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THE QUOTA SYSTEM OF REPORTING NEWS WILL DESTROY THE SABC

The submission by the ruling party that the SABC should allocate 62% of its news coverage to it would be comical if it was not tragic. The ruling party wants the coverage of news and current affairs to reflect its majority status as reflected in parliament.



Interestingly, this submission is being made in the context of the ruling party refuting claims of editorial interference at the public broadcaster.

Anybody who has a basic understanding of what constitutes news would struggle to understand how the proposal of a quota system in the allocation of news coverage would work. For the quota system to be effectively implemented, the SABC would have to actually cease to become a news organisation. Unfortunately, it will have to essentially become a propaganda tool for the ruling party where at least 62% of the coverage reflects the ruling party. This means that the SABC must ignore breaking news and ensure that sufficient space is reserved for the ruling party. How tragic?

Sadly, this proposal is being made at a time when the SABC is going through a renewal phase to assure the public that it wants to restore confidence in the pub-

lic broadcaster; and wants to remain true to its mandate of being a public broadcaster, and not a tool for state propaganda.

The previous management at the SABC had almost brought the SABC to its knees. That management that undermined editorial policies of the SABC were pawns of the dominant faction of the ruling party at the time. When another faction of the ruling party took over, it promised to leave the SABC alone to do its work without political interference. Sadly, the submission on the quota allocation of editorial space undermines that commitment.

Our position as AZAPO is that the SABC is a national asset whose independence and professional integrity should be protected by all patriots. It is important for the SABC to be credible so that it can serve the millions of South Africans who rely on it for news and information.

The SABC should be allowed to cover news events on the basis of their newsworthiness, and not because of any other consideration. If the SABC is not given the space to discharge its news mandate, then the ruling party should not be surprised when public broadcaster's viewership and audiences drop as viewers and listeners vote with their remote-controller and switch to other credible sources of news and information.

The drafters of the quota system should be alerted that it is not in the best interest of the country and even the ruling party to destroy the SABC.

THE EVER-RISING FUEL PRICES PLUNGE CITIZENS INTO A NEW DOWN

Just this past April, our wallets were emptied by a 52 cents fuel levy increase. Based on that fuel increase, the Automobile Association (AA) gave the citizens a breakdown of that damage on their pockets. The levies are about 40% of the price of fuel at the pumps, which amounts to R5.30 a litre of fuel.

Still based on that April increase, the AA revealed



that it cost you R694.50 to fill a 50 litre tank at the coast. Of that R694.50 damage, R264 went the fuel levies. These levies are divided between the General Fuel Levy, which received R168.50; and the Road Accident Fund (RAF), which got R96.50. The remaining R139 went to the parties that store, transport and sell petrol to you. AA rubs salt into the wound by making it clear that of the nearly R700 you spent on a 50 litre tank at the coast, that petrol actually costs a meagre R290.50 on its arrival in a ship at the harbour! That's the New Down for you.

If you cried out hard on that April damage, we wonder if you still had tears left to cry for the July fuel increase. On 4 July 2018 the fuel price went up yet again by 26 cents a litre for 93 octane; 95 octane went up by 23 cents; while diesel (0.05 sulphur) jumped to 26 cents a litre. Every fuel price increase means an increase in the prices of transport, food and everything related thereto. Add to that the fact that the government thought it wise to grab from the citizens' small pockets a VAT increase of one per-

centage point from 14% to 15%. That's the New Down for you.

What is more painful is that the fuel price in South Africa keeps on going up when the barrel of crude oil has gone down from \$77 to \$74 due to the decision of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) on 22 June 2018 to increase the supply of oil in the market to reduce prices and compete for a bigger market share against their rivals. The reason why the citizens are not able to benefit from such global decrease in fuel prices is to be found in weakening of the Rand against the Dollar.

Did we say about R100 of your R700 with which you bought your 50 litre fuel went to the Road Accident Fund? That same RAF that is said to be technically insolvent thought it wise to pay R500.000 a month for the rental of office chairs! That's the New Down for you.



It is against this background that AZAPO calls for the considerable reduction of the fuel levy and the subsidisation of wholesalers and retailers by the state. That should give the people a reprieve from the ever-soaring fuel prices. It is only an uncaring government that keeps on saying there is nothing it can do while the people's suffering is worsening under its watch.

POLICE VIOLENCE HAS NO PLACE IN A DEMOCRACY

A Johannesburg daily newspaper this week published a report about two police officers who allegedly brutally murdered an Ennerdale man and conspired to conceal the murder. The man, who had been arrested for house-breaking, was allegedly murdered in police custody after the two officers had brutally assaulted him.

It raises many questions about the training of the police and their approach to solving crime. The duty of the police is to investigate crime, charge and arrest suspects in preparation for their appearance in the court of law where their guilt or innocence will be determined. That is the due process of criminal justice.

The two officers are now on trial for murder and at-



tempting to conceal the murder. According to the police docket, after killing the man, the two officers went to his home and pretended to be looking for him, creating an impression that they did not know his whereabouts.

The culture of police brutality is refusing to die despite the dawn of democracy. We still see too many horrible images of police using brute force to quell protests by unarmed demonstrators. It is this culture of violence within the police establishment that produced the most brutal massacre of the post-apartheid South Africa, Marikana.

During the apartheid era, we understood that the police were a violent machinery at the disposal of the then racist regime to suppress the freedom aspira-

tions of Black people. While we still abhorred their brutality against the people, we understood their mission. They were against the people.

It is hard to understand why, in a democratic South Africa, police still resort to violence against the people. It is even harder to understand why the police carry automatic assault rifles like the R5 when they conduct crowd control over unarmed citizens. This



readiness to unleash violence against the citizens they are supposed to be protecting and serving makes no sense in a democracy. AZAPO calls for the banning of the carrying or use of weapons of war against unarmed citizens who are exercising their Constitutionally entrenched rights.

What is disturbing is that these acts of brutality against the people are not isolated. While violence should be condemned regardless of the race of the victims, it is unlikely that these two black policemen would have treated a white suspect in the manner that they treated the black man from Ennerdale. Their conduct exposes the internalised self-hate that many of our people still harbour.

If the Black people in general, and the black police officers in particular, are to embrace the new ethos of treating other Black people with respect and courtesy, they must first be baptised in Black Consciousness. BC will teach them to love other Black people as they love themselves. It will teach them to be firm in doing their work, but to be professionals and not resort to acts of hooliganism in their attempt to solve a crime. BC will teach them to be humane.

WHY YOU SHOULD VOTE AZAPO

During the period of Elections, political parties make all sorts of promises to the voters. Generally speaking, the promises are similar; we will deliver jobs, fight corruption, deliver free houses, supply water, electricity and generally a better life.

An ordinary voter is left wondering which political party he or she should vote for as virtually all political parties promise the same things. Sceptical voters have even lost confidence in the voting process as they see all the electioneering as a vehicle for politicians to go to parliament where they will earn huge salaries, and get attractive benefits and largely forget about the voters. They will remember the voters after 5 years when they want another mandate to go back to parliament.

The declining confidence in the electoral system partly explains the increasing voter apathy. To many potential voters, the electoral process is just a means for some politicians to access power and feather their nests.



The logical question therefore is: why should people vote for AZAPO? How will AZAPO be different from the current political parties that are in office? What is unique about AZAPO that other parties are not offering?

AZAPO offers voters the Black Consciousness ideology. AZAPO is unapologetic about its love for Black people and its commitment to restore the dignity of Black people. But above all, AZAPO does not see itself as a liberator of Black people. We see Black people as their own liberators. Through BC, AZAPO advocates for mental liberation of Black people. And once they are mentally liberated, Black people become the masters of their own destiny. They begin to do things for themselves. In other words, instead of waiting to be passive recipients of the goodwill of the state, they become active in the struggle to emancipate themselves from the legacy of apartheid and colonialism. AZAPO will unlock the full potential of Black people to improve their lives and end the culture of total dependency on the state for free things.

One of the reasons that the ruling party is arrogantly abusing political office is their mistaken belief that they alone liberated South Africa from apartheid. AZAPO's belief is that liberation, although not totally achieved since the land and the economy is still firmly entrenched in the hands of the white minority tribe, was a collective act of our people. Our freedom was not a gift bestowed upon us by one party. It was a product of our people throughout the country. Our people should reclaim that and see themselves as the masters of their own destiny.

So why should you vote AZAPO? You should vote AZAPO because it is AZAPO alone that intends to end the victimhood mentality among our people. Currently, we complain that our schools are dysfunctional. But it is Black teachers who teach in those schools. We complain that our hospitals are badly managed, yet it is our own Black people who are running these hospitals. We complain that the economy is not being transformed, yet it is a Black government that is the biggest purchaser of any service and goods. We still sing about being landless, yet a Black government has been in power for 24 years. All that Black people require is Black Consciousness to get out of the victimhood mentality and shape their own destiny. Vote AZAPO, if you want a new vision for this country!