

**BUDGET DEBATE ON THE NORTH WEST LEGISLATURE
VOTE NO 2
07 JULY 2009**

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In the sixteen years that the democratic order saw the light of day, there are many things that ought to have been done yet in the decade and half that this house has sat members have been seized with a quest for personal comforts such as better salaries, the type of cars they drive in and the houses they are allocated; some even go to the extent of complaining about what is served in the restaurant.

We have not been sent by the electorate to look after ourselves but to ensure that the quality of life of the electorate is better.

The authority of each legislature as clearly stipulated in Section 104 (1) (a) of the Constitution of the Republic (Act 108 of 1996) is to ensure that each province has a constitution.

No mention is ever made of this very important mandate of the provincial legislature. It is something we in the UCDP challenge members to reflect on and prepare a legacy for posterity.

There is need to hone the skills of the whippers in the legislature to make it interactive and consultative to serve the interests of the electorate and not

those of some particular political party. The question of majoritarianism has to be avoided as it leads to polarisation in the long run.

We admit it may be early days as the current legislature is only 2 months old but anything untoward must be nipped in the bud lest it be taken for granted.

In spite of it being set out as one of the aims of this legislature I have yet to see its business at committee level conducted in an open and transparent manner where the media are in attendance. What is astounding is learning in the corridors that some colleagues in the legislature are due to go overseas. Why can't the event be made public and the criteria applied to choose them be made in an open and transparent manner?

The UCDP calls on this house to take note of Section 116 (2) (b) which enjoins provincial legislatures to **“make rules and orders concerning its business, with due regard to representivity and participatory democracy, accountability, transparency and public involvement.”** With that in mind nothing can be done in the name of the legislature without the involvement of the opposition opposition parties.

It is strange that notwithstanding convention or international best practice that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (SCOPA) is chaired by a

member of the opposition, the ruling party in this legislature has deemed it fit to allocate the chairmanship of that committee to themselves. They want to be referees and players at the same time.

The time has come that this legislature adopts a language policy. It is not enough to say each one is at liberty to use a language of their choice. We know that human beings need guidance if not enforcement. We have nothing against English which is used as the *lingua franca* in this legislature but a new beginning has to dawn to reflect the demographic representation of the province.

It may be that the public is not attracted to the legislature because our engagements do not quench their thirst for events. We need to look at all these issues because each of the four political parties represented in this house promised the electorate to represent their aspirations. Some people hardly hear their language spoken in deliberations of the legislature

As indicated above that it may be early days to pronounce on what is or is not happening. The time allocated for debates or the sitting in the chamber is insufficient. We take note of the Honourable Speaker's view that members should be more in the field and less in the chamber but we argue that so far none of the two is taking place. We further argue that even if we were to go

to the field we still have to come back to the chamber and debate issues.

Members of this house should guard against being talkers and not doers. The legislature should not be turned into a talk shop whose resolutions are neither respected nor carried out by the executive and even the legislators themselves. The case in point here is that the Mmabatho Airport whose International status remains under utilised. All other provinces have flourishing airports, even those that had none before 1994, thanks to their legislators. The provincial legislators did all their might to bring about change unlike those who operated in this legislature then who sought to bring down all development they found.

We in the UCDP hope that, this legislature will during their tenure wake up to the needs of the province and agitate for them without placing undue emphasis on name changes while people have no basic services such as water, food and unemployment figures rise by the day. We have to turn around the fortunes of this province.

I thank you