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THE MERCURY  
Friday September 19 2003

## Credibility Crisis

**K**WAZULU-NATAL'S provincial legislators – and some of the officials serving them – need to pull themselves together. The apparent mismanagement (at best) of the legislature's business, coupled with a legislative programme that is hampered by party rivalries and the failure of members to attend committee meetings, threatens to undermine democracy.

South Africa took on a system of government in 1994 that was a healthy balance between centralised and regionalised democracy, adapted from systems which function well elsewhere.

But, for such a system to function properly, all involved have to pull their weight.

If provincial government were to break down (in KwaZulu-Natal or any other province) so that national government had to take over its functions, the quality of democracy would be diminished, effective delivery would be badly compromised and South Africa would be in danger of lurching toward the kind of centralised, authoritarian state which the constitution-makers of 1993 carefully avoided.

Events in the national assembly suggest shortcomings at that level as well.

However, the national assembly member accused this week of grossly abusing his office seems about to be properly disciplined.

At least the institutions of government are bringing to light the abuses.

But, the onus is on the legislators – national or provincial – to follow through and restore faith in the democratic process.



THE NATAL WITNESS, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2003



## Corruption

SOME 20 months after KwaZulu-Natal's Auditor-General lodged a report on maladministration, corruption and fraud among civil servants at the provincial legislature, the Parliamentary Executive Board has finally recommended that the legislature's Secretary be fired.

There is every sign that Robert Mzimela is almost literally the tip of the proverbial iceberg. In fact, the IFP's Velaphi Ndlovu insists that Mzimela is suffering for the crimes of others. As the most senior civil servant at the legislature Mzimela is, of course, accountable for the conduct of his subordinates, but certain politicians are also under suspicion. These include no less a figure than the Speaker, Inkosi Bonga Mdeletshe, his deputy Willies Mchunu, and (in an interesting echo from the past) the Minority Front's Amichand Rajbansi.

Beyond the obvious concern that the administration of the provincial government is compromised by mismanagement and criminality, there are several worrisome aspects to the affair. Why has it taken so long for the Auditor-General's report to be acted upon? Would its contents ever have come properly to light had the ACDP's Joanne Downs not risked censure to bring it into the open? How is it possible that a very senior civil servant could be on paid suspension for more than two years without any decisive action being taken?

The ANC has accused the IFP of dragging its feet over the matter, and indeed the IFP alone quibbled over the sacking of Mzimela. Once again suspicions arise that legislators are more enthusiastic about political point scoring and protecting their own turf than about running the province effectively. Too many people in high places are unsuited to the office they hold and not to be trusted with public money. All this falls well short of the transparent and accountable governance which is supposed to characterise democratic South Africa.



THE NATAL WITNESS, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2003

## 'Traditional leadership bill ignores women's land rights'

CAPE TOWN — A bill aimed at defining the role of traditional leaders in governance has come under fire for its failure to give women better representation.

The Landless People's Movement (LPM) this week voiced grave concern that the Traditional Leadership and Governance Bill entrenches customary law which discriminates against women in ways that deeply affect their lives.

Rural women still suffer severe discrimination with regard to land and property rights, the movement said. "It does not guarantee equality for women, and while the Constitution guarantees the rights of women, it does not work in practice in rural areas."

The bill seeks to define the place and role of traditional leadership within the new system of democratic governance in the context of the Constitution. Parliament's portfolio committee on Provincial and Local Government is presently holding

public hearings on the bill.

In their submission earlier this week, the LPM welcomed the fact that the bill requires the representation of women on traditional councils, but questioned how these women will be selected.

"We are concerned that if this issue is left vague, the women will be selected by the chiefs and they will all be from the royal household," the group said.

The movement, which represents networks of rural women, also stressed that the proposed 30% representation of women in councils is too little.

Citing examples of how customary law affects women, the movement said that, in most communal areas, women are not allocated land in their own right unless they are over 40 years old. There are also many cases of women being thrown out of the house by the husband's family after his death.

— Political Correspondent.



Friday September 19 2003 **SOWETAN**

## A loveless marriage

**O**NE of the most intriguing realities of post-1994 politics must be the abiding partnership between the ruling ANC and the IFP. That largely because it was never really built on any common policy or ideological platform. And the fact that it is now under pressure should therefore hardly come as a surprise.

Many reasons were offered to justify the coalition. Certainly, the more important common factor that sustained the alliance, however, was an overarching desire to ensure stability in KwaZulu-Natal – the IFP's home base. Without stability, delivery in any form would have been impossible. To that extent, this coalition served, and continues to serve, both parties' interests.

But it is coming under serious threat. And the reasons, which are increasingly finding expression in the broader public domain, are not necessarily new.

Throughout this alliance of convenience one fact has always been amply evident. And that relates to the fact that there was very little trust between the ANC and IFP.

While the IFP was accommodated in government, the ruling party ensured senior ministers – among them home affairs minister and IFP leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi – were always kept in check by trusted ANC members.

Case in point was the appointment of trusted ANC member Lindiwe Sisulu as deputy home affairs minister. It then also installed one of its most senior intelligence officials Billy Maselha as director-general. Now it has named another ANC enforcer, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, as Buthelezi's deputy. Similarly, the IFP has shown scant respect for the ANC in the KwaZulu-Natal provincial cabinet.

More recently, the relationship has come under unprecedented strain as the IFP began flirting with the Democratic Alliance to form an anti-ANC alliance ahead of the 2004 elections. This week, the ANC has responded in kind by naming a leading member of the New National Party PW Saalman as deputy minister of correctional services – the second most senior portfolio held by the IFP. This comes just days after Buthelezi was overlooked for the job of acting president this week in favour of home girl, Dr Manto Tshabalala-Msimang. In the absence of a firm foundation, these developments could easily rock this tentative ANC-IFP alliance.

But it would be foolhardy to allow these events to undo the coalition. The principal reason for its existence – stability in KZN – remains as relevant as ever. Dissolving the partnership now will therefore serve neither party's interests.

Both sides must instead elevate stability above all else.



Friday September 19 2003 **SOWETAN**

# Shock defeat of DA by FF

THE Freedom Front upset the Democratic Alliance with a surprise victory in a municipal by-election in Bloemfontein's ward 23 on Wednesday.

The FF's Gert Fouché took 1 231 votes to the DA's 1 206.

The New National Party garnered 552 votes and the African Christian Democratic Party, 264. In the 2000 election, the DA took 86% of the vote in the ward. – *Sapa*



Friday September 19 2003 **SOWETAN**

## **'ANC has betrayed the youth**

YOUNG people in this country have been totally sold out by black political organisations, especially the ruling African National Congress. Youths played a major role during apartheid and they were used by political leaders in different ways.

Some left schools for the sake of the liberation struggle with the hope that one day they would enjoy the fruits of democracy. Slogans such as the ANC's "liberation first, then education", were counter-productive.

This has had a great impact on the crime situation in our country.

Lack of jobs is affecting young people more than anyone else. Young people were trained to kill people and they were given rifles to fight against their political enemies.

Those arms have not been returned and are now used for robbery and other crimes.

The sad thing is that those kids are now forgotten. The ANC was one of the organisations fighting the white domination of the National Party. From 1948 the National Party oppressed black people in this country.

The NP policies were designed to make blacks slaves of poverty, ignorance and underdevelopment.

Everybody remembers many statements that were made by Nat leaders. Many statements were made to undermine black people.

The Nats hated us and that still affects us today. So it is surprising that the ANC, which led the struggle against apartheid, is now in bed with them.

This is an insult to black people. If black leaders were still living that would be another story.

The ANC is in an alliance with the New National Party because it wants to be in power forever. The ANC has sold out young people.

The Inkatha Freedom Party has often called for the national youth ministry but the ANC has totally ignored such a proposal.

I urge young people in this country to vote this government out of office for the sake of future generations.

**SIBUSISO NTULI**  
University of Zululand



## THE MERCURY

### Friday September 19 2003

# Hey, all freeloaders: here's a great idea for making money

LISTEN, this thing is a cinch, a piece of old tack, a damn good racket, and I'll let you in on it.

As a finance journalist, I cover all manner of moneymaking ventures. But nothing beats this. It's money for jam.

Basically, you have to join the club and pay membership fees. Once you've done that, you'll never have to do another honest day's work in your life.

The scene is... politics.

And it's so simple.

Elections are in April, so join a political party now. The ruling one is probably best. But any decent-sized party will do. Then get an opinion on

everything from the arms deal to education. Make a noise. It doesn't matter what you say as long as you say it loudest.

The only people you have to agree with are your party bosses, who will demand slavish loyalty.

In public, press the flesh and chuck sympathetically about social problems. And when that gets boring, fill up on righteous indignation. Bang your fists on the table. Demand that somebody (other than yourself) does something about crime, corruption and lazy public servants.

It's really easy and there are jobs to be had. There are 400

seats in the national assembly and many charlatans are already lining up to ensure their bumps fill the leather-lined seats of parliament in April.

Hey, who wouldn't? The gross monthly package for an entry-level national MP is R20 800.

There are also the nine provincial legislatures. Collectively, they have about 300 seats. The monthly package there is at least R27 700.

I'd also wager that the average annual increase for MPs since 1994 has been above inflation.

All this for a relatively small membership fee. Of course,

each club has its special levies. But that's okay. Paying them guarantees clubhouse perks.

The clubs are starting to fund-raise now. Only last week I received, by mistake, I'm sure, an email from the Democratic Alliance.

Brian Goodall, chairman of the DA's finance committee,

sent out a circular saying the party needed to raise R22 million to fight the elections. Each MP has to pay an election levy in proportion to his or her seniority in the party. Very democratic, I thought.

Anyway old Tony Leont is in for R14 421 and an ordinary

MP has to pay R9 630. And, if you are feeling the pinch with those MP's repayments, the party has agreed to accept four postdated cheques between November and February.

Says Brian: "While paying in, or raising, money is never easy or enjoyable, I hope you will agree with me that this is a reasonable request."

You betcha, Brian! It's a small price to pay for a job that's worth R246 000 a year and comes with a five-year contract.

And the nice thing about a career in politics is that there's so much opportunity for movement. If you disagree

yourself in office, there's always the option of an ambassadorial post. You can go into government or get a plum job in a parastatal.

Finally, you could go into business - oaks will be falling all over themselves to have you as a director because of your influence.

You don't believe that? Well, it's true. Hell, the same DA circular says every MP will either contribute "out of his/her own pocket or ask others to contribute on his/her behalf" for the national campaign. Unless that contribution is from your mother, you can bet it comes

with strings attached.

So, there you have it, my money-making tip of the week.

But you do know that this is all very tongue-in-cheek, don't you? Some politicians are dedicated to bettering the lives of the poor and make huge personal sacrifices. They'd probably work for nothing. It's the freeloaders we have to watch.

Now for two unrelated bits of gossip: the next local government minister in Thabo Mbeki's cabinet will come from Durban, and the showdown for control of KwaZulu-Natal's parliament will be the week after next.

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Times  
by greg and



THE MERCURY  
Friday September 19 2003

## Report reveals abuse of resources by KZN MPs

SIPHO KHUMALO  
POLITICAL STAFF

A SCATHING report into maladministration and mismanagement of the KwaZulu-Natal legislature's resources has expressed doubts about the conduct of three MPs, including MF leader Amichand Rajbansi, who stayed at an Ulundi hotel despite being allocated flats by the legislature.

The report is part of a wider

probe into the affairs of the legislature which found wide-ranging abuse of resources, vehicles, cellphones and noted a number of omissions on the part of the legislature's chief executive officer, Robert Mzimela.

This week the parliamentary executive board recommended that Mzimela be fired, while other parliamentary officers are to face disciplinary action.

The decision to have Mzimela

fired was taken by the ANC, the DA, the ACDP, the NNP and the Peace and Development Party but opposed by the IFP. The UDM and MF were absent.

The report says Rajbansi, who was allocated flat 28 in Ulundi, stayed at the Ulundi Holiday Inn on the night of May 20, 2001, at a cost of R448 to the legislature.

However, Rajbansi has reacted angrily to the report, saying that he had used his flat at

Ulundi for 99% of his stay there.

Others who stayed at the hotel despite being allocated flats were IFP MP Eliot Vezzi, who spent several nights at the hotel, resulting in a cost of R3 169.37.

The report said it appeared that Vezzi, who has since been transferred to Cape Town, did not stay in the flat.

Another IFP MP, Mandla Shabalala, who had also been transferred to Cape Town, spent

a night at the hotel, incurring a cost of R595.18 to the legislature.

Vezzi and Shabalala could not be reached for comment.

The report is generally critical of the way the legislative assembly flats in Ulundi were managed.

It said poor management of the flats by Mzimela resulted in them being occupied by external tenants without leases and collection of rents.



THE NATAL WITNESS, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2003

*New amendments enable South Africans abroad to vote in general elections*

# Expats will be allowed to vote

**S**OUTH Africans temporarily living abroad during next year's general election will be allowed to vote in terms of amendments to be adopted by Parliament's Home Affairs committee yesterday.

The change to the Electoral Laws Amendment Bill, which was proposed by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), is likely to hold the greatest benefit for opposition political parties, as many of their supporters live abroad.

As a result, these parties have

been among the most vocal in calling for the change.

Patrick Chauke, the African National Congress chairman of Parliament's Home Affairs committee, said three categories of overseas voters will be allowed to cast special votes: South African students, people temporarily out of the country, and people abroad in pursuit of business interests.

Chauke said there is no specific definition of "temporarily" out of the country. This can extend to four years or more, but will exclude people who have

emigrated or have taken citizenship of other countries.

The right to vote will be limited to people who have registered in SA and have a residential address and identity document.

People who registered in previous elections will also qualify, but they will be allowed to vote only at national level, not for provincial government representatives.

"All political parties have agreed that this is the correct step to take," Chauke said. "Our

duty is to ensure that South Africans are given an opportunity to exercise their right to vote."

He noted that there are only 3 000 voters living abroad who voted in the last general election, even though the IEC went to great lengths to ensure that systems were in place to allow them to do so.

Another amendment will allow registered voters to vote outside their district of registration, though they will only be able to participate in the national elec-

tion.

Chauke said the committee is concerned about the number of voters in SA who do not have ID books and who will not be able to reach polling stations. It hopes that door-to-door visits by officials of the IEC will assist in helping with both problems.

"If you check on the voters' roll you will see that we are missing more than nine million people. We are trying to work with the IEC to find ways and means to reach out to those people," he said. — Business Day



Friday September 19 2003 **SOWETAN**

# What does the IEC do?



Home Affairs Minister and IFP president Mangosuthu Buthelezi.



Left: Brigalia Bam, chairperson of the IEC.



Right: IEC chief electoral officer Pansy Hlakola.

from page 1

**What is the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)?**

It is a permanent body established in terms of the Electoral Commission Act of 1996 to promote and safeguard democracy in South Africa. It is a publicly funded body and is accountable to Parliament, but is independent of the Government.

**How does the IEC work?**

The IEC has five full-time commissioners, appointed by the President, whose brief is to deliver regular, free and fair elections at all levels of government: national, provincial and local. This it achieved by:

- Dividing the country into voting districts;
- Making logistical arrangements for elections;
- Registering eligible voters;
- Ensuring the smooth running of voting; and
- Counting, verifying and announcing the results of elections.

**How does the IEC ensure that elections run smoothly?**

The IEC is responsible for all the logistics of running elections, including setting up voting stations in the most remote rural areas, installing telecommunications facilities such as

telephones and fax machines, and setting up a computer network to link all voting stations.

**What has the IEC achieved so far?**

It has successfully conducted two general elections. These were the first democratic elections in 1994, and the 1999 elections. It also managed the 1995 and 2000 local government elections, as well as a number of local by-elections. The IEC also mounted an untested voter registration exercise before the inaugural democratic elections and in all, 18.4 million people registered as voters in nine days, more than 80% of all eligible voters in 14 650 voting districts.

**How does South Africa's electoral system work?**

Parliamentary elections are held every five years. Anyone aged 18 and over and who has registered on the voters' roll is entitled to vote. South Africa uses a proportional representation voting system based on political party lists at the national and provincial levels.

A registered political party receives a share of seats in Parliament in direct proportion to the number of votes cast for it in the election. Voters don't vote for individuals, but for a political party, which decides on members to fill the seats it has won.

**Am I registered to vote, and if so, where?**

If you're on the voters roll, you're registered to vote. You should check the roll to see if you're registered and to make sure your details have been correctly entered, in particular, that you're registered to vote in the area in which you live (your home area, the area to which you return after temporary periods of absence).

**Where and how do I register to vote?**

You can apply to register only in the voting district in which you live or to which you regularly return after temporary periods of absence.

You can register when you turn 16 years of age, although you can only vote when you are 18 years old.

You can register at the office of your nearest municipal electoral officer during office hours.

**How do I register?**

To register, you must:

- Apply for registration in person;
- Be a South African citizen; and
- Possess a valid bar-coded identity document or a valid temporary identity certificate. Your details will be entered into the IEC database and, once they have been verified by the Home Affairs Department, entered into the voters' roll.

**Where do I vote?**

You can only vote in the district for which you registered; your name will appear only on that part of the voters' roll devoted to this district.

**How is the fairness of elections determined?**

The Electoral Act of 1998 makes specific provision for accrediting neutral observers for South African election.

The 1999 election, for instance, was observed by about 11 000 neutral observers, 369 of whom were from abroad.

The international observers included organisations such as the Organisation of African Unity, the European Parliamentarians for Africa and the Southern African Development Community.

The United Nations Electoral Assistance Division helped the IEC with coordinating the international observers, while the South African Council of Churches coordinated the local observers.

Only organisations can apply to the IEC to observe elections. Observer missions compile a report and announce their findings about the conduct of the elections and whether the poll was free and fair.

## HOW TO CONTACT THE IEC IN YOUR AREA

**IEC head office**  
012-428-5700 or fax 012-428-5863  
**IEC Eastern Cape**  
043-709-4200 or fax 043-743-4784  
**IEC Free State**  
051-401-5000 or fax 051-430-4845  
**IEC Gauteng**  
011-644-7400 or fax 011-644-7448  
**IEC KwaZulu-Natal**  
031-367-9900 or fax 031-306-0698  
**IEC Mpumalanga**  
013-754-0200 or fax 013-753-2564  
**IEC Northern Cape**  
053-838-5000 or fax 053-831-8095  
**IEC Limpopo**  
015-291-0600 or fax 015-295-9609  
**IEC North West**  
018-387-6500 or fax 018-387-6522  
**IEC Western Cape**  
021-409-5300 or fax 021-425-6410

In addition, political parties contesting the elections are entitled to have monitors at voting stations to ensure compliance with voting procedures.

Party monitors and observers also keep a watchful eye on the counting process after the close of the vote. — Victor Mecoamere



Nine-and-a-half years into our democracy, we are back in the world of rumour-mongering, writes **Mondli Makhanya**

# Trial by rumour

**I**n the late 1980s there lived an old woman in the Kwa-Mashu neighbourhood where I grew up. She lived alone, was for years dressed in widow's weeds and spoke to no one.

We would see her only when she left home to run errands or came out to hang her washing — which sometimes included what seemed to be Inkatha regalia.

The conclusion was reached by all: she was a witch, a spy and Inkatha. That she was Inkatha and a spy meant something should be done about her. But the fact that she might also be a witch complicated matters, as her arsenal might just have been too much for attackers.

Then some time in 1989, on the eve of the commemoration of one of the township's struggle heroes, something happened. A rumour circulated that the old woman had been seen walking naked in the streets after midnight, ostensibly to cast an evil pall over the commemoration ceremony.

When the ceremony ran into police harassment and bloody clashes, the blame was laid squarely at her door. It was she who had created conditions for the injuries and arrests. After all, she was a witch, a spy and Inkatha.

A few weeks later her body was found half a kilometre from her home, riddled with bullets. The fact that she had managed to evade her assailants for such a distance was evidence, for many, that she indeed

had supernatural powers that made her difficult to kill.

No one bothered to find out who killed her. She had been a witch, a spy and Inkatha. Now she was dead.

That was the 1980s when *impimpi*s were as vile as the enemy itself. Many would say the old woman was lucky to be shot, as others met far more horrifying deaths.

Some were genuine *impimpi*s. But others were victims of what one could call "trial by rumour".

Thankfully, we have moved away from that era and its ways. We can now deal with accusations rationally, through the judicial system or in the realm of public discourse.

Or so we believed. Nine-and-a-half years into our democracy, we are back in the world of rumour-mongering and assassination by innuendo.

Take the case of National Director of Public Prosecutions Bulelani Ngcuka. In recent weeks he has been the subject of a whispering campaign, whose most damaging claim is that he spied for the apartheid government. This rumour was eventually backed by documentation indicating that Ngcuka might have betrayed his comrades in the dying days of apartheid.

As in the bad old days, the accusers have not proved anything beyond reasonable doubt. They simply allude to the possibility of espionage based on circumstantial evidence, based on a report, based on apartheid security force

documents, based on shadowy spies somewhere in the crevice between the liberation movement and the apartheid system.

Trial by rumour led to the death of many people in the 1980s. Granted, one was at war and the last thing one wanted in the same trench was an untrustworthy comrade. Senior leaders had called for *impimpi*s to suffer gruesome punishment.

But in the process, *impimpi*-spotting became so widespread in the liberation movement that it became self-destructive. Picking up on this trend, the security establishment developed strategies to enhance the culture of suspicion, to divide the enemies of apartheid.

A prominent Kwa-Mashu youth activist was once picked up by the police and dumped outside Durban's notorious CR Swart Square on the day of a mass release of detainees. When the released prisoners saw him, they could only reach one conclusion: that he was there for debriefing and payment. No amount of explaining and protestation from the young man could persuade them otherwise.

**No matter how much Ngcuka pleads his innocence, the court of rumour has sat and passed judgement**

In the weeks that followed, his circle of friends shrank and he was invited to fewer and fewer meetings. Those who pleaded his case were silenced with dollops of extremely circumstantial evidence.

He retreated to the emotional safety of his own family, finally leaving to study at a distant university where his anonymity allowed him to continue contributing to a cause in which he so fervently believed.

The court of rumour requires no conclusive evidence, and from it there is no appeal. No matter how much Ngcuka pleads his innocence, the court of rumour has sat and passed judgement. In many quarters, particularly in the ruling party, many will now question his integrity. Stories are already circulating about his real motives for investigating African National Congress leaders suspected of wrongdoing.

This should tell Ngcuka that he should have stuck to the letter of the law, subjecting Deputy President Jacob Zuma to a proper court process rather than first bringing him to the bar of public opinion.

But as the Schabir Shaik trial plays out, Zuma will have no choice but to answer to this court. He cannot, as the country's second citizen, run away from answering to the public he serves.

In the court of public opinion, where the combatants are out in the open, there are remedies. It is

open to Zuma to explain his actions to the satisfaction of reasonable South Africans.

In the shadowy world of spies and whispering campaigns, it is well-nigh impossible to differentiate between fact, fiction and smear.

But popular opinion has its own weaknesses as a means of sifting truth from lies: it can also breed unsubstantiated allegations. It is a very dangerous place to resolve what may be the most contentious issues to face post-apartheid South Africa.

In sorting out the Zuma/Ngcuka mess, we should consider retreating to the legitimate institutions the democratic order bred and gave legitimacy.

Step one would be for Ngcuka to treat Zuma as he would any accused against whom there is prima facie evidence.

Step two would be for Zuma to cooperate fully with the investigation and stop tap-dancing to his own semantics. In a structured investigation, where he fully answers questions about his personal finances, he could clear his name once and for all.

He will also have to call to heel that funny Durban family, whose loyalty to him seems so oddly intense. They, too, will have to play by the book.

The battle must be fought out in well-lit rooms by visible antagonists, with clearly defined rules of combat. What we cannot afford is a retreat to the barbarous methods of our past rulers.