

# focus

Tracing Political Trends



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Suzman Tribute Edition  
Eulogy  
Motion of Condolence  
Memorial

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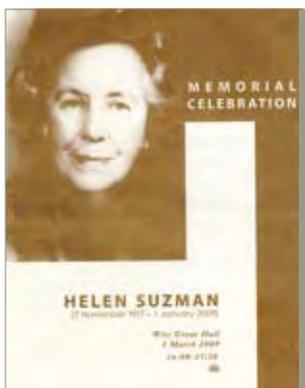
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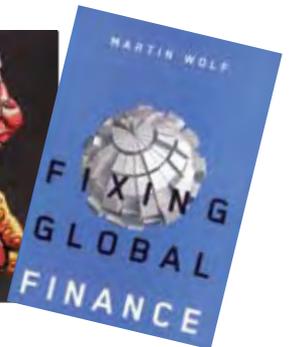
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By Raenette Taljaard

# Hamba Kahle Beloved Helen

This edition of FOCUS marks a solemn and sad event – the passing of our beloved Patron-in-Chief Helen Suzman. It is a moment of bereavement we wish to mark by publishing a special Helen Suzman Tribute edition as a fitting honour to a life well-lived with a sound moral compass.

Hers was a life that set an example worthy of emulation by us all for its sheer tenacity, principle and commitment. This is a moment of reflection accompanied by an outpouring of grief, both locally and abroad, that has been breathtaking in both scale and scope – a collective emotion that saw our nation's flags flown half-mast in tribute to a daughter of the struggle who gave every sinew of her spirit to the fight for justice and the cause of democracy in her beloved country.

But it is also a celebration of how South Africans of all walks of life and political persuasions united in paying tribute to a life which, in its richness of friendships offered and countless kindnesses extended, was a lived celebration of the enduring values of honesty, fairness, trust, compassion and integrity.

Helen's funeral witnessed a unified front of national grief, with various key figures expressing a sense of loss on behalf of our country, including President Kgalema Motlanthe and former State President FW de Klerk.

These unprecedented levels of bipartisan tribute culminated in the South African Parliament passing a Motion of Condolence mourning Helen's passing – an appropriate tribute given her hours of toil in the very Houses of Parliament that have witnessed the birth of the very democracy for which she struggled.

As President Kgalema Motlanthe warmly and aptly remarked during his State of the Nation address:

*"Above all, I stand before you with pride and confidence that the South Africa we celebrate today – worlds apart from the divisions, conflict and exclusion of a mere 15 years ago – is a product of the labours and toils of South African women and men from all walks of life.*

*"These South Africans represent the hope and resilience that characterise our nation.*

*"Within the galaxy of outstanding South Africans are Members of our democratic Parliament to whom we had the misfortune since last February to bid the final farewell. They include Brian Bunting, Billy Nair, Ncumisa Kondlo, John Gomomo, Joe Nhlanhla, Cas Saloojee, John Schippers and Jan van Eck.*

*"To these, I would also like to add Ms Helen Suzman, a truly distinguished South African, who represented the values of our new Parliament in the chambers of the old."*

As Mamphela Ramphela emphasised in a tribute in the *Sunday Times* after Helen's passing, her spirit of public service and ethos of serving first and foremost the needs and lives of others must be the most salient characteristic of Helen Suzman's life journey.

It is a characteristic we would be well-advised to appropriate from her public life for future generations of South Africans at whichever level of government and governance. It is a value that was celebrated and recalled at an emotional Memorial celebration organised by Helen's family in her honour at the University of the Witwatersrand – her alma mater, where her fine political consciousness was honed further as a young student.

The public memorial was not only a fitting tribute in form and substance, but also in how Helen's daughters placed this celebration of their mother's life in the public domain as a gift to South Africans at a time of their own greatest grief – exactly as selflessly as their mother would have done it.

Those who knew Helen will realise that her greatest sadness would have been missing the excitement of our fourth democratic elections, their outcome and the fate of ANC presidential candidate Jacob Zuma – a fate keenly watched despite Helen's ailing health.

As the Helen Suzman Foundation embarks on a new year of new challenges, the HSF team and trustees will be actively seeking to promote and protect the legacy of the great Helen Suzman – whose abiding humility was a great hallmark – through various project reviews and a recalibration of our tasks to emphasise public service in various ways.

A small task and a great and enduring responsibility.

Tracing Political Trends

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By Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein

# The pursuit of simple justice

The complex edifice of achievement that was Helen Suzman's life was built, in the end, on a few simple ideas – principal among them, that justice must be pursued. This is the eulogy delivered at her funeral on 4 January 2009

**A**t a funeral, as we confront the seriousness and sadness of death, and the fact that we are all equal before G-d, according to Jewish custom, ordinary protocol is not observed and we do not welcome by name any distinguished attendees. At the same time, of course, looking around this room we see so many people gathered from all different walks of life because the loss of Helen Suzman is a loss on so many different levels.

It is a loss on a personal level. And at this time we extend our condolences to the family; to her daughters – Francie and Patty, to her son-in-law Jeffrey, to her grand-daughter Josi and her husband Jaime, to her grandson Danny and his wife Daphna and their little son Leo, her great-grandson – newly arrived in the world, who has come from afar to attend. And, of course, gathered here this morning is the Jewish community, because Helen Suzman was proud of her Jewish identity. She asked to be buried next to her beloved husband – the late doctor Mosie Suzman – and she asked to be buried in accordance with Jewish rites.

Her forebears fled persecution in Eastern Europe and found a haven on this southern tip of Africa. She grew up in a Jewish home where they lit Sabbath candles, went to cheder, and she was very much a person who identified with the





Helen Suzman's family, President Kgalema Motlanthe and former President F.W. de Klerk; and other dignitaries gathered at her funeral in Johannesburg on 4 January 2009

community. And, therefore, as the South African Jewish Community, we are gathered here this morning as part of this diverse group because we also have experienced the loss on a communal level.

And then, of course, as South Africans we are gathered here. Flags are flying at half-mast across the country. We have the great honour of the President and former Presidents who have gathered here together with the highest office bearers in our land to pay tribute because Helen Suzman was a great daughter of South Africa, and it is a loss for South Africa as well. And, indeed, her death is a loss for the world. Humanity has lost a great sister. And so, all human beings around the world, in a sense, have lost a great soul today.

Gathered in this room is the dream that Helen Suzman fought for. The dream of a South Africa united in its diversity – and so this is part of what we gather to do, to pay respects to her and to remember what she did for all of us. But at the same time, as we begin to pay respects, we do so with humility. And I think

the words of former President Nelson Mandela are very apt, at this point, to remind us of the humility that we need to adopt at this time. He wrote to her on the occasion of her 85th birthday: "It is not for us or anyone else to sing your praises. Your place is ensured in the history of this country. Your courage, integrity and principled commitment to justice have marked you as one of the outstanding figures in the history of public life in South Africa."

And so even before we begin with any remarks, it is important for all of us, with humility, to acknowledge that whatever we say this morning, and whatever tributes are paid to Helen Suzman, to remember these words. "It is not for us or anyone else to sing your praises because your place is ensured in the history of this country", no matter what we say.

But having said that, let's try and understand a little bit more about her legacy. What is leadership about? What did she teach us of what it means to be a great human being and a great leader? The 36 years she served so loyally as a Member of Parliament for



President Kgalema Motlanthe, former President F.W de Klerk, Gauteng Premier Paul Mashatile, Colin Eglin and former Chief Justice Arthur Chaskalson and Mr Gordon Wadell act as pallbearers

Houghton, what did she teach us in that? And I think that perhaps the best way to understand it is from an ancient passage in the Talmud where leadership is described as follows: "lo avdut elah serarah" – "not power and glory, but service". And one of the commentaries explains that the word "serarah" – "power" – refers to brutal raw power exercised with insensitivity. And that is what Helen fought all her life – brutal power. That word in Afrikaans which sums it all up – *kragdaadigheid* – the abuse of power.

Helen would often say, "I don't like bullies." She also used to say, "All I want is simple justice." She was driven by a passion to right the injustices and to correct the wrongs of the world. Those who are close to her say she had no elaborate political philosophy. She simply tried to help the weak and the vulnerable. Helen Suzman was the living embodiment of the injunction in the Book of Deuteronomy – "Justice, justice, thou shalt pursue." When the verse says justice must be pursued, it is telling us that justice is not easily attained and needs relentless pursuit to be achieved. Helen Suzman relentlessly pursued the cause of justice and fairness in South Africa. She fought apartheid because apartheid was the ultimate abuse of power. It was built on the destruction of the rule

of law and so she fought it. And that is echoed in the ethos of the Five Books in the Bible where 36 times we are warned to be kind to those who are vulnerable and not to oppress the weak. And so she fought oppression because of her creed of simple justice.

And history must record that she was one of the great freedom fighters for the liberation of South Africa from the tyranny of apartheid. The tools of her liberation struggle were not guns or the politics of resistance, but the use of the machinery – the beast of the apartheid parliament – to attack the system itself. She used her parliamentary privilege to prod, attack and discredit the National Party government. But she did so with one of her most effective weapons, her wit and humour. She sparkled with life. She had a keen sense of humour which was used very effectively in parliamentary debates – a sense of humour which demonstrated that despite her unshakeable conviction of the righteousness of her cause, she was not self-righteous. Her humour also reflected her fiery independent spirit that challenged conventional wisdom and was able to pierce the façade of the webs that people spin. In short, she had *chutzpah*. And she used that *chutzpah* to tackle the bullies.

And the Nats were the bullies. They tried to bully her about being a woman, about being a Jew. Helen Suzman was a proud Jew. She identified strongly with the Jewish people and the State of Israel and never tried to hide her identity even though she was subjected to anti-Semitic abuse in Parliament as well as outside of it. Many a time in Parliament she was told, "go back to Israel"; "go back to Lithuania". She was subjected to chauvinistic jibes. PW Botha, the former President, once said to her – "if my wife chattered like that I would know what to do" and "she is like water dripping on a tin roof." And then she records in her memoirs how one member of Parliament caught her in the lobby and said, "Helen, you've got a man's brain." And she writes there in her memoirs: "His was not a brain I admire." But it was that kind of *chutzpah* that prodded and poked and made people uncomfortable.

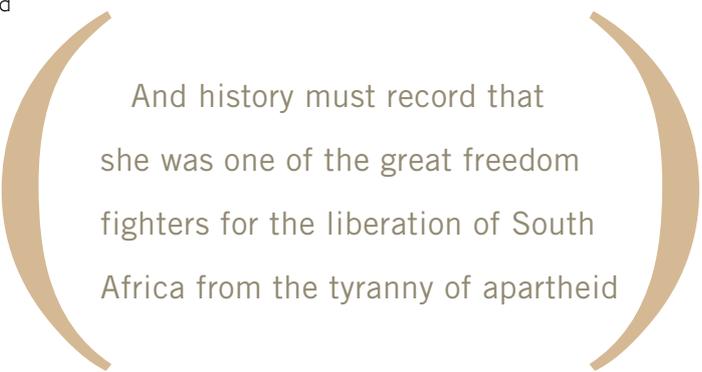
In her memoirs, she records with great pride what she said to Prime Minister Vorster: "I was glad to have the opportunity," she writes, "to tell Vorster face-to-face during the 1969 session that I had seen a survey in the *Sunday Times* which said that over 70% of the white population thought he was doing a good job, and only 0,3% thought that he was no good. I said I would stand up and be counted amongst the 0,3%." And she tackled him head on. PW Botha – she famously did not get on with him, and at one point in a parliamentary debate he said, "The Honourable Member from Houghton doesn't like me." So she interjected and said, "Don't like you – I can't stand you." She knew how to deal with the bullies.

But on a more serious and profound level, she was a voice. She is described by many as one of the great parliamentarians of modern times. Her feistiness and temerity in shaming Prime Ministers gave hope to millions of South Africans and, indeed, to the citizens of the world, all of whom witnessed that in the midst of the darkness of apartheid, there was a voice clear and strong speaking out against injustice and oppression. She was the voice of millions of disenfranchised and oppressed South Africans – the victims of the evils of apartheid. And she used her parliamentary privilege in ways to undermine the system.

For example, she used her parliamentary privilege to publicise information that otherwise would have been censored because in Parliament nothing can be censored, and the press were free to report on anything that took place in Parliament. It was a debate I was having with the family in the past few days, but I found it in her memoirs. In fact, she used the opportunity of her parliamentary podium to read out a large section of the closing statement of former President Nelson Mandela at his treason trial. Those were words that no one could hear because they were censored; but she used her platform in Parliament to read out his speech so that his speech could then be reported in the press. That is how she used her parliamentary privilege.

And, of course, she asked questions – exposing the inequities and, indeed, the stupidity of the system. There is the retort when one of the government ministers said that her questions are embarrassing to the country and it is famously known, and reported very widely in the past few days, that she responded: "It is not the questions but the answers that are embarrassing."

And she used her parliamentary position to oppose the iniquitous apartheid legislation. One example, in particular: in 1963 the National Party brought before Parliament the 90-day detention without trial legislation. And in the end the United Party supported it. And she was the only person who voted against it. But what she did was very clever: In order to demonstrate the stupidity and the evil of what was taking place, what she did was – when the Speaker of the House called for the "aye's" and the "no's" and she was the only no – she called for divide. In terms of the parliamentary rules that is conventionally used when you can't judge the numbers and you have to then separate. The "aye's" then sit on one side of the house and the "no's" sit on the



And history must record that  
she was one of the great freedom  
fighters for the liberation of South  
Africa from the tyranny of apartheid

other side. But she used it to embarrass them because the whole Parliament moved over to one side and she sat there, as the only 'no', sitting by herself, all alone on that side, symbolic of standing up against what was going on.

And her courage was recognised. After that 1963 vote, she received a message from the late Chief Albert Luthuli, who wrote to her as follows: "I take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation and admiration for your heroic and lone stand against a most reactionary parliament. I most heartily congratulate you for your untiring efforts in a situation that would frustrate and benumb many." And then he said a very important phrase: "Forever remember you are a bright star in a dark chamber where the lights of liberty are going out one by one." A very important and beautiful phrase: "You are a bright star in a dark chamber."

So she gave hope to him, to the leadership of the struggle, and indeed to ordinary South Africans. In the African newspaper *The World* on 31 March 1966, covering the election – which had been



Fellow human rights activist and friend Advocate George Bizos mourns the passing of Helen Suzman

a disastrous election – these are the words: “Africans today hail the victory of Mrs Helen Suzman in the Houghton constituency during the general election yesterday. Some leaders described it as the news of the year for Africans. Many township people sat next to their radios last night waiting for the results. There was widespread jubilation in buses and trains from Soweto and other townships today as news flashed that Mrs Suzman had retained her Houghton seat.” She gave people hope, and her opposition and her position as a Member of Parliament gave hope, despite the fact that she stood alone.

But the other part of her leadership, and going back to that Talmudic statement that “leadership is not power and glory but service”, was that Helen Suzman’s devotion to public life was about serving people and not exercising power over them. It was not about what she could take from her position as Member of

Parliament, but how she could use her position to do good in the world. She was not ambitious to become, but rather ambitious to do. She concerned herself with the plight of individuals – following the Talmudic teaching that to save one life is to save a world. She dealt diligently and to the best of her ability with hundreds of requests that came to her from far and wide – even those far beyond the borders of her own constituency. Suffering South Africans of all colours turned to her for help. She never let go and tried her best to solve each one of their problems, doing work which was nearly always unsung and unreported in the public domain. And this is important, because goodness done in private when the world cannot see is the real test of a great person. With kindness and compassion she visited prisoners to bring comfort and to fight for ways of improving their conditions; and she visited all the famous political prisoners at a time when it certainly caused her

great discomfort. And it required a tremendous amount of courage to do so, and to overcome great resistance from the authorities.

Her family tells me that people phoned her house at all hours of the day and night looking for help. She made herself accessible. Her phone number was listed and it was part of her personal mission to help as many people as possible in the most practical way. She pursued justice with a relentless work ethic and with a practical mind to carry through on the finest details, realising that great ideas and great ideals must be implemented in order for them to bear fruit. Helen Suzman demonstrated the power of words but she was also a woman of action. She did things, she got things done. She did practical things to help people. She got involved with the nitty gritty, the messiness of the details of people's lives in order to help them. She was a practical politician focused on the minutiae of the implementation of policy.

But she had courage, courage to stand alone. For 13 years she was the only parliamentary member of the Progressive Party. She had courage to stand alone and she believed she could make a difference. Because many people would say, if you can't change the whole system and you can't save the world then don't even start. And she quotes the words of Robert Kennedy on a visit that he made to South Africa, and these words clearly inspired her because she includes them in her memoirs. Robert Kennedy addresses this very point and he says:

"Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events. And in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation. It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal or acts to improve the lot of others or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope – and crossing each other from a million different centres of energy and daring – those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression."

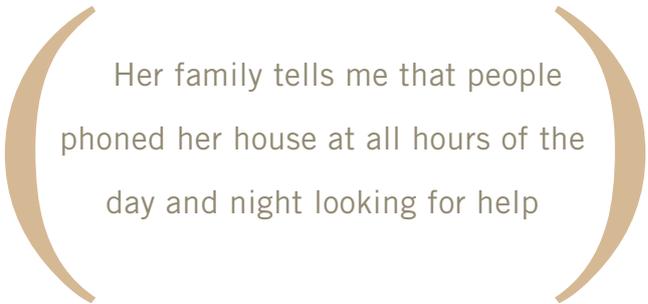
Helen received a note from Bobby Kennedy. He wrote to her, and it's recorded in her memoirs: "You are an inspiration to all of us. Those of us who live in a different atmosphere under different circumstances and yet are struggling with the same kinds of problems may become weary and discouraged at times. But we shall always find the stimulation to continue knowing that Helen Suzman never gave up."

Helen Suzman never gave up. And that took courage and conviction. It took a sense that even though the world is in disrepair we must help fix it to follow the Talmudic doctrine of what we call *Tikkun Olam* – the moral injunction to fix the world. That expression in Hebrew – *Tikkun* – which means to fix, *Olam* is the world – is premised on the fact that the world is broken. *Tikkun Olam* means "to fix the world", but it means the world is broken. And many people, when they see a broken world, become disheartened. When Helen saw a broken world, she came forward

to fix it. She never gave up. And she was never disheartened by the fact that she could not complete the task. As it says in the Talmud, in Ethics of the Fathers: "The work is not for you to complete but neither are you free to rest from it altogether." You can never complete the work. The fight for freedom, the fight for a better society is never complete. And Helen was prepared to work knowing that she could never complete the work – and that took courage.

But what the commentaries point out on that passage in the Talmud – "the work" isn't complete, but an individual's contribution to "the work" – the mission to completely fix the world – can be complete. And we can say today to Helen Suzman that you completed your work for us. The work was not complete – the struggle goes on – but you completed your work for us and for that we thank you.

She was a role model for us all and let her memory, in conclusion, and her life be an inspiration and a guiding light for all of us as we confront the exciting, daunting and sacred task of building a truly great country for all South Africans. May G-d grant us the wisdom and strength to follow her teachings. Through her life she taught us that leadership is about service and not power and glory; that life is about giving and not taking; that in a cynical and selfish world, we



Her family tells me that people  
phoned her house at all hours of the  
day and night looking for help

must strive to be idealistic; that one human being is a whole world; that kindness and compassion are everything; that we live with the courage of clear moral convictions; that we must work hard to pursue justice with relentless energy and dedication; that actions speak louder than words; that we must never despair in the face of enormous challenge; that we must stand up for the vulnerable and never tolerate the bullying of abusers of power; that real integrity is about getting the job done. And that even though we cannot complete the work, we must still strive to do what we can. That the pursuit of simple justice must be the calling of our lives and that the struggle for freedom continues always. These were her values and this is her legacy. Her life was a brilliant and shining gift to us all.

May G-d Almighty comfort and bless us all, her bereaved family, friends and fellow South Africans. May her memory be a blessing.

# IN THE PANTHEON OF LIBERAL GREATS





On 27 January 2009, the Speaker of the House moved a motion of Condolence on the passing of Helen Suzman. Senior representatives of opposing parties rose to express a rare unity of opinion on the life of a courageous, principled woman and great parliamentarian

# Motion of Condolence

The CHIEF WHIP OF THE OPPOSITION: Madam Deputy Speaker,  
I move without notice:

That the House -

1. notes with profound sadness the death of Helen Suzman on 1 January 2009;
2. acknowledges the significant contribution she made to the attainment of democracy in South Africa by fearlessly fighting against the apartheid government during her time as the only Progressive Party MP in Parliament;
3. recognises that since her retirement from Parliament in 1989 she has stood four-square behind the ideals that animate the South African Constitution and stood up without fear or favour for human rights and civil liberties in South Africa and in the wider world;
4. further acknowledges that she has left a rich political legacy that will inspire all South Africans in the years ahead; and
5. conveys its condolences to her family and friends and expresses the assurance that she will truly be missed.

I thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I acknowledge the presence in the gallery of the following members of the Suzman family: Mrs F Jowell, daughter of Mrs Helen Suzman; Ms P Suzman, daughter of Mrs Helen Suzman; and Prof J Jowell, son-in-law of Mrs Helen Suzman. [Applause.] You are most welcome in the National Assembly.





# In the pantheon of liberal greats

Tony Leon, former Leader of the DA, who succeeded Helen Suzman as MP for Houghton, knew that he was standing on the shoulders of a giant

**M**adam Deputy Speaker, honourable colleagues, on New Year's Day 2009, South Africa and the world mourned the death of Helen Suzman. Yet today in Parliament, we should celebrate her long-lived life and her public service – public service of undoubtedly one of the most distinguished parliamentarians of the past century.

Helen Suzman embodied and fought for the essential principles of our own Constitution. Her tireless efforts on behalf of the disenfranchised, the disadvantaged and the downtrodden shone a bright and noble light in the darkness of the apartheid Parliament.

She has bequeathed to us a mighty legacy of achievement, a potent example of holding power to account, and proved in fact that the power of convictions can, over time, defeat the convictions of power.

This exceptional, intensely human and very humorous woman was a unique politician. We should look upon her and learn from her. We will not see her like again.

Her 36 years as the Member of Parliament for Houghton, which for 13 years in pre-democratic South Africa was the only white parliamentary constituency to return a liberal member, were unrivalled in their energy and courage, singular in their commitment to principle, and the cause of pugnacious opposition. Alone in the House of Assembly, although protected by a surprisingly supportive Speaker and aided by an affirming media, she confronted the juggernaut of the apartheid state. She did not stop its enactments or excesses in all cases, but she exposed its perversities and its prejudices. She kept alive the democratic values which that system so assiduously undermined.

Her dissent however was never mechanical or knee-jerk: her iron-clad belief in simple justice and the rule of law impelled her opposition and provided her moral compass. As she once observed with so much accuracy: "If you don't know what to do, go and look for the principle." And she practised what she preached. Clad in the armour of principle, armed with a plethora of facts and buttressed by her first-hand visits to the furthest reaches of South Africa's dark empire of racial discrimination, she set the benchmark for conscientious public and parliamentary service.

Ironically, for all its democratic defects, of which this House is only too aware, the previous Parliament in which she served offered her, as a single member in a very hostile Chamber, almost unlimited opportunity to perform the role of a doughty fighter, despite the fact that she never belonged, at any stage in her career, to the party in power. She proved by her example something we are apt to forget: government holds no monopoly of wisdom and enjoys no exclusive franchise on patriotism. Often the reverse is true, and in the cruel light of hindsight we have an indication that, frequently, during Helen Suzman's time and afterward, South Africa and its national interest is sometimes better served from the opposition benches, than from anywhere else.

Although she retired from Parliament in 1989, just before the dawn of the new South Africa, she remained actively and vigorously engaged in the politics and the public affairs of our country, first as a human-rights commissioner and later as a commentator, and, yes, even at the age of 90, as an agitator. In the words of one of her election slogans, "she fought to put things right". Refreshingly, she had no time for the modern fashion of political correctness or other pretentious and ultimately self-defeating attempts to cut corners on



principle and to adjust views, or even bend history itself, to fit current needs or to court majority opinion.

On a more personal level, Helen was the inspiration for my own first political involvement in this country's politics 40 years ago. She enthused an entire generation of then young South Africans, including the Chief Whip of the DA who then was the leader of the Young Progressives, as I recall, and persuaded many that the progressive cause was worth fighting for, and that the system of apartheid was worth fighting against. Then 20 years ago, in 1989, I had the very daunting task of succeeding her as the Member of Parliament for Houghton. I realised that I was standing on the shoulders of a political giant: her legacy, even while she was alive, was writ large and stood in inverse proportion to her very slight physical stature.

There is little doubt or debate that Helen Suzman has, after her death, ascended into the pantheon of liberal greats. But it is perhaps worth noting, in fixing her legacy and honouring her contribution, that she in fact was no ideologue. She summed up her philosophy with the simple premise: "I hate bullies."

Although a liberal, "finish and klaar", as we would say, some of her stances on social issues were radical, and she was in other respects a conservative: she believed, for example, in conserving

institutions, from a Parliament populated with serious-minded and honest and hard-working members, to courts of law presided over by sober-minded and independent jurists.

While she celebrated the fact that she lived long enough to see the system which she so vigorously opposed collapse and witness the birth of a new constitutional order, she always maintained a steadfast and unsentimental eye on current developments and remained utterly unafraid to confront the government, whether this one or the previous one, when warranted.

This led to something of a clash in 2004, between her and our previous President, Mr Thabo Mbeki. He accused her of being in favour of change but determined to resist it. On this matter, in fact, I think he was wrong. For what Mrs Suzman opposed was not change itself, but the knock-it-all-down-and-begin-everything-again approach.

Helen Suzman's funeral, on 4 January 2009, at the Jewish Cemetery at Westpark, Johannesburg, brought together the current political good and the great, and the perhaps not-so-great, of the governing elite, the opposition and civil society. Someone wistfully remarked after her funeral, "It's as though the country is searching for a true heroine." At her graveside they did not have to look any further.

# The passion to make sure that humankind succeeds

On 27 January 2009, the Speaker of the House moved a Motion of Condolence on the passing of Helen Suzman. Mnyamezeli Booi, Chief Whip of the Majority Party in Parliament, remembered what she meant to him and his comrades in the dark days following 16 June 1976

**M**adam Deputy Speaker, and honourable members, this is just one of the great lessons we take upon ourselves as Members of Parliament. Some of us never thought we would ever have an opportunity to talk about such a great person. During our youthful days she was one of the shining examples, and part, of our own resistance.

She was one of the women that we could rely on in very difficult times. We could always look up to her during the dark days of apartheid and ask, "What can we do? Who can we speak to?", when we lost some of our own brothers, as young as they were. Sometimes it was very difficult for us to explain to families where our colleagues had gone. I was still young in 1976 when these things were beginning to unfold and impact on families in a manner that nobody could explain.

When we resisted apartheid, we could never say who would remain part of our families. As members of the Congress of South African Students [COSAS], we lost some of our colleagues during the night, trying to creep towards a house, and we would say we had not seen so-and-so for such a long time. We did not understand what had happened to some of our best friends. Some claimed that they had crossed the border; some claimed that they had been arrested by the security branch, and so we didn't know where they were.

Typically of her and her leadership, she would listen to us at any time of the evening. When we had finished, she would follow up on our behalf, and take it back to the Parliament and to the public eye, so that we could know what had happened to some of our own brothers.

Some of them we had lost; some were buried by the apartheid regime. She helped us to identify them, so that we could relate to the families what had happened.

We will always remember Helen Suzman for the contribution she has made to our own society. She might have stood up and

come to a Parliament that we ourselves had been fighting against, but she remained an inspiration to us as young people during that period. We were able to say that this is one woman and one leader we could rely on.

We stand here, as the ANC, to say that she made her contribution to society, and we are very thankful for what she has done for us, because without her we would never have known what had happened to some of our colleagues. Without her we would never have known how to relate to people on Robben Island. It had always been very difficult, but she always shed light and provided us with help. As the ANC we are very thankful for the type of leadership she provided throughout the difficult period when we resisted apartheid.

Helen Suzman will remain a shining example to our society of how we should stand up when it is very difficult to do so. She will remain an example of the fact that during difficult times one should never abandon the human soul. One should be able to stretch out one's hand to an individual. One should be able to say to a human soul: "I am still around. I will reach out my hand to you and hold on, even if there are ideological differences, even if there are difficulties." She did it and she enabled us to carry the responsibility during very difficult times. This is the type of example we have set for ourselves.

As Members of Parliament, she told us that we could stand up as an institution and unite, and mobilise and use the platform in a very progressive manner; so that we can attain the goals set by various people. As a Member of Parliament she set that example, and we want to say to her, as the ANC, that this contribution she made to our society cannot be forgotten or overlooked, because to build a Parliament and be able to sustain this type of institution is valuable to society. It is valuable to the poorest of the poor of the society. She reached out to them and set that example, and we say to her: wherever you go, let them look after you. Let the



role that you played in society be protected. As the ANC, we are really grateful for the contribution you made.

And I am saying to Members of Parliament, let us learn a lot from what Helen Suzman did in our society. We might have had our own ideas and battles on how we have viewed her during those days of apartheid and beyond, but her contribution cannot be forgotten by this society. She contributed from different walks of life.

I explained to one of the veterans who is going to speak after me, how valuable it is for him to contribute to this particular debate, because she helped us during difficult times to know who was on Robben Island, so that we were able to bring news to the families of those that were arrested on the borders, when nobody knew that they had been arrested and sent there.

We would approach her and speak to her, and explain that this was a rural family, and these were the circumstances that confronted them, and the police had been making it difficult to reach out to that particular family. Because she was driven by the needs of humankind, she could stand up and say, this is what I have been able to establish about this particular individual, and this is what happened. That is what drove her, the passion to make sure that humankind succeeds under difficult conditions.

We, as the ANC, say that that type of contribution cannot be reversed and thrown into the sea. We should take the good out of it, and build a better society. The lesson that she has taught us is that as an individual one can set a good example under difficult conditions, so that everybody can learn something positive, without politicising the role that you play in society.

I am saying on behalf of the ANC that Helen Suzman showed us a lot in our youthful days: that resistance without purpose can also

create problems. But because she had the purpose of saving and helping humankind, she helped us during the very difficult conditions of apartheid and today, as we stand here, as the ANC, we thank her for the role she played within society. We thank her for being able to hold us together. We have been able to quote her many times. We have been able to interact with her, because of her leadership and the role she played during that particular period.

Those were very difficult and dark days. I remember one of the children we lost was Dlomo from COSAS in Soweto. She was the only one who could help us to trace the whereabouts of Dlomo. She was the only one who could help us after the 1976 Soweto uprising to bring to light to the atrocities of apartheid.

She continued to be a liberal, which I respect, because it demonstrates the fact that she was principled in terms of what she believed in and her vision, and she always knew that there were human beings behind and beyond principles, and they had to be protected. That is why, as the ANC, we will always remember her: That is the type of example we would want to learn from and hold up to our own society and children. We can tell our children:

Learn from this: that there were some human beings, even under the apartheid regime, who were able to come together and bring light when it was very difficult. Without her, some families would never have known what happened to their children.

We say to you, Helen Suzman, in Xhosa:

Hamba kakuhle, Nkosikazi, hamba kakuhle, mama, into osenzele yona yinto esisoloko siyijongile, yinto esiza kusoloko siyikhonzile sisithi kuwe igalelo lakho ulenzile, ngelo galelo othe walenza phakathi kwabantu bethu, asisayi kuli libala. Sohlala sikunye nawe, sikukhumbula. Siyabulela.



# The struggle must go on

Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi of the IFP asks that we may find fresh inspiration in the life of Helen Suzman

**M**adam Deputy Speaker, honourable members, I rise today to honour the memory of Helen Suzman. Being aware, as I am, that I may be the last one left in this House of my generation who worked closely with Mrs Suzman, I feel the burden of conveying the full measure of our country's loss.

Let us not mourn the loss of her life, but rather reflect on her breathtaking bravery, firm convictions and profound integrity so that her life may inspire us all again.

In the narrative of our liberation struggle, Mrs Suzman's role is yet to be fully appreciated. This should not be the closing of a chapter, but rather the opening of a new one in which this House solemnly proclaims the importance of her role to inspire future generations and dignify us all in sharing such a great compatriot.

When coming to power, our ruling party took down a beautiful portrait of Mrs Suzman adorning the walls of this building, and some of us felt that it was a desecration of our liberation heritage. I would like to congratulate the Speaker, because I see that Mrs Suzman's picture has re-emerged in our corridors.

Mrs Suzman transcended all the barriers of segregation and discrimination to soar above the bigotry and injustice of her age, colleagues and context. As a white politician, she rejected the philosophy of apartheid and forcefully advocated full human rights and political franchise for the oppressed masses. She was one of the few white liberals who shared my view that the tricameral system was not a small step in the right direction, but a major setback which entrenched the racial mindset.

As a woman, she shattered the sexist cultural and legal paradigms of our country which saw all women as lesser individuals. She proved her leadership capacity, which few of her male colleagues from any walk of political life have matched. As

a Jewish intellectual, she projected an internationally admired image of professionalism, progress and higher morality, which brightened an often fragmented parochial and myopic white political milieu.

Her formidable skills in the predecessor of this House remain unmatched – whether she used her well-reasoned arguments to expose the immorality of discrimination or merely to expose the idiocy of the system. By quoting the Home Affairs reclassification statistics, for instance, I remember her showing how many people in the preceding year had turned from black into coloured and from coloured into Indian or white.

In the eyes of the world, she became the doyenne of our liberalism who tirelessly chipped away at the foundations of apartheid, and indeed the whole world honoured her in many ways. As a political agenda, liberalism is far from complete. Her teachings should continue to mark the path of our country's growth and development.

The task before her was not easy. She could have demurred from the burden imposed by history by saying: "Oh, I am a woman" or "I am only one person". Yet in a country racked by atrocities against the poor, the innocent and the disenfranchised, her convictions dictated her duty. She proved that a single committed person can indeed make a huge difference for a whole country.

Perhaps it is this that drew me most to Mrs Suzman. I know the courage it takes to commit one's life to the good of others in the face of peril. In this, Mrs Suzman and I were kindred spirits. [At this point, Prince Buthelezi recounted two personal anecdotes which are to be found in his address at the Helen Suzman Memorial Celebration, which is also published in this issue. They are therefore omitted here.]



Her friendship with Madiba – our doyen and icon – is well known, and the visits that she paid him on Robben Island. She did all this when being associated with black politicians was plainly dangerous. Her character would not allow her to sit in silence or pursue personal ambitions when so many were suffering. For this, we must continue to hold her memory as an example for future generations. For instance, I would like this House to resolve that many of our schools or any other appropriate thing be named after her.

I would like to be personal and say that my wife Irene and I never forgot the many occasions that she and her husband, Dr Mosie Suzman, accommodated us in their home because during the apartheid era as blacks we could not stay in hotels.

When she clocked 21 years as a Member of Parliament, Mr Colin Eglin, the then leader of the Progressive Federal Party, invited me to Cape Town to propose the toast at a function to honour her.

She never despaired, never gave up, never faltered, never felt that her energies or resources were inadequate to the task,

and never rested. Even in her twilight years, she pursued many causes which were insufficiently attended by our post-liberation government, ranging from HIV/Aids to the fight against poverty. She knew that her work was never finished and indeed, colleagues, it isn't finished.

Mrs Suzman and I walked along the same path for half a century, and I feel the burden of the work which remains to be done. For as long as South Africans suffer in poverty, despair and indignity, the struggle must go on.

Madam Deputy Speaker and colleagues, I think it would be wrong not to pay tribute to her wicked sense of humour. I remember her recalling an incident in the House where Horace van Rensburg gave advice to a very bulky and fat farmer, who was a Member of Parliament here. She told me that Horace said to this gentleman: "Please go to the gym and exercise, then you will see something that you haven't seen in a long time."

With these thoughts, I offer my condolences to all the family, as well as to my party, on the passing of this brilliant patriot and great leader. May her life continue to inspire us all. INkosi isikelele iAfrika!

# A long, productive and compassionate life



As a trustee of the Helen Suzman Foundation, the ID's Patricia de Lille pledges to protect the legacy of Helen Suzman

**M**adam Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the ID I would like also to pass our condolences to the family of the late Helen Suzman.

The passing of Helen Suzman reminds us once again that many of the generation to whom we owe our freedom are slowly leaving us. She has joined others such as the late Oliver Tambo, Mangaliso Sobukwe and Steve Biko.

As a trustee of the Helen Suzman Foundation, I was so often struck by the incredible dignity and humanity of Helen Suzman. As the Helen Suzman Foundation, we will continue to protect and promote her legacy.

The fact that she lived such a long, productive and compassionate life does not take away any of our sadness today. She was a principled woman and never compromised when it came to the truth. Helen always spoke truth to power.

Her contribution and her regular visits to political prisoners will always be remembered. At her funeral, you could see political prisoners from all political persuasions paying their last respects to Helen. May her soul rest in peace! Thank you.



# The fighter in the bullies' den



Cherylynn Dudley of the ACDP honours the courage of the outsider

**M**adam Deputy Speaker, the ACDP pays tribute to Helen Suzman, a woman of stature, who demonstrated that bullies can be overcome if you stand up to them. She also demonstrated her belief that political correctness should not override integrity or good ethics, and she did what was right when others would not.

Helen, an English-speaking, Jewish woman in a Parliament dominated by male Afrikaners was an outsider from the start, and her strong public criticism of the governing NP's policies of apartheid at a time when this was unusual among white people made her even more of an outsider. Yet, she was a tireless fighter for her cause and showed that one person, even an outsider, can make a difference.

While this amazing lady lived for others, nobody in this world will miss her more than her two daughters, Frances and Patricia. To you, the ACDP would like to send its heartfelt thoughts and condolences as you mourn her passing and celebrate her wonderful life.



# A kind and precious soul



By Sunklavathy Rajbally

Sunklavathy Rajbally of the MF celebrates a blessing to the nation

**M**adam Deputy Speaker, may I also bring a message of condolence from the MF. While we mourn the loss of the wonderful Helen Suzman, we cannot help but also celebrate the blessing she has been to our nation.

Very few people live to the good age of 91. Helen has indeed seen the part she played appear in the pages of history, and the triumph of our democracy. She serves as a great inspiration to us all, and her open beliefs and commitment to the people have been a great contributor to democracy in South Africa.

Indeed the nation mourns the loss of Suzman and I take this opportunity to convey our sincerest condolences to the family and friends of this most kind and precious soul. Suzman never allowed fear to overcome her beliefs. She is a great example for women globally. Her strength and convictions make her a true South African, one who did not allow the system to override what is right, what is just and what should be.

We believe that her family and friends have shared all her sacrifices and her beliefs and courage. You have been blessed.

Helen Suzman, the nation thanks you for all you have been and so much that you have given us. We pray that you shall continue watching us from the stars and guiding us through your example to a true democracy. May you rest in peace. I thank you, Madam.





By Dr Motsoko Pheko

# A stand for right

Dr Motsoko Pheko of the PAC saluted Helen Suzman's courage

**M**adam Deputy Speaker, the late Mrs Helen Suzman was a respected politician. She was a brave person. It takes a great deal of courage to stand against what is fashionable or is considered right by the majority.

Helen Suzman served in this Parliament during one of the darkest days in our country. Her voice was a minority voice, always overwhelmed by the voices of those who believed that by virtue of their numbers in this House, they were ordained to tell everybody what was right or wrong.

Suzman's stand in this Parliament demonstrates that the majority can be very wrong. Indeed, the apartheiders were all wrong. What they defended in this country was finally declared a crime against humanity by the United Nations.

During the debate on the imprisonment on Robben Island of

the first president of PAC, Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe, without even a mock trial, Mrs Suzman said, and I quote: "Sobukwe has been detained for another four years in jail. The cardinal point is that Sobukwe is being held in prison as a prisoner and as such deprived of his liberty."

[Referring to the terminology she had used to describe where Sobukwe was being held,] Mr GPC Bezuidenhout asked: "Why do you say that he is living in a compound? Is it not a flat?"

Mrs Suzman answered: "I wonder whether the hon member who is so cynical about this would care to take up permanent residence in that flat. Perhaps he will enjoy it."

The PAC salutes the courage of Mrs Suzman. May she be a dynamo of inspiration to all those who love freedom and fight for justice. Izwe lethu.





By Andrew Mlangeni

## A woman who got things done

When the books arrived, Andrew Mlangeni of the ANC remembers, they knew that Helen Suzman was coming to the Island

Madam Deputy Speaker and Members of Parliament, in the passing away of that remarkable lady, Helen Suzman, South Africa lost a great human being, a human being who, in this institution of Parliament, single-handedly fought for the rights of all the oppressed people in South Africa, especially the black people who were denied their human rights by the National Party government. Helen Suzman's indomitable spirit withstood all the insults that were hurled against her by the members of the NP at the time.

Helen had great foresight. By 1958, the ANC had become a great liberation movement. The movement had become a thorn in the flesh of the NP. By 1958 the government felt threatened by the ANC. And the Minister popularly known as Blackie Swart, who was responsible for banning people, especially members of the ANC who were fighting against apartheid laws, etc, had threatened to ban the organisation.

Helen warned the NP in this very institution, Parliament: "At the moment the ANC is a legal organisation operating above ground. If the government bans the ANC, you will be forcing them to go underground. And when they go underground, you will not know what they are doing."



But the government didn't take heed of the advice given by Helen Suzman. At the time, as Helen pointed out, the government knew in advance about anything that the ANC was going to do, whether in the form of activities such as boycotts, or asking people to stay away from work as a form of protest. But once it was forced to go underground it became difficult for the government to know. Suzman had warned them.

All kinds of insults were hurled against her. She was called a "kafferboetie", or a "kaffersussie", whichever is correct. But Suzman stood her ground and continued with what she was doing. Helen was a great liberal. Her mind was free from prejudice of all kinds. She not only visited us in prison on Robben Island, but also went to the townships, as well to what were then called squatter camps, to see how people were living in those areas. Today we call the squatter camps by a decent name, we call them informal settlements. Only Helen Suzman could go into such areas to see for herself the conditions under which people were living. She would then come to this Parliament and raise these issues.

Again she was called a "kafferboetie" because she took up the cudgels of the black people. Whenever our treatment in prison tended to improve a little bit, we knew that Suzman was on her way. We would get things such as books that you perhaps ordered more than six months ago. They would give you your books if you were studying, because those were some of the things we raised on Robben Island. You would have to wait for months before you could get books prescribed by the University of South Africa and

other institutions, but as soon as you got them, you knew that Suzman was on her way to see the conditions under which we were living, to see how best she could help us.

Only a person such as Suzman could help us. The International Red Cross also used to visit us on Robben Island, but they couldn't do as much as Suzman.

Suzman was not afraid to go to Pretoria to the commissioner and raise these issues personally, to say that these were the conditions under which people were living, please bring about some improvement.

She was a fearless lady. As I said earlier, while South African citizens could not go into the townships to see for themselves the conditions under which people in the townships lived, Helen Suzman would go there, bravely unescorted, and mingle freely with the people in the squatter camps. Her white friends then could not go. They were afraid and said that the black man was an animal, and that she would be killed. Suzman had no such fears, and she was accepted wherever she went.

The ANC pays tribute to this wonderful lady, this remarkable human being. Hopefully her spirit will rest in peace. Let us all take inspiration from her, as some people have already pointed out. Let us be inspired by the works of Helen. Let us try to follow in her footsteps and work not only for ourselves but for the people of South Africa. Let us be concerned about all the people of South Africa, as Helen was. If you all do that, comrades and friends, I have no doubt in my mind that Helen will lie peacefully in her grave. Long live the spirit of Helen Suzman, long live!

This poem was sent  
to the Helen Suzman  
Foundation to mark the  
passing of Helen Suzman  
by Mr David Cohen

# Miss Helen

She was as if an ant  
A persistent pest  
Among rampaging elephants  
They were tall with tusks  
Totally in control  
Determined, they were  
That no one would pass  
Without a Government-issued pass.

"The rules" they roared  
And, she meekly at first  
Quietly, befitting her slight  
Stature, but no less determined  
Issued continuing dissents  
"Tis a free country" she said  
Free air to breathe  
To breathe free thoughts.

"Subversive" others exclaimed  
When she freely expressed  
Fresh thoughts of a nation  
Which could be reunited  
To use these wonderous resources  
To build a common homeland  
If, only if, the elephant  
Bullies would mend their ways  
A small voice for the voiceless

Too elegant to be crushed  
Too courageous to be dissuaded  
Ever raising, in a rising chorus  
Of new born equanimity  
The ant stubbornly suddenly stood tall  
On the hallowed grounds she staked  
Creating a mood of national reconciliation.

Miracle of miracle  
In her lifetime, a micro minute  
On history's elongated pages  
She outlasted the elephants  
Lived to see the day  
When freedom's sunshine shone  
Shown on the southern tip  
Of the southern half of the hemisphere.

To Mrs. Helen Suzman  
Dr Moshe's wife  
One of the "mothers"  
Of the new born nation  
Of South Africa  
01/02/09

By David Cohen



1 January 2009

The Suzman Family  
The Helen Suzman Foundation  
Private Bag X2600  
HOUGHTON  
2041

Dearest Suzman Family

**CONDOLENCES**

On behalf of the RIM Council, Chief Executive Officer, Management and Staff I would like to convey our heartfelt condolences to your family.

We will always remember Helen Suzman for her relentless fight for human rights and the enormous contribution and sacrifices that she made towards the achievement of a free, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

She will especially be remembered for the selfless contribution she made to Robben Island by visiting and supporting the political prisoners during the apartheid era.

Her memory will live in our hearts forever.

Sincerely

**Mr Naledi Tsiki**  
**Robben Island Museum Council: Chairperson**



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MEMORIAL  
CELEBRATION

**HELEN SUZMAN**  
(7 November 1917 – 1 January 2009)

*Wits Great Hall  
1 March 2009  
16:00-17:30*





By John Kane-Berman

# The start of an illustrious career

The proceedings of the Memorial for Helen Suzman held at the University of the Witwatersrand on 1 March 2009 were introduced by John Kane-Berman, Head of the South African Institute of Race Relations, who recalled the experience that launched her political vocation

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to all of you, and a special welcome to a former President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr Thabo Mbeki, and Ms Mbeki. Welcome further to the many representatives here of various foreign governments.

These proceedings are being broadcast live on Radio Today throughout Southern Africa and also by satellite on a DSTV Audio Channel, so welcome also to all our radio listeners.

Finally, welcome to all those family members, the Suzman family and friends who have come from other parts of the country and other parts of the world to be here. Among them, Leo Joel, age six months, Helen Suzman's first great-grandchild who has come from London.

My name is John Kane-Berman, representing the South African Institute of Race Relations, and it is my honour and



privilege to be chairing this occasion. It's not only a memorial tinged with sadness, but also a celebration of an illustrious life of which the entire nation can be proud.

It was in doing work for the South African Institute of Race Relations that Helen Suzman began her long fight for rationality and justice. That was in 1946 when the Institute engaged her to prepare its submission to the Fagan Commission of Enquiry into the pass and other racial laws. She later wrote that what she learnt while preparing the submission had both appalled her and convinced her that these laws were both morally and economically indefensible. "It was this experience," she said, "that brought me into politics."

The Vice Chancellor is unexpectedly indisposed, so in his place we will welcome Prof Yunus Ballim, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-Principal of the University of the Witwatersrand, and he will say a word of welcome.

Then a welcome by Ms Francis Joel, elder of Helen Suzman's daughters. After that, there will be a series of tributes from distinguished South Africans. Ms Anne Bernstein, Head of the Centre for Development and Enterprise; Justice Dikgang Moseneke, Chancellor of the University; Mr Colin Eglin, former leader of the Opposition; Archbishop Desmond Tutu, former Archbishop of Cape Town; Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party; Mr Nicky Oppenheimer, Chairman of De Beers Consolidated Mines; and Ms Helen Zille, leader of the Democratic Alliance. Mr Pieter-Dirk Uys, actor, author and playwright is apparently not coming, but he's sending a representative in one shape or another. And then Dr Mamphela Ramphele, former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cape Town.

Halfway through there's going to be a short video, and at the end, Mr Daniel Joel, grandson of Mrs Suzman, will recite a poem. The Choir will then return and sing the National Anthem.

By Prof Yunus Ballim

# A long relationship comes full circle

Prof Yunus Ballim, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-Principal of the University of the Witwatersrand, welcomed the assembled family, friends and dignitaries to the Helen Suzman Memorial

It falls to me to say a word of welcome to you on behalf of the University of the Witwatersrand, and to say a few words as to the reason that you're at a university in the first place, but particularly at Wits University. Helen Suzman, of course, was a student of this university and started here in the very early days. She briefly had the courage to lecture here as well, something that takes a fair bit of courage at Wits.

She then went on, of course, to much higher things, and you'll hear much of that from other speakers far more eloquent on that subject than I am. But she was also for many years a member of the council of this university, and, I must add, when this university was particularly faced with difficult times; times of challenge from the then apartheid government, and then, of course, times of enormous

challenge with matters of serious transformation of higher education in the early days.

Helen also has, of course, an endowed Chair of Political Economy at this university, a Chair that still bears her name. But far more important to us was the fact that she was an undying supporter of the values that this university stood for. She stood squarely behind us as this university stamped its mark as a place where diversity of opinion is not only tolerated – it's a terrible word – but actually celebrated; a place where people like Helen Suzman found a comfortable intellectual home, alongside a myriad different views of the way of the world and the human condition.

It's particularly fitting that we're celebrating her life here today, and Wits is enormously proud that you've taken the time to come and share this moment with us.



By Francie Jowell

# A daughter's tribute

Helen Suzman's family welcomed an illustrious gathering to the memorial celebration held at the University of the Witwatersrand on 1 March 2009

**O**n behalf of Helen's family, especially my sister Patty – and our cousin Irene Menell, who was so important in Helen's personal and political life, a very warm welcome to you all. Our special thanks are to Wits University for so generously hosting and helping to organise this event. They provided a wonderful team, headed by Mike Khuboni. (I hope they recover soon.)

We are also grateful to our distinguished speakers. All of them readily accepted the invitation to honour our mother. We're only sorry that there isn't enough time for contributions from other close friends and colleagues, many of whom are in the audience.

There were also many others, some of whom we didn't know, who contacted us after Helen's death. They wanted us to know how Helen had variously changed their lives by tenaciously pursuing their causes. I wish that we could share all their stories with you: they were particularly moving for us, because we remember well the hundreds of letters, the phone calls at all hours of day and

night, and the people who simply turned up at our front door. All of them hoped that Helen could and would help them. She may not always have succeeded – but she always tried. As the daughter of one political prisoner told me, "She was always there for us."

We've been overwhelmed, too, by public tributes from every corner of South Africa and abroad. In this country they came from a wide range of political opinion.

We (Patty, my husband Jeffrey and I) were in the gallery of the National Assembly on 27 January, when the Speaker of the House moved a motion of condolences. This acknowledged Helen's significant contribution to the attainment of democracy in South Africa. It also recognised that since her retirement from Parliament, "she stood four-square behind the ideals" of the Constitution and "stood up without fear or favour for human rights and civil liberties in South Africa and in the wider world".

Representatives of all parties warmly supported the motion. Each spoke from a different perspective – but in an atmosphere of unusual unanimity.



That, too, was very moving for us. As was President Motlanthe's tribute in his State of the Nation address. He described Helen as "a truly distinguished South African, who represented the values of our new Parliament in the chambers of the old".

A warm letter of condolence from former President Thabo Mbeki and Zanele Mbeki honoured Helen as "one of the leading midwives of the democracy we enjoy today, and which we must continue to defend, as she did".

Shortly after Helen's death, former President Nelson Mandela and Graca Machel kindly paid us a condolence visit. Madiba cradled Helen's baby great-grandson in his arms – something that Helen, sadly, did not have the opportunity to do. We're sorry Madiba could not be with us today, but we are delighted to welcome Graca Machel.

Before we continue with this memorial celebration and hear what each speaker has to say about the Helen each of them

knew, I can't resist mentioning how she would probably have reacted to these accolades and to this celebratory event. I can hear her saying, in her inimitable way: "Oh for goodness sake, what is all the fuss about? I was only doing my job."

That was some unique job, created by herself. It was based on a lifelong belief simply described in a letter I received in the early 1960s. Reacting to the draconian apartheid laws and to Verwoerd's dire threats to anyone who opposed them, Helen wrote defiantly:

"I am quite determined... to say what I want to say and to hell with the intimidation... Those of us who can speak up have a moral obligation to do so, and I intend to exercise my so-called Parliamentary privilege to the last day."

Determination to "speak up" against injustice motivated her not only to the last day of her parliamentary career – but right up to the very last day of her life.



# ‘Stand up for Mrs Suzman!’

By Anne Bernstein

Without her, much evil would have been passed unnoticed



After the 1961 general election Helen Suzman was the only member of her new party re-elected to Parliament. Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd gloated triumphantly, saying to her: "I have written you off." She replied: "The whole world has written you off."

For the next 13 years the Progressive Party in Parliament consisted of one person – Helen Suzman. Through this "trial of fire" she became South Africa's greatest parliamentarian and human-rights activist.

She was the lone voice in Parliament voting against the policies of apartheid.

The MP for Houghton stretched the boundaries of the whites-only parliament so that she became in effect the MP for millions of people denied the vote. She used her privileges as a Member of Parliament to gain access to areas forbidden the general public – prisons, townships, resettlement areas – and people – banished, banned, forgotten, untouchable. She reported her findings and presented alternative policies to the country through the parliamentary press gallery.

Without her, much in that terrible period would have been

passed unquestioned, unnoticed. It was Helen's probing questions in Parliament – thousands of them – that provided information apartheid's critics could use to rally opposition.

One of Helen's nephews was in the army at the time. The commandant wanted to know if anyone had a Member of Parliament as a relative. When he discovered that Helen Suzman was someone's relation he immediately said: "Oh God, tell her nothing!"

If only our current MPs engendered such fear of exposure in today's officials.

Helen was inundated with requests for assistance from desperate people:

Would she intervene with the minister for a family who had been "endorsed out" of urban areas?

Would she find the son grabbed by the police and never seen again?

Would she help a detainee on a hunger strike?

No plea went unanswered, despite the fact that few if any of these requests would result in votes or assistance towards re-election.

Helen's role in Parliament enabled her political party to expand and consolidate a base of support among white South Africans for human rights and a non-racial approach to the country's future. The importance of this has often been ignored.

She inspired generations of South Africans who felt empowered by her voice at a time when opposition was being trampled upon. You will find many of those people in leadership positions in South Africa today.

There are those who think she mainly influenced white people. They are wrong.

Anyone who ever went with Helen to Soweto, to the pass courts, to a rural area, or so-called black spot, to a political trial, or to a funeral when emotions were high, immediately experienced

The MP for Houghton stretched the boundaries of the whites-only parliament so that she became in effect the MP for millions of people denied the vote

the admiration and respect that greeted her from almost every corner of the country.

I recently accompanied Helen to a dinner. A very senior government bureaucrat joined our table. He told me his name and I knew from that that he had grown up in a family that belonged to the Communist Party. He lived in Govan Mbeki's village in the Transkei and had been educated in the former Soviet Union. He asked me if that was Helen across the table. Learning that it was he said with awe in his voice: "She changed all our lives. She had a profound influence on me and my parents. I have to talk to her."

I went with Helen to Chris Hani's memorial service. A tense, dangerous time in the country. Fearlessly she insisted on driving into downtown Johannesburg. We arrived at an overflowing hall. Helen said: "I haven't come to stand outside, hang on to me." Within minutes this 5' 3" dynamo had pushed her way through the crowd and into a hall full of militant young people. No seats. Quick as a flash a marshall recognised her and hauled a young lion of the struggle out of his seat, saying: "Stand up for Mrs Suzman!"

She had an immense impact on race relations and, over time, a profound influence on white leaders which played its part in enabling our transition to democracy.

Helen's reputation was built through grinding, hard work – not grand philosophies or inflammatory speeches. She had to stand alone in a hostile sea of 165 other MPs, critically analyse their proposals, undermine their comfort zone – shame them – through a rapier wit and overarching command of the facts.

For 13 years she dined alone in Parliament.

All this took immense courage – the courage to go back year after lonely year; to defy her race and class.

The House of Assembly would shout at her – baying – when she stood to speak and oppose. The three Prime Ministers she confronted over a period of 25 years – Verwoerd, Vorster and Botha – were, in her words, "as nasty a trio as you could encounter in your worst nightmares".

Through her mischievous wit Helen fearlessly cut through all their assumptions.

"I do not know," she once purred in Parliament, "why we equate – and with the examples before us – a white skin with civilisation."

She recommended that members of PW Botha's cabinet should go and see for themselves the conditions in which black people were forced to live, but only provided they went "heavily disguised as human beings".

Helen's fury at the then official Opposition's failure to oppose indefinite detention without trial resulted in a memorable remark: "How often have I sat in Parliament and watched a shiver go up and down those green benches looking for a spine to crawl up."

It takes someone with a wicked sense of humour to add to a CV containing over 30 doctorates from the world's greatest



universities her main achievement of 2001: Declared Enemy of the State by Robert Mugabe.

When you leave today remember a fighter for justice, a special person, a great South African.

But don't just do that.

The legacy she would want is for each one of us to take her values and courageous example and apply them to South Africa today.

She would wish us to:

Try to change the lack of opportunity we see all around us.

Make officials and politicians know that they are public servants ...

... and that democracy enables voters to "throw the rascals out at the next election".

Speak out when you see injustice, even if you are the only one to do so.

Always acknowledge the achievements as well as the great challenges facing this country.

Work hard to build the great society Helen fought for and for so long.

At the heart of Helen's values was a quote she often used, a philosophy that could serve South Africa well today:

"It is the individual that society should cherish and the state should serve."

Ladies and Gentlemen, I – and many others – are proud to be known as Helen Suzman liberals.



By Justice Dikgang Moseneke

# In full flight

A rare and genuine hero, she never faltered in her attack on apartheid repression

I too rise to remember, pay tribute to and celebrate the life of Helen Suzman.

The collective life of a people yields only a few genuine heroes. During spells of political confrontation and social strife, real heroes are even more uncommon. The reason is not far to find. Ordinarily, a human being does indeed succumb to a real threat to her life or limb or freedom or property, as well as to a hazard to her social status. She fears even more the rejection, disapproval or sometime ostracism of her very own or of the powerful in a society.

I heard of the name Helen Suzman in my township of birth, Atteridgeville, in Tshwane. The adults often in hushed tones said she was different from them. They never said who "them" were. Then all liberation movements had been banned. Their leaders were in jail or in exile. I was only 15 years of age

and yet I had just become a child soldier against apartheid and colonialism. As a teenager I had already resolved, like many other youth of my time, that apartheid is a monster with which we must brawl and destroy in our lifetime. The remarkable thing to us as fiery child activists was that she was not only a woman, and the only member of her party in Parliament, but she often and openly, inside and outside of Parliament, said apartheid was a monster that must be destroyed.

We shared the passion to destroy apartheid and yet our worlds, I thought, were indeed miles apart. She did not seem to think so. Soon members of our underground cells were arrested, charged and convicted in a mass political trial before the Supreme Court at the Synagogue in Pretoria. Sentences imposed ranged from life imprisonment to five years. I earned myself ten years on Robben Island, at the age of 15. Within days of the conviction Helen Suzman rose in Parliament to express her disapproval and disgust for dispatching so many student activists against apartheid straight to jail in circumstances where no acts of violence were proven. Frankly, she was the only one that cared to demur publicly.

Her impatience with the increasing apartheid repression soon became legendary. In the same year, 1963, Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, the President of the Pan Africanist Congress, had just finished his jail term after his conviction arising from the pass protest of 1960. John Vorster, the Minister of Justice of the time, brazenly moved Parliament to authorise his indeterminate detention on Robben Island. In a monumental speech of protest, Helen Suzman reminded Parliament, our country and the world that no one should be detained without trial; that Parliament is not a court of law and may not itself impose criminal sanction; that no one should be condemned without being heard; that only courts of law bear that power and even so, only after due process and a fair trial; that on no one may an indeterminate sentence of imprisonment be imposed; and that, in any event, the protest for which Sobukwe was convicted was legitimate because pass laws invaded the dignity, right to equality, worth and free movement,

and the right to work, of all disenfranchised African people. The Nats booed her and ignored her. Parliament passed the Sobukwe detention clause every year for eight years and every year for eight years Helen Suzman renewed her objection to its passage.

For every year she paid a visit to Robert Sobukwe at his solitary residence of detention. She visited Nelson Mandela and the Rivonia trialists in solitary confinement on Robben Island regularly. Besides my mother, who came for those notorious 30-minute visits every six months, Helen Suzman was the only woman I set eyes on on Robben Island. She insisted that she wanted to see the actual cells where political prisoners were kept. She had an abiding concern for the lot of political captives. She raised constant questions in Parliament about their condition and, supremely for me personally, she supported our right to study while in prison.

Once I was out of prison a virtual love affair developed between Helen and me. We served together on a committee that raised funds to finance the further study of political prisoners still on Robben Island. We served together on the first IEC [Independent Electoral Commission] that ran our elections in 1994. My wife, Kabo, and I have had a good few dinners at her residence. She insisted that I must have whisky: one day gives you long life. When I became Chancellor she sat in the front row next to my mother in this very Great Hall.

We must wonder and admire this Helen Suzman in full flight. She interceded for a fellow citizen in distress for no immediate gain, but certainly moved by the highest principles of human decency which today form the bedrock of our amazing Constitution.

Helen Suzman may rightly claim what Karl Max famously said about worthy living: Man's (and I hastily add a woman's) greatest possession is life, since it is given to her to live but once. In dying, she must be able to say: "All my life and all my strength have been dedicated to the finest cause in the world, and that is the liberation of mankind."

That is the Helen Suzman of my world.

Thank you for listening, and God bless.

# Ripples of hope in the waves of change

Act by individual act, Helen Suzman battered against the walls of apartheid

**H**elen and I first met in June 1954 at a lunch arranged by Tony Delius, the parliamentary correspondent of the *Cape Times*.

Helen was completing her second year as MP for Houghton. I was about to become a member of the Cape Provincial Council. Tony had phoned me saying, "Colin there is one MP among the new members I believe you should meet – she is Helen Suzman. She is bright. And, one way or another, she is going to make an impact on the political scene."

How accurate both Tony's assessment and prediction turned out to be. For Helen was bright, very bright. And she certainly made her impact on the political scene.

I found her to be very attractive. Physically, politically and intellectually. I realised that behind her sparkling blue eyes there was a sharp mind and a tough will.

We seemed to be on the same political wavelength, and to share the same judgment of the political players of that time.

That lunch marked the start of a personal and political friendship that lasted for more than 50 years.

I came to appreciate Helen's keen intellect, to understand her commitment to principle, her intolerance of hypocrisy, her scorn for position seekers, her anger at injustice, her concern for people. I also came to realise that she did not suffer fools gladly.

I enjoyed sharing in her sense of fun, and appreciated her warm and generous hospitality.

In Parliament she was courageous and principled. When she spoke she was lucid, clear and to the point. No obfuscation, no ambiguity, no spin. There was never

any doubt where Helen stood.

She was meticulous in making sure of her facts. She went to see for herself.

Armed with first-hand information she returned to the fray, questioning, harassing, and badgering the apartheid ministers. Using Parliament as a platform, she demanded the attention of the apartheid rulers, got the ear of the media, endured the vilification of the racial bigots, and earned the respect of the oppressed.

She showed that one could be aggressive without being offensive. That one could oppose without losing the respect of those who you opposed.

When I came back to Parliament after 13 years, to my baptism of fire as leader of the Progressive Party, it was great to have Helen with her experience, her quick wit and her fighting spirit as my bench mate. She was wonderfully supportive, with advice, with encouragement while I was speaking, with incisive interjections when the Nationalists were on the attack, and with telling responses when it was her turn to speak.

I noticed that Helen had acquired a few interesting habits.

In the early '60s when there were 11 Progressive Party MPs, Helen, when she saw or heard something in Parliament she found to be amusing or ridiculous, made a note of it and passed the note around for the benefit of the other members of the caucus. I asked her whether, during the years when she was on her own, she was frustrated at not being able to write these caucus notes. "Oh," said Helen, "I still wrote the notes. But instead of passing them around, I put them in my handbag for later on."



I noticed that, while I was speaking, Helen would start moving further away from me on our bench. When I asked her why she did this, she replied: "When you get excited you wave your big hands around, and I don't want the Nats to have the satisfaction of seeing me getting a smack in the face."

During the years that Helen had been on her own she had learnt how to study a document, draft a question or prepare a speech while a debate in Parliament was droning on, and yet at the same time keep an ear tuned to the proceedings.

On one occasion when Helen appeared to be totally focused on writing a speech, as she did in her very legible "schoolgirl" handwriting, PW Botha, speaking in Afrikaans, referred to her as a tannie. Quick as a flash Helen raised her head and responded, "Don't you tannie me, or I'll oomie you."

Helen's greatest triumph in Parliament? Undoubtedly, when on 19 June 1986 the National Assembly at last passed a Bill repealing the Pass Laws that Helen had fought against year after year throughout her political career.

After the Speaker had announced the result and our caucus members had gathered around Helen to congratulate her, two young members of the Nationalist Party left their benches and walked across the carpeted floor to shake Helen's hand, to congratulate her and to thank her for what she had done. Helen the fighter had won at last.

Helen was a great parliamentarian, but one of a special kind. She did not allow Parliament to determine her agenda. Nor

did she allow the ritual nature or ambiance of Parliament to dilute her message.

In fact, Helen was more than a parliamentarian. She was a political activist, who with consummate courage, tenacity and skill, used Parliament as a platform to get her message across.

At times when each of us is considering our own course of action, we will do well to bear in mind the fact that Helen's greatness was founded, not on any grand design, or great speech, or momentous event, but on a multitude of single acts of courage and caring.

The words of Senator Robert Kennedy, in his address to the youth of South Africa at the University of Cape Town on 6 June 1966, are very appropriate as we remember Helen today.

"Few of us will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each one of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation.

"Each time a man stands for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope. And crossing each other from a million centres of energy and daring, those ripples can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

Today we say to Helen, "Thank you for sending forth those ripples of hope during the dark days of our country's history. Thank you too for demonstrating to us and to future generations, that one person can make a difference."

# Looking to the legacy

Helen Suzman's life reminds us that we have a right to aspire to the highest standards in public life

**T**his feisty, petite lady used to be tickled pink when I greeted her, as I always did: "Hello, my dear child." She thought it incongruous that someone nearly two decades younger could be so crazy.

Dear Helen, what a great privilege it is to be here to honour you, one of the greatest daughters of our soil. It was so heart-warming to read and hear the heartfelt tributes from across the entire political, racial spectrum of our land.

The tributes that poured out to mark her passing made one's heart swell with pride. But her passing should be marked as a national bereavement, when our flags hung at half mast. She was quite extraordinary, as we have heard so eloquently described. Really, this diminutive person stood up to the crude, uncouth taunts and jeers of the Nationalists in Parliament for all those many, many years, quite stoksielalleen.

They poured their withering scorn on one they must have thought to be the epitome of a misguided white do-gooder; a liberal, sies! A kaffir sissie, someone needing

to be redeemed from herself. It must have been a daunting, intimidating ordeal, not something one looked forward to with too much enthusiasm.

So we really have to give great thanks for her. She deserves all the accolades and acclaim that came her way for her quite remarkable determination and courage. Once she had decided that the policies of the Nats were pernicious, wrong and unprincipled, then she threw herself into the fray of opposing and exposing their viciousness and irrationality with a fearless and intrepid zeal, and for so long without the solace and backing of parliamentary colleagues, she turned out to be the only real opposition to the ghastliness of apartheid.

Maybe we haven't shown just how deeply grateful we are and how much we owe to her. You might have wondered whether she wasn't perhaps something of a masochist. Surely there were far easier ways of making a living. Well, she had been convicted on principle by her personal integrity and once she decided that apartheid was wrong, it had to be opposed by every fibre of her tiny frame.



Let me close in paying my warmest tribute to a wonderful human being. I seek to underscore just one or two salient points that come from what is going to be the legacy of Helen Suzman. One is that it is good for us to remember that our freedom has been won through the endeavours of many, many stalwarts of all races. If we are the so-called rainbow nation with diverse elements, that nation owes its existence to efforts of a remarkably diverse group of human beings of all sizes, shapes, races, political persuasions and all religious affiliations, or none.

No one group can claim a hegemony merely by virtue of its ethnicity. South Africa belongs to all of us, to all who dwell here. All, all of us are sons and daughters of this land. You can be a zealous proponent of a particular viewpoint and yet you can all the while be civil, courteous. Our public discourse should not sink to the level of the gutter. Debate can be vigorous, yes, animated, yes. But in the end, it has to be the cogency of the argument and not the loudness and barbarity of language that should win the day.

I always remember that my father used to say: "Don't raise your voice, improve your argument." We must have zero tolerance for corruption, for those who have a proclivity to have their hands in the till. We want those holding public office, our representatives, to be principled persons, persons whom we can be proud to look up to; not embarrassments that need to be defended.

Dear friends, we inhabit a moral universe, right and wrong are things that matter fundamentally. Those who become arrogant, who become drunk with power; who seemingly are unassailable, watch out. The Nats were returned election after election, with increased majorities. Waar is hulle nou? Those who hold power and are afflicted by the arrogance of power must know that they are ultimately going to get their come-uppance. For ultimately, power is for service.

Dear friends, we have an incredible array of gifted people in this land. Don't let's sideline people because of their ethnicity or their political affiliation. Our land is a scintillating success waiting to happen.

# A friend for all seasons

Her support is a treasured memory, and her example a legacy to us all

**T**oday we have gathered to celebrate the life of a magnificent lady who we will never see the likes of again, in our lifetime.

One of the greatest privileges of my long life is to have known Helen. She was a dear friend to me and my wife, Irene, for over half a century. I liked her as much for her sheer zest for life and deadpan wit as I admired her for her great role in the struggle. No one who met her will ever forget those piercing blue eyes full of intelligence and empathy in equal measure. The last time I saw those eyes, on the 28th of October 2008 at Brenthurst during the delivery of the Harry Oppenheimer Memorial Lecture by the former President of Brazil, they shone as brightly as ever. Age simply lent her even more grace and charm.

Helen, in my view, in life was never given the reception she deserved. It would be a travesty if Helen's role was not now given the prominent recognition in our struggle narrative that it merits. Her glorious contribution

was as great as any of the other struggle heroes and heroines. Her human-rights record of tirelessly using her position to break the apartheid mould in a profoundly undemocratic whites-only parliament will stand as a towering monument to her for all time. She gave no quarter to her opponents and did not expect any. Helen was a conviction politician who played a straight bat and played it for all it is worth.

Helen knew her own mind. She held solid principles. She expounded them clearly and she acted upon them decisively. Helen, who could have chosen a life of white entrenched privilege, instead chose the path of courage. She fought the good fight with her impeccable liberal credentials and an unerring social conscience. This tiny lady, but a lioness in stature, demonstrated the power of one who stands up to unjust laws and bullies. She demonstrated, like David versus Goliath, that good can triumph over evil and right can prevail over might.



To me, she gave unstinting support when dallying with black politicians was not the smartest thing to do. For her brave fight on our behalf, she joined that distinguished group of white South Africans who have the pejorative of "kafferboeties" hung around their necks. I will never forget how she and her husband Mosie gave such wonderful hospitality to Irene and me during the apartheid era, when it was rare for white people to give hospitality to black people in their homes. These were days when hotels were reserved only for whites. There are too many incidents to mention of how she supported me and I will never forget them for the rest of my life.

But one which stands out was in 1976, during the students' revolt against the imposition of Afrikaans as a second medium of instruction in black schools. There was an unfortunate clash between the residents of Mzimhlophe Township and hostel dwellers at Mzimhlophe Hostel. Dr Beyers Naudé phoned me suggesting that I should come up to the Reef to help quell that unfortunate black-on-black conflict. The Rev Cedric Mayson picked me up in a single-engined plane from Ulundi. I was briefed by Dr Naudé about the conflict on arrival. When the Commissioner of Police was informed that I intended going to

Mzimhlophe, he forbade me, adding that if I defied him, action would be taken against me. I told Helen about the ban. The ban was confirmed to her and she then pleaded with me, almost in tears, not to defy the police. I, nevertheless, went to Mzimhlophe.

I also recall what a great honour it was for me when another friend, Colin Eglin, as leader of the Progressive Federal Party, requested me to attend the celebration of Helen Suzman's 21 years in Parliament and to propose the toast. Then another occasion was when I was arrested in Germiston for not carrying my pass as I was returning from a meeting of the Progressive Federal Party. It was Helen Suzman who intervened and had me released after midnight.

Now Helen is gone and we feel bereft, but we now have one shining light to guide us that Helen never had. We have her example. We give thanks today for a life that achieved so much for all of us.

It is appropriate on this occasion that we as South Africans thank Frances, her late husband Mosie and the rest of the family who lent this great fighter to us for so many decades. We express our condolences to the family.



By Nicky Oppenheimer

# A light in dark places

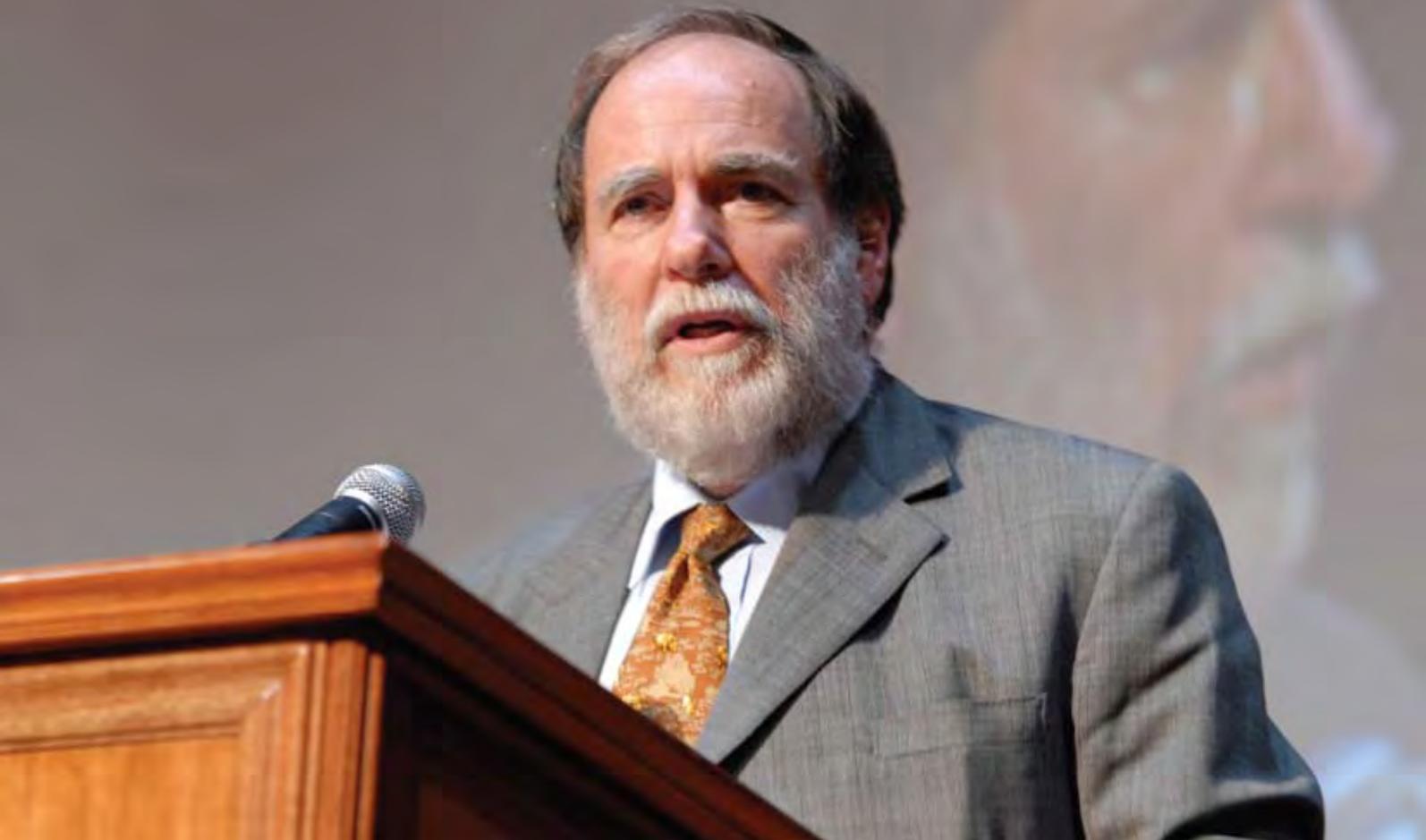
She was fearless because she knew she was right

**F**earless is the word most frequently associated with Helen Suzman – and fearless she certainly was. Who among us could summon up the courage it must have taken to sit, day after day, month after month for 13 lonely years as the sole voice of justice, right and liberty in a Parliament which saw all three as little short of treasonable?

Who but this pint-sized, elegant woman with her clear blue eyes behind which lurked a razor sharp mind could have faced down those arch bullies, John Vorster and PW Botha, and the baying mob behind them and shrugged off their fury and their insults, armed only with deadly wit, a deep contempt for all they stood for, and sure and certain knowledge that she was right. To them she was “a sickly humanist”, a “neo-Communist”, a lone woman and a Jew who had had the effrontery to enter

a place where male chauvinism was the norm and anti-Semitism never far below the surface. And the courage not only to enter their domain, but to hold them day by day, year by year to account?

For if she was fearless in ignoring the threats – and she was threatened – it took another kind of courage not to give up the lonely struggle in a place inhabited by people who were as alien to her and her view of the world as she was to them. For Helen never gave up. With a physical and intellectual stamina and tenacity to match her courage, and helped by a small and dedicated research team, she would eviscerate bill after repressive bill, and put as many as 200 parliamentary questions a year – forcing into the cold light of day issues which the apartheid government would have liked to keep hidden, illuminating, not only for South Africa, but the world at large, the



real cost of apartheid in terms of individual human suffering. She seized the special rights and privilege parliamentary membership gave her to demand answers and to go into the dark places of apartheid South Africa – its prisons, townships and squatter camps – to give a voice to the voiceless and the oppressed.

And this, I believe, is the key to Helen's courage. For 36 years she was a knowledgeable and expert parliamentarian, determined to use the rights it conferred on her to serve the rights of others; but she was never, in essence, a politician – with all the compromises and ambiguities in the service of a particular party, group or ideology which that implies. Her courage was infused and powered by something even greater than courage: moral clarity. If she was fearless it was because she knew she was right, guided not by policy or ideology but by principle. And the principle which drove her was the right of each individual to live in freedom, under the protection, not of a group or party or even the State, but of the rule of law, the knowledge that in any society all will not be safe if each is not free.

It was this that enabled her to speak out clearly and – in her own words – “in no uncertain terms” on behalf of the countless number who through her sought redress and rescue from the iniquities and indignities inflicted on them by apartheid's banal bureaucracy.

One of her political enemies once likened that clear and certain voice to the incessant chirping of a cricket in a thorn tree. In a way he spoke truer than he knew. Jiminy Cricket was, after all the voice of Pinocchio's conscience. And politicians and Pinocchio have more in common than they like to admit. Helen was the voice of South Africa's conscience: impatient, disturbing and right, and one reason why, even during the long night of apartheid, we had reason to be proud in the knowledge that a country with such a conscience, even if it didn't listen to it, couldn't be all bad.

We needed that voice then, the voice that is unafraid to speak truth to power – and we need it still today. The void that its silence has left speaks far more loudly than can I, of her legacy.



By Helen Zille

# Engaged to the last

Her values  
did not fade  
when apartheid  
crumbled

**W**e all know Helen Suzman as the passionate champion of freedom, the woman who stood for “simple justice, equal opportunity and human rights”. Those were her values when she sat in Parliament for 13 long years as the lone Progressive and the sole voice of opposition to apartheid. They remained her values after apartheid ended.

Almost all the eulogies for Helen end before 1994. This is because the period before 1994 is now considered safe, politically correct terrain. Everyone can attack apartheid now. Everyone can deliver speeches today that would have been brave during the darkest days of apartheid, but which carry no present risk. Helen spoke out when it was most difficult to do so, both before and after 1994. She was strong enough to



withstand isolation, scorn and abuse to defend her values and principles. It is a testament to her integrity, intellect and foresight that most of her greatest critics of the past acknowledge today that she was right. She never gave up. She was interested, engaged and involved right up until her death.

One of life's highlights, after being elected leader of the DA, was getting regular calls from Helen, offering witty and trenchant advice on how to deal with current examples of power abuse.

She never chose comfort zones. And she made sure I never strayed into one.

Often when she advised me on present issues, I cast my mind back, nearly 50 years ago, to think what courage it must

have taken to go against the apparent inevitable logic of South African politics and history, premised as it was on the immutability of competing racial nationalisms. She was one of the early and certainly one of the most faithful pioneers of the non-racial, democratic South Africa.

Perhaps the phrase that has stayed with me most consistently was her simple affirmation of the liberal credo. "I hate bullies. I stand for simple justice, equal opportunity and human rights; the indispensable elements in a democratic society – and well worth fighting for."

I remember that during one of my last conversations with Helen she said: "I did what I could, where I was, with what I had."

Helen, we will continue to follow your example.

By Evita Bezuidenhout

# The power of persistence

Evita Bezuidenhout sent a video message from her election office ...

Sorry I can't be there celebrating your wonderful life, but I am now running my own political party: Evita's Peoples' Party.

I will never ever forget Helen Suzman, because year in and year out she sat alone in Parliament – the only member of the white opposition to the apartheid government – and she said the same thing, day in, day out, week in, week out, year in, year out.

"Free Mandela, get rid of apartheid." "Free Mandela, get rid of apartheid."

She drove the Broederbond absolutely mad.

"Free Mandela, get rid of apartheid."

Like a chihuahua on tik.

Eventually President FW de Klerk couldn't take it any more. He said to me, "Evita, how do I shut her up?" I said: "FW, do what she says."

Thank you, darling Helen, for showing that one woman can change the history of a country. You did, and I think as you did on earth, you are now doing in heaven.

Ons mis jou vreeslik.



# In celebration of a good life

If she could speak truth to power then, when it was so dangerous, we must do so now

**A**C Grayling, writing in *Pleasure, Duty and the Good Life in the 21st Century*, proposes that there are seven notes sounded by a good life in our times, namely: Meaning, Intimacy, Endeavour, Truth, Freedom, Beauty and Fulfilment. These notes come together to produce an integrated set of elements of a person's character.

Helen Suzman's life was a beautiful symphony that harmonised all these notes to give us a remarkable woman, mother, friend and public servant. She has set high standards for all of us. I choose to focus on Freedom as a note through which to celebrate this great life. The focus on Freedom also comes at a critical moment in our history as a young democracy that Helen Suzman fought so hard for.

For Grayling, 'The concept of Freedom lies at the root of the very possibility of ethical life.' Freedom entails free choice and action.

Helen's life was lived in a manner that demonstrated the meaning of human agency – taking responsibility for values, aims and acts that follow from the choices one makes.

Freedom is also about thinking for oneself and to use reason publicly in all matters. Helen led the good life because whatever issues she tackled in public and private matters were products of her fiercely independent mind.

I have written before about Helen Suzman's exemplary public service. Her lone voice of reason as an MP for over three decades was amplified by the ethical foundations of her life. Her courage emanated from her deep understanding that to be fully human one has to be free to think for oneself and express such thoughts in a reasoned manner.

Helen's exemplary public service was an expression of her duty to herself as a human being whose freedom could not be fully enjoyed unless others were free.

Helen's life was the embodiment of duty to herself as a free spirit extending in its fullness to duty to others.

Today we stand at a crossroads in our young democracy. How is the freedom fought for so many at such high cost finding full expression in the conduct of our public life?



Helen demonstrated to us how to recognise and defend the rights of the least among us. She did not only serve those she knew, but was a public servant and a concerned citizen in cases where it mattered most – those in prison, those banished and those abused by public officials.

Why are we as citizens of this democracy so tolerant of corruption, incompetence and abuse of public resources to benefit party political interest? Why are we silent in the face of a culture of impunity settling in our public service? For example, the finding by the Public Protector that the then Chair of Eskom, Mr Valli Moosa, a member of the ANC Finance Committee, did not recuse himself when the Medupi power station contract was awarded to Hitachi, which had Chancellor House, an ANC BEE front, as its partner. Another example is the Minister of Correctional Services, Mr Balfour, who violated tender procedures, yet dismissed concerns with a statement in this regard that it is his department and he can do what he likes.

How are we as citizens exercising our agency to demand

integrity, honesty and ethics in our politics? Why are we lacking in courage to speak truth to power at this critical moment in our history with so much at stake?

Helen took risks to challenge the then National Party government bullies at great risk to herself at a time when the system was at its most brutal and unforgiving of any dissenting voice. Why are our MPs – the majority – unwilling to think independently for themselves when all they stand to lose are their privileges, not their lives?

Our Freedom as a democracy is at risk for the first time in our 15 years as a young democracy. Witness the election violence, physical and verbal, the intolerance of alternative views, the threats against those holding opposing views.

The best memorial we can build for Helen Suzman is to follow her great example and strive to promote, defend and protect the foundations of our democracy as expressed in our Constitution.

We owe it to ourselves and to future generations to stand up and be counted.



By Daniel Jowell

# A radiance undimmed

Helen Suzman's grandson, Daniel Jowell, honoured his grandmother with a poem

I would like to read a short poem in memory of my grandmother.

I chose this particular poem because it brought to my mind a tribute to Helen by the late Chief Albert Luthuli. He wrote to encourage Helen during a particularly gruelling session in Parliament in 1963. He said:

"Forever remember, you are a bright Star in a dark Chamber, where the lights of Liberty of what is left, are going out one by one."

The poem I would like to read is by Hannah Senesh, who was a writer and resistance fighter. She wrote the poem shortly before she died at the hand of the Nazis at the age of 23.

There are stars whose radiance is visible on earth  
though they have long been extinct.  
There are people whose brilliance continues to light the world  
though they are no longer among the living.  
These lights are particularly bright when the night is dark.  
They light the way for mankind.

Thank you.



By Raymond Louw

# Questions of courage

How Helen Suzman used the privileges of Parliament and the Press to tell the sordid truths of apartheid

The role Helen Suzman played out as a politician for 36 years in the South African parliament during the ruthless authoritarian apartheid era was extraordinary, perhaps unique. There is no known record of any other member of a parliament anywhere having conducted such a courageous, sustained, one-person assault on an evil ideology and system of government as she did so successfully.

At one period, for 13 years, she was the sole representative of an opposition political party in that parliament, where, for a long time, the remaining 165 seats were occupied by men, nearly all of whom were antagonistic to her.

Yet, despite those overwhelming odds, she gained more international recognition for her thoughts, speeches and repartee than all the others on those benches. She

was instrumental in informing the world what was going on in South Africa, how the government created comfort and wealth for a selected section of the population while subordinating all others in the most cruel way to servitude. And she did it by skilfully using the press as her messenger. She had an instinct for what made news and attracted media coverage, and exploited it to the full. She energetically exercised her parliamentary powers and privileges, and especially the opportunity they gave her to enter places barred to ordinary citizens and to make statements others were prevented from making, or in danger of being jailed if they made them. She asked questions of the powerful which were ignored if they came from others, and attended events and functions that others would not have ventured into, or where they might have been stopped, or arrested, if they had tried.



Not that it was without risk. Though she projected an outward appearance of being unaffected, she kept to herself her fears that some zealous apartheid policeman or other official would not obstruct her, or worse, detain her.

After she and a few colleagues had left the official United Party opposition, because of its support of the National Party government's land policies, to form the Progressive Party in 1959, and then, after finding herself in the election of 1961 the sole representative of the party, as the MP for Houghton with a majority of 564 votes, her belief in simple justice and non-racialism evolved into her one-person campaign.

She discovered that the privileges of an MP and of the parliamentary system afforded her powerful instruments to enable her to turn her campaign into an unassailable weapon. She describes it as ironic that a government as authoritarian as the National Party had a deeply rooted respect for the parliamentary system, which provided her with a forum to elicit information and challenge their policies. But there was a further factor. Unlike in some other undemocratic countries, where parliamentarians of Helen Suzman's calibre have been jailed or house-arrested, and

thus prevented from playing a meaningful role, in South Africa the National Party was also eager to impress on the world that it was a democracy, even if limited only to "free whites".

To have curbed her by some draconian measure would have destroyed that claim and hastened world condemnation and sanctions. However, that did not stop the Nationalists from threatening her, describing her as a security risk, and implying frequently that government tolerance of her was reaching breaking point.

When the then Prime Minister, and chief architect of apartheid, Hendrik Frensch Verwoerd, was assassinated by a parliamentary messenger, the Defence Minister of the time, Pieter W Botha, dashed over to her seat in the house – "arms flailing and eyes bulging", she later wrote – and yelled at her in Afrikaans while stabbing at her with his forefinger: "It's you who did this. It's all you liberals. You incite people. Now we will get you. We will get the lot of you." The opposition United Party was also hostile, and showed it perhaps only a degree less offensively than the Nationalists.

In this torrid environment and "through this 'trial of fire', she became South Africa's greatest parliamentarian and human rights



activist”, Centre for Development and Enterprise executive director Ann Bernstein said at her memorial service on March 1.

“She became in effect the MP for millions of people denied the vote. She used her privileges as a Member of Parliament to gain access to areas forbidden the general public – prisons, townships, resettlement areas – and people – banished, banned, forgotten, untouchable.”

She questioned cabinet ministers, senior government officials and sources of information not available to the public at large. In her 13 years on her own she asked more than 2 262 probing questions about apartheid operations, removals of black people from so-called “black spots” in white areas, how race classification was conducted, and all the facets of the machinations of apartheid.

leader Toivo Ja Toivo – resettlement areas, black townships, funerals, areas that the ordinary public could not, or had little desire to, visit. She took up prisoners’ complaints directly with ministers and judiciously voiced them in Parliament, and her actions resulted in improvements in the prisoners’ conditions.

This was a period when more than 100 laws and regulations restricted press freedom to report what was happening in the country, but through her questions and the answers supplied by ministers, and her 885 speeches in the house during those 13 years, much “banned” information was published in the newspapers. It thus became available to South Africans and, indeed, to the world, providing ammunition to many overseas anti-apartheid movements. Helen cultivated friendships with editors, political correspondents and other journalists dealing in the issues she took a special interest in. *Rand Daily Mail* editor Laurence Gandar was an especial friend and he threw his newspaper’s support behind her as she struggled as a lone MP. Without that support she might not have been returned as an MP for Houghton.

Gandar later noted: “Helen Suzman’s special talent was that she understood, developed and used with telling effect the nexus between Parliament and the media, the press in particular.” *The Mail*, in common with most English-language papers, had supported the United Party opposition, but after the formation of the Progressive Party it became the first paper in the country to support the fledgling newcomer; a move that some others followed later. The Afrikaans-language papers were totally subservient to the apartheid cause, but even they were forced into publishing some of the information Helen had brought into the open. *Mail African Affairs* Correspondent Benjamin Pogrund has related how he would ask Helen to pose questions in Parliament based on information he had obtained but could not publish. When the answers were given he was able to publish.

Former *Argus* Group political correspondent Peter Sullivan relates the story of how Helen gave him a copy of a speech she planned to make in the house later that day about the manner in which trade unionist Dr Neil Aggett was tortured in police custody. Sullivan published the speech in the *Argus* afternoon papers as she was making it. It caused a huge upset and she was reprimanded by

She discovered that the privileges of an MP and of the parliamentary system afforded her powerful instruments to enable her to turn her campaign into an unassailable weapon

She made it a rule to see for herself, investigate, and then release the information in Parliament, either as a statement or in the form of a question to a minister to enable her to gather further information. What she said in Parliament was privileged and could be published by the media – much of it information that the media would not have been able to publish without the protection of that privilege.

She visited prisons and prisoners – among the hundreds, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Robert Sobukwe and Namibian



the Speaker because he had ruled that the Aggett case was sub judice, which meant it could not be raised in Parliament. But the speech could not be expunged from the parliamentary records because Sullivan had made it public property.

Ann Bernstein noted that, without her, much in that terrible period that needed exposure would have been censored, or passed unquestioned or unnoticed by the larger audience in the country. Despite her steely resolve and pointed activism, Helen was no grim activist. She had an irreverent sense of humour and a rapier wit which she used against her enemies and detractors with paralyzing effect. It peeped through in her CV, containing over 30 doctorates from the world's great universities, when she cited as her main achievement in 2001: Being declared "Enemy of the State" by Robert Mugabe.

She was also a great showman. While all alone on the parliamentary benches, at lunchtime she would be hostess at the largest table in the centre of the parliamentary dining room, crowded with friends and well-wishers – sending the clear message to the other MPs, huddled in twos and foursomes, that though alone, she had lots of support. Today's parliamentarians can learn from her how to do their job.

Raymond Louw was editor of the *Rand Daily Mail* from 1966 to 1977 and is now editor and publisher of the weekly current affairs newsletter *Southern Africa Report*, and Africa Representative of the World Press Freedom Committee.

By Rhoda Kadalie

# Situation vacant: new champions for compassion

A memorial speech delivered at the Marais Road Synagogue in Cape Town contrasted Helen Suzman's unwavering campaign for human rights with South Africa's current double standards and dismal failures in that arena

I wish to thank the SA Jewish Board of Deputies for asking me to speak at this memorial service in honour of the great Helen Suzman. It is indeed a privilege because Helen and I were bosom buddies and we talked a lot. "The reason you and I get on so well," Helen used to say, "is because we are so much alike; you are just worse!" In many ways Helen kept me on the straight and narrow. Whenever my columns were too strident, she would coax me out of it, very wisely. The more I got to know Helen, the more I realised that one comes across someone with such profound wisdom only once in a lifetime.

We are all familiar with Helen's illustrious life as the country's most famous Member of Parliament, who used

the powerful forum of Parliament to fight for the rights of those who were excluded from Parliament. She believed very deeply that Parliament was that space where public representatives transacted the business of citizens in public. She believed in the institutions of Parliament, in the rule of law, an independent judiciary, and she became one of the world's most famous human-rights campaigners, who fought tooth and nail against every bill that violated the rights of people, citizens and non-citizens alike. There are few politicians today who combine these roles, of politician and human-rights campaigner, so fantastically well – acknowledged so aptly by Chief Albert Luthuli in a letter he wrote to her in 1968:



Helen Suzman and Irene Menell on the campaign trail for the PFP

*"In moments of creeping frustration and tiredness, please pick courage and strength in the fact that thousands of South Africans, especially among the oppressed section, thank God for producing Helen, for her manly stand against injustice, regardless of consequences.*

*"For ever remember, you are a bright Star in a dark Chamber, where lights of liberty of what is left, are going out one by one. This appreciation covers your contribution since you entered Parliament as member of the Progressive Party.*

*"This meritorious record has been climaxed by your fittingly uncompromising stand in the rape of democracy by Parliament in the debate that made law, which was one of the most diabolic bills ever to come before Parliament.*

*"Not only ourselves – your contemporaries – but also posterity will hold you in high esteem."*

What set Helen apart for Luthuli was her "uncompromising stand", taking up issues "regardless of the consequences". Often alone, Helen was fearless, politically incorrect, and courageous in fighting for what was so obviously right. She was a liberal when to be liberal was not in fashion. She opposed sanctions when it was politically incorrect to do so, and she may have lost the Nobel Prize because of it. "Posterity will hold you in high esteem," says Luthuli, and that is exactly what happened when Helen died.

The entire world, even the African National Congress (ANC), graciously acknowledged her contribution towards building democracy in this country.

There are so few like her today. In eschewing popularity and populism, she became popular. On Google the tributes rolled in non-stop, and Helen's name still pops up in the most unlikely places, as I found in reading Jonny Steinberg's *Thin Blue*, on policing in South Africa. In trying to understand why policing is so anarchic today, he goes back to Soweto and he interviews a guy called Mtutuzeli Matshoba, whose brother was detained in 1978 and taken to jail in Port Elizabeth. In the book this guy animatedly spoke about how Helen intervened in the release of his brother.

This is the legacy that Helen left us, and in her old age, she increasingly despaired about South Africa's double standards on Zimbabwe, and she liked to point out that Mugabe's tyranny started with his destruction of Parliament and its institutions, the rule of law, the judiciary, the media, Zimbabwe's exemplary education and health systems. This enraged Helen, so much that she literally wanted to die. South Africa's consistent support for the rogue states such as Zimbabwe, Sudan, Myanmar, and Iran at the United Nations Security Council destroyed her faith in the current regime and often made her feel that all her work was in vain.



She could never understand why our government flirted with dictators and human-rights-delinquent regimes, and why we consistently voted with China and Russia in vetoing Western-instigated resolutions. She despaired over South Africa's schizophrenic approach, which the Democratic Alliance called a courtship with the West on one hand, while giving succour to the West's adversaries on the other; harming our international credibility, all but obliterating the moral high ground we attained through our transition to democracy.

Helen remembered how the ANC howled against those states that helped South Africa prop up the apartheid state.

And this brings me to the topic that I was asked to speak about tonight – human rights in general, the struggle for human rights in this country, and what it means to be an activist.

opening address to Parliament, when Zimbabwe on our doorstep is ravished by an unstoppable barbarism that has rendered 3 000 dead from cholera alone, not to speak of all the other human-rights abuses Mugabe is guilty of. Mugabe, of course, will never be called a savage, because then that would be called racism.

Let me pose a question to South Africa: if Israel sent a human-rights delegation to South Africa, what would it find?

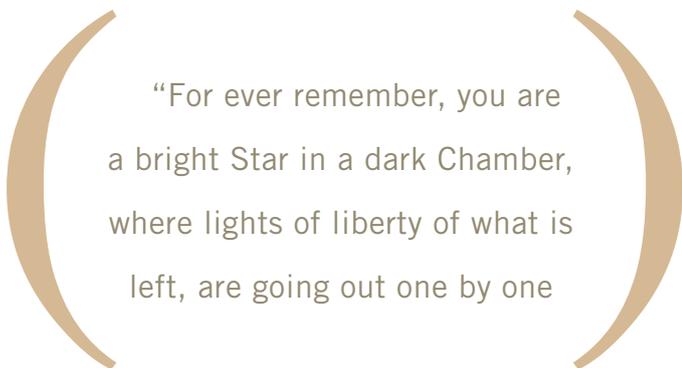
The human-rights delegation went to Israel at a time when South Africa was reeling in the aftermath of the embarrassing outbreak of xenophobic violence in which hundreds were killed simply because they were foreign and black; in a matter of weeks more than 32 Somalis were killed for simply being entrepreneurial. On every international index, South Africa has gone down a notch or two, such as, for example, the Human Development Index, because of the devastating maternal health and infant mortality rates. We have an HIV/Aids pandemic which kills a thousand people a day; more than 6 million are infected, mostly young women between the ages of 15 and 29; we have a multiple-drug-resistant TB epidemic that is out of control; and now hundreds of people are infected with cholera.

Bishop Paul Verryn's church is overflowing with thousands of Zimbabwean refugees, treated like dirt by the very South African regime that is quick to utter condemnation of others.

Just yesterday I heard Kumi Naidoo (who is now on a hunger strike), the CEO of CIVICUS and an ANC stalwart, speak about his disappointment in the South African government for the way they have supported Mugabe, and for having weakened Morgan Tsvangarai to such an extent that he had no option but to capitulate to the scoundrels in the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Yesterday, too, I was hosting a professor from Holland who is an expert analyst of sexual violence in her country, and she could not believe our figures on rape and child rape, in particular. The fact that rape against women is not declining, given our overwhelming representation of women in government, is one of the biggest indictments against women in public office. Given the proportional representation electoral system, our women politicians are beholden to the men in the party who put them there. Party interests override their commitment to gender interests, and once women are catapulted into power they forget their obligations as politicians. Helen was never like that. She set the tone.

I have yet to find a politician of Helen Suzman's calibre who effectively combines human-rights campaigning with their role as politician. She left her comfort zones; she went where angels feared to tread; she challenged and took on the police fearlessly, as recently shown in one of the video clips on CNN after her death.



“For ever remember, you are  
a bright Star in a dark Chamber,  
where lights of liberty of what is  
left, are going out one by one

Not so long ago, a group of South African activists went on a tour of Israel and the occupied territories to inspect human-rights violations in the region, and the Israeli occupation in particular. They visited one side of the conflict, and went for five days, and came back smugly condemning Israel from a dizzy height. Immediately others got on the bandwagon, supporting them because it was the politically correct thing to do. They did not for one moment reflect on why it was important to see both sides of the conflict, and how they could help both the Israelis and the Palestinians find solutions to the conflict, and how we could share some of our experiences to help two related peoples imagine a future together; just as we have done. There was no modesty in their condemnation, given what is going on in our country and how ashamed and modest we should be about the beam in our own eyes. Intrinsic to human-rights investigations is the weighing up of all sides; of weighing up one right against another; as Helen did so adeptly.

Last week we were greeted by a headline: “Top Jews condemn war on Gaza”. Can you imagine a headline: “Top Christians condemn Hamas”? President Motlanthe calls the war on Gaza “savagery” in his



Armed with devastatingly accurate information gleaned from her insistence “on seeing things for herself”, she became a “boots-on politician”, going where the action was. In 1973 she went to Kliptown to see the unrest for herself; she visited the squatter camps in Cape Town in the winter of 1981, after shelters had been demolished by government officials; she addressed crowds at a mass funeral of victims of police shootings in Alexandra in 1986; took statements from Moutse residents who had been assaulted by vigilantes; visited Oukasie residents who were threatened by forced removals; and she pleaded the fate of the Sharpeville Six in 1988.

Going into these areas was often life-threatening, but Helen knew that people relied on her to get the information out and expose to the world the atrocities of apartheid. Beneath Helen’s tough veneer of taking on the apartheid bullies, prime ministers and security police alike, lay a warm compassionate soul, whose mission was driven not only by a deep respect for democracy, equality for all, and human rights, but also by a deep compassion for those who were not represented, the “Other”, and those

oppressed by laws she thought were fundamentally inhumane.

I am always sad that Helen died disappointed in our new democracy; disappointed that Parliament had become captive to liberation politics and majoritarianism; that our legislators are implicated in one corruption scandal after another. She detested having to acknowledge that life for her in the apartheid parliament was more tolerable than the post-1994 parliament is today for opposition MPs.

The lesson for us today: we cannot leave the business of Parliament to politicians alone. Helen believed so profoundly that an opposition was crucial because without one there could be no dialogue; and without dialogue, one could not begin to approach the truth. No one person, and no one party, can lay absolute claim to the truth, whatever their credentials. And the person or party that does so is almost certainly going the Mugabe route to fanaticism, fascism, and thuggery.

Let us commit ourselves to continuing Helen’s legacy of speaking truth to power as much as we speak power to the truth.

By George Bizos

# The Prisoners' Friend

During the late forties Helen Suzman was a lecturer of Economic History at Wits University. Many of the students had interrupted or delayed their studies to fight against the Axis powers. Helen was as young as many of them. The Nationalist Party's victory in 1948 angered not only the ex-servicemen but the majority of the students and our teachers. Not only because our new rulers had supported the Nazi and Fascist axis but because they threatened to close the doors of the university to black students and enact laws to enforce their apartheid policies.

We regularly protested in the Great Hall, on the steps leading up to the classical columns of the Central Block and even the terrace around the swimming pool. The young Helen Suzman, elegantly dressed was often among us, nodding approval and applauding what we said.

The student body vociferously condemned attempts to remove coloured voters from the Common Voters Roll, particularly prior to the 1953 General Election. We were pleased that Helen Suzman, one of our own, was elected to Parliament. Many have written about her parliamentary career, particularly when she was alone in opposing laws which violated the rights of the people.

I will confine myself to her passionate concern for the well being of all prisoners particularly those convicted or detained without trial, house arrested or

banned for their political beliefs. She used her voice in Parliament, spoke to the media within and outside South Africa, Presidents, Prime Ministers, Ministers of Justice and Prisons, Commissioners, Heads of Prisons, their lower ranking warders and Parliamentarians. None of them liked Helen Suzman. They denied her allegations, put up vulnerable prisoners to lie about her, accused her of being a friend of terrorists and communists. She was not deterred.

The conditions on Robben Island and the Pretoria section for political prisoners in the sixties and early seventies were atrocious and vindictive. Conditions in prisons for women were not much better. Helen visited them regularly at the request of their families.

The conditions under which all convicted and awaiting trial prisoners, most of them black were held were atrocious but little was publicly known. Only when in the mid-sixties Harold Strachan was released after serving three years in Pretoria, Port Elizabeth and Pietermaritzburg prisons, told Benjamin Pogrand the senior reporter on the *Rand Daily Mail* in great detail of the inhumane conditions that prevailed. Laurence Gondar the editor after lengthy consultations with Kelsey Stuart the newspaper's legal adviser published the gruesome story.

The apartheid government charged Strachan with perjury Pogrand and Gondar under the Prisons Act and a couple of warders who corroborated Strachan. The



Photo: Mark Wessels

litigation inhibited the owners of the newspaper to continue the campaign.

Helen Suzman's parliamentary privilege, her persistent demands to visit prisoners, her frequent public statements within and outside the country, her constant reminders of international treaties and protocols to which civilized countries adhered led the government to question per patriotism.

Helen was not deterred. She visited Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Robert Sobukwe and many others on Robben Island including the hundreds of young men who had been sent there for taking part in the Soweto Uprising. She persuaded the Ministers of Prisons to improve their facilities. The young men referred to her as Aunt Helen.

Many young people were detained without trial in the mid eighties. A Detainees Support Committee was formed. Helen took up their cause, insisted that the detainees be visited by doctors and persistently called for their early release. She published smuggled notes describing the torture inflicted by the Security Police.

Her presence in Court to observe political trials and inquests into the deaths of Achmed Timol, Steve Biko, Neil Aggett and others was resented by the Security Police, Prosecutors and Magistrates but valued by the accused, their relatives and us who represented them.

Her efforts on behalf of prisoners led to a more humane treatment even before the end of the apartheid regime. For this and so many other reasons we should all remember her.



By M&G Critical Thinking Forum

# Ready to Govern?

The changing of the guard represented by a national election focuses our attention on the future, which will eventually be in the hands of a new generation of political leaders – who have strong opinions about what they believe it should hold

Some 35 million South Africans are under the age of 35. In his opening comments at a *Mail & Guardian* Critical Thinking Forum that asked: “Ready to govern? Has the next generation got what it takes?”, Songezi Zibi, communications manager of Xstrata, suggested that it may be time “the youth took the country by the scruff of the neck and moved it forward”.

Moderator Judge Dennis Davis led a discussion among political youth leaders Cornelius Janse van Rensburg of the Freedom Front Plus (FF Plus), Buti Manamela of the Communist Party, Siphon Ngwema of the Congress of the People (COPE), Khume Ramulifho of the Democratic Alliance [DA] and Floyd Shivambu of the African National Congress (ANC). This is an edited version of some of the points they made at the forum.

## INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

### MR RAMULIFHO:

We want a South Africa where people live in a community which is safe, where local government provides basic services, quality of health has been provided, and opportunities will be created. In short, we want a South Africa characterised by opportunities. That is not where we are.

Education is key to an open opportunity society, and that young people are involved in deciding what type of life they want to live, and creating opportunities – not because you are well connected, but because you have what it takes. That is how we want to see South Africa in five years, and it's possible.



**MR JANSE VAN RENSBURG:**

The FF Plus is bent on ensuring that the new disenfranchised society in South Africa overcomes the racist transformation policies of the government.

The economy is going to be a high priority for the next five years, and in an economic downturn no one can afford luxuries. One of the luxuries of our economy has been BEE [black economic empowerment] and affirmative action. We would go for a situation where affirmative action does not apply to people born after 1990.

In education, we need more infrastructure, and a bigger emphasis on mother-tongue education. We're a proponent of supplying antiretrovirals to all persons with HIV on the government cost. On crime, we support the death penalty and corporal punishment, and we would reinstitute the specialised narcotic unit and also not victimise rehabilitation centres, as the government up until now has done.

**MR NGWEMA:**

With the advent of COPE we have seen a number of young South Africans who were not politically active, all of a sudden taking an interest in politics. We believe that this is very, very good for the country and its democracy.

We would like more political tolerance – a situation where political parties are able to engage one another in a mature manner, where we are able to put national interest above petty political issues – and respect for our democracy as enshrined in the Constitution.

We want a democracy where the interests of the people are taken as first priority. We would like to professionalise the civil service, and depoliticise appointments. You cannot have a civil service that will look after the people's service-delivery issues if people get their positions because of their struggle credentials. Lastly, we would like to have a patriotic, prosperous country, regardless of your creed, colour, or where you come from.

**MR SHIVAMBU:**

As the ANC, we have already said that a lot has been achieved but a lot still needs to be done. Our primary focus now is to continue with nation-building. But we deal as well with issues of democratising society and the state, building human resources, growing the economy, and developing our communities in a spatially representative format. Instead of focusing on what we currently call economic centres, we should find a way of developing all our communities.



Judge Dennis Davis puts the young leaders of various political parties through their paces prior to the 2009 election.

We need to place more emphasis on decolonising South Africa. What characterised colonial territories was the extraction and exploitation of primary products. We want to build an independent, dynamically integrated economy where we are able to extract, produce and consume our own goods and services.

We are going to build a developmental state, with the capacity to intervene in the economy for higher growth, for the development of our economy, and to make sure that we all have equal opportunities.

And in all this we emphasise providing space and opportunities for young people to contribute to development, and develop themselves. We are focusing on education, quality health, and decent work for all; and on developing our rural communities, making sure that we've got safety and security, and dealing with the broader issues of transformation of the state.

**MR MANAMELA:**

For the Young Communist League, the key issues are nation-building, national unity, and overcoming the barriers of race.

What is happening in the townships, in the squatter camps, in the workplaces, needs to be reversed as urgently as possible in order to ensure that we create equitable access for young black people to the opportunities that have been created by our democratic dispensation. But there are also young white South Africans who are working class, poor, and therefore unable to

seize the opportunities of our democracy. So national unity is important.

But most importantly, we need to confront our socio-economic challenges – reversing the socio-economic backlogs our country faces across the racial divides. The HIV/Aids pandemic is a major challenge. And we play a central role as youth formations to deal with the issues of crime.

As access to economic opportunities can only be dealt with if the past imbalances are properly reversed, we must continue with BEE, but in such a way that it creates opportunities for job creation and massive empowerment, as opposed to some form of pyramid.

It is important to improve the public service, not only dealing with nepotism, but also with capacity and the quality of service. We need to ensure that young people have access to public services.

**DEBATE**

**MODERATOR (to Mr Manamela):**

You talk about class, but what has BEE done? It's created a bourgeois class.

**MR MANAMELA:**

It hasn't created a bourgeois class, it has only deracialised a bourgeois class. But in the ANC manifesto is the fact that we



need to transform the system whereby the black business people were just facilitators of the provision of goods and services, instead of them being the providers of those goods. That means that people will have to be judged on the basis of the jobs that they create.

**MODERATOR (to Mr Shivambu):**

Why is it that South Africa performs worse in education than most other African countries with far less resources than we have?

**MR SHIVAMBU:**

It's not an issue of resources only. There are lots of other aspects. You know that Verwoerd said that we were going to be hewers of wood and drawers of water. We are not supposed to study mathematics. We got independence quite recently and lots of these systemic realities are guided by what has happened in the past.

**MODERATOR (to Mr Ngwema):**

On some levels we've done remarkably in 15 years. Why not simply improve? Why do you need a new party?

**MR NGWEMA:**

You're looking at the media saying these people have left the ANC and joined COPE. Quite a lot of members who have joined COPE were not politically active.

A lot of changes took place within the ANC, post-

Polokwane. Who is the current leader of the African National Congress? I don't just mean president. Look at, for example, the recalling of Thabo Mbeki. Jacob Zuma said, "I am not for recalling this President." Then you've got someone saying this dead snake, come Monday, is going to be buried. If you are going to be a leader, surely you must have some clout? You cannot have an 86-member committee making national decisions without a mandate from the people.

**MODERATOR:**

There's been a lot of speculation about COPE's policy on affirmative action.

**MR NGWEMA:**

We agree with affirmative action and broad-based BEE. COPE is saying, let's look at the unintended consequences. One is that few people are benefiting. White people with skills are leaving the country. A typical example is Eskom, where a lot of engineers went overseas to look for greener pastures. Where did that leave us? So we're saying, let's have a discussion.

**MODERATOR (to Mr Janse van Rensburg):**

I'm concerned that you want to start the race all over again, forgetting that people were born in 1990 to enormously impoverished black communities, which suffered 300 years of racist rule. How can you forget that?



Young party leaders compared and contrasted their ideas about affirmative action and race in South Africa today

**MR JANSE VAN RENSBURG:**

The problem is that we're trying to work for a better past instead of a better future. Actually, the aim of economic policy is not to increase diversity, it's to racialise the economy.

From 1994 to 2005 white poverty increased by 150%. Hunger knows no colour. We're talking about ensuring that the poor are assisted. We've got to look at input-based empowerment, that is, education. Other societies in the East, such as Malaysia, did not have this output-targets thing that we have, they worked on their input.

**MODERATOR (to Mr Ramulifho):**

The DA has been extraordinarily ambivalent about how we deal with historical redress.

**MR RAMULIFHO:**

We need to redress the imbalances of the past. We support affirmative actions that add value to the system. We support BEE that [doesn't depend on] connections. It has to be broad-based in that you empower people with skills, so that they can decide what future they want. Welfare programmes should be there just to assist people, so that they can become independent and decide their own fate. Let's empower the people we assist. The state obviously needs to intervene where it's due. But its intervention needs to be limited.



**MODERATOR (to Mr Manamela):**

How do we build a community which moves beyond race?

**MR MANAMELA:**

It's a very important question. It's unfortunate that we're talking about it from a very terrible past. It's not only about the colour of the person, it's also about the allocation of resources. We need everybody to have access to basic services. Our society will continue to be divided on the basis of colour, whose underlying crisis is a contest for resources. I agree that gradually poverty is beginning to cross the racial boundaries. We need to deal with it. But it's a falsehood that the current generation of white young South Africans did not benefit from apartheid. Many are enjoying the benefits created by the conditions their parents were in.



**MODERATOR (to Mr Shivambu):**

Sipho raised the issue of political tolerance. Are you concerned about that?



Youth leaders shared a deep concern about the education and skills crisis confronting our nation

**MR SHIVAMBU:**

We are, but will you allow me just to assure Cornelius once again that affirmative action is not about retrenchment of white people. Let's continue to discuss these issues in terms of the best model of redress, which does not exclude everyone else.

Political tolerance is very important. The ANC has consistently said that those who disrupt meetings do not belong in the organisation.

**MODERATOR (to Mr Ngwema):**

The world's in a very serious economic crisis. The next administration is probably going to have less tax money to spend. What's the effect of that going to be?

**MR NGWEMA:**

I think the ANC is being a bit dodgy in coming up with a concrete answer on how its manifesto is going to be funded. Clearly the taxes we pay are not going to go down any time soon. Secondly, it's well and good to increase grants, but you are not empowering people by giving them money, you empower people by creating sustainable opportunities that they are going to be able to derive income from.

**MODERATOR (to Mr Janse van Rensburg):**

What do you say about the economic downturn?.

**MR JANSE VAN RENSBURG:**

We need to increase our competitiveness by quality education. And we've got to move away from a situation where our public sectors are understaffed. And the people appointed must be the right people for the job.

We have to relax our labour laws, becoming more competitive in terms of hire-and-fire principles. We do not necessarily disagree with the minimum wage, for example. But in the agricultural sector, as soon as the minimum wage came in, large numbers of farm workers were out of a job.

**MODERATOR (to Mr Ramulifho):**

How do you see the impact of the present economic crisis?

**MR RAMULIFHO:**

The main point is to make sure that we address the basics in education.

It's going to depend on political will. If people are underperforming, what do we do with them? We have Director-Generals who get disclaimers or qualified audits every year, but we keep them in office. We talk about skills, but we have schools in townships where there are computers but no electricity. The critical thing is that we are not encouraging investment in areas where there's poverty.

# Where to now?

The state of the nation may have provided the impetus for the discussion, but it was our future in difficult times that was on the participants' minds in this pre-election debate

A debate held under the auspices of the M&G Critical Thinking Forum following President Kgalema Motlanthe's State of the Nation address gave rise to vigorous debate on a range of hot topics, prominent among them being the economy.

The panel, under moderator Professor Adam Habib, comprised: African National Congress (ANC) Chief Whip Mnyamezeli Boo; Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP); Patricia de Lille, leader of the Independent Democrats (ID); Tony Leon, former leader of the Democratic Alliance (DA); Dr Philip Dexter, a leading member of the Congress of the People (COPE); and General Bantu Holomisa, leader of the United Democratic Movement (UDM). These are edited extracts from their introductory remarks and their views on South Africa's economic policies.

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

### MR BOO:

We in the ANC feel that the President has represented the nation very well. He has also said that our robust debates should not overwhelm us, but we should take them as challenges and engage with each other.

The ANC has been able to live up to the expectations and hopes of South Africans, but in humility he does say there are weaknesses. The suggestions he has made in relation to aiding the economy are quite challenging, and as we prepare for the elections, we will again be prepared to be engaged, so that we can find solutions. One issue we think everybody should focus on is how we continuously improve the life of the poor. Service delivery is one of



ANC Chief Whip Mnyamezeli Booi launched a spirited defence of the State of the Nation address and of the ANC's performance in office

the priorities. We are going to make sure when we go back to government that we fulfil our mandate.

**PRINCE BUTHELEZI:**

We have entered an economic crisis, and in a moment where decisive leadership is required, our President asks that we simply hold on. It is clear that change is needed, and our President has offered no change. South Africa needs a renewed Parliament and a range of skills, leadership and expertise. The road ahead is harsh and hard. The dramatic nature of the times calls for the patriotism of the people of South Africa, which is the greatest asset that our Government can in fact mobilise.

The President made reference to the inspiring values of our Constitution which are indeed of paramount importance. But one can't say in one breath that one believes in constitutionalism

and at the same time not respect the separation of powers or grope for political solutions to judicial problems. Our Constitution has been betrayed, I think, and in many respects, obliterated. Our democracy is ailing. The people of South Africa have been forgotten. Our liberation struggle has been hijacked. Within government the fundamental divide between right and wrong, integrity and corruption, service of the people and personal enrichment, efficiency and incompetence, hard work and laziness, party and state has been compromised, but within South Africa's civil society there's a vast pool of hard-working, efficient men and women of integrity. We have postponed a searing debate on how we have fulfilled the promises of our Constitution and laid the foundation on which our Republic is hopefully to prosper for decades to come. This debate can no longer be postponed.



COPE's spokesperson Dr. Phillip Dexter castigated the President for failing to mention a host of challenges

#### **DR DEXTER:**

I thought we got an address of the state of another nation. The things that were missing were, firstly, that we have been going through a classic constitutional crisis, where there was an intervention in government, in a way, through the removal of the President. No mention was made of that and the trauma it caused the country. Secondly, the attack on the independence of the judiciary was missing. The xenophobic violence that ravaged our country; not a word. Political intolerance and violence, no mention of that. The death of the Scorpions, the SABC crisis. One was left with the impression that essentially the ANC was saying that the answer to all these problems is social grants. There could have been a lot more about the real challenges, and a lot more said to put us at ease as citizens as to what the intentions of the ruling party would be in the future.

#### **GEN HOLOMISA:**

At last the government is beginning to accept the need for the state to intervene in the economy in a big way. The President mentioned that he's going to create jobs or employ more people, and we hope that will serve to kick-start our economy. But more importantly, this country has never had a consensus on macro-economic policy; one which would be sensitive to the imbalances and backlogs of the past. We take note of what BEE [black economic empowerment] has done, but we have not started yet to build wealth creators within that black community in a big way.

He mentioned corruption, but the leadership outside has been systematically devaluing and undermining our institutions of democracy because of one individual. The coming elections will not be about the bread and butter issues only; words like "integrity" and "trust" will feature very much.

#### **MR LEON:**

I thought that President Motlanthe did rather well compared to his predecessor. The speech was happily free of any intellectual pretension, there was no race baiting, and there was at least an admission that certain things have not been right.

But I was on a panel similar to this last year, talking about the state of the nation. On the subject of education, this extraordinary point was made by Mamphele Ramphele: that Bantu education was better than the present system of education. A most extraordinary moment. What are

Tony Leon (DA), Patricia de Lille (ID) and Bantu Holomisa (UDM) converged on a variety of key faultlines in South Africa

the facts? In 1995 1,7 million children started Grade 1. In 2007, 565 000 matriculated. Along the way we lost 1,2 million pupils. We spend an inordinate amount of time talking about things like the developmental state. What sort of state gets those results?

So much that we do is on the demand side, and so little concerns the supply side. We've got to do one fundamental thing: join up the things that we preach in our very estimable Constitution with what we actually practise. If there's a disconnect, we need to get in new set of practitioners to try to make that whole again.

#### **MS DE LILLE:**

I very seldom agree with Tony Leon, but let me say that I also felt relieved when President Motlanthe spoke, because there was no need to read between the lines. The ID agrees with him that we have made progress as far as transformation is concerned. But we are concerned about inequality, which has increased in the past 14 years. He announced an economic stimulus package, which we also agree with because of the economic meltdown.

But we are very weak on implementation. We have a civil service bloated with cronies and nepotism and people who are not able to do the job. We have something like 55 000 vacancies. How are we going to deliver?

With poverty and job creation you need a two-pronged strategy. On job creation, the ID proposes that we go to renewable energy. We've got the wind, we've got the sun, we've got water, and with renewable energy you can create thousands of jobs while beginning to make this nation energy efficient. About 70% of our young people between 18 and 25 are unemployed, and that is where we need to focus. We say that government must provide a wage subsidy, so that the companies can employ the first-time job seekers, and train them at the same time. You can help to alleviate poverty by giving young people the space to come into the market.

#### **DISCUSSION: THE ECONOMY**

#### **GEN HOLOMISA:**

We inherited an economic system, albeit under separate development, where the state was intervening in a big way. There were reasons for that; but when we immediately withdrew the incentives, for instance, from the farming community and textile industry, it meant that a lot of people in this country lost their jobs. We were told that this was line with globalisation, but the United States, France and other developed countries never stopped doling out trillions of US dollars to subsidise their farmers and textile industry.

There is a need for a CODESA type of set-up to focus on the economy and identify certain inherent defects in our system with





Whilst the degree of prospective state intervention in the economy was debated, it seemed to be a foregone conclusion that it would be inevitable

a view to agreeing on macro-economic policy. The UDM is saying the government must do more, but we are not going to be careless. We want the entire nation to come up with their views, and then we identify how the state must intervene.

**MS DE LILLE:**

Too much emphasis is put on BEE, as if it's the panacea for all our economic problems. In fact, there are many structural problems in our economy and we would like to see government lead by example. They must invest in the economy and infrastructural development to create jobs. We don't believe in privatisation. We believe that competition must be stimulated. We need to look at our competition policies so that we unlock the monopolies – like telecommunications, for instance.

**MR LEON:**

The truth of the matter is that there's been an enormous amount of state intervention in the economy over the past few years. The highest levels of intervention by this government have been in the mining sector. The consequence of that legislation was an investment strike by world investors into the South African minerals economy at the very moment that there was a commodities boom in the world. Obama has taken a country where they believe in very little government

intervention and made it one of the most over-invested government-run economies in the world, and the same has happened in Britain. I'm saying we should do the same, but we need to put everything on the table, and not have certain holy cows that are never brought into the room at all, such as our labour law. It might be that actually we need to relax certain of the strictures that keep people out of work in this country.

**PROF HABIB:**

The United States is investing 1,5 trillion from deficit money to grow the economy to with unemployment. Would your party support that?

**MR LEON:**

No – certainly in the quantum you propose it would bankrupt South Africa. But there's a big difference. The United States borrows its deficit in its own currency from China. South Africa's current-account deficit, which is exactly the same percentage, about 8% of GDP, is not funded in rands because it's funded in foreign short-term portfolio flows, which leave this country in dollars because they get repatriated. That is the fundamental difference.

**DR DEXTER:**

For the past 100 years, people in our country have been living in an economic crisis. They're poor,



they're unemployed, they don't have skills, they don't have opportunities. Fifteen years of government and those things have not been properly addressed. The real reason why is that the government has never had an industrial strategy. What it's put forward as an industrial strategy is a complicated, garbled account of all these interventions that we would like the state to make. We'd be in favour of state intervention, but it's got to be a radically transformed state, and the General's pointed out one of the issues, which is a professional public service. Without that you can't deliver decent public services.

**MR BOOI:**

State intervention in the economy has been a long debate within the ANC, and it came to fruition at Polokwane. So we really welcome the rigour with which opposition parties are reflecting on this. 2010 is going to help us to build bulk infrastructure and create employment, so while we accept there's a bigger financial meltdown around the world, South Africa seems a little bit more stable at this particular moment. But the ANC is open-minded about engaging in debate.

**PROF HABIB:**

Zwelinzima Vavi and Blade Nzimande say that unemployment should be part of the Reserve Bank mandate. Trevor Manuel and Tito Mboweni say no. What is the position of the ANC?

**MR BOOI:**

Trevor is really espousing the positions of the African National Congress at this particular moment.

**MS DE LILLE:**

The ID supports a deficit. I think it's an indictment on us that we're sitting with a surplus and millions of our people are still poor. But not too big a deficit. We say 2 – 3%, because we need to find the money for poverty alleviation.

**PRINCE BUTHELEZI:**

In the IFF we think that we need at least about 8% economic growth in order to create sustainable jobs. I would like to emphasise that the whole issue of the economy goes back to the Constitution, because the perception of people in the other countries who might invest in our country will be determined by the extent which our image is a positive one. If our image, because we have not been faithful in implementing our Constitution, is bad, then South Africa will not be seen as a good destination for investment.

**GEN HOLOMISA:**

The voters should deal with the tripartite-alliance ambivalence in the economic set up. The ruling clique preaches elimination of unemployment in the streets and on Mondays goes to Parliament and legislates against employment. This confusion has to be noted. They have been presiding over a period of creating unemployment almost daily.



By Mosiuoa Lekota

# No more honeymoon

COPE president Mosiuoa Lekota explains why the time was ripe for a new party geared towards governance

At a breakfast briefing held under the auspices of the South African Institute of Race Relations, The Weekender newspaper, and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Liberty, Mosiuoa Lekota, President of the Congress of the People, encapsulated key points from the new party's agenda: in particular, qualified appointees for service delivery, electoral reform and education.

This is an edited version of his opening address at the briefing, which he kicked off by tackling the question of the moment: whether there had been a battle over the selection of Mvume Dandala as the party's national presidential candidate.

No, there is no battle for leadership whatsoever. We took a decision to see who's best placed to lead our team to Parliament, and our decision is that the Reverend Dandala will lead our squad.

Some members assumed that [those of us who] initiated the move to set up the Congress of the People were by hereditary determination entitled to lead government. But we make the point that we made right at the beginning: we cannot continue to appoint men and women to lead government, administer departments, and so on purely because they were in exile or served years in prison or in the underground. It's the wrong criterion altogether.

When people struggle for freedom, they require a particular form of organisation. Its task is to remove the force in power for reasons that objectively justify such an act. It will recruit the skills it needs for that particular task. And when it has succeeded, it's achieved its historical mission. That creates new conditions. Instead of getting rid of a government, it must now govern. It must collect taxes, and ensure fresh and clean water for the people every day. It must make sure that commercial and agricultural activities continue so that there's constant supply of food and other goods.

This is completely different from fighting for freedom. The category of people you need for the second task is those who are trained, educated, experienced: administrators, budget experts, doctors, engineers and so on.

One of the reasons why many liberation organisations have failed when they have come to power is because they have not made the necessary transition, to appreciate that we can't go on rewarding comrades who went to jail or into exile, by putting them in positions of influence and power when they are not appropriate. That is why the Congress of the People is the right organisation for this country at this time. It must identify and recruit men and women with the necessary skills, training and, of course, commitment to this country and its advancement.

When we came to power we inherited a country that was exporting large quantities of manufactured goods. Today that has significantly reduced. We are increasingly becoming a country that exports raw material. We are going in the direction of many others who inherited infrastructure that shrinks and shrinks. Is there any wonder, if your manufacturing sector is shrinking, that large numbers of workers walk the streets unemployed? We should have captured that, held it, and then begun to expand it and make for a better life.

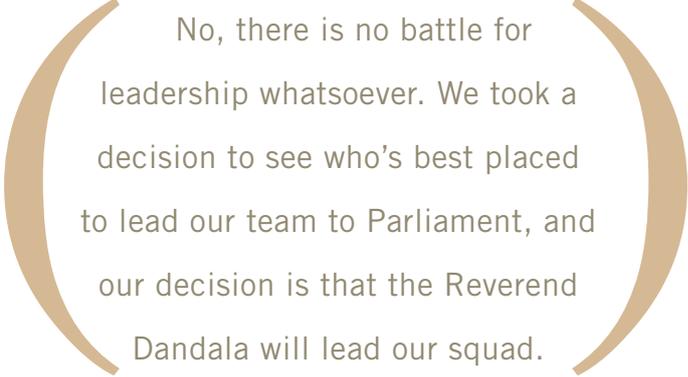
After President Mandela came out of jail. I saw that here were prospects for us to build this society into something great. But I have to concede now that we have not been progressing in that direction. A certain culture has developed around us, and it has not done us any good.

We must also correct also some of the other things we did. At the moment, at the elections, the people mandate a political party to choose the mayors, the premiers, the President and so on for them. We agreed on that at CODESA, because many people in the liberation organisation had been in exile. Most of

the population knew the leaders of Bantustans and the Tricameral Parliament and things like that. They didn't know people that had been in the underground. So we thought, for the first elections, let's have a system in which people vote for the party. And since the parties know who their members are, they can then deploy them in particular positions on behalf of the people.

But at the end of the first five years, you could have direct constituency elections. When the first five years ended, of course, power had been tested and tasted. So 15 years on, we haven't returned the power to the hands of the people, as a consequence of which, the country is run by leaders accountable to the party that deploys them, and not to the people.

We have to change that, and put political power back into the hands of the people. Let the people choose for themselves who will lead them. And because they want the best for themselves, they will not elect fraudsters and people are not properly qualified, who have no integrity in relation to the people.



No, there is no battle for leadership whatsoever. We took a decision to see who's best placed to lead our team to Parliament, and our decision is that the Reverend Dandala will lead our squad.

Now, why did Mr Lekota not deal with these things all along?

What do you think would have happened if, during President Mandela's first term, I had said we don't need a liberation organisation any more, we need a modern political party geared towards governance? It was not the right time to say that. People would not have understood. The honeymoon was on. Don't disrupt things during the honeymoon, because you are looking for trouble.

As Premier, I caught somebody siphoning off public funds. I took up this matter and lost my premiership. Timing very, very wrong; sober up.

Then many millions of rands were lost in the Eastern Cape, and we found some 40 or so vehicles at the home of one of the Director-Generals. People began to say, how can this be allowed to happen?

The clock has been ticking, going towards the right hour to intervene. Infrastructure faults, no services. The people of Harrismith burn tires on the streets. The people who used to

manage Metrorail in Pretoria, who knew how to do it, were compelled to take pensions. Now the train doesn't arrive on time, and people burn the station. The honeymoon is coming to an end as those glaring weaknesses show that we don't need a liberation organisation, we need a political party geared towards governance, which understands and prioritises the task, not of rewarding the past, but of doing for people what they need.

People don't eat history, people don't drink history. They need vegetables to eat, they need clean, purified water and sewage properly processed. Some 20 years after he came to power, Mugabe decided to take the commercial farms and give them to the veterans, to reward the comrades of yesterday. But what do they know about running a commercial farm? Why is there no food in the supermarkets in Zimbabwe today? Why is the Zimbabwe dollar worth nothing? Because nothing's being produced.

South Africa must not drift in this direction, but by the reduction of our manufacturing sector, we are going there. There's a suggestion that we must borrow money. And then what do you do with it? Finance consumption, give it to people to eat it. When it's finished, you must borrow some more. That's not investment. Mugabe did the same thing. Later, the countries want their money plus interest. And then this country will be counted as one of the highly indebted poor countries.

The Congress of the People's vision is: "We need to transform this country into a united, disciplined nation of men and women who work hard every day to make South Africa better."

You make South Africa better by earning your own keep, and then contributing by way of tax to national wealth. We must get that into the psyche of our nation. Not that freedom has come and it's a permanent Christmas.

We have to be able to teach our people from an early age: you must go to school and study, prepare yourself, and qualify, so that tomorrow you become a competent citizen who can work, keep yourself alive, and be able to make your contribution to the wealth of our nation.

But to do it, we have to invest heavily in the education of our people. Schools in the townships, in the countryside, need libraries, laboratories, computers. We must divert the resources of this country, not so much to grants, as to expanding the economy, training South Africans.

We have a dual problem of unemployment and unemployability. This makes it necessary to focus on investing in education. That is real empowerment. People will do things themselves. They will create businesses and employ other people, instead of looking to be employed by somebody else. I don't begrudge anybody who gets

given shares by some business or the other. But that can only [apply] to the few of us who were lucky, under apartheid, to pass matric or even get university degrees. We want children that are born in the shacks to get that education.

You can't have a party that thinks people must be given food parcels now. What kind of government thinks you get hungry once in five years? You don't get food parcels every day, you get them when the elections are looming. We have to create a situation in which people are able to survive every day.

I know countries in Africa whose budget every year is 70% foreign aid. They can't take decisions for themselves. If they take a decision that those who give them aid do not like, they are told: "If you want to do that, bring our money back."

South Africa is not lost yet, and we must arrest this. And this is why it's critical to get the Congress of the People to take this new approach.

We need all those trained South Africans in whom South Africa invested. It was unfair under apartheid that only white South Africans were trained. But however unfair that investment was, it remains our property, it remains our investment. We need expatriates back to uplift those sections of the population that were left behind. They are not doing us a favour. It's their patriotic duty. But we must create space for these people to participate with us, first of all in sustaining what we have; secondly, in expanding it; and thirdly, in therefore upgrading and uplifting those of our people who have nothing.

Let me say one thing before I sit down, because some people will say I'm deliberately avoiding it.

Having been Minister of Defence, I am constantly confronted with the arms deal. The deal was negotiated in two phases. We took a decision that the government would sign contracts only with the multinational companies. But because of the amount of money involved, we said to the multinationals supplying us that we couldn't allow all of it to go out of the country. Therefore they would have to spend some of it inside the country.

They wanted to know which companies the government wanted them to work with. We said we would not prescribe that because we wanted to hold them responsible for the quality of what they delivered to us.

So government signed the contracts with the multinationals, who proceeded to negotiate and sign contracts with South African companies without government participation. When people say that there was corruption committed by the government, you need only to look at the primary contracts between the government and the multinationals. We asked the Chapter Nine institutions to investigate,



and they returned a report, which is with the Speaker now, in which they said, with regard to the primary contracts, that they had found no corruption whatsoever.

Nevertheless, we stumbled across evidence that corruption was committed in the course of the secondary contracts between the multinationals and South African companies. The Tony Yengeni matter, secondary contracts. The Schabir Shaik matter, secondary contracts. The pending charges against the

President of the ANC, secondary contracts. The freezing of Fana Hlongwane's accounts, secondary contracts.

Although most of it was negotiated by Joe Modise, who was my predecessor, I signed the [primary] contracts after he had retired. No one will bring evidence to show that I committed any corruption with regard to the arms deal. And I know of no evidence against any one of my colleagues in that subcommittee – Thabo Mbeki, Trevor Manuel, Alec Irwin and Jeff Radebe.

By Helen Zille

# The task is to realign politics

The DA believes that by demonstrating its principles in action it can make a profound difference to South Africa's future

**D**emocratic Alliance (DA) National Leader Helen Zille laid out her party's strategy at a breakfast briefing held under the auspices of the South African Institute of Race Relations, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation and *The Weekender*. This is an edited version of her address.

In the Democratic Alliance we believe in getting as close as we possibly can to the reality of politics in South Africa, looking below the foam on the crest of the wave and understanding the deep currents beneath. If you can get closer to the real things that are moving South Africa in a particular direction politically, you make judgements that are proved to be right in the judgement of history. That is a very difficult job.

This election has a different vibe about it, there's a real interest in politics for the first time, I think, since 1994.

The two registration weekends have been extraordinary, with thousands upon thousands of young South Africans, and many older South Africans who tell me they have not registered since 1994. Many people think it is the Obama effect, and I think that certainly has something to do with it. But I think that for the first time many people think that the ANC is vulnerable, and their vote starts potentially making a difference. They want to get out and make that difference.

The ANC splintering is going to be a long-term process. But what we are learning more and more is that when the ANC splits, the DA can win.

A lot of analysis suggested that the DA would be more vulnerable to the emergence of the Congress of the People than the ANC would, but it seems the opposite is true. Every indication that we



have had in the past three months is that when COPE splits the ANC's voter base, the DA wins.

The DA, in the past three months in the Western Cape, has won nine seats off the ANC, and that was a first for us. We won four seats against both the ANC and COPE, and in the two-way fight with the DA and COPE, we won five. That was an extraordinary outcome, and it wasn't only happening in the Western Cape, but as far north as Musina. So when the ANC splits, the DA wins.

The corollary is also true: when the opposition splits, the ANC wins, and I think more and more opposition voters are beginning to understand that. The task is to consolidate the opposition, to realign politics, to bring together the people who believe in the same value set that I describe as the open-opportunity-driven society. The real currents that are moving underneath the surface are driving us into that process, which will be very healthy and very good for South Africa.

So we are now winning much more, and that is one of the key reasons that we had to re-brand the DA: to take out of people's minds that we are only a party of opposition, and position ourselves as a party of government that governs well. People have to be able to see what the implementation of our value set, principles and policies mean in practice.

In Parliament, the ANC currently has 74,2% of the seats, enough for them to feel unthreatened enough not to change the Constitution now. But as that comfortable majority gets

slightly more threatened, I believe the Constitution will be more and more at risk. The ANC is fundamentally threatening the Constitution without having to change it, because they're using cadre deployment to ensure that every key position in the constitutional set-up is becoming an extension of the party, rather than a check and balance on the party. It was quite clear to me that we were not going to realign and change politics from Parliament, from the top down.

That does not mean for one minute that Parliament is unimportant. It is a crucial platform. But it is not the place where we can, in the foreseeable future, win, and if we are a party of government, we have to win somewhere.

So the strategy was to focus on the places where we could conceivably win, and then implement our policies in office. We started doing that in the local government elections of 2006. Two years previously, we had 27% of the vote in Cape Town. We put in the biggest fight of our lives and pushed our vote up to 42%, and then it was possible, with the help of six other parties, to create a coalition government that could take the ANC out of office in Cape Town. That was a critical step in our strategy.

Not the most ideal circumstances, a seven-party coalition. What made it even more difficult was that the ANC was set upon correcting the voters' mistake, as they tried to do 13 times through unconstitutional and devious means.

But we were able to use that coalition to demonstrate why the DA's policies of the open opportunity society are



housing accreditation, which makes it a lot easier to cut through the red tape and deliver housing. When we won office in Cape Town we applied for housing accreditation. We met all the criteria; we submitted; three years later we are still waiting.

There's been a deliberate attempt to block us, because, frankly, the ANC government in the province would rather people continued living in squalor than enable the DA to improve their circumstances.

And the only criterion that we have not met yet is the need to be audited to say that we do have the capability, and the reason is because the province doesn't have the capacity to audit us. They're using that in this amazing catch-22 situation to prevent us getting what we should constitutionally be getting. I'm now going through all the mechanisms to declare a dispute.

So we know that to address the issues that we have not been able to address, we have to win the province. That's the next step in our strategy of becoming a party of government.

We intend to win the province of the Western Cape at least, and possibly other provinces as well in coalitions. We need to show in all the key areas what co-operative governance can do when a local authority is working efficiently, with clear policies and the support of provincial government.

The next step will be in 2011, when we have local government elections. Some very clever young people are crunching the numbers, working out which cities and towns across South Africa we're going to win. And I'm amazed: there's Ventersdorp, Middelburg, you name it. Ekurhuleni's right up there. We just need a change of seven positions to take the Nelson Mandela Metropole on a coalition.

All this while the ANC will crumble, because it is just a collection of internal factions vying with each other for power; no coherent founding philosophy, no overarching vision. As Kgalema Motlanthe himself said, every project in government is envisaged to make someone in the ANC rich. It must have been a unguarded moment.

By 2014 I believe that we will have realigned politics so fundamentally that it will be possible to challenge for government at a national level.

indeed better for everyone. And many of our coalition partners understand precisely what we're trying to do and why, even though many are fiercely loyal to their own parties.

And so we believe that we need to take the next step now.

We've made great progress in Cape Town. We've turned the city round from complete bankruptcy, we've driven economic growth, we've brought down crime in partnerships with other agencies in the city centre by over 90%; it's a living, breathing, viable city again. But there are lots of things we haven't done.

When I analyse the things we have not got right in Cape Town, it is because they would require co-operative governance of a very close kind between the city and the province, in areas such as transport, community safety, housing, tourism and economic development. The Constitution gives certain powers in those areas to the province and others to the city, and in all of those areas the province has sought to block any progress we might want to make in Cape Town. So co-operative governance has been a profound failure.

Let me give you one vivid example. Housing is not a local government competence under the Constitution but local authorities with the ability and capability to do so, can apply for

The plan doesn't exist for its own sake, it exists because we want to make South Africa a successful democracy, and prevent it becoming a failed state.

We've come to the collective conclusion that the essence of the failure of the state, especially on our continent, is the result of a liberation movement coming to power. Liberation movements' jobs are to seize power; and the democratic state has the role of limiting power; holding power to account, and putting checks and balances on power. And liberation movements often think that any check and balance on their power is not the essence of democracy, but, as Julius Malema would say, counter-revolutionary.

In the end, everybody's opportunities in that society become related to the extent to which they are politically connected. It's got nothing to do with ability, hard work, commitment, determination and all the values that are so central to the success of an open society. And once the internal clique in power gets that kind of control over the polity and the economy, they have to assert their control through draconian means because that is the only way to keep it. The state becomes the institutions that serve and reinforce the power of the small clique. Economic collapse is then inevitable, the emigration of skills and capital, and all the morbid symptoms of a failed state.

We, in the City of Cape Town, are applying government on the principles of the open opportunity society, and nowhere is that more important than when you're filling key positions or offering tenders. To ensure that politicians don't manipulate selection processes to choose their friends and their allies, we write a job description with the best human-resource experts. The consultants, not the politicians, choose a short list on the basis of the job description. We interview and choose what we believe is the candidate most fit for the purpose of that job.

We had a particularly important position to fill in one of our utility services and the man who got the position, and I have to mention that he is black because it is relevant to the outcome of the story, is doing the most superb job.

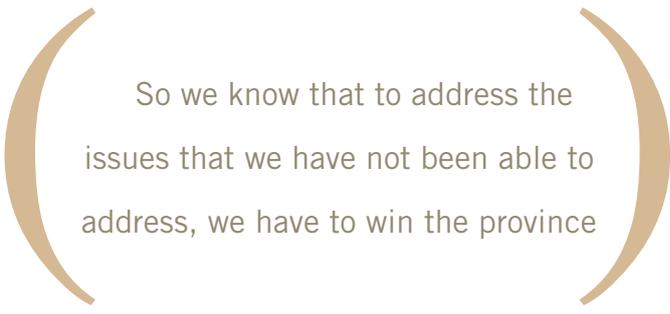
I had a braai for all the people who've really gone the extra mile in the city at the end of last year, where I said to him that he was doing the most outstanding job. And he said: "I applied for a position to every major metro in South Africa and I didn't even get an interview anywhere else, because I am not politically connected. The only place that I got an interview was in the City of Cape Town, which I never thought I would apply to because it is the only city run by a party that I would never have voted for." And then he said something which really gave me a sense of how big our challenge is: "I understand now what you're talking about when you talk about the open opportunity society and I know which way I should vote next year. I just hope my head can overrule my heart."

That is the challenge that we face in this realignment, one of our biggest challenges.

You don't have to go to Zimbabwe to see the examples of what the closed crony system means for the failed state. You have many examples in local authorities across South Africa. Durban decided to privatise their public transport system; nothing inherently wrong with that. But the ANC government there made sure that their friends, Delize M Gee and Jay Singh of Remant Alton, were able to buy the transport system for R70 million. They duly ran it completely into the ground and a couple of years later, the local authority had to buy it back for over R400 million, leaving the group of cronies that had driven it into the ground R300 million richer. To add insult to injury, they then leased it out to Remant Alton once more, to continue managing a system that now doesn't work for anyone.

In the Eastern Cape, a municipality called Ndlambe got new computers delivered and put in a warehouse. When they wanted to install them, they had vanished.

The DA asked a few questions, discovered that no one less than the municipal manager was working with a syndicate



So we know that to address the issues that we have not been able to address, we have to win the province

that had spirited away the computers. We laid a charge with the police, it went absolutely nowhere. Two years later the same municipal manager was spotted by the ANC at a COPE meeting, and the next day he was suspended and charged with the theft of the computers.

We're taking steps of national significance to establish a clear alternative model for all to see and experience. We have a model to say no one lost their grant where the DA won, no one lost their house where the DA won, far more people got houses. In fact, life improved much more, for far more people, and so we can expose the lies and manipulation and cynicism with which the ANC fights elections.

That's our mission and I've never been more confident that we can do it. That is going to be the job of the next five to ten years in politics, and I would rather be here, doing that kind of work with many thousands of other people, than anywhere else in the world, because that work is going to turn South Africa into a model democracy.

# Meeting the great expectations of the young

By Jacob Zuma

ANC leader Jacob Zuma pledges that a new planning commission in the Presidency will monitor performance and implementation in the new government

Jacob Zuma summarised the ANC's plans for South Africa's future at a South African Institute of Race Relations breakfast briefing, co-hosted by the South African Institute of Race Relations, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Liberty and *The Weekender*.

We are 22 days away from exercising our right to vote, a right for which so many fought and for which many lost their lives. When South Africans vote next month, we will collectively be doing so to secure the gains we have made as a nation in our 15 years of democracy.

The achievement of our freedom was not a miracle, as many proclaim. It was the consequence of many decades of relentless and painful struggle, the conclusion of a great human tragedy. Each national election is a

reminder of that great national achievement. It is a celebration of South African-ness and national pride that we overcame apartheid and became part of the international family of nations.

This year's election is indeed a true celebration of our democracy. The election appears to have energised the electorate in much the same way as it did in 1994. Over 23 million people have registered to vote. Half of these are under the age of 40. There are voters who were not yet born when our icon, Nelson Mandela, was released from prison. This is a young electorate with great expectations for the future.

We are determined to work with them to make this country of their dreams a success. We are committed to



continue building an inclusive society, based on the respect for democracy, non-racialism and non-sexism. We must build a new patriotism where all South Africans, black and white, are proud of their country and are ready to defend it and work for its prosperity and success.

The anchor of our democracy is a progressive constitution that was painstakingly negotiated to ensure that never again would the dignity of any person in this country suffer degradation or neglect. Since January 2008, the leadership of the ANC has made a concerted effort to reach out to every sector of society. Not only to listen to the views held on pertinent matters, but also to understand the concerns that our people have. This intense listening campaign helped to shape the ANC's view on what needs to be done in the next five years.

The people we talk to in their homes and in various forums tell us that the ANC-led government has brought development and hope to South Africa and has been able to ensure stability. It is their wish to live in peace and to live in a thriving, multiparty democracy. It is their desire to live decent lives, free from fear or want. It is their desire to have decent jobs and be able to look after their families.

As we listen and share the concerns, we know that we are faced with new challenges. The global economic crisis is having an impact on our country. We are determined to work together with business and labour to minimise the effects of this global challenge. The agreement between business, labour and government in responding to the crisis provided five priorities for the budget presented by

Finance Minister; Trevor Manuel, in February. These were:

- (a) protecting the poor;
- (b) accelerating investment spending;
- (c) minimising job losses;
- (d) taking steps to improve long-term competitiveness; and
- (e) ensuring that the debt burden does not rise too much.

The greatest strength we have in meeting this challenge is not simply sound economic management or massive public-infrastructure investment, it is our ability to work in partnership. South Africans, when called upon, can rally around a common cause and work together to overcome what seem to be insurmountable obstacles.

That is why we say working together we can do more. The ANC has a clear and achievable plan over the next five years to improve people's lives further. It focuses on employment creation in a growing economy, health, education, rural development and land reform, as well as fighting crime. But this plan will only produce the desired results if all South Africans get involved in implementing it.

Once the election is over and there is a new government with a decisive mandate in place, there will be an opportunity for all South Africans, regardless of who they voted for, to contribute to the process of improving the lives of all. The ANC election campaign is entering its final phase. We'll now intensify direct voter contact over the next few weeks. In the past two months of campaigning we have established the following: support for ANC among South Africans is as big and as enthusiastic as ever.



People recognise the achievements of the past 15 years and feel they are part of the progress that has been made. People are forthright about the problems they still face on a daily basis. These include problems of access to basic services, crime, poverty, unemployment, corruption and lack of accountability among public representatives and public servants. These are issues people raise very forthrightly, while recognising the good work that the ANC has done, which they have been part of.

People expect the ANC to address these problems. They sometimes complain bitterly to the ANC about what has not yet been done and the shortcomings and mistakes of government, because they know that the ANC will respond to them. They feel entitled to level criticism at the ANC but are fiercely protective of the movement when other parties try to do so. People are prepared to work with the ANC to achieve the kind of lives they want.

Both in our interaction with people and in new registration figures, it is clear that there is a great deal of interest in this election and we can expect a higher voter turnout. This election is essentially about what party has the best programme and the means to improve people's lives. Other parties have tried very

hard to make this election about individuals and personalities.

But voters are interested in issues such as jobs, houses, safer streets and an end to corruption, among others. We are already looking beyond the elections to immediate priorities of the new administration, and responding to the global economic crisis and its impact on South Africa will be the most pressing priority of the incoming government.

The new government will also need to proceed with the infrastructure investment programme, putting in place the resources and the expertise needed to implement it effectively. This will provide much needed investment and stimulate economic activity at a time when the economy needs it.

Work will also need to begin on the design and detailed costing of a national health insurance system, alongside our investments in the public health system. We must also review progress in the implementation of the national AIDS plan, to identify obstacles to the achievement of the ambitious goals we have set ourselves.

We are on course to realise our manifesto pledge of ensuring that 60% of schools are no-fee schools. This must be accompanied

by intensive work to ensure that matriculants are able to pursue higher education regardless of the financial situation of their families.

We have begun the overhaul of the criminal justice system. We must see this process through to its conclusion.

We must review our land-reform programme, making sure that financial and technical support becomes an integral part of the process of redistribution.

The transition to a new government will be smooth. The ANC's transition management team has been paying attention to how this will be achieved and how to make the National Executive of government more efficient and effective. The incoming administration will make changes to certain Cabinet portfolios, based on the experiences of 15 years in government and the priorities for the five years ahead.

Certain portfolios are likely to be split to allow for greater focus on key areas. We'll also establish a planning commission in the Presidency to enable better co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation. We'll pay particular attention to the performance of those charged with implementing policy. We'll hold those occupying positions in the Executive and public service to the highest standards of competence and accountability.

We are determined to stamp out favouritism and patronage. People will be appointed to positions of responsibility on the basis of their ability to do the work. The next government will do everything it can to strengthen all institutions of the state and ensure that they have the means to fulfil their constitutional responsibilities. The administration will promote and respect the independence of the judiciary, the oversight function of Parliament and all other institutions charged with promoting democracy.

We have to ensure that institutions, including those of the criminal justice system, act impartially and without political or any other undue influence from any quarter.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are running a successful election campaign. Our message is getting across to the electorate and we are confident that they will return the ANC to power with an overwhelming majority. The ANC is definitely ready to govern for another term.

*Question time brought forth further comment on various topics, among them employment equity and affirmative action, and the new performance-monitoring system.*

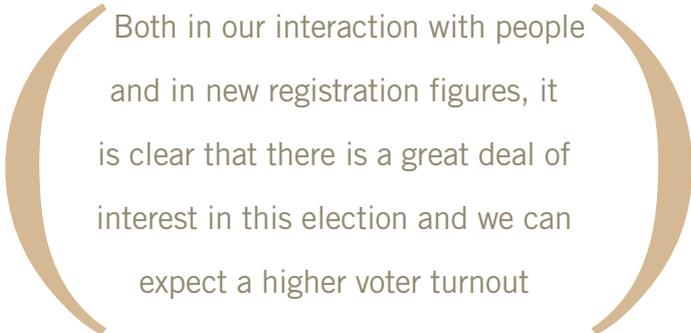
The vigorous performance-monitoring structure we are going to establish means that we will see whether everything is working appropriately or not. We believe that that structure is going to play a critical role.

With regard to [ministers who are] not performing, they are put there to serve. If they can't serve, sorry. And that is a decision and a determination that the ANC has taken. All of our colleagues and comrades in the list are aware of this. If you are given a job, and you

know you can't do it, tell us. Our business is to serve the people, not to serve ourselves. The performance monitoring will tell us in a short space of time who is not performing, and we will act.

This will [also apply to] employment equity. We are going to ensure that programmes work effectively.

I don't think we should have a time limit on affirmative action. Why should we? It is the response to well-known policies of this country over the years, and was developed to address that specific issue: how do we close the gap? Now that we are fixing South Africa, we've got to do this. I think on its own, with time, without putting a date, it will come right. It's not a big deal, it's not a problem. I'm not sure why it is a worry. There could



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be a problem in the implementation of it, which we must look at, and that is why I've been saying we are open to criticism. For example, when I went to address the Solidarity Union they raised a very specific issue, asking why we persist with this at the level of scarce skills? Shouldn't we discuss whether this should be applied or not where skills are scarce? And I said I thought they had a point, because you can't say, when skills are not there or very scarce, that other people can't take an opportunity because we want to find a black person.

But if you look at the statistics, while we have had a growing economy, we've had deepening poverty, and this indicates the problem we have. I believe that affirmative action and black empowerment are one part of the instrument to address that problem. You know, black businesses will tell you, the small ones in particular; that they don't find favour when they go to the financial institutions; they are asked for security or collateral they don't have. What must they do? We are not just doing this for the sake of it. It addresses a problem, so we haven't thought of a time limit.

We think we are making good progress. A 2-point-something-million black middle class has been created that helps to grow the economic cake in this country. That develops South Africa. It must be encouraged.

# Crafting a coalition

As this address at the recent conference on ‘Models for Governing in Africa’ points out, coalitions can succeed – if due care is taken to make them succeed

In talking about my very practical view on coalition-building and coalition management, I should first of all make it very clear that my own practical experience is based on my work in the parliamentary system in the Federal Republic of Germany, with an electoral system based on proportional representation. However, I have dealt with other frameworks and I will try to make some general remarks that can probably be helpful in other constitutional and electoral circumstances, too.

One of the common arguments against coalition governments is that coalitions are not as stable as one-party governments. Germany is an example that this is not necessarily the case. In our post-war history we have,

almost all the time, had coalition governments, with all kinds of constellations, excluding only the post-communists and the neo-Nazis or right-wing extremists. And Germany's development since the war has indeed been very stable and very good. It has been said that the need to form a coalition government has had a moderating influence on Germany's policies, and did indeed have an impact on its very favourable economic development.

Having negotiated coalition agreements in some federal states of Germany as well as on the national level, and having also worked with these agreements at state and national levels, and also having dealt with problematic constructions in other countries as a



consultant, I find there are some general guidelines that should help to achieve a stable and functioning coalition government formed by more than one party.

In general, one can say that most of the time when coalitions run into trouble during an electoral period, the mistakes have been made at the very beginning. Ailing coalitions have very often been formed hastily, without a negotiation period sufficient to set up a detailed agenda, very often not foreseeing that problems and conflicts will occur - maybe not the day after the election, but probably in a year or two.

Over the decades we have developed certain unwritten rules for coalition building and coalition management, which are obeyed by all parties intending not only to form a coalition government, but to keep it running through a whole elected (?) period, if possible.

First of all, we negotiate a very detailed governmental programme, a catalogue of all kinds of legislation that we intend to do together. This is a very long list – on the federal level, a book the size of the Berlin telephone directory, more than 200 pages. Once the list is completed, it is signed, like a contract, by the party leaders, the caucus leaders, the secretary-generals and the chief whips of every coalition partner. Sometimes this is even done in public, to make it a more formal procedure.

The agreement, in most cases the full catalogue, is immediately published and available to everybody on the Internet. Thus it is binding for every coalition partner; big and small. The reason for

this detail is that, in a parliamentary system, particularly the smaller partner is in danger of getting marginalised after having voted for the prime minister in Parliament. This procedure guarantees that the issues agreed on will be brought on to the parliamentary agenda by all of the coalition partners jointly. This fixed, detailed and formalised contract is the basis for governmental and parliamentary work.

One of the common arguments against coalition governments is that coalitions are not as stable as one-party governments

But a legislative period is long. So how do we handle issues that come up later, and were not visible in the very beginning? We need to make arrangements for that situation, too, since it will definitely happen. Our solution is simple. We agree on the consensus principle. No agreement – no changes: a force towards consensus or deal-making within the coalition.



Above all, this only works with a general agreement we always install, and that is: “no dissenting voting” (neither in the plenary nor in committees); a coalition will always vote together. This clause is always essential and fixed in the coalition contract.

It is also important to agree on a conflict-resolution mechanism at the very beginning, possibly when there are no conflicts. It is too late to try to install it once a conflict is in the air. This conflict-resolution mechanism within the coalition, on a day-to-day basis, includes different levels of consultation where consensus can be reached. If no consensus is achieved, the issue is shifted to the next higher level. At the top level, the decisions can also (by consensus) be “political solutions”, according to the situation (and that means political deal-making).

It is also essential to install levels of formal communication within the coalition. There should be a parallel working structures within the parliamentary caucuses (that is, parliamentary caucuses work independently; there is, for instance, no such thing as a joint session of the parliamentary caucuses of the coalition).

The coalition working groups meet on a regular basis prior to the respective meetings of the legislative bodies (for example, one day before the committee, plenary etc):

**Committee level:**

A joint working group of coalition members for every committee meets one day before the committee, and the respective parliamentary caucus, meetings.

**Plenary:**

Caucus leaders and whips of coalition partners meet before their respective parliamentary caucuses meet, and at least one day before the plenary for consultation on its agenda.

**“Coalition Round” (top level):**

Party leaders, secretary-generals of coalition parties, caucus leaders and whips, the prime minister; and one member of government of each coalition party meet weekly to prepare and consult on the work of government and Parliament.

These communicative instruments should not be underestimated. As I said: in most cases ailing coalitions suffer from a lack of preparation at the beginning. But the second most common reason for problems is insufficient communication among the coalition partners and/or between the government and the coalition partners. So levels of

communication should be institutionalised and should be maintained throughout the whole elected (?) period.

The third most important factor in problems within coalitions, although not very often admitted, is the human factor. We must not forget that these are people, individuals that need to work together and communicate for a long time, in spite of the fact that they remain competitors. Coalitions are not marriages; the partners will continue to strive for a better result at the next election, to have the edge over the opposition, but also over the coalition partners.

So this set of formalities must be completed by informal but, most importantly, permanent communication among the leaders of the coalition. In my case, this was between the caucus leaders and the chief whips.

My very personal experience: my colleague, the chief whip of the Conservative coalition partners, and I, as chief whip of the Liberal Party, would speak on the phone practically daily to keep updated, and to ask the opinion of the partner on issues that might just come up in the future. We would meet sometimes, no agenda, no formalities, just for a coffee or – being German – for a beer, preferably.

It sounds strange, but this informal consultation was a kind of early-warning system for possible problems in the future. We worked so intensely together that we really became friends. We addressed each other as “Mr Fire Chief”, since we were always called when a firefighter was needed somewhere for the coalition. And we trusted one another. We spoke frankly, knowing that this would not be in the newspaper the next day. We were both sure that we cared about this alliance, and wanted it to last the whole period. And we succeeded.

By the way: our coalition is over; we are both working in different positions, but we are still in friendly contact. Everyone is – of course – working for the success of his own party now. We are in opposition, and his party is in a different coalition. But our coalition, in those days, as long as it lasted, was successful.

The success of coalition work is not coincidence. It can be planned, it has to be organised. Still, there is no guarantee of success. But the odds are much better when we obey certain unwritten rules, if we take time to prepare, and if we care about consultation and communication.

So – as a practitioner of coalition building and coalition management – I am talking about a certain craftsmanship. Craftsmanship that can be learned, that has to be adjusted to the particular needs in specific conditions, but that is always worth while.



By Trevor Manuel



# G20, Beyond the London Summit

Address to the Helen Suzman Foundation/Gordon Institute of Business Science

## Introduction

Thank you for inviting me to speak to you today. I believe it is an appropriate occasion for me to extend a word of appreciation to you for creating such a vibrant and active forum for public discussion, which further deepens our culture of democracy.

Let me begin by positing a radical suggestion – I am confident that the global economic crisis will in due course give way to a more robust and more enduring era of economic development in Africa and the developing world than we have hitherto contemplated. Stronger economic development in the countries of the South is not a new event. It has roots that go back a decade or two, and it has several inter-connected strands:

- The extraordinary economic growth of China and India and the sharp decline in the number of people living in poverty worldwide.

- The sustained rise in commodity prices, reflecting much more broad-based industrialisation and modernisation and associated demand for infrastructure and traded goods and services.
- The rapid increase in the use of new, lower cost and efficiency-enhancing information and telecommunications technologies.
- The rise in urbanisation rates and mega-cities across the developing world, and rapid increases in education and technology adoption.
- Greater macroeconomic stability in much of the developing world, including several leading African economies.
- Although growth may be interrupted for a period, these are powerful dynamics and they are not going to be reversed. In some respects the structural imbalances that underlie the present crisis are constraints

to broader development, and so the resolution of these imbalances is a condition for more sustainable growth and prosperity. These are not just economic dynamics, or changing trade and financial relations. Structural change is also about the evolution of institutions:

- There is, worldwide, a welcome (though sometimes troublesome) decline in political timidity, a strengthening of people-centered democracy, and a willingness to pursue reforms within developing countries.
- There is an opportunity now to re-shape the international financial and developmental architecture to bring about both greater transparency and better resource flows to support the developing world.
- Alongside the restructuring of trade and financial relationships we will begin to see better management of earnings disparities and, over time, greater fairness in labour market outcomes across the world.

These are trends that will complement other economic transitions: South-South economic links will strengthen, and in Africa a renewed impetus to reform intra-African economic barriers and commitment to cross-border public infrastructure will assist in supporting growth of markets.

Institutional evolution and overcoming barriers to broader economic development are not automatic, elegant trajectories however: the process will be uneven and for now we have to contend with a series of grave challenges associated with the current crisis, in particular the economic damage caused in the short-term by declining capital flows, rising macroeconomic instability, and job losses in vulnerable societies. Raw statistics cannot capture the magnitude of these adjustments, but the numbers are nonetheless startling:

- The World Bank estimates that 53 million more people will fall below the level of extreme poverty in 2009 and an additional 32 million people will lose their jobs in emerging countries in 2009.
- The ILO estimates that the global number of unemployed will increase from 190 million in 2007 to 210 million in 2009.

#### The G20 dialogue

Over the past few weeks there has been something of a turnaround in markets internationally and in South Africa. I wish I could report that the G20 Leaders' meeting last week and the process leading up to it have diagnosed the problem, identified the remedies required and agreed on an appropriate burden of adjustment. I would love dearly to tell you that the world economy is now reviving.

There are tentative indications of a recovery, but this is not just about a new direction in financial market trends; there are also deep-rooted structural imbalances and massively distressed institutions which will take considerable time to be resolved.

Rising new orders and the continued sharp decline in inventories, reflected for example in the leading purchasing managers' indices of production, provide encouraging signs of improvement in global manufacturing. Sharply lower inventories, among other things, suggest that consumption of intermediate and final goods is now increasing. As inventories deplete, firms need to increase production to meet ongoing demand. The data underlying these developments come out of the US economy and a range of emerging markets, including China, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Brazil, and others.

The corresponding indicators in Europe and other parts of Asia are, however, less encouraging, and suggest that the sharp plunge in economic activity in the centres of the crisis is still working its way around the globe, and may be followed by a succession of after-shocks. The impact of these waves of retrenchment on employment is perhaps our most critical concern because of the effect job destruction has on aggregate demand.

The world still needs to fight through these turbulent tides, and the under-currents are powerful and unpredictable. Part of doing that requires governments to demonstrate not just a capacity to reach diplomatic agreements, but also to implement difficult fiscal and financial adjustment programmes, often of unprecedented complexity. It is not enough to diagnose what is wrong, it is also necessary to design a response and construct the institutional capacity required for its implementation.

We are fortunate in that there have not been major shocks to our banking system, and the institutional implementation of our fiscal response very largely builds on plans and capacity that is in place, and infrastructure projects that are in progress.

But I can also report that President Motlanthe and I came away from the G20 Leaders' summit in London last week heartened by both the substance of engagement with extraordinarily



Stronger economic development  
in the countries of the South is  
not a new event

difficult policy issues and the willingness of global leaders to think differently about the challenges of financing development.

I don't want to pretend that the world's structural trade problems have been dealt with or that there are not important differences of perspective between global leaders. Even the most immediate challenges of stimulating global demand and dealing with the non-performing assets on major financial institutions' balance



sheets evoke sharply contrasting analyses and opinions amongst the major protagonists. There are different views on how the regulatory systems should evolve and on what kind of re-shaping of financial institutions and markets we should pursue.

It is not that the G20 is unfamiliar with the structural issues: it was in this forum that the issue of global macroeconomic imbalances was recognised and defined as a serious impediment to world economic stability several years ago. The implications of

those imbalances for financial stability and international financial contagion were extensively and intensively discussed. The IMF and external observers of the global economic trajectory issued warnings over the inconsistencies building up in key economies. They pointed out the risks accruing to the developing world, which had benefited from the flow of capital looking for higher returns and the boom in commodity prices driven by growth in China and elsewhere. Too little of these discussions has filtered through to multilateral action or to national authorities and their assessment of domestic monetary policy or financial regulators.

Credit rating agencies implicitly validated the underlying view of the protagonists that the world could go on forever with the US and the UK over-consuming and China over-exporting. The search for yield on investments took progressively less account of the risks associated with the assets being sold to investors. And underpinning all of this was the idea that households, especially those in wealthy countries and enclaves around the world, could perpetually take on more debt because of sustained growth, asset appreciation, financial stability, low inflation and positive investment returns.

Nonetheless, the G20 has emerged as the successor to the G7/8 and a more credible forum for addressing the global economic crisis, and we need to see it as an important body in moving forwards to resolution and towards a new foundation for global economic coordination. For the latter effort, of course, the G20 has brought in heads of state and heads of government, and some beyond the normal G20 membership, and it seems sensible that this collective will need to be broadened further.

Certainly the G20 will need to make much faster progress in ensuring that our multilateral institutions more effectively raise the voice and participation of all members. A range of options are available for that, centred around reform of the governance and institutional makeup of these organisations, and involving adjustments to shareholdings and decision processes that reflect in a more balanced way the interacting interests of member states and their people. These actions should be grounded in a new compact with the developing world – on an agreed set of support mechanisms that add value to economic development – and a new compact with the developed world that emphasises mutual macroeconomic and financial dependence and the shared responsibility of the global community for our global endowment – the physical environment, human solidarity, accumulated knowledge and technology, shared transport, communications and energy resources and the institutions of social and economic cooperation that cut across national boundaries.

Measures to respond to the crisis

The fact of the matter is that global macroeconomic imbalances need to decline in size, and toxic assets need to be disposed of (written-off). The first requires a rise in saving in debtor countries and a decline in saving in creditor countries, and higher world interest rates for some years. The G20 has focused on:

- stabilising the global financial system,
- countering the economic downturn,

- ensuring resources and means of preventing a collapse in developing economies, and
- securing an open and fair trade and finance system for the long-term.

In the short-term, economic stabilisation is an obvious priority, while remaining perilously out of reach. Household saving has already risen in many countries and in due course household debt levels will retreat. But this will also lower consumer spending for an extended period of time, and therefore drag down economic growth in economies like the US, the UK and Europe. Consumer spending in those economies accounts for 40% of total economic activity in the world. As lower consumer spending feeds through into investment, medium term growth will also falter, and growth in economies with trade and financial ties with large advanced economies will also slow. We have seen this process in action over the past year or so as economic growth rates plunge around the world.

Declining debt levels for households and firms will emerge as the underlying dynamic driving the future economic recovery, but the pain experienced in the short-term is dramatic. Governments around the world have implemented fiscal measures to boost aggregate demand in the near term, in part to offset the general economic dislocation associated with the deleveraging. Monetary easing has in some countries been extensive, with historically low interest rates and quantitative easing in place in the US and the UK to try to get financial institutions to extend credit to firms and households. In other countries, including our own, interest rates have begun to fall quite sharply.

By any fiscal or monetary measure, South Africa's macroeconomic response has been large. Our fiscal response as a ratio of the slowing in our gross domestic product has been larger than nearly all other countries, except for the United States. On the monetary side, the interest rate has been cut by 250 basis points, ranking us in the middle of the G20 spectrum. Unlike in the US and the UK, we have plenty of room for further monetary easing, and as inflation continues to fall, so too will our interest rates.

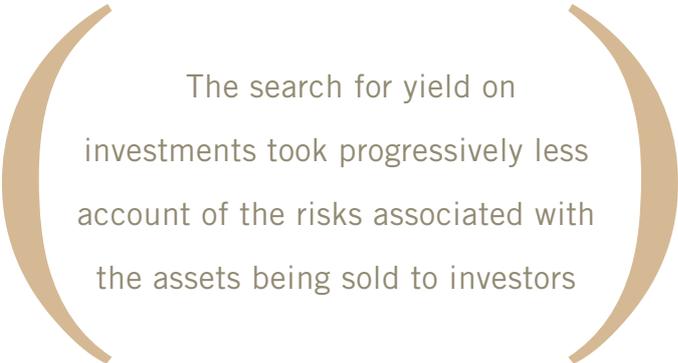
But these sorts of macroeconomic offsets to falling demand are not a panacea, and will do little to stop the economic adjustment facing overly indebted households and firms. Our task in the short and medium term is to ensure that we minimise the damage to the rest of the economy from deflation in the over-indebted groups and sectors. Unfortunately, this is not a simple exercise, and many firms that have expanded in recent years will fall back to more sustainable levels of production and employment. Some sectors will need to shrink even further as they are more fundamentally uncompetitive. Governments here and abroad must address these challenges by ensuring that safety nets are in place and effective, that skills retraining works well and quickly, and that sectors of the economy not burdened by debt are able to grow and increase employment.

The adjustment of the South African economy to the crisis has been less severe than in many other countries. The exchange

rate has depreciated significantly, by 27 percent in 2008, and it remains today 17 percent below the value pertaining in July 2008 at the height of the commodity boom. When the global economy begins to recover, a more competitive exchange rate should enhance foreign demand for our exports.

At the same time, South African households have set the stage for a recovery in the medium term in consumption. Household debt levels have declined sharply, from about 78% of GDP to our estimate of nearer 70% today, which, along with declining debt service costs, will help to free up considerable purchasing power. This will be offset negatively by a lower value for financial and property assets which are unlikely to reach their mid-2008 highs in the next few years, and which impact on consumer spending.

Easing credit constraints in advanced economies is critical to reinvigorating economic growth. But a major part of the crisis has been caused by the uncertainty about the value of defaulting assets on the balance sheets of many financial institutions – the so-called toxic assets of collateralized debt obligations and



The search for yield on investments took progressively less account of the risks associated with the assets being sold to investors

somewhat more indirectly credit default swaps. These need to be addressed to enable banks to stop restricting credit, and are being tackled in different ways in affected economies, including the use of liquidity support, government guarantees, equity purchases, deposit insurance, and moving impaired assets to bad banks or making markets to realise prices for the assets.

Exiting the crisis and setting the ground for a renewal of macroeconomic and financial stability and sustained economic growth will depend on how countries address national and international financial regulatory concerns. As you all know by now, widespread failures have become evident in everything from mortgage lending practices to the failure to realise that off-balance sheet special purpose vehicles constitute major balance sheet risks. The world's financial intelligentsia clearly erred in judging an appropriate and sustainable balance between supporting financial innovation and feeding the credit default swap casino. I fundamentally disagree with the idea that we can get the former only if we allow the latter. We are in danger now of having both being shut down by populations angry at this folly.

Nevertheless, I believe the G20 has stepped out onto the right path by identifying a range of specific areas of financial regulation that need urgent attention. Many more areas that need to be addressed will most assuredly be added by other observers and analysts.

**The G20 has discussed the need to:**

- Broaden effective regulation to all systemically important institutions,
- Ensure the registration and regulation of hedge funds,
- Call for registration and compliance with relevant codes of all Credit Rating Agencies whose ratings are used for regulatory purposes,
- Reinforce macro-prudential oversight,
- Enhance the counter-cyclical effects of financial regulation, and
- Strengthen international regulatory cooperation.

Addressing the financial aspects of the crisis is clearly necessary, and while we might agree on many of the reforms to regulations, regulators, and financial markets, we also need to remain mindful of the long-term implications of what we do. We need to remain cognisant of the gains that have accrued to marginalised communities from the extension of financial services in recent years.

I believe that it will be necessary in coming months to move to protect those achievements and the economic benefits associated with them. The Mzansi accounts, and the services related to them, have helped bring poorer communities closer to the formal economy, over time helping to reduce recourse to loan sharks and ultimately strengthening information networks that are important to more distant needs, like searching for jobs. In short, I am concerned that we wander too far down the road of reaction to the financial markets by penalising those among us that have least access and need it the most.

Yet the global crisis is pulling down growth rates in the developing world, as trade finance dries up and capital flows back to originating countries generates macroeconomic instability and reveals large financing gaps. The cost of capital for emerging markets which are able to borrow in international and sometimes their own domestic capital markets, has increased and remains high. The JP Morgan Emerging Market Bond Index has the average risk premium now at 633 basis points above the yield on US Treasuries. This elevated cost of capital will remain a constraint on emerging markets and developing countries until the global crisis eases.

The Institute for International Finance expects private capital flows to the developing world in 2009 to fall to just US\$165 billion, compared to the high of US\$920 billion achieved in 2007. This is a serious decline, and risks putting the recent favourable performance of many economies at risk of reversal. The developing world has taken on a more important role in world economic growth, and in 2009 and 2010 provides some buoyancy to global growth rates.

The G20 has agreed to a significant increase in financing for the IMF – US\$250 billion – and considerably more was discussed as an option. The multilateral development banks will be further

supported too. These represent important additions to the capacity of our multilateral institutions to prevent crises in the developing world and foster economic growth and sustainable macroeconomic policies.

Declining commodity prices and failing capital flows need to be offset within the developing world by greater access to multilateral financial flows, and critically a renewed commitment to domestic policies focusing on human capital development, institution and capacity building, and of course macroeconomic stability. Reinforcing the good policy trajectory of the past 15 or more years is in many ways the only response that the developing world has in its own power to decide on and implement. It needs to do so. Africa has to build on the progress achieved in defining regional economic integration as the building block of a successful continental economy. Meaningful steps to lowering tariff and non-tariff barriers between African economies would provide impetus to economic growth without, in the current environment, presenting opportunity costs in the form of trade diversion.

**So where does this leave us?**

It is trite to observe that the global economic crisis will not disappear overnight. This is because the global macroeconomic imbalances of surplus countries feeding the insatiable appetites of deficit countries will not unwind quickly, especially for as long as we believe that it is the sole responsibility of the US to alter its policies to solve the immediate collapse in world aggregate demand. Yes, the US needs to act, and is doing so, but so too do countries with large current account surpluses and the rest of us. The unwinding of global imbalances depends on longer-term structural, regulatory and behavioural changes in many countries that will take time to achieve. In the meantime, macroeconomic volatility and international financial contagion emanating from advanced economies will present serious problems for the developing world.

There is a risk that global crisis will lead to national or regional inaction – I hope that I have made clear that I believe this is a time for renewed efforts towards accelerated economic integration in Africa and more broadly across the developing South. As trade and financial ties, many of timeworn provenance, disintegrate, new opportunities to forge more economically efficient relationships emerge. Trade between African countries seems a target worth examining in the interest of developing robust regional economic communities. Deeper integration and more rapid economic growth in Africa and the developing world generally carries with it extensive benefits for the world economy. Getting those regional policies right, however, requires us to focus ever more fervently on economic reform and institution building at home.

It is also important to examine in more detail what kind of economic adjustment is needed in conditions of declining foreign and domestic demand. While macroeconomic policy can, to some extent, help support demand, it cannot offset the decline on a one-for-one basis. This implies that demand for some sectors' output will fall, irrespective of government actions. The further implication



The HSF-GIBS Lecture attendees posed some challenging questions to Minister Manuel ranging from fiscal and monetary policy amidst crisis to the future trajectory of macro-economic policy after the 2009 elections

is that firms will need to price to re-establish volumes of product sold or in demand. There are numerous examples of companies moving in that direction, including the recent announcements by ArcelorMittal South Africa and many retailers of significant price cuts. Unfortunately, some other industries appear to believe they can adjust best by raising prices in an effort to maintain profit margins on a smaller volume of sales. This seems especially unhelpful in the current environment, and will be costly in terms of employment.

From the side of government, limited state resources should continue to be deployed in the pursuit of economy-wide measures that have as broad an economic impact across as wide a range of firms, sectors and workers as possible. This starts of course with a stable, low inflation fiscal and monetary environment. It includes vigorous enforcement of competition laws, continued improvements in our regulatory regime, streamlining of our tax and tariff systems and upgrading of basic transport, energy and telecoms infrastructures. Improvements in education and basic health delivery must remain at the heart of our efforts to improve both competitiveness and social justice.

These are, in my view, better uses of public resources than the frequent demand made for special assistance to specific firms and sectors. In the National Treasury we have come to recognise the importance of creating the fiscal space when revenues are strong to help offset the downturns. Extended to the private sector, it suggests that expectations that government will socialise the costs of irrational exuberance cannot be entertained. This is neither good for long term growth nor is it what is required to deal with our shorter term difficulties. A vigorous and competitive private sector is essential to our long-term economic development,

backed up by an effective and capable public sector:

Allow me to conclude by making a few points about our multilateral system. A sustainable recovery for the global economy in my view requires a more balanced and inclusive governance structure for the world economy. Achieving that has proven rather difficult, largely because too much of the developed world and too much of the emerging world find it expedient to cling to the vestiges of power conferred on them (or held out to them) by our multilateral system. But we need to stand back and ask what the point of that jealousy really is. If we buy into the view that economics is a positive sum game, then our institutions should have as their central themes transparency, inclusion, and agreed rules. I fear that our historical legacy of nationalism and the national exercise of power continues to betray our global interest in a more inclusive system, and that this will have the effect of delaying our exit from the present economic crisis.

We can respond to this problem in several ways. One is to vigorously pursue regional economic integration – creating cross-border infrastructure, making better use of the multilaterals that we have agreed to strengthen, becoming bolder in our drives to reform and deliver. A second is to work much harder to ensure that we are delivering effective public services. A third is to place employment, productivity and competitiveness at the heart of our approach to trade and industrial policy and sector regulation. A fourth is to maintain our counter-cyclical, low inflation and prudent approach to macroeconomic policy. Finally, we must continue to define and give expression to the need for an inclusive and fair global economic system.

Thank you.



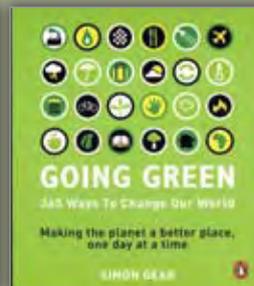
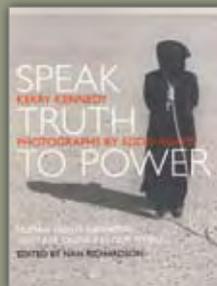
# FOCUS BOOK CORNER

**Speak Truth to Power:  
Human Rights Defenders Who  
are Changing our World**

by Kerry Kennedy

David Phillip Publishers 9780864867292

Kerry Kennedy interviews a range of mostly unsung heroes who are fighting for human rights in places where torture, imprisonment, and death are the side effects of speaking out against such atrocities as child soldiers, sex slavery, honour killings, and repression of political rights. These are extraordinary people, and yet they are as human as the rest of us.



**Going Green: 365 Ways to  
Change our World**

by Simon Gear

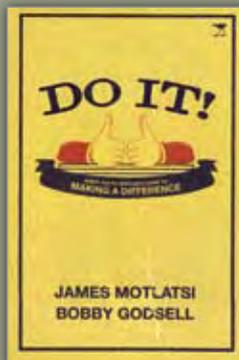
Penguin Books 9780143025931

Everyone is talking about greening their lives, the state of the planet and global warming, but most people don't know how to get involved. This book written by Simon Gear, South Africa's most popular weatherman and climatologist, will help readers 'go green' one day at a time.

**DO IT! Every South African's Guide to Making a Difference**

By James Motlatsi and Bobby Godsell  
Jacana Media 0781 770096400

Bobby Godsell and James Motlatsi, in their new book *Do It!*, use both personal stories and skills that they honed as leaders in their respective organisations, in order to extract practical ways in which we can become active citizens – taking responsibility for change, and intervening where government has either chosen not to, or where it has not succeeded.



**The Anatomist: The autobiography of Anthony Sampson**

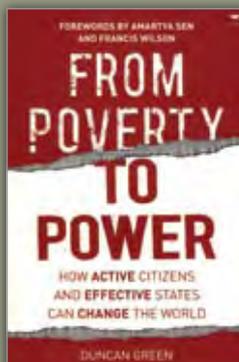
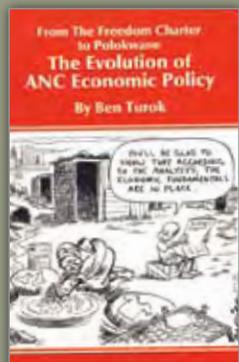
Jonathan Ball Publishers  
9781868423347

The life of Anthony Sampson, one of the greatest journalists and writers on contemporary affairs of the 20th century, was an extraordinary one. Born in Britain he worked for both South Africa *Drum* magazine and Britain's *The Observer*. Sampson was a close friend of Nelson Mandela, writing his biography along with a range of bestsellers.

**From the Freedom Charter to Polokwane: The Evolution of ANC Economic Policy**

by Ben Turok  
New Agenda 9780620425650

Ben Turok traces the economic debates within the ANC from the Freedom Charter; to the shift to macro-economic stabilisation in the transition to democracy in 1994, to the revolt against economic orthodoxy at the ANC Polokwane conference and furthermore analyses the economic challenges that will face the new government in 2009.



**From Poverty to Power: How active citizens and effective states can change the world**

by Duncan Green  
Jacana Media 9781770095809

The 21st century will be defined by the fight against the scourges of poverty, inequality, and the threat of environmental collapse. *From Poverty to Power* argues that a radical redistribution of power is required to break the cycle of poverty and inequality and to give poor people power over their own destinies.

**Precedent & Possibility: The (Ab)use of Law in South Africa**

By Dennis Davis and Michelle le Roux  
Double Storey 9781770130227

*Precedent & Possibility* tells a series of dramatic stories about some of the crucial court cases in South African history, both under apartheid and in our constitutional democracy, and goes some way to explain how our justice system has got to where it is today.



**Immigrants: Your Country Needs Them**

by Philippe Legrain  
Abacus 9780349119748

Immigration divides our globalising world like no other issue. We are being swamped by bogus asylum-seekers and infiltrated by terrorists, our jobs stolen, our benefit system abused, our way of life destroyed – or so we are told. Philippe Legrain has written the first book that looks beyond the headlines.



By Martin Wolf

## Fixing Global Finance

The John Hopkins University Press, 2008. ISBN 9780801890482

Review by Raenette Taljaard

Renowned *Financial Times* (FT) columnist Martin Wolf's *Fixing Global Finance* is a perfect follow-up to his *Why Globalisation Works*, and it expands his defence of globalisation to a strong defence of the globalisation of global finance – despite the deep and profound subsequent tremors in a world of finance described by Wolf as “a jungle inhabited by wild beasts”. As Harold James pointed out in his review in *Foreign Affairs*: ‘He [Wolf] has not forecast that financial globalization will necessarily end in disaster; but he has warned of its dangers and tried to address shortfalls.’

Wolf pronounces the economic crisis a product of a “perfect storm” of global macroeconomic imbalances. *Fixing Global Finance* was published prior to the outburst of the worst aspects of the global financial crisis. However, its analysis raises profound questions about the deep structural imbalances that exist in the global economy, particularly between the United States (financial liberalisers) and China (mercantilists), and the implications these imbalances have over the long term. Irrespective of whether one blames the Americans for their excessive consumerist behaviour or the Chinese for their frugality, the unsustainability of the current imbalances cannot be denied.

Despite the detailed features of the ongoing global crisis, this deep undercurrent or structural feature remains a core feature of the future beyond any green new deal, fiscal stimulus packages or new Financial Stability Board – all steps present in the G20 London Summit Communiqué.

It is this structural undercurrent that provides a much more sustained challenge to effective globalisation than the exact delineations of the current crisis, the ongoing turmoil in the banking sector, and the various toxic-asset measures that have been taken in different countries to deal with the current crisis – crucial as these more recent developments are.

Wolf need not be apologetic for his robust defence of financial globalisation, as it seems abundantly clear that the future lies in new regulatory measures, and not in a reversal of the process of global financial flows and product innovation. Despite initial concerns that the G20 would stall in disagreement between the United States (more fiscal stimulus) and the European Union (financial regulation) on the eve of the London Summit these fears were addressed by a twin-track strategy that was pragmatic.

Wolf's chapter entitled “Towards Global Reform” appears positively prescient in the context of the

# THE LONDON SUMMIT 2009

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various steps adopted by the G20 in Washington in November 2008 and Horsham and London in 2009. Given the clear emphasis he places on the need for more co-ordinated international action and for substantive International Monetary Fund reform, including the creation of additional reserves for crisis, he appears to have inadvertently written the script for the G20 meetings.

Given the timing of its release before the full might of the global storm was unleashed in financial markets, *Fixing Global Finance* certainly contributed some key ideas to the thought development on the eve of G20 meetings, even though some may argue it may seem too timid in its recommendations, in the face of rapidly evolving events. This would not be a fair critique.

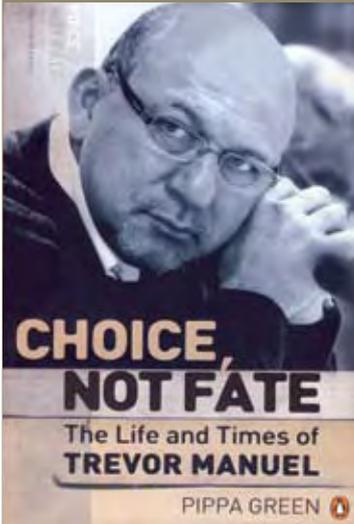
What seems abundantly clear is that the still rapidly evolving global events, as well as Wolf's ongoing insightful critiques of the deepening crisis and G20 responses in his FT columns, will see a rapidly updated version appear on our shelves.

In a pre-G20 London Summit FT column entitled 'Why the G20 leaders will fail to deal with the big challenge', published on

31 March, Wolf again hones in on the broader structural questions:

*"Will the G20 rise to these exceptional challenges? No, is the answer. What is needed is both a large increase in aggregate demand and a shift in its distribution, away from chronic deficit countries, towards surplus ones. On both points, progress will be far too limited... In the meantime, the G20 summit is largely dealing with the immediate symptoms of the illness. Finding a longer-term cure for chronic global excess supply still lies ahead."* It is a focus he keeps repeating in another FT column titled 'After G20 comes G2' published on the 8th of April, which again takes aim at the US-China imbalance and its implications.

At least it is worth hoping and waiting for an updated Wolf publication filled with critical reappraisal of the core challenges, especially the deeper structural ones, in the light of recent events, as geopolitics shifts and economic textbooks receive a make-over from Marx to Keynes to Minsky, and the history books are being written as the G20 rapidly displaces the G8 as a relevant global forum.



By Trevor Manuel

Different readers will find different aspects of *Choice not Fate* appealing reading, and there can be little doubt that different parts of Trevor Manuel's life path, as conveyed on its pages, will arrest the attention of different audiences for different reasons.

Those who wish to analyse the advent – and recent aftermath – of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy will spend hours poring over Manuel's move from Trade and Industry to what would become the National Treasury under Nelson Mandela's presidency, and some of the associated history recorded in this autobiography.

Those who wish to know a bit more about Manuel's life experiences, and his formative years, will feel as if they are staring through Alice's looking glass at the bizarre contortions of our country's racial-classification past, and the detours it forced on the lives and experiences of men and women who decided to fight for justice and were confronted with moral quagmires, not of their making, in a nation that had lost its moral compass.

Those who try to read the tea-leaves for future indicators of Manuel's post-April 2009 plans on the pages of *Choice not Fate* will be disappointed at the

## Choice, Not Fate

Penguin Books, 2008. ISBN 9780143025337

Review by Raenette Taljaard

absence of indicators or any hints – though they will have adequate clues to indicate the pragmatism that informs the man and his choices.

Indeed, as he himself recently revealed in an interview, he views his life and time in office very much as a service to the people – a service that has made him the longest-serving Finance Minister in the world, which is one reason this book will have a readership that stretches beyond South Africa.

*Choice not Fate* provides a key insight into a formative chapter in the life of the man recently labelled 'The Veteran' in *Time* magazine on the eve of the G20 Summit. The pages trace the evolution of a level of confidence and experience in office that shows when Manuel takes to the podium at global events such as the World Economic Forum in Davos, and IMF and World Bank meetings, or as he deals with the rapidly changing dynamics of global governance and financial regulation in the G20 context itself.

*Choice not Fate* acts as a prelude to key questions in the transition phase of South Africa's economic policy trajectory at a time of global crisis as the Mbeki era makes way for a Zuma presidency, and GEAR makes



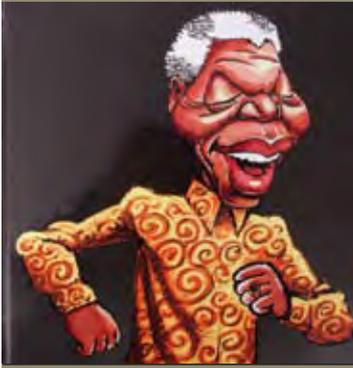
way for a decidedly more aggressive state involvement in the South African economy – and this in a context where the United States and the United Kingdom currently appear to be crafting an entirely new ethos of government engagement, with the near-wholesale nationalisation of banks in both countries. While GEAR was adopted with the proverbial political ‘forward-cover’ of Presidents Mandela and Mbeki – at a time of consolidating faith in the South African economy during the Asian financial crisis – one can be forgiven a sense of déjà vu, given the coincidence of more transitional uncertainty (as South Africa prepares for its fourth democratically elected government) amid the worst global economic turmoil the world has seen since the Great Depression.

It was Manuel’s choice to become engaged, and not to look away from, the liberation struggle and its moral cause, and to involve himself in the fight. This decision led to a fate that took him from solitary confinement to the centre of global debates on the future of the IMF. It is Manuel’s choice to continue serving South Africa, returning to Parliament at number four on the ANC parliamentary lists after the stormy post-Polokwane tumult. As he reminisced this year on Budget Day, recalling the very day that

Nelson Mandela walked from Victor Verster Prison a free man, his ‘choice’ was clear: an unfinished mandate.

*“Nineteen years ago, on this date, in this city, just 200 metres down the road, former President Mandela stepped up to the podium to make his first address as a free man. He said, and I quote, ‘The need to unite the people of our country is as important a task now as it has always been. No individual leader is able to take on this enormous task on his own’. Madam Speaker, these words remain profoundly relevant today. Fellow South Africans, we cannot promise an easy road ahead, or rapid resolution of the economic and social challenges we face. But we know that the choices we have made set us on a path of shared growth and broadening participation in a fairer and more dynamic economy – there is hard work to be done if we are to achieve the transformation we seek. To travel this road with confidence, we must remain united.”*

It is indeed the choices that Trevor Manuel makes that demarcate his fate, and not the other way around. As his voice continues to resound in public office here and abroad, those choices seem clear.

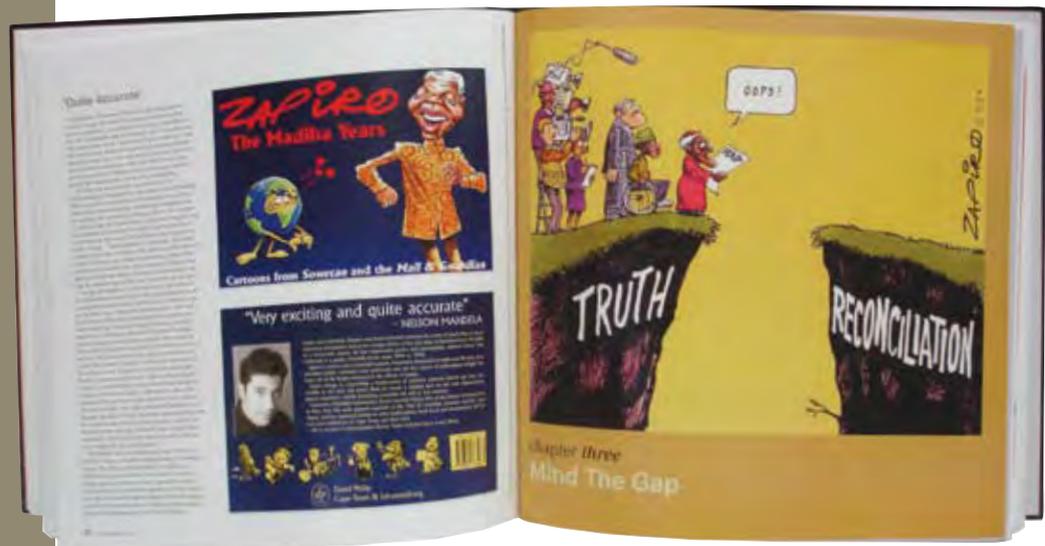


By Jonathan Shapiro

## The Mandela Files

Double Storey, 2009. ISBN 9781770130043

Review by Kate Francis

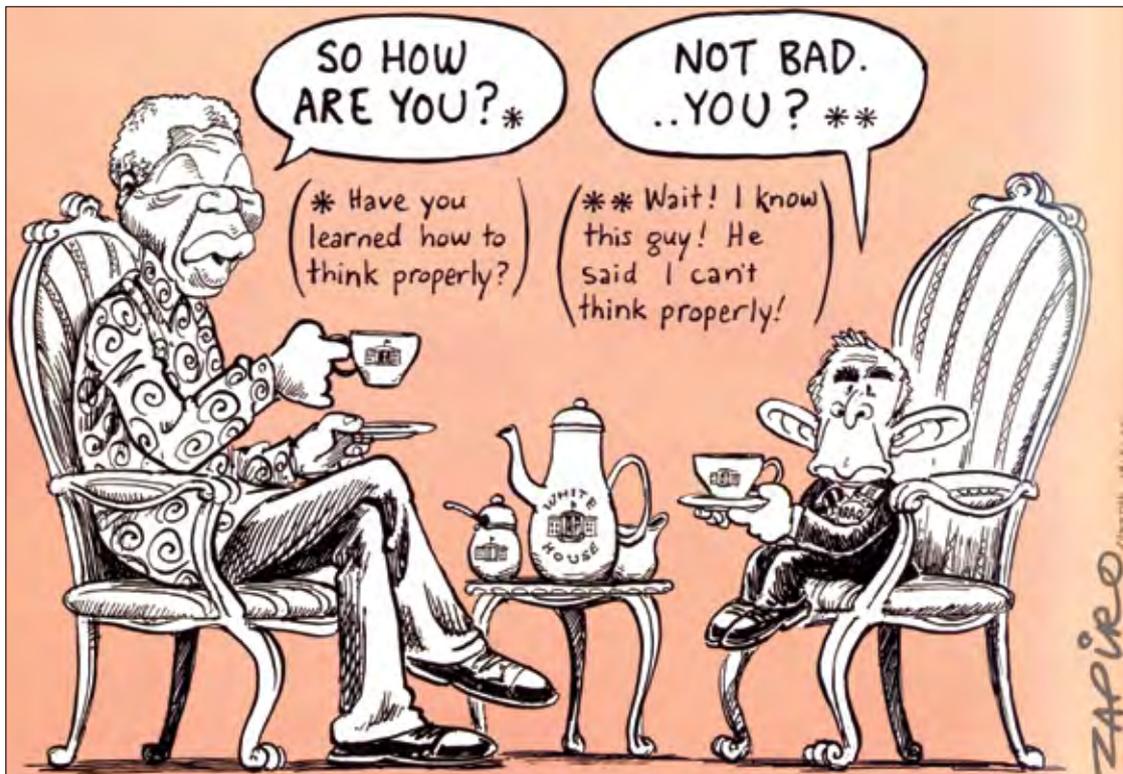
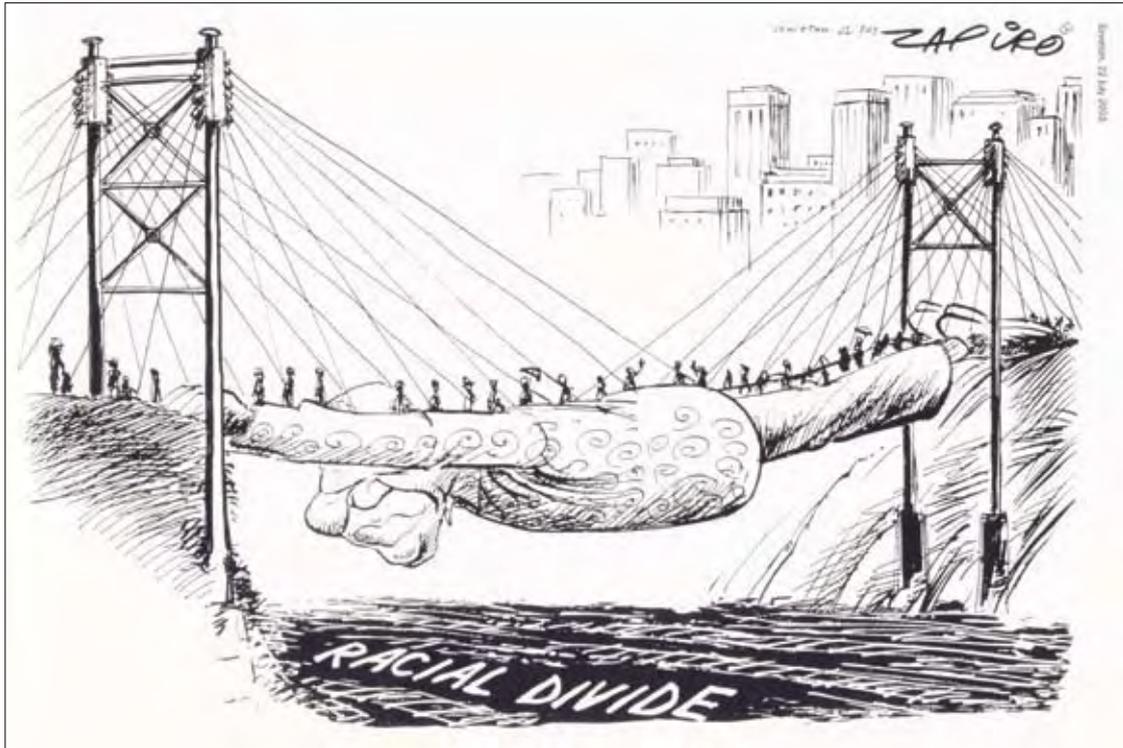


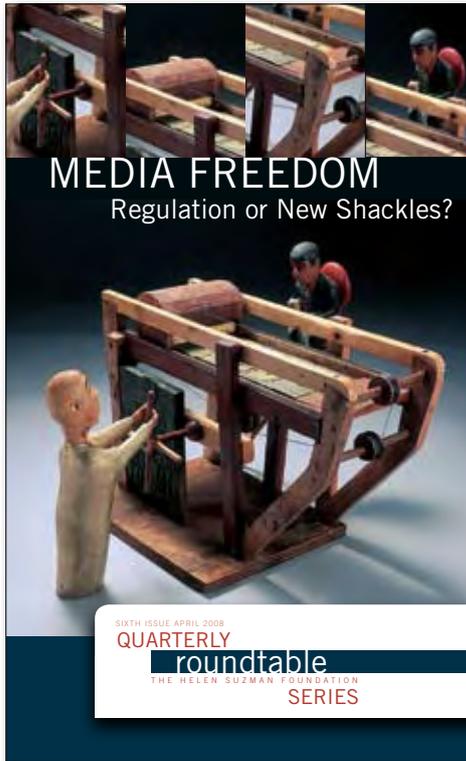
**T**he *Mandela Files* may be classified as a coffee-table book to be dipped into in the ad breaks or when the cricket becomes too embarrassing to watch. However, you'll find yourself absorbed in the page-turning commentary as South Africa's greatest cartoonist documents the life of South Africa's greatest man.

As the title suggests, *The Mandela Files* provides an excellent record of South African history through the cartoons featuring Mandela, among others, as he appeared in various newspapers around South Africa. It takes us from the first rumblings of the United Democratic Front and snippets of Zapiro's own story as an activist participating in the struggle for democracy, to the transition to democracy, the Mandela era, and the Mbeki administration. We are allowed an insight into Zapiro's own transition as he agonises over his changing role from criticising the apartheid system and government to criticising some of his own struggle heroes.

Through the delightful combination of cartoons, punchy commentary, explanations and the occasional photograph we are privileged to view history, as it happened, through the creative eyes of a sharp-witted cartoonist with the ability to pull on heart strings in one instance and shock to the core with his clarifying insights in another. Like all Zapiro's previous books, *The Mandela Files* tells and draws it like it is and in the process provides an archive of events that are recorded in a way that words cannot capture. Mandela even used one of Zapiro's cartoons as an explanation when he couldn't find the words to express his disappointment over South Africa losing the bid to host the 2004 Olympic Games.

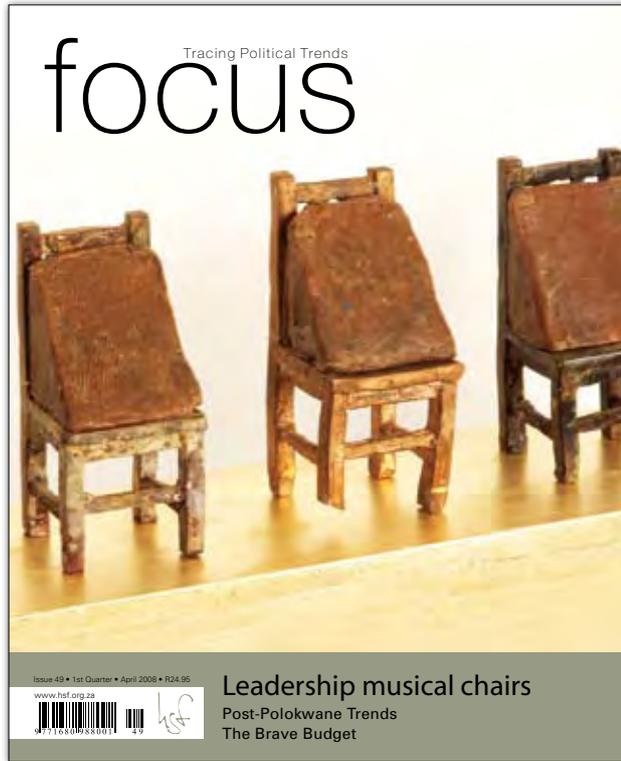
Just as the machine you use to suck up dirt off the floor is no longer a vacuum cleaner, it's a Hoover; the sticky stuff you put over a cut is not an adhesive bandage, it's a band-aid: in the same way I won't be surprised if sometime in the future when you need someone to produce a satirical drawing, you won't ask for a cartoonist, you'll ask for a Zapiro!





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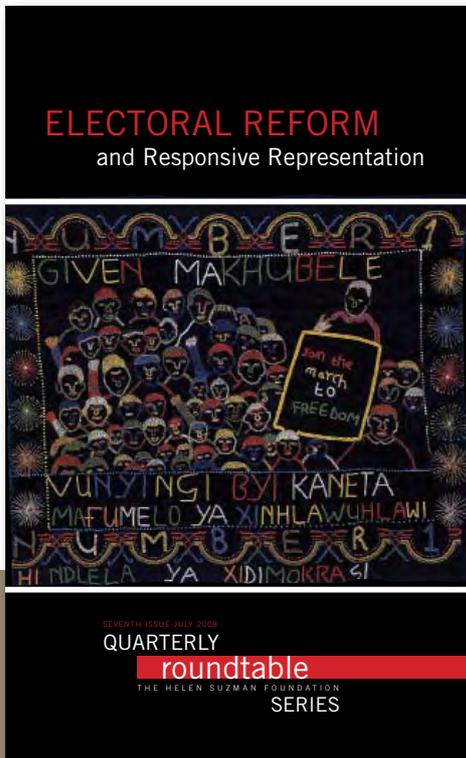
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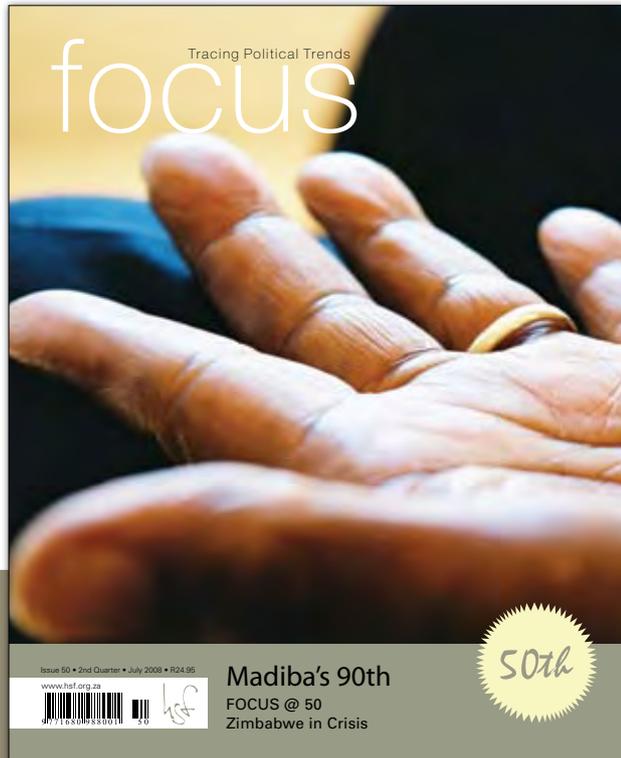
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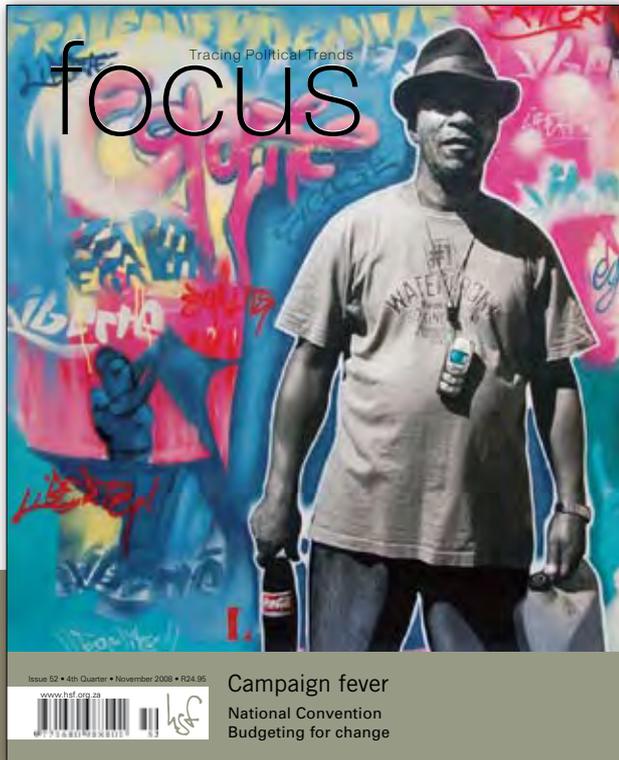
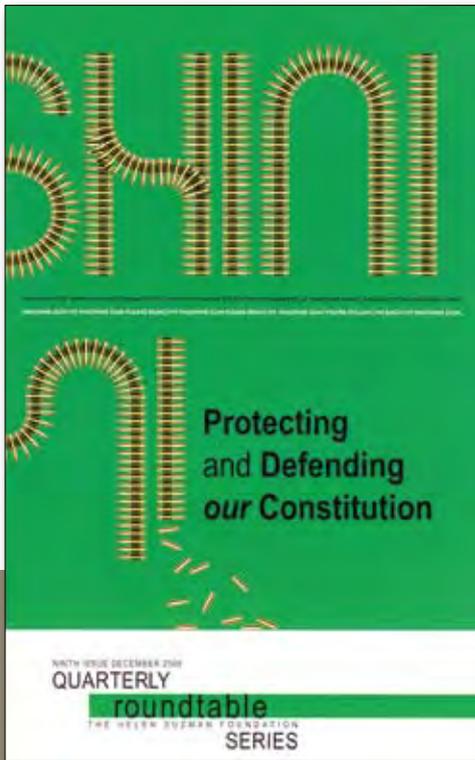
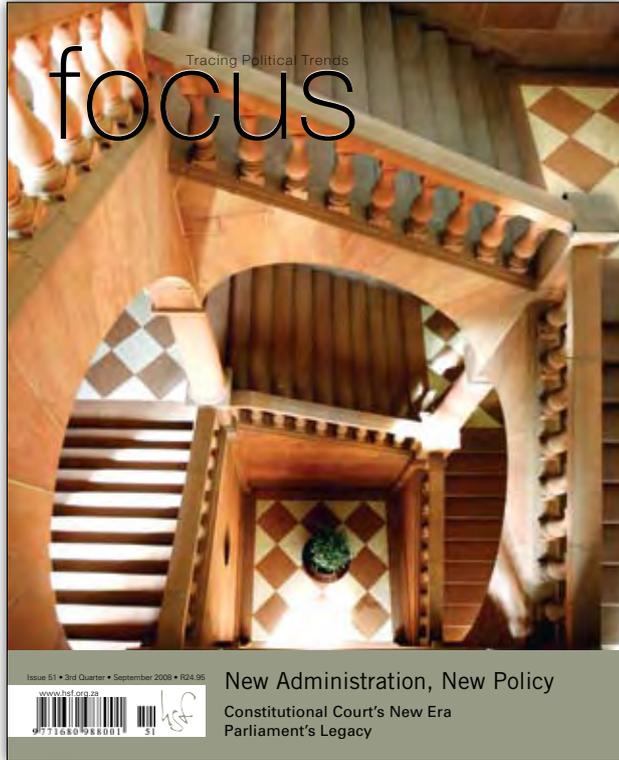
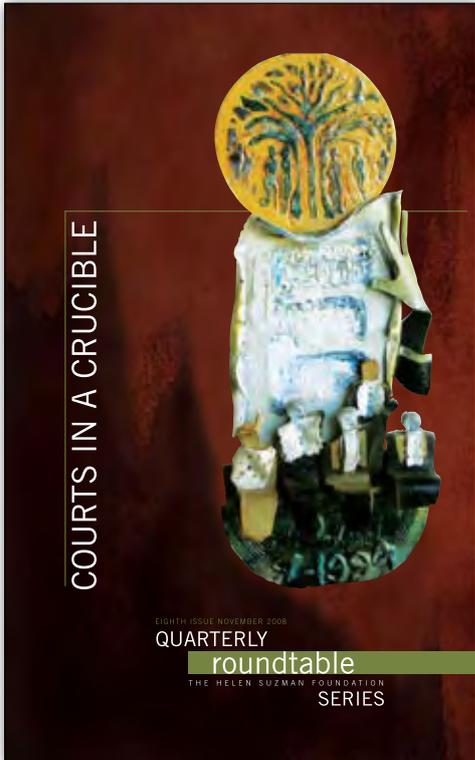


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**Madiba's 90th**  
FOCUS @ 50  
Zimbabwe in Crisis

50th



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...SHE'S ASKED  
US TO ROLL  
IT BACK UP?

...SHE'S REFUSING  
ANY PREFERENTIAL  
TREATMENT!



HELEN SUZMAN  
1917-2009  
HAMBA KAHLE MAMA!