

**REPRESENTATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN WOMEN IN THE
PUBLIC SPHERE**

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METHODOLOGY

The aim of this report is to explore how South African women are (re)presented by the media as they engage in the public sphere. It looks at women in three different fields namely, politics, business and art, analysing at the onset the way they argue, that is, as rhetorical agents. It then proceeds to assess how these women's gender is perceived to enhance or be detrimental to their capacity to deliver. In the process, the report comes to belie and confront various myths that still persist and taint women's image in the public arena.

In the realm of politics, I will be analysing Cape Town Mayor and Head of DA, Helen Zille. In the corporate world, I will be looking at Bulelwa Qupe, who owns the Ezabantu, long-line Hake fishing company, and in the Arts, I will be looking at articles published on Nadine Gordimer, the author who bagged the Nobel Literature Prize less than two decades back.

Data for this purpose was compiled from various websites, namely SABCNews.com, Mail and Guardian, News24, IOL and a few blog sites. It was then perused, sorted and labelled. Common topos were extracted and portions dealing with the (re)presentation of women were summarised prior to the actual write up. In the course of the research, I realised that the framing of events had a momentous bearing on the way the women came to be appear and so, I paid close attention to titles, captions and emboldened writings.

The report begins with findings on Helen Zille's media representation and broaches on themes such as values and ethics, Zille as family woman, Media and Public Relations, Competence, Zille as victim, and race or gender. This is

followed by an analysis of Qupe and deals with the following: Values and Morals, Family woman, competence, fighter and voice for the voiceless. Nadine Gordimer's part examines her representation as a woman writer, the role of censorship, her socio-political engagement and her image as victim.

One of the challenges in the course of the research, arose from the fact that the women were viewed as effective or ineffective for various reasons other than their gender, even if gender considerations did predominate. Extricating gender issues from others was at times a tricky one, especially in the case of Zille and Gordimer, where both the commonplaces 'race' and 'gender' prevailed.

HELEN ZILLE

Helen Zille, mayor of Cape Town and recently, national leader of the Democratic Alliance has been the object of much media attention lately, especially with the announcement of the 2010 soccer World Cup in Cape Town.

Helen Zille as a rhetorical agent

Helen Zille, as a rhetorical agent makes use both of her ethos as a disciplined and committed hardworker to win hearts, and of logos to set projects into motion.

The Capeinfo of April 2006 qualifies her as the 'Best Cape Town Mayor in decades'. It brings out many of her virtues namely 'go-getting, demanding and respected', 'a steely resolve to do the right thing, 'much quieter and warmer than expected', someone 'comfortable saying "I don't know, I need to learn more..."', 'focused, committed, fiercely bright and incredibly hard-working'.

This series of accolades is given alongside her various achievements in office, as former provincial minister of education, DA spokesperson and mayor. The article

as a whole is intent on valorising Zille's political image, even going to the extent of dismissing unconstructive remarks made by other papers: 'Some media reports have not been accurate and at least one report was written on hearsay' as well as political figures: 'We believe that the Provincial premier and the President's office were 100% wrong for their public criticisms of her (and others who raise concerns)' as regards her decision to postpone discussions on Green Point where the World Cup will be held.

Whether or not readers would tag this article as a partisan one, it is noteworthy that it was published only a month prior to her election as National Leader of the Democratic Alliance on 6 May 2007 and is likely to have impacted on her campaign, more specifically on her ethos as eligible candidate.

Media (re)presentation

1. The question of values and ethics

It would be popularly believed that many women politicians would integrate an ethics of care in their approach to politics. The ethics of care focuses on cementing human relationships through commonly held values and morals. In many articles, Zille is shown to cherish the values of truth, integrity and hard work. On the SABC News of May 25, 2007, Zille announces that her politics will stress on 'shared values', not 'separate identities'.

In Carte Blanche dated May 13, 2007, Zille is said to be faithful to 'a good old fashioned work ethic: what you put in you'll take out. In Helen's words: being present, punctual and very prepared.' No wonder, her day's schedule begins at four in the morning and ends in the late hours of the night. As for her commitment to truth, even as a young political correspondent, Zille is said to have always demonstrated a strong adherence to truth. She fearlessly reported the real cause of Steve Biko's death in detention, and maintained her statement,

even when it led to her being accused of misleading the public.

As a woman politician, she is also cast as an upholder of democracy, which does not jar with her liberal views on politics. In mainstream feminist theories, liberalism has, in the past, made great strides in extending the opportunities open to women in the public sphere so that they could match up those of men. It gave rise to laws such as the 'Equal rights amendment' in the US and other parts of the globe. Though it is not surprising that as a woman politician, Zille would lean to the left, her concerns are broader than those of women emancipation alone. In Fairlady, she defines liberals as those who 'typically develop their opinions by looking for reasons why they may be wrong, rather than proof that they are right. They are particularly sceptical of nationalism and patriotism because these concepts are so easily abused by demagogues who appeal to group loyalties and racial prejudices to entrench their own power'. Having the 'culture of scrutiny, questioning and debate' entrenched in her, she goes further to fight for open and fair elections in the name of democracy.

In the November 1, 2006 IOL article, Zille is said to take to the streets with her supporters to 'save democracy'. What is at stake here is not only her position as Mayor but also the representivity of committees as a whole. Should the executive mayoral system be substituted with an executive committee as proposed by the ruling party, chances are high that the ANC, with its enduring popularity, would eclipse other parties trying to surface in local government. In the process, it would threaten the very understanding of democracy. The decision is consequently voted in Zille's favour and the ANC backs off 'from its bid to strip Cape Town mayor Helen Zille of her executive powers.' This decision is quite momentous for it projects Zille as the champion of democratic governance. Her gender does not impede her political path here for her image as a liberal woman politician works towards reassuring the electorate that she can tackle issues of the new republic.

The real challenge for Zille is that of gathering enough black votes. On the

SABC News of April 30, 2007, as Zille seeks the support of the black majority, she observes that the question of race still influences voting tendencies. "The single biggest threat to South Africa's democracy is too much power in too few hands, that always is a threat to democracy". Most of the support for the DA comes from the White population which comprises, in terms of the ballot of 12% against the 70% supporting the ANC. Zille links threat to democracy to demagoguery, and insists that "We, like many other emerging democracies are far from that point and it is the DA's biggest challenges to show people of all races, of all creeds that we really care about them." As such, she demonstrates that her party believes in providing equal opportunities to all independently of their belongings and beliefs. Besides commending the principles of her party, she is shown to be a woman of resilience and she awaits the catalytic 'tipping moment' that will make her party conquer all voters' hearts and do justice to democratic values.

This could in fact work in her favour as a woman politician, if Zille were not at the same time not lambasted for being 'too white liberal' or having a 'power-hungry zeal' in some of the blogs. Still, at no point are these perceived downsides linked to Zille's gender, unless this consideration is tacitly implied.

2. The family woman

Some papers also remind us that Zille is a homebound too. Fairlady presents Zille as the family woman, joking with her sons and commenting on the nickname her sons gave to her husband: 'Mayonnaise'. It also gives readers an insight into Johann Maree's first impression of Zille. 'I thought she was a very clever, beautiful woman but I also saw her as a strong and self-assured person who knew exactly who she was and what she was doing.' In presenting this side of the picture, readers can conceive of Zille, as a full-fledged person who also has a private life to attend to. Zille's fulfilment of traditional gender roles does not deflate Zille's image as a woman politician, for in the following lines we are told that Zille spends most of her time in office, which can be read off as a sign that

she puts public interest first.

3. The Media and Public relations

In the public sphere, Zille is depicted as a 'Media darling' and an adept at public relations. She never refuses any interview, despite her very busy schedule. She encourages familiarity with journalists by insisting that they address her as 'Helen' and endears herself by admitting her errors rather than appealing to lame excuses. She does not hesitate to acknowledge the good work of her political opponents and is described as having the skill to give a 'positive spin' to any situation. In other words, she has the ability to market any important political situation via the media to gain access to her public, or rather 'pragmatic access to hearts and minds'.

No wonder she is described as the 'hot favourite' by the SABC News and other papers who follow her very closely prior to the 2007 elections for the leadership of the DA. She is said to have mass support matching that of Mlambo-Ngcuka, and having a good lead over the incumbent leader back then, Tony Leon. As such, it would appear that her good relations with the media enhance her image as a public figure.

However this is not always the case. In the Cape Argus of March 26, 2007, her mediatic influence is seen in a negative light. Zille is criticized for 'charm(ing)' the media 'with photo opportunities' rather than 'delivering tangible results'. In the process, the article comes to confirm, that the misconception that women make use of their charm alone to win the favour of the masses, still prevails. The association of Zille with womanly charm may prompt readers to question Zille's capacities as an effective mayor.

4. Competence

The SouthAfrica.info of Dec 22, 2006, raises doubts on Zille's handling of the World Cup. It states that Zille is in the 'hotseat' and also outlines that the stakes are high should Zille fail to deliver. Apparently, Zille's delay over the construction of the 2.5 billion stadium, may lead to the city losing the semi-final. Grindrod states that "The blame must go squarely on her shoulders for playing politics with this critical issue."

In the ID press release of May 23, 2007, Zille is criticized for having double standards by the ID Chief Whip Lance Greyling. The latter wonders how she could 'have the audacity' to propose a 19% increase in water tariffs when she actually opposed the ANC's 'hefty' increase in water tariffs in Durban. He states that 'Either Zille is hypocritical, or she has no idea of what is happening outside her Mayoral position'.

As for the Chaaban case, appearing on the SABC News of June 13, 2007, where Zille alleges Badih Chaaban of the African Muslim Party of corruption, the latter states in defence: "This woman is starting to see ghosts as the cross is starting to loom closer and everyone is thinking what is going to happen to their positions. She is a bit nervous, because her party is in tatters". This evinces the fact that women politicians are still seen as unfit for politics because of their gender and that the belief that they are unable to deal with pressure, and imagine or inflate scenarios disproportionately, still forms part of the popular mindset.

In the same vein, the Mail and Guardian article of May 15, 2007 pits the empty rhetoric that often accompanies one's position as member of the National Assembly against the programme of social delivery that has so far been on the agenda of the DA. As Zille juggles with her dual job as mayor and member of the opposition in the Assembly, the question arises in this article as to whether Zille will be able to juggle between mere words and delivery. The author states that Zille should focus on delivery rather than rhetoric, and outlines her innumerable skills as well as some of her weaknesses. Zille is said to have talent as well as

integrity, however she still needs to learn to delegate. She also needs to revamp her party to ensure that senior management of the DA is not merely constituted of 'the coterie of white men from privileged backgrounds'. The author sees Zille's office as member of the opposition as an opportunity to make the ideals of 'public ethics', 'the liberal values of tolerance, accountability and constitutionalism' prevail, 're-brand' the opposition and intensify the programme of social delivery at the national level.

Likewise, in Politics.za of May 6, 2007, it is said that Zille needs to be more of a 'night watchman' than aspire to be a 'long term leader'. The night watchman in cricket is a normally a non-specialist who does the batting when the batsman loses a wicket near the end of the day. In this manner, he covers up for the next batsman who can begin afresh on the following day. To view Zille in this light, would imply that she is merely a makeshift solution until the time is ripe for the designated leader to step on the political stage.

In the Africancrisis of May 7, 2007, there are mixed feelings to Zille's appointment as leader of the DA. Some suspect that she will continue to deliver poorly, while others state that no matter what, the DA would remain a White political party. The author is skeptical of Zille's 'liberal' scheme of ideas. 'Helen wants to love the blacks Liberal style. That doesn't work... What the blacks of Africa need is "tough love"'. Toughness is here not seen as a woman politician's cup of tea.

What is admirable though, is that despite scepticism over Zille's competence as a liberal woman politician, she does not surrender to criticism. Actually, the way Zille handles the Cape protest about poor water and electricity supplies, is worthy of analysis. On the SABC News of May 16, 2007, she appears firm and full of conviction, as she shifts the source of the problem, from one of service delivery in the city, to a result of attempts by the ANC to 'destabilise her multiparty government'. Her gender may be viewed as inhibiting her credibility as

politician, but her verbal dexterity allows her to surface and prove her competence.

It comes as no wonder then, that some news articles spill much ink on how Zille will fulfil her duties as she puts on her different caps in the public domain. Prior to the elections for the leadership of the DA, Zille in the Cape Times, is shown to be a good 'strategist' and 'manager' as she anticipates how she will handle her two offices, as mayor and as leader of the DA. Her intention to have a satellite office linking her mayorship to her position in DA is one of the ways in which she intends to do justice to both jobs.

In the Cape Argus of May 11, 2006, Zille is described as having a 'can-do attitude'. The author of the article, T. Johnson, hopes that this attitude is infectious and filters down to the officers at the lower end. He then speaks in defence of Zille and her 'cautious response' to the building of the 1.5 billion stadium for the World Cup 2010. He props his argument with studies showing the choice cities have to make across the globe, between economic infrastructure to attract foreign investors and development to enhance the lives of local inhabitants. He states that the stadium is not even of great appeal to investors as much as a skilled workforce, effective municipal services and a well-run transport system' are. If politicians, like Rassool, criticise Zille's indecision over the construction of the stadium, the author thinks it is because, they are aware of other 'trade-offs' this construction will bring.

With the election of Sandra Botha as leader of the opposition on the 24 May 2007, Zille is quoted in the AllAfrica.com of the following day, stating that with two women in 'high-profile positions', there is no doubt that what matters for supporters is not gender but 'competence'. The article, as such, challenges the erroneous belief the nation can be run by men and men alone.

5. The victim

Even so, readers may witness Zille in countless situations as a victim of plots allegedly hatched by the ruling party to clip her wings and strip her of her power as Mayor. Readers may consider Zille's vulnerability especially as a woman politician, to be to the detriment of her power in office.

On the September 22, 2006 SABC News for instance, Zille is cast as victim of an 'undemocratic plan', involving not only the substitution of the executive mayoral system with an executive committee, but consequently of her removal from power as parties get to be represented proportionally.

Likewise, on the SABC News of June 30, 2007, Zille is seen to be a victim not only of plots by ANC members, but in The Rapport among other newspapers, as a victim of conspiracies by De Lille, the DA provincial leadership, and 'Botha and his cronies'. Though, these are not backed by concrete evidence, they suffice to weaken Zille's case as woman politician.

One 'qforum' blog states on 8 May 2007 that the DA does not have a leader with charisma. It admits that Zille is 'tenacious and extremely talented' but lacking something 'the likes of Eva Peron had'. As it stands, Zille may well become 'victim of a plot similar to that which got rid of Benhazir Bhuto'. The author of the blog states that Bhuto was not as 'dodge' as she had been depicted, and that if a man had been in the same position it would not have made a difference. Zille's gender here is hence seen to be at antipodes with the toughness required to survive in politics.

6. Race or gender?

As much as gender may be shown to inhibit Zille's delivery as Mayor and leader of DA, her race also comes to play a crucial role. It appears that Zille is unable to garner enough Black votes because she is 'White' and her party is primarily constituted of 'White members' at its head.

In the Mail & Guardian of Dec 10, 2006, Zille and Athol Trollip are said to have a history of 'beating farm workers, oppressing domestic workers' according to the Cape Argus. They are derided as Fauxhosa speakers, using without success, their knowledge of Xhosa to win Black votes.

BULELWA QUPE

Qupe as a rhetorical agent

Qupe as a rhetorical agent, uses her ethos as the first black woman entrepreneur and a successful one too in the fisheries, to win the support of government and non-governmental organisations and militate for other women entrepreneurs.

Besides her image, Qupe also strikes readers as someone who is eloquent. In the Herald for instance, she is said to address a 'rapt audience'. Her verbal skilfulness allows her to stand as a Spokesperson for other women who seek to engage in business activities like her. She becomes a role-model for them, the epideictic itself. In the TV series, 'Salute to Success' where she is to be interviewed, she is said to have adopted one of 'the different routes hardworking and talented South Africans have explored to make their dreams come true.'

Her mastery over words also makes her stand out as an uncompromising negotiator in business. In The Herald of November 15, 2002, Qupe appears at the fore, with a major disagreement between her enterprise, the Mazidlekaya and the Lusitania company, in which she holds 5% of shares. Her tone is firm when she states that the deal between the two companies has not been fulfilled as per agreed. She notes that though the quota requirements were met, the deal was not merely a paper quota one, but one that stipulated that skills would also be transferred. This portion of the agreement was however not concretized. The fact that the settlement was reached out of court and that Lusitania agreed to pay

all legal costs incurred, comes eventually to project Qupe as a good negotiator.

In her speeches, one often spots narrations of her struggles as a businesswoman. The use of the forensic arguments here serves to highlight her achievements and motivates her efforts to alleviate the difficulties of other women in business.

Media (re)presentation

1. The question of values and morals

In the Herald of 15 October 2002, Qupe is caught lying when asked whether she owns 50 % of shares in the Mazidlekhaya. This puts a blot on Qupe's ethos as a praiseworthy businesswoman.

However one of the priorities to which Qupe does pay lip service is that of customer care. The City Press article of June 18, 2005, quotes a part of her address as Chairperson of the South African Women Entrepreneurs' Network where she advises other businesswomen to "Have passion for what you do, respect your clients, deliver a good product on time, accept criticism and persevere - these are the secrets of the game." If Bulelwa Qupe's business prospers it is perhaps due to these values embraced by women.

2. Family woman

The City Press article of June 18, 2005 relates Qupe's success story. This time though, it is given a more human touch. Qupe is projected as the family woman, 'mother of four', who runs her business with her husband Don, who spends her Sundays home and can afford an annual holiday in January with her family.

As for The herald of October 9, 2002, it ends with a note of gratitude, "I would never have made it without my family," says Bulelwa, but with her husband, Don,

and four children, she feels she can still conquer the world'. Here again, Qupe's gender is seen not a disadvantage to her business. Instead, her family gives her the support she needs to sustain herself in the corporate world.

3. Competence

Qupe's competence may be signalled by the different awards she has received and by the various women entrepreneur organisations in which she is actively involved.

The City Press article of June 18, 2005, extols Qupe's qualities as a 'shrewd businesswoman' who carefully observes market trends and leaves no stone unturned to realise her dreams. Besides cunning, she is shown to have perseverance. She states that there were major challenges but that she turned them into her 'propeller to success'. We also come to see her as a 'forward-looking' woman. She is said to travel abroad on repeated occasions to keep up with the technological innovations in other countries. Thus even if it is commonly held that women are less experienced than men in business, Qupe transcends this shortcoming by going on the quest of new knowledges.

4. A fighter

Many articles actually laud Qupe's efforts to enter the corporate world. It is pointed out in many instances that opportunities are scarce for women entrepreneurs to engage in business. As such, we often find Qupe being sketched as a fighter.

The Herald of March 28, 2002, brings to the fore some major challenges facing local suppliers of fish, and consumers alike, as local shops in the Eastern Cape announce a shortage of Hake and maasbanker. Qupe, in this article, becomes one of the main spokespersons, speaking on behalf of local suppliers and consumers. "It seems the suppliers are focusing more on exporting than

servicing people locally. Some people are so desperate that they are going to the sea to catch the fish themselves,” Mrs Qupe said. She is also said to have written to the Environmental Affairs and Tourism Minister Moosa to ask him to “intervene to ensure the local market is looked after”. Her gender does not prevent her from being influential in the local fish supply stream.

5. A voice for the voiceless

Rather, as shown in the WeekendPost of June 4, 2005, Qupe becomes the ‘fighter for the economic liberation’ of Eastern Cape women. In fact Qupe assumes the status of the voice for the voiceless. She chairs several women organisations that provide financial and other support to budding businesswomen.

‘Sisters doing it for themselves’, an article on The Herald, speaks of what Qupe sees as the opportunities and challenges of entrepreneurship for women. She states to a ‘rapt audience’, “Women have been marginalised, her place was in the kitchen, but today we see a lot of women climbing the corporate ladders, not by default, but by design, not as tokens, but as decision makers and opinion leaders”. She is presented as a businesswoman well aware of what it takes to be a good businesswoman. She states that though attitudes have changed since 1994 and banks such as ABSA are cooperating in boosting local businesses, there is still a need for ‘significant changes in the behaviour, attitude, and perceptions of businessmen towards women’. She quotes the success rate of women businesses, stating that 53% of small and medium businesses are owned by women, many have grown into national companies, and even ‘outpace’ male-run companies. She appears also as a woman who believes firmly in transformation as she likens the wave of entrepreneurship to a revolution that should occupy people’s minds.

In The Herald article of November 15, 2005 entitled 'Eastern Cape businesswomen put on road to success', Qupe's name figures again, this time as the head of the Nelson Mandela Metro Sawen speaking on enhancing the opportunities for budding businesswomen. She states, 'Women are serious about business' and insists that more information seminars be promoted to empower them.

In The Herald article of June 13, 2005, Bulelwa's name is at the fore: 'Bulelwa angling to help women get ahead in life'. Her reputation as a fine businesswoman is emphasised in the very first line. She exports fish products to Spain and has recently been elected the vice-chairman of SA Women Entrepreneurs Network. Leading a 94-woman delegation from the Eastern Cape to the inaugural national conference of the SA Women's Entrepreneurs Network, Qupe clearly projects herself as a voice for budding women entrepreneurs. She states that through the entrepreneurs network, she will go to the extent of lobbying the various government departments to ensure that women have no difficulty in seeking the help of government officials in solving their business problems.

These various articles on Qupe's efforts to boost women-led enterprises only evidence the fact that gender is still viewed as a barrier to entrepreneurship.

NADINE GORDIMER

Nadine Gordimer as a rhetorical agent

Nadine Gordimer is said to master the art of blending literature with politics. Her deep sense of justice and political commitment influences her writings. In the Mail and Guardian issue of February 4, 2000, Gordimer is said to be a 'realistic

optimist'. Her collection of essays under the title 'Living in Hope and History: Notes from our Century', is said to speak of 'profound concerns' such as the 'status of the artist', Aids, religious fanaticism, 'implications of economic and cultural globalisation', 'sexual liberation' among others. As for her style, Gordimer is said to have an eloquent and impassioned rhetoric.

Media (re)presentation

1. The woman writer

Gordimer, the woman writer is described as having a rich vision but also a good insight of human nature and behaviour. Her keen eye for the complexities of human ties can be linked to her experiences as a woman. In fact, when robbed in her home in Johannesburg, the Mail and Guardian of November 3, 2006 states that she was overcome more by sympathy than by fear. She seemed to be concerned about the future of the youth and used this incident as a springboard to address issues of crime and employment. It is not a coincidence then that the emotions that tinge her writings are part of her own encounters.

Also, in the novel Pickup and Manu Herstein's Ama for which Gordimer was nominated for the 2003 Commonwealth Writers Prize, SABC News of March 27, 2002 describes how the tangles of love and cultural encounters are rendered through the eyes of the woman character's 'silent and deep understanding of human nature'. It would be plausible to suggest that though Gordimer writes realistically about the political status quo, it is nevertheless impressed by her own experiences as a woman and therefore, of greater emotional complexity.

2. Censorship

The literary activity of writers is still monitored by censorship boards. The SABC News of April 16, 2001, outlines of the controversy surrounding Nadine Gordimer's novel 'July's People'. It is claimed that the novel is 'racist' and should be dropped from the school curriculum. Geldenhuys, education spokesperson of DA, disproves of this censorship, holding that it could bring an end to literature

and turn South Africa into a laughing stock in the eyes of the international literary community because the state is confusing what is politically appropriate with what is appropriate in the realm of education. On the SABC News of April 22, 2001, Gordimer deplores the 'incredibly low level of assessment' and 'abysmal ignorance' that led her novel 'July's people' to be tagged as 'deeply racist, superior and patronising'. She is glad that the Gauteng government is not eager to remove the text from the school curriculum. Similarly, in News24.com of April 15, 2001, Gordimer states that the report that her novel is 'racist', that it does not encourage good grammatical practices, and that it is anachronistic just because it speaks of an unseen future, "echo amazingly, exactly, the language and attitudes of the old apartheid censorship board". Are the limitations as strenuous on the men's side?

In the News24 article of October 19, 2006 entitled, 'Whites are finished', the author speaks of mostly male novelists who have put their foot down and denounced the 'inexorable decline towards corruption and lawlessness'. Some have already left South Africa, like Coetzee, and some like Hope live in 'self-imposed exile'. Perhaps, it is this geographical distance that allows them to engage liberally in such bold statements. Gordimer, as an inhabitant of South Africa can only be cautious. She seems to be less prompt to reject the new South African political dispensation and acknowledges that some things are 'remarkably good' while others 'very, very worrying'. Nonetheless, she remains vague in her comments stating they are too complex and need to be written down. In juxtaposing native Gordimer's statement to those of exiled male writers, the article is perhaps making a parallel point. Is it because women writers are less mobile than men that their writing path is fraught with more obstacles?

3. Socio-political engagement

It is noteworthy that local censor does not prevent Gordimer from gaining recognition abroad for the socio-political commitment conspicuous in her writings.

The IOL of April 2, 2007 speaks of Gordimer's achievements as she receives the 'Legion d'Honneur'. Previously, she had been awarded the Nobel Prize for her writings on the 'inhumanity of apartheid'. She is quoted stating, 'I accept with great gratitude and humility'. She here pays lip service to the social decorum set in place, prescribing deference on the part of women. Pietton, the French Ambassador, believes that she is a 'great writer' and that her "work shines throughout the world". For Serote, she is the pride of South Africa and as far as her writing talent is concerned "She keeps a sharp focus on human relations in her writing that makes her work timeless".

Apart from her writing, her efforts to boost the publication of novels in African mother tongues has also received much attention. Her 'Nadine Gordimer Short Story Award for Writing in African Languages' is a laudable one for it is also intent on providing financial support to budding local novelists. This is a way perhaps to entrench her concerns to the local population and in a sense, gain acceptance by others despite her skin colour and gender.

4. Victim

Along the lines of media attention, Gordimer has also been much at the fore recently, as a victim of defamation. In the IOL article of Dec 5, 2006, it appears that Suresh Roberts has not only written a controversial biography about her but leaked 'embarassing tit-bits' about her in the media. He has also ridiculed the status of Wiliam Gumede calling him 'Livingstone's servant', and Tony Leon's father calling him a 'hanging judge'. However, the paper prefers to foreground Gordimer's case with its obvious title 'Author's defamation case: judgment reserved'.

In News24.com of June 28, 2007 on the other hand, the author shows her reservations regarding the basis of this controversy. She states that Gordimer's biography is 'highly readable' and that Roberts has a good grasp of his subject. It would almost seem as though she were dismissing Gordimer's case of

defamation as being mere ruckus, and that Gordimer were actually being unfair towards Roberts. As such, this article seems to twist Gordimer's status from that of victim to that of perpetrator.

Either way, Gordimer, the woman writer is a victim of untowardly articles on her, and in both of them, she seems to be given no room to state her own opinion. Are we witnessing here the perpetuation of women silence in the public sphere? Perhaps.

Common denominator

Nevertheless, despite all challenges and cases of victimisation, Zille, Qupe and Gordimer all three remain etched in our minds as fighters. Despite all constraints, they militate to revolutionise what they perceive to be a deplorable status quo and use their experiences and ethos to uplift the lives of the less privileged.

It is true that, at times, the media presents them as transgressors who need to be silenced and at other times, as heroes with vision and determination. At times, their gender may well be viewed as incapacitating, but their bold acts constantly come to the fore to debunk age-old myths about women.

HELEN ZILLE

http://www.capeinfo.com/Surveys/Interviews/Helen_Zille.asp

10:00 am. June 28, 2007

Local Government

"...the best Cape Town mayor in decades"... ?

Will the euphoria last? Photo: Ian Landsberg, The Cape Times
Helen Zille is not what we expected.

She had the reputation as a go-getting, demanding and respected provincial minister of education. When police didn't appear at a school when called out, she went to the police station to find out why... and found them watching *The Bold & The Beautiful* on TV. Teachers who arrived at school late would find her waiting for them.

Since her election as mayor of Cape Town in March, headlines have been filled with how Zille "puts stadium plans on ice", "purges staff" and the anger from Western Cape Provincial Government (WCPG) and national government. Some media reports have not been accurate and at least one report was written on hearsay.

What has Zille inherited?

Throughout the 20th century, the old City of Cape Town was renowned worldwide for the achievements of its management, often in defiance of national government.

The malaise started when surrounding municipalities were combined to form the 'unicity' and party politics was introduced into local government in 2000.

Since then, the three administrations have been tainted (or worse) by accusations of incompetence or corruption.

What is Zille up against?

"The ANC still has a top-down, authoritarian structure where loyalty to the political cause is prized above almost everything else, including incompetence. ...the greatest weakness of the ANC is (its inclination) to dismiss ideas from outside its own bureaucracy." — The Economist

"It's not a matter of if we are going to develop Green Point stadium, it's a matter of implementation," said Provincial premier, Ebrahim Rasool.

Speaking to CapeTalk radio, 2010 boss Danny Jordaan "growled" that Green Point stadium's environmental impact approval will be "pushed through".

Do the people of Cape Town have any say? Politicians need to sell their policies, not force them on an electorate.

Determination and humility are not mutually exclusive.

2010 Soccer World Cup

What are the facts and what's the storm all about? [Click here to read the full](#)

story.

Yes, we did find a steely resolve to do the right thing, but we also found her much quieter and warmer than expected. She's quite comfortable saying "I don't know, I need to learn more," then seeking out other opinions.

A Baptism of Fire

As soon as she arrived in the mayor's office, she had to deal with the collapsing Emergency Services branch. At the first meeting of the new mayoral committee (which meets in public, unlike the secrecy of her predecessor), Zille says that after the agenda was completed, staff asked for a presentation on the Green Point stadium because contracts needed to be signed immediately. "We were presented with three figures – the stadium cost is R1.5 billion; national government's contribution is R500 million; the City pays R1 billion."

"There was no business model or financial viability so I asked that we postpone decisions for a week until we see some figures. I still haven't seen any figures." WCPG, national government and the 2010 Local Organising Committee were very upset and a round table meeting was held. The planning and environmental impact studies are now going ahead.

"Of course we want to host some 2010 Soccer World Cup games, but we must make sure we do it properly," she says. "Cape Town hosted successful opening games for 1995 Rugby World Cup and 2003 World Cup Cricket. We need to build on that." A legal challenge by local residents could delay construction, as could the discovery of archeological sites (as happened in the vicinity). "We need a second option, we can't have all our eggs in one basket. Already, the time frame for a new stadium is very tight." (Click here for more on 2010.)

The DA-led multi-party coalition has a slim majority over the ANC and the ID (which has voted with the ANC so far in Cape Town). A year from now, Zille faces the infamous floor-crossing period when elected representatives can abandon the voters who chose them to join another party. So she has one year to show that her brand of government works and she's only too aware of how important her success is to the future of the DA.

City's slogan: "this City works for you"

Now that shouldn't be too difficult if she gets Council working. In the last financial year, the City only spent a reported 63% of its capital budget. In the past year, Council's staff numbers dropped by 6.5% while the total salary bill rose 7.9%. One must wonder where that 14.4% or R231 million was spent.

Changes needed?

We believe that the introduction of party politics into local government has been the worst thing to happen in decades – our democracy is too young, our political leaders largely too immature and the civil service is under pressure.

In Cape Town we've seen city managers replaced each time the ruling party changes.

When the unicity was formed, Cape Town's town clerk (CEO) was told to stay at home and do nothing on full pay for a few years. ANC-appointed Andrew Borraine was ousted when the DA took power and the ANC did the same to the DA-appointed Robert Maydon. Both received golden handshakes of about R1 million to move on. Zille is trying to oust Wallace Mgoqi at no cost to ratepayers.

Maybe it's time that certain posts are identified as political posts, and that contracts are tied to the incumbence of their political masters (or mistresses). Now surely that's the best incentive to succeed!

With the Stadium story still raging on, the issue of political purges started. City manager Wallace Mgoqi knew his future was insecure if Zille was elected mayor because the validity of his extended contract was under question even before the election started. An interim city manager has been appointed and the outcome of Mgoqi's claims are likely to be resolved by the courts.

Zille started with the restructuring of the Mayor's office, where support staff have been reduced from 27 to 12, saving some R6 million a year. Was this a political purge? These advisors and aides were appointed to support the political realm, otherwise advice and aid should have been available from Council's staff of 22 000 people. Together with Mgoki, these people have more capacity to frustrate the new management team's plans than anyone else.

"I don't mind having vocal ANC members in the top management team if they are competent and get the job done. But I won't have people who campaign against me, who try to hasten my demise and cannot (or will not) deliver," she says. "The city manager can thwart everything we need to do!"

Answering a question about the stable civil service in the UK which sees political masters come and go, she counters that "in the USA, when a new administration moves in, they bring their top people with them." It's a compelling argument that certainly suits any politician, but it doesn't address the specialised nature of city management.

"the City is in
a melt down"

And there is so much to be done. An ANC-appointed former manager told CapelInfo at the end of last year that the City Council is in a melt-down, unable to deliver the services it's tasked to do. Zille disagrees, "It's not as bad as people say. There are still many excellent people here who were frustrated by the previous administration. We have to get the appointment at the top right, we have to reward competence and get a close alignment for our policies."

CapelInfo cannot agree with her. We believe that the past three administrations have run the City into the ground. (The last administration was an unfolding

catastrophe, conducted in secrecy.) We believe that Zille is going to need to find people equal to the calibre of the globally-respected department heads that the old City of Cape Town had, to dig the City out of the mess it's in. Many, many really competent people left the Council in the past six years, not because of new policies (many were aligned to the current administration's party) but because of an unproductive environment and incompetent interference from the top.

In former times, the city engineer and the other department heads held the real power as professionals, although the town clerk (usually from a legal background) was the nominal CEO. Considerable power was vested in the executive committee (councillors) and Cape Town's exco always had a very strong chairman, usually a businessman, but the department heads really ran the city. The system worked well for 150 years.

What does the future hold?

We believe Zille was 100% right to ask for a one week postponement of decisions regarding Green Point in the absence of adequate information. We believe that the Provincial premier and the President's office were 100% wrong for their public criticisms of her (and others who raise concerns). Cape Town needs a mayor who puts its citizens first.

Council's Budgets

Capital Budget

2006/07

2007/08

2008/09

R2.7 bn

R2.6 bn

R2.5 bn

Capital Budget to be reviewed by portfolio committees

Costs of Soccer 2010 still to be assessed

Major Projects:

N2 Gateway – infrastructure

Soccer 2010

Athlone Stadium upgrade

Upgrade of landfill sites

Replacement of Fire Engines

Sewerage system

Operating Budget

Approximately R18 billion

Priorities:

Strict control on the filling of posts

Finalisation of the staff placement & parity processes

Continuation of the President's Urban Renewal Project (Khayalitsha & Mitchells Plain)

Continuation of the transformation process & the restructuring grant agreement with national treasury

"There are urgent items that need attention – mainly the invisible items that we take for granted. Our infrastructure has been surfing on the legacy of the past but we are now growing into the spare capacity. The water shortage and the electricity outages are fresh in our minds, but our sewerage system needs expenditure of R2 billion! We have experience of being told to use water or electricity sparingly, imagine being told to flush our toilets less often!"

Zille acknowledges that tourism is Cape Town's most important industry, but says she's not sufficiently up to speed to comment adequately.

Will she be getting the best advice? Her mayoral committee member responsible for economic affairs and tourism is Wasfie Hassiem (African Muslim Party). Two emails from CapelInfo to Hassiem remain unanswered. During his tenure on Cape Town Tourism's board, he is remembered for his opposition to the promotion of "gay tourism". The City Council has played a subordinate role to WCPG in tourism, a fact many tourism stakeholders are not happy about.

There's little doubt that she will pursue a policy of "Cape Town first" when it comes to assessing how Cape Town Routes Unlimited and Cape Town Tourism spends the significant budget they receive from the Council.

"...Zille would certainly be the best mayor Cape Town has had in decades"

Writing in the Sunday Times, Brendan Boyle says "Without the millstone of the DA's political agenda, Zille would certainly be the best mayor Cape Town has had in decades. She is focused, committed, fiercely bright and incredibly hard-working."

The DA's political agenda is probably less of a millstone than the mutual antagonism that exists between the DA and ANC, and Zille will have to work with other tiers of ANC government. The ANC won't want to see a DA-led Cape Town succeed but they will have to be supportive if she gets the Council working (spending full budgets), delivers to the poorest as a priority, and the perennial taints of corruption attached to previous administrations are a thing of the past.

Political parties now in opposition need to understand how democracy works. The election is over and the people have spoken. Rather than still trying to oust Zille, as some politicians are, the focus must move to the real issues of administration.

Her powers are considerable as an executive mayor – the post that was introduced by her predecessor, Nomaindia Mfeketo. Zille concedes that "jobs

like this are lonely. You have to take the flak because the buck stops here... there is just so much power..."

Now she needs to use that power to come up with the bold vision for Cape Town that policies alone can never achieve. She needs to demonstrate that she is a mayor that unifies and represents the needs and aspirations of all Capetonians, whatever they voted.

April 2006

Curriculum Vitae: Helen Zille

1974 – 1982: South African Associated Newspapers – Political Correspondent (Rand Daily Mail)

1989 – 1993: Zille Shandler Associates (Public Policy Consultancy) – Senior Partner

1993 – 1999: University of Cape Town – Director of Communications

1999 – 2004: Member of Provincial Parliament

1999 – 2001 MEC for Education in Western Cape

2004 – 2006 Member of Parliament, DA National Spokesperson and Spokesperson on Education

Other positions held

Technical Adviser to the DP at CODESA (early 1990s)

Caucus Chair (Western Cape Legislature) 2002

Caucus Leader (Western Cape Legislature) 2002 – 2003

One of the 3 Federal Vice-Chairs of the DA

Chair of the Western Cape Metro Region

Constituency responsibility for the N2 Development LMC (28 wards)

Fundraising at national, provincial & regional level for the DA

1980/1990s – (Various Board and NGO memberships) Open Society Foundation, the Independent Media Diversity Trust, the Black Sash (amongst others).

Party Seats in the Council

ACDP	7	3.3%
AMP	3	1.4%
ANC	81	38.6%
DA	91	43.3%
ID	22	10.5%
PAC	1	0.5%
UDM	2	1.0%
UIF	1	0.5%
UP	1	0.5%
VFplus	1	0.5%
	210	100%

<http://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/18/14547.html>

11:33 am June 30, 2007

<http://www.bizcommunity.com>

Helen Zille: media savvy PR pro

By: Chris Moerdyk

How much has PR contributed to Helen Zille's meteoric rise through the political ranks from a relatively unknown functionary a few years ago to mayor of one of the world's great cities and now leader of South Africa's official opposition? The answer, quite simply, is a lot.

Of all of the country's politicians, Helen Zille clearly comes out tops in terms of understanding how to use PR and particularly the media to get her message across to voters.

Media darling

Citizens of the Western Cape who have seen her in action this past year since taking over the mayoral hot seat in Cape Town will probably be convinced that she has charmed local newspapers and radio stations into becoming solid Democratic Alliance supporters.

In fact, letters to editors and calls to talk show hosts suggest exactly that. But, they're wrong of course. All she has done is make herself available 24 hours a day to any journalist who wants to talk to her. And when they do the first thing she tells them is to call her Helen, which immediately establishes a quite remarkable rapport.

But, she doesn't stop there. The very media savvy Zille never shies away from difficult questions and doesn't ever get overly defensive and fall into the trap of making lame excuses. She talks straight from the shoulder and doesn't mince her words.

Negative

And all of this is manna from heaven for journalists frustrated by all the other ring-fenced politicians who watch their words so carefully they end up saying nothing and denying everything.

All of which means that so many journalists enjoy interviewing her so much that she has a huge media presence and the perception is created that they and their media are ardent DA supporters.

One thing no-one denies, not even her most vociferous political enemies, is that Zille is one of the busiest people in the country. She seems to be able to be in six different places at the same time. All of which suggests that being busy is no excuse for not being readily available to the media. But, clearly she does not see it only as being available to the media but rather using the media to get her own messages and agenda across. Which is what PR is all about.

Teach a thing or two.

There is no question that even as a relative newcomers to top line politics, Zille will be able to teach her longer established peers a thing or two about PR, communications and reaching into the hearts and minds of consumers and voters.

She understands the power of apology and the fact that these days if one has made a mistake, admitting it, saying sorry and promising to fix it earns more political brownie points than doggedly denying any form of wrongdoing. Very few other politicians understand the way this works.

Something else she seems to have a firm grasp on, unlike her predecessor, Tony Leon, is that it is not the end of the world to actually say something nice about an opponent. In fact, having a bit of humility is another way of earning huge brownie points these days. George Bush and Tony Blair will attest to just how far arrogance and petulance gets politicians these days.

For example, in radio interviews the day after her election as DA leader, Zille positively gushed with almost schoolgirl enthusiasm over the fact that President Mbeki had telephoned her to congratulate her on her victory.

Positive spin

She is certainly someone who can manage to get a positive spin out of virtually everything that happens to her.

Hopefully the Zille PR style will prove to be infectious and that all those defensive, unavailable, often arrogant and mostly communications clueless politicians will start catching on.

With enormous and complex changes taking place in the way today's consumers behave, there is no doubt whatsoever that marketing is going to play an ever increasing role in the way politicians attempt to motivate voters. And with politicians such as Zille having at started using at least a few marketing components, it won't be long before politics accepts that marketing is not about magic but rather pragmatic access to hearts and minds.

More...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chris Moerdyk is a corporate marketing analyst and advisor and former head of strategic planning and public affairs at BMW SA. He spent 16 years in ad agencies ending up as resident director of Lindsay Smithers FCB (KwaZulu-Natal). He pioneered and was the first editor of the media and marketing pages in the Saturday Star. Moerdyk is a specialist contributor to Bizcommunity.com.

- The Better Performance Paper - www.rotatrim.co.za
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http://www.int.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=79&art_id=vn20070316012449723C676220&newslett=1&em=165025a6a20070318ah
11:11 July 1, 2007

Zille throws her hat into the ring

By Anel Powell

Cape Town mayor Helen Zille has decided to stand for election as national leader of the Democratic Alliance (DA).

She told a packed meeting of the Cape Town Press Club on Thursday night that she would stand for election in May as the leader of the official opposition.

"I will not be leaving the mayoral team, but I will be standing as candidate for election as leader of the DA.

'May the best man or woman win'

"I've decided after many requests, much cajoling and, it would be fair to say, pressure. I was not going to do it until I was sure (doing) both jobs would be possible," Zille said.

Her decision, which ends months of speculation on whether she will add her name to the list of candidates vying for the top national position, comes exactly one year after she donned the mayoral chain.

Zille has proposed a management collaborative structure that would allow her to fulfil the roles of mayor and national leader of the DA.

She said the office of the mayor would be synchronised with the DA's satellite office in council and the DA's office in parliament.

Zille emphasised that a party satellite office was not unique to the DA. "The ANC has one with two people. The DA is the only party (in council) that does not have one."

'We welcome anyone who accepts the position'

The DA would now have a "modest" satellite office to link the office of the mayor to parliament.

Zille said the mayor's office would remain apolitical, despite her other role as leader of the DA.

The mayor's rigorous schedule looks set to get even tighter.

If elected, she would meet daily at 7am with staff in the mayor's office. Then she would meet the DA leader's office an hour later.

Zille would have two speech writers, one in council and one in parliament.

She would remain based in the civic centre, but would attend parliamentary caucuses on Thursdays and devote weekends to national visits.

An executive director is to be seconded to the mayor's office to shoulder some of the workload. Zille said the hundreds of emails and requests received daily was "totally unmanageable". This meant she needed a dedicated person to respond to cellphone messages and correspondence, regardless of whether she entered the leadership race.

"But this is not a new appointment - the director will be seconded from elsewhere in council."

Zille's diary will be electronically linked to parliament, but managed from the mayor's office.

The question of who would replace DA leader Tony Leon, who said in November he would not stand for re-election, has opened debate about the race for the party's new leader.

The other two candidates are Eastern Cape leader Athol Trollip and national party chairperson Joe Seremane.

Leon said recently at the Gauteng federal congress that the party would choose the best leader, regardless of race or gender. "No position within the DA, including that of leader, will ever be reserved for a person of a particular race."

Leon appeared to anticipate Zille's decision in saying: "May the best man or woman win.

"All of South Africa, in its diversity and its talent and its potential, deserves no less."

Leon's spokesperson, Martin Slabbert, said on Thursday night: "We welcome anyone who accepts the position. It will be decided at an open and democratic process at our May congress in Gauteng where the delegates will elect the person they believe is most suitable."

Zille said she had been working with management experts on the draft management model.

She acknowledged that holding two positions would be "a major challenge", but said the biggest challenge for the DA would be to keep its support base while gaining new voters.

Referring to reports that there are divisions in the DA leadership over her possible election, Zille said: "I lunched with (provincial leader) Theuns Botha (on Thursday) and he gave me the understanding he would support me and work with me."

Of the difficulties of juggling two jobs, Zille said there was a risk. "Anything that goes wrong will be blamed on (my) doing both jobs. I will have to be a lot less hands-on and there will be a backlash."

Zille also spoke of the DA's relationship with the ANC.

"In the long term, I see the ANC splitting and this will be a pivotal watershed moment in South African politics."

The split in the ANC would open up possibilities, however.

Zille's decision was strongly criticised by former mayor Clive Keegan, who suggested she was betraying her mandate to voters not to leave the city.

Simon Grindrod, leader of the ID caucus, which shares power in the council with the DA, assured Zille she had his and ID deputy mayor Charlotte Williams's support in ensuring the city remained stable.

- This article was originally published on page 1 of The Cape Times on March 16, 2007

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http://www.women24.com/Fairlady/Display/FLYArticle/0,,802-806_13221,00.html

12:38 July 10, 2007
The mark of the Zille
Issue: April 2007

From journalist to activist, from mother to MP, and now Mayor of Cape Town, Helen Zille tries not to leave the world as she found it.

'Hi Ma, you still the mayor?'

Helen Zille chuckles recalling her sons Paul, 22, and Thomas's, 17, greeting one Friday night in January after plans of yet another attempt to topple her DA-led multi-party coalition – the seventh since she took office in March 2006 – had been exposed.

'Well, you never know,' she continues, amused at the recollection of her family ragging her about another backstabbing, treacherous week at the office.

Fortunately for her, the wobbly six-party coalition survived, gaining a larger majority when Patricia de Lille's Independent Democrats opted to join the Unicity government. The move offered wary Capetonians a local government that now represents 65% of voters.

'You do know my sons call my husband the Mayornaise?' she quips.

The Mayornaise is Johann Maree, Professor of Industrial Sociology at the University of Cape Town, whom Zille met and married in the 1980s after giving up a notable and promising career as a political correspondent with the Rand Daily Mail.

Years later, Max du Preez, founding editor of the independent Vrye Weekblad and now veteran writer and political commentator, confessed to having had a crush on the twenty-something Zille. The young Du Preez worked at Beeld at the time and would often bump into Zille as they covered the same stories or sat in the parliamentary press gallery.

'I thought she was a very clever, beautiful woman but I also saw her as a strong and self-assured person who knew exactly who she was and what she was doing,' he recalls.

Those who know Zille well often refer to this sense of purpose and self-assurance, but add that it is only one dimension of her personality. Superficially, it may be misinterpreted as arrogance or abrasiveness, a perception borne out by adjectives like 'Godzille', 'tough' and 'no-nonsense', so often used to describe her style of leadership.

But South African politics is not for sissies. And although she's been shot at, insulted and physically and verbally attacked, her passion and commitment remain undiminished.

Zille is a democrat and a liberal. And while the definition of 'liberal' remains fluid and contested, in an essay titled 'Liberalism's Blind Spots', Zille explains its essence, using philosopher Karl Popper's formulation that liberals 'typically develop their opinions by looking for reasons why they may be wrong, rather than proof that they are right. They are particularly sceptical of nationalism and patriotism because these concepts are so easily abused by demagogues who appeal to group loyalties and racial prejudices to entrench their own power'.

This culture of scrutiny, questioning and debate is something Zille and her

siblings, sister Carla and brother Paul, lived and breathed while growing up in Rivonia in the '60s and '70s.

- Read more in the April 2007 issue of Fairlady.

http://www.sabcnews.com/south_africa/crime1justice/0,2172,151186,00.html

Copper crisis getting out of control: Zille

June 20, 2007, 06:15

Helen Zille, the Cape Town mayor, has warned that the wholesale plundering of copper cables is threatening to bring the tourist hub to its knees.

At a crisis meeting with scrap metal dealers yesterday, Zille said nobody will invest in a city if you cannot rely on something as basic as electricity supply.

The cable crisis is not unique to South Africa, but local authorities fear that the situation is spiralling out of control. Although the Western Cape has no copper mines, local business leaders, reported that the region exported R77 million worth of copper to China last year.

Nationally, it costs an estimated R500 million to replace stolen cables every year. Knock on losses, such as the impact of power outages, amount to R2.5 billion.

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<http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200704260351.html>

11:48 July 17, 2007

ANC Policy is Threat to Freedom

Business Day (Johannesburg)

OPINION

26 April 2007

Posted to the web 26 April 2007

By Marian Tupy

Johannesburg

TOMORROW marks 13 years since SA's first multiracial elections brought the African National Congress (ANC) to power. A country once on the brink of a civil war is now a stable multiparty democracy and one of Africa's freest economies. Yet the ANC's behaviour is increasingly intolerant towards political opposition,

raising fears for SA's political future. The end of apartheid was supposed to put an end to censorship. But as an internal inquiry revealed last year, ANC-aligned managers have banned a number of outspoken critics from appearing on the SABC. Among those silenced were Moeletsi Mbeki, President Thabo Mbeki's own brother, who criticised some of the government's race-based redistributionist economic policies, and Archbishop Pius Ncube of Bulawayo, who criticised Pretoria's soft line on Robert Mugabe's tyrannical rule in Zimbabwe.

The ANC has also tried to usurp power in Cape Town -- the last major city remaining outside its control. Cape Town is run by mayor Helen Zille. A recipient of the United Nations' Human Rights award, Zille is a woman of unimpeachable anti-apartheid credentials. But her membership in the Democratic Alliance makes her unpalatable to the ANC, which recently tried to replace Cape Town's executive mayoral system with an executive committee on which the ANC would have had substantial representation.

The ANC is also contemplating legislative proposals that would put the justice minister in charge of court budgets. The judiciary perceives this, quite rightly, as an attack on its independence. Significantly, the proposals under consideration include a measure that would limit the courts' power to suspend an act of Parliament that they deemed unconstitutional. George Bizos, a prominent lawyer who defended Nelson Mandela during the latter's treason trial in 1963, likened the ANC's proposals to events in the 1950s, when the all-white Parliament passed a law that allowed it to override unfavourable court rulings.

The culture of political correctness, actively encouraged by the ANC, stifles public debate over the direction of SA's economic and social policies. Those who dare to criticise the government are often labelled as racists. That is troubling, because only in an atmosphere of openness, where different views and policy recommendations can be thrashed out without intimidation, can South African society hope to find the answers to pressing social problems such as crime, poverty, unemployment and the spread of infectious diseases.

Though the ANC continues to enjoy much of the international support it received in the days when it fought apartheid, its political tactics remain rooted in the Cold War. When the apartheid government cracked down on the ANC in the late 1960s, many of its top members went into exile. Some, including Mbeki, went to the Soviet Union and became members of the ANC's sister organisation, the South African Communist Party (SACP).

While in exile, the ANC cadres were exposed to the rigid structure and antidemocratic nature of the global communist movement.

On his release from jail, Mandela undertook the difficult task of modernising his party's outdated political and economic agenda. He helped cut the ANC's close link with the SACP and shed much of its Marxist ideological baggage. Yet, despite Mandela's opposition, the exiles were strong enough to push through Mbeki's appointment as SA's deputy president. As the ageing Mandela became increasingly detached from day-to-day politics, Mbeki's appointment ensured that the ANC retained its Marxist party structure and its intolerance of political opposition.

It's long past time to reassess the ANC's democratic credentials. The party

appears increasingly interested in little more than concentrating and maintaining power. Fortunately, it continues to draw much of its international standing and inner confidence from the accolades it has garnered since the days when it fought apartheid.

The ANC remains hypersensitive to criticism and, as Mbeki's reversal of his earlier denial that HIV causes AIDS suggests, able to change course. Western diplomats, civil society groups and the business community should speak out against those policies that undermine the rule of law, independence of the judiciary, freedom of the media and the functioning of opposition parties in SA. Their criticism will only be effective, however, if it is loud and unambiguous.

Tupy, a policy analyst at the Cato Institute's Centre for Global Liberty and Prosperity, is author of the policy paper, Troubling Signs for South African Democracy under the ANC.

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http://www.mg.co.za/articlePage.aspx?articleid=306300&area=/breaking_news/breaking_news_national/

12:30 June 30, 2007

NATIONAL

Zille: 'Too much power in too few hands'

Wendell Roelf | Cape Town, South Africa

01 May 2007 07:41

The concentration of power in South Africa is the biggest threat to its democracy, the front-runner to assume the leadership of the country's main opposition party said on Monday.

The challenge for the Democratic Alliance (DA), which draws its core support from the country's estimated five million whites, is to lure more black voters and help break traditional racial voting patterns, Cape Town mayor Helen Zille said.

"The single biggest threat to South Africa's democracy is too much power in too few hands, that always is a threat to democracy," Zille said in an interview. "But that happens when people don't have opportunities, when people don't have chances, when people are open to demagogues making false promises."

Zille, who has successfully battled efforts by the ruling African National Congress (ANC) to trim her powers in the only major city not governed by it, is seen as likely to succeed Tony Leon in this weekend's vote at the DA's national

conference.

The DA is South Africa's biggest opposition group but, with just 12% of the ballot at the previous general election in the 2004, it trails far behind the 70% support of President Thabo Mbeki's ANC.

Zille said a major challenge ahead of her, should she win, would be to increase the support base of the DA among South Africa's black majority.

"The challenge is to convince the majority of people ... [and] to get to a point in South Africa where we transcend race, transcend identity and vote on issues," she said. "We, like many other emerging democracies are far from that point and it is the DA's biggest challenges to show people of all races, of all creeds ... that we really care about them."

But Zille said winning converts would not happen easily, and predicted a "tipping point" could only be reached within the next five to seven years.

"Things move very slowly and suddenly something catalytic happens and things change very quickly. And I think we are in for that kind of major realignment in the near future ... things could change dramatically," Zille said.

This could include a possible split in the ANC's alliance with its leftist allies, as well as differences emerging within the ANC over a presidential succession that has pitted camps aligned to Mbeki against those who back former deputy president Jacob Zuma. -- Reuters

<http://www.sabcnews.com/Article/PrintWholeStory/0,2160,148434,00.html>
11:27 am June 30, 2007

Zille hot favourite to replace Tony Leon: Survey
May 04, 2007, 17:00

On the eve of the election of a new leader for the Democratic Party (DA) a survey suggests that Helen Zille is by far the favourite for the position.

A Markinor survey suggests that if it were left to DA supporters or even the broader South African population Zille would be the next DA leader.

The newly released survey results show that Zille is even more popular than Tony Leon - amongst both DA supporters and the general population. Nationally Zille has captured a score of 4.6 in the popularity stakes out of ten. Her support also compares favourably with that of Phumzile Mlambo Ngcuka, the deputy

president.

Mari Harris, the Markinor director, says a representative sample of 3 500 randomly selected South Africans were interviewed. Nationally, Joe Seremane is the second most popular DA leader on a score of 3.7 out of ten. Seremane is followed by Douglas Gibson, Theuns Botha, Ryan Coetzee and Athol Trollip.

The new DA leader will be elected on Sunday with Zille - Seremane and Trollip contesting the position. Leon will not stand for re-election but will retain his position as an ordinary member of Parliament in the National Assembly.

Over 1 000 delegates and 150 observers will attend the Congress. Throughout the course of congress 30 resolutions will be debated and voted on. They include a request to appoint a sub-committee to investigate the creation of a deputy leader's position.

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<http://www.sabcnews.com/Article/PrintWholeStory/0,2160,148232,00.html>
11:31 June 30, 2007

Zille seeks support for DA among black majority
April 30, 2007, 20:45

Helen Zille, the Cape Town mayor and the front-runner to assume the leadership of the Democratic Alliance (DA), says the concentration of power in South Africa is the biggest threat to its democracy.

The challenge for the DA which draws its core support from the country's estimated 5 million whites, was to lure more black voters and help break traditional racial voting patterns, Zille said. "The single biggest threat to South Africa's democracy is too much power in too few hands, that always is a threat to democracy," Zille said in an interview. "But that happens when people don't have opportunities, when people don't have chances, when people are open to demagogues making false promises."

Zille seen to succeed Tony Leon

Zille, who has successfully battled efforts by the ruling ANC to trim her powers in the only major city not governed by them, is seen as likely to succeed Tony Leon in this weekend's vote at the DA's national conference. The DA is South Africa's biggest opposition group but, with just 12% of the ballot at the last general election in the 2004, it trails far behind the 70% support of President Thabo

Mbeki's ANC. Zille said a major challenge ahead of her, should she win, would be to increase the support base of the DA among South Africa's black majority.

"The challenge is to convince the majority of people and to get to a point in South Africa where we transcend race, transcend identity and vote on issues," she said. "We, like many other emerging democracies are far from that point and it is the DA's biggest challenges to show people of all races, of all creeds that we really care about them."

But Zille said winning converts would not happen easily, and predicted a "tipping point" could only be reached within the next five to seven years. "Things move very slowly and suddenly something catalytic happens and things change very quickly. And I think we are in for that kind of major realignment in the near future things could change dramatically," Zille said.

This could include a possible split in the ANC's alliance with its leftist allies, as well as differences emerging within the ANC over a presidential succession that has pitted camps aligned to Mbeki against those who back Jacob Zuma, the former deputy president. - Reuters

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<http://www.sabcnews.com/Article/PrintWholeStory/0,2160,150831,00.html>
11:39am June 30, 2007

AMP councillor refutes charges against him
June 13, 2007, 07:45

Badih Chaaban, the Africa Muslim Party (AMP) councillor in the City of Cape Town, has dismissed allegations made against him by Helen Zille, the mayor. The city yesterday laid a complaint of corruption with the police alleging that Chaaban has offered six DA councillors money to defect to his National People's Party last September. Chaaban says he believes Zille is hallucinating.

"This woman is starting to see ghosts as the cross is starting to loom closer and everyone is thinking what is going to happen to their positions. She is a bit nervous, because her party is in tatters," Chaaban says.

Early this year the AMP councillor launched a R300 000 defamation claim against Zille. The action stemmed from a radio interview that Zille had with SAFM's Morning Talk Show on January 18 this year.

On the programme, Zille allegedly made remarks about Chaaban in connection with the Green Point World Cup stadium project. Chaaban alleges the interview was heard by about 600 000 listeners.

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http://www.sabcnews.com/politics/the_parties/0,2172,135339,00.html

10:02 June 28. 2007

Leon says Mbeki behind plan to oust Zille

September 22, 2006, 15:45

Tony Leon, the Democratic Alliance (DA) leader, says President Thabo Mbeki is behind ANC plans to replace Cape Town's executive mayoral system with an executive committee.

If successful, the plan will strip Helen Zille, the city's DA mayor, of her powers. Writing in his weekly newsletter on his party's SA Today website, Leon said Mbeki was instrumental in the decision to launch the plan.

"President Mbeki was apparently instrumental in the behind-the-doors decision to launch this latest assault on mayor Zille's powers - a meeting at which he was elected an ex-officio member of the ANC's provincial executive," he said.

"Undemocratic plan"

It was a breathtaking irony that while loudly proclaiming on South Africa's high democratic standing, Mbeki had "at the same time, eagerly partnered a patently undemocratic plan" to unseat Zille. Leon said Mbeki had played a "leading role" in the affair.

Earlier this week, Richard Dyantyi, the Western Cape local government MEC, sent a letter to the city notifying it of a proposed change to the municipal structure. If the change goes through, it will see Zille's seven-party coalition, which is currently running the city, give way to an executive collective committee, on which parties will be represented proportionally in terms of the number of votes they received in the March 1 local election.

Leon said the ANC plan had brought "the moral equivocation that has long marked Mbeki's presidency" into sharp focus. - Sapa

<http://www.sabcnews.com/Article/PrintWholeStory/0,2160,150549,00.html>
12:11 June 30, 2007

Strike not just about wages: Zille
June 08, 2007, 14:00

The current public service strike is as much about the succession struggle in the ANC as about workers winning higher wages, suggests Helen Zille, the Democratic Alliance (DA) leader. "Is it moving away from the wage issue that sparked it and becoming part of the ANC's succession battle?" she asks in her weekly on-line newsletter on the DA's SA Today website.

She said the question was important in the light of the governing party's imminent policy conference, set to begin on June 27, and the national ANC conference in December, where a new leader would be elected. "This (leadership) contest will not only dominate the ANC's internal debates and conflicts, it is increasingly becoming the prism through which we must understand other...events in society at large.

"Until the ANC's succession battle is finally resolved, all major issues in all spheres of government and civil society will be filtered through this prism."

The strike lacked "the normal trajectory of wage negotiations", with a give-and-take on both sides. Recent statements by Zwelinzima Vavi, the Cosatu secretary-general, gave credence to the idea the strike was a weapon wielded in the internal struggle for control of the ANC. "Vavi accused government analysis of the recent economic boom as 'propaganda similar to Nazi Germany' - an absurd hyperbole, immediately shot down by...President (Thabo Mbeki).

Strike will impact on balance of power

"This stand-off and the subsequent strike has set the scene for the ANC's policy conference, where the competing factions will square up to each other to determine what policy platform the ANC will offer the electorate in 2009.

"The outcome of the strike will have a significant impact on the perceived balance of power of the combatants preparing for battle at the conference - which is why a reasonable solution to the current impasse is proving so elusive."

Zille said Cosatu needed to show it could mobilise its constituency on a vast, conspicuous scale to paralyse the state and deliver the results they had promised. - Sapa

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<http://www.sabcnews.com/Article/PrintWholeStory/0,2160,149716,00.html>

12:19 June 30, 2007

Govt benefited from DA's robust opposition: Zille

May 25, 2007, 15:15

Helen Zille, the Democratic Alliance (DA) leader, says the government has benefited from her party's robust opposition politics. Writing in her weekly newsletter, Zille said if the party had not subjected the government to scrutiny, the concept of opposition would have lost its legitimacy.

Zille added that the DA would bring into being the politics of shared values rather than separate identities. She says she is in the process of setting up a major policy review to ensure that DA policies remain relevant and can offer real solutions to challenging problems.

Zille added that the DA would continue to keep government under critical enquiry. She says one of the most tragic features of the democratic South Africa has been the steady retrogression of the ANC into a racial nationalist party. She says the ruling party has run out of ideas, and increasingly falls back on race to hold its support base together.

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<http://www.sabcnews.com/Article/PrintWholeStory/0,2160,149234,00.html>

12:23 June 30, 2007

ANC leads Cape residents in protest

May 16, 2007, 18:00

Thousands of protestors, led by the ANC in the Western Cape, took to the streets of Cape Town today protesting over service delivery. The protestors claim that they have had their basic services, such as water and electricity, cut off by the city of Cape Town.

Traffic was brought to a virtual standstill as thousands of protestors, led by ANC provincial officials, marched through the city centre. ANC provincial leadership put their differences aside as Ebrahim Rasool, the Western Cape premier, and

Mcebisi Skwatsha, his political adversary and the party's provincial secretary, stood shoulder to shoulder in a rare display of public solidarity. Rasool had his entire cabinet in tow.

They say 46 000 Cape Town residents have had their water cut. Nearly 500 000 more residents have received notices threatening to cut off the supply of these basic services. Skwatsha threatened more action. But, Zille has rejected ANC's allegations as nonsense.

Zille says only 46 000 notices have been issued to defaulters, and that only 34 000 residents have had their water placed on what she calls a "trickle system." Zille denied that the city was evicting people from their houses. She said the march had nothing to do with service delivery and more to do with ANC's attempts to destabilise her multiparty government.

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http://www.mg.co.za/articlePage.aspx?articleid=305533&area=/breaking_news/breaking_news__national/

12:40 June 30, 2007

NATIONAL

Leon: Reports of anti-Zille plot are 'distorted'

Cape Town, South Africa

23 April 2007 12:55

Outgoing Democratic Alliance (DA) leader Tony Leon on Monday dismissed as "distorted and inaccurate" media reports alleging a plot against Cape Town Mayor Helen Zille.

Leon said he met on Monday morning with Zille and DA Western Cape leader Theuns Botha "to discuss certain media reports, which suggest a group of party leaders in the Western Cape has been meeting with some of our coalition partners in an effort to undermine Ms Zille".

"It seems these reports are distorted and inaccurate," he said in a statement.

Everyone agreed it was necessary and appropriate to hold meetings with the DA's coalition partners in the Western Cape and in the City of Cape Town to manage their co-governance of a number of municipalities across the province.

In the city, Zille conducted these meetings and in the rest of the province they were conducted under Botha's leadership.

Both had done an outstanding job under very difficult circumstances over the past year, Leon said.

"Meetings with our coalition partners will therefore continue as per normal.

"This morning's meeting was unanimous that our party in the Western Cape is united in its twin objectives of providing the municipalities of the province with exemplary government and of winning power at provincial level at the 2009 general election.

"This is our mission and we will fulfil it," Leon said.

Rapport newspaper reported on Sunday that Independent Democrats leader Patricia de Lille and the DA's provincial leadership were "conspiring" against Zille.

"Botha and his cronies" were apparently also conducting an intense campaign to prevent Zille being elected DA leader next month, Rapport said. -- Sapa

<http://www.id.org.za/newsroom/press-releases/greyling-helen-zille-s-da-has-double-standards/>

12:43 July 10, 2007

Greyling - 'Helen Zille's DA has double standards'

23-05-21D Chief Whip Lance Greyling says DA national leader Helen Zille 'has double double standards because she is ignoring even the most infantile political principles at the expense of the poor.'007

ID Chief Whip Lance Greyling says DA national leader Helen Zille 'has double double standards because she is ignoring even the most infantile political principles at the expense of the poor.'

Greyling's comments come after the Independent Democrats in Cape Town this week opposed the high rates and tariffs increases proposed by the DA here.

In Cape Town, the DA wants to increase water tariffs by 19%, an increase the DA calls 'reasonable'.

However, a statement from the DA Durban caucus in reaction to an ANC budget

there refers to “the hefty 15% [water] increase.”

‘In Durban the DA has aggressively opposed what it calls the governing ANC’s hefty 15% increase in water tariffs, while in Cape Town Zille and the DA have the audacity to propose a 19% increase,’ Greyling, whose constituency is KZN, says.

‘As the national leader of the DA, can Zille please explain why the DA in Cape Town calls a 19% increase in water tariffs “reasonable”, while in Durban a 15% increase proposed by the ANC is “hefty”?’

‘Either Zille is hypocritical, or she has no idea of what is happening outside her Mayoral position in Cape Town, or perhaps Zille wants to continue the sad legacy of her predecessor, Tony Leon, of opposition at all costs,’ says Greyling.

‘What the public demands from Helen Zille and her DA is consistency. Will the real Democratic Alliance please stand up so the public can see who they really are.’

Released by Lance Greyling – 083 298 8553

<http://www.capeargus.co.za/index.php?fSectionId=463&fArticleId=3199453>

12:46 July 10, 2007

Letters

Maybe Zille's can-do attitude can wake up staff

April 11, 2006 Edition 1

Mayor Helen Zille and the city are taking a tough stance against defaulting ratepayers ("A day with Helen Zille", April 5).

This is good financial management practice and complies with the Municipal Systems Act of 2000. But the city should practise what it preaches. It, too, is a slow payer.

I know of a small business that waited six months to be paid for work done, and then only after a letter of demand to the director of finance.

Before that the council was full of excuses, much like the bank mentioned in the Michael Morris article.

Our household is still waiting for a rebate on an excessive water account, promised in September. Lately, officials have not replied to letters.

Perhaps Zille's can-do attitude will filter down to lethargic senior and junior staff who have not heard of new public management and governance practices.

Speaking of Zille, I welcome her cautious response to the construction of a R1.5 billion stadium, despite her being subjected to howls of protest from Premier Ebrahim Rasool and the ANC.

I have been reading up on the challenges facing developing cities as part of a UCT programme in urban infrastructure management. It is acknowledged in the urban studies field and by the United Nations that cities in a "globalising world"

are being forced to be competitive.

Cities are having to make choices between "economic infrastructure" - mass transport, communication technology, water and electricity - to attract and serve global business, and services to the average and especially to poor citizens.

The former options win at the expense of a lower level of service to citizens and of poverty alleviation. Furthermore, the poor are often excluded from the benefits of globalisation.

The literature does not specifically mention events such as the Olympics and World Cup, but it is my view that the clamour to host these events, especially by poor countries like South Africa - despite the dubious economic benefit - is part of this globalising trend.

The problem with politically driven projects like the 2010 World Cup and the 2004 Olympic bid is that they are seldom quantified from an economic or utility point of view at the start of the process.

Even putting the most positive spin on the proposed stadium, it cannot be described as economic infrastructure, which is what attracts investors to a city.

Frankly, a stadium has little appeal to investors, who look for a skilled workforce, effective municipal services and a well-run transport system.

Rasool has some smart advisers. I imagine he has been told about the trade-offs - a smart, very expensive facility that would hardly ever be used to full capacity after the World Cup, and reduced levels of service that the city and province would have to make.

But still he and others make intemperate statements minimising the concerns of many people, not only the mayor.

T Johnson

Belthorn Estate

<http://www.capeargus.co.za/index.php?fArticleId=3750346>

12:47 July 10, 2007

Letters

Zille should put delivery before photo opportunities

March 26, 2007 Edition 1

Mayor Helen Zille has disappointed on many fronts since taking the reins of Cape Town.

To begin with, she doesn't have an outright mandate to govern and needs other parties to cling to power - but acts as if she received the majority of the vote.

Zille states the multiparty government constitutes 65% of the vote obtained in the 2006 local government elections, but conveniently forgets that she campaigned against the Mayoral Committee System that keeps her in power while at least 54% of the electorate (DA 43% and ID 11%) voted for the Executive Committee System. which allows for a proportional system of governance.

A reasonable person will conclude that if no party receives more than 50% of the vote, the executive committee system must be employed and thus Zille's mayoral committee is undemocratically constituted. On this score Zille has failed the

electorate for her own personal gain.

Recently, Zille announced that an "apolitical" committee would be set up to scrutinise proposed street name changes.

Capetonians should not be fooled by this, on two grounds.

Firstly, the way these committees are selected does not allow for apolitical "experts" to be chosen. Each political party will identify candidates with the undemocratic process of horse-trading employed to embed political sycophants on the committee.

Secondly, Zille has been true to her "Godzille" nickname by dictating from the outset that proposed name changes not acceptable (to her and the DA) will not be considered, and that current names not an affront (to her and the DA) will not be changed.

Surely, this constitutes political interference in the process and makes a mockery of her assertion that the street name change will be apolitical.

My last complaint is the most damning. Having had over a year to deliver services, she prefers charming the media with photo opportunities and writing letters with party political undertones instead of delivering tangible results.

There has been a growing chorus of discontent from Capetonians about the non-repair to roads, non-delivery of new roads and building of houses.

Showing difficulty in tackling these high priority issues, Zille announces she will be running for the leadership of the DA. All this while Capetonians are expected to pay more rates for poor quality of services is not acceptable.

E Davids

Mitchell's Plain

<http://politics.za.net/articles/2007/05/06/helen-zille-is-the-leader-of-the-opposition>
11:03 July 12, 2007

Politics.za

Third world country. First world politics.

Helen Zille Is The Leader Of The Opposition

Posted by Farrel on Sunday, May 06, 2007

Mayor of Cape Town Helen Zille has been elected as the new leader of the DA, beating out DA Federal Chairman Joe Seremane and Easter Cape Provincial Leader Athol Trollip.

What's interesting to me was the utter shellacking Joe Seremane received in the voting. Seremane received a mere 65 votes, compared to Zille's 786. Even supposed no-hoper Athol Trollip received 228 votes. I'll bet that some spin doctors in Luthuli House are making note of that.

Due to the fact that Zille will retain her position as Mayor of Cape Town and will not be present in parliament, the DA will have to appoint a parliamentary representative to take her place. I assume this will be Joe Seremane.

Although Zille is a competent and able leader I do hope that her reign as leader takes the form of night watchman rather than a long term leader. The DA is still facing a leadership crisis in that the top leadership is still dominated by white

males. Perhaps we should be keeping an eye on some of the DA's Young Guns?

http://www.mg.co.za/articlePage.aspx?articleid=308375&area=/insight/insight__columnists/

12:26 June 30, 2007

COLUMNISTS

The Zille gambit: delivery or rhetoric?

Richard Calland: CONTRETEMPS

15 May 2007 03:59

Most opposition leaders can enjoy the luxury of opposition: they can promise the world, free of the responsibility to deliver it.

The new leader of the DA, Helen Zille, is in an unusual position. Wisely, she has decided to remain mayor of Cape Town. She is betting that the opportunity to match words with deeds outweighs the risk that her term as mayor will expose her utterances for empty rhetoric.

But what exactly will she aim to achieve and for whom? To answer this question satisfactorily, Zille must confront a sharply drawn strategic choice that was, in the end, the unhinging of Tony Leon.

Leon never resolved the inherent tension between his pursuit of national power and the concomitant need to win votes from the majority community, and the fact that he persistently positioned his party as representative of minority communities.

It was unresolved because it is fundamentally unresolvable. You simply can't do both. Zille must choose: is her DA to be a party of and for minorities, or will it be willing and able to persuade people from the African majority that it can provide a plausible political home for them?

The only possible way of untying the Gordian knot into which Leon tied the party with a series of strategic and tactical blunders, of which the infamous "fight back" campaign was the archetype, is to reclaim the lost ground of liberalism that Leon chose to sacrifice with his lurch to the right.

Combine this with a style that was as prickly as a scalded hedgehog, and an inability to convey any sense of empathy with the plight of the majority of his compatriots who are poor and often unemployed, and you had a package that failed to take advantage of a growing new electoral market of young, disenchanted voters who lack historical loyalties to the ANC.

To have any chance of success, Zille must reposition the party in three

dimensions: strategy and tactics; style and tone; and policy and ideology. She should forget about winning national government -- that is an Everest that will not be scaled by any current opposition party for the foreseeable future -- and instead focus on winning key pockets of power at local government level to build up a credible record of governance.

Which takes us back to Cape Town, where Zille has the opportunity to show that she can develop and deliver policies for all Capetonians, not just the privileged minority that has been the focus of her party up until now.

Zille must lead the party from the Mayor's office in Cape Town rather than the opposition front bench in the National Assembly. There has been a lot of nonsense on this subject from people who should know better, some of whom said that she should give up the mayorship because it would be "unthinkable" for the opposition not to have its leader in Parliament. Given the opportunity that real power in Cape Town presents, how foolish it would be to relinquish it just to be able to indulge in the increasingly feeble verbal jousting of the National Assembly.

Moreover, it is the one part of the country where the ANC is vulnerable; thanks to the consistently rotten performance of its provincial and local structures, Zille can shine in comparison.

She will, however, have a tough decision to make over the leadership of the DA in Parliament. Whoever it is must mirror Zille and not undermine her approach. She will need to execute radical surgery on the party's senior management -- the coterie of white men from privileged backgrounds who smothered Leon in the groupthink that was the fount of his most serious strategic misjudgements, and whose attitude to people with different views -- even within their own party -- is as illiberal as it was unwise.

It is an important moment in opposition politics. Zille has plenty of blind spots, including a tendency not to delegate enough and to try and do too much herself, but she is a quality politician -- with integrity as well as talent.

As Zille now heads the one opposition party that has substantial resources, how she leads will have important implications for the county's political future. If she proves to be as shrewd as she is undoubtedly energetic, she will not only grasp the various strategic, ideological and management nettles that together constitute her political inheritance, but also present the ANC with its own dilemma about how to handle her.

Focusing on a programme of social delivery that transcends race and class in Cape Town and wherever else the DA can gather government office; that is strong and principled on public ethics; and which espouses the liberal values of tolerance, accountability and constitutionalism, there is a chance to re-brand the

opposition and encourage a broader coalition.

<http://www.africancrisis.co.za/Article.php?ID=12886&>

11:46 July 17, 2007

AfricanCrisis

SA: ANC congratulates Zille

Date Posted: Monday 07-May-2007

[So Helen Zille stepped down. Tony Leon puts on a brave face but I wonder if he really likes any of this. Can Zille do more than Tony Leon? I doubt it. Helen wants to love the blacks Liberal style. That doesn't work. Next question. What the blacks of Africa need is "tough love". They need some straight talk. They need to be told to look into their souls over some issues. There are basic problems and misconceptions which have been allowed to delude them for decades. Their minds need to be SET STRAIGHT. This unconditional love will achieve very little. Jan]

The ruling African National Congress on Sunday congratulated Cape Town Mayor Helen Zille on her election as head of the country's official opposition, the Democratic Alliance.

"The ANC congratulated Helen Zille for her victory. We wish her the best of times as the new leader of the opposition," said ANC spokesperson Smuts Ngonyama.

The party's Western Cape branch, however, received Zille's appointment with mixed feelings, the SABC reported.

Western Cape ANC chairperson James Ncqulu said while the ANC in the Western Cape welcomed Zille's election, the party felt Zille had been "dismal" in her service delivery in Cape Town.

He said poor people had been experiencing evictions and water cuts and if Zille remained mayor and DA leader, her views would always be blinded by serving her "narrow party's interests", rather than serving the broader interest of Cape Town.

As a result her election as leader "will be a dark cloud to those yearning for service delivery and transformation in Cape Town".

Independent Democrats leader Patricia de Lille welcomed the election of a woman leader to head a political party in South Africa.

"The ID led the way in producing the first elected woman leader of a political party in the country and another woman leader will be welcome," she said in a statement congratulating Zille on her post.

De Lille said the ID hoped to "see a considerable change in the DA from its traditional obstructive politics to the politics of engagement".

The Young Communist League (YCL) were less enthusiastic in their response to Zille's appointment.

Spokesperson Castro Ngobese said outcome of the election "shows that the DA will forever remain a white political party" and that it did not "appreciate or represent the interests of the majority of our people especially the working class and the poor".

He said however, that the election of Zille might provide a turnaround strategy in the party's political approach.

The Christian Front (CF) said Zille was faced with a big responsibility in her new position.

"There is a big responsibility that rests on her shoulders to lead the DA into the next election," said the CF's Rudi du Plooy.

Du Plooy said Zille had proven herself a formidable opponent to the "normal ANC high-handed tactics in Cape Town".

Meanwhile, the African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) valued Zille's ethics, integrity, knowledge and expertise, it said in a statement.

ACDP Western Cape provincial leader Hansie Louw said Zille "richly deserved to be the new leader of the DA".

"In obedience to Biblical injunctions, we will pray for you and other leaders in our country, in the hope that all of us will contribute to building a better South Africa for all its people," said Louw.

The Freedom Front Plus (FF Plus) also congratulated Zille on being elected leader of the Democratic Alliance. - Sapa

URL:

http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=13&art_id=nw20070506222255311C711724

<http://allafrica.com/stories/printable/200705250121.html>
11:51 July 17, 2007

DA Caucus Elects 'New Face' Botha to Parliament Post

Business Day (Johannesburg)

NEWS

25 May 2007

Posted to the web 25 May 2007

By Linda Ensor

Cape Town

Democratic Alliance (DA) MPs yesterday elected Sandra Botha of Free State as leader of the opposition in Parliament in the hope that she will help new DA leader Helen Zille broaden the party's support among blacks and the youth.

Describing herself as a team player who stands her ground, Botha indicated she would bring a new, less combative style to the National Assembly.

Botha beat Tertius Delport by 31 votes to 25, with one spoilt paper. The fact that both are Afrikaans counted in their favour as candidates as this was considered important to achieve diversity within the party leadership.

The vote was based less on ideological differences and background than on personality and the image of the party.

"There was a yearning within the caucus for a completely new face untouched by the past who could reach out to the DA's new constituency," said one DA MP.

Political researcher Jonathan Faull said Botha was probably elected not so much on her appeal to the DA's targeted constituency as on being a better option than Delport, a former apartheid cabinet minister who would have been a stick with which the African National Congress could beat the DA.

Zille said at a media conference that the fact that the DA now had two women in its high-profile positions was not an issue with its supporters, who had indicated in a survey that gender was irrelevant in the choice of leader. The most important criterion was competence.

Former Gauteng leader Ian Davidson was elected unopposed as chief whip, and Mike Ellis unopposed as deputy. Wattie Watson was elected leader of the opposition in the National Council of Provinces (NCOP), and Kraai van Niekerk re-elected chairman of the caucus, with Janet Semple and James Masango his deputies. National Assembly whips will be Sandy Kalyan, Willem Doman, Donald Lee and Paul Swart. Juanita Terblanche will be DA whip in the NCOP.

Active in the progressive anti-apartheid movement, Botha was deputy secretary-general of the National Women's Coalition, deputy director of the Independent Electoral Commission in Free State and DA caucus leader in the NCOP.

She chaired the United Nations working group on rural women, and was chosen by National Assembly speaker Baleka Mbete as first DA chairwoman of the National Assembly, a position she has now relinquished.

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http://www.southafrica.info/pls/procs/iac.page?p_t1=692&p_t2=2000&p_t3=2785&p_t4=0&p_dynamic=YP&p_content_id=531427&p_site_id=38

11:53 July 17, 2007

BUSINESS NEWS

Helen Zille in hotseat over 2010

Posted Fri, 22 Dec 2006

Cape Town mayor Helen Zille will be to blame if Cape Town loses the 2010 Soccer World Cup semi-final, Independent Democrats leader in the city council Simon Grindrod said on Thursday.

"I'm holding Helen Zille personally responsible if we lose the World Cup, because her first act as mayor was to halt the planning process," he said.

His statement follows claims by the Western Cape provincial government — denied by Zille — that the city has blundered on a crucial procedural issue in paving the way for the construction of a R2.5-billion stadium at Green Point in the city.

Grindrod said Zille's first act on taking up the mayoral chain in March this year was to halt the stadium planning process over questions she already knew the answer to.

"She was trying to appease her support base, and it's all backfired," he said.

The two-month delay that ensued had probably cost the city the semi-final.

"The blame must go squarely on her shoulders for playing politics with this critical issue."

He called on Zille to summon an urgent council meeting to resolve the matter.

Chairperson of the Federated Hospitality Association of SA, Nils Heckscher, said in a statement that the province, city and "all decision-making bodies" should get their act together, and put an end to the delays threatening the stadium.

"Decision makers and all role-players need to see the bigger context," he said.

"This is about economic growth opportunities and an injection of billions of rands into the city coffers that will not easily be rivalled by any other event."

Sapa

<http://www.cartelblanche.co.za/Display/DisplayPrint.asp?ID=3311>

11:54 July 17, 2007

Helen Zille Date : 13 May 2007

Producer : Diana Lucas

Presenter : Bongani Bingwa

Researcher : Quereshini Naidoo

Genre : Profiles

It's been a heady seven days since Cape Town's Mayor Helen Zille took over the reigns from Tony Leon as leader of the Democratic Alliance.

Helen Zille (Mayor: Cape Town & Leader: Democratic Alliance): “Thank you for the opportunity to be part of this great journey with you. Together we are going to change South Africa.”

Speaking in English, Xhosa and Afrikaans, Helen’s opening address to the over 1 000 delegates was full of hope and promise of a new ideal South Africa.

But there’s nothing sudden or magical about the new DA leader’s path. She’s spent the majority of her 56 years adhering to a good old fashioned work ethic: what you put in you’ll take out. In Helen’s words: being present, punctual and very prepared.

Bongani Bingwa (Carte Blanche presenter): “It’s four o’ clock in the morning, a little early for most of us. But for Helen Zille this is just the start of what may be a 16 or 18-hour working day. For the next 48 hours we are going to follow her and fit ourselves into her schedule or at least we are going to try.”

And it’s at this time you’ll find Helen, in tracksuit and slippers, in the study of her Rondebosch home catching up on emails and over 400 messages on her cell phone. It’s also the only time she could give us her undivided attention.

Helen: “You know in Afrikaans there’s a saying [Afrikaans expression] and it is true, the early bird does catch the worm. [Xhosa expression].”

So when Johann Maree, her husband, wakes up an hour later Helen’s already on her way out the door to the city’s mayoral offices.

Bongani: “Given her schedule that she has, I mean she is up at four o’clock in the morning ... 18 hour days ... when do you see her?”

Professor Johann Maree (Sociologist Department: UCT): “Not often. I often go to bed and she is not there yet and I wake up and she is gone. But there are inevitable gaps and we just play it by ear and when we both have a lull that’s the time we can spend together at home.”

Bongani: “Helen Zille’s political career began at the tender age of 22 as a cadet journalist for the now defunct Rand Daily Mail. Her then editor, internationally acclaimed Alistair Sparkes, recognised her investigative skills and she rose through the ranks becoming the paper’s political correspondent. Her work quickly earned her a tough reputation, the ire of a few politicians and not a few mentions in parliament.”

In 1977 Helen exposed the death in detention of Black Consciousness’ leader Steve Biko.

Helen: “We journalists get scoops out of other people’s misery and that was a

terrible, terrible period. We knew that Biko had been murdered. We knew that there was no chance of him having died of a hunger strike after a week. He was a strapping big man. Alistair said there is going to be a cover up here and we have got to uncover it.”

Her exposé was one of the first times ordinary white South Africans could read what was really going on, but in true form the apartheid government denied everything.

Helen: “I was taken to the press council. It was kind of a quasi-court headed by a judge if you don’t mind. We were charged with misleading reporting and all sorts of other things and we were found guilty as charged. It was a devastating finding for me because no journalist likes to be found guilty of misreporting. But we had made it impossible for the government to cover up and that was the important thing.”

In this verdict Helen saw the danger of too much power in too few hands and left journalism. After going back to university, where she studied economics and politics and marrying academic Johann Maree, she joined the then Democratic Party

Helen: “I knew in 1994, obviously, that the ANC would win by a landslide. But I knew that the next challenge that would lie ahead in the next ten to 15 years would be to achieve a viable opposition in South Africa ... a non-racial opposition to prevent the ANC from becoming too powerful because inevitably everywhere in the world power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. My husband and I had a big disagreement about that, so he went off in 1994 and voted for the ANC and I went off and voted for the DP.”

Bongani: “And who was right?”

Helen: “I was right [laughs].”

Johann: “We certainly do have different perspectives. Although I suppose over time we do get closer to each other. But what is underlying it is that we have the same values and goals and desires for South Africa and that is really what brought us together and kept us together.”

Helen believes one of her greatest challenges in leading the DA into the future is South Africa’s education crisis. As a former DA MEC for education in the Western Cape she visited over 500 schools. On one such visit to a school in Guguleto she found it had been broken into the night before.

Helen: “So I stood there on my cellphone and I called the Guguleto police station and I called and I called and I called and there was no reply. So I got into my car and drove to the Guguleto police station and I walked in and there was

everybody sitting around watching 'The Bold and the Beautiful' on a television in the charge office. So I stood there and said 'excuse me'. Obviously nobody knew who I was so that was good and I said, 'I have been trying to phone and no one is answering the telephone here because there has been a major burglary at a school up the road'. They said, 'Sorry, the telephone is broken'. I called it again from my cell phone there and the phone rang and I said, 'There you go, not broken at all'. I was outraged and I kicked up a big, big fuss about that and as a result television screens were removed from police stations."

But Helen's son's Thomas and Paul don't take her as seriously as maybe she'd like.

Paul Maree: "We keep her in line here. We have got to make sure that she knows her place in the home [laughs]. And so we can give her a hard time, but what people might know she gives as good as she can get."

Thomas Maree: "The media always portrays her as 'Godzille' and such a tough woman and everything. Here at the house she is just mom. The only time she turns into Godzille for me is when she wants me to go to bed. At eight o'clock or so she just switches off the TV and says, 'bedtime'."

Paul: "You have to have a very specific character to be able to handle a career in politics. I know that I definitely don't possess the constitution to be able to take what she does."

It is just before seven and the mayoral staff gather for various meetings with Helen. It's been just over 14 months since Zille was elected mayor of Cape Town. The first few were precarious.

Bongani: "The ANC was fairly determined to get rid of you?"

Helen: "Yes they were."

Bongani: "Why?"

Helen: "Because they don't like losing elections."

Bongani: "Who does?"

Helen: "Well you see in democracies parties don't particularly like it but they accept it. That is the essence of democracy. Nobody stands to lose, obviously, that is why you fight to win. But when you lose you accept it and you get into opposition and do your best as opposition because you believe that opposition has a very important role to play in democracy."

Also standing for leadership of the party was ex-Robbin Island stalwart Joe

Seramane. While 76 percent of the DA delegates voted for Helen, Joe only got six percent of the vote.

Bongani: "That is a strong rejection."

Joe Seremane (Chairman: Democratic Alliance): "No, I don't think so. That is how things begin. I did it for one purpose ... to send a signal that anybody can do to it to the stereotypes that think it is white persons' territory. We are a segregated and fragmented community and we must repair that damage."

The DA will have to build a new model of opposition. Helen, as mayor, will lead the party but the caucus will have to elect a separate leader for parliament, who will be called leader of the opposition.

Bongani: "Whoever is elected, will they be answerable to you or to the caucus?"

Helen: "Well I will be at the caucus every single Thursday and I will give the leader's address at the caucus every single Thursday as I currently do. I will take advice from the caucus, but in the end I am the leader and I will give the direction."

In her role as mayor, Helen welcomed President Thabo Mbeki when he was invested as a knight into the most venerable order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem at St Georges Cathedral in Cape Town last week

Mbeki was one of the first to call Helen after her win.

Helen: "My cellphone rang and I answered it and it said, 'Hold on for the president please'. I was very touched by that."

Bongani: "Were you surprised?"

Helen: "I was amazed. He was very cordial ... he congratulated me most warmly. During the course of our brief conversation somebody said we should get together. I said, 'Mr President what is the protocol, can my office call you or must I wait for your office to call me?' He said, 'Ask your office to call me' and then we wrote a formal letter requesting a meeting."

Bongani: "And when is that going to take place?"

Helen: "We are waiting for a reply."

Hopefully she won't have to wait as long as her predecessor Tony Leon. His first appointment with the president was in his last week in office.

Helen: "Tony Leon took the concept of the open opportunity society and saved it

as an option for South Africa. That is what he did and that will be his lasting legacy. If it wasn't for Tony Leon we would now have a choice between white nationalism and black nationalism with coloured people having to choose between them. People who look back on history will see what Tony Leon did ... he built a party from 1.7 percent to 12.5 percent. Unbelievable. I can't hope to match that achievement, but I don't want to go backwards. I want to go forwards."

What is perhaps Helen Zille's greatest priority is that the Democratic Alliance should offer an alternative to what she believes is a deeply divided ruling party.

Bongani: "For the DA to grow significantly you are going to have to have a black majority voter base."

Helen: "That is our challenge. That is our main challenge. There is such a direct interest for the ANC to mobilise on 'race'. If they do that and they do that successfully then they will never have to do another thing because they will always have a majority vote in South Africa. They can be the worse possible government in South Africa and just mobilise people's emotions around 'race' and get re-elected every time. If things get too dispirit, if the divisions get too deep, if the ideologies become totally incompatible, then there is only so much that superglue will do. So we will have to see if that happens, but if it does then there will be a new fluidity in politics and many new options."

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http://blogs.uct.ac.za/blog/media_flaws/2007/05/13/something_fishy
11:30 July 1, 2007

Media Flaws

PARRHESIA IN PRACTISE...

BLOGS | HOME | ALBUMS | ADMIN

Sunday, May 13, 2007

CECI N'EST PAS UNE PIPE

I smell a rat! In the Chihuahua club that is. Zille, the last time I spoke to her, was on some hallucinogenic tip of erasing race from the discourses of South African reformatory measures. Even insinuating that blacks need to take off their race blinkers and not see things as black and white. Last week she was humming a tune that sought to make decisions and debates issue-based rather than being

influenced by identity politics. I agree with her on that - sounds all fair and well, but has anyone heard her latest tune?- Tony Leon must be fulminating and choking on his spit. Zille has now screechingly changed route and is humming something along the lines of her party being in full support of Affirmative Action and Black Economic Empowerment, and now all of a sudden feels a compulsion of sorts not to ignore past discriminations. Talk about backstabbing - this goes against her parties delusive dreams of scrapping Affirmative Action et al? Was she waiting for her inevitable God-Zille status to be confirmed prior to unleashing the neo-liberal within?

I don't buy it! I still smell a rat. I've been monitoring some of the Zille appraisals and my oh my has she been glorified to a point of near godliness in South Africa's political scene - nothing but lousy ass-kissers stuck in some nostalgia and longing for an all-white governance. If I knew less I'd actually be fooled into believing that she was the neo-Mother Theresa of South Africa.

Meanwhile as the Chihuahua club (DA) glows or grows as a noise making nuisance, the ANC is riddled by a suicidal Zuma who is hogging all forms of media limelight. The media seems to be entertaining his antics! Knowing how right-winged our media is - it is plain to see that Zuma is not a newsworthy subject but a newsworthy avenue to tarnish president Mbeki's image. Imagine if you will, you're seated in the presidential guesthouse, staring at Rene Magritte's Ceci n'est pas une pipe (This is not a Pipe) and Blue Label giving up the walk, succumbing to being dispensed for inebriation-sake. 'Imagine' being the key-word in what follows...

" I wonder what I've ever done to those imbeciles!?" with a sincere gesture of confusion "I mean nothing I ever do is ever, ever acknowledged. I've strengthened relationships with foreign investors, I've allowed the Health department to squander funds on their hypochondriac cases - AIDS victims, I'm trying to deal with crime - even though some forget who started the mess of inequalities. And Charles, is trying too, he's tapped into private security companies to poach 30 000 of their best to help. I weeded out the sex pests and soap-endorsers . I'm doing my best to redress poverty. I abandoned GEAR, and AsgiSA is doing well!" at this stage you sense a certain level of unnerving talk, as he readies himself for his next shot of Blue Label.

"But no, all they see is an aloof me! A me that undermines the constitutional court. A me that's jet set. I bet you if Madiba was still president no one would winge about these things - given a chance he'd be doing the exact same things. Eternally grateful buggers would probably blame themselves for this countries mess than dare challenge their saviour - their knight in Robben Island armour."

Pipe in hand, takes a deep drag, holds and continues with smoke churning out in rings, "But then again the media is still white dominated and naturally perpetuates a racist mediated reality that will only seek flaws in a black governancy and will never acknowledge competency in the natives!" Puts pipe down, in his irritable tone mumbles, "really annoy me... And what's wrong with

congratulating a new-president-elect in Nigeria!? How he was elected is none of my business - I'm doing my job by mereley extended my congratulations to a new African head of state! Argh!" Empties pipe, stares blanky at Magritte's painting, suddenly lifts the near-empty Blue Label and walks out.

There's really something wrong here. Everytime a journalist or columnist submits something that's anti-Mbeki, it's published instantaneously. Everytime a journalist or columnist submits something that's pro-Mbeki or paints the government in a bright glow - it's ditched, it doesn't get aired. The only one's who bother are the SABC and they're getting serious slack for merely reporting issues that purport to the NATIONAL government of the day.

Eish, how did I get into this area? I was actually writing about the Chihuahua club's worrying indecisiveness and unscrupulous tactics, to lure black voters, to get more and more power for their seemingly power-hungry Zeal, I mean Zille.

Posted by Unathi Kondile (Hardcore) :: Comments (6) :: Permalink :: Trackbacks (0)

"Was she waiting for her inevitable God-Zille status to be confirmed prior to unleashing the neo-liberal within?"

She's never been anything but neoliberal. Those who paint her in the press as being on the Left of the duh-duh-duh-DA are seriously delusional.

Comment by yawn (05/14/2007 07:19)

If you look at Zille's curriculum vitae, you will notice that she has been in the ring with some worthy opponents and was the last man 'oooops' woman standing hence Shapiro dubbed her "Godzille". We must concede that Zille has at least half a brain. She's the undisputed underdog who has continued to successfully serve the cause your so-called Chihuahua club. If you keepon' lifting weights, you become stronger, if follows that for every battle she wins, her stature grows.

I warned my ANC aligned friends that the ANC western cape should be smart choosing their battles with Zille. Fighting her on every issue is nonsensical and defeats logic, surely they must give her an ounce of credit.

The ANC has perpetuated her ballooning stature

Comment by 'Nathi (05/14/2007 13:41)

She was called GodZille long before Zapiro heard of her - that was her nickname when she still worked here at UCT.

"Ballooning stature"? Whites make up less than 10% of the population. And only right-wing english speaking whites would vote for her. That's what, less than 5% of the population? Admittedly, they buy a lot of newspapers, but the Argus-reading population alone is not going to swing an election.

Comment by tokyo rose (05/14/2007 14:59)

TO: TOKYO ROSE

Smell the coffee. Zille has been painted with the angelic brush by all media (even the ANC at National level are ooking forward to her DA rule). If you haven't notice the media is pumping air to her balloning stature. Don't underestimate the power

of media, it changes mindsets

Comment by 'Nathi (05/14/2007 16:29)

SOME LINKS

Top links: nasal spray is about nasal spray. xanax is about xanax. tramadol hcl is about tramadol hcl. carisoprodol ingredients is about carisoprodol ingredients. ativan blood does in long stay is about ativan blood does in long stay. ultram pain medicine is about ultram pain medicine. viagra for women is about viagra for women. rosacea symptom is about rosacea symptom. how to eat a pomegranate is about how to eat a pomegranate. surviving manic depression is about surviving manic depression. diabetes diet is about diabetes diet. zocor 40mg is about zocor 40mg.

Comment by Ameliya (06/04/2007 11:56)

SOME LINKS

Top links: doctor effects side xenical is about doctor effects side xenical. order hydrocodone is about order hydrocodone. rogain extra is about rogain extra. ritalin and weight loss is about ritalin and weight loss. carisoprodol compound tab is about carisoprodol compound tab. lamisil is about lamisil. ephedrine buy is about ephedrine buy. online cialis is about online cialis. tylenol with codeine suspension is about tylenol with codeine suspension. antibiotic medication zithromax is about antibiotic medication zithromax. treatment for anxiety disorder is about treatment for anxiety disorder. azithromycin rash is about azithromycin rash.

Comment by Brecket (06/25/2007 01:20)

<http://qforum.mweb.co.za/showthreaded.php?Cat=&Number=681655&page=&view=&sb=5&o=&vc=1>

11:42 July 17, 2007

Re: So Helen Zille takes over...

05/08/07 06:24 PM

I just worry that the DA is still too "white liberal" and it doesn't have a leader with charisma that will appeal to the masses. I love Helen Zille and I think she is tenacious and extremely talented but she lacks something that the likes of Eva Peron had. "They need to adore me, so Christian Dior me, from my head to my toes". I think they should take DNA from Eva and Helen and breed a super leader. I worry that she will become the victim of a plot similar to that which got rid of Benhazir Bhuto (?sp) - I'm certain she wasn't as dodgy as she was made out to be, and that if it had been a man in her position, no-one would have cared.

BULELWA QUPE

<http://www.theherald.co.za/femme/2002/10/09/busiw.htm>

16:26 July 16, 2007

Bulelwa hooks major award for fishing firm

By Helga van Staaden

FISHING company owner Bulelwa Qupe – the first black woman in this region to be granted a fishing quota – was overjoyed to hear she had won a national award for women using technology in business.

Bulelwa, owner of long-line hake fishing company Ezabantu Fishing, is one of very few women operating in this male dominated industry.

Bulelwa, 43, who also owns Aqua Fish and Chips in Motherwell, was the only nominee from the Eastern Cape to go through to the Technology for Women in Business (Twib) finals which took place in Durban in August.

“Up to today I don’t know who nominated me,” said an overjoyed Bulelwa. Apart from winner her own category – Agriculture and Food Processing – she was also the overall winner of the Twib 2002 Award.

Twib is a national programme started by the Department of Trade and Industry. It is aimed at enhancing the accessibility of science and technology to women in business and in particular the small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs).

The annual competition includes sectors such as tourism, mining and energy, construction, textile and crafts, information communication technology and agriculture and agri- business.

This tenacious businesswoman left a career in nursing to venture into an unstable business world.

She opened her fish and chips shop in 1997 after identifying a niche for seafood which was also affordable in the township.

However, her business grew at a rapid pace and she soon realised that it was difficult to get adequate quantities of fish from the local suppliers.

In order to satisfy the demand of her customers, she decided to apply for fishing rights from the Department of Marine and Coastal Management. This was not easy to achieve, Bulelwa recalls.

“One day I was watching Parliament Today on SABC3 when I heard that fishing rights would be granted to all, but it turned out to be a long and difficult process to get the licence.

“After three years of waiting for the fishing rights to be issued, our licence was revoked after operating for a year. The licence was only re-issued again in the beginning of this year.”

Bulelwa was the first black woman to be granted fishing rights in the Eastern Cape and, to familiarise herself with sea life, she enrolled for a course in marine culture at UPE.

With the fishing quota comes certain restrictions, such as only being able to fish for three months of the year and only being permitted to catch 65 tons of fish, to prevent depletion of the sea resources.

Nonetheless her business has flourished and today Bulelwa employs 10 people, eight of whom are women.

Apart from the day-to-day running of her businesses, Bulelwa is also the representative of the South African Woman’s Entrepreneur Network. This

organisation will have its first meeting on October 11 and aims to mentor small and developing businesses in all industries.

She is also the executive director of Lithuba Lethu Woman's Development in Motherwell, which was formed to liaise with all women in business, and a member of the Exporters Club in Port Elizabeth.

Although Bulelwa's fish and chips shop, Aqua, is not as profitable as she would like at the moment, due to the high price of potatoes and oil, she is positive about what the future will hold for her.

Her vision for Ezabantu is to become one of the bigger fish in the sea and she is willing to work at it.

"Because we have five per cent shares in Lusitania fishing company, we make use of their facilities to catch our fish," explains Bulelwa.

"Not having my own vessels frustrates me," she confesses. "It is difficult to develop in industry where all the bigger companies swallow the smaller ones."

Although Bulelwa is enthusiastic about the fishing industry she admits that it is both difficult and challenging at the same time.

"I would never have made it without my family," says Bulelwa, but with her husband, Don, and four children, she feels she can still conquer the world.

http://www.theherald.co.za/herald/2004/03/23/biz/01_23032004.htm

16:32 July 16, 2007

Business Monday July 16, 2007

Sisters doing it for themselves

By Lourens Schoeman

THE transformation of South Africa requires significant changes in the behaviour, attitude, and perceptions of businessmen towards women, says Port Elizabeth businesswoman Bulelwa Qupe of Bantu Marketing Exporting and Processing.

Speaking at an Absa seminar on women in business on Friday, Mrs Qupe said apartheid had caused intense fear, mistrust and polarisation between racial and ethnic groups, with devastating effect on the natural growth of the people.

"Women have been marginalised, her place was in the kitchen, but today we see a lot of women climbing the corporate ladders, not by default, but by design, not as tokens, but as decision makers and opinion leaders," she told a rapt audience.

She said the first 10 years of democracy had seen many women come to the fore, many business issues had been raised and solved by women.

"South Africa boasts many successful women entrepreneurs. These women visionaries have turned small enterprises into successful national companies – but too few South African women have been able to emulate them," Mrs Qupe said.

"There is no doubt that the awareness of women has increased significantly since 1994, despite the fact that certain barriers still remain in terms of the advancement of women and the perception that they have too much on their

plate to be able to run a business properly.

"If you want your business to survive, you must be prepared to care about the person who makes your existence possible – the customer," she said.

"Today our challenges come from within as we strive to provide hope for entrepreneurship, which like revolution, should be the soul of our nation.

"Entrepreneurship must become much more the norm than aberration, while innovation should be the nature of our culture where we are always open to ideas and not afraid to fail."

Absa business banking services general manager Jenny Tyobeka said it took courage and guts to build a business.

"But it is interesting to note that internationally women- owned businesses far outpace the growth of our male counterparts," she said to applause.

She said her bank was acutely aware of the importance of nurturing local entrepreneurs.

"It is estimated there are about 75 000 small and medium businesses in South Africa and about 53 per cent of them are owned by women," she said.

http://www.news24.com/City_Press/Features/0,,186-1696_1723349,00.html
16:35 July 16, 2007

18/06/2005 20:56 - (SA)

E Cape businesswoman gets hooked on fishing business

WHEN a Port Elizabeth woman opened her fish shop eight years ago, she knew nothing about fish.

Today not only can Bulelwa Qupe identify most types of fish, she owns two fish shops and two companies with fishing licences.

Qupe (46), a mother of four, was recently elected the first vice-president of the South African Women Entrepreneurs' Network at its inaugural national conference in Johannesburg.

After working as a nurse for 15 years, Qupe decided to take charge of her financial destiny and opened a franchised chicken shop in Motherwell in 1995.

Born in Port Elizabeth, Qupe matriculated in the village of Peelton, outside King Williams Town, before studying to become a nursing sister.

Her journey has not always been easy, but she says: "I used the challenges as my propeller to success.

"I also own the harbour-based Buntu Marketing, Exporting and Processing and export fish to Spain."

Qupe's idea for starting her chicken business was based on the belief that "everyone has to eat".

But after two years, her target market changed as many middle-class blacks began moving closer to the city centre.

In 1997, the shrewd businesswoman decided to change her focus to fish.

"But the demand for fish always exceeded supply and I had to decide how I could

guarantee having fish at all times."

And so Qupe's battle to get fishing rights started.

She formed two closed corporations which were awarded hake long-line licences in 2000.

"In that time I developed my skills by completed an aqua-culture certificate at the University of Port Elizabeth," she says.

Qupe runs her business with her husband, Don, and recently bought shares in a fishing boat.

She believes she will have her own boat by next year.

Having travelled extensively for business, Qupe has her finger on the pulse of the industry.

"I travel to keep up with technology. It's always good to compare and learn from other countries."

She says she has opened a second fish shop which is doing well.

"The fish shops are called Aqua Fish 'n Chips.

"Both are part of a brand, with a logo and colours - I used my franchise training to do this."

Running her own successful business is not an 8am to 5pm job.

"We make Sunday a family day to spend time together and also go away together for an annual holiday in January when business is quiet," she says.

Driven by a passion to uplift South Africa's women, Qupe is also chairperson of the South African Women Entrepreneurs' Network in the Nelson Mandela metro and the Eastern Cape.

"There are still many challenges, like access to financing, that face women," she says.

"Generally, women are not skilled and we want to build capacity for them to succeed in the business world."

Qupe's advice to aspiring businesswomen is: "Have passion for what you do, respect your clients, deliver a good product on time, accept criticism and persevere - these are the secrets of the game."

http://www.weekendpost.co.za/main/2005/06/04/Switchon/tf05_04062005.htm

16:49 July 16, 2007

Kerishnie Naicker to debut as TV show host

By Babalwa Shota

FORMER beauty queen Kerishnie Naicker will debut as a television host when the show Salute to Success hits our screens tomorrow.

The new series is about celebrating South African success stories.

It's also a search for the ultimate South African whose story of success and plans for the future best inspires and motivates people.

One of the 36 semi-finalists from around the country is Port Elizabeth's Bulelwa Qupe, a former nursing administrator who now owns a successful fishing business. Qupe is credited as being a fighter for the economic liberation of Eastern Cape women.

She was chosen among hundreds of candidates, and stands a chance to win R100 000 for a worthy project of her choice.

The 13-part series hopes to bring to light the different routes hardworking and talented South Africans have explored to make their dreams come true.

Viewers will hear motivating stories of rags to riches and overcoming odds like disabilities to achieve the almost impossible.

The panel of judges includes businessman Moss Mashishi, Vanya Mangaliso the founder of fashion house the Sun God'dess, TV and radio personality Bob Mabena, and Sunday Times columnist Gwen Gill.

ýSalute to Success starts tomorrow on e.tv at 4:30pm.

<http://www.theherald.co.za/herald/2002/03/28/news/nofish.htm>

17:01 July 16, 2007

PE families in a pickle as Easter fish supplies drop

By Heidi Bantam

EASTERN Cape families could be left without their traditional pickled fish this Easter.

It is understood that local fish shops are running short of hake and maasbanker supplies in the run-up to the holiday.

The shortage is caused by huge demand from high-paying export markets draining Eastern Cape hake resources and sending local prices soaring.

Motherwell fisheries owner Bulelwa Qupe said she was experiencing a "critical problem" with her fish supplies.

Her business, Aqua Fish and Chips, supplies a large part of her local market, but "since August last year, I've been finding it difficult to get hake and maasbanker.

"It seems the suppliers are focusing more on exporting than servicing people locally. Some people are so desperate that they are going to the sea to catch the fish themselves," Mrs Qupe said.

She has written to Environmental Affairs and Tourism Minister Valli Moosa, asking him to "intervene to ensure the local market is looked after".

Major supplier Eyethu Fisheries spokesman Michael Klaas said the majority of good quality hake caught off Eastern Cape shores was being landed at other ports, like Mossel Bay and Cape Town, while exports were also substantial.

A partial solution to the problem would be to award more quotas to Eastern Cape companies and to encourage these companies to process their fish in the Eastern Cape.

"This would bring more fish for the local market into this region," he said.

http://www.theherald.co.za/herald/2002/10/15/news/n02_15102002.htm

17:05 July 16, 2007

Scorpions unit probes E Cape fishing company

By Guy Rogers

THE Scorpions are investigating an Eastern Cape fishing company in connection with concerns about a R3,6-million fishing quota application.

This was confirmed yesterday by marine and coastal management.

Spokesman Horst Kleinschmidt said the department had launched a simultaneous investigation into the same case that could end in criminal charges being laid if proof of fraud was revealed.

The company concerned is called Mazidlekaya Fishing CC. Bulelwa Qupe, a prominent Port Elizabeth businesswoman, who was this week honoured with an award from the department of trade and industry, is a co-director of the company and a major shareholder with 50 per cent of the shares.

It is understood that concerns centre on the relationship between another Mazidlekaya shareholder and a former assistant to MCM's chief director.

Asked for confirmation on this, Mr Kleinschmidt said: "This is the subject matter of investigation."

The Herald's information is that Mazidlekaya applied for quotas in 1998 and 1999 but was turned down. In 2000, one Port Elizabeth shareholder was removed by a court order and his shares were redistributed. A Western Cape schoolteacher was appointed in his place in 2000 and the situation changed dramatically to the extent that in 2001 the company was awarded a 33-ton long-line hake quota and in 2002 it was successful in its application for a four-year 65-ton or 65 000kg quota. With hake selling at R14 a kilogram, the 2002 award is worth R910 000 a year, adding up to R3 640 000 over four years.

The former assistant to the chief director, apparently the brother of the schoolteacher, has since left MCM and is now a senior official with DTI in Pretoria.

Mrs Qupe, 43, featured in the media last week as a result of the DTI award, which is aimed at enhancing the accessibility of technology to women in business. She said in an interview with The Herald's women's supplement, La Femme, that she owned Aqua Fish and Chips in Motherwell as well as long-line fishing company Ezabantu Fishing, which in turn owns five per cent shares of Cape Town fishing giant Lusitania. The Herald's source slammed the allocation, which he charged sent out "completely the wrong message".

"It seems to be that if you have a contact in government you can get anything and do anything. An investigation by the Scorpions is all very well, but the allocation should not have happened in the first place and meantime this company can fish and sell the quota. What happened as well to the mandate that these quotas were going to go to the poor people who really need and deserve them – the fishermen themselves?"

Mr Kleinschmidt said that, although he could confirm the matter was being investigated by the Scorpions, he was not able to comment on details in this regard.

In a separate probe, however, "the department is investigating the information contained in the application form for fishing rights submitted by Mazidlekaya." Approached for comment, Mrs Qupe said she did not own 50 per cent shares in

Mazidlekaya although she did own “a portion”.

A call to the Registrar of Companies confirmed our information that this portion is in fact 50 per cent.

She referred further questions to a Cape Town spokesman and put the phone down when The Herald tried to ask her about the Western Cape shareholder with the brother in MCM and DTI.

http://www.theherald.co.za/herald/2002/11/15/news/n22_15112002.htm

17:07 July 16, 2007

Settlement reached on fishing quotas

By Guy Rogers

A FLEDGLING Eastern Cape fishing company has emerged from a clash with Western Cape giant Lusitania with an out-of-court settlement that the company believes spells good news for black empowerment.

Following a first-time allocation of 33,9 tons of hake in the long-line sector, Mazidlekaya entered an agreement in September 2000 with Lusitania. The deal rested on the combined value of the quotas and the use of Lusitania’s vessels to catch these quotas.

Mazidlekaya argued that it also hinged on the stipulation that skills should be transferred – and that this stipulation was not met.

Lusitania opposed this position and the smaller company’s move to extricate itself from the deal, and the dispute culminated in an arbitration settlement last week in Cape Town.

In terms of the settlement, the agreement was cancelled and Lusitania paid all legal costs incurred in the dispute.

Approached for comment yesterday, Mazidlekaya’s majority shareholder, Port Elizabeth businesswoman Bulelewa Qupe, said she was pleased about the outcome of the dispute and now just wanted to get on with her quest to grow the company.

She said that while she and her team had become unhappy in the early stages of the deal, they had stayed with it out of loyalty to their partner, hoping that their concerns would be dealt with.

In January this year they were awarded a further 65 tons, but their differences were still unresolved and they had moved to extricate themselves from the deal.

Mrs Qupe said the stipulation on skills transfer was in line with Marine and Coastal Management policy that the quotas allocated should not become “paper quotas” and that they should be used to grow the capability of the emerging companies.

“The thinking is that with the allocation of the quotas the government has done its bit, and now the players must do their bit as well.”

The judgment would hopefully increase the confidence of emerging companies that they could fight successfully to protect their rights, she said.

Welcoming the outcome of the dispute, Eastern Cape Fishing Forum secretary Boya Chetty said companies with the necessary finance and infrastructure

should assist fishing industry SMMEs “by giving them a fair deal”.

“The new quota holders want to get involved directly in the industry and not to be paper quota holders. They depend on the companies that have been privileged in the past.”

Fishing industry consultant Roy Ventura, who was with Lusitania at the time of the deal reached with Mazidlekhaya, emphasised that the arbitrators had delivered no judgment on the issue.

“We simply heard (Mrs Qupe’s) testimony and thought: ‘This is not the kind of partner we would like anyway. We don’t want anything to do with these guys.’ ”

http://www.theherald.co.za/herald/2004/11/15/biz/02_15112004.htm

17:09 July 16, 2007

Eastern Cape businesswomen put on road to success

By Dineo Matomela

EMERGING businesswomen from across the Eastern Cape were given tips on how best to become successful entrepreneurs at a conference in East London last week.

At a membership drive organised by the South African Women’s Entrepreneurs Network, during the organisation’s Eastern Cape Open Day, budding businesswomen were given advice on how to maintain a good track record with taxes, apply for bank loans and register their businesses.

About 100 women guests from various Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises in the province attended.

Nelson Mandela Metro Sawen head Bulelwa Qupe said women in business deserved a chance to be schooled and be given advice on growing their businesses.

She said: “ Women are serious about business but they are lagging behind. We need to have more information seminars at which we can empower businesswomen.”

Speakers at the function were representatives of Absa, the Companies and Intellectual Property Registration Office, South African Revenue Services and the department of trade and industry.

The next Sawen workshop will take place in the O R Tambo District Municipality in February.

http://www.theherald.co.za/herald/2005/05/13/biz/02_13052005.htm

17:11 July 16, 2007

Bulelwa angling to help women get ahead in life

Business Reporter

A PORT Elizabeth woman who exports fish products to Spain has been elected the first vice-chairman of the SA Women Entrepreneurs Network at its inaugural

national conference and annual meeting, which ended at Kempton Park on Wednesday.

Bulelwa Qupe, the owner of Port Elizabeth harbour-based Buntu Marketing, Exporting and Processing, and two fish shops, one at Njoli Square and the other in Motherwell, led a 94-woman delegation from the Eastern Cape to the conference.

Qupe, who is driven by a passion to uplift the women of South Africa, is the chairman of both the organisation's branches in the Eastern Cape.

She says her role as national vice-chairman of the organisation is to ensure that women did not get left behind in the business world.

"I will also be lobbying the various government departments to make it easier for women to approach government with their problems through the entrepreneurs network," she said.

http://www.theherald.co.za/herald/2005/07/27/news/n02_27072005.htm

17:13 July 16, 2007

Women hooked on fish farming

By Tabelo Timse

FISH farming, or aquaculture, is growing internationally and the Eastern Cape is catching on fast.

The Eastern Cape chairman of the South African Women's Entrepreneurs Network, Bulelwa Qupe, said: "Provinces such as the Western Cape and KwaZulu Natal have started various projects which are proving to be sustainable. The Eastern Cape is also becoming a force to be reckoned with, especially in the O R Tambo district (in the Transkei)."

She said access to land was a major challenge.

About 25 people, 15 of them women, attended a course on aquaculture production and management at Stellenbosch University last month .

Three of the women were from the Eastern Cape. "We are looking to have more representation next time, especially from the metro," said Qupe. The course was funded by Technology for Women in Business.

The entrepreneurs learned about pond construction, water quality, aquaculture economics and other topics. The programme was run by Twib, Stellenbosch and Israel Consultants.

Qupe said fish farming required lot of hard work and passion. As with any business, there were processes that needed to be followed.

"Fish farming does not necessarily mean you have to be in the rural areas or close to the sea – people in urban areas can also be involved as some fish require only a pond."

She said types of fish farming included ornamental fishes like the koi, which has a huge market in the Far East, with fish selling at between R60 and R3 000 each. Other types included tilapia, which was tricky to farm with as it needed 14 hours of daylight and was sensitive to temperature.

Qupe said another opportunity which was slowly gaining momentum was perlemoen farming.

This type of farming would involve breeding perlemoen and selling it to the government. She said the metro could also take advantage of seaweed collecting. Licence application forms for seaweed production can be picked up at the Helenvale resources centre before Friday.

http://www.theherald.co.za/herald/2005/08/09/news/n15_09082005.htm

17:16 July 16, 2007

Climbing the steep corporate ladder

By Tabela Timse

ALTHOUGH many opportunities have opened up for women in the workplace, there are still many challenges they have to overcome.

Eastern Cape Premier Nosimo Balindlela says women have made progress in terms of improving the economic life in a short space of time.

They are taking up senior positions such as directors-general and district managers and they have taken the corporate world by storm.

However, she said: "Women are lonely at the top; we as women need to create spaces so that other women can also join, and we need supportive structures."

She said women should also bring down the barriers that are preventing them from moving up.

"It is high time we realise that women are not tokens, women are in top positions because they have worked hard, they deserve to be there just like their male counterparts."

As the first female premier, Balindlela admitted there were difficulties at first, but she realised that she needed to develop a partnership with men.

"In terms of leadership the province is dominated by males, but in terms of population there are more women than men."

Balancing work and family is not easy for the premier, but she says, as she is an expert at multi-tasking, she makes sure she has time for her family.

"I am very good at delegating. I would call my husband to join me at a certain function; after that I would call a director-general of a department and schedule a meeting. In between I would ask for coffee and then make calls to my sister to check on a relative," she said.

Urmila Soni, an attorney who has her own law firm, said when she entered the legal field, she was faced with two major challenges.

"The first, being a woman, was a huge disadvantage and the other, being black. To prove myself, I took the attitude that I would have to render a service which was par excellence and build up a practice where clients preferred to deal with me purely based on service."

This was a hard road and till today some prejudices are still being felt, she said.

"The perception that women cannot be as hard and business-like as their male counterparts when it comes to business decisions is slowly but surely being changed."

Standard Bank Eastern Cape, director Hannah Mathuso Sadiki said women in the corporate field needed to accept that they brought with them an emotional competency that did not exist in a lot of companies.

“We don’t have to be ‘macho’ to be real bosses we can still be feminine about it,” she maintained.

In order to overcome these challenges, women had to support each other and get rid of the pull-down syndrome. “Secondly, we need to reflect our emotions as men do, and not apologise for them,” said Sadiki.

She said although there were more women in the boardroom, they were paid less than men.

Director-general in provincial and local government Lindiwe Msengana-Ndlela, said challenges women faced in SA were inextricably linked to the level of poverty and under-development.

Msengana-Ndlela said it was important that women led different collectives within society and continued to do that with passion and enjoyment, whilst maintaining the appropriate standards of conduct, behaviour and professionalism.

“Empowerment of women has to start at the early and formative stages of life. I think it is equally important that, whilst we look at the current generation of women, we focus on future generations.”

Nickie Turner, who was rated SA’s top state advocate and High Court prosecutor, said she felt that despite the fact that women were celebrated today, too few women had progressed.

A large proportion of women remained subject to abuse, she said.

Turner, who is based in Grahamstown, said as a woman she had encountered little difficulty in her working environment.

“I think a positive attitude towards life and its challenges ensures a smoother ride on the way up.”

Eastern Cape chairman of the SA Women Entrepreneurs’ Network, Bulelwa Qupe, said the main business challenge facing women was access to finance and a huge business skills gap.

“Women are having problems in accessing land and ownership of land,” Qupe said.

She said another concern was more women were agreeing to be used as fronts for individuals and companies.

“Women allow themselves to be used as fronts without looking at long-term effects because at the end they will be left with nothing.”

The Rev Maureen Lamb said to her the day meant that women had remained strong through trials and tribulations to bring South Africa to freedom.

She said in every sphere of life people, male or female, faced challenges which they needed to handle with steadfastness and integrity.

NADINE GORDIMER

http://www.mg.co.za/articledirect.aspx?articleid=165803&area=%2farchives%2farchives__print_edition%2f

11:15 July 30, 2007

Archives : Print Edition

Musings of a 'realistic optimist'

04 Feb 2000 00:00

Lionel Abrahams **LIVING IN HOPE AND HISTORY: NOTES FROM OUR CENTURY** by Nadine Gordimer (Bloomsbury) This is a gathering of Nadine Gordimer's essays: reflections, reviews, tributes, conference papers, reports, letters and addresses to the United Nations, the Nobel Prize audience and other eminent bodies - the earliest from 1959 but most from the Eighties and Nineties. In a letter to the Japanese novelist Kenzaburo Oe, who looks to her for "a word of hope", she describes herself as "only a realistic optimist" and anticipates the present volume thus: "So I am putting together a modest book of some of the non-fiction pieces I've written, a reflection of how I've looked at this century I've lived in." These writings - tide-marks of her extending consciousness of contemporary conditions, issues, literature and opinions - are distinguished by the breadth and urgency of her concerns, the compass and depth of her information, and the frequently penetrating eloquence of her impassioned rhetoric. The collection brings forcibly home how singular and prodigious a presence she has grown into on South Africa's (and doubtless the world's) intellectual stage. Her comment on Leopold Sedar Senghor's career - "It is fascinating to follow this extraordinary adventure of the human spirit" - can fairly be applied to her own. I found the experience of reading this book by turns enthralling, illuminating, rousing and challenging, yet, at certain points, dismaying. Her topics - some of them informed interests, some of them profound concerns - range from the status of the artist, to Aids, to the fatwa on Salman Rushdie and the menace of religious fanaticism, to TV's banalisation of violence, to the corruption of language, to the implications of economic and cultural globalisation, to sexual liberation, to literacy, to the prospects for literary translation and publishing in Africa, to the Internet, to the imperatives of poverty and the paradoxes of 20th-century technological advancement. To quote some of her characteristic illuminations and challenges: "It is detachment that sins against life." "For to be illiterate is ... to spend one's life imprisoned between the walls of one-dimensional experience." "... literature has its implicit and unalterable social role." "What alienates the Writer from the State is that the State - any State - is always certain it is right." "... to discover the conditions of life. That is what the Writer's imagination seeks to do everywhere; and ... it is generally not what the State would have from the Writer." "Perhaps there is no other way of reaching some understanding of being than through art?" "Who, anywhere in the world, translates the raw material of the human condition, which millions experience but

for which millions have no words?" - in protest against the "gagging" of almost all our known black writers as "named communists", in 1966. Her two most recurrent themes are literature and politics. And then the inter-relationship between the two, particularly as it implicates morality, responsibility, truth, justice, imagination, individuality and freedom. Both main themes afford her occasions for celebration. She is ever magnanimously ready with praises honouring heroes of various kinds. She writes about writers with an enthusiasm that lifts her encomiums above mere cool criticism. Even in the case of Roland Barthes, where her main intention is to point out the limited applicability of his theory of reading, specifically in the socio-economic context of Africa, she first invokes the intellectual excitement of encountering his ideas. Yet the oceanic breadth of her reading ensures that her choice of favourites for appreciative exploration never lacks discrimination. She writes here with a rich intensity of vision on the achievements of Senghor, Gunter Grass, Naguib Mahfouz and the Austro-Hungarian novelist Joseph Roth. Among the many others to whom she more fleetingly makes obeisance are Blake, Balzac, Dostoevsky, Chekhov, Yeats, Proust, Kafka, Camus, Borges, Kundera, Achebe, Mphahlele, Heaney and Serote. The urgency with which she writes on politics is that of commitment, and her political commitment colours her literary comment as well as everything else in this volume. She would say illuminates, holding her politics to be the chief expression of her moral sense. In 1959 she writes, "... my opposition to apartheid is compounded not only of a sense of justice, but also out of a personal, selfish, and extreme distaste for having the choice of my friends dictated to me ..." Later, she seeks the source of Beyers Naude's political conversion in: "Sense of justice, that spirit-level indicator, origin unknown?" And addressing students at a Wits graduation ceremony, she tells them: "The sense of the rights of human existence is there inside you ... - a collective conscience painfully arrived at ..." and warns them against "that vapid death-rattle: Oh, when I was a student I used to get steamed-up about things". "... painfully arrived at ..." Passages I have quoted will already have suggested that keeping faith with her commitment, her sense of justice, her conscience, has not been, for Nadine Gordimer, a simple, easy matter. Indeed, she seems to have had to wage her own struggle within the Struggle. The most naked indication is the following sentence from her essay on Roth: "It troubles me that the writers whom I tend to admire most - Roth, Kundera, Milosz, Levi, Kis - are those who reject, out of their own experience, the Left to which I remain committed in hope of its evolution." How easy, how safe, to have kept such a predicament secret! This inner struggle, however, has in no visible way hampered her wholehearted service to her commitment. Politics receives the main emphasis in the longest section of the volume. She tackles apartheid, analyses its corruptive moral legacy, and assesses its politics of censorship; she glorifies the rally to welcome Walter Sisulu and others on their release from prison; she eulogises Nelson Mandela, celebrates the 1994 election, then critically reviews the first year; she pauses to endorse, with an added punch of wit, the African National Congress's damnation of Mangosuthu Buthelezi; she contrasts disappointing race relations in the United States with the hopeful ones in South Africa, presses the United Nations to action on poverty, et

cetera. Political matters engage her beyond that section - and sometimes contentiously, as on the role of communism, for one, in her survey of the 20th century. But politics is inseparable from contention, and by her lights, all her political acts of writing are functions of realism, conscience and human responsibility. With so much justified and so much to admire, then, why am I occasionally dismayed? Apart from certain responses to being made aware of my relative ignorance, obtuseness or callousness, it is that I feel flickers of apprehension about the direction a line of thought seems to be tending in. For example, when Gordimer asserts in an address: "I can speak of literature and politics, pass from one to the other in one breath ... because the former ... is created inescapably within the destined context of politics" (her emphasis) - I have to ask, if the condition is indeed ineluctable, why is there a need to insist on it? What's the agenda? And when, citing this as evidence of Mahfouz's essential quality of "Wisdom", she quotes his major character, Kamal - "a struggle towards truth aiming at the good of mankind as a whole" - I uncomfortably quibble: What kind of truth is it that is imbued with an aim? I feel slightly chilled on reading: "It is for the average white to discover, earn and affirm a valid identity in a society with a black majority ... Groups of extremists who cannot adjust will die out with the present generation, I believe." I am not comforted by her explanation, in 1997, of destructive union actions, trashings on campuses, taxi violence, et cetera: "...people ... lose the faculty of using the law when, at last, such recourse is open to them". (Her emphasis.) In like vein comes: "The tactics of a desperate liberation struggle are all that many people know how to employ." And at "Apartheid was an avatar of Nazism. The theories of racial superiority and most of the repulsive and cruel ways of implementing them were the same in both regimes", I question "most": how do we tally the one called the final solution? There are other discomposing passages, but none more so than: "Senghor has been accused of not condemning, in his play, Chaka's brutality, but his interpretation of Chaka's killing of his beloved wife may also be understood as symbolic of the terrible ultimate sacrifice of all that is personal demanded by a struggle for freedom." (Her emphasis.) But after all, Gordimer knows the world and yearns for "the good of mankind as a whole", so perhaps my misgivings amount only to waves of vertigo that affect me when I look down out of my ivory tower. (A pity that the publishers have not done a due job in respect of typos and adequate apparatus. Inter alia, we find - in the contents list! - "Madel" for "Mandela", while "1988" at the end of an essay which refers to "1988 a decade ago" is one of too few attempts to indicate the occasions of these historically orientated papers.)

http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=3015&art_id=vn20061205022943436C598406

11:27 July 30, 2007

Author's defamation case: judgment reserved

December 05 2006 at 10:26AM

By Vusumuzi Ka Nzapheza

Judgment has been reserved in the Cape High Court in the R300 000 defamation claim of author Ronald Suresh Roberts against South Africa's biggest newspaper, the Sunday Times.

Roberts is seeking damages from the paper's owners, Johncom Media Investment Limited, for the October 2004 article headlined "The Unlikeable Mr Roberts".

On Monday, his lawyer, Derek Mitchell, presented his closing argument.

'Created a conflict of interest for Deneys Reitz'

Mitchell said the article had appeared in the midst of the much-publicised spat between Roberts and Nobel literature laureate Nadine Gordimer over a biography he had penned of her. When the two were unable to reconcile differences over the book, Gordimer refused to authorise it.

"I have difficulty understanding why the Sunday Times was defensive of Gordimer. The contract gave her the right to withdraw the authorisation of the biography, but not the right to stop the publication of the book," Mitchell said.

The article claimed Roberts "was told to leave" Deneys Reitz law firm in 1994 "when it was found he'd been making private business arrangements that created a conflict of interest for Deneys Reitz".

Roberts told freelance journalist Chris Barron, who wrote the article, that he left because he was "bored".

Johncom counsel Wim Trengove, SC, said for Barron to write that Roberts was asked to leave Deneys Reitz was not defamatory.

'His actions had been overzealous, laughable and over-the-top'

He said, according to the "Bogoshi judgment", it was "reasonable" for the Sunday Times to publish the article because it was in the public interest and the paper had not been negligent.

The 1998 National Media Limited and Others vs Bogoshi judgment spells out that if a newspaper can show it took reasonable precautions to establish the accuracy of its report, and provided it was in the public interest, it wasn't defamatory.

Trengove said Roberts ought to have taken as a compliment the article's contention that he had "relentlessly pursued the SABC".

"Mr Roberts has told the court that, in retrospect, his actions had been overzealous, laughable and over-the-top when he pursued the SABC. The statement, therefore, is true as it stands in the article," Trengove said.

He said Roberts was a public figure who engaged in robust public debates.

"Roberts had leaked to the media embarrassing tit-bits about Nadine Gordimer in his war against her. He launched a vicious attack against author William Mervyn Gumede, accusing him of being a servant of Livingstone. He accused Tony Leon's father, Judge Leon, of being a hanging judge. Oversensitivity does not require legal protection, especially when you engage in robust debates," Trengove said.

http://www.iol.co.za/general/news/newsprint.php?art_id=nw20070402002306359C429665&sf=

11:29 July 30, 2007

Gordimer receives highest French award

By Celean Jacobson

Nobel laureate for literature Nadine Gordimer, noted for her work about the inhumanity of apartheid, has become one of just a few South Africans to receive France's highest award, the Legion of Honour.

Gordimer was awarded the decorative medal on Saturday at a ceremony at the Pretoria home of Denis Pietton, the French ambassador in South Africa.

Pietton said France wanted to pay homage to a "great writer" whose "work shines throughout the world".

'I accept with great gratitude and humility'

"By making you an Officer of the Legion of Honour, we also wish to pay tribute to a symbolic figure of the fight against apartheid, that absurd and terrible system that sought, unrealistically to separate races," he said.

Gordimer, 83, who is also a Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations Development Programme, was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature in 1991. Several of her novels were once banned in her own country.

The author said she was "overwhelmed" by the honour from France. She expressed her love for French literature and writing and spoke about the inspiration she drew from authors such as Marcel Proust and Jean-Paul Satre.

"I accept with great gratitude and humility," she said.

Napoleon created the legion in 1802 to honour exceptional service to France, including artistic and intellectual contributions.

Nobel peace laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu, former education minister Kader Asmal, singer Miriam Makeba and writer Andre Brink are among the handful of South Africans who have also received the prestigious award.

"As South Africans we can be proud of Nadine," said acclaimed South African writer Mongane Wally Serote at the ceremony. "We are very happy that her talent as a writer kept South Africa on the world map."

"She keeps a sharp focus on human relations in her writing that makes her work timeless," he said.

Born in the mining town of Springs, east of Johannesburg, Gordimer began to write at the age of nine. Her first short story was published in a South African magazine when she was 15.

Regarded as the doyenne of South African literature, she was an ardent opponent of apartheid and spoke out against racial segregation and censorship in the country.

Pietton said Gordimer's work "deeply marked by the situation in South Africa" and "demonstrated the superiority of human feelings over legalised segregation".

Gordimer is known for books such as her first novel *The Lying Days*, *July's People* and *The Conservationist*, joint winner of the Booker Prize.

She also edited *Telling Tales* an anthology for Aids charities, featuring Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Margaret Atwood, John Updike, Susan Sontag, Hanif Kureishi and Jose Saramago.

Her latest book *Get A Life* was published in 2006 and *Beethoven Was One Sixteenth Black*, a collection of stories, is to be published later this year. - Sapa-AP

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http://www.news24.com/News24/South_Africa/News/0,9294,2-7-

1442_2016375,00.html

17:54 July 30, 2007

'Whites are finished'

19/10/2006 12:45 - (SA)

Johannesburg - Their prose did much to expose the moral bankruptcy of apartheid to the outside world but the literary elite of white South Africa has now turned ferociously on the Rainbow Nation's new rulers.

Following the departure of Nobel laureate JM Coetzee to Australia, authors such as Andre P Brink, Rian Malan and Christopher Hope have delivered searing indictments of the state of the nation, sickened by what they see as an inexorable decline towards corruption and lawlessness.

Brink, whose novels such as *A Dry White Season* brought him regular opprobrium from the apartheid rulers, has also burnt his bridges with their replacements in the corridors of power.

He has described two cabinet members - Health Minister Manto Tsabalala-Msimang and Safety Minister Charles Nqokula - as "monsters", despairing at what he regards as indifference to the rising tide of crime.

Brink acknowledged to AFP that crime has long been a problem but he said the situation has now reached breaking point.

'A reason for despair'

"The cumulative effect has just reached a point where one cannot take any more, and where the attitude of the authorities goes beyond all acceptable limits," he said.

"The attitude of Nqokula (who told parliament that those "whingeing" about crime should emigrate) has made it clear that the government simply does not take it seriously enough and, in fact, is in itself reason for despair."

Brink was also outraged at the decision of a number of senior ANC officials, including the speaker of parliament, to give former chief whip Tony Yengeni a hero's send-off when he went to jail to serve a corruption sentence.

"Faced with such blatant disregard for the law, and for the suffering of the people, we now have to speak out. To remain silent, would make us complicit with evil."

Malan's memoir of growing up in the apartheid, *My Traitor's Heart*, painted a devastating picture of the brutalities of the regime and, only two years ago, he was hailing the first country as a veritable "paradise".

Sliding towards decay

But in the latest edition of Britain's *The Spectator* magazine, Malan concluded the country was now sliding towards decay.

"We thought our table was fairly solid and that we would sit at it indefinitely, quaffing that old Rainbow Nation Ambrosia," he wrote.

"Now, almost overnight, we have come to the dismaying realisation that much around us is rotten."

Malan identified what he calls the purging of whites from the ranks of civil service as the root cause of the decay.

"There won't be a civil war. Whites are finished. According to a recent study, one in six of us has left since the ANC took over and those who remain know their place."

Malan and Brink insist they will not be driven out of their native land.

Coetzee however has already voted with his feet, becoming an Australian citizen earlier this year.

The famously taciturn author, a two-times winner of the Booker prize, has not gone into detail about his reasons for setting up a new home in Adelaide.

But in a rare interview with Australian television after his move, Coetzee said: "Leaving a country is, in some respects, like the break-up of a marriage. It is an intimate matter."

Feeling of helplessness

Coetzee's 1999 masterpiece *Disgrace* centres around the rape of a white academic's daughter, speaking to the fears of many about sexual violence.

Writing about ANC deputy president Jacob Zuma's recent rape trial, Hope despaired at the "general feeling of helplessness in the face of the seemingly insatiable energy in and among South Africans for violence in all forms."

Hope's 1981 satirical debut novel, *A Separate Development*, was banned in South Africa. He now lives in self-imposed exile in France.

Nadine Gordimer, another Nobel laureate who has written extensively about the pre and post-apartheid eras, said it was simplistic to reject the new South Africa wholesale.

"My own view is complex and I really prefer to write them down," she told AFP.

"There are things that are remarkably good and things that are very, very worrying."

http://www.news24.com/News24/South_Africa/News/0,,2-7-1442_2022074,00.html

12:55 July 30, 2007

Gordimer slightly hurt in attack

28/10/2006 23:07 - (SA)

Johannesburg - Author Nadine Gordimer was attacked and robbed in her Johannesburg home on Thursday, but she did not suffer serious injuries, police said on Saturday.

The 82-year old Nobel laureate was "slightly hurt, but did not suffer any major injuries", police spokesperson Sanku Tsunke told AFP.

"Apparently, three men gained access into her house. They held the domestic worker as well as Nadine Gordimer," Tsunke explained.

"When the suspects wanted to take the jewellery and especially her wedding ring... that's when one of the suspects assaulted her," Tsunke added.

"She was locked in a storeroom together with her domestic worker," the spokesperson said.

The men, who entered the house through the kitchen door, stole money and jewellery and before "the domestic worker managed to press the panic button and they fled", Tsunke said.

The police spokesperson said that investigations were "underway".

Gordimer, a leading anti-apartheid figure, won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1991.

Criticism over crime

During the past few months, several prominent white South African writers have accused the government of failing to act on crime and corruption, although Gordimer did not clearly join them, warning against rejecting the new South Africa wholesale.

Novelist Andre Brink notably described two cabinet members - Health Minister Manto Tsabalala-Msimang and Safety Minister Charles Nqokula - as "monsters".

"The cumulative effect has just reached a point where one cannot take any more, and where the attitude of the authorities goes beyond all acceptable limits," Brink told AFP on October 19.

But Gordimer, who has written extensively about the pre and post-apartheid eras, told AFP she felt it was important to retain a sense of context.

"My own views are complex and I really prefer to write them down," she said.

"There are things that are remarkably good and things that are very, very worrying."

Gordimer is due to award Nelson Mandela Amnesty International's highest prize on Wednesday.

http://www.news24.com/News24/Columnists/Marianne_Thamm/0,,2-1630-2147_2137907,00.html

18:02 July 30, 2007

The native who caused trouble

28/06/2007 09:59 - (SA)

Marianne Thamm

It is a rare occurrence that the launch of a book in South Africa makes it onto the SABC's prime time news slot.

We are not a nation of readers and news about authors, their books or their subjects is usually consigned to the back pages of the "lifestyle" sections of popular newspapers and magazines.

On TV, books only make it (often unread) onto Noleen Moholwana-Sanqu's 3-Talk, usually to be giggled and glossed over in passing.

But there it was, a longish but disjointed clip on the 19:00 bulletin about the launch of Ronald Suresh Roberts' authorised biography of President Thabo Mbeki, *Fit to Govern - The Native Intelligence of Thabo Mbeki*, (STE publishers R150) that took place in Pretoria recently.

Embedded presidential reporter, Miranda Strydom, struggled to pin the garrulous Mr Roberts to a suitable sound bite. So, instead we got a voiceover about the book and its importance in understanding the president's intellectual tradition.

Unlike Nadine Gordimer, subject of Suresh Roberts' previous first-authorised-then-unauthorised-biography, *No Cold Kitchen*, the president attended this launch and actually signed copies of the book. We can take it then that President Mbeki fully endorses the work and all it represents. After all, his office did exert some influence in getting Absa to contribute a lovely R1.4m to the project.

What biographers should do

I bought *Fit to Govern* this week. It wasn't easy. After wandering around my local bookshop looking for it in the "New Arrivals" and "African Non-Fiction" sections, an assistant informed me that "we're not allowed to stock it". The publishers have apparently done a deal with CNA, presumably so that larger numbers of ordinary South Africans might have access to it.

Now, while I have never met and hold no candle for Ronald Suresh Roberts, I do vicariously enjoy the frisson he brings to public debate. Since his arrival in South Africa in 1994 as a coordinator for a contingent of international monitors who had come to observe the elections, Roberts has managed to generate a considerable amount of controversy and alienate a significant number of influential people

including Kader Asmal, Ken Owen and most famously, of course, Nobel Prize winner, Nadine Gordimer.

I recently finished his 2005, weighty biography of Gordimer and actually found it highly readable. Roberts is passionate about and understands his subject. Apart from that, he is also an engaging, intelligent writer even if he can't resist inserting himself into the text.

And while the biography may have needed an edit, was undisciplined at times and unravelled entirely towards the end, it did what good biographies should do; take you back to work of the author with a renewed sense of understanding and enthusiasm. Also I did not come away from No Cold Kitchen thinking anything less of Gordimer.

On the defensive

Fit to Govern - The Native Intelligence of Thabo Mbeki is not exactly a biography, it is more an attempt to present an intellectual portrait of the president outside of the one rendered by what Roberts views as a flawed, essentially racist and "colonial" media.

Roberts asserts that South African media is immature and has contempt for black people and black intellectuals (like himself) in particular. And it is because of this contempt, he says, that the media has such contradictory and inconsistent views on Mbeki who has been labelled variously as "an enigma", "a Stalinist", "aloof", "a dictator" and an "imperial President".

Roberts assumes the average reader (who shops at CNA) will be familiar with a range of philosophical and political theories that he relies on to build on or justify various arguments, some more compelling than others. Ultimately though, these references serve more to illuminate Robert Suresh Roberts' intellectual influences rather than Thabo Mbeki's.

In the book, Roberts also defends some of Mbeki's most controversial policies and actions including his views on HIV/Aids, multi-party democracy and Zimbabwe.

There is an unfortunate defensive and accusatory tone that permeates the entire work and that begins at the start with a quote from Mbeki who predicts, "the representatives of the colonial 'mother' will be waiting to do everything possible to discredit the book". This is followed almost immediately by an attack on the media by Roberts and from there the punches roll, thick and fast.

"Colonials", "settlers" and "liberals" all come in for a drubbing, which detracts somewhat from the stated intention of the book - a supposed exploration of the president's "Native intelligence".

Thabo Mbeki is a prolific writer and if you want to know what he thinks without using Ronald Suresh Roberts as a filter, read his weekly online newsletter or two collections of his writings, *Africa The Time Has Come* published in 1999 and *Africa Define Yourself* published in 2002.

That said, *Fit To Govern* offers an alternative angry, intelligent, provocative, intriguing and at times revisionist view of one of the most influential African leaders of our time.

Send your comments to Marianne

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http://www.mg.co.za/articlePage.aspx?articleid=288746&area=/breaking_news/breaking_news__national/

18:18 July 30, 2007

Gordimer tells of sorrow for men who robbed her

Johannesburg, South Africa

03 November 2006 08:29

As an 82-year-old woman confronted by four fit young men out to rob her Johannesburg home, Nadine Gordimer might have been paralysed by terror.

But Gordimer won a Nobel Prize for Literature in 1991 for her insights into South Africa's racial and economic divides. So as the thieves grabbed the author and her 66-year-old domestic worker she was overcome more by sympathy than fear. "One grabbed me and had his arm across me. It was a muscular, smooth arm and I thought, 'Shouldn't there be a better use for these hands, this arm, than robbing an old woman?' What a waste of four young men. They should have jobs," she said.

Gordimer handed over cash and car keys but balked at surrendering the wedding ring from her husband, Reinhold Cassirer, who died five years ago. "He pulled off my ring. He held me tight, against his chest. I was very close to his face and could see he had very little beard. He didn't shave often. I would put his age at 18 to 22," she said.

The women were locked in a store room. They were released after about 30 minutes by security guards.

A week later Gordimer, a member of the ruling African National Congress,

viewed the incident from the other side. The robbers, she said, are products of a society grappling with its past. "I know that South Africa has a terrible problem with crime, with violent crime. But I don't think the answer is more police. I think we must look at the reasons behind the crime. There are young people in poverty without opportunities. They need education, training and employment.

"South Africa needs a huge jobs programme ... that will prevent youth from turning to crime," she said. - Guardian Unlimited © Guardian Newspapers Limited 2006

http://www.mg.co.za/articledirect.aspx?articleid=154342&area=%2farchives%2farchives__print_edition%2f

18:19 July 30, 2007

Actually, the censors were right about Gordimer

26 Apr 2001 00:00

Now that the censors have retreated, albeit temporarily I suspect, and Nadine Gordimer is rehabilitated, it is important to focus upon an issue that was obscured by all the righteous indignation surrounding the opprobrium heaped upon our noble laureate's head. The abiding irony is that the censors were right, for the wrong reasons. Gordimer is not an appropriate author to inflict upon learners (or upon anyone else for that matter). Not because she is racist it is much worse than that: she is boring and pretentious. And you don't have to take my word for it. Gordimer is reported as having claimed, "[July's People] has been understood all over the world ... as a revelation of the condemnation of the ways racism and colonialism distorted human relations under apartheid. If the selectors ... are looking for moral lessons few could be more telling than the situation in this novel." Apart from the unmitigated hubris, literature is here reduced to hollow homily and pious pontification. On Gordimer's own admission, her text is now irrelevant. Oscar Wilde stated that "there is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book, a book is either well written or it is badly written". It is indeed a tedious thing to plough through Gordimer's turgid prose and vacuous sermonising (and I have had the joy of teaching her texts). Utterly bereft of any redeeming aesthetic value, Gordimer's books are badly written. Laurence Berman, Department of English, Unisa Judge Dread? Zebulon Dread's take on the Klein Karoo Nasionale Kunstefees ("Arts festival or Boerfest", Friday, April 20 to 25) is a unique and pertinent look at the kultuur-en-kak that resounds across Oudtshoorn each April and nogal, as the dreaded Zabalon would say "uit die kaffir se vuil bek"! I'm always delighted by his uncompromising bloodletting anarchy; mine is dull by comparison. Hotnotsgod? Don't lose yours! Pieter-Dirk Uys, Darling Nice one, Zebulon. I was there too and Zebulon didn't tell a single lie. And that's coming from some Afrikaans guy. We bow to thee, O black hole balancing out 10 000 ooms and tannies. Toast Coetzer The hate speech in Zebulon Dread's article is both alarming and sad to read. The "article" is not only

a slap in the face of your liberal Afrikaans readership, but is also annoying to other readers. If I would like to read this kind of stuff I would buy MAD magazine. It is also disappointing that you have decided not to publish "The week that was" anymore. Any weekly newspaper/magazine of repute (the Economist, etc) has such a feature. And what has made Robert Kirby decide to be a moralising firebrand instead of the brilliant satirist he always was? Pierre du Bois, Stellenbosch A perilous hope That so many Africans, particularly black Africans, are risking their very lives traversing a desert and a treacherous sea lane, all in the hope of a better life in Europe ("The dream of a better life", April 20 to 25), is a shameful indicator of the abysmal state of affairs in most of the fabled Dark Continent. Surely it is a historical irony that black slaves were once marched across this same desert by Arab slave dealers and now some Arabs are involved in helping black persons, who are voluntarily taking on the desert, to get to Europe across the straits of Gibraltar to an uncertain if not "slavish" future. It does seem as if many blacks are badly treated at home and expect and, perhaps, get better treatment in Europe, just as their leaders too would rather shop and holiday in Europe as the acme of earthly bliss. Oh, "hopeless continent", to recall an allusion by the Economist magazine last year. Michael E Aken'Ova, University of Venda, Thohoyandou Is anybody there? I could not help but respond in support of your article on the National Development Agency ("NDA needs warp speed on delivery", April 12 to 19). Unfortunately, much as [CEO Thoahlane Thoahlane] Dr T rejects the reports about the NDA's non-delivery, they are very true. I am director of a community centre in KwaZulu-Natal and I can confirm the reports about adult education NGOs not receiving funding from the NDA. My organisation submitted a funding proposal to which we have not received any response. We call the NDA offices on a weekly basis to follow up and either nobody picks up the phone or we get put through to empty offices. I have left several messages for the executive director, none of which has been responded to. To know that funds are there and yet our organisations face closure due to some people's incompetence is unacceptable. The non-delivery by the NDA is threatening the work of many NGOs doing good work in pursuit of the citizens' rights enshrined in the Bill of Rights, notably "the right to basic education including adult basic education ..." The NDA must get its act together, or civil society will act decisively against it. Do not believe Dr T when he denies this or dismisses those who have raised this issue as unthankful white racists. I am not white and certainly not racist, but I am very angry at the NDA. Name and address withheld on request Taking issue I refer to your article "Dolphin closes its SA head office" (April 20 to 25). Certain of the points are not accurate. I refer to the following: the Promenade Hotel has never been attached, contrary to your statement. There have been no demands for more than R8-million. Liberty Properties and Nedcor combined were asking for R4,3-million. The Rivonia Inn did not run up an overdraft of R4-million. Rivonia Inn does not even have an overdraft facility. Block Hotels did not make a last-minute court appeal to freeze the auction. Mention was made that Mike Sharpes had not come out to South Africa in the past year. At no time was Mr Sharpes blamed for the "crisis", and no mention was made that the problems arose from Mr Sharpes's "hopeless

mismanagement". Judd L Lehmann, operations director, Block Hotels SA
Circumscription As an organ of state, President Mbeki should be circumscribed.
Robert Ribeiro, Pietermaritzburg More historical truths If considered in isolation
of the history of Israeli domestic and foreign policy, the honorable Tova Herzl's
sermon ("Jews deserve a place in the sun to call their own", April 20 to 25) is
worthy of note. For one to make complete sense of the ambassador's piece, one
needs to consign the following (inconvenient) facts into (George Orwell's)
memory holes: 1. Israel was one of the very few states that used to supply arms
and share intelligence with South Africa (in contravention of a United Nations-
sanctioned arms embargo); 2. Palestinians continue to be driven off their land
and have their homes flattened in the middle of the night by the Israeli military.
These historical truths (one of which is still unfolding) are etched in my mind, so
instead of seeing (in the ambassador's piece) a clarion call to battle with racism, I
see a textbook example of hypocrisy. Velaphi Mjongeni, Mowbray A sexist
condom policy I wonder why our government is still giving men preferential
treatment, by only distributing male condoms. All current statistics prove that
young women are most at risk of contracting HIV, with figures growing daily. Poor
and dependent women have very little power to protect their most basic right to
life, because female condoms are very expensive. The government is aware of
men's attitude towards using condoms, yet fail to empower women to protect
themselves. Female condoms should be available free of charge, as is the case
with male condoms. Madi Ditmars, Gezina Saving the rhino I have just been sent
a copy of a letter from your newspaper describing the cruel and callous shooting
of a rhino in a municipal reserve near Kuruman. How could this senseless act
have been permitted? First of all, the sale of the animal was against the wishes
of local people and, second, the manner in which it was killed was barbaric, to
say the least. What price a trophy! Shame on hunters such as this individual from
Hertzogville who, it would seem, hasn't an ounce of compassion in his body. Will
this rhino's mate be next? We will want to know. Virginia McKenna, The Born
Free Foundation, West Sussex, UK Aids does not discriminate We are very
pleased that the article about Triangle Project's sex survey was published
("Shock survey on gay sex", April 6 to 11). We must agree with Shaun de Waal
("How shocked should we be?" April 12 to 19) about the unfortunate title of the
article, and endorse his contextualising of the findings and the survey sample.
There are a number of issues that we would, however, like to clarify. In his article
De Waal refers to the 7,7% of respondents who reported that they had tested
HIV-positive. What was not clear was that men in the survey sample were more
likely to be tested than average men who have sex with men in Cape Town. This
is because the major reason for testing was in applying for a home loan. Also
23,2% of the respondents had never had an HIV test and only 61% of the men
stated that their current HIV status was definitely negative. It is therefore correct
to assume that the HIV prevalence rates for gay men in Cape Town are between
8% and 39% for the sample and quite possibly more for less affluent gay men. In
the past three months, 14% of the tests done at Triangle Project have been
positive for HIV/Aids. This is not to say that gay men, and men who have sex
with men, are most at risk of HIV/Aids. It is important to correct two myths that

gay people spread HIV/Aids and that HIV/Aids is only a heterosexual problem in Africa. Many men who do not identify themselves as gay also have sex with other men. This is made invisible through homophobia, silence around single-sex institutions, and the false belief that homosexuality is unAfrican. The truth is that the virus does not discriminate against people on the grounds of sexual orientation. It cannot know if the sex is "gay" or "straight". It is also true that the gay community is still vulnerable to infection and bearing a disproportionate burden of illness. Gay communities shouldn't be ignored in HIV/Aids prevention strategies. Annie Leatt, director, Triangle Project Prosecute him I read with relief that the investigation into the racist CD has been completed and that there might be some prosecutions taking place. Shane McCallaghan must be prosecuted for referring to President Thabo Mbeki and former president Nelson Mandela as "k.....". I could not believe that any white person, no matter how trapped in our apartheid past, would use such an insulting and racist term against black people. I regard this as insulting not only the two high-profile black people, but also black people in general. I find his excuse that he recorded the songs under the influence of alcohol ridiculous and unacceptable. If that was the case, thanks to the alcohol because it revealed something innately entrenched in him. Black people sacrificed their lives fighting against the notorious apartheid regime, which entailed derogatory references such as the one in question, and eventually the system was toppled. Now we are in the new South Africa, which is based on human dignity and respect. However, we still have individuals who want to sow divisions among South Africans. To deter any potential racist, not only white, against such behaviour, Shane McCallaghan should be prosecuted. Khulani Qoma, Rhodes University ENDS

Now that the censors have retreated, albeit temporarily I suspect, and Nadine Gordimer is rehabilitated, it is important to focus upon an issue that was obscured by all the righteous indignation surrounding the opprobrium heaped upon our noble laureate's head. The abiding irony is that the censors were right, for the wrong reasons. Gordimer is not an appropriate author to inflict upon learners (or upon anyone else for that matter). Not because she is racist it is much worse than that: she is boring and pretentious. And you don't have to take my word for it. Gordimer is reported as having claimed, "[July's People] has been understood all over the world ... as a revelation of the condemnation of the ways racism and colonialism distorted human relations under apartheid. If the selectors ... are looking for moral lessons few could be more telling than the situation in this novel." Apart from the unmitigated hubris, literature is here reduced to hollow homily and pious pontification. On Gordimer's own admission, her text is now irrelevant. Oscar Wilde stated that "there is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book, a book is either well written or it is badly written". It is indeed a tedious thing to plough through Gordimer's turgid prose and vacuous sermonising (and I have had the joy of teaching her texts). Utterly bereft of any redeeming aesthetic value, Gordimer's books are badly written.

<http://www.sabcnews.com/entertainment/other/0,2172,31107,00.html>

18:23 July 30, 2007

Gordimer scoops Commonwealth writers prize

March 27, 2002, 16:45

Nadine Gordimer, winner of the 1991 Nobel prize for literature, has been named as one of two regional winners of the 2002 Commonwealth Writers Prize. Her book *The Pick-Up* and *Manu Herbstein's Ama, A Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade* have been recognised as Africa's best contributions.

The regional winner will go forward to the final stage of the Commonwealth Writers Prize, which will be decided in Edinburgh in April. They join books in each category, selected by the three other international juries, covering Canada and the Caribbean; Africa; and South East Asia and the South Pacific.

The judges of the 2002 Commonwealth Writers Prize Africa region are Penina Mluma, a professor of Theatre Arts at the University of Dar es Salaam and Executive Director for the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE); Vinesh Hookoomsing, from the University of Mauritius and Augustine Mensah, from the University of Botswana.

In her latest book, Gordimer explores new territories of love and cultural encounters, which are delicately mapped out by one woman's silent and deep understanding of human nature and behaviour. Readers are left asking: Who picked up whom? Is the pickup the illegal immigrant desperate to evade deportation to his impoverished desert country? Or is the pickup the powerful businessman's daughter trying to escape a privileged background she despises? When Julie Summers' car breaks down in a sleazy street, at a garage a young Arab emerges from beneath the chassis of a vehicle to aid her. The consequences are unpredictable and intense, as each person's notions of the other are overturned.

Manu Herbstein was born and educated in South Africa. He has lived and worked in England, Nigeria, India, Zambia and Scotland. Since 1970 he has made his home in Accra, Ghana. He first visited the slave castle at Elmina, Ghana, which features in this novel, in 1961.

In his latest award winning novel, he follows the life of Nandzi, who is given the name Ama, which is strange to her and her culture. A life of struggle and resignation, bondage and freedom, passion and indifference, intense love and remorseless hate. Though forced into desperation, Ama never lets her soul be consumed by fear. Her story of defiance and spiritual fire starts from the day she is brutally seized, raped and enslaved, and ends with her breathing the pure air

of spiritual freedom.

Ama, A Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade, has been described as a monumental work, epic in scope and design, and clearly the result of extensive research, which has been skillfully woven into an enchanting narrative.

http://www.sabcnews.com/entertainment/the_arts/0,2172,69206,00.html
18:21 July 30, 2007

Use mother tongue in writing, encourages Gordimer

Nadine Gordimer, South Africa's former Nobel Prize Laureate

November 17, 2003, 12:00

Nadine Gordimer, South Africa's former Nobel Prize Laureate, has said that it is important that writers should be encouraged to use their mother tongue.

The Nadine Gordimer Short Story Award for writing in African Languages was unveiled over the weekend at Gordimer's 80th birthday celebration in Boksburg, east of Johannesburg.

The Nadine Gordimer Short Story Award for Writing in African Languages will be an annual award in the form of a bursary. It is aimed at the many African language writers who often find it financially difficult to take up writing in their mother tongue and get their works published.

"I can't believe that there won't be a special pleasure as there is for anybody reading in their own language in finding that if you going to read in whatever your language is, that you can find a book, especially when you're a child, that is written in the language that you read everyday, " she said.

Gordimer became the first South African to win the Nobel Prize for literature in 1991. However, even though she has won many awards, she does not regard it as her most important achievement. "But perhaps the best fruit of my having lived so long is that I lived to see the end of apartheid and to see 10 years nearly of a new South Africa."

Gordimer has published 14 novels and over 200 short stories in her writing career of nearly 70 years.

http://www.sabcnews.com/south_africa/general/0,2172,13867,00.html
18:24 July 30, 2007

Gordimer says education department responsible for racism comments

Nadine Gordimer, author of the now controversial 'July's People'

April 22, 2001, 14:00

Nadine Gordimer, winner of the 1991 Nobel Prize for Literature, rejected attempts by Ignatius Jacobs, Gauteng education minister, to distance himself from reports claiming that one of her books was racist and should be dropped as a matric set work.

Gordimer said the department is responsible for ensuring that those people evaluating books have the appropriate literary knowledge. "It's not possible for...the MEC to distance the department from what happened here."

Comments made by set work evaluators about her novel, July's People, showed an "incredibly low level of assessment", and "abysmal ignorance", Gordimer said.

The report on the novel branded it as "deeply racist, superior and patronising" and not relevant to South Africa today. It also criticised a number of works by other writers, including Shakespeare.

Gordimer said she was gratified by Kader Asmal's condemnation of the report and his rejection of the department's evaluation system. "I am delighted that the Gauteng department has agreed to abandon this system, and that the directive has come from government itself."

Jacobs said the comments were unfortunate. According to Jacobs, a handful of teachers, among the 1000 canvassed by the evaluating panel, were responsible for these contentious views.

Jacobs said that these views had been rejected by himself and the panel. He said a serious mistake had been made to allow the "non-sensical" view of a small minority to affect the entire process.

Jacobs said learners should be exposed to a wide range of books, which would be rotated in a three to five year cycle, and additional books would be added over time.

The entire education community, as well as the writers themselves, should become involved in compiling the list of set work books, Jacobs said.

The department announced a decision to overhaul the process to ensure fairness and transparency.-

http://www.sabcnews.com/south_africa/general/0,2172,13679,00.html
July 30, 2007

SA literature could die at the hands of politics

Nadine Gordimer, author of the now controversial 'July's People'

April 16, 2001, 17:30

The Democratic Alliance (DA) says political correctness could lead to the end of literature in Gauteng schools. The statement comes in response to a report by Gauteng school evaluators who have advised that a 1980 novel by Nadine Gordimer, the Nobel literature laureate, entitled "July's People" be dropped from the curriculum because it was racist.

Boy Geldenhuys, the DA education spokesperson, says the Constitution's political ideals "such as tolerance, non-discrimination and the rejection of racism and sexism" should not determine literary suitability.

"South Africa will be made the laughing stock of the international literary community if, for instance, Shakespeare's Hamlet is deemed to be unsuitable for grade 12 because it is supposedly not constructive," says Geldenhuys.

"If that which is politically correct is turned into a measuring stick for literary suitability at school level it will be the beginning of unwanted censorship that could culminate in so called 'book burnings'," he says. - Sapa

http://www.news24.com/News24/South_Africa/0,,2-7_1011061,00.html

13:04 July 30, 2007

Gordimer slammed as 'racist'

15/04/2001 14:20 - (SA)

Johannesburg - South African educators have advised that a 1980 novel by Nobel literature laureate Nadine Gordimer be dropped from the curriculum because it is "deeply racist", the Sunday Independent reported.

The school evaluators from Gauteng Province, which encompasses Johannesburg and Pretoria, described "July's People" - studied in schools since 1994 - as "deeply racist, superior and patronising".

It is a tale of a white family given refuge by their house servant in the countryside as civil war between blacks and whites devastates the country.

The evaluators also said the language of the novel was "not acceptable as it does not encourage good grammatical practices".

Gordimer, who won the Nobel prize for literature in 1991, responded: "If the selectors of fiction are looking for moral lessons against racism, few could be more telling than the situation in this novel."

The evaluators found the story anachronistic because it "projects a South African future that did not happen".

"It is considered therefore that it will not interest modern learners," they concluded.

Gordimer said the criteria and the righteousness of the tone of the report "echo amazingly, exactly, the language and attitudes of the old apartheid censorship board". - Sapa-AFP

