



TURNING THE PAGES TO SANITY

The release of Part One of the Zondo Commissions' report on corruption and state capture earlier this month was like a breath of fresh air to South Africa's besieged citizens who had known for years about state capture and the endemic plundering of the country's funds and resources yet could not understand why the ANC's parliament let it all happen. As one commentator put it – Zondo has nailed it.

This report revealed something that we all thought existed in the country, but no one had ever spoken about or quantified or lauded this existential reality – that there are millions of good decent and honest South Africans whose names rarely appear in the press and who in fact have kept integrity alive during the African National Congress' (ANC) systematic pillaging of a once-functioning nation.

We can start our integrity list with Judge Raymond Zondo who quietly and methodically set out in printed form the relentless peeling back of a plan to take over South Africa without firing a shot. The ANC and its fellow travellers' plan to capture the nation of South Africa was a chronicle of corruption, greed, arrogance, and a peculiar sense of entitlement in that ANC members and officials felt that South Africa was theirs for the taking. Political commentator R.W. Johnson in his book *Fighting for the Dream*, Chapter 6 - 'The dynamics of African nationalism' outlined the pattern of behaviour which occurred throughout virtually every African nation after independence. He highlighted how many African countries were run for the benefit of a small elite "that gobbled resources but was itself unproductive. Money that should have gone on capital expenditure and sustaining the infrastructure was appropriated by this elite through higher salaries, bonuses or simply stealing. Corruption was structural and went unpunished".

The ANC stuck to this script, says Johnson, while many South Africans thought somehow Mandela's ANC would be different. Despite their revolutionary rhetoric about "our people" and the reckless promises made to the voting

masses, the ANC has behaved the same as the rest of the continent. It is clear the ANC didn't care about their voters: if they cared, South Africa wouldn't be in a state of shock at how brazenly they helped themselves to what belonged to the citizenry. There appeared to be no shame and, even today, we do not hear any apologies from those who Judge Zondo has fingered. In fact, they are probably working out right now how to use the courts to deflect the Zondo Commission's accusations, much the same as Jacob Zuma has used the SA courts for the last 20 years to avoid going to jail.

According to Professor Richard Calland of the University of Cape Town, "each chapter of part one (of the Zondo Report) presents an intricate and fascinating account of how three public entities – South African Airways, the government's information arm and the SA Revenue Services – were systematically 'captured' with criminal intent and how misinformation through the diversion of public funds to a puppet media organisation 'The New Age' was used to try and cover up what was going on."

Zondo brought to SA's attention the fact that the ANC's cadre deployment policy brought South Africa to its knees. "The eye-watering incompetence of the ANC's 'deployed' cadres has collapsed government departments and parastatals". (The Citizen 7.1.2). The judge emphasised with a fervour seldom seen in an official document that this policy of cadre deployment was the main reason why accountability, honesty and a responsibility towards the taxpaying citizens was completely missing within the plundering classes. TLU SA has on numerous occasions over the past years highlighted that loyalty to the ANC was an overriding obsession when it came to employment and placements within the cabinet and the civil service. Merit never came into it.

Last year TLU SA pointed out that state employment ads in the media were simply window dressing. TLU SA also declared that none other than President Ramaphosa chaired the cadre deployment committee from 2012 to 2017, at the same time as the humbug job advertisements filled the employment pages of the newspapers. A police officer told TLU SA it was ANC employment policy to choose those loyal to the ANC rather than someone who possessed the qualifications set out in the job advertisement. This was the answer when questioned as to why so many police officers were so woefully under-qualified for their posts.

The president was asked about this corrosive policy by Judge Zondo who stated that the destruction of functioning government departments happened "under the watch of the ruling party". The ANC "failed dismally to make any effective interventions to halt the decline. Either they did not care, or they slept on the job, or they had no clue what to do".

“The pervasive influence of the ANC’s deployment committee, of which Cyril Ramaphosa was chair during his term as deputy president, shows the corrosive impact of party loyalty on a once-functioning country. (Citizen 7.1.22). Judges were also pre-selected for vacant posts in the judiciary. The committee also interfered in the appointment of the South African Broadcasting Corporation’s board, while discussions included appointments to Rand Water chief executive’s post, and the boards of the SA Post Office, the Department of Transport, the Passenger Rail Agency of SA, the Road Accident Fund, the National Lottery, SANparks and others. These revelations were a shock to many, as was Ramaphosa’s role in this Soviet-type deployment of party loyalists whether they were competent or not. The president defended his cadre deployment policy in the civil service saying it was an “important part of implementing the ruling party’s mandate” as if that mattered more than saving South Africa from ruin! The official opposition the Democratic Alliance (DA) declared that Ramaphosa chaired a committee that “captured, corrupted and collapsed our state”. This is an undeniable fact, and how Judge Zondo will deal with this extraordinary and damning accusation, not denied by the president, remains to be seen.

While the focus of the Commission was to a large extent on Jacob Zuma’s wholesale plunder while he was president, his deputy president at the time, Cyril Ramaphosa, was called into question as to why he had done nothing during those “nine wasted years” of the Zuma presidency.

What remains to be seen now is whether there will be enough finance to prosecute the felons in the ruling party and others who have been fingered by Judge Zondo.

THE GOOD PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA

What were the millions of South Africa’s honest and hardworking people thinking while state capture, theft and an uncaring incompetence were destroying their country? Many of these people’s exuberance at the coming to power of the “democratic” ANC soon turned to disappointment, disgust and, eventually, a desire to do something to save their country from ruin. What the Zondo Commission report also exposed were honest civil servants who simply refused to transfer money into dubious accounts, or who would not go along with signing papers which they knew were to cover up criminal activities. Mr. Themba Maseko was out in the cold for years after refusing to take an order he knew was dishonest. He was unable to get a job. He was an honest man. Many other honest men lost their houses. It takes a certain type of courage to go against the ANC, especially when they controlled the civil service job market.

The ANC's pernicious downward spiral over the years alerted many citizens to the fact that if they didn't do something, their lives would collapse around them. Foremost in this decline was the parlous state of the country's municipalities. Potholes, sewage in the streets, an undrinkable domestic water supply, ground and air pollution and a shambolic billing system were the order of the day. Trying to move the zombies in the local ANC-controlled councils to action proved to be an exercise in futility, so citizens themselves rolled up their sleeves and repaired sewage pumps, filled potholes, cleaned up the water supplies, mowed the grass on the verges and tried to make their towns look reasonably civilized.

South Africa had never experienced anything like this. Whatever can be said of this country, civil servants did the jobs they were paid to do throughout SA's history. Only under the ANC did our infrastructure collapse, and this devastation awoke a sense of disgust amongst citizens of every colour and political bent. They realised they had been had – vacuous election promises were no substitute for clean streets and potable water. Scores if not hundreds of civil society organisations and pressure groups mushroomed and found that they could indeed change things. There are thousands of examples of citizen activism getting solid results. Good people realised that evil does indeed triumph when good men do nothing.

South Africans are basically honest people. They pay their taxes, obey the law and hope for the best. This hope however was dashed under the ANC but a desire for decency and a civilized approach to community living became the calling card for thousands of citizens now up in arms at the ANC's destruction of their once beautiful country. Under a headline "Most people want to do the right thing" (Beeld 14.12.21), the South African Revenue Service's (SARS) efforts to get taxpayers to voluntarily submit their tax returns was reported as "gaining momentum". More than 4.3 million returns due 2 December 2021 have been sent to SARS, 46% more than the same period last year. After the destructive deployment by former president Jacob Zuma of one Tom Moyane to head SARS, millions of Rands were lost under his stewardship. But SARS has now become an even more effective and efficient organisation than it has ever been. The fact that SA taxpayers watched for years as their hard-earned money was swallowed up by venal civil servants and cabinet ministers should have precipitated a citizens' revolt. This did not happen because millions of people pay their taxes in South Africa to the government of the day, as a matter of principle.

Numerous examples exist where citizen activists have been successful in dramatically changing the country's trajectory in many areas, particularly

when it comes to the environment. Shell International's plan to search for oil and gas on South Africa's wild coast fuelled outrage across the country. Petitions were signed by hundreds of thousands of people, street protests were organised and government ministers who awarded licences to Shell years ago were called to account. On January 11 this year a concerned group of scientists and environmental fundi demanded that legislation be passed to ensure that one minister should no longer oversee the environment and be able to single-handedly issue permits to all and sundry. The United Nations and other world climate and environmental organisations are supporting these South African scientists and the world is watching.

SA citizens' anger is powerful when the cause goes against their grain. On 28 December 2021, Shell was ordered to call a halt to its survey after the High Court of Makhanda interdicted Shell from proceeding further with their plans. Of course, they will appeal and if they do, citizen's anger will once again be a force to be reckoned with.

In late 2019, environmentalists discovered that, yet another licence had been granted to an Indian company to mine coal in a declared protected environment in Mpumalanga province. Eight civil society groups opposed the proposed mining within a strategic water source where thousands of birds from South Africa and all over the world come to nest. The granting of a licence by an ANC cabinet minister to mine coal in this Mabola Protected Environment was set aside. Mabola had been declared protected under the Protected Areas Act of 2014 by the Mpumalanga Provincial government where more than 70 000 hectares were at stake. Yet in 2016 without public consultation, ANC ministers gave permission for a large coal mine to be built inside the Mabola area. Citizens challenged this sleight of hand decision in the court and won.

In January of this year, it was discovered that the government had granted a licence to an Australian company called Seismic Search to conduct surveys on South Africa's West Coast. This go ahead was given by the Petroleum Agency of SA, a government body which granted a reconnaissance permit on November 9 last year. A civil society movement called "We are South Africans" (WASA) brought an urgent interdict against the Oz company, which proved successful. In a statement WASA said "we have the support of many organisations both locally and overseas. Our name will be on the court document, and we represent the people of South Africa, the 15 million of them whom we reach. We say that all South Africans have had enough of an attack on our collective futures."

All the while these licences have been granted by the very government that is supposed to protect our country. Corruption however is endemic within the ANC. It is in their DNA to the extent that they would see their country's natural beauty destroyed for 30 pieces of silver.

During the July riots in Durban, stories of people with brooms and dustpans turning up at their workplace to help clean up after some of the worst rioting and looting in SA's history graced our media. Pictures of not so young women sweeping the streets and carrying off rubble in plastic bags were heartening. More than 300 people died but there have been no convictions to date.

Gift of the Givers is headed by a South African Muslim man well known now for his appearance in country towns and districts with food for cattle and help for farmers, all under the whip of drought. It is now a registered Foundation and was recently in the Eastern Cape where over 700 homes were damaged by bad weather, with many people without a roof over their heads. This foundation provided temporary shelter, hot meals, and community volunteers to assist in cleaning up the area. This group is made up of volunteers who help with their own money and donations from the public.

Local Knock and Drop newspapers delivered free to homes around the country invariably contain stories where South Africans of all stripes help others in need. The care of animals in distress is well developed in this country where no financial help is given to animal welfare organisations by the government. The ANC has stolen South Africa blind, hence civil society and caring individuals are continually stepping in to help those in need.

In dozens of malfunctioning municipalities throughout the country, citizens have stepped into repair and renew infrastructure that has been allowed to fall into disrepair by useless ANC councils whose main aim is to increase their salaries every year. Examples of this type of citizens' action are legion.

In a hard-hitting piece (Sunday Times 9.1.22), TV host, award winning journalist and commentator Justice Malala declared that South Africa is a country "of two mindsets and two sharply contrasting visions of where we are headed".

"The first mindset is of a small elite, built around a personality cult, which wants to tear our constitutional democracy and its institutions down, create chaos, ascend to power and then loot. Then there's the rest of us: people who wish for a prosperous peaceful and democratic country. The battle for supremacy between the good and the criminals is under way, and we do not know who will win. The criminals are loud, ruthless, and vindictive. The good are many, but few raise their voices often enough".

“The depths of these divisions in society and in the ruling party raise SA's risk profile significantly in the coming year.”

These divisions are not only about good and evil, but about democracy itself. It has failed in Africa, and it has failed here. The principle of democracy is used by the power hungry to attain power, then the voters are ignored. In SA's case, power was centralised so quickly that creeping socialism is now clearly apparent. A new type of political system is needed for South Africa with its unique problems - its racial, cultural and language mixes. Cognisance must be taken of these aspects otherwise the ANC's 'democracy' will destroy South Africa. A type of federalism which considers the vast differences and chasms within the South African populace must be seriously considered. Millions of people have no political recognition whatsoever. Traditional leaders are rarely consulted when the nitty gritty of political decisions that transform lives are made. A perfect example is how mining licences have been granted by one or two ministers to foreign firms, the repercussions of which affect millions of lives. Without the activism of a few, these irresponsible willy nilly licence granting's would have gone unnoticed.

Those who do nothing to stop the ANC's destructive path will have to answer to generations to come. The ANC can be stopped. A new approach that brings millions of people into the country's decision-making process is needed. The path to peace in South Africa must include recognition of the country's unique composition and must not be within an ideology that favours a few over the many. Sitting and waiting for someone else to do something is not an option.