

Sunday
FLOOR CROSSING

New look for old politics?

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6 April 2003

Does the New South Africa need a New Political Party? Are the old ones out of date? Perhaps Patricia de Lille could bring excitement – and integrity – back to our politics, writes **Humphrey Tyler**

JUST WHEN millions of South Africans are saying they are sick of politics and one in five won't even bother to vote next time, three members of parliament have announced they are starting new political parties. Is it for the money? Do they want to ride in new jet planes like President Thabo Mbeki?

Two are pretty inconsequential and most have never heard of them. They are Teresa Millin, from the Inkatha Freedom Party, who is now the leader (and maybe the only member) of her African Independent Movement, and Cassie Aucamp, the sole former representative of the Afrikaner Eenheidsbeweging, now founder of the National Action party.

But the third is quite someone. She is Patricia de Lille, one member of parliament just about everybody has heard about. She has left the Pan Africanist Congress to start the Independent Democrats.

The Pan Africanists say they are pleased she's gone. She was trouble. She disagreed with the party line on just about everything.

When the PAC backed Mugabe for his "African" solution for getting rid of white farmers in Zimbabwe, she said no.

Then she declared the Zimbabwe elections were not fair. Now PAC secretary

general, Thami ka Plaattjie, even complains about De Lille's "anti-African National Congress rhetoric". Maybe it has been stopping the parties getting into bed.

But De Lille left the PAC because she says it's dead. Led by a disorganised gaggle, headed by an anxious former Methodist clergyman, it reflects very little of the profound Africanist base that its founder, Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, would recognise.

Although the PAC is pleased she has gone, several other parties would be delighted to have her.

Crusader

She is a fiery lady who has made her mark. She is a crusader against corruption. She cornered the government over the arms deal fiasco. She's distinctly critical of Yengeni. She wants clean government. She fights for a proper national attack on the Aids pandemic. She would be a marvellous acquisition for the Democratic Alliance.

One newspaper columnist got carried away by the thought. He said the DA should not only invite De Lille to join, but that it should appoint her the new DA leader at once.

An "alternative role" could be found for the present DA leader, Tony Leon. Maybe he could be sent to run the Western Cape region for the party, the

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Is this healthy for South Africa's political landscape?

columnist suggested.

Many DA rank and file – and former supporters of the party who left disgruntled – would be delighted, but the DA chairman replied prissily that while the alliance would “welcome” De Lille, she would have to go through “democratic procedures” before she could be elected to a leadership position.

Oh well. But why would she want to join the Democratic Alliance anyway?

She has always rejected expediency and political chicanery and compromise, and the current DA is compromising itself out of just about any of the major moral principles it once avowed.

In the Cape, it did deals with the New National Party.

In KwaZulu-Natal, with the Inkatha Freedom Party.

Any minute now, it will vote

to make Ulundi the provincial capital – if it thinks there is a seat to be won somewhere – even though the idea is political and practical nonsense.

But forget the “opposition” parties. Would the African National Congress want her?

Alone

On the face of it, no. She has given them considerable uphill. She's like a latter-day Helen Suzman and the ANC's health minister, Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, for one, would have a fit if De Lille joined. Even Mbeki might pale. But a principle in politics enunciated by one-time US president Lyndon Johnson might apply.

Asked why he kept a certain cantankerous politician in his party instead of expelling him he said it was simple; he would rather have the man inside his

tent pissing out than outside pissing in.

He was talking figuratively of course, and obviously no one should please take offence.

But you get the drift.

So some anxious people in the ANC might like to invite the lady in, for safety's sake.

But Patricia de Lille has decided to go it alone and there are good reasons for the good of South Africa why she should. The New South Africa really does need a New Political Party.

All our main established political parties predate 1994. They are pre-democracy. They may all disavow apartheid, but they all carry apartheid baggage. Their mindset is out of date.

They don't reflect the realities of a society that is so much in

transition it is almost in revolt. They are so busy looking backwards as they stumble into the future that they don't catch the excitement of a possible, truly non-racial future for South Africa. They simply aren't with it.

And some of them, sadly, are betraying the values which they, or their predecessors, fought for so hard. The DA, the pale successor of the proud Progressive Party, is a case in point.

Helen Suzman did more by herself to uphold democratic values and political morality

will entrench it.

Just having a vote doesn't mean you have democracy.

Everybody had the vote in Iraq, but there was only one man they could vote for.

In South Africa, few people seem to have realised the importance of the Slabbert commission that was set up to review our election process.

It reported that the voters need to be represented in parliament by men and women who are accountable to them directly and who can get kicked out if they don't do the job they are chosen to do, never mind what their party might say.

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But the ANC has let us down, also.

Too many of its members, affiliates or general connections have been seduced by success. They can't keep their hands off the goodies. But, most seriously of all, they fought for democracy, but have given us instead a form of one-party state where the voters don't count directly, and where a small group takes the major decisions. The danger is they

Blank cheque

The present proportional representation system takes direct power away from the voters and gives the political parties a blank cheque. But the ANC supports it. It suits them. It is very cosy. And the floor-crossing legislation endorses chicanery.

But they should look at the figures. Fewer people are bothering to vote.

That isn't just because they are bored. It's because politics doesn't mean enough to them. They don't have a direct hand

in running the show. People are losing their political voice. Ultimately, that is a very dangerous thing.

Patricia de Lille has an unquestionable reputation as a fighter and for probity and the highest integrity. She needs more than that if she is to head a successful political movement.

She should look at the very basis of our democratic system, how we vote. She should fight to give politics back to the people. She could even change her party's name.

There are too many parties around that have tarnished the democratic name.

She could call her party the Voters Party.

She should fight to give power to the people. That's what the Freedom Charter promised.

That's what South Africa really needs.

□ Humphrey Tyler is author of *Life in the Time of Sharpeville*. He was the only reporter in the crowd at Sharpeville in 1960, when police killed 69 and wounded 178. Most were shot in the back.

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MUSA ZONDI



LIONEL MTSHALI



S'BU NDEBELE

Parties close ranks after desertions

Just what went wrong in the ANC's bid to seize control of KwaZulu-Natal over the floor crossing period, asks Bheko Madlala

THE hastily convened crisis meeting held in Durban this week by IFP bosses appears to have been the turning point which stemmed the tide of defections from the party to the ANC, just hours before the window period closed at midnight on Friday.

Until Thursday, the ANC and its partners, the Minority Front and the New National Party, looked set to seize political control of the province, having gained the former DA provincial MP Omie Singh and the former education MEC, Gabriel Ndabandaba.

The *Sunday Tribune* has learned that two key IFP MPs were wrestling with the idea of crossing to the ANC this week, prompting the party to call the "head-count" meeting to stop any further defections.

The meeting on Thursday at a

city hotel – which effectively halted a complete shift in the political landscape in the province – was attended by all the IFP's provincial MPs.

IFP national spokesman Musa Zondi hinted yesterday that IFP members who attended the meeting were asked to declare their loyalty to the party. But Zondi would not be drawn on whether a head count was conducted.

"I don't know about those rumours. This was just a simple meeting of the party trying to deal with the situation. We wanted to check on who was on our side and who was contemplating going," he told the *Sunday Tribune* yesterday.

Asked what method the party used to verify its members' allegiance, Zondi said the mere presence of its members was proof.

With the 15-day walk-over period over, the IFP now finds itself in a difficult position, with two members having defected to the ANC, leaving the IFP-DA coalition outnumbered by the ANC-led coalition.

But Zondi was unfazed yesterday by the fact that the ANC coalition now had the upper hand.

"We will see what will happen as time goes. The truth of the matter is that the IFP and the DA are still the government, until the ANC decides to move a motion of no confidence. We don't know whether that will succeed," Zondi said.

He said that the relations between the IFP and the ANC were at an "all-time low", and that the floor-crossing had not helped to improve them.

Zondi also said the recent political developments in the province would be discussed at the long-awaited meeting between IFP president Mangosuthu Buthelezi and ANC president Thabo Mbeki.

The meeting was scheduled after the deteriorating relations between the two parties reached a nadir last year, when Mtshali boot-ed out ANC MECs Dumisani Makhaye and Mike Mabuyakhulu, and replaced them with DA members.

Reinstatement

ANC party insiders said yesterday that, with the party failing to muster enough seats to control the province outright, it was going to use its majority in parliament to push for the reinstatement of the two ousted MECs.

"From now on, the IFP will no longer do as it pleases. Certainly, the floor-crossing has put the ANC in a better position. The ANC will now dictate the position of the province and we will push for the honouring of the coalition agreement on which the IFP reneged. We will also ask for the reinstatement of the two MECs," said the source.

Makhaye himself said if there

had been "no intimidation", the ANC would have gained more MPPs.

"Obviously, we are the biggest party in the legislature, but it is in our nature to work with everyone – although we have noted that the IFP is adamant that it will not work under ANC leadership in the province," Makhaye said.

He said the party was prepared to work with everyone – including the ACDP and the UDM – to gain an outright majority in parliament.

Asked whether the ANC was contemplating moving a motion of no confidence in premier Lionel Mtshali, Makhaye said: "We have not discussed that, but the premier will be elected by the majority members of the legislature, just like Mtshali was appointed by the majority of members of the legislature."

□ **Andre Koopman** reports from Cape Town that while the ANC has made notable gains in KwaZulu-Natal, the two weeks of floor crossing have left the UDM, at a national level, "a ghost of its former self", and the NNP "bleeding".

The UDM, which had 14 MPs before the floor-crossing exercise began, now has four; and the NNP, which had 28 MPs, lost nine to the DA, but gained two – one from the IFP and one from the DA.

The major beneficiaries in the

political defections were the two most powerful parties – the ANC, which increased its MPs from 266 to 275, and the DA, which moved from 38 to 46.

□ **Stan Mzimba** reports from Umtata that UDM leader Bantu Holomisa warned the organisation's followers yesterday that since the ANC had a two-thirds majority in parliament, it could now call an early election.

Introspection

Addressing a packed Cicira Teachers' College hall near Umtata, Holomisa warned that all party leaders should start preparing for the 2004 elections.

"Now that all the 'polecats' have left the party, it's time for the UDM to do an introspection of itself. Those who left have left with their jackets and briefcases, and the UDM as an entity still stands," said Holomisa.

He urged party leaders to target people with expertise and professionalism, "because it's time to utilise such people to strengthen our party".

He warned that should the Independent Electoral Commission attempt to reduce funding to parties whose members had defected to other parties, the UDM would definitely take the matter to court.

SEE PERSPECTIVES PAGE 1

Politician hooked by own bait

RANJENI MUNUSAMY

THE biblical phrase "Come and I will make you fishers of men" took on a new meaning for the African Christian Democratic Party this week.

It was a case of the fisherman becoming a fish, said its leader, Reverend Kenneth Meshoe.

The political theatrics surrounding the floor-crossing resulted in a bizarre situation where a Democratic Alliance member in the Western Cape, on a mission to recruit new members, ended up defecting herself.

Meshoe said Pauline Cupido was dispatched by the DA's provincial office to woo members from his party. But upon visiting the

Cape Town offices of the ACDP, Cupido decided to sign up, giving the party a grand total of two seats in the provincial legislature.

"We voted against the floor-crossing legislation and therefore took a decision not to talk to anybody to join us. But of course we could not say no to new members," said Meshoe. Still, his party was "rather stunned" by Cupido's decision. "We did not go to the fish, the fish came to us."

Similarly, a New National Party member in the National Assembly, Adriaan Blaas, was converted without being preached to.

The two-week floor-crossing window period, which closed at midnight on Friday, resulted in the establishment of five new one-person parties as well as a 68% majority for

the African National Congress in Parliament.

The UDM suffered the most blood-letting, losing 10 members from its 14-member caucus. Four new members have also given the ANC an outright majority in the Western Cape legislature with 22 members out of 42 seats.

KwaZulu-Natal, where the ANC could clinch power from the IFP with a slender two-seat lead tomorrow, is on a knife edge.

It appears that some party leaders are not taking chances following the riot of defections. The voice message on Minority Front leader Amichand Rajbansi's cellphone reminds callers: "Always support the Minority Front, and have a good day!"

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KWAZULU-NATAL

AFTER THE FLOOR CROSSING

IFP	32	ANC	35
DA	6	Minority Front	2
		NNP	2
		PDP	1
	<hr/> 38		<hr/> 40

UNDECIDED

UDM: 1 and ACDP: 1



ANC corners IFP premier

Mtshali's job on the line unless he puts rival MECs back in KwaZulu-Natal Cabinet

RANJENI MUNUSAMY

THE ANC is to issue an ultimatum to KwaZulu-Natal Premier Lionel Mtshali tomorrow to appoint an evenly balanced Cabinet of ANC and IFP members or risk being booted out.

While the ANC could effectively wrest control of KwaZulu-Natal from Inkatha at a sitting of the legislature tomorrow, the party wants to back Mtshali into a corner to force him to appoint four more ANC MECs to the provincial Cabinet.

If Mtshali accedes to the demand it could force an end to the IFP's co-operation with the Democratic Alliance in the province.

The two-week round of floor-crossing has resulted in the ANC and its KwaZulu-Natal alliance partners capturing a majority in the province by a fine margin of two votes over the IFP-DA alliance.

The ANC now has 35 members and is relying on the support of two members each from the Minority Front and New National Party. The new Peace and Development Party has pledged its single vote to the ANC, giving the party 40 of the 80 votes in the legislature.

The IFP now has 32 members and the DA six.

The United Democratic Movement and African Christian Democratic Party hold the two remaining seats, and remain wild cards in the equation. But yesterday,

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

PARTY	BEFORE	AFTER
ANC	266	275
DA	38	46
NNP	28	20
IFP	34	31
UDM	14	4
ACPD	6	7
New parties		5
Minority parties	14	12
TOTAL:	400	400

ACDP leader the Rev Kenneth Meshoe guaranteed the ANC the leverage it requires. He told the Sunday Times that his KwaZulu-Natal representative, Joanne Downs, would support the move to strike an ANC-IFP balance in the Cabinet.

Indications from UDM insiders are that its lone member, Sipho Qoma, will support the IFP. This still gives the ANC two

votes to take control of the province.

ANC provincial leader S'bu Ndebele said yesterday his party would demand tomorrow that Mtshali honour the 1999 KwaZulu-Natal coalition agreement providing for a 50-50 balance in the Cabinet.

The two parties have been engaged in battle since the ANC was allocated four instead of six of the 12 Cabinet seats.

Their relationship was shattered in December when Mtshali axed two of the four ANC MECs and replaced them with DA members.

The ANC now wants its two MECs, as well as former Education MEC Gabriel Ndabandaba, who was fired when he defected from the IFP, reinstated. Ndebele said his party wanted the "anti-ANC front" in KwaZulu-Natal to be dismantled immediately. "We will give him [Mtshali] a deadline by which to reshuffle the Cabinet and instate the 50-50 balance. This is the very minimum we are demanding."

Mtshali's spokesman, Mahlathi Tembe, said yesterday he did not know "what the premier's reaction would be".

The IFP's KwaZulu-Natal caucus was locked in crisis talks in Durban on Thursday and in Pietermaritzburg on Friday.

The party has waged an all-out battle to retain control of the province by blocking its members from defecting.

Speaking after being awarded the freedom of Greytown in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands yesterday, IFP leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi said the party had not had the money to entice people to join the IFP during the floor-crossing.

IFP spokesman Musa Zondi said the party was waiting to see what would happen in the legislature tomorrow. "It depends on what the ANC will do. We will see if they will go ahead with a vote of no confidence. But we will see if they will have enough votes," he said. — *Additional reporting by Thabo Mkhize*

MEC puts heat on shady cops

Policemen accused of corruption by the Chatsworth community will be redeployed, writes Bheko Madlala

THE beleaguered Chatsworth police station, which has the reputation of being one of the most troubled stations in the province, could once again undergo a major overhaul aimed at purging corrupt elements, following a parliamentary address by the provincial MEC for safety and security, Nyanga Ngubane, recently.

Among a number of radical measures which are being considered by provincial police bigwigs is to again transfer suspected rogue policemen to other stations and bring in new ones.

The Chatsworth police station has been hit by a series of blows which have tarnished its image in the recent past.

The station also has a long history of controversy, varying from allegations of corruption, to policemen being involved in some cash-in-transit heists.

The Community Policing Forum also attracts its share of controversy, with many people accusing some of those involved in the forum of using it for political point-scoring.

In the latest twist, the chairman, Minority Front councillor Visven Reddy, resigned from his position.

Addressing the provincial legislature recently, Ngubane said the Chatsworth police station was one of the stations which would receive urgent attention from provincial police top brass, in an attempt to restore stability, credibility and service excellence. Ngubane said he had been to the police station recently to meet the community and the management.

He said the community said they had lost trust in the members of the police station.

Referring to the station's unenviable reputation, Ngubane said among the allegations which had resurfaced were that dockets had "gone missing" and that some policemen were accepting bribes.

"We were warmly welcomed by the community which expressed itself strongly on the problems bedevilling the police station," Ngubane told MPs.

Corrupt

He said the community complained of suspected corrupt elements within the police station and complained that the service at the station was "appalling".

Ngubane said the community recommended that for trust to be restored between the station and the community, some of the policemen would have to be transferred to stations elsewhere in the province.

"We are busy looking at all those recommendations, includ-

ing transferring the policemen who are alleged to be involved in corrupt practices. We are particularly concerned about the image of the station and the service.

"We are of the view that, in order to rebuild the bridge of trust between the community and the police, urgent steps need to be taken."

Ngubane said the community said some policemen at the station had become so familiar with some of the community members, that it was now difficult to act against them.

"When the community says enough is enough, we have to act. Those policemen who have been fingered will face stern action from the department, including disciplinary action, and could be fired, depending on the nature of the offence."

Ngubane said he would meet the community soon to inform them of the steps the department had decided to take in its mission to transform the station.

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Angry Mbeki hits Buthelezi with legal bill

This Day 06/04/2004

■ 'Pay your own costs in personal capacity and not as a minister'

CARIEN DU PLESSIS

CAPE TOWN — A legal battle between Thabo Mbeki and Mangosuthu Buthelezi turned personal yesterday when the president told his legal team that the home affairs minister should be personally liable for the costs of the case.

Mbeki had applied to the court to declare Buthelezi's immigration regulations "invalid and of no force and effect".

The president's instruction came by phone to his lawyers while they were arguing the case late yesterday afternoon.

Michael Donen, Mbeki's advocate, said he was "gobsmacked" when his argument was interrupted by the message.

The president said the home affairs minister had not informed him that he would oppose Mbeki's application to have the immigration regulations set aside.

The president directed that Buthelezi proceed with the application and pay the costs in his personal capacity and not as a cabinet minister.



Mangosuthu Buthelezi

Legal experts estimated that the costs would amount to about R500 000.

Donen yesterday questioned Buthelezi's sudden decision to oppose the application to set aside the regulations.

He said the president was bringing his application on behalf of the cabinet, of which Buthelezi was a member.

"Where does he get the authority to oppose?" Donen asked.

Gary Eisenberg, an immigration lawyer, won a court ruling last month to force Buthelezi to publish the regulations. An agreement between the two parties was made an



Thabo Mbeki

order of court and Buthelezi published the regulations. But Mbeki and the cabinet wanted them to be substantially redrafted.

Donen accused Buthelezi of having acted from "ulterior or improper motives".

He said last month's court order should never had been made because it was "clearly orchestrated to avert the cabinet process that was already under way".

The minister had abdicated his powers to make regulations to the court, Donen said.

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'The president is a hypocrite and a liar'

ANGELA QUINTAL

CAPE TOWN — IFP leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi yesterday accused President Thabo Mbeki of being a hypocrite, of lacking moral leadership, and of resorting to outrageous lies.

Buthelezi made his unprecedented personal attack on the president at an election rally at

Harding on the KwaZulu-Natal South Coast.

The ANC also geared up its campaign in the province, laying 20 charges of intimidation, disruption of political party events and assault against the IFP and its election partner, the DA.

Buthelezi said he was flabbergasted Mbeki had "for no rhyme or reason" attacked

him to discredit the IFP.

Mbeki last week branded Buthelezi a rightwinger because of the IFP's alliance with the DA, and also resurrected TRC findings that Buthelezi and the IFP were responsible for gross human rights violations during apartheid.

SEE PAGE 2

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