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ENDURING ANC MISRULE IS A PEOPLE'S CHOICE

We can choose to go on a hair-splitting exercise. We can fall into the trap of saying that the country's President Cyril Ramaphosa's sins pale into insignificance compared to the "barbarians at the gate" who want to replace him. We can also believe Ramaphosa's apologists who argue that the man is a victim of a bigger plot by those who want to revive the State Capture project. But we choose to resist the temptation. We choose to keep it straight and simple. The ruling party, not some sections of it but in its entirety, should be relieved of "the heavy" burden of governing South Africa. Period.



Since the ANC took control of the State in 1994, we have seen some of the disturbing developments. Just to mention a few, South Africa is now the most unequal country in the world. Under the watch of the ANC, unemployment is approaching 50%, while 70% of young people are not employed.

Education has essentially collapsed, especially in Black areas. Public health care is in a crisis, crippled by short-

age of doctors and other health professionals. More than 20 000 people are murdered each year. The country no longer has reliable supply of electricity. Many people who live in rural areas and other locations dominated by Afrikans do not have access to drinking water. Under the ANC watch, road infrastructure is in a state of decay. Trains have stopped running in many parts of the country. Millions of people still live in the dehumanising conditions of squalor and in shacks. Holiday makers can no longer enjoy the beaches in Durban because that part of the Indian ocean is full of raw sewage.

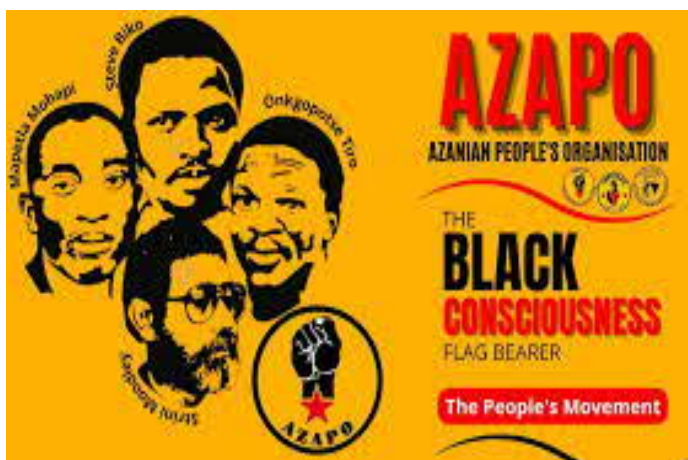
This is the score card that voters should use to judge the performance of the ruling party, not how it deals with its president who has since been exposed as having feet of clay.

As the founding father of our movement Bantu Biko said, the period of oppression is prescribed by the endurance of the oppressed. In other words, any people can only be oppressed to the extent that they allow. In the current context, the ruling party has made an assessment on the levels of tolerance to abuse of the South African population. They have concluded that the population is generally tolerant of their misrule. They have concluded that the population is tolerant of unethical leadership. They have concluded that the population is tolerant of corruption. They have concluded that the population is tolerant of poor service delivery. They have concluded that the population has bought into the false narrative that the ruling party is the sole and authentic representative of the people of South Africa and that it is the undisputed leader of society. They have

concluded that the people of South Africa cannot process the thought of life without the ruling party at the helm.

It is not important whether the above conclusions are correct or not. What is important is whether the people of South Africa believe them or not. The only time that the ruling party can take corrective actions and mend its ways is when the population display through the vote that they deserve better. After all, we all get the government we deserve. The suffering and abuse of the people will continue for as long as many people still throw their hands in the air in desperation and ask a silly question: "If we do not vote for the ruling party, which party can we vote for?"

Increasingly the majority of the people are shunning the vote. Many who are frustrated by the failure of the ruling party to deliver on its election promises, such as the creation of jobs and a better life, opt to stay away from the polls arguing that they are tired of empty promises. They believe that there is no real alternative to challenge the ruling party.



We submit that AZAPO is that alternative. AZAPO's history in the liberation struggle dates back to the formation of the South African Students Organisation (SASO) by Biko and his comrades such as Ranwedzi Nengwekhulu and Mosibudi Mangena more than 50 years ago. It was our Movement that kept the hope of liberation alive throughout the 1970s after the banning of the ANC and the PAC following the March 21, 1960 Sharpeville massacre. It was our Movement that inspired students in Soweto to revolt against the apartheid regime in June 1976. The student revolt re-

ignited the struggle for liberation as thousands of young people left the country to join the ANC and the PAC in exile. It was AZAPO that kept the liberation fires burning throughout the 1980s. It was AZAPO that warned against CODESA and pleaded with our people not to participate in the talks that will lead to an election of a puppet and neo-colonial regime that will ensure that the land remained in the hands of the minority white tribe.

Some can argue that is impressive history. But what is AZAPO promising people today? How will AZAPO solve the problems of South Africa today? Why should people put their trust in AZAPO today? How will AZAPO be different from the criminals who are running our country today?

AZAPO is different from all the other political parties in that it is anchored on Black Consciousness (BC). BC teaches us self-love and pride in what we do. In other words, a politician in office who has been baptized in BC will first and foremost respect himself or herself and more importantly respect and love his people. Ethical conduct is a product of self-respect. When we love our people, we will act in their best interest. An AZAPO government will embark on a cultural revolution to transform those employed by the State to embrace BC. Once people are free mentally, they begin to believe in themselves. They begin to reject all things that undermine their progress and embrace things that help improve the quality of their lives.

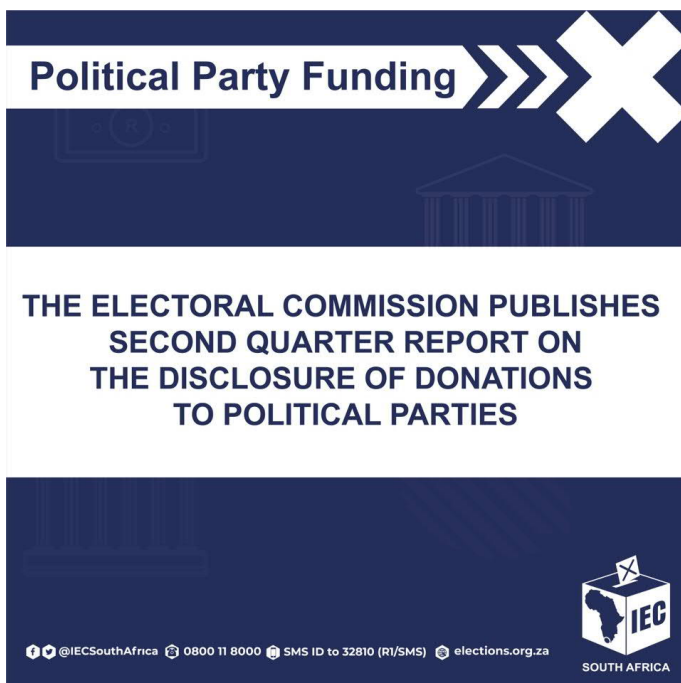
An AZAPO government will engineer a program that reminds people that they are not victims and that they are the masters of their destiny. Currently, the average politician or senior public servant is complaining about virtually everything. They do not appreciate that they are in power. AZAPO will remind people that the power to solve the problems of the country resides in their hands. This power starts with the rejection of the victim mentality and helplessness, and embracing revolutionary consciousness that asserts that we, the people, are the authors of our own destiny.

We should free ourselves of being married to an abusive ruling party. AZAPO is here to help restore our hope in our country.

THE POWER OF MONEY ON POLITICS

This past weekend, AZAPO held its last Standing Committee meeting for the year. The meeting, led by AZAPO President Nelvis Qekema, reflected on the progress that the organisation has made since the current leadership was elected on December 4 last year.

One of the issues that the leadership spent time on was the topic of funding given to political parties by private business. In the latest report on funding of political parties, the biggest beneficiaries of private funding were the Democratic Alliance, Action-SA and the ANC. The common factor among these parties is that they all embrace free market economy.



While there is a view that it is politics that drive the economy, in reality it is the economy that drives politics. Those who have money use it to create a political system that will ensure that they do not lose their money.

The influence of those who wield economic power on politics is not a new thing. In the mid-1980s when the economy was on a decline, white businesspeople realised that apartheid was too costly to the economy. They then initiated talks with the then exiled ANC to end apartheid. It was those talks that led to the unbanning of political parties and the release of political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela.

The scheme was well crafted and well executed. South Africa would end apartheid and allow all people to vote. By allowing the managed political reforms, South Africa would no longer be a pariah State in the eyes of the international community. With the fall of apartheid, economic sanctions would be lifted, and the domestic economy will benefit from foreign investment injection. The deal was that the black-dominated government would control the politics, but the white minority tribe would retain the control and ownership of the economy and all the means of production including land ownership.

In order to ensure that the above arrangement is honoured, the architects of this sell-out deal ensured that the country would have what is termed Constitutional Democracy. This means that power is vested not in Parliament where public representatives are but within the courts. Whatever bill that Parliament may pass, it can only become law once the Constitutional Court has ratified it.

But those who have money have also seen an opportunity. They have realised that they can also appoint a puppet regime that looks after their interests. They do this by funding parties that will not threaten the interests of capital. It is therefore not surprising that a radical and revolutionary Movement such as AZAPO will not be funded. This is not new. Even at the height of the anti-colonial struggle, AZAPO and its exiled wing, the Black Consciousness Movement of Azania, were not funded by those who pumped lots of resources into the ANC and its allies. AZAPO has always been seen as too radical and a big threat to the interests of capital.

The meeting at the weekend accepted a known reality that AZAPO would not receive funding from private donors for well-known reasons. The self-reliance message was reinforced. For the organisation to move forward, it will have to rely on its own members and supporters who will replace money with human capital. After all, Black people are on their own. The quest for total liberation is a noble cause that cannot be betrayed by lack of private donations.

COSATU BACKS SACP FOR 2024:

BLUNTING THE ANGER OF THE WORKERS

There is an English saying that “You can’t have your cake and eat it.” But COSATU’s management of its members in relation to whether the trade union federation should continue to support the ANC in polls suggests that if one is creative enough, it is possible to have your cake and eat it.

For the longest period of time, COSATU has been threatening to leave the ANC, arguing that as an employer, the ANC government has been an abusive partner. The labour federation keeps on threatening to leave but on the eve of every election, they kiss and make up.



Currently, there is a lot of unhappiness, especially among public sector workers over the government’s decision to give a 3% increase to the workers who were demanding a pay rise of 10%. In a move apparently designed to show the militant position of COSATU, some of its affiliate unions, including NEHAWU, NUM and POPCRU resolved that they would throw their weight behind the SACP in the 2024 general elections.

This radical position serves to pacify the angry COSATU members. It offers them hope that finally the abusive marriage between COSATU and the ANC is about to be nullified. But a closer look at the decision exposes the whole thing as just a posture designed to manage workers’ anger. How can the unions be serious about supporting the SACP in the 2024 general elections when the SACP has not officially stated that it would contest elections on its own? But that is not even the issue. Suppose indeed the SACP decides to

stand on its own and end its parasitic dependence on the ANC, what is the political program that the SACP plans to put on the table that will be radically different from the ANC? Put differently, judging from the lives of the so-called communist leaders such as Blade Nzimande and Thulas Nxesi, what is communist about the SACP?

The workers are being taken for a ride. The marriage counsellors of the ANC and COSATU bond have just devised a scheme to blunt the anger of the workers by making them believe that there is a new home for the workers in the SACP.

In truth, while there could have been a good reason for the labour federation to be in alliance with a liberation movement in order to maximise unity of the oppressed to accelerate the downfall of apartheid, conditions have changed as the ANC has effectively become an employer in the public sector. Workers should understand that they risk their unity if the federation is seen as a labour desk of the ruling party. Not all members of COSATU belong to the ruling party. Workers join unions to advance their workers’ interests, mainly on the shopfloor. Some of the reasons COSATU suffered a major split that led to the formation of SAFTU were the difficult dynamics of managing shopfloor interests against broader political issues.

AZAPO Voice believes that workers’ political consciousness should be raised so that they are not manipulated by the political charlatans who talk left and walk right.

FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF AZAPO DECEMBER 4 LEADERSHIP

AZAPO elected the present Standing Committee at the University of Johannesburg 25th National Congress on 4 December 2021. This December 4 Leadership completed its first anniversary this past weekend by holding a review session that critically looked at the year that was and progress made to date. It’s mandate was to #ReLioniseAZAPO by rebuilding it into an action-oriented organisation that will serve as the weapon and shield of the Azanian masses towards the repossession of the land, liberation and socialism. AZAPO Voice invites your comments and views on your reflections on the December 4 Leadership performance. Write to us on info@azapo.org.za.