

The Great Betrayal of our Rainbow Nation

Speech by Solly Malatsi MP, DA National Spokesperson

Many South Africans are sick and tired of being mesmerised with poetic phrases about hope.

They are frustrated about being rallied to be resilient when their lives are a daily struggle for survival. They no longer need stories enticing them to re-imagine the future when they live in despair. For many South Africans the hardships they endure daily are inflicted by ANC government's failures.

According to the Quarterly Labour Force Survey for Q3 in 2022, 11.2 million South Africans are unemployed. 10.2 million young people between the ages of 15 and 24 are not in employment, education or training. They lack the skills nor qualification to stand any chance of ever finding a job in their lifetime.

This is the greatest betrayal of a generation of young people.

It's scary that crime stats show that every day between July and September 2022, 76 people were murdered. These aren't just numbers. Every murdered person was loved by someone. All of us – well except those with VIP protectors – live in fear of criminals who aren't scared of law enforcement authorities.

Mr President – many South Africans work hard to provide for their families and protect their loved ones from harm. All they need is the government to do its job and do it well. All the people of Giyani, Polokwane and every other community that often goes for days or months without water - need is clean running water when they open their taps.

They are not asking for miracles. They look to you for leadership and solutions. They look to you for compassion for their suffering.

While all of us in this house have a responsibility to deliver on the promise of constitution, Mr President you carry the largest weight of that responsibility. Yet you consistently miss opportunities to show you care more for the state of our country than the state of your dying party.

We have become a nation defined by the potholes that punctuate our streets due to the neglect of road infrastructure. Navigating those potholes in NkowaNkowa and between Makhado and Thohoyandou is a daily life threatening mission.

For those of us, who bear the misfortune of living in villages and townships under ANC governments, access to basic services is a gruesome gymnastics adventure. This is the lived reality of millions of South Africans. To many of you in the executive, that is not your daily struggle.

You live in the luxury of ministerial homes with free water, free electricity and lately with free generators while the rest of us grapple with loadshedding. You have become shameless political tourists in villages and townships only to pop up feigning some opportunistic compassion during campaigns.

That Mr President, is the greatest betrayal of our rainbow nation.

Don't you have any shame when municipalities scramble to fill potholes or clear roads ahead of your Presidential and Ministerial visits only to neglect them afterwards? Your party's failure in local government has unleashed the most ruthless assault on the dignity of poor South Africans.

For communities who experience the difference by DA governments know that the quality of life is better compared to where the ANC governs. Right now the people of UMngeni Municipality, can testify that life is getting better under the Mayoralty of Chris Pappas.

They now know that DA government appoints municipal workers who are fit for purpose in a fair and transparent manner unlike in the past where jobs were reserved for ANC cadres only.

The people of Umgeni know how it feels to have a government that truly cares about vulnerable residents.

Since coming to office Mayor Pappas and his team have increased the basket of free services and the number of poor households receiving indigent support assistance from the municipality from 133 to 3 050 today.

Right here in Cape Town; Mayor Hill-Lewis is leading a revolution in infrastructure investment worth R120 billion that will be the foundation for economic growth in the city for 10 years.

Over R3 billion has been budgeted for major capacity upgrades at Potsdam, Zandvliet, Athlone, Macassar and renovating the Bellville wastewater works. In order to secure Cape Town's water security and protect the city from the threat of future droughts, the City is now investing around R5 billion to introduce 300 mega-litres per day of new water by 2030.

These are DA leaders who are demonstrating daily how good governance and leading with compassion delivers quality services that restores the dignity of communities.

From small acts such as regular cleaning of public spaces to big projects such as massive investments in sewage infrastructure, they are showcasing how DA governments uplift communities. If you are a resident in a village or township that to this day does not have access to clean drinkable water in your household, use your power and vote for a government that delivers in 2024.

If you are victim of gender based violence who is yet to get justice because of government's slow processing of DNA samples, use your power and vote for a government that cares in 2024.

If you are an unemployed qualified young person who hasn't found a job in the public service because you are not an ANC cadre, use your power and vote for a government that values hiring people who are fit for purpose.

And if you are an entrepreneur who has retrenched staff or ultimately closed your business because of the loadshedding, use your power and vote for a government that believes in supporting entrepreneurs to succeed.

Fellow South Africans, we are a nation in disrepair. But all is not lost. We have an opportunity to repair our beautiful country in 2024. Let's vote these ANC political scammers out and restore our country on the path to a prosperous nation.

Kea leboga.