

### EDITORIAL

Party campaigning for the April election has been both interesting and intriguing. Interesting from the standpoint that political parties, especially the ruling party, spiced the campaign with face-to-face contact of leaders with the ordinary voters through road shows and impromptu visits to communities by President Thabo Mbeki.

The process has also been fairly intriguing in that not only do the manifestos of the parties look pretty much the same as they raise similar kinds of issues, but a vilification campaign seemed to be the order of the day. Opposition parties seemed devoid of credible or justifiable campaign issues in their challenge of the ANC's ten-year dominance.

On the contrary, the ANC avoided the combative campaign strategy adopted by the official opposition DA. Instead, the ANC's focus was on its achievements over the past ten years and its programme of action for the next ten years through what the party termed "a people's contract". It is worth noting that the DA's combative strategy was double edged sword. On the one hand, the sword aimed to disorganise the ruling party with a view to catching possible

undecided voters. On the other hand, the sword was aimed at disorganising other opposition parties, especially the new Independent Democrats (ID), as it seemed to pose a potential threat to the DA's opposition status. In both cases, the DA's grand strategy has been to drive South Africa's political system away from a dominant party system towards a *duopoly* or two party system.

So, in a nutshell, there have generally been two types of electioneering - namely a delivery-based campaign by the ruling ANC and combative politicking by the official opposition. The other parties in the election race have tended to use strategies in between these two polar opposites. Irrespective of whatever campaign strategy parties have adopted, the stark reality is that the electioneering has been marked more by identity politics and less by issue politics. Be that as it may, it is encouraging however that the electioneering has not been marked by violent conflict with the exception of fairly isolated cases in Kwazulu-Natal.

As we have indicated in one of the previous issues of this *Update*, there are various structures in South Africa that deal specifically with election-related conflicts and these include (a) the IEC, (b) the

Party Liaison Committees (c) Conflict Management Panels, (d) The Electoral Court and (e) the Constitutional Court. In dealing with conflict these structures rely on the Electoral Act and the Code of Conduct.

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## NATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

### CAMPAIGN 2004

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Ours is still a young and fragile democracy; race relations are still tenderly delicate, coming as we do from centuries of racism and white minority domination. Indeed, outright racism has been replaced by lots of racism of the subtle type, which plays itself out around the braai-veils and liquid dinner tables. The point is, even though by law, we are now an inclusive nation, it will take many decades, even centuries, to address the national question, and build a truly united South Africa. One way to lay the groundwork and deal with this fragile, divided nation will be to tackle the national question with due sensitivity and understanding. One of the questions needed to be asked about the 2004 election campaign concerns what its impact will be on the national question. Put differently, did the 2004 campaign help to reinforce or to undermine nation building in South Africa? This year's campaign, unlike the previous two have been characterised by such acrimony, bitter attacks and rivalry that we will only start to feel the negative implications long after the dust of 2004 has settled. The

sad thing is that this hostility did not seek to bolster nation building; it was done more to woo votes at any cost.

While many parties have gone on the charming offensive by taking to the streets, villages, townships, and suburban South Africa, the messages to voters was that 'the other bunch' should not be trusted. Even though in the main, the messages from the soap-boxes and *Imbizos* tried to be sensitive to the explosive issue of race in our country, we should remember that racial identities play a role more than any other factor in this election. The majority of citizens are likely to cast their votes on the basis of racial, ethnic and other identities, and racial and ethnic divisions thus play a crucial role. Unfortunately, we may discover in the post-election environment that, because of the irresponsible campaign pursued by many politicians, the images and perceptions of 'white' fear, 'white superiority' and *baaskap*, 'swart gevaar', 'Xhosa hegemony', 'coloured' uncertainty, 'Zulu-assertiveness', 'Indian marginalisation', and certainly fear of the tyranny of the majority, or tyranny of the black majority will be reinforced. The election campaign, and the manner in which certain political elites behaved and scorned one another, will have the result

of polarisation and undue tension in our society. Sadly therefore, the much celebrated 10 year mark of our democracy will be a rather short cause for celebration, because, after the party on 27 April, we all come down to earth and have to confront the realities of this society, including the newly caused polarisations. The key point is that race relations remain an open sore in this country, and the current elections campaign does little to heal the wound.

After the party we will have to make sense of the continuous call for 'transformation', the anger and embitterment of some; the need for clean and incorrupt politics, the need for taxation, the crime, and so forth.

Some have been so obsessed with the ruling party's dominance that they have complicated the prospects for the politics of reconciliation and nation-building. Many have even forgotten to concern themselves with the electorate and got stuck with the governing party's power and developed a view that such power should be curtailed. There has been so much animosity built up between the ruling party and the official opposition, that it has become almost impossible for them to have a constructive working

relationship in the short to medium, maybe even the long-term.

Some others have even resorted to the politics of desperation as they made the prospect of a third term by Mbeki a key election plank yet he had not even started his second term. This, at times, came across as 'swart gevaar' politics. Then there was the scare, not of a weak and fragmented opposition, but of a dominant party state, even a one party state. The point is that instead of examining their own weaknesses, many opposition parties deflected attention to the ruling party. The one important message sent out here was that of fear – fear about the future of democracy; fear that Mbeki may be a power monger of sorts. Again, there are almost certainly to be unintended consequences of such messages, not only to the voters but also because it could undermine both national and international confidence in the country. One of the scariest messages sent out by some was that the ANC intends to suppress minority political parties.

There will also be some important consequences for the ANC. While the ANC appeared determined to build on its *Imbizo* campaigns by selling the idea of 'a people's contract' to the citizenry, and fought a campaign that will be remembered for its lack of

populism, it should expect its constituencies to hold it firmly to the pledge of a people's contract. While parties and actors such as the Congress of South African Trade Union (COSATU), and SACP have been vociferous in calling for the people to go out in their millions and vote for the ANC, they are similarly sending a message to the ANC that 'we intend holding you faithful to your pledges'. They will also be some of the harshest critics of ANC policies, as they were during the first five years. The ANC will have to be careful about the kinds of tensions with social movements. In the past, tension between the ANC and social movements has been marked by a lot of mutual recrimination and dubbing each other 'neoliberals' and 'ultra-leftists'. There will almost certainly have to be the need for the ANC to develop a thick skin against criticism, as well as becoming more tolerant to dissenting voices. The ruling party will have to start to appreciate that critical debate and discourse is healthy for a society such as ours.

President Thabo Mbeki has come out strongly against those councillors who are not in contact with the people. He says the confidence shown by people towards the ANC demands that the councillors should be responsible. President Mbeki braved the scorching heat to take his election campaign to

Welkom in the Free State, a second visit to this region. Braving the intense heat, the President was confronted with grievances on his arrival. He acknowledged the government's shortcomings but he also pointed a finger at councillors who were not doing their work.

The official opposition - the DA - does itself no good with its Fight-Back philosophy. To most blacks this approach means reversing the gains of freedom including gains as a result of affirmative action and black economic empowerment. To workers, the fight-back philosophy of the DA means flexible labour market policy and more privatisation and commercialisation of public enterprises and social services. Any party that advocates a minimalist state and reliance on market as the most efficient medium of allocating resources which will entrench existing income and wealth inequalities along racial and gender lines, will not endear itself to majority of the voters, especially those who have been at the receiving end of apartheid social, economic and political exclusion.

Somebody clearly advised the DA leader that he should pursue an aggressive campaign as an alternative governing party or a government in waiting - that he should behave like a

classical conservative party member from Europe, a liberal party; go on the attack, expose poor governance, and portray itself as the future government.

It is in this respect that I have used the term minority parties. For a party to be termed an opposition, it must envision and organise itself as an alternative governing party. This is currently lacking in South Africa. The smaller parties have not organised and envisioned themselves as alternative governing parties. At best they are pressure groups and do not see themselves as constituting government in the future.

Instead of toying with the politics of fear, politicians should focus on real issues and above all appeal to the voters, their identities and interests, and let the votes ultimately decide.

The DA has also used race in an interesting way by being staunchly anti-affirmative action. Tony Leon has said that people of Indian origin are being discriminated against through the implementation of government's affirmative action policies. Leon was addressing an election rally in Phoenix, one of the biggest Indian townships. He told the mainly unemployed audience that government policies such as affirmative action do not benefit them.

Leon said the number of households with no income whatsoever in the area rose from about three thousand to 9-thousand since 1994. The DA leader said that high crime rate in the area was as a result of high unemployment.

The IFP leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi has been bitter and angry over the ANC's failure to keep the 1994 promise of international mediation and floor-crossing. He focused strongly on HIV and AIDS, by lashing out at the ANC over its management of the HIV-AIDS crisis. Speaking at the launch of his party's position on the pandemic, Buthelezi questioned the ruling party's policy on treatment for the disease. The IFP claimed it is leading the field in fighting the scourge. It started distributing anti-retroviral drugs to prevent mother-to-child transmission in Kwazulu-Natal long before the government was forced by the courts to do so. The IFP says it would treat HIV/Aids as a national priority by promoting abstinence, assisting AIDS orphans and providing anti-retroviral drugs.

The Freedom Front Plus leader, Pieter Mulder and Nasionale Aksie (NA) said there are parties are not afraid to tackle the ruling ANC head-on in the coming election. Their election campaign will broadly concentrate on the ANC's

mistakes and missed opportunities, missed opportunities to reach out to and placate minorities. They are very sentimental over their *Taal*. Interestingly, both these parties say they are committed to critical but constructive opposition. They have been campaigning vigorously to woo voters away from NNP and DA support. Even through both said they target minorities in general, these parties have targeted the Afrikaans speaking market.

## DEBATES AND VIEWPOINTS

### MANAGEMENT OF ELECTION- RELATED CONFLICTS A CASE STUDY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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#### Introduction

Democracy in Africa has recently been the concern of both the international community and African nationals themselves. This has been confirmed by a number of international and domestic observer missions participating in most of the elections conducted on the continent. To their discredit, several African states, have failed to provide a stable political and electoral environment where citizens feel free to exercise their right to vote for whoever they choose.

In some African countries winning elections is a matter of life and death. The race for state power means access to wealth as the government is the major or only employment agency. Losing elections means being unemployed and this is more clearly seen in countries where there are

weak economic and civil society structures. When one is not in politics, there is no other avenue where one could use one's other skills. This also results in an unstable post election period. Even within the SADC sub-region, some countries experienced political conflicts and electoral tensions, many of which kept smouldering for months after the electoral event itself. Clear examples are Zimbabwe and Zambia, where there are still outstanding litigations regarding alleged unfairness in the election process.

From my experience as an electoral official, I have observed that tensions around elections have centred on the different phases of the electoral process with specific references to rules that guide the elections, process that precedes the elections, application of the same rules as well as the scope that allow for the adjudication of potential electoral disputes. The exclusionist character of elections in Africa has now been recognised as one of the sources of election related conflicts.

In the case of South Africa, election-related violence, particularly during the 1994 elections could be categorised as what Anastase termed the "excessively

identist partisan divisions", and this phenomenon was most visible in Kwazulu-Natal. Having being part of the 1994 electoral process in Kwazulu-Natal, one observed how some of the leaders' campaigns were identist-connoted. The result was bloodshed where about 30 000 people died because of political violence. South Africans never forgot the bloody run-up to the 1994 elections. Through the 1996 Electoral Commission Act and the Electoral Act of 1998, the government took note of this phenomena and this resulted in electoral legal instruments such as the Code of Conduct and regulations on Party Liaison Committees being put in place.

#### Constructive Management of Election-related Conflicts

It has always been said that the best way of bringing about government is through the ballot and not the bullet. An election process is widely seen as an alternative means to violence in achieving governance. There are many ways which could be used to ensure that election-related conflicts are well-managed or are pre-empted. It would be advisable for the workshop participants to read the *Norms and Standards for Observing Election in the SADC* as this document covers most of the

methods by which elections related conflicts can be avoided or managed. To mention a few key processes which could ensure substantially conflict-free elections, the following key processes must be transparent and accountable:

### ***The Legal Framework***

The Constitution and the electoral laws of a country must be written in such as so to ensure the inalienable right of citizens of a country to participate by means of free, credible and democratic political process. In addition, in order to level the playing fields, the rules and regulations must apply fairly to all political parties and candidates.

### ***Electoral Management Body***

The integrity of the Electoral Management Body (EMB) must not be in doubt and this applies to all electoral stakeholders. It must not be seen as tool to advantage the ruling party. The composition of the electoral management body must be agreed upon by all the electoral stakeholders and must guarantee by some kind of the legal framework. The EMBs must be well funded so that they can execute their mandate in timeously.

### ***Voter Registration Process***

Electoral practitioners are well aware of the fact that the disenfranchisement of

voters begins at the voter registration process. The voter registration process must ensure that every eligible voter is registered and mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that on voting day, voters are able to vote in cases where an Electoral Commission has unintentionally not added the name of the voter to the voters roll. Voters must be given ample time to inspect the voters' roll before voting day. Sufficient time must be given to the process of claims and objection. Voter registration must be a continuous process. Political parties must, where possible, be given a copy of the final voters' roll.

### ***Role of the Courts***

Electoral petition tribunals must be established in good time and these must be well-funded. My experience in observing elections in Nigeria was that electoral petition tribunals were set up very late, and this caused a delay in the processing of election petitions.

### ***The Role of Other Stakeholders***

All electoral stakeholders must be included in the electoral process. This could be covered by the electoral law or regulation. The Electoral Commission of South Africa has successfully been able to come up with regulations

dealing with party liaison committees, ensuring that parties are consulted throughout the electoral process. The process has been extended to other stakeholders such as the NGOs and other interested groupings working in the field of elections including religious formations, the media and the security agencies.

### ***Party Liaison Committees in South Africa***

The South African Constitution entrenches the principle of multiparty democracy through the Bill of Rights. The Independent Electoral Commission's mandate to strengthen constitutional democracy is being developed within this framework. In order to build confidence and trust in the Electoral Commission, the Commission has powers vested in it by Section 5(1)(g) of the Electoral Commission Act, 1996 established and maintained Party Liaison Committees for the purpose of facilitating liaison and cooperation. Party Liaison Committees, which have been established at national, provincial and local levels, ensure inclusion of the major electoral stakeholders through consultation, and in turn, encourage thorough transparency by the Commission while at the same time it allows for demonstration of

bureaucratic efficiency and competence. Political parties are key players in supporting the electoral process hence their understanding of all activities pertaining to election management and legislation is critical.

In short, the Electoral Commission of South Africa, through the Party Liaison Committee regulations, has put in place mechanisms to ensure that political parties are consulted throughout the different phases of the electoral process. The Commission convenes consultative meetings with parties either bi-weekly or on a monthly basis. This process is done at national, provincial and local level. These meetings serve as consultative forums for the IEC. Each party sends two representatives to these meetings.

In Kwazulu-Natal, these structures have worked very well. It will be remembered that it is one of the provinces that experienced the highest political killings during the run-up to the 1994 elections. The province is well-known for political violence during election time. My observations after working there since the 1994 to the 2000 elections, is that I have seen a decline in election related conflicts and one can attribute this to Party Liaison Committees as well the process extended to other structures such as the ECCO,

the Provincial Leadership Forum and the Kwazulu-Natal NGO Election Forum, and the Conflict Management Committees. In all these structures the Electoral Commission was a participant and this ensured free flow of information from the Commission to the electoral stakeholders and *vice versa*. It must be borne in mind that the Commission was not forced to engage all stakeholders other than parties, but for the sake of transparency, the Commission extended the Party Liaison Committee process to these stakeholders. With all these stakeholders involved, the opportunity to engage in political violence was decreased. I am deliberately stating "decreased" as there were some areas in Kwazulu-Natal referred to as no-go areas and hotspots as late as the 2000 local government elections. The violence however, has substantially decreased in comparison to the 1994, 1996, 1999 elections.

From my experience, one can say that dealing with political violence during elections in a country that has just come out of a conflict situation, is a process and this might take time to resolve. Civic education, voter education and setting up conflict management structures for example, could assist in moving the process to reasonable levels of election

related disputes that do not involve violence.

### **Lessons for the SADC Region**

One of the most important lessons for the SADC Region is to learn from each others' election experiences. There is a wealth of experience within our electoral management bodies and this can be seen in the way in which our elections have been substantially without major problems, with an exception or one or two countries.

Sharing of resources by electoral management bodies could also reduce the cost of managing elections. These resources might take the form of personnel, technical advisors or equipment. We have to come up with agreements within electoral management bodies and encourage NGOs working in the field of elections to second staff to assist in other countries during elections. This should preferably not be from one single commission or electoral management body, but from each EMB within SADC.

Having observed several elections within the SADC sub-region, it is evident that there is a need to take a cue from the NEPAD processes. We should begin to standardise the election process within the sub-region either in the manner in which we manage or

observe elections. There are available documents, such as the *Norms and Standards for Observing Elections in the SADC region by the SADC Parliamentary Forum, Principles for Election Management, Monitoring and Observation (PEMMO) by EISA and the Electoral Commissions Forum (ECF)* and many other documents on the continent that could assist us in these processes. As a sub-region, we need to find a way of contributing to the Africa Peer Review Mechanism by adhering to best practices and principles with a view to institutionalising democracy and governance.

## NEWS FLASH!

### VOTERS TO MAKE SILENT MARK AFTER POLL FURY AND THUNDER

ANC win sure, Western Cape and KwaZulu Up for Grabs, DA's Future on the Line

Linda Ensor

Political parties wound up their eight week election campaign yesterday [12 April] in a last-ditch stand to woo voters ahead of voting tomorrow. but with election day taking place in the midst of Easter holidays, and voter apathy widespread, one of the key factors to be scrutinised after the poll will not only be how the voters cast their votes but in what numbers.

Surveys identified a high level of apathy and of undecided voters galvanising parties to make sure that voters turned up. With the ANC's dominance assured, opposition parties have been left to fight among themselves over scraps, with little chance of making significant into ANC support. Various surveys suggest that the ANC will get more than 66% of the vote. Of critical importance will be how voters decide the balance of power in KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape.

Opposition parties have focused their election campaigns on the failure of government delivery in key areas – job creation, slow economic growth, the fight against HIV/AIDS, crime and poverty alleviation – and promised to do better.

The ANC has campaigned intensively with an eye to increasing its majority, which is now just short of the two thirds mark. House visits, rallies and the presentation of President Mbeki as a caring leader sensitive to the needs of his people were elements of the ANC's campaign. In his last letter in *ANC Today* before the poll, Mbeki called for SA to unite behind the ANC and work towards a shared destiny. He characterised the call for a strong opposition as a polarising attempt to entrench "national division as the very essence of our democracy."

In a replying salvo, DA leader Tony Leon said he found Mbeki's view of democracy "disturbing and distorted" as it labelled anyone who disagreed with the ANC as a proponent of division.

IFP leader, Mangosuthu Buthelezi rallied his supporters, saying that SA could do better than under the ANC.

The new kid on the block, Patricia de Lille's Independent Democrats was a particular target for the DA as the two parties exchanged shots over the extent of support for the ID, which some surveys suggest will win 0.9% of the vote. The party itself is hoping for between 5 % and 10%.

The New National Party could shed support, particularly among the whites, to the DA..

Excerpted from *Business Day*, 12 April 2004

## PROVINCIAL ROUNDUP

### GAUTENG

#### **POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION: ROLE OF SECURITY FORCES IN GAUTENG.**

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#### **Introduction**

Elections are the cornerstone of democracy<sup>1</sup>. April 14 2004 will witness South Africa participate in its third non-racial and democratic elections since 1994. As the period draws nearer, political parties in Gauteng are putting the final touches into their campaigns. Gauteng is the biggest voting province, with a quarter of the registered voters in the country<sup>2</sup>. In terms of political violence and intimidation, Gauteng is relatively peaceful when compared to other provinces such as Kwazulu-Natal. However, Intelligence Minister Lindiwe Sisulu has noted that there are some parts of the province where problems of political violence and intimidation might be experienced. According to the *Sowetan* of 20 February

2004, the minister has singled out Thembisa, Katlehong and Thokoza on the East Rand as places that will be monitored closely. This short piece attempts to investigate the role of the security forces and the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) during this pressing time.

#### **The Challenges**

The IEC remains adamant that all systems are in place for 14 April 2004. Furthermore, it has mentioned that none of the logistical problems that maybe encountered on the day of the election will be beyond its control. According to the Provincial Electoral Officer (PEO), Gugu Matlaopane, the number of voting stations in the province had increased, and more than 30 000 election workers would be deployed around the province on election day<sup>3</sup>. Measures that have been put in place by the IEC in dealing with cases of violence and intimidation include the following:

- Code of Conduct
- Conflict Management Panels
- Party Liaison Committees; and
- Electoral Court

Over and above these, the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) will be on hand in all the province's voting stations to take control of the situation. To prove this, government has moved to cancel the leave of thousands of security officials to ensure that they are on duty on April 14.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the IEC in Gauteng has said that security officers would be deployed with extra manpower in the hot spot municipalities of Ekurhuleni, Emfuleni, Westonaria and Kungwini. Matlaopane asserts that "members of the SAPS will be all over, in uniform or not. I don't think that there is opportunity for anyone to create problems"<sup>5</sup>. Matlaopane further noted that unlike the position in 1994, Gauteng enters this year's election with no major political conflict. Positive signs, especially the heavy deployment of security officials, indicate that the election day will be relatively calm and stable.

Since elections are a hotly contested battle, it is worth mentioning that no matter

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.eisa.org.za>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.mg.co.za>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Misbach, W. 2004. "Thousands of cops will be on duty to on duty on April 14 to ensure free, fair polls", *Sowetan*, 20 February.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.mg.co.za>

how tight the security, there is always going to be dissatisfaction from contesting political parties in terms of the election outcome. If parties lodge a complaint with the IEC regarding the outcome of the election, the IEC in Gauteng, as in all the other provinces, has mechanisms through which the dispute can be settled. If the conflict can be mediated, the IEC has recourse to the Conflict Management Committee. This Committee comprises priests, lawyers, educators, NGOs; and the Mediation and Arbitration Commission. According to the IEC, most of panellists that make up the Committee were involved in the previous electoral events (1994 and 1999). Regarding this, the IEC has mentioned that because of its good track record in terms of its ability to deliver and conduct free and fair elections; no major challenge regarding the April 2004 election will be beyond its control.

### **Conclusion**

The IEC asserts that a common complaint received thus far, has to do with poster vandalism. However, Matlaopane asserts that the issue has been amicably amicably. More worrying, however, is an earlier incident where deputy president Jacob Zuma was prevented from campaigning in the one of the province's hostels. One hopes that these hot spots will be treated with

the caution that they deserve. If the IEC's promise of providing all the polling stations with adequate security forces, election officials and relevant election materials is fulfilled, the voting process is bound to be free and fair and most importantly, peaceful in Gauteng. However, it is not only the responsibility of the IEC and the security officials to ensure that there is no violence on the day of the elections. Contesting political parties, some with a history of violence, must as a matter of principle, abide by the Electoral Act and ensure that there will be no violence on the polling day. Nonetheless the IEC is adamant that in comparison to the 1999 election; the 2004 elections in Gauteng will be a lot better run.

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[http:// www.eisa.org.za/dee](http://www.eisa.org.za/dee)

[http:// www.mg.co.za/ Gauteng](http://www.mg.co.za/Gauteng) on election day".

## NORTH WEST

### WINNING THE ATTENTION OF THE MEDIA

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On the weekend ending April 4 the larger political parties held the last on their mass rallies and entered a new phase of electioneering. The new phase was to concentrate on individual interactions between potential voters and party supporters canvassing support. These interactions include door-to-door campaigning and telephonic "cold-calling". Until now (April 4) most of the focus of political parties has been on capturing the attention of the mass media. Such self-generated media coverage represents a cost effective way in which political parties can present themselves and their policies to new audiences and, in the process, distinguish themselves from competitors. As a rule this self-generated coverage is presented to the electorate as "news" rather than as advertising and, consequently, carries greater credence.

Prominent successes in soliciting media coverage

included the State President and Deputy Presidents' numerous walkabout tours. President Mbeki received wide publicity as he visited voters across the country and urged them to vote for the ANC. The process repackaged Mbeki in a fundamentally different way. Gone was the staid, aloof and somewhat intellectual President. The new image was one of a person more eager to be associated with, and even confronted by, the common man. The media responded with generous coverage of the campaign. Paralleling Mbeki's campaigning (with somewhat less impact) was Deputy President Jacob Zuma who embarked on a similar tour. Contrary to the President's campaign, Zuma's sought to emphasise continuity and his "Zuluness".

In an attempt to woo support away from the IFP, Zuma's campaign was accordingly heavily focussed on soliciting support among voters in KwaZulu-Natal and in single sex hostels in the metropolitan areas. In several instances his reception was distinctly icy or not overtly hostile.

The outgoing premier of the North West, Popo Molefe, was somewhat successful in

generating provincial and national media coverage that promoted the ANC in the North West province specifically. The bulk of the coverage that he generated was derived from conferences and other business gatherings in which investment in the province was promised or secured. An example was the launch of the *Platinum Pride* initiative in which promises of investment were used to portray the ANC's success in stimulating further economic growth. The investment is being used by party marketers to counteract criticism of the ANC in a field where it is most vulnerable – its poor record with respect to job creation.

Media coverage of Mbeki and Zuma far eclipsed that gained by opposition party leaders like the DA's Tony Leon or the IFP's Mangosuthu Buthelezi. The issues that won coverage in the mass media focussed heavily on politicians (like Mbeki, Zuma and Leon) with national profiles and agendas. While there is a certain logic to the focus on national issues and persona, the provincially based political parties such as the UCDP and the campaigns with regional focuses got the short end of the stick. Most smaller parties (and thus

regional parties) were largely unsuccessful in capturing the media attention. For example Lucas Mangope's UCDP failed to win significant media coverage. Political parties which fail to generate appropriate coverage in the mass media ultimately cannot present themselves to the electorate without having to pay for the publicity. These parties have to purchase media coverage and rely on more interactions like door-to-door canvassing. If they do pay for coverage it is then branded as a "paid-for political advertisement" rather than "news". Furthermore any party's ability to conduct door-to-door campaigns or to cold call on potential supporters is heavily dependent on organisational capacity and financial clout. Unfortunately the smaller political parties are almost defined by their poor organisational capacity and their limited financial resources. However none of the larger opposition political parties (which are better financed) have anywhere near the organisational capacity of the ANC. Consequently that party which benefited most from media coverage is also the one best positioned to conduct the campaign on a one-to-one basis. Relative to the ANC all the opposition parties will be more

dependent on the relatively ineffective medium of posters and the loyalty of past supporters.

### **Party Seniority and Media Focus: Where Have All the Women Gone?**

An unintended consequence of the dominance of national figures and issues has been an election campaign heavily dominated by males. As almost all of the most senior politicians in political parties other than the Independent Democrats and KISS are male, the media has inevitably presented the election as a competition between interests represented largely by men. With the exception of Patricia de Lille (ID), the mass media has shown the campaign as a battles between Mbeki, Buthelezi, Leon, Holomisa etc. Consequently, those voters predisposed towards supporting a female candidate may ensure de Lille fares better than expected on April 14. Contributing to the centrality of the senior ANC leaders has been the party's reluctance to identify the candidates for Premier in each province. The party line is that the premiers do not have a prominent role to play in electioneering and that the provincial campaigns are run by the organisation and not by the premiers. Be that as it may, it detracts from the

potential role played by premiers and minister – offices in which women are relatively well represented. The position also ensures that the party campaigns tend to be centrally run and vary little between the provinces.

The candidate for the premiership in each province usually occupies the first position on the parties list of candidates. In the North West Province that position on the ANC's list is occupied by Darkie Africa the provinces MEC for Housing. All of the top six positions on the ANC's list are held by MECs. The list however, does not include two current MECs – Kuscus (MEC for Finance) and Sefularo (MEC for Health). Speculation has long been that Africa along with the eighth person on the list, Thandi Modise are the ANC's preferred choices for Premier. The Premier will undoubtedly be selected in a way that ensures that women are adequately represented in the post. The highest position held by a woman on the ANC's list for the North West is that of the Agriculture MEC, Edith Molewa, at number three. However, as the ANC is assured a substantial majority in the province the party will be able to appoint a Premier from well down the party list.

## LIMPOPO

### LIMPOPO GEARS UP FOR THE ELECTIONS

*Kholofelo Mashabela  
University of the North*

#### Introduction

The IEC in Limpopo has registered a number of firsts in its attempt to ready the province for Elections 2004.

The IEC has taken 54 000 educators through voter education workshops, held twenty three workshops each for women and youth groups, twenty-two workshops for about 6 000 leaders and has seventy fieldworkers conducting elections training everyday until the 11 April. According to Rev Zwo Nevhutalu, who is head of the Limpopo IEC, these workshops have been running for a few months now.

He promised that by 11 April, two hundred meetings of five hundred people each, on voter education, will have been held. These involve mostly traditional leadership structures and will amount to over 100 000 people. Nevhutalu also disclosed that on 25 March, a day before the school vacations, teachers in Limpopo had been asked and participated in voter education in class. He added that all these figures represent the highest

volumes in all the mentioned categories in the country.

#### IEC Mission

The Limpopo IEC seems to have taken its mission very seriously. According to Nevhutalu, they had set themselves the following goals:

- to register the highest number of voters possible
- to launch the biggest ever voter education in the country
- to reduce the number of spoilt ballots. He pointed out that in 1999, 2% of votes were spoilt, and that translated to about 25 000 votes – enough to win a seat in Parliament.
- To create a climate of free political activity
- to have people vote early in the day so that Limpopo could be the first province to release election results

The readiness effort has included the registration of 2.2 million voters in the province, which amounts to 78% of eligible voters.

Polling stations have not been overlooked either. A task team had been set up to assess schools that were to

be used as polling stations. Two hundred and seventy were found to be without ablution facilities. The government has since committed R10m to the provision of permanent ablution facilities at these schools.

The five hundred and thirty schools designated as polling stations were found to have no water supply. The government has since committed R103m to this project. It will come in two phases; first the erection of tank stands and mounting of tanks, and then the supply of water. Stations that have not been connected to municipal water supplies by the election date will have their tanks filled with water from tankers on Election Day. Water supply projects that are not complete by the election date will be completed after the elections. Nevhutalu said that in 1999, the IEC had rolled out temporary facilities at schools designated as polling stations, but that this time around they wanted to establish permanent facilities.

As far as polling material is concerned, the IEC does not envisage any hiccups. Nevhutalu said the IEC always provided a little more polling material than the official statistics suggested - just in case. Should a polling station run out of polling

material, the situation would be remedied within thirty minutes, he added.

The peacekeeping force side has not been left behind because security officers have been trained by presiding officers to deal with election issues. The police, he said, are ready because they had always been involved when voter education took place. The IEC hoped, however, that the peacekeeping officers would not have to do any work on Election Day. "If the peace officers don't do any work on Election Day that will show our political maturity." The only worrying factor is the state of the roads in rural areas, he added. After the recent rains, many rural areas have become difficult to access. Nevhotalu however expressed hope that the public works department would remedy the situation soon.

### **Zwo Nevhotalu- A Man with a Mission**

Rev Zwo Nevhotalu, PEO for Limpopo, takes his work as more than a job. For him it is a calling, a mission even. He confided to *Election Update 2004* that he found every opportunity a challenge. His dreams, he says, are always bigger than the organisation in which he finds himself. The work he does for the IEC offers him the opportunity to be a builder, he says. "While we come from a past of fighting against apartheid, we are

now building for the future", he adds.

The most important message he has for voters is that voting is that voting is the most important civic duty any citizen can perform. He further pointed out that those who do not cast their vote, do not understand their duties as citizens.

He reflects on a recent trip to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which he categorises as a broken country - both literally and figuratively. The intelligentsia, he said, had left the country because the democratic framework had broken down. He then adds, matter-of-factly, "we have to celebrate that we have a democracy that works by voting."

## **NEWS FLASH!**

### **VOTING OFFICERS QUALIFIED TO RUN ELECTIONS ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD**

South Africa has become the first country where voting officers have been able to obtain internationally recognised qualifications in the running of free and fair elections.

This is part of groundbreaking training that the IEC has been providing in partnership with Unisa's Adult Basic Education and Training Institute (Abet), to presiding officers and their deputies for South Africa's third democratic election. South Africa is the first to have unit standards (building blocks towards a qualification) registered for working in voting stations, said Rushdi Nackerdien, the IEC's manager for voting and results.

Since the qualifications authority has agreements with similar bodies internationally it means presiding officers have internationally recognised academic credits in the running of elections anywhere in the world.

Nackerdien says that not even Australia, which has one of the most sophisticated electoral systems in the world, has unit standards for voting officers. "Our training is aimed at professionalising our industry. We are saying an election is serious. It involves a lot of hard work. We need to match international standards and requirements and our staff are trained to a level where they deliver free and fair elections."

The IEC awarded the Abet Institute the contract to provide the training at a cost of R3, 5 million – a fraction of the R640 million that the election is expected to cost.

**This Day 13 April 2004**

## Kwazulu-Natal

### WAITING FOR THE BARGAINING THE ODDNESS OF PARTY CAMPAIGNING IN KZN

*Laurence Piper*  
*University of KwaZulu-*  
*Natal, Pietermaritzburg*  
*Campus*

We are reaching the end of a curious election campaign in KwaZulu-Natal. At the root of this oddness is the contrast between the blandness of what parties say and the amazing alliances that they have formed. This odd outcome is the result of attempts to reconcile popular vote-catching with post-election elite bargaining. The closeness of the race has meant that fears about future bargaining and have sometimes outweighed electoral commonsense.

#### Campaign Content

What parties have said during elections is pretty dull. The major players all talk about the same issues and occupy similar positions near the centre of the ideological spectrum. Difference is more marked in the effectiveness parties claim to have. This is constituted by the competency of their policies and their power to deliver on their promises. Hence a major election issue has been the coalitions of post-

election power-sharing, 'vote for us because we can actually deliver' has been a common cry.

This much seems common nationally, but KZN is different in a couple of ways. In terms of the content of electioneering, violence and the capital issue have come to the fore in recent weeks, especially in the ANC's campaign. Where the ANC is using the former to invoke the passions of its core supporters, it is using the latter to reach middle-ground voters. While the message is tailored to different audiences the intention is the same: to rally voters against the IFP and for itself.

That election 2004 will be the freest and fairest election yet in KZN is common cause. To date the incidents of violence, intimidation and disruption are lower than in 1999 and certainly 1994. All parties and the IEC report to be satisfied with security preparations ahead of the poll, yet talk of violence remains high in KZN, especially from the side of the ANC. Indeed the ANC has organised visits by national and provincial leaders to key IFP areas such as Nongoma, Ulundi and Msinga. In the words of provincial organiser Senzo Mchunu, the point was to 'force the IFP to allow

access to areas our ordinary members could not enter'.

In part one can read this as a determination to ensure that political freedom does finally penetrate every corner of South Africa, at least during election time. Thus the ANC wants early deployment of outside security forces in IFP-held hotspots to facilitate a free and fair election. Relatedly, in a recent column in *ANC Today*, Thabo Mbeki spoke of the unique nature of violence in KZN, implying that this was problem that belonged to the first decade of South African liberation, and not the second – its time had passed.

In part though, talk of violence reinforces the stereotype of the IFP as a Zulu traditionalist party prone to confrontation when it does not get its way. In the same way that talk of apartheid curtails the credibility of the NNP, so talk of militant Zulu nationalism hurts the IFP. As hard as the party tries to portray itself as a multi-racial and conservative-liberal alternative to the ANC, it seems unable to outrun the past. Indeed, even the act of publicly calling for peace, as the party did extensively early on in its campaign, reinforces the popular association between the IFP and violence. Noticeably the IFP has

ceased talking about violence in recent times. Thus, intentionally or otherwise, talk of IFP violence is more important than its practice in 2004.

Similarly, the ANC has begun to talk increasingly about the capital issue as election day looms. The intention here is to target middle-ground voters, especially those living in and around Pietermaritzburg, who might be concerned with the IFP moving the legislative capital to Ulundi. Indeed the ANC has also used this issue to try and embarrass the DA in KZN. Thus these two issues are the main ones on which the content of the election campaign in KZN differs from elsewhere in South Africa.

A similar concern with reaching new supporters is echoed in the IFP's discourse. This has consistently portrayed the party as a more competent and inclusive alternative to the ANC whilst not attacking the ANC in too acrimonious a way until recently. Hence the quick distancing of the party from any suggestion of violence, and the affirmation of the economic importance of Pietermaritzburg in the party's manifesto and provincial growth and development plan.

In contrast with the measured tones of the IFP, the DA has taken a more

abrasive turn in recent days, epitomised in Tony Leon's speech at the joint IFP/DA rally in Durban on 4 April. When added to the recent attacks on Patricia De Lille, Amichand Rajbansi and other small parties, this suggests a concern to consolidate the opposition vote rather than advance into new constituencies.

### The Coalitions

If the content of election 2004 is pretty bland, the coalitions are extraordinary. Ten years ago who would have imagined the main liberation movement teaming up with the party which oversaw apartheid? Similarly who would have imagined the party associated with a militant Zulu traditionalism teaming up with a party associated with English-speaking capital? Today, nobody bats an eyelid.

In KZN the coalitions are the same as elsewhere in SA, but the reasons for them are a little different. For the ANC in KZN the 'partnership' with the NNP is more about a lack of alternatives and national consistency than the support that the NNP brings. Indeed, if the ANC is to form the provincial government after April 14 it may well have to rely on parties like the ACDP and the MF, as the NNP in KZN is a shadow of its former self. I think it more likely that the Coalition for Change will get the 41 seats needed

to elect the Premier, and certainly the Coalition suits the DA's national agenda of projecting itself as a potential challenger to ANC power. However, it remains an open question among many in the KZN DA whether the IFP is in fact better to work with than the ANC, and whether the IFP can be trusted to go into power with it rather than the ANC.

Further, from the IFP's point of view, the Coalition seems a sure vote loser. For one thing it amounts to an admission that the IFP cannot win KZN on its own. For another, the manner in which the Coalition has been presented to the public seems to favour the DA. This must undermine IFP attempts to court the more conservative vote reflected in its 'agreements' with Union Solidarity and the Freedom Front. In 1999 but especially in 1994, the IFP won many thousands of votes on the provincial ballot from people who voted NNP and DA on the national ballot, probably as an anti-ANC vote. However, with the DA in an alliance with the IFP, the rationale for an IFP tactical vote is removed.

If the Coalition does not make much sense as a vote-getting strategy it makes more sense in terms of position for post-election bargaining. There is a good chance that the Coalition will win more seats in the

provincial legislature than the ANC, placing the IFP in a position to secure the premiership of KZN once again. Given the track record of coalition and power-sharing between the ANC and IFP at both provincial and national level, the real excitement of election 2004 in KZN will be in the horse-trading after 14 April.

In sum then, the bizarre nature of coalitions in KZN is in marked contrast to the blandness of much of the content of electioneering, and reflects positioning for the real political contest of 2004: the post-election elite bargaining. It is really only against the anticipated outcome of a close race in the province that this oddness makes any sense.

### **Campaign Styles**

In terms of the style of electioneering both the ANC and the DA have followed their parties nationally in preferring person-to-person contact combined with a slick national media campaign to old-style rallies. This is new for the ANC rather than the DA, but it seems to be the new 'best practice' for electioneering in liberal-democracies. In contrast, the IFP seems to be pursuing the rally-driven style of years past.

Of the three main parties the DA's strategy is the most straightforward. Like the national strategy, the party in KZN is presenting itself as

the core of a new potential rival for power to the ANC. It is this perspective that defines its relationships with the IFP and ANC. As already noted, the only interesting nuance seems to be a recent return to its core voters over new ones. This is despite the fact that the party believes it can pick up between 10% and 12% of the black vote in areas of KZN.

For the ANC in KZN, the turn from rallies to personal contact reflects a national concern to 're-root' the party amongst an increasingly disillusioned electorate. In KZN this is a wise strategy. In the 2000 local government elections, the party lost ground to the IFP as only 49% of its 1999 supporters turned out. This was in contrast to the 60% of the IFP's supporters. This engaging style meshes well with the above noted issues of political violence and the location of the capital city. Unfortunately the dispersed and local nature of the ANC's programme makes its effectiveness difficult to assess, but most reports are positive.

The IFP's style is more rally-centred than the ANC and DA, indeed remarkably so, with Buthelezi speaking at no less than 40 events between the launch of the IFP's campaign on 18 January and the end of March. These rallies are scattered over most provinces – a remarkable schedule for a 76 year old

man. Clearly the plan is to push Buthelezi rather than the IFP (if such a distinction is a valid one), presenting him as an elderly, almost British-style, statesman looking distinguished in his bow-tie and formal jacket.

Yet, in my view, the IFP's attempts to target middle-ground voters are compromised by the imperative of securing power after the election. As argued above, the Coalition for Change undermines the IFP's independent identity, blurring the distinction between itself and the DA, and removing the rationale for most tactical votes in KZN.

Perhaps in the end the IFP should not be too troubled with this, for it has struggled to attract voters outside of rural areas of KZN since the 1996 local government elections anyway. Indeed the core challenge for it, as for the ANC, resides with its long-standing rural supporters. This is because firstly, the numbers of rural people are roughly 3.5 % down since 1996 and, more importantly, because the ANC is making inroads into rural areas.

Thus while both the ANC and IFP have problems with their supporters, the problems are quite different: ANC has a potentially growing but apathetic support-base whereas the IFP has a shrinking but more reliable one.

## CAMPAIGNING IN KWAZULU-NATAL

*Shauna Mottiar*  
Independent Political  
Analyst

As the election approaches, opinion poll predictions are mounting. Of particular interest are predictions that the African National Congress (ANC) will take power in KwaZulu-Natal an official Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) stronghold. Analysts are quick to point out however, that opinion polls are not always accurate. In 1999, a pre election poll predicted that the IFP would win 4% of the vote. It in fact won 8.58% of the vote.<sup>6</sup> The close contestation in the province is reflected in the campaign processes of the IFP and ANC respectively.

The IFP has campaigned in KwaZulu-Natal quite intensively paying particular attention to its traditional strongholds of power - rural and peri-urban areas. It has also attempted to intensify its popularity within Indian constituencies and increase its support from within youth sectors.<sup>7</sup> The ANC on the other hand, has concentrated on permeating IFP strongholds and former 'no go' areas for ANC

campaigners. The ANC rally in Ulundi is an example. Ulundi is a well established IFP stronghold and the site of much political tension and violence in the 1994 election where two ANC party workers were shot dead and a number of ANC vehicles burned by ardent IFP supporters. The ANC rally in Ulundi for the upcoming election was for the most part contained by a massive show of strength by the South African Police Service (SAPS). A convoy of ANC activists and supporters arrived in Ulundi accompanied by several hundred heavily armed policemen and helicopters hovering overhead. Reports are that the Ulundi townships were very quiet with many residents remaining indoors and very few people except children willing to accept ANC flyers being handed out by members of the convoy. An address by Charles Nqakula (Minister of Safety and Security) was nearly disrupted when a group of IFP supporters attempted to force their way forward towards the podium - they were held at bay by the SAPS. Nqakula was addressing the issue of eradicating the culture of 'no go areas' in KwaZulu-Natal: "we are sending a message to anybody who wants to impede others who are trying to exercise their democratic rights...that they will be dealt with". Notwithstanding Nqakula's convictions, it is clear that some IFP

supporters still reject the ANC on what they see as their turf, hence the attempt to disrupt the rally. More worrying however, is the fact that many township residents remained indoors during the rally. This indicates possible fears of political intimidation. Indeed, the ANC was forced to abandon its plans to campaign door to door in the province because of fears that residents visited would be victimised later.<sup>8</sup>

Existing tensions between the ANC and IFP have been compounded by campaign disruptions and violence. President Thabo Mbeki accused IFP leadership of "orchestrating the intimidation of campaigning political opponents". He was referring to various incidents where ANC rallies had been disrupted and claimed that the only conclusion to be drawn was that an armed minority group had come to terrorise the people and limit their interaction with the President. He added that the IFP was acting to protect white interests by entering into a "right wing coalition" with the Democratic Alliance (DA). The IFP's Mangosuthu Buthelezi responded to these claims by saying that his alliance with the DA was based on shared federalist principles. He also accused the ANC of formulating a one party state evidenced by their ever

<sup>6</sup> Tabane, R, "Palaver of the Polls", *Mail & Guardian*, April 2 2004

<sup>7</sup> Msomi, T, "We also took up fight against the oppressors", *Sunday Times*, March 28 2004

<sup>8</sup> Harper, P, "ANC has first rally in Ulundi", *Sunday Tribune*, March 28 2004

increasing concentration of power undermining the autonomy of provincial and local government. He then referred to campaign disruptions saying that IFP supporters did not prevent Jacob Zuma from campaigning in the IFP hostel strongholds in Johannesburg but rather Zuma failed to observe Zulu protocol of announcing his visit.<sup>9</sup>

Violence in the province during election campaigning has led the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) to put into plan an election observation system. The KwaZulu-Natal Democracy and Elections Forum (KZNDEF) has been tasked with proactively dealing with any threats to the election, it plans to have 140 monitors working in 5 regions in the province (northern KZN, south coast, Ladysmith, the Midlands and Durban) during the pre election period. The KZNDEF which is to be the largest group of independent domestic observers is still waiting for confirmation of further funding before it can add more domestic observers to its ranks. It is also running a tight schedule as funding for the initiative came through very late. Its aim is to have 2000 independent monitors covering 85% of voting stations on election day.<sup>10</sup> Notwithstanding the

campaign disruption and violence in KwaZulu-Natal, both IFP and ANC structures are planning their premierships for the province in preparation for the next administration.

The IFP, it seems, will retain Lionel Mtshali as its candidate for the premiership. According to analyst Kiru Naidoo, Mtshali's status in the party is unchallengeable. He is known to be a hardliner within the party. This can be proved by his dismissal of several ANC MEC's from his cabinet during the floor-crossing period due to what he termed the ANC's "backdoor attempt" to seize control of the province. To all intents and purposes, the province seems to have been led fairly well under Mtshali and Naidoo claims that the ethic of good governance has become enshrined in the province and that the financial situation is well in order.<sup>11</sup> Should the IFP maintain control in KwaZulu-Natal after the election it is set to implement its "Growth and Development Plan" for the province. It is reported that the Plan grants sweeping powers to the Premier effectively reducing powers of MEC's and allowing the Premier high levels of control over various departments. According to the Plan, "The office of the

Premier will ensure that KwaZulu-Natal is governed in a 'joined up' manner with one vision that will infuse the work and life of each department, moving away from the existing situation of fragmented government activity"<sup>12</sup> The Plan also makes the Premier responsible for the province's economic development framework which aims to target direct foreign investment and make KwaZulu-Natal an 'economic powerhouse'. Under the Plan, the Premier becomes responsible for rooting out corruption, controlling youth development and facilitating the empowerment of women. The Plan will also settle the "status, role and function of the monarchy" by drafting a new provincial constitution (the previous constitution was not certified by the Constitutional Court) as well as enhancing the role of traditional authorities (a key component of the IFP's support base) with the provision of support and offices. HIV/AIDS is also given priority by the Plan that envisages an extensive HIV/AIDS programme. Despite the election battle ahead, the IFP has already begun to lay the groundwork for its vision by employing highly paid consultants to advise the provincial government. Criticism of the Plan is abundant led by the

<sup>9</sup> *Sunday Times*, March 28 2004 and April 4 2004

<sup>10</sup> *Witness*, April 1 2004

<sup>11</sup> Harper, P, "Head to Head in KZN", *Sunday Tribune*, March 28 2004

<sup>12</sup> Harper, P, "All Power to the Premier", *Sunday Tribune*, April 4 2004

view that the extended powers of the Premier constitute centralisation of power – something the IFP has always criticised the ANC of indulging in on a national basis.

## **FREE STATE**

### **COUNT DOWN ELECTION CAMPAIGNING AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT**

*Angelique Harsant and  
Willem Ellis  
University of the Free state*

#### **Introduction**

Political parties are making a final effort to campaign for votes and prepare for the elections. Even though the Free State does not engender the same interest on the electoral radar as, for instance, the Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal or Gauteng, political parties still sent in their big guns in order to convince Free Staters to vote for them. Election campaigning has been vigorous, utilising both national and provincial political figures in order to maximise its impact. This report will attempt to highlight some of the major events of the various election campaigns in the province and the measures taken to ensure a peaceful free and fair election.

Speculation as to who the ANC's candidate for Premier will be should it take power in KwaZulu-Natal, centre on Deputy President Jacob Zuma. This is due to his ability to work with IFP and Minister of Transport S'bu

#### **Election Campaigning**

In the first few weeks of 2004, opposition parties started campaigning vigorously for the upcoming elections. The ANC took another approach and aligned its campaigning strategy with the party's election slogan, i.e. a people's contract, by door-to-door visits. President Mbeki started the party's door-to-door campaign in Botshabelo, a section of Bloemfontein in the Free State with one million residents. The residents of this area complained to the President mainly about unemployment, lack of resources, and Pitso Moikume (an ex-cadre of the Azanian People's Liberation Army) handed the President a petition on behalf of dissatisfied ex-soldiers.<sup>13</sup> President Mbeki has also visited the mines in Welkom shortly after the area was visited by Mr. Tony Leon and Dr. Mangosutho Buthelezi. The ANC also vigorously campaigned for votes among white Free Staters.

<sup>13</sup> Msomi, 2004:1 and Engelbrecht, 2004, p.1.

Ndebele who according to Naidoo "has held the ANC together in the region and has the reputation for giving the IFP no quarter in the race for control of the legislature"

Deputy-president Jacob Zuma also visited the Free State in the latter part of March, stating that only a vote for the ANC could ensure real participation in the government of the country. The ANC concluded its election campaign in the Free State with its largest meeting thus far at Bethlehem in the Free State. The current premier, Winkie Direko, the leader of the ANC in the province, Mr. Ace Magashule and Dr. Essop Pahad, Minister in the office of the President graced the occasion. They used the opportunity to ensure voters that legislation empowering women and the youth would be forthcoming in the near future and that a vote for anybody but the ANC would be a wasted vote.<sup>14</sup> The strength of the tripartite alliance was also demonstrated when Dr. Blade Nzimande, the leader of the South African Communist Party (SACP) visited the Free State recently and asked voters to vote for the ANC as the only party that could make a difference to their lives.

<sup>14</sup> Kok, 2004a, p.2

At a meeting held in the Eastern Free State during the week of 23-26 March, Mr. Innes Aucamp, the NNP leader in the Free State again reiterated that an alliance with the ANC was the only workable option for progress in the South African political environment. He mentioned that time for confrontational politics was over and that the NNP was uniquely positioned to assist in transforming the country and province.<sup>15</sup>

The leadership of the DA-IFP coalition, Mr. Tony Leon and Dr. Mangosutho Buthelezi visited the Goldfields, a traditional ANC stronghold, on 20 February. They used the opportunity to address mineworkers with regard to the declining mining industry and its impact on the local economy of the Welkom area. During a visit to the underground workings of a mine, Mr. Leon mentioned that ANC economic policies chased potential investors away from the province. Dr. Buthelezi defended the DA-IFP alliance, saying that the two parties shared similar values<sup>16</sup>. At an IFP meeting, also attended by DA MP's, in Qwaqwa on 28 March, Dr. Buthelezi accused the President of putting international matters and the building of the AU before pressing issues in South Africa such as HIV/AIDS,

poverty and crime. He stated that the DA-IFP alliance agreed on ways of addressing these scourges and would do so if elected.<sup>17</sup>

A recent election poll conducted by Markinor provides some interesting estimates regarding the popularity of different parties in the Free State. According to the poll, the ANC should consolidate its position in the province with 75.5% of voter support, with the DA coming in second with 10.6% electoral support. This could give the ANC 23 of the seats in the Free State Legislature (down from 25) and the DA three (up from two). The NNP, with 0.5% of the vote in the province and the FF+, with 2.7% of the vote could both lose their seats in the legislature allowing the ACDP to enter the legislature for the first time with 4.5% of electoral support.<sup>18</sup> The FF+ and the NNP both reacted by saying that this result did not coincide with their own findings and did not reflect their support in the province.

March 24 saw the last sitting of the current Free State legislature and political parties represented in the legislature made use of this opportunity to lambaste each other in the protected environment of the legislature. The DA accused the ANC of being power-

hungry and said that the NNP had destroyed itself through its alliance with the ANC. The DA was accused by the NNP of polarising the political landscape in the province, with the FF+ comparing the DA to a jackal – changing its coat, but never its tricks. The ANC defended its alliance with the NNP by saying that this was the only way of building the nation<sup>19</sup>

Vigorous election campaigns have the tendency of raising the political temperature in a province and the Free State should be no different. Comments by political leaders at meetings and rallies could easily encourage their supporters to act outside the boundaries of responsible electioneering and the codes of conduct signed by party leaders. This could cause a variety of conflicts to erupt, derailing responsible election programmes of political parties. To date the Free State has been fortunate with the IEC only reporting minor incidents of conflict. These incidents included reports by the UDM in Sasolburg and the DA in Botshabelo, regarding the removal or defacing of election posters and placards.

### **Conflict Management**

Efforts to stabilise the Free State in the run-up to the election and pro-actively address conflict have led to

<sup>15</sup> Kok, 2004b, p.2.

<sup>16</sup> De Wet, 2004, p.5.

<sup>17</sup> Kok, 2004c, p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> Coetzee, 2004, p.1

<sup>19</sup> Coetzee, 2004a, p.19

the creation of an elaborate conflict resolution structure. This structure is not new and consisted of eight members in 1999. This article will endeavour to briefly sketch this structure and its operational duties.

According Mr. S Rabanye<sup>20</sup> of the Free State IEC, the provincial conflict resolution structure is controlled by the Chief Electoral Officer of the Free State, Mr. C Mepha, and is operationally directed by one of his senior officials, Mr. S Rabanye. On a provincial basis they are assisted by a specially trained conflict resolution panel, consisting of individuals with experience in conflict resolution practices. The panellists are based in Bloemfontein and are on standby to address any conflict in the province. Placement of the panellists in the five regions of the province on the eve of the election to ensure quicker deployment to conflict situations is currently being considered by the management of the IEC. The conflict resolution panel currently consists of the following five individuals, each with experience in conflict resolution, facilitation and community dynamics:

- Mr. K Tladi;
- Mr. M Webber;
- Mr. P Pajane;
- Mr. N Mothibeli; and
- Mr. A Rafaku.

The five provincial panellists were introduced to all of the political parties during a Party Liaison Committee meeting held on 25 March.

The panellists will only be utilised in cases where conflicts cannot be addressed on a local level and the IEC has made provision for local conflict management through the deployment of 25 electoral project co-ordinators (EPCs) throughout the 20 municipalities of the province. Due to the higher number of voters and a higher conflict potential two EPCs have been deployed to the Matjabeng Municipality (Welkom) and Maluti a Phofung Municipality (Qwaqwa) and three to the Mangaung Municipality (Bloemfontein, Botshabelo, Thaba Nchu). Experience has shown that the local practitioners can address most conflicts and that provincial panellists are not always needed for conflict resolution. The few conflict situations referred to above were all addressed by the EPCs. EPCs are mandated to liaise with any necessary role-players on local level to address the conflict, but should keep the provincial IEC office informed of progress regarding the conflict in order for provincial panellist to be deployed if necessary.

The panellists and EPCs received the very same training over a period of two

days. This was conducted in late January 2004, and only their reporting structures differed. The training was conducted by facilitators deployed by EISA and aimed at introducing participants to conflict resolution practices within an electoral environment. Participants were provided with handbooks containing the training materials. The following topics were covered:

- A chapter on democracy, elections and conflict sought to describe the meaning of democracy within SADC and South Africa and the central role that elections played in upholding democracy. Electoral systems were reviewed and the role of the IEC and observers during elections were addressed. The presence of conflict during elections was also described.
- Chapter two dealt exclusively with conflict, defining conflict and looking at sources and roots of conflicts. Escalation and de-escalation of conflict were investigated and participants were shown how to assess a conflict. Strategies for managing conflict were also described.
- The last chapter described the interests-based approach to managing conflict, highlighting the role of mediation and

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negotiation in this process. Emphasis was placed on dealing with people during conflict situations and using problem solving techniques in addressing conflict.

The training was aimed at complementing the already existing skills and experiences of panellists and EPCs in order to produce well-rounded conflict resolution practitioners. It is only time that will tell whether they will be able to cope with electoral conflicts in the Free State.

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## WESTERN CAPE ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL IN THE: WESTERN CAPE

*Dr. Cheryl Hendricks*  
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As we approach the April 14 elections, political parties are winding down their campaigns. The popular verdict seems to be that this was an exceedingly dull campaign. This is partly due to the fact that the outcome of the national election and most of the provincial elections appeared to be a forgone conclusion. This has influenced the nature of the campaigns. Taking advantage of the celebration of ten years of democracy, the African National Congress (ANC) has seemed content with patting itself on the back for its successes and promising to do better in those areas where complaints can still be levied. Lacking any credible alternative policies, opposition parties have concentrated on pointing out the areas of weakness in ANC policies or government and discrediting each other. Election campaigns serve the purpose of making the electorate aware of the different political parties contesting elections and their respective policies, all with the central purpose of garnering their votes. This paper analyses the effectiveness of the campaigns of some of the

political parties contesting the elections in the Western Cape.

There are 20 political parties competing in the Western Cape's provincial elections. It is unlikely that any of these parties will gain 50% or more of the votes, and therefore a coalition government will remain the order of the day in this province. Only two coalitions stand a chance of occupying the provincial portals of power after April 14: the Democratic Alliance and the ANC/NNP alliance. The latest SABC/Markinor opinion poll estimates that the ANC will obtain 32%, the DA 24%, and the New National Party (NNP) 13% of the votes. Political parties believe that opinion polls are snapshots of voter preference at a particular time and that they are able to mould the attitude of voters and thus influence the outcome of the elections. This is why they spend millions on election campaigns and accuse those with more party funds of being at an advantage. How, then, have the competing political parties sought to sway the electorate and which sections of the electorate are they targeting?

The ANC has significantly increased its support base in most of the communities of the Western Cape. In both the 1994 and 1999 elections it was struggling to make inroads into the Coloured community, the largest

demographic group in the province. This community has traditionally supported the NNP. Through an alliance with the NNP, the ANC succeeded in capturing the provincial legislature in 2003. This alliance has decapitated the NNP, for many of its supporters would now either vote directly for the ANC or shift to one of the other parties. This has directly affected the campaigns of both the ANC and the NNP. The ANC runs what it calls a "positive campaign." The emphasis of their message is on what they have done as a governing party and what they plan to do (create jobs, build houses, and so forth). Their billboards are high up on the lampposts – way above the rest – with a simple message: "VOTE ANC." It is President Mbeki's face that graces all the posters, not Ebrahim Rasool's, and this leaves the impression of an invitation to the Western Cape to become part of mainstream South Africa in the governance sphere.

High profiled ANC members, including President Mbeki and Deputy President Zuma, have visited towns in the Western Cape over the last two months. They have not forgotten to visit the homes in traditionally white and Coloured suburbs. It is the exercise of meeting the people through their door to door visits that is the ANC's

most effective strategy in the Western Cape. Any house that President Mbeki has walked into, and in which he has listened to the respective concerns and promised to do something about them, is almost sure to translate into a vote for the ANC. The weakest aspect of ANC's electioneering has been its inability to appeal to the youth. During the voter registration drive it became apparent that many youth were not registering. In the Western Cape, 34% of those aged between 18 and 24 years have not registered. For those that have registered, the Nando's chicken advertisement (in which they advertise the chicken as if it were a political party) seems more appealing than the slogans/quotes of the political parties.

The NNP has had a hard time trying to distinguish itself from the ANC during this election campaign. It is once again targeting the Coloured vote, for this is about the only vote it can deliver, and this just barely, to justify an alliance with the ANC. Their posters state: "It is your country too," "Let us be your voice," "Keep the Western Cape NNP" "Your key to government" "DP+Right-wing = DA," and the most recent blazoned in pink, "DA in government? When pigs fly." The first four posters speak to minorities and this is in line with the NNP seeing itself as

the champion of minority interests. However, in previous elections "keeping the Western Cape NNP" translated into keeping the ANC out. This is no longer the case and the DA has highlighted this *ad nauseum*. We are living in strange times where previous conservative racist parties can now label once liberal parties as racist, which is the retort of the NNP. The NNP now projects itself as the only truly multi-racial party in South Africa, but all parties claim this. The NNP has reverted to bringing back "pappa" as a last ditch attempt to secure the Coloured vote. De Klerk, whom many Coloureds supported in 1994, appeared at a rally in Hanover Park recently. The NNP has been staggeringly unsuccessful in selling its new *anti-opposition* opposition politics (what it calls 'participatory governance'). This party has made too many fatal errors and it is very likely that it would become history after this election. It seems poised to go down in history as the party which sold out the white vote in the apartheid era and the Coloured vote in the post-apartheid era.

The Democratic Alliance is concentrating on the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. It has now formed an alliance with the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). The DA has taken its road and rail show to small towns in the

Western Cape, handed out bullet proof vests in Woodstock, and has been to Mitchell's Plein and to Stellenbosch University. It hopes to make inroads into both Coloured and Afrikaner constituencies by spreading the message that a vote for the NNP translates into a vote for the ANC and by capitalising on the high crime and unemployment rates in the province. The DA's slogan is "South Africa Deserves Better." It claims that this has no racist connotations for they mean, "A big country deserves a better government. A big country deserves a better alternative. A big country like South Africa deserves a better future." However, constant reference to Zimbabwe, corruption, ruling party non-delivery and the "whiteness" of their party leadership makes it difficult not to perceive it as playing the race card or as subtly appealing to race sentiment. The DA is increasing its support nationally. However, it is the perceived need for a strong opposition party to keep the government in check, and its ability to become this, that largely explains the increase of support for this party. The constant bellicose tone of the DA is paying off in increasing its support, this despite its apparent lack of real policy alternatives. Its only clear policy alternative is the promise of nullifying progressive labour

legislation fought for by workers.

The Independent Democrats (ID) hope to attract all those who no longer see the DA and the NNP/ANC as representing their interests. De Lille, the party's leader, positions herself as a principled person who will not enter into alliances for the mere sake of power. Others have labelled the party as a 'one woman show' and defectors from the party have criticised her leadership style as dictatorial. To her credit, De Lille has stuck to the issues in her campaign instead of being side-tracked into the mud-slinging that has beset the other smaller parties. The recent testing for HIV/Aids by the party members is an example of the low-keyed, yet effective way in which the ID is putting the issues at the forefront of their campaign.

The New Labour Party's slogan is "Its our time" but its leader, Peter Marais, has had his time and wasted it. The Cape People's Congress claims that "enough is enough" but offers the electorate nothing; the National Action invites the public to "catch the new wave," but waves by their very nature rise and decline quite rapidly and for this party prematurely so; the African Muslim Party invites us to join the "fight to reduce bread by R1"; the African Christian Democratic Party assert that they represent "true hope for the nation,"

but want to ban abortions in a country with alarming rape statistics and teenage pregnancies. "Vote Azapo" and "Vote PAC" – where are these posters?

Campaigns essentially revolve around promises by parties of what they will do if they are chosen to form the government. If the campaigns have been dull during this election, it is because none of the opposition parties have offered the public a compelling alternative vision of how society should be organised. The opposition parties may allege that they are not fairing well in this election because of a lack of equity with regard to access to the media and funding. However, no amount of extra funding or media publicity is likely to dramatically affect the outcome of the elections. The truth is that people choose their parties for a variety of reasons other than the slogans on the billboards: trust, tradition, policies, identity, and so forth, are far more important than advertisements. The new social movements are beginning to mobilise themselves as an alternative to the parties. However, they remain embryonic and divided. Perhaps by 2009 they will be a strong voice with credible alternatives and in the process liven up the debate about the possible future for our country that ought to energise election campaigning.

## EASTERN CAPE

### **PARTY CAMPAIGNS THE NON- CONTEST ELECTION IN THE EASTERN CAPE**

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#### **Introduction**

In line with national predictions, most analyses of the likely outcome of the 2004 election in the Eastern Cape, point to an ANC victory. There is consensus amongst political analysts, academics and pollsters that the ruling party will be returned to power - most likely with an increased margin. This article discusses the campaign focus of the parties just prior to the election concentrating on the leaders styles and the strengths of their messages.

What is notable about the provincial campaign? As in the other seven provinces of the country, where the ANC is most certainly going to be comfortably returned to power, is the dullness of the campaign.

Unlike in 1994 when there was a lot of euphoria around the process and in 1999 when the presence of the newly formed UDM presented a challenge to the ANC and a new dimension to the electoral process in the province, this time around

the campaigns are almost dead.

#### **The African National Congress**

The campaign tone of the ANC, in this so-called heartland of the party, has followed the national focus and emphasis. As polls have predicted, the only two contested provinces in South Africa will be KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape and in this regard, predictably the ANC has not actually focused much of its campaign in the Eastern Cape.

Its provincial campaign has been overshadowed by the contest in the two provinces. From January when it launched its manifesto in KwaZulu-Natal to the end of March, only senior officials of the party like ministers and member of its National Executive Committee (NEC) send to canvass in the province.

It is only in the two weeks preceding the election that the party sent its most senior leaders to the province. The process was kicked off by a two-day visit by President Mbeki at the end of March. This was followed by plans to send in the Deputy President Jacob Zuma the following week to be followed by the party's National Chairperson Mosiuoa Lekota, during the

last weekend of the campaign.

Following the national campaign trend, President Mbeki focused on the ANC's past achievements in providing social services to previously disadvantaged communities, and stressing continuity in this regard in the second decade of democracy. Quite significantly, Mbeki started the campaign by paying homage to the king of the Rharhabe, Mxhoba Sandile. In this province, where traditional leaders are critical in garnering support for political parties – this was a very shrewd move on the part of the ANC to defer to traditional authority.

This move followed the recent visit to the province by the Minister of Public Works Stella Sigcau, who is a princess, to rally support for the party. Her continued presence in the cabinet is owed in part to her royal roots and her ability to bring on board this sector of support for the ANC. Such imagery is very powerful in the Eastern Cape, especially after the founding of the UDM in 1997, which has sought to present itself as the true custodian of traditional structures in the province.

Beyond this, the President, unlike in past campaigns, and also in following national trends has cultivated

what the media has labeled his "new image". This entails undertaking both impromptu and well staged "walkabouts" by making house-to-house visits in residential areas. Here he engages voters about their problems, listening to their concerns and noting them and directing his officials in his entourage to deal with them. To what extent this campaign strategy will actually have any bearing on the election results is quite debatable, but quite clearly the ANC is intent in sprucing up the image of its leader to rebuff media and opposition complaints that he is a boring and aloof leader. The strategy is meant to indicate a leader who is compassionate, willing to listen to ordinary people and prepared to act on their behalf. For example, Mbeki has not lost the chance to note that he is concerned about the complaints that he is receiving from ordinary people around the country, especially against the tardiness of local government officials. Quite dramatically, and in tune with his image of caring for the ordinary citizen, he ordered the shutting down of an illegal shebeen in Port Elizabeth during his walkabout there and accused DA officials in the city of refusing to campaign in poor areas because they look down upon poor people.

This is quite an interesting change in focus of the ANC's

campaign and hails the positioning of candidates than ever before. However, it might well be symptomatic of a disturbing trend that the level of debate in this campaign is without much substance.

### Opposition Parties

Opposition parties that have indicated serious interest in contesting the Eastern Cape election are unsurprisingly the UDM given its success in the 1999 election, the DA, and to a lesser extent the NNP. This can be gauged by the sending of their national leaders to the province to address campaigns. Marthinus Van Schalkwyk and Tony Leon have frequently made what the media has described as "lightning" visits to the province whilst Bantu Holomisa returned now and then, especially to his base in Umtata. Their campaign messages have been largely to attack the ANC on delivery, HIV/AIDS, corruption and the need to keep out the ANC from power.

In a very significant move, the DA and UDM have attacked ANC for using state functions and resources to promote the party and reports of political intimidation. In the latter case, a DA rally was allegedly disrupted by unruly ANC members in East London who played loud music outside the venue

where the DA was holding an election rally.

The case of corruption was taken up personally by Tony Leon who instructed the provincial leadership to lay a complaint with the Public Protector after the ANC allegedly used a government fax machine to print a fund raising flyer. These events have been noted by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and the Public Service Accountability Monitor (PSAM), although no official complaint has been lodged with these bodies. The IEC has however decided to be pro-active and has called meeting between the three parties to sort out these differences.

The wildcard party in the provincial race has been the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), which has generally ignored the province. Its leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi was slated to visit the province for a rally during the week preceding the election.

Besides these main parties, the ID and Azapo are the only two other parties that have sent in their national leaders to campaign in the province, although their efforts have been very low-key instances.

The PAC has been very quiet in the province, with its leader not having even made one visit, a situation that also goes for the ACDP.

One interesting factor that might well be critical to the impact of the political parties in the provinces has been their focus on attacking each other. The UDM has bitterly criticised the NNP and DA for having supported the floor-crossing legislation last year that nearly led to its annihilation. Generally, the DA has accused the other parties of being non-starters, maintaining that voting for them leads to a waste of votes - focusing especially on Patricia De Lille of the ID, calling her party a "one woman show". The ID has countered with a blistering attack on the DA for its senior memberships' endorsement of the death penalty, especially senior leaders like Tony Leon and Douglas Gibson.

All this bickering is likely to negatively affect opposition parties, especially in provinces such as the Eastern Cape where the ANC already enjoys massive support. What this actually does is to confuse the voters more and reduce their chances of making a serious impact.

#### **ANC-Opposition Message and Prospects for Success**

The ANC is likely to succeed in its strategy of combining the image of a caring Thabo Mbeki with its powerful message of what it has managed to do for the people of the province. Its rebuttal of criticism from opposition parties by

pointing out to its efforts against fighting corruption in the province and the envisaged national roll out of anti-retroviral drugs, seriously dent the attacks of the opposition.

Opposition attacks on each other, their similar campaign message in terms of identical attacks on the ANC in issues ranging from HIV/Aids to corruption, are unlikely to sway support from ANC members to these parties. They are also seriously hampered by serious intra party bickering and attacking each other to position themselves as the "strong opposition" that can take on the ANC.

#### **Conclusion**

The ANC's third straight win in the province in this election should serve as a serious imperative on opposition political parties to look seriously at their campaign strategies and policies.

As on the national level, the threat of democracy to South Africa may not come from the ANC becoming a dominant party. The alienation of voters, however, from the process of elections that will become a dull and ritualised affair bereft of meaning as long as opposition parties cannot challenge the ANC provincially and nationally.

## NORTHERN CAPE

### **ELECTION CAMPAIGNING AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT – THE NORTHERN CASE**

#### *Kenney*

Most political parties finally appear to be taking the Northern Cape vote seriously. A number of significant political parties descended on the province to canvass for votes. We should remember that this is the only province with less than a million votes. In fact, it has less than 500 000 thousand registered voters with the majority of them concentrated around the Diamond Field District that incorporates the city of Kimberly. Outside this district the rest of the population is spread across this vast province and it becomes very expensive for political parties to canvass votes. This situation appears to be giving the ANC an edge over its competitors for the hearts and minds of the Northern Cape voters.

#### **Political Campaigning**

##### *The ANC*

The ANC President has finally visited the Northern Cape to embark on a door-to-door campaign that has become the feature of the ANC campaigning in this year's national and

provincial election. It must be remembered that the government *Imbizo* was not held in this province and the government promised to hold it after the election. Even though, the government argued that these were not part of the ANC's campaign strategy; it was clear that they served to increase the profile of the ANC. It gave them the image that this is the government that cares about its people.

The Democratic Alliance (DA) and some analysts had argued that President Thabo Mbeki was aloof and did not show any concern for ordinary people and that he spends most of his time outside the country. The DA had also argued that Mbeki also shuns the question time in Parliament and leaves his Deputy President to deal with any questions. Therefore, these *Imbizos* and the door-to-door campaigns spearheaded by the government and the ANC respectively are an attempt by the President to dispel those claims. Both these strategies have been very successful, as these gatherings have been well received by the ordinary people.

A concern has been raised that most political parties, especially those in power, only visit the ordinary people when the election approaches but rarely visits

their citizens after the elections. This is sometimes termed an electoral cycle. According to this understanding, politicians appear competent and perform well just ahead of elections. However, this is not necessarily a bad thing, as the electorate can somehow hold politicians accountable. This is what makes a competitive democracy better than a dictatorship. The party politicians might not be the only ones responsible for this trend but also the voters and observers since the voters tend to be more vigilant during this period and South Africa is no exception. Elections are therefore a very important part of a democracy.

The ANC's door-to-door campaigning has not been smooth sailing. It has exposed the ruling party to some very harsh criticisms from the ordinary voters and this province is no exception. The *Star* reported that Mbeki and fellow ANC dignitaries witnessed a Kimberly resident openly attacking the local ANC ward councillor Martin le Grange. She said that she used to like the local councillor but things changed when her electricity was cut off, arguing that they have not had electricity for months. The councillor defended himself by arguing that he was not the one responsible for cutting the

electricity but it was the municipality. The resident answered by saying that she did not want anything to do with her local councillor. Mbeki told the woman that most municipalities in the country were in serious financial trouble and they were trying to help municipalities resolve these problems. During this campaigning, the President allowed people to talk and promised them that they were going to attend to their problems.

This was but one of the stories that the ANC encountered in their door-to-door campaign strategy, which appeared to have been very successful. Furthermore this process might have entrenched the image of a party that somehow cares about the people. At the beginning this might have been seen as a risk assignment by the ruling party but come the election on 14 April; we will see how far it went to solidify the ANC position amongst the electorate.

The other issue of interest during this election campaign by the ANC is the ordinary people's conception of government. It appears that the voters do not hold the national government responsible for the problems at local government level. It is not held accountable for the 'upward' looking councillors, who seem detached from their local

communities. The voters do not link the failures of local municipalities to the policies set by the government at national level. This tends to work in the interest of the party in power since failure to deliver services at local level will not translate to the loss of votes during the national and provincial elections. This might be one of the reasons the voter turnout is often higher during these elections than local government election.

The ANC political campaign strategy was characterised by the door-to-door campaigning. This could be a very expensive process and very difficult for smaller parties to emulate. This is also unlikely to generate as much hype as presidential visits. Therefore, this tended to give the ANC a lot of mileage and might have consolidated its current position or more than that, earned it new friends.

#### *The Opposition Parties in the Province:*

The New National Party (NNP) leadership also headed for this province in the past week. It appears that the lack of resources has meant that most political parties concentrate on their traditional support basis and the NNP is no exception. They met with various groups including the farming community. In a public meeting with farmers in Victoria West, the NNP

leader, Martinus van Schalkwyk said farmers represented a valuable resource. He argued that they were the cornerstones of many rural families. He singled out particularly Afrikaner farmers. He further argued that there were hopeful signs that white farmers were willing to cooperate in the process of land redistribution to avoid the mistakes that were made in Zimbabwe. The NNP approach appears to be more conciliatory and continues to try to get white electorate to buy in to the approach of cooperative government with the ANC.

Whereas, the Democratic Alliance (DA), on the other hand, believes that the ANC should not be treated with "kid gloves" and needs to be confronted directly when it fails to deliver. The SABC/Markinor opinion poll predicts that the DA will replace the NNP as the official opposition. If this is the case, this will put the NNP in a weaker position when it negotiates the terms of the coalition with the ANC in the province. The NNP hopes that this will be one of the provinces where it can form a coalition government with the ANC.

The DA leader Tony Leon also visited the province on 1 April 2004 to address his supporters. The event was also covered in the local newspaper. All the opposition parties appear

resigned to an ANC controlled government after the election. The DA believes that the ID will only make visible inroads into the ANC constituency. Therefore, the DA does not see the ID as a threat in their attempt to become the main opposition.

### **Orania – A No-Go Area in the Northern Cape**

Orania appears to be one area where political parties are not in a hurry to solicit votes. About fourteen years ago, a community of white people fighting for the right to self-determination came together to form an area that is now known as Orania. The area is privately owned town that covers 3000 hectares of farmland in the Upper Karoo. The Afrikaner Volkstaat land was acquired from the Department of Water Affairs and it has a statue of the apartheid architect Hendrik Verwoerd. This is an exclusively white Afrikaner community with a population of about 600 residents.

During the previous elections held in the country - the municipal election, nobody bothered to vote and instead they had their own 'private municipal elections.' The IEC at the time said that the government would not recognise that council. Fast forward into the present, it appears that most political parties will not worry to canvass votes in this area

since there is little hope that the residents of Orania will bother to vote. One of the political leaders that have vowed not to canvass for votes in this town is Patricia de Lille, the leader of the Independent Democrats (ID). The *Sowetan Sunday World* quoted her as saying she could not care less for its residents; arguing that the Freedom Front Plus (FF+) should go there and seek votes. The DA said that they are not interested in people who believe in exclusivity while living in a united South Africa. The DA said as a party they will go anywhere to seek votes, but will avoid Orania, while the ANC said that its priority is to set up strong bases where it has an evident following. The FF+ is the only political party that has put posters in the area. It appears however, that for now most political parties will not be canvassing votes in the area.

### **Conclusion**

The Northern Cape appears set for a peaceful election No serious infringements to the Electoral Code of Conduct have been reported. If one takes history into consideration, there are unlikely to be any serious violations to the Code of Conduct. There has been only one high profile incident in the Northern Cape and that involved low ranking ANC officials and Patricia de Lille, the leader of the ID. This was never

brought to the attention of the IEC, and the IEC officials only read about this incident in the newspapers. This is the only notable incident in the Northern Cape. Most political parties wrapped up their political campaigns in the province last week. The IEC believes that it is more than ready for the coming elections and material has already been delivered to the voting districts throughout the province.

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## MPUMALANGA

### ELECTION CAMPAIGNING AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN MPUMALANGA

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#### Peaceful Electioneering

The IEC in Mpumalanga, as in other parts of the country, has put in place mechanisms to deal with conflict among political parties during campaign phase of this election. According to IEC officials in the province, preparations and mechanisms in place are meant to dealing with inter party conflict in the two phases of this year's general election: the campaigning phase and on election day. The campaign phase was preceded by the various political parties and other role players signing an electoral Code of Conduct that governs the way political parties and other stakeholders will conduct themselves in relation to each other and to citizens during campaigning. Political parties are also encouraged to report to, and lodge formal complaints with, the IEC in the province when violations of the electoral Code of Conduct occur.

As already indicated in the previous editions of this

*Update*, Mpumalanga is one of the strongholds for the ANC and is expected to return the party to power with an overwhelming majority. This dominance of one political party over others seems to have eliminated the prospects for large scale conflict among political parties. In other words, it would appear that the dominance of the ANC in the province has served reduce political temperatures and therefore the fierceness of competition from opposition parties. Conflict among political parties has certainly been reported in the media during the election campaigning in the province but only very few minor incidents of political conflict. The IEC in Mpumalanga has also confirmed that only minor incidents of election-related political conflict have been reported to its offices and it appears that these did not require the IEC's to resort to its elaborate conflict management procedures. The incidents were mainly political squabbles, allegations and counter allegations relating to election campaign posters being destroyed or removed from lamp posts.

#### Corruption as a Campaign Theme

Nonetheless, the fact that electoral competition in Mpumalanga has been largely peaceful does not

mean that opposition political parties have thrown in the towel. So far, it would appear that only two of the major opposition parties have not targeted the province for high profile political campaigning. It would appear that the national leaders of the IFP and the NNP have not visited Mpumalanga for intensive political campaigning. It is not clear whether or not this suggests that the two parties have decided to cut their losses by writing the province off as a 'lost cause'. However, other opposition parties have campaigned in the province.

In fact, during the past two weeks there has been a flurry of activity in the province as some political parties have arrived for intensive political electioneering. The PAC and the UDM have both been to the province and held election campaign rallies. However, Thabo Mbeki's political campaign trip to the province in the first week of March appeared to prompt the official opposition, the Democratic Alliance, to react by also sending their 'big gun' into the province to campaign in the President's wake. DA leader Tony Leon went to Mpumalanga by train to campaign in the second week of March, about a week after the President had been to the province. While Mbeki campaigned largely on the

basis of relating to his audiences the ANC's achievements in the past ten years and emphasised the need for working together between the different groups in society, Leon concentrated largely on the theme of corruption in Mpumalanga.

The DA's campaign theme and focus were clearly coordinated and articulated with the choices of the areas where the party conducted its electoral campaign. For instance, the train stopped at several towns including Kinross, Bethal, Ermelo and Carolina where the DA leader addressed party supporters. All these towns happen to be located within the same municipality – the Gert Sibande district municipality. The Gert Sibande district municipality is one of only three in the province, and has been hit by a spate of corruption scandals as well as a number of forensic investigations in the recent past. In fact, the Gert Sibande district council mayor Busi Mdluli, resigned recently, on 29 March, in the wake of serious allegations of fraud, corruption and grave misuse of public funds. These allegations were contained in a forensic audit report that accused the mayor of squandering taxpayers' money on personal luxuries.

Such venality in Mpumalanga is not confined only to the local government. Even the provincial

government itself has had a series of corruption scandals over the years. In fact, the widespread problem of corruption in Mpumalanga has become an 'Achilles heel' for the ANC. Also, given the predominantly negative tone of campaigning for this year's election, it was inevitable that opposition parties, especially the DA, would focus public attention on the province's record of corruption - this, especially, as the ruling party attempts to focus attention on positive achievements over the past ten years. Therefore in his short trip to Mpumalanga, as expected Leon made virulent attacks on the provincial government's record of corruption and mismanagement, labelling Mpumalanga as South Africa's "corruption capital" Leon also added that since President Mbeki assumed office, South Africa had slipped 14 places in the international ranking of perceptions of corruption as compiled by Transparency International.

#### **Impact of DA's Campaign Attacks on the ANC**

The attack appeared not only to catch the provincial government by surprise, but also clearly riled the authorities, thus drawing a sharp and obviously infuriated response directly from the Premier's office. Joy Letlonkoane, spokeswoman from the

Premier's office, issued a terse statement, saying, "we view these wild allegations against our province as baseless, unfounded and a dangerous electioneering ploy to deceive the public. The statement continued: "we want to set the record straight. Mpumalanga has never been a corruption capital and it will never be."

However, a closer look at the response from the Mpumalanga authorities to Leon's attack reveals some interesting observations and possible clues to the deeply hidden political dynamics of the ANC in the province. For instance, although Leon's attack was not just aimed at the provincial government of Ndaweni Mahlangu but also at the ANC in general, the response appears to have come only from the Premier's office. There was no high level and coordinated response directly from the ANC's party leadership in the province. Also, the response came from a low ranking official – a spokesperson from the Premier's office - rather than from a high ranking government spokesperson. Not even a single ANC MEC or MPL in the province appeared to have responded.

There could be several possible explanations for this subdued response to Leon's stinging attack. Firstly, it could be that the ANC was skilfully attempting to avoid making a direct and equally

virulent response to Leon as this could have turned the issue of corruption into one of the major political campaign themes. This would have played into the hands of the opposition, especially the DA. The ANC is much more likely to be affected negatively by this. Secondly, the ANC has largely avoided running a similarly negative political campaign as the DA and may have thus viewed Leon's attack as part of this negative campaigning strategy. Therefore, leaving a response to come from a low ranking government official may have been intended to depoliticise the issue of corruption and turn it into a mere technical and administrative matter. Thirdly and more plausibly, it is common cause that the ANC as a political party in Mpumalanga is riven with internal divisions, factionalism and therefore political tensions that may have prevented the party from issuing a collective and coordinated response to Leon's attack. In fact, some of the factions within the party in the province may have treated Leon's attack as being directed to Mahlangu's government and, by implication, at his dominant faction within the provincial government.

It is no secret that there is fierce rivalry within the ANC in Mpumalanga and that the internal political factions are key vehicles

through which such rivalry has always been transmitted. What this implies is that a political misfortune for one faction automatically translates into potential fortune for rival factions. It is also not a secret that Mahlangu is fighting tirelessly in his quest to retain his current position as Premier. However, there are equally determined key individuals within the party who are also calculating their chances of capturing the position. Therefore, Leon's corruption charge may have been interpreted narrowly as an attack on Mahlangu, either individually or together with his dominant cronies, with potential to weaken him politically and thus open up the political space for rival factions to compete for control of the provincial government.

Whatever the consequences of Tony Leon's negative election campaigning style in the internal political dynamics of the ANC in Mpumalanga, a closer look at the scant attention the DA has paid to the province so far, compared to the ANC, suggests that the party possibly regards the province as a lower priority. For instance, Leon did not campaign in the same areas that Mbeki and the ANC targeted in Mpumalanga. This is critical if the DA's intention is to challenge the ANC directly by making inroads into traditional ANC support bases. For instance

in his election campaign in the province in early March, Mbeki, accompanied by Minister Thoko Didiza and some high profile local leaders of the ANC, spent a weekend not only engaging in close door-to-door campaigning in some residential areas, but also meeting various interest groups, including ethnic minorities. The party also campaigned in high concentration areas such as townships, shopping centres and taxi ranks. In contrast, Leon went from Johannesburg to Mpumalanga aboard a train and spent less than a whole day campaigning in the province. It was widely reported in the press that he made several 'whistle stops' along the way, stopping long enough at each station to address party supporters while aboard the train, before moving on to the next station. It was also reported that at the end of his train journey, a plane was waiting to fly him back to Johannesburg. It appears that he did not carry out any intensive campaigning such as house-to-house calls or address selected interest groups as did Mbeki. Therefore, the amount of time Leon spent in the province and the fact that his speeches were restricted only to party supporters may suggest that the party regards Mpumalanga as a low campaign priority. This article discusses the campaign focus of the parties

just prior to the election concentrating on the leaders styles and the strengths of their messages.

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**CHRONOLOGY 4**

8 Mar. 2004 Date by which the IEC must decide on the validity of objections, under Section 30 and must notify the objector and the registered political party who nominated the candidate of the decision arrived at.

23 Mar. 2004 Cut off date for appeals against decisions of the IEC.

25 Mar. 2004 The Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC) announce today that arrangements have been put in place for the casting of special votes on 12 or 13 April 2004 within South Africa or on the 7 April at South African missions overseas.

26 Mar. 2004 SABC/Markinor Opinion 2004 survey on "Possible Turnout, Voter Registration and Apathy" is issued indicating that between 87 and 92 percent of registered voters have indicated their intention to vote.

29 Mar. 2004 Date by which the Chief Electoral Officer must have compiled a list of the registered parties entitled to contest the election and the final list of candidates for each of these parties.

29 Mar. 2004 The Democratic Alliance files papers in the Cape High Court requesting an urgent interdict from the Court to stop the African National Party (ANC) and the New National Party (NNP) misusing public funds for electioneering purposes.

1  
 30 Mar. 2004 National Action (NA) withdraws its application for membership of the Democratic Alliance (DA) – Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) coalition, but will continue working towards the creation of an effective opposition.

30 Mar. 2004 Findings of the University of the Witwatersrand Politics Research Group survey reflects very strong party identification and continuing support for President Thabo Mbeki.

5 April 2004 Date by which the CEO must have issued certificates of authentication to candidates.

7 April 2004 IEC launches its National Results Operations Centre (the ROC) in Pretoria. The opening ceremony is addressed by the IEC Chairperson Dr Brigalia Bam.

7 April 2004 Voters who will be abroad on Election day and have applied for special votes will cast their votes at South African missions overseas.

12 April 2004 Applications to the Presiding Officer at the Office of the Presiding Officer for visitations by voting officers to cast special votes are made on this day.

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