



**From Violent Protest to Dialogue: How do we change the current
discourse?
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It is with a certain amount of sadness that I have been reflecting on this dialogue. Except to commemorate Sharpeville or Soweto, I never imagined coordinating and hosting a dialogue on police shooting. Perhaps this was very naïve. The cynical part of me thinks it is surprising that *not more* events like last week have occurred. The failure of leadership on so many levels deeply saddened me. Today is a day to understand, acknowledge and look at ways to that we can take dialogue and protest positively forward. The legacy [of the Marikana shootings] will be with us for a long time, but the legacy for the families of miners, police and security will be even deeper. At heart of the problem is the failure on all parts of society to recognise the voices of the marginalized and bring that into the mainstream national discourse. We hope that this discussion will be useful and fruitful, a start - not an end point - of the conversation.

Adv. Mike Pothier: Research Co-ordinator: SACBC Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Office

We want to understand the context of Marikana - why what started out as a labour dispute escalated so quickly into violence. We specifically did not ask one of the two main parties to speak as we do not want this to be finger pointing or apportioning of blame. But political parties play important roles in providing avenues for people to speak and all over the country people are saying that there is a failure of leadership to give people avenues of expression of frustration.

This is not about apportioning blame. We have a judicial enquiry. The question is why. This meeting is not specially about Marikana. We could have met in April last year after Andries Tatane was killed in Ficksburg. We could have had it this month when Mr Sandile Hoko, a bus driver, was killed when his bus was stoned or 4-year-old Nhlanhla Ngalo killed in violent protest. We think about in every corner of our country the sad fact is that people have died from service delivery, labour or other protests. The right to protest is enshrined in the Constitution - there's nothing wrong with protest but there's something wrong when protest spills over into violence and is met with such force as we saw last week. It's that "wrongness" that we want to look at today.

"South Africa belongs to all its peoples. We, the people, belong to one another. We live the rainbow. Our homes, neighbourhoods, villages, towns, and cities are safe and filled with laughter. Through our institutions, we order our lives. The faces of our children tell of the future we have crafted." This is from the vision statement of the *National Development Plan (NDP)* presented in Parliament and the next day 44 people were shot dead. I think we would all buy into this vision – how we would like our country to look eighteen years from now, in 2030. Symbolically, we are halfway there – from 1994. The events from last week show that we have a hell of a long way to go.

Bishop Kevin Dowling: Bishop of the Rustenburg Diocese: SACBC

I speak with great emotion, and I quote: “How I can understand a figure or a statistic unless I have held the hand that it represents?” This was spoken by Dr. J.P. Muliylil on the topic of HIV/Aids but is very relevant to any suffering or tragedy. Forty-four individual, unique human beings. Before that, on 10 August, two poor security workers from Protea Coin hacked to death, two probably pretty poor police were also hacked to death, and six workers were also killed, claimed by NUM to be their members. Sometimes the word “killed” we use in this country is sanitized. People are murdered.

At the memorial service in Marikana there was a woman with tears streaming down her face and a blank look - but ceaseless crying, crying, crying. A life that has been utterly destroyed by this violence, she and others collapsed. Fortunately, there were many social workers on hand to help. We have become so accustomed to violence in this country that we forget the uniqueness of people.

Earlier, under leadership of Bishop Seoka (Anglican Bishop of Pretoria), [religious leaders] gathered to decide what to do without being manipulated or exploited in the situation. We heard that Malema and the government were going to have their own services. We decided we would have to maintain our integrity. The clergy took over. Archbishop Makgoba came and at one point he begged: “Please, politicians, do not use this to score cheap political points!” Julius Malema was chewing gum the whole time. He never once reached out to those mourning. I was hurting.

Why does protest assume such a large part of our psyche? There is no doubt that apartheid brutalized and dehumanized us. It will take more than one generation for those who were crushed to be healed. The profound challenge we faced at the transition for which we had suffered so much to achieve would mean nothing until economic and human reality is really transformed. It has not been transformed, and therefore the seeds of apartheid violence continue to germinate, because the little people have had their hopes not fulfilled – as evidenced in poverty and unemployment. From Brits to Rustenburg, then turning north up to Northam, these platinum mines have spawned massive shack settlements of the greatest inhumanity. Scenes of utter hopelessness meet one: litter and squalor. Hundreds of thousands are living here.

At Impala Platinum in January/February, tens of thousands were on strike – armed and very violent. The following week, the Aids programme I run saw four nurses abducted in their uniforms, held the whole day and threatened to be stripped naked. We had to close down the clinics and the entire operation for 3 weeks, including the orphan centre programme that provides the children with their only meal each day. The police said: “We are frightened – we are 500 against 7,000!” In that kind of situation, overreaction can very easily happen.

Hopefully the Judicial Commission will come to the heart of things. It is the “little ones” that every sector of society must concern itself with, because unless we do this we are

not going to move beyond looking at statistics, and [never get to] hold the hand the statistic represents. We have to ask the questions, “Why?” “Who or what is contributing to the systemic issues that break the hearts of people so they think that their only way forward is to resort to violence?” We have to look at systemic issues and causes. We have excellent labour legislation – the CCMA, negotiation and dispute resolution processes - that was not used.

What is called for here at this watershed moment is that there must be principled, pro-active leadership at all levels- civil society, the churches, government, business and the unions. We have to take the reality as it is, analyse it, and come up with how we are going to find a way to resolve issues so that we do not have to resort to violence. At Impala I was so hurt and incensed at what had happened to the “little ones” because of the strike that I wrote to Zwelinzima Vavi, and I listed all the events and what was done by the strikers, and I asked whether at the union level you regard this as acceptable “collateral damage” – these levels of intimidation and hurt. He replied that we have to take this up - to train our union members to take protest up to a peaceful level and not to resort to violence.

There are critical issues that we must take up. One of them is truth. What is the truth being put out as the fundamental cause of the protest? That the rock drillers are demanding an increase from R4, 000 to R12, 500? On Tuesday, the NUM said they get around R10, 000. Later that day, Lonmin said the drillers get R10, 000 plus performance bonuses. A researcher on the ground said some miners say they take home - with overtime - R18, 000. What is the truth? This is one indication of the complexity of the issue. There are no easy answers.

We need to have principled, objective, skilled negotiators – skilled in reconciliation processes and able to bring about a process of dialogue in a safe space. Church leaders can play a critical role - as in Marikana. Very often workers do not trust anyone – government or business. Perhaps we need to get involved, spend time on the ground – and it takes so much time. We are beginning to get people talking. On Monday, the AMCU will talk with business about wages. This is a watershed moment. All leadership and civil society must look at what this situation requires. For me, this is principled, pro-active leadership based on values, focused on transforming society for the little ones and not for personal gain.

Mr. Nqabayomzi Kwankwa: Deputy Secretary General: United Democratic Movement
Programme Director, the Leadership of the Goedgedacht Forum for Social Reflection and the Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Office, Ladies and Gentlemen, Fellow South Africans, on behalf of the United Democratic Movement (UDM), thank you very much for giving us the opportunity to participate in this debate.

The seeds of the next Marikana massacre have already been planted. More people are going to die at the hands of the South African police over the next few years. This is

because we allow the Police Commissioner, Riah Phiyega, to get away with showing no remorse for the worst atrocity in the post-Apartheid South Africa, the Marikana massacre. She was quoted in the print media as having said that SAPS is not sorry for mowing down Lonmin mineworkers and we did nothing about it. That no senior government official has taken responsibility for Marikana massacre is deeply troubling.

We have two options. We can bury our heads in the sand and hope that the problems of police brutality and the culture of violence, engulfing the country will go away on their own. We did this in 2010 in the Andries Tatane incident, in which an unarmed protester from Ficksburg was brutally murdered by the police right in front of our eyes. Alternatively, we can put all hands on deck and do the hard things required to pull our country away from the tipping point.

It is the latter one of the two options that my speech today attempts to spell out. In particular, it is the role that, we, the political parties can and must play to help society make, what is certainly going to be a gradual transition *from violent protests to dialogue* – as it is captured in today's theme.

Admittedly, South Africa is a different country to what it was a before the advent of our democracy in 1994. To date, approximately 3.4 million have been built. The number of people with access to electricity has since 1994 increased from 36 % to 84 % in 2011. Millions of our people have access to clean water and sanitation. The South African economy has also performed relatively well over the past 18 years. We are a Constitutional democracy that recognises and protects the right for people to protest. However, as Dr Martin Luther King, junior once aptly put it, *"All progress is precarious, and the solution of one problem brings us face to face with another problem."*

Tremendous as the progress made thus far maybe, many challenges still remain. While some of the challenges are a direct consequence of the natural process of development, some are largely due to bad choices or weak political leadership.

For instance, the rate of unemployment in South Africa is one of the highest in the world. It is one of the most critical socio-political problems facing South Africa at the moment. The latest Labour Force Survey for the second quarter of 2012, released by Stats SA last month, shows that the official unemployment rate stands 24,9 %. However, this strict definition of the unemployment understates the unemployment in South Africa due to its exclusion of discouraged work seekers. After factoring discouraged work seekers, the unemployment rate stands at almost 40 %.

Although this is a crisis of epic proportions, which poses a serious danger to social and political stability, some of it could be attributed to developmental challenges confronting South Africa at the moment, such as skills shortages, and so on.

Nevertheless, to the millions of unemployed people the inability to find a job and be able provide for their families undermines their freedom. It also points to the failure of Government's policies to address the unemployment problem.

Additionally, South Africa is one of the most unequal societies in the world. For example, our country's Gini coefficient is rated at 0.67, which is very high by any standard. Not only is the wealth of the country becoming increasingly concentrated in the hands of a select few politically connected individuals, the poor are getting poorer under the ANC government.

The poor watch as the new ruling elite embraces a new culture of crass materialism, conspicuous consumption, corruption and the acquisition of wealth at all costs. Municipalities and government departments have become the battlefield for wealth accumulation at all costs.

In all levels of Government, the important link between effort and reward is broken. Some ruling party cadres become overnight millionaires without making any contribution, if at all, to national output.

In fact, the failure of political leadership in our country at the moment, which has resulted in the Marikana massacre, reminds me of the following lines from a poem by William Butler Yeats, *the Second Coming*, when he says:

TURNING and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;

Again we are at a tipping point. Things are falling apart because the centre no longer holds. The elected (falconer) have deserted the electorate (falcon). They now concern themselves more with wealth accumulation than with service delivery.

Needless to say the masses have reacted angrily to the bleak picture painted above. Service delivery protests, which often turn violent, now characterise the new way for people to express discontent with the status quo. We are the protest capital of the world, which would not necessarily be a problem if the protests did not turn violent.

It is the culture of violence that should concern us as a nation. It is clear that anger and resentment belie the seemingly well-adjusted Rainbow Nation. The wounds of the past have yet to heal.

Our people resort to violence during protests while, the other hand, the police also uses violence to control violence.

This begs the question: did we come this far to self-destruct?

But there is hope. Hope lies in the role that political parties and civil society can and must play to change the situation for the better.

Robert Louis Stevenson once said: *“So long as we love, we serve. So long as we are loved by others we are indispensable.”*

Politicians need to serve the people. We need to go back to the principles of selfless service to others and accountability, as this is the only way we can win back the permission to lead our people.

Political parties need to work together with the ruling to come up with policies that will reduce inequality and eradicate poverty. Political parties need work all stakeholders to develop a new economic plan for South Africa that will prioritise job creation.

We should initiate campaigns to educate the public about their Constitutional rights together with the avenues they can explore to give practical expression to them (rights).

The flurry of service delivery riots around the country do not just point to the failure of the ruling party alone. They also point to the failure of political parties as a whole to be responsive to the needs of the electorate. But the nature of this responsiveness is also important: In Limpopo, for example, we found that people expected public representatives to do things for them, not for us to empower them. They give us a problem and we solve it but next time they will not know how to solve it and if you are not available they will protest.

For instance, we cannot over promise before an election and expect people to be patient when we are unable to deliver as soon as we ascend to power.

Political parties need to bridge the gap between them and the electorate by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of constituency work programmes. This would ensure that there is direct accountability to the electorate by public representatives in the current electoral system.

However, a long-term solution to the current challenges is to move away from the proportional representation system to a constituency based one. To be responsive to the needs of the electorate, politicians need to be directly accountable to the people who elected them rather than political parties. Can you have principled leadership when it is so disconnected?

In the final analysis, we need to put all hands on deck to ensure that we change South Africa for the better, because electoral reforms alone are not a panacea for South Africa's problems. We have to work together to protect our democratic gains.

Because our hard-won liberty, built on sound principle and human sacrifice, is one victory we must never betray or squander. It is built on a contrasting tale of men at their most evil and most heroic, and where like everything else in life, the good emerged victorious over the bad. This is a lesson that we must never take for granted in all our dealings as South Africans.

God bless South Africa! I thank you.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

How do you think we can separate political from labour issues, because that is at the centre of what happened at Marikana? How do we disconnect the unions from the political parties in terms of representing the people?

In an ideal world, we would like to see trade unions completely independent. In the South African context, we see COSATU in alliance with the ANC. But that is not a problem if we create space for other trade unions to work for workers' rights. But we cannot isolate what happened in Marikana from greater society.

Regarding the sprawling, growing townships around the mines, is there a sense of what proportion are local or migrants?

There is a huge range of migrants, particularly in the platinum area, from the Eastern Cape. Some settlements are entirely Xhosa-speaking. There are also huge numbers of migrants from other countries, particularly single women, moving south with the perception that around the mines they can find a way out of poverty. But this is a lethal concoction as for many the only way out is through transactional sex – leading to HIV/Aids. Some miners are specifically recruited from Mozambique or the Eastern Cape. There are many socio-economic issues if they don't come with families or stay in hostels. Around the mines there is a huge mix of peoples – locals waiting for RDP houses will take up residence in shacks. Impala had their miners housed exclusively in single men hostels. They have now given them housing subsidies so they can take up housing around mine shafts. The majority are migrants in these areas.

Regarding the talk of the absence of civil society representative in the area, what needs to be done? Are there civil society organisations in the area that can be used from now on; for example, as an early warning system?

We do not have anything like what we need in the area. The intervention by the SACC to get constructive dialogue is a first. Research, e.g. Benchmark Foundation, is going on, and the researchers claim that they give data to companies like Lonmin (which is a British, not South Africa-registered company), and claim that nothing has been done on factors that could lead to potential violence. This is a wake-up call for all of us, including myself, that we cannot be predominantly concerned with internal issues. We must use civil society and researchers and be "in" our communities. Everything is these areas

revolves around the mine. The platinum price going down and the cost of living prices going up will mean increased problems. We have to put an early warning system in place. We must use civil society to help us. Mining companies must put up a coordinated civil society group to look at these issues.

There is a tendency to call all “protest action” as leading to violence. The majority of strike and protest action is peaceful. People are trying to put demands forward or get their demands recognized. Under a banner, there is a tendency to think that someone is listening to the protested (even if it just their own organization). In service delivery protests, there is a sense that no-one is listening. Lawful protest tends to have an objective; unlawful protest has no objective. It will be very difficult for Marikana miners to back down - as they have no goal. There is a real disconnect between civil society and unlawful protesters.

It is also too easy to dismiss any protests just because they are violent (without recognizing the reasons for the violence). Poverty is also a form of violence. The violence must be condemned but the reasons for that violence must be investigated.

The state is the most powerful actor. The state has alternative mechanisms and should not respond in the same manner. It cannot treat violence as being equal on both sides. A minority - but a growing number - of protests are violent.

To what extent are the mineworkers supplied by labour brokers?

There are two kinds of brokers: Subcontract work (mining companies do not pay mineworkers directly so services are cut; this may not be the Lonmin case, specifically) and brokers.

What about the many countries around the world where poverty and disempowerment is the same, if not worse, than in South Africa, yet communities going over to violent protest are rare? What distinguishes South Africa, if anything?

In the short term, it is crisis management – reacting to hotspots – that is needed. But in the long term, the Cuban option – pouring resources into rural development - might be the better option. We need to take stress off the survivalist systems. In Marikana all the systems were stressed and were blown apart. Societies that do not have violence are those that provide respite. We need to try tackle at source some of the issues e.g. rural development for the number of migrants and education and health is what we want to prioritise to make the country a better place to live in.

DISCUSSION, ARRANGED THEMATICALLY

Reasons for violent protest

When people protest under a banner, it provides a sense of being listened to, of being taken seriously. What are the different banners? NGO, church, faith-based organisations are examples. All of these provide a structure and leadership. Maybe that tells us something about protest: When they take place under an organization or pro-active leadership, perhaps it creates the possibility of non-violence, and conversely, if protest comes under no leadership, it creates possibility for violence.

There is a sense that we have lost dignity or worth of human beings and this is fundamental for both sides – black and white. There is a sense of violence in the way the employers speak to domestic servants. We are so used to violence that we have lost the sense of dignity. How do we bring back this sense of dignity?

We have also lost patriotism – it is “their” problem, not my problem. We blame everyone else: “See how they react, that is why they were shot!” We must find a solution together to help our country. We need to learn to enable our people to find solutions themselves, from the floor, not from the top or the NGOs. Often the NGOs come from outside the country and proffer solutions: “This is what we are going to do for you.” We need to own our problems, deal with what is occurring in our locality, and the church can play that role because they try to not be partisan.

We are still a cynically, maladjusted nation. Many illegal violent protests go unreported. For example, in the Eastern Cape people are toyi-toyiing every day and often turn violent but it is not reported in the *Daily Despatch*. People have lost faith in dialogues. After 1994 we “summitted” everything! Today people are not interested in summitting – they want to see how bread and butter are being brought to the table.

Human nature

The appeal to moral sense and altruism by our lay leaders is a concern. Neuropsychological suggests that there are seven systems to the brain: seeking, gathering, wanting, attachment, aggression, care and play. Only one has an element of altruism – the rest are geared towards survival. These systems have been in place for 250 million years. This theory explains why we have government or faith-based communities in the first place – due to altruism. But to expect ordinary persons who are trying to survive to be altruistic is misplaced.

Role of politicians / leadership

This discussion already shows the complexity of the situation. The Commission of Enquiry has a very limited terms of reference so will not solve what happened in Marikana. The disconnect between politicians and ordinary people can be assisted by

Parliamentary Officers like CPLO and COSATU. There are mechanisms for enabling this in the Constitution but they are not being used.

The People's Parliament raised the issue that many ANC members are angry at what they called a "sjambokking" regarding the Traditional Courts Bill. People are angry with 25 % unemployment. We cannot speak nice words to people who live in shacks and cannot pay school fees. At the same time, we have a leadership of bling – that spend over R2-million on cars. And we have massive under spending and we see what happens in Limpopo. The leadership focus and quality of debate is poor – including spelling mistakes.

What did we learn from East Asia? In China, people intervene decisively. In Singapore, people are arrested for spitting or littering. But you feel safe at 2am in the street – there is a culture of compliance. In South Korea, they have built international conglomerates. In South Africa, we have Commissions of Enquiry but we still have twenty-five percent unemployment. As some say, "Life sucks!"

Humanity, respect for law and lack of love for other people and God Himself are all necessary. This is very long-term. It's not easy to be altruistic – one must make an actual decision to care for someone else, not [only for] myself. The problem in South Africa is that millions of people – and that is not even counting economic refugees –are forced to live in survival mode. The only thing they think is: "How do I survive for the next 24 hours?" So you get women who will have transactional sex for R20 to put some pathetic food in their stomachs.

Principled leadership is something that one has to grow over time – a long-term, slow process, necessary for our grandchildren to have hope. What are the different interventions that can be undertaken in this country to begin to grow this kind of leadership from community level into other sectors?

The first thing to ask is do we mean the same thing when we speak of "principled leadership". The problem is that many who get into positions of power due to connections also have the issue of survival. So the issue of altruism when you are called to transform the situation of my constituency takes a great deal of reflection, leadership and it starts at local contexts. We need to look at blockages, threats and prevention. The dialogue is essentially what Trevor Manuel presented – included a vision and proactive engagement (we have a map but we will need every individual of every sector to state whether they agree with these principles and if so what does it demand of them in order to make 2030 a reality).

Support for the Constitution

Pierre de Vos wrote a brilliant article published on 23 August 2012 that says that many South Africans are confused about the role of SAPS i.e. to protect. Some are staunch defenders of police in Marikana. On social media, many are supporting the police and saying that they were justified and that we need to get away from dialogue. We need to take dialogue seriously.

Ultimately, the police, the public and top leadership are saying that the Constitution is in our way and are thus undermining the Constitution. Archbishop Thabo Magkoba convened a national dialogue initiative two to three weeks to get dialogue going on the Constitution.

Inequality and poverty

We are living in country of promise. There are many protests in communities due to the gulf between people staying in informal settlements and those living in cities. How to breach the gap between the townships and the city is a key concern. The people are knocking on the door but there is no answer.

We must also look at long-term issue of inequality e.g. mine bosses earning 250 times that of workers.

Although R82-billion in government infrastructure funding goes unspent, corporate South Africa is sitting on R500-billion of unused funds! Can they not have the common sense to see that if they invest 10% it will pay huge dividends? It seems that there is an extractive, exploitive approach to Marikana that is in the country on the whole. Corporate South Africa does not have the intelligence and the foresight; there is no long term thinking - it is all about short-term gain.

We have a lot of money in our country. It has just been misdirected. We can change the lives of the poor but there is not the political will to direct the money to the poor. In the beginning, we have to hold poor people by the hand. Parastatals are just washing themselves with money – it is squandered throughout the country. There is no will to act for positive change. If just a small amount of the government underspend could go to empowering communities it would go a long way to benefiting the communities.

It is important to be aware of the economic violence perpetrated by banks and retailers and enable people to not enslave themselves to this (debt). People resort to all kinds of things as they try to attain a certain standard of living.

Regarding capitalism and our global financial system: each one in this room must look at our own ways of looking at money and how we personally spend and use money.

The education system in the Western Cape is being suffocated by migration from the Eastern Cape. We need big business to invest in rural areas e.g. previously, Pep Stores products were produced near Butterworth. Many buildings are standing empty in these areas today. Local airports are dumping areas and only three floors of an 18 floor building in the town are being used. There is a lot of wastage e.g. the Youth Parliament.

Ways that NGOs/CBOs can assist

A couple weeks ago in Khayelitsha there was an open meeting on necklacing. It was easy to be depressed but there is hope. Three CBOs spoke: Right2Know, Equal Education and Justice for All and called for all of us to work together. They called for a Commission of Enquiry into policing – which has not happened. But everyone is now taking political sniping. The pain is that all the participants said that no-one is listening. There is no dialogue. The real crux of the pressure is that NGOs and civil society need to stand by these communities in different ways and assure that they get heard and are not side-lined.

There is no excuse to mobilize people to get your way e.g. with the ANC and the *City Press*. What you are saying to ordinary people is that you have to use violence to get what you need. Immediately after 1994, Dr Ramphela said that most of the major civil society organisations went to sleep because of the promises of government. In the case where those promises have not materialised, civil society needs to rise and put pressure on government.

It's difficult for NGOs that have essentially become emasculated and for skilled people to continue to their work. Dr Ramphela was speaking about civic organizations, not traditional, registered NGOs. These are people who worked with communities. We need to get these people to take up these issues again, to revive them, to have a vision around common challenges. Most traditional NGOs will be in some way aligned to a political party – and are thus affected when it comes to politics. There are very few civic societies existing in communities today and we need to find a way to partner with traditional NGOs.

NGOs did not “go to sleep”; rather, all foreign donors went to government. Many people were unemployed – the very fabric of NGOs went unspent. And yet much money was under spent.

Many small NGOs have gone out of business because money coming in is going direct to government. There are stories of this all over the place. It's enormously difficult to make a future because people are looking at advancement, their backs, and their turf. People, particularly in government, are looking at reactive issues such as an NGO looking better than government. Marikana is an example of reactive leadership. The company is concerned that they will not meet their targets. Pressure is on them to make their dividends. They demanded that workers return to work on Monday. That is an example

of reactive leadership. Other civil society leadership could have sat with them in their management committee could have told them this was a disastrous ultimatum. This is the difficulty of altruism.

Causes of violence

An article by an author surnamed “Jaco” spoke of the good things that come out of violent protest. One of the things it said is that - opposed to what the media is saying - the destruction of inanimate objects does not constitute violence. That is a very sad point. Blowing up a house, even though no-one is inside, does not make the act non-violent.

It is impossible to solve *all* of society’s socio-economic issues. One of the participants recalled an essay question they had to write on years ago: “What constitutes the most pressing social issue in the US and how would you solve it?” The response of the participant’s mentor was: “Interesting! Nothing short of a Second Coming could solve your problems!”

It is important to stand by people who are trying to claim their Constitutional rights and help them avoid becoming violent and at the same time assist the dialogue happen in a different way.

There are things that maybe as a country we are not willing to invest resources in. We see it in everyday life: At an early Learning Centre, one sees three-year-olds engaging and it tells one that there is violence. We are such a violent people. We only see this when we go out of the country (i.e. we see how non-violent others are).

We need to look at the role of the media in the rewiring of children’s brains. All we see in cartoons is violence. Children are bored of cartoons without violence. Research has shown that men in pornographic activity see their brains rewired. We need to look at a holistic way of dealing with issues. One of the participants noted that at 9:55pm the previous evening night, their 19-year-old son wanted to watch a programme: it was not fit to be watched by him as it depicted school kids using the school to sell drugs, breaking infrastructure and making fires from desk tops. This is not supposed to be watched by kids.

South Africans went through a series of events pre-1994 but now we are interviewing the current generation on what happened before. Is this necessary - to bring back what us their parents experienced, instead of bringing something new for them to experience?

We had the protests in Ficksburg but we decided to live in denial – not taking into account that they are raising important messages and asking whether we are doing the best to address the issues that are being raised.

Electoral system

We have a proportional system on a national level – people vote for a party. We also have a ward councillor system. In all areas that see protest, all have ward councillors, and many are from the ANC. People vote for the ANC again, which is fine. People do not know their councillors. In Atlantis some years ago, people voted for a candidate that was charged with rape! In our system, we have twelve political parties in Parliament and 51% voting rates. This is the reason that the ANC pushed for a proportional system. Each country must choose the best system for them.

Before 1994, the ANC used a model to ensure it was always in contact in the period before elections and so it looked like a constituency system. In the current system, do people actually understand what a proportional system entails and how they can use it to their benefit?

Each political party advances their interests – like religious groups and civil society. Five unions are represented at Lonmin but tolerance is still a challenge. We need to focus. We must deal with the healing first and then do a proper diagnosis. At election time, all the political parties are doing their door-to-door canvassing, but that accessibility is not maintained after the elections. That is what is happening here. People are frustrated because politicians do not respond to people unless there are elections. In Villiersdorp, a fire truck and a community hall were burned down, and although the mayor, MEC and other powers that be – the municipality and provincial governments - had solutions to problems they did not communicate to people on the ground. They had misinterpreted the word “consultation”. Now the people in Villiersdorp are happy because they have been informed. Consultation and communication are key – direct contact between politicians and the electorate using the same resources used before elections.

Unions

The situation is very complicated. The AMCU, a non-registered union, was eating into membership in other unions, and therefore NUM and COSATU had a very difficult time, with a union that did not have a seat at the table with Lonmin. Even the head of AMCU pleaded with his members on the *koppie* on Wednesday and they did not listen to him.

Police training and methods

Regarding the police training and command structure, SAPS got in experts after the Bhopatong massacre. It appears the kind of training in all these procedures did not happen. There are symbols in all of this, too. The militarization of the police needs to be examined: Ranks and uniforms say something, perhaps eat into psyches of police that often face very serious challenges and situations – and the fact that we often have murders of police; and that two of their colleagues were hacked to death two days before may have contributed to the shootings. We need strong, pro-active leadership to

take charge and talk to police. The police officers also need help if they are going to be wholesome people.

Pre-1994 we were faced with the situation of unbanned political organisations versus apartheid regime forces. We inherited situations where people who were armed by us fighting the regime were not disarmed and the same people are fed up with us – the rulers. For example, there were Self-Defence Units in every corner of South Africa and we gave them every firearm available (including AK47 rifles which even police did not have) but we did not have a disarming process. Why can't we go to the same countries that supported us and say support us in rebuilding what we bombed – whether airports or police stations – to build a free, democratic South Africa? How did we get to the point where once again the police are acting against the interests of the people? It seems symbolically very wrong.

Police training needs to be examined. Individual police are not trained properly. Some become CID after only nine months training. One officer spoke of how his car was stolen in Mfuleni as a form of intimidation. He has gone through court system and is left in tears. When he arrests people, they tell him that they will be out and sure enough they do get out.

Good crowd control and conviction procedures are very difficult to follow and demand very complex training. Why were the police issued with rifles? Those were the only means to defend themselves. It is very scary to be on one side against protestors. The police experience a huge threat to their lives and extreme conditions of work.

Solutions

The issue is complex. What exactly is the issue? We all have the ability to lead and are frustrated at service delivery not happening, wages not increasing, but how do we respond to this anger? Do we actually respond?

We are actually reacting. To respond to a situation of challenge requires us to be leaders, and to take responsibility for the choices they made. No-one – not police, civil society or the protestors - is taking responsibility. We talk about dialogue and hold *indabas* and summits constantly.

Why are not we spending monies on arts and culture? In Moscow, under the Soviets, money was spent on the arts – which is why today there are buskers on every corner. The South African government does not understand the benefits of sports and arts and culture. Children in townships do not even have sports field, but sports help to teach how to play with people, rules, etc. These are short-term interventions that can be achieved.

This is a question of priority: How can people think of sport or music when they lack basic needs?

There is a tendency to look upwards, outwards and sideways for solutions but increasingly we are beginning to see that change must come from ordinary people. How do we empower people to see that they have an innate dignity that no-one or nothing should take away? How they recognise that they are unique people who have all the skills to create their own reality is the long-term challenge.

We started off with a vision of the *NDP*. We need to have a vision and this one is the best on the table at the moment. Then we need to look at our facts and on that basis we draw up our strategies. One fact we can all agree upon is the massive inequality in our society that is a long-term strategy. But in the short-term, when we talk about Marikana, the short-term (e.g. labour brokers) are not solved.

Is it possible to think of this violence in a positive manner – e.g. in terms of energy, organisation, courage, coordination, willingness to take risks? All of these are very positive qualities but unfortunately they ended up in Marikana. Many asked why the Zimbabweans put up with Mugabean oppression? Why did six million Jews in WWII more or less meekly go to their deaths? We don't have that problem in South Africa! People do get off their backsides and do something about it, but in the Marikana situation there is something that had terrible side effects. Maybe it is about finding a way to channel this energy.

What exactly is dialogue? This requires us to share our ideas freely but also to listen to each other. We are out there in the field fighting our causes but we also need to listen to each other to have pro-active leadership.

The irony of this situation is that this is not the hardest of problems for South Africans to face. Earning R10, 000 a month is enough to create infrastructure development, and these sites are finite sites. What we have is a comprehensive failure: Lonmin, unions and journalists. It took them all this time to change [the information] from a 200% to a 5% increase. One good politician, journalist or NGO person could devote a week or two and could work out a developmental plan for these finite sites.

How do you empower a wounded nation? The mental health issues that our society faces include exposure to on-going, chronic trauma. We cannot underestimate that violence in the community undermines the basic building blocks of society. Families are no longer functioning. According to HSRC research on gang violence in Cape Flats, children say it feels like the end of the world. We have a seriously ill society and it needs healing. We have to rebuild society, families and values. We cannot underestimate the past. We have to look at history - even before colonialism. We have to look at the value system that starts on the ground.

Something basic is missing in our leaders. Simple care and respect for other human beings is not there. Foreigners say that South Africans are wonderful, warm people. There is something in our society that is a heartbeat that we can build on – the *ubuntu* concept – but we cannot ignore the mental health issues and our health and government systems cannot deal with it.

How do we best deal with this situation by creating an environment where all the players have the will and buy-in to change the current situation? This will need a broad dialogue e.g. a “growing economy” that does not empower people to become self-sustaining, self-reliant communities.

People start complaining because there is no platform but they are taking action. One government had an *imbizo* in Mannenberg but the spokesman spoke to the community for two hours. This mindset needs to change. Poor people are not stupid. Rich people do not know the answers. We need to respect people. For example, the children said that they need more benches in the school and this [government representative] woman - who is a good woman - refuted that and said that they need houses. We are so stuck in our heads that we miss what people are saying. Some *imbizos* are spokespersons pitching, telling the people what to do instead of listening to the people and them telling us what to do.

There's no need to throw the baby out with the water. A lot of good work has been done since 1994. Electrification has gone up to 90% of country, 25% of the national budget goes to education, there is efficient revenue collection, policing personnel have been doubled – these are all big achievements. But these have also led to other problems e.g. increased electrification has led to overload. And we do not work smart. The DTI and department of foreign affairs do excellent work. But other departments are ridiculous. Next week there is a Parliamentary event costing R2-million, but there is not money for Rape Crisis. We must sit down as a nation to look at issues and find solutions.

We enjoy criticism as part of the kaleidoscope [that makes up South Africa]. Altogether different approaches and different actors will ultimately produce the best country and society.

There exists collective solidarity around survival issues. It is this solidarity that people are bringing to our attention about their issues. We need to find a way to channel this energy. The Movement for Democratic Change envies South Africa because we are vigilant and make it clear if we are not happy. After the deal (with Mugabe), civil society organisations went to sleep. In South Africa, this is not the case. We need to find a way to channel the energy.

Servant leadership is the kind of leadership we need. Our politicians need a radical change – to see their riches for a community. This is the kind of leadership that people aspire to.

SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS

- Question of disconnect between leadership and people. The electoral system is part - not the whole part - of the problem.
- Violence is a reaction to feeling that people are not being listened to or taken seriously.
- South Africans don't appreciate or value or use the legal and constitutional mechanisms that are available to us. People need to be mobilized around mechanisms.
- The police are not trained adequately, nor are the people who ordered and equipped them.
- The need to channel constructively the energy and forces that people have – this is the role of civil society - before they get to government. The symbolic idea of a banner – it's necessary, even if not of a political party or a union. Perhaps it is the role of CBOs or civil society to supply that banner.
- In terms of leadership, we asked what kind of leadership do we want and how do we go out and ensure that we get it? How strong are our political loyalties and historical allegiances – be they to the Opposition Party that rules in one part of country or to other parties? We will simply replicate good and bad leadership if we are not prepared to do question our allegiances. How can we bring out leadership that listens and pro-active leadership? For the Marikana miners, it [violence] worked. We need leadership that gets there before the violence begins – especially as we could be at the beginning of a horrible pattern with drops in prices and retrenchments.
- We know that there have been positive achievements. We know that our people have that positive energy.

END