

# Cronin warns of dark 'forces' at work in the ANC

'They are beginning to realise prospects are not as rosy as they thought'

By Ngwako Modjadji

President Jacob Zuma and his supporters are working "very hard" to collapse the upcoming ANC national elective conference in December because they have realised that things might not go their way.

This allegation was said by former SACP first deputy general secretary Jeremy Cronin who spoke to Sowetan yesterday on the sidelines of the SACP national congress in Boksburg on the East Rand.

In his presentation of the state power report, Cronin said some of those forces who want to collapse the ANC conference were facing 783 or 1 000 charges. This was a clear reference to Zuma.

Cronin, surprisingly, said it would be dangerous for the SACP to contest the 2019 general elections alone.

"We must not underestimate the popularity that the ANC still has," he said. "Although it is declining popularity, in 2019 the ANC if it continues under its present trajectory it would be lucky to get more than 50%."

"But ... it would still be by far the largest party."

Cronin said the SACP needed to understand if you go off on an independent electoral ticket you need to make tactical and strategic calculations as to what the outcome would be.

However, delegates at the congress were clear the SACP must contest state power.

Cronin said this would deepen hostility between itself and elements in the ANC. "Elements who are anti-SACP in

the ANC will use the fact that we are campaigning independently to say we must end this reality of dual membership."

SACP senior leaders such as party general secretary Blade Nzimande and party deputy chairman Thulas Nxesi are ANC national executive committee members.

**Not everyone who is in the ANC can be bought**

Solly Mapaila, the new SACP first deputy general secretary, said there was a need for an alliance which would be needed even more in the future.

"Therefore we must build a strong, independent vanguard party, for socialism and the working class," Mapaila said.

"The SACP must build the kind of liberation movement and trade union it would like to see in the future."

Cronin said the "forces" were reckless in the commissions in the ANC national policy conference held last week.

"They didn't succeed in collapsing it. We must [not] rule [out] the danger that excuses are found to delay and prolong or not to have an elective conference for the ANC."

Cronin warned there was a lot of thuggery and manipulation of lists at play.

"I think they are beginning

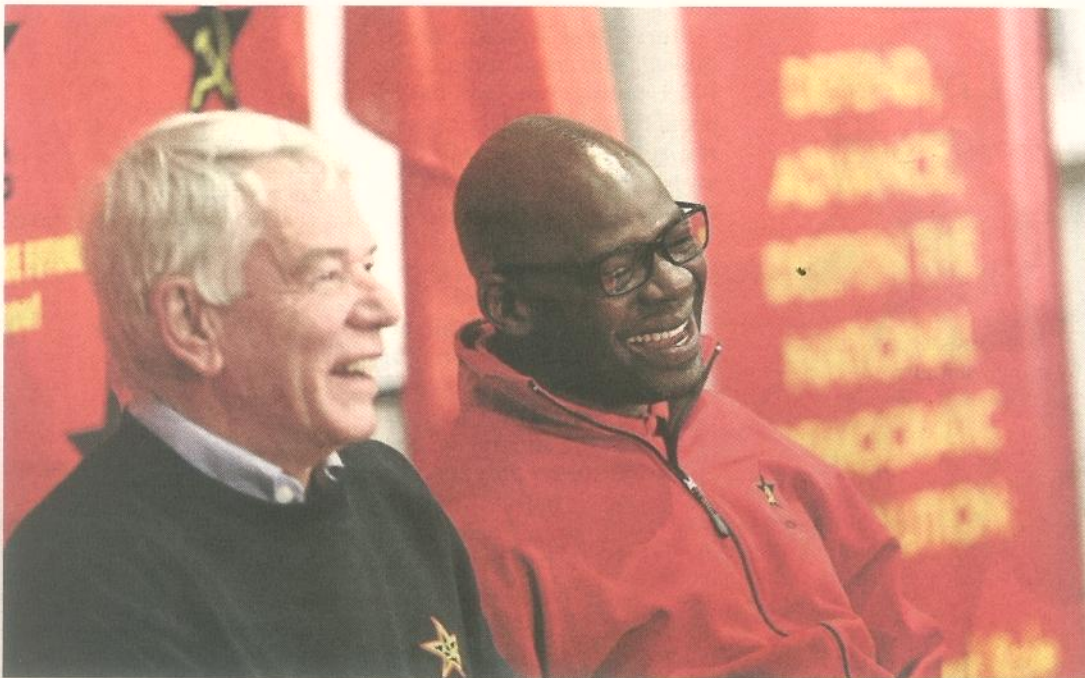
to realise that the prospects are not as rosy as they thought they would be," he said. "Not everybody in the ANC can be bought. The national policy conference was a strong indication that although there was a very well-funded caucus they got challenged by a mass of comrades whose politics are not shallow."

Cronin said those forces were not sure if their preferred candidate would be elected the next president of the ANC.

The Zuma camp wants Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma to be the next ANC leader.

He also criticised the power deal in the ANC top six backed by Zuma, saying it would just perpetuate the paralysis which was the problem now.

The Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa camp made a clean sweep at the conference by winning most discussions.



Former SACP first deputy general secretary Jeremy Cronin and his replacement Solly Mapaila at the 14th national congress of the SACP. / MASI LOSI