What is lacking in this definition is the assertion of a people (the majority of whom are the working masses) being organised to wrest the material basis of wealth so as not to be recipients of government handouts, but a bulwark that maps and charts its own organised destiny. Let us move away from utterances such as "benefits for the people", parading ourselves as disbursers of gratitude to a destitute mass.

The movement has to move away from the premise of wanting to provide what the motive forces stand to gain, but begin to commit itself to organising the working masses to be their own liberators, not only in social terms but, most fundamentally, also, in the arena of mass economic emancipation, beyond the broad-based black economic empowerment vision.

At the moment we appear as seers who have all the formulae to resolve our people's plight. This does not mean the movement should not lead. However, the manner and form of that leadership should not be disassociated from the overall involvement of the people themselves, at the helm of whom are and should be the working class.

We might argue that we have put in place structures of civil society to address this and to deepen participatory democracy. However there is not much commitment to, and focus on, empowering our own organisational structures, branches in particular, to begin to mobilise the masses to play a leadership role in organs of civil society like ward committees, community policing forums, etc.

We have at last acknowledged that South Africa is a capitalist country. But we have not yet reached the stage of defeatism and despair at our situation. The task of bettering the lives of our people, within the transition from the immediate past colonial set up, should be informed by a necessary shift from a movement that has all the formulae to a position of confidence in the organising of the masses of our people to, together with them, better their lives.

We have assimilated, within our approaches to organising, the liberal form of outreach. The manner in which we allow our structures to flout the frameworks for constituting ward committees, wherein different community sectors have to be mobilised and organised to deepen participatory democracy, is reflective of a laissez faire approach to the organising of the motive forces.

All sorts of excuses are brought forward as to why it is not practical to have active ward committees, when we forget that we have used our own organisational malpractices – like gate keeping – to stifle the intended dynamism of these organs of people's power. We have allowed our structures to have all members of ward committees being card-carrying ANC members – probably as recipients of patronage for what might have been support during elections. There could also be a misunderstanding around the function of these organs of participatory democracy.

Ward committees have a bearing on how we mobilise our motive forces, and get them to be participants in structures of local democracy at community level. The locus of the struggle to win aerial and ground support from the masses is located also in residential areas, the point at which our structures have to mobilise and organise the working class and other classes and strata.

The membership of the movement is overwhelmingly working class. But that does not translate into the dominance of working class ideology and politics in ANC discourse. Usage of working class ideological methodology and terminology is frowned on and regarded as "outdated thinking". However, tools of analysis are not about what is fashionable or acceptable, but should be informed by what best and objective tools need to be utilised to analyse and come up with solutions to problems facing the people. Idealist and bourgeois tools of analysis are by far much ancient than working class ones.

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# A personal perspective on the ANC

*The 2006 local government elections marked the formal dissolution of the New National Party, following the decision of many of its leaders and members to join the ANC.* ***Renier Schoeman*** *reflects on his own personal experience of this transition and the challenges ahead.*

I had the privilege of attending the ANC National General Council in June 2005 as a deployed cadre. In the many documents we received there was a section headed, *"Peoples Power in Action"*, which for me captured, in a unique and powerful way, the essence of the challenge we face when we seek to mobilise support for the ANC in communities which have not yet supported ANC in significant numbers. I believe this can be changed.

According to the NGC documents: "While the majority within the white community harboured misconceptions about democratic majority rule, experience since April 1994 is showing that, loss of ill-gotten privilege aside, the new system affords them the kind of freedom and security which is legitimate, long-term and therefore more meaningful.

"Indeed, many of these and other sectors of society who benefited from apartheid harbour a positive ambivalence or even critical support towards the process of change. These sectors, and indeed the white community as such, are therefore not an exclusive terrain of parties opposed to change. It is the task of the democratic movement to try and liberate them and, where possible, their political representatives, from the prison of fear, hatred and antipathy towards the process of transformation... The benefits they enjoy deriving from the new order, and the new sense of proud belonging they nurture, are among the elements that should be harnessed."

Against this background I want to sketch my own exposure to and experience of the ANC over a number of years. It started after 2 February 1990 and the release of Nelson Mandela and others and the return of exiles. Not long after that point, I became Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs under President FW de Klerk and had my first contacts with President Thabo Mbeki, who was then ANC Foreign Affairs spokesperson. Even after my first personal interactions with him at a conference in London I was vastly impressed with his self-confidence, balance and international skills and standing.

Although I was not part of Codesa, I had exposure to many ANC leaders like Terror Lekota, Ronnie Kasrils, Aziz Pahad, Tito Mboweni, Cyril Ramaphosa and many others. My first impression was of a group of highly motivated, well-prepared people who were ready to play their role in building a new better South Africa, which is what we in the National Party of President De Klerk understood would have to come about under ANC leadership. It was at this time that I also had my first contacts with people like Sbu Ndebele, Zwele Mkhize, Mike Mabuyakhulu and many others as political competitors in KwaZulu Natal.

After the ANC took power in 1994, in terms of the Government of National Unity, I had the great honour of serving under President Mandela for two years from 1994 to 1996 as Deputy Minister of Education, working under Prof Sibusiso Bengu with whom I had a very cordial relationship in a difficult portfolio.

The first two years of our participation as the National Party was not always easy because, quite naturally, given where we all came from, there was a very cautious approach from both sides, sometimes even suspicion. There was great pressure on the ANC to deliver, fast, and on the National Party to be defensive and protective, especially on issues like education.

Unfortunately, the route the NP took to withdraw from the Government of National Unity in 1996 was a fatal mistake from which it never really recovered. Our decision to withdraw from a sharing of governance and rather to play only an opposition role was not what the voters really wanted or the country needed.

## THE DA DETOUR

I am not going to dwell on the consistent weakening of the New National Party (NNP) over the following few years but I do want to refer briefly to the disastrous detour which we took into the Democratic Alliance (DA), and which was in retrospect also a major mistake.

The DA actually harms rather than promotes the legitimate interests of minorities in South Africa. This is because of the way the DA engages in the national debate. It seems to be consistently destructive and overstates its case, resulting in a loss of credibility.

For example, the DA's leader, Tony Leon, makes a highly tendentious statement when he says: "...and so nation building is reduced to venal rent-seeking as individuals trade on their race to achieve wealth and power."

This cynical accusation simply does not stand up to critical examination. The evidence to the contrary, among other things in the repeated pronouncements and actions of President Thabo Mbeki, is there for all who are not blinded by prejudice against the ANC to see. The DA collectively, with the exception of a few of its leader group, has an obvious "blind spot" in respect of the ANC, which precludes it from a decent engagement with the ruling party. It seems that the DA actually contaminates every cause that it tries to embrace and so ensures the failure of that which it is trying to achieve.

By generalising in a negative way, the DA is not only contributing to polarisation but is being seen as resistant to changes aimed at improving the quality of life of many South Africans, mainly black South Africans, who are living under totally unacceptable conditions.

In contrast to this, our message to the people must be that there is another, better way and that is to support the efforts to build a national consensus founded on true South African patriotism as a critical instrument in the effort to deracialise our society and to develop a unity of purpose to confront the great challenges of our country.

It was precisely with this in mind that Marthinus van Schalkwyk and a few of us other senior leaders led the NNP into a historic new relationship with the ANC in November 2001, which culminated in our decision in 2005 to disband the NNP after 91 years and to join the ANC.

In November 2002 I had the honour to be appointed as Deputy Minister of Health under Dr Manto Tshabalala-Msimang. What was really striking in my second term in an ANC-led government from 2002 was the ANC's confidence in government after the six years that had passed since 1996. The quality of cabinet discussions and presentations were of a world-class standard. As one who has been close to government at cabinet level in various capacities for most of my career, I think our governance at cabinet level compares with the best in the world.

Another NGC document, entitled *"Unity And Diversity in the ANC"*, says:

"Working in an ever-changing environment, the ANC has acquired a remarkable tactical resilience. But what has enabled the ANC to play this role is its understanding that diversity and unity are not diametrical opposites, but dialectical opposites; that these are mutually reinforcing aspects of democratic politics. The unity among its ranks and supporters is what has made this movement strong and imbued it with the capacity to give leadership to our diverse people and nation. But the movement never misconstrued unity as uniformity. The ANC has always valued the breadth of its appeal and the diversity of its ranks, but placed equal value on unity in action. The creative management of that tension is the secret of its success.

"The ANC embraced certain key democratic political values, principles and practices, to which it has consistently adhered, both in it public and its inner life. It is by remaining true to those ideals and values that the ANC has remained relevant to the people of South Africa and to the world.

"The story of the ANC is that of several thousands of ordinary South Africans, working and struggling together as comrades, to propound the vision of a South Africa that would be a better place for all its people. After ninety-three years, the ANC lives and the ANC still leads."

I can identify with every sentiment here. Let us all be a part of that living and leading in the ranks of the ANC.

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**RENIER SCHOEMAN** is a member of the ANC and a former executive director of the New National Party.

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