

ANC loss was own knockout blow

Pretoria News, Pg 7, 7/2/17

THE CAPITAL has always been a contested cake by political parties, but the ANC was given an opportunity by the electorate to govern this city until the August 3, 2016, local government elections.

The DA is now assisted by the EFF, Freedom Front Plus, Cope and ACDP together with the PAC that sometimes abstains during council proceedings.

This polluted political cream has launched missiles against the ANC, but the main question is; who must get a slice from this big cake?

The metro is the third biggest municipality in the world after New York and Tokyo. It is also the biggest municipality in the continent.

It is the capital of the country and home to almost 99% of the international commissions and embassies.

Many important institutions such as the administration of the country, national departments, the CSIR, Reserve Bank, Sars, Wonderboom Airport, Unisa, University of Pretoria, Tshwane University of Technology, Ford Motor Company, BMW, Nissan, Dinokeng Reserve and National Botanical Gardens are all based here.

If one looks at the important institutions, it becomes clear why the city is the centre of contest and why it is a necessary and revolutionary task of everyone in the ANC to defend this metro.

But it has been empirically proven that there are many people in the organisation who do not care, and their aim is to maximise the appropriation of resources for their own individualistic pleasure.

If the majority of our revolutionary forebears of this movement were still alive they would have cried seeing DA mayor Solly Msimanga being the ceremonial figure of this capital city.

There was arrogance when other revolutionary alliance components warned the previous administration not to outsource the then Pretoria showground, Wonderboom Airport or the Tshwane Market.

However, it happened because of their arrogance that the ANC would govern the city "until Jesus came back".

By the time the arrogance gradually ceased, the city was under the control of the DA.

Since the ANC parallel regional conferences at St George Hotel and another one at Justice College, the movement has never been the same.

The battle of the two groups was further deepened by the manner in which Nkozasana Dlamini Zuma's commission's report was handled; that about 10 councillors in 2011 were selected fraudulently.

The commission had some recommendations, but not even a single one was implemented by the ANC Tshwane region, which pointed to arrogance and lack of respect towards both organisation and the people of the capital.

Because of behaviour of that nature, I suspect that some members who strongly felt that they were dealt with incorrectly became disillusioned and stopped participating.

That was justified when the ANC started using Expanded Public Works Programme workers such as those at Vat Alles to do the work of the organisation

The alliance handed over the capital to the DA-EFF coalition on a silver platter but the possibility of the revolutionary movement regaining control are high, writes Apson Sepadi Makaung

that included the door-to-door election campaigns. It was clearly the highest form of unacceptable behaviour by the organisation and unfair treatment to the workers.

The ANC Tshwane regional executive committee nominated three mayoral candidates.

This excluded the then mayor and current regional chairperson Comrade Kgosientso "Sputla" Ramokgopa, which was a sign of no confidence in him.

The three comrades who were nominated were the current regional deputy chairperson Comrade Mapiti Matsena, regional executive committee member Comrade Suzan Ngobeni and Comrade Kerin Littler.

I suspect that both the ANC Gauteng and the national (leadership) did not have confidence in the credentials of all three.

The good decision by the ANC upper structures to rescue the Tshwane region was the appointment of Comrade Angela Thoko Didiza.

But when the ANC made the resolution to bring someone in as the face of (its) election (campaign), the machinery was without oil and difficult to operate.

That intervention had been suggested by the SACP, Cosatu and Sanco in the region for almost four years, but that call was ignored by the ANC regional leaders.

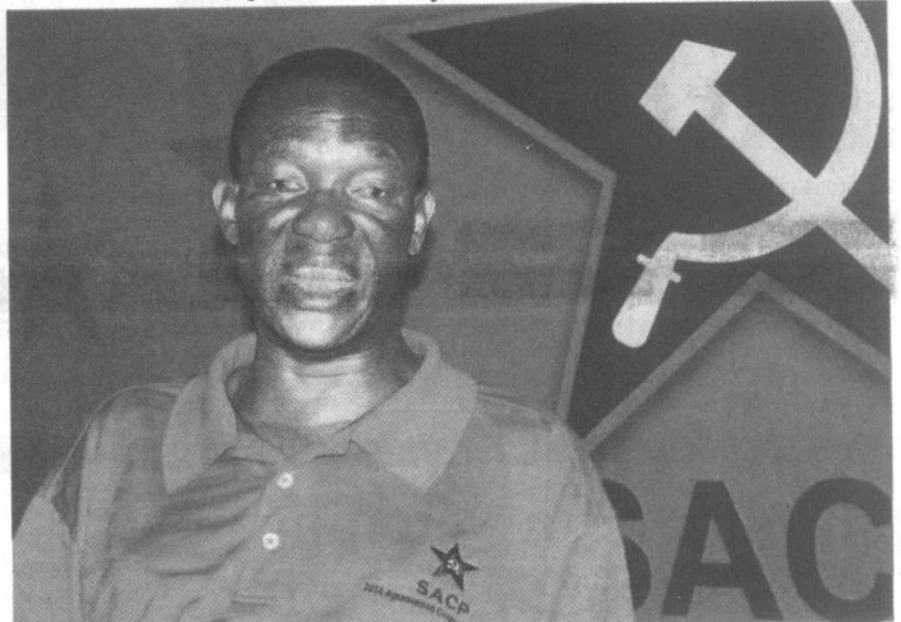
The alliance components organised several marches to the City of Tshwane complaining about how the city was being run, but the political leadership never availed themselves to receive even a single memorandum, including the one that was led by Cosatu president Comrade S'dumo Dlamini in 2012.

The last march took place in October 2014 and memorandums were handed over to Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs and the Presidency, but they never bore any fruit, hence there was no attempt to rescue the municipality and the movement in Tshwane.

Last August was like a technical knock-out in a boxing ring, and the ANC election campaign was like a foreign thing to structures in Tshwane precisely because the majority of comrades who were part of the election teams - knowledgeable and experienced since 1994 throughout all the democratic election programmes - did not take part.

On election day, as an activist I was part of the SACP team assigned to do revolutionary work in other areas.

We started our work in the farm areas between Pretoria North and Hamman-skraal. We found farmworkers without



Apson Sepadi Makaung says the ANC gave away the capital city to the DA-led government on a silver platter.

transport to take them to their voting districts and the majority of them were ANC members (as it was easy to identify them by their regalia).

The DA had three kombis that were branded with their colours and logo, and transporting only its supporters from those farms to voting stations.

We took about five hours trying to transport ANC supporters with our SACP cars, and when we got to Hamman-skraal we found the majority of voting stations had no ANC visibility.

On the other hand, the DA was well prepared in terms of party agents and highly visible through its colours.

We went to the nearest ANC operation centre and found about 70 comrades relaxing and drinking alcohol.

Within three minutes, a certain bakie passed on the main road loud-hailing; "Please get your ID and vote ANC before stations close."

The comrades at the operations centre shouted at the occupants of the car to "go away". I think it was practically proven the majority of us in the broader movement worked on the assumption that our black townships were the base of the movement, forgetting that a human being was a "rational animal".

When the IEC (Independent Electoral Commission) started counting (the votes) we were neck-in-neck with the DA. We thought we will win the election because the majority of wards in Mamelodi, Soshanguve, Mabopane, Winterveldt and Ga-Rankuwa) were not yet counted.

We were unaware that we were lying to ourselves; the people were not our property and we didn't have full control over them.

In politics a person can sleep in power and wake up the following day without it, especially in a country that practises a multi-party system democracy.

For the Tshwane region to drop from 49% during the national general elections to 41% was a result of the deaf ears turned towards the voices of the people. Election 2016 was indeed "the visit of Jesus Christ, who was from Nelson Mandela Bay going to Joburg via Tshwane".

Perhaps the movement should use the number of wards that we won as a strategy to come back. Indeed the election results were like a technical

knockout against the movement by the counter-revolutionaries.

In this contested political platform it will be difficult for the DA to retain power in predominantly working class areas. The resignation of former city manager Jason Ngobeni during the first council meeting in this metro sent an ambiguous message: either a strategy to avoid accountability or deliberate intention to frustrate the DA.

Msimanga immediately encountered a serious challenge as there was unavoidable pressure to appoint a new city manager. His first blunder was the appointment of Lindiwe Kwele, the former deputy city manager, in an acting capacity.

Both the DA and ANC were in support of Kwele as the right candidate for the position, but the DA decided to drop her on realising that she was highly implicated in the Dinokeng TribeOne Music Festival debacle. The DA then anointed Moeketsi Mosola, but the ANC does not support that name.

While they were fighting over the appointment of city manager, service delivery was not appropriately provided.

Another challenge is the Vat Alles workers, the poor working class who experience a lot of exploitation and have become the political football of both DA-led alliance and ANC councillors.

The ANC was addicted to using Vat Alles as a tool to fight political battles in and outside the council. This fight is happening in the presence of the SA Municipal Workers Union, which experienced a split owing to the newly established labour formation, Democratic Municipal Workers Union of South Africa.

The majority of the poor workers (Vat Alles) did not receive their January remuneration because they refused to sign contract forms that were issued by the DA government on the ill-informed advice from their former ANC masters.

In my own analysis, it is the ANC-led alliance that handed over this capital city to the DA-EFF "coalition in disguise" on a silver platter. Possibilities are very high for the revolutionary movement to regain control of the city.

● Apson Sepadi Makaung is former secretary of Cosatu in Tshwane and current district secretary of the SACP and writes in a personal capacity