



## **“LOOK BEYOND THE LOAD SHEDDING”, SA PRESIDENT TELLS KING CHARLES THIRD**

This is like Ukraine's President Zelensky telling investors to “look beyond” Russia's missiles and his country's flattened buildings to the incredible investment possibilities on the horizon, despite the “challenges” his country is now experiencing.

It may seem ludicrous to draw comparisons but South Africa's desecration after thirty years of ANC plunder may not appear as ravished as the Ukraine landscape, but the destruction and deep corrosion are there nonetheless.

Nobody does pomp and ceremony better than the English! Riding in the royal gold coach has never failed to impress those whose political arrows have unflinchingly sought to pierce the heart of colonialism and Western ways. The more vicious the diatribe from the post-colonial independence rulers, the more effusive has been the tea at Buckingham Palace, cocktails at 10 Downing Street and, of course, the ubiquitous visit to Kew Gardens.

One wonders about all the fuss around president Ramaphosa's official state visit to the United Kingdom. What's in it for the British, we may ask? The SA president called for more investment in his country, effusively extolling the benefits of such an exercise for Britain's business community. But surely these gentlemen would very carefully consider investing in today's South Africa where “load shedding”, while serious, is but one of the cancers that have infected our land under a venal and destructive ANC regime.

So is it perhaps a future British waste disposal foray into South Africa that's on the cards? A British company Romco Metals established a facility to recycle waste in Nigeria in 2015. It intends putting up three other factories across Africa, doubling production by 2025. Despite

the hullabaloo about “turning garbage into riches”, the truth is starkly opposite. Nigerian garbage heaps are huge health hazards and that country releases 200 000 tonnes of plastic into the Atlantic every year. Is SA a future target? Given the ease with which our officials have to date issued licences to those whose only objective is to plunder our environment for the proverbial quick buck, it is not beyond the realms of possibility that SA could be within some British waste firms’ crosshairs.

Or is it the much trumpeted “green” technology that has seduced Westminster? The United Kingdom has agreed to support South Africa’s so-called green economy by investing in green hydrogen. During the SA president’s visit to the UK, the two nations agreed to implement the next phase of the UK-SA Infrastructure Partnership.

That is the official narrative. According to BusinessTech (23.11.22), “the next phase aims to fund projects that will create investment opportunities for UK companies upwards of 5,37 billion British pounds (R115 billion) over the next three years and assist South Africa with its economic growth, skills development and push towards renewables”.

There will also be “grant-funded” technical assistance (no amount mentioned) and the development of green hydrogen will utilise South Africa’s vital minerals, including the platinum group metals, of which SA (with Zimbabwe) produces most of the world’s supply. However, the cost of SA producing this green hydrogen is predicted to be approximately \$4 per kg by 2030, a premium of between \$2 and \$2.5 per kg higher than hydrogen extracted from traditional methods.

## **FANFARE**

We have had many fanfare-announcements of projects and plans and jobs for the millions via the ANC. The jobs never materialize – there is today higher-than-ever unemployment. SA has now given Britain the assurance there will be enough skills here to make this new hydrogen proposal work, stating that we have “world class expertise in the field”. The world class expertise is however not within the ANC nor is it within millions of its followers. And SA’s economy will have to function properly as a whole to make anything like this type of concept work.

As it is, the erstwhile world-class Eskom has been brought to its knees by the ANC, and who can guarantee that the same thing won't happen with the green technology proposal? Everything the ANC has touched since it came to power has turned to dust. Only corruption and enrichment of a few cadres at the top have flourished under the ANC's corrosive regime. The ANC could not even maintain our railways, our roadways and our ports. And where do our skills really lie? Many of our top people have fled. Jacob Zuma supporters saw to that in July 21 when they plundered Durban, while the police were conspicuous in their absence. Unfettered crime, stealing, incompetence and a total lack of shame and accountability have completed this circle of uselessness and dissipation.

How will the ANC's ubiquitous grubby fingers be prevented from grabbing the tenders which will inevitably be offered to the local and international business community? Who will keep the tender process honest? Nobody has so far, and while president Ramaphosa has promised to "root out corruption", it still persists in all its degeneracy. The ANC is not known for its technical prowess: they cannot fix a pothole, they cannot maintain a sewage plant, they cannot farm, they have destroyed Eskom and Transnet and Prasa and SAA and all the other parastatals they took over because of their ignorance of anything technical. So who is going to supervise this new process which will need engineers and technicians of the highest quality and ability and who, more importantly, must have integrity and a strong work ethic within their DNA?

## **MASS EXODUS**

"South Africa's engineering capacity has dwindled at a shocking rate over the last decade, with the South African Institute of Civil Engineering (SAICE) identifying this critical shortage of skills as one of the key drivers behind the country's collapsing infrastructure." (BusinessTech 14.11.22).

Overall SAICE found that vital infrastructure segments were deteriorating quite rapidly and, without government intervention, many are at risk of collapsing – if they haven't collapsed already. South Africa faces a "debilitating shortage of engineering skills", says SAICE. "It is rare to find a municipality that has a full complement of qualified and experienced personnel". (Note: look

for these South Africans in Australia's NSW municipalities throughout that state.)

"The country has lost a shocking number of engineers in the civil sector", declares SAICE. During 'transformation', many older (white) engineers were displaced, "which has completely disrupted the profile and skillsets that are required and available for effective service delivery in SA. This displacement deprived new entrants and candidate engineers of essential mentorship."

This catastrophic development was admitted to in recent years by Eskom, which attributed much of its current power supply issues "to a lack of necessary skills and technical capabilities needed to keep power stations operating", says SAICE. Eskom recently launched a crowd-sourcing platform specifically directly at targeting those lost skills and beckoning them back into the fold to "assist with mentorship". This "passing on of skills" is something of a pipe dream.

The corruption, incompetence and lack of accountability engendered by president Ramaphosa's cadre deployment policy has seen off any chance of successful skills transfers actually happening. Integrity, honesty and a sincere work ethic cannot be passed on. It is either in your DNA or it is not, and it is clear it is sadly missing in most of Mr. Ramaphosa's appointees. This is empirically evident by the collapse of SA's municipal structures, our railways, our roads and our harbours.

Perhaps the British should think twice about this public/private partnership they are planning with their new multi billion rand investment. Who will control the operations? Will they be subjected to the cadre deployment fiasco as well? What about strikes and sabotage? All those new jobs need a functioning transport service, but with quite a few rails and sleepers missing, and squatter shacks occupying what were once a railway line thoroughfares, rail service could be a problem. What about buses? Many have been torched by the taxi industry? And road safety? While Johannesburg's 12,000 km road network is in a state of near collapse, the head of the Johannesburg Road Agency (JRA) Tshepo Mahanuke insists staff call him "Dr" on the strength of a doctorate he bought. He was hired by the JRA as CEO at R3,5 million a year and he claims a Harvard Master's degree that doesn't exist. He was appointed, insists the JRA, after "diligent checks".

“Dr.” Mahanuke has advised he will send memo’s back if they are not addressed to him as “Dr.” He is 34 years old.

Not surprisingly, some foreign investors are running for the hills. They are now holding the lowest number of government bonds in more than a decade. They are net sellers (where more bonds are sold than bought) to the tune of R8 billion in the first six months of this year.

## **CADRE DEPLOYMENT AS GOVERNMENT POLICY**

TLU SA has pointed out on numerous occasions that the core problem behind the de-industrialisation and destruction of our once functioning country has been the government’s cadre deployment policy, which is the appointment to responsible positions of loyal party hacks who are mostly incompetent and incapable of performing the task at hand. This has been occurring throughout the country for years now, at all levels of government.

“Dr” Mahanuke is but one of millions of examples of this phenomenon. Despite the very obvious implosion of many local government structures and administration, the ANC regime continues unabated with this policy. It is thus clear that what matters to the government and the president in particular, is that loyalty to the ANC is more important than the survival of South Africa as we knew it. The implementation of this policy is the single most pivotal reason why a majority of this country’s municipalities have folded.

Current advertisements for municipal jobs carry the caveat that the employer supports Employment Equity legislation, meaning no whites need apply. For years now, president Ramaphosa’s local election campaigns have been replete with his pronouncements that “merit” has always been important to the ANC and that more “skilled” personnel will be appointed to “improve” service delivery.

And he is still on this fraudulent trail! With a straight face he recently told the hapless voters of Ditsobotla municipality in North West province that they were now “on my radar”. What chicanery! This municipality has been run into the ground by the ANC and after suffering for years under their grotesque “management”, they have been placed under administration. The president appeared in Lichtenburg recently (this once thriving town within the Ditsobotla

council's administration) to “assess” the poor state of the town and its surrounds! Assess? Everyone in South Africa worth his political salt knows that that part of the world is rotten with ANC corruption. The ANC is the president's party and now he's “assessing” his party's damage?

The infighting for posts between ANC factions in Ditsbotla resulted in a ludicrous situation where there were two mayors, two speakers and two spokesmen!. Ramaphosa told his voters that he “wants a new council” but of course he will appoint them and they will be no different from the present incompetent bunch. Theft is corrosive: one company was awarded a water project for R32m to refurbish infrastructure that had been previously upgraded for R1 million! The president knows this very well. He truly speaks with a forked tongue.

## **CRUEL JUXTAPOSITION**

South African society is a cruel juxtaposition between great creativity and political destruction. The latter has won hands down. Thousands of good people have fled our shores, reluctantly it can be said, but how does one live with a government whose DNA is of another world? They live in a different reality.

During a recent state visit by French president Emmanuel Macron to the USA, he told a White House audience that his country and the US were historically close because of “shared values”. This is something that is hugely lacking in South Africa and this is why the country is failing. Accountability and integrity are scarce in the current regime and within its coterie of followers. They possess no introspection, no shame: they cannot admit to themselves that they have destroyed the country. Their speeches and endless meetings and interviews consist of the “challenges” they are “planning to address”, and their promises flow like a river in spate. But there are no apologies for messing up!

A perfect example of this bizarre mindset is what our president told the recent SA-UK Business Roundtable in London. He said his government was “working closely with Eskom to improve the fleet of the utility's power stations”. How's that for gall! His ANC destroyed the fleet in the first place, but of course there's no admission of that! Now his government is “working on” improving the stations!

Meanwhile hundreds of skilled artisans, technicians and engineers are walking away from South Africa's state owned companies, including Eskom, and they aren't hiring qualified workers to compensate for the losses.) (My Broadband, 30.11.22) In response to a parliamentary question, the ANC revealed that in the past three years, Eskom has lost 270 engineers, 232 technicians and 189 artisans. This reply did not however say whether these losses have been replaced.

Mr. Ramaphosa also told the British his government is undertaking "far-reaching" reforms to, inter alia, improve the capacity and competitiveness of railways and ports, and to "improve the pricing and supply of water!" Everything is about "improving" and "reforming"! Yet in 1994, his party the ANC received a fully functioning country on a plate. SA's roads, electricity supply, water quality and supply, its railways and infrastructure were world class. Eskom was the best and cheapest electricity supplier in the world! Our ports and our roads were the very bedrock of our successful imports/export sector, especially for farmers. Now the president intends "improving" a railway service that "his people" destroyed brick by brick, rail by rail, sleeper by sleeper. Complete railway stations have disappeared.

Does the president think that the British don't know South Africa's embarrassing realities, that those who wrote King Charles' speech are not laughing up their sleeves while our president waffles on, telling some of the best whoppers possibly ever uttered by any other invited head of state including such charmers as Mobutu Sese Seko (Zaire 1973), Julius Nyerere (Tanzania 1975), Robert Mugabe (1994) and our own Jacob Zuma (2010).

His whole speech was a fantasy of hyperbole; his government was "improving capacity", and "undertaking reforms" and taking "decisive measures" to try and get right what his party actually destroyed! Decisive measures have been taken to tackle crime and corruption, he said, and law enforcement agencies are being "rebuilt" and being provided with the resources needed to prosecute those responsible for the criminal capture of state institutions. Why then is ex president Zuma not in the dock right now?

Any intelligence agency worth its salt would know that it was none other than Cyril Ramaphosa as the then vice president who sat

mum in parliament for years while SA's president Jacob Zuma and his foreign chums almost took over the country, lock stock and barrel!

Says Barney Mthombothi of the Sunday Times (23.10.22): "The inexorable deterioration in the country seems to be caused primarily by the promotion of 'people of poor quality' into senior government positions." Mr.Mthombothi says that not everything bad can be laid at Jacob Zuma's door. "The rot preceded his election. The party's cadre deployment policy has made many comrades rich beyond their wildest dreams but it has bankrupted the country. In the name of transformation, a few individuals who have no clue how government functions decide which cushy job should go to which favoured comrade". Here is a succinct summary of a policy tragedy of huge proportions.

## **A SAD CONCLUSION**

There is no other solution to the salvaging of South Africa than to rid ourselves of the ANC's pervasive presence in government, in academia or indeed anywhere else where their poison has penetrated.

The huge chasm between Western and African mindsets is no more disturbing than in South Africa. In the SAICE report, president Marianne Vanderschuren refers to warnings given by her organisation on the state of SA's infrastructure. In 2006 SAICE predicted a long night of rolling blackouts if urgent steps to improve electricity infrastructure were not taken. Load shedding arrived two years later. The tipping point the SAICE warned of in its 2017 report has now come for Prasa passenger rail, freight branch lines, unpaved roads and sanitation infrastructure outside urban areas which are now "unfit for purpose".

The overall issue is that not enough maintenance is occurring and there is almost no proactive maintenance. Municipalities don't have enough people with engineering backgrounds to do the kind of strategic thinking (*italics ours*) that infrastructure projects require. The need for more technical skills has not been addressed. Ms. Vanderschuren refers to government's "attitude". (We referred to it as values, accountability, integrity and a work ethic.) "If this attitude (towards the need for maintenance and more technical skills)



doesn't change soon we will see further infrastructure collapses", she says.

"Only 23 of the 850 water treatment systems in the country are meeting the standards we've set for ourselves in South Africa. Around a quarter of all sewerage systems at municipal and local government level are at critical risk of failure", says SAICE.

With law and order almost non-existent, a construction mafia has appeared. Bulletproof vests are now line items on her members' books, says the SAICE president. As a result of projects being delayed because of tardy municipal service at planning level, less than 50% of planned investment actually goes out. She asks the government to "come on board" with law enforcement. That is like asking the cat to bark and the dog to miaow.

Trade union Solidarity provided Eskom CEO Andre de Ruyter with a list of 300 experienced engineers and former Eskom employees months ago. Clearly however de Ruyter is under pressure not to accept a "whites only" help package. He had to respond to claims that he was "bringing apartheid back" and this is a clear example why it is virtually impossible to promote merit in South Africa and why the country is on its knees. De Ruyter said only 2 former Eskom employees had so far been hired.

De Ruyter is doing his best because without a stable electricity supply, South Africa is doomed. But there is endemic corruption at all levels of government. Those with integrity who have to make decisions based on good sense don't find integrity down the line. Nothing will work unless integrity encapsulates every element of further development, and that seems to be something unattainable in South Africa.

Eskom should be run by electrical and mechanical engineers, not political bureaucrats. Eskom needs experienced employees. Even with something as simple as fixing a water pump can be a problem. There are those who don't know what they don't know. "We have lost a lot of institutional knowledge" says de Ruyter.

And this brings us back to Cyril Ramaphosa and his cadre deployment policy. Unless this is abolished, everything else is simply papering over the rot.

The ANC has to go. There must be a clean sweep to really root out the corrupt mindset of those who don't care so that those who do care can revive and salvage our country. It will be an uphill battle. Can it be won?

We finish with a quote from Sri Lankan author and Booker prize winner Shehan Karunatilaka (courtesy of Daily Maverick): "Evil is not what we should fear. Creatures with power acting in their own interests – that is what should make us shudder".