

Thuli Madonsela exposed the 'dodgy' architect who benefited from Nkandla upgrades. Photo: Madelene Cronjé

# End the Nkandla grandstanding

**T**he public protector's report on Nkandla has been at the centre of our public discourse for more than two years now. The opposition parties have used Nkandla, and are continuing to use it, as a campaign message against the ANC.

Her report does not provide anything new to the public, except that it uncovered one dodgy character, architect Minenhle Makhanya, who unduly benefited from the project by adding unnecessary measures that had nothing to do with the security of the president. Why didn't Thuli Madonsela make recommendations as to what must happen to this man? It is clear that he played a huge role in defrauding the state.

Madonsela's focus on government and the president in particular make this report more political than anything. One can only explain the inflating of the cost to R245-million as a form of corruption in the private sector.

The biggest problem with the report is that everyone was expecting Zuma to be found guilty of wrongdoing. It didn't go according to their expectation. It goes without saying that Zuma benefited from the upgrade — this is why there were upgrades in the first place. — *Sizwe, Malelane*

■ Who needs Monty Python when Jacob Zuma and his Flying Circus are here to entertain us? First the matter was top secret and then it wasn't. There was a legal attempt to prevent the publication of Madonsela's report, only to be withdrawn days later. Madonsela was at one stage threatened with arrest for the crime of doing her job.

It beggars belief that such twaddle emanates from individuals in powerful positions. I imagine that members of the diplomatic community, here and abroad, must be rolling around on the floor, convulsed in helpless laughter.

Zuma's private architect, without security clearance, creamed off R16-million of taxpayers' money. No doubt he has made a full and proper disclosure of this windfall to the South African Revenue Service. — *John Gardener, Howick*

■ The Mail & Guardian's story ("A licence to loot", March 20) is just a

statement to mislead voters. The way the public protector has handled this investigation is worrying. She has compromised fundamental principles of justice and fairness and thus the credibility of the investigation. The use of the media, in particular, to leak the provisional report and the habit of making comments on an incomplete process have negatively affected and unnecessarily cast aspersions on the president.

The time spent by the public protector on a parallel investigation was lengthy compared with the interministerial task team's investigation. Already the president has signed a proclamation for the Special Investigative Unit to take up the recommendations of the team's report. Nothing in the public protector's report suggests the interministerial task team report was wrong.

Before we start to crucify Zuma, we must criticise the spending of R1-billion on security for American President Barack Obama at the Nelson Mandela memorial service. — *Thabang Maseko, spokesperson, Eastern Cape Young Communist League*

■ One has to ask ANC supporters and ANC voters: How do you feel about the fact that state money (your and my tax money) for "a better life for all" has been rerouted to build Nkandla? Money set aside for inner-city rejuvenation and sinkholes has been used for Zuma's private residence.

So, ANC voters, will you stop protesting against failures of service delivery, lack of housing, the bucket system or electricity cuts? The priority of this ANC leadership is not a "better life for all" — it is a better life for Number One, and then for the cronies.

And, to those ANC hardliners who consider Zuma a king and not a president, can I ask: Do you know

what democracy is? Or was the fight against apartheid only to gain power (and related credit cards) and not for a democratic, free, equal society based on a strong Constitution and the rule of law? — *Theo Martinez, Johannesburg*

■ Calling for the impeachment of Jacob "Mr Erratic" Zuma is childish, immature and grandstanding by the Democratic Alliance. The president acts cunningly to avoid mistakes, as in his visit to Mauritius, where a diary, an encrypted fax and offshore accounts could have sent him to jail. The Nkandla report could not point to his involvement and knowledge of this "daddy of all scandals".

The report is a victory for the officials who blew the whistle, the media that published details of this abuse of state power, the official who rejected this opulent spending, and the masses whose funds for development were diverted so that the Zuma family can live opulently without paying a cent.

State employees could not get a housing subsidy of just R1500, but Zuma's cows and chickens can live like kings. Zuma is not a member of the ANC but of the African National Crooks.

The Nkandla report shows that Zuma and his blind Cabinet members put his family first, before the interests of the working class and the poor. Maybe this is a reason Zwelinzima Vavi can now dispute that Zuma is a "friend of the working class and the poor"; he is a feudal lord stealing from the peasants.

The ANC is not going to purge Zuma the way it purged Thabo Mbeki, mainly because the ANC's national executive committee and his Cabinet are full of jobseekers.

Between 1994 and 2009, Zuma could not build his home. He could not pay his traffic fines, electricity and water bills, school fees or rent — Schabir Shaik had to give him pocket money. The state should be reimbursed for his salary of R2.4-million a month, together with the R36 000 paid monthly to his four wives.

The report exposes finance minister Pravin Gordhan, who never questioned the diversion of funds to the Zumas. The media should check whether any companies that inflated the Nkandla costs contributed to the ANC or the Zuma education trust. — *Ingrid Ramosa, Tshwane*

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