

# Conflict over legacy at Hani memorial

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THE grave of former SA Communist Party leader Christ Hani was turned into a battlefield over his legacy yesterday.

Cosatu general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi's was the lone voice that praised Hani's stance – expressed shortly before his death – that he did not wish to join the government.

Speaking at the wreath-laying ceremony in Boksburg, Vavi said Hani's statement embodied the principle of selflessness. But SACP general secretary Blade Nzimande differed sharply from Vavi.

He said people used Hani's statement to "rubbish" the SACP for its participation in government.

Nzimande, who serves as the minister of higher education and is a national executive committee member of the ANC, said that good communists were in the ANC.

"This government is not the enemy. It's our own government, it's not the government of dogs."

President Jacob Zuma said Hani would have changed his stance had he lived past 1994.

"We used to argue greatly with what he was saying and I said it was wrong he can't do so," Zuma said.

He urged South Africans to use Hani's name "appropriately", describing him as a "courageous, fearless and brave comrade".

Public Works Minister Thulas Nxesi endorsed Zuma's views. He said Hani would have accepted deployment by the SACP and ANC.

Vavi said Hani never shied away from controversy and castigated political leaders who either ignored problems or were implicated in them. "For this he was even imprisoned for a time by his own leaders."

Nzimande agreed that Hani was able to rise up and speak when things were going wrong in the movement. But he said Hani did not

grandstand in the media.

Meanwhile, Zuma, without mentioning his name, slated Planning Minister Trevor Manuel for suggesting that government must stop blaming apartheid for everything.

"To suggest that we can't blame apartheid for what we are doing now or what is happening now in the country ... I think it's a mistake to say the least," he said.

Ekurhuleni mayor Mondli Gungubele defended Manuel at a lecture at the Boksburg Civic Centre in honour of Hani last night.

He said while he agreed with Zuma that the effects of apartheid will not be fully reversed in our lifetime he believed Manuel's statement was viewed out of context.

"When policy is in our hands we can't say its apartheid ... Please, it's us," he said.

Nxesi, who was programme director, said: "The Trevor debate will help the party do self-reflection and engage where he is missing the point."