

## **We're not targeting Ramaphosa** – Politics Web 26 August 2019

### **We're not targeting President Ramaphosa, we're targeting a system of patronage**

Some people mistake the DA's insistence on an investigation into the R500 000 Bosasa payment to Cyril Ramaphosa's Nasrec election campaign for a personal crusade against the man. Yet this not about going after one man. It is about fighting to dismantle a system of patronage that has poisoned our state and economy over the past two decades.

The system works like this: the ANC-in-government (e.g. Department of Correctional Services, Department of Mineral Resources) gives lucrative tenders to the ANC-in-business (e.g. Bosasa, Guptas, Chancellor House) which in return funds the ANC-as-political-party (one or both factions).

Like Zuma-Gupta, the Ramaphosa-Bosasa relationship follows this standard ANC modus operandi. It is no coincidence that the President's son, Andile, started receiving large monthly payments for "consulting" work the same month his father became ANC president. That is how this system works.

This patronage system has enabled an ANC-connected elite to enrich themselves while also entrenching their political power to facilitate ongoing elite enrichment. It is profoundly anti-democratic, deeply corrupt, and unequivocally against the public interest.

The system is replicated in every sphere and level of government. As Kgalema Motlanthe remarked back in 2007: *'The rot is across the board. It's not confined to any level or any area of the country. Almost every project is conceived because it offers opportunities for certain people to make money.'* This is the lens through which we must analyse all projects and policies, including NHI.

State capture didn't originate with the Gupta brothers, and it didn't end with their departure. It wasn't isolated to the term of President Zuma, and it didn't benefit only his friends and family. The Guptas were simply the most brazen beneficiaries of state capture. Their unashamed looting pulled back the covers to reveal a much bigger, much more insidious web. State Capture was built into the DNA of the ANC in 1997 when they formally adopted their policy of cadre deployment at their Mafikeng Conference. Their stated intention: to bring "all levers of power" under their control by deploying party loyalists to key positions across the state. The aim was to capture not only the institutions that control the biggest budgets, the SOEs, but also the institutions that are meant to investigate and prosecute wrongdoing, such as the Hawks, the NPA and SARS.

As much as we would all like the Zuma chapter to be closed for good, it would be extremely naïve to think that the ANC has changed its entire *raison d'être* simply because a different president sits at the helm. The recent revelations in the media of just how much it costs to buy a presidency – R400 million and counting – should burst that bubble. Despite the promises of a new dawn, it is clearly business as usual in the ANC.

Last week in Parliament, I asked the President to institute a full-scale, independent inquiry into all allegations of state capture that involve Bosasa. This inquiry should be headed by a retired judge, selected by the Chief Justice. It is crucial that we get straight answers and the full picture. We cannot afford to look the other way simply because we happen to like this President more than the other one, or because we fear what may be waiting in the wings. That is no way to uphold the values of our constitutional democracy.

And we must not stop with Bosasa. As was the case with the Guptas, Bosasa is just the most brazen, visible example of this toxic system that has permeated our state through the ANC. We must examine every donation made, and cross-check this with contracts awarded and appointments made.

We must root it out at every level and sphere of government. It is pervasive throughout – from the councillor who manipulates housing lists and work contracts to the mayor who hand-picks suppliers and service providers for multi-million Rand deals. It is so interwoven into the fabric of the ANC that they don't even view this practice of patronage as unethical. It is simply seen as the spoils of war – the rightful reward for ending up on the victorious side of the party's internal battle.

Our economy is in deep crisis and faces imminent collapse. We need to break this patronage system now. If we don't, we risk another ANC faction paying even more for the presidency at the next elective conference, and our country will continue its descent. While government is seen as a "legitimate" ticket to wealth, nothing will change for South Africa. Investors will shun us, our economy will remain stalled, and poverty and unemployment will continue to rise. At some point, this pressure cooker could explode.

So, when the DA demands the whole truth and nothing but the truth from Cyril Ramaphosa, it's nothing personal. Rather, it is of critical importance to the future of South Africa.

Warm regards,

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DA Leader