

De Lille now captive and cannot bite hand that feeds her

By **Themba J Nkosi**

The much-anticipated hour of announcing President Cyril Ramaphosa's cabinet has finally come. It brings into sharp focus many challenges and expectations. One of them is the "marriage of convenience" in appointing Patricia de Lille, leader of the Good Party, into his cabinet as the minister of public works and infrastructure.

Some see this move of bringing her closer as a diplomatic strategy of silencing De Lille and turning her into a toothless bulldog.

De Lille's appointment could serve as two-way political traffic in a number of ways. There is a great likelihood that at the end of the day Ramaphosa and his ruling party will yield political fruits in this political relationship.

From the look of things, it seems Ramaphosa will benefit more than

her and the Good Party. De Lille will no longer be able to criticise him openly and oppose the ANC publicly because she cannot bite the hand that feeds her.

By accepting the ministerial position as someone who is very good at digging out corruption and drilling maladministration, this move has compromised her a lot. Soon it will become history that she has passion to expose all forms of corruption as she did during the multimillion-rand arms deal during the 1990s.

So, her appointment might not give her that door of opportunity to ruffle feathers of corruption. Appointing her into the cabinet could be the best way of neutralising and containing her in whatever way she might want to say or act upon.

Bringing De Lille into the cabinet gives Ramaphosa ample time to

study her tactics and read her mind and predict her moves. It might happen that this is a way of frustrating her under the pretext of the "dawning of a new era".

Mao Tse Tung said: "The basic principle of war is to preserve oneself and destroy the enemy." Time will tell who will be destroyed slowly but surely.

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Another advantage of bringing her closer to him is to be perceived preaching the language of political tolerance and acceptance at the expense of her party. The Good Party is still at the nascent stage. De Lille's responsibilities in the ministerial world with travelling will compromise her as a leader.

The primary objective of this well-calculated move is neutralising De Lille and removing a sting in her party as opposition. The stark reality is that Good Party will be compromised by its leader's appointment as a minister. De Lille cannot be on both sides of the fence; as the saying goes, you cannot run with the hares and hunt with the hounds. Former US president Lyndon Johnson once said: "It is probably better to have him inside the tent p***ing out than outside the tent p***ing in."

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