



STATE OF THE NATION AND CADRE DEPLOYMENT - THE PRESIDENT'S NEMESIS

Just eleven days after South African President Cyril Ramaphosa delivered his State of the Nation address (SONA) on 8 February, his party was instructed by the Constitutional Court to hand over comprehensive records of the African National Congress' (ANC) cadre deployment (CD) records to the country's official opposition, the Democratic Alliance (DA).

This was the culmination of legal demands by the DA to scrutinise the records of a deployment policy which began in 2012 under this same president Cyril Ramaphosa: a policy designed to only deploy government supporters and loyalists to state jobs, whether competent or not.

The 2022 Zondo Commission on State Capture declared that "cadre deployment was unconstitutional and illegal." Commission chairman Judge Raymond Zondo stated in Part 6 of the report that there is also no reason for the ANC's deployment committee (chaired until 2017 by Ramaphosa) to exist. (On receipt of the cadre deployment (CD) documentation on Monday February 19, the DA immediately asked the court to declare the policy unconstitutional. This request was dismissed by Judge Ledwaba but the DA will appeal this ruling.)

What is significant about the surrendering of the CD committee's documentation to the DA so soon after the SONA address, is that it debunks the contents of the president's speech. The deployment laid bare by the minutes of the CD policy now exposed, certainly didn't deliver the "accomplishments" alluded to by the president in his SONA speech. The documentation made clear that the ANC has wielded significant power through its CD policy, which led Judge Zondo to state that the ANC "was at the heart of the descent (of the country) into grand corruption in the democratic era". (Maverick 24.6.22).

Thus the self-congratulatory ramblings of the president's SONA address on the successes of the ANC over the past 30 years and the current "challenges", must be judged against the reality of the ANC's responsibility for the collapse of South Africa as we knew it, as exposed via their CD policy. The president's speech bore little relation to the conditions under which South Africans now live, despite what Judge Zondo declared.

SPEECH TRAVESTY

It is not so much that the contents of the SONA speech were stultifying, to say the least: commentators have gone into great detail to point out the untruths, hyperbole, effusion and the strange mental trajectory the president took when commenting upon the abysmal state of the nation. His speech was “almost devoid of meaning” and “he blamed everybody but himself for the country’s ills, and he drives people to the departure lounge each time he opens his mouth”, declared two Sunday Times columnists (11.2.24)

He gave the impression that he could have been a visitor from Outer Mongolia, flying in and taking stock of what he saw. Apart from the blame game on the state of the country, it was as if he were reporting on something with which he had absolutely nothing to do!

He pontificated about “events at home that have shaken the foundations of our constitutional democracy” and declared that perhaps the greatest damage was caused during the era of state capture. “He stressed his government’s determination to repair and rejuvenate those areas of public life that have either collapsed or are in an advanced state of decay and dysfunction” wrote Pieter du Toit (News24, 8.2.24). “He was in effect praising the ANC-in-government’s attempt to restore institutions and functions which were maimed and gutted by the same ANC-in-government!”

STATE CAPTURE

But where was he during the state capture era? He was in fact deputy president of the ANC and the state during what he calls those “nine wasted years” of the Zuma presidency. Was he out of the parliamentary chamber when opposition parties called for at least six parliamentary motions of no confidence in the Zuma regime, which motions were roundly voted down by his own party the ANC? Did he object at any time to the state capture criminal activities which were taking place under his nose? We didn’t hear a peep from Cyril Ramaphosa at all.

What a hoax of a SONA speech! Does the president really believe thinking people in this country are taken in by this humbug that praised the ANC’s “achievements” over the past thirty years? If spending taxpayers’ money on welfare to keep his supporter afloat is something to brag about, then there’s a serious mental disconnect here. Or does he just want the thinking people’s taxes and to the wall with what they think! He’s clearly aiming his prattle at the hapless millions who listen to his nonsense because all they care about is their social grant at the end of the month. They have been told that if they don’t vote for their saviour the ANC, apartheid will come back, and that “the boere will come and get you” which he told his supporters one day in Limpopo.

It’s primitive politics in true ANC style and yes, it’s the bottom line on democracy in South Africa. If millions can vote for an ANC that has systematically desecrated this once-functioning country, then this democratic parody needs serious attention if there is any chance of saving

our country. Elections are used by the ANC to lie, to malevolently pledge, and to consolidate their position for a further five years, in whatever shape or form they can, by whatever means they can.

PLAYING WITH OUR LIVES

The state president is playing with our lives. He knows how to keep a straight face while telling a whopper, to pretend that he cares, to play upon people's ignorance, and to state he is "shocked" at what is happening in South Africa as if it were nothing to do with him! He is thumbing his nose at us because his cadre deployment policy is continuing unchecked, despite what the Zondo commission says.

In a large newspaper advertisement from the Department of Social Development (Business Times 11.2.24), eleven top grade posts are listed, each demanding high academic qualifications, experience and above average human qualities. But there is a caveat: the department is an Equal Opportunity Affirmative Action Employer. Thus the chances of success of applicants with the qualities needed for the job but who are not within the racial parameters of the "acceptable" cadre crowd, appear low. How many persons have been employed in these jobs without Qualifications Authority approval? Or has there been no approval sought? According to a Bulletin police contact, the job requisites set out in great detail in these job advertisements are simply "window dressing". Since no white person will apply for these jobs on the very slim probability that he will be employed, it is left to the ANC to organise who will get the job.

Scrutinising the cadre deployment (CD) documentation handed to the DA by the ANC on a court order, it is astonishing how the ANC's internal communications from the CD committee were carried out. These communications "read like a frivolous neighbourhood WhatsApp group. The messages show how the process of appointing deployees to critical institutions was chaotic. It reveals haphazard communications and appointments based on loyalty to the ANC". (News24 22.2.24)

"Government job adverts were posted on the group and a call was made for members to put their preferred candidate forward. It was seemingly up to committee members to recommend and approve all candidates". Were skills taken into account? Perhaps, but if the skills were not available, then loyalty to the ANC was the key to the job. This is why South Africa has buckled under the gross and wide-ranging incompetence of state employees across the board, including cabinet ministers.

President Ramaphosa admitted to the Zondo Commission that "cadre deployment, on occasion, failed to ensure that deployees were 'fit for purpose'". As well, in defence of the policy, the president and others have stated that deploying party loyalists in government is practised throughout the world. Indeed this is true, but qualifications should trump party loyalty when the chips are down, and a job has to be capably carried out.

In the civil service embracing six states and separate federal sectors in Australia, with diverse federal and state governments interchanging throughout the years, civil servants continue doing their jobs, no matter who is in charge. Many spend their whole lives competently employed in government structures. The secret to this success of course is the median level of competence within the working population. In the first world, the median level is adequate enough to maintain the country's infrastructure and functions. In South Africa the median level is low, in many cases at third world levels. This is why employing people on the basis of party loyalty has been so devastating. In thirty years, South Africa has indeed been reduced to third world levels within its structures and functions. This is clear for all to see, except of course when the ANC is judging the situation.

The calamitous ANC government is the hand South Africa was dealt during the years of overseas pressure to abolish apartheid for a one man one vote democracy. The ANC will never abandon their cadre deployment policies. They will continue to throw taxpayers' money at renewing and rebuilding and refurbishing, where the simple employment of capable people could have made all of this talk and spending huge amounts of money unnecessary. To rid South Africa of the ANC curse should be everyone's goal but the hurdles to this objective are immense. But they must be overcome. There is no alternative.