

LEGISLATURE BUDGET VOTE 2011

I S MFUNDISI

(UCDP)

28 April 2011

It is 17 years since the legislature saw the light of day and like psychologists will tell you it is grappling with the final stages of adolescence. This is accounted for by the manner in which some members prefer to conduct their business.

That parliament is a place for the exchange of ideas is not being disputed but such exchanges do not have to be puerile they have to show maturity and tackle issues of state or those of the province.

The time has perhaps come that the legislature considers a logo for the institution in line with the two houses in parliament and the other provinces.

The separation of powers vested to the legislature should be said and done in word and deed. If the legislature logo were to be introduced that would reduce the perception that this institution is just but one of the government departments. The corporate image of the legislature would be greatly enhanced as our letterheads will no longer bear the logo of the provincial government, another sphere of power or authority.

We in the UCDP have even in one sitting in the house proposed a motion to congratulate the table staff on their aptitude in producing the necessary papers even the unaudited sample of hansard a day after a sitting. The snag is that the real hansard is hard to come by. The legislature will have to jerk up the production of this document.

We in the UCDP commend the Hon Speaker for the innovations he is bringing about in the institution. On or menu as members of the Rules Committee we have to digest sets of policies that should govern this legislature. We thank him for the foresight to avoid a situation where the institution will wallow into doing things without any basis for that.

Funds are never enough but Treasury should take a softer line in allocating or resources to the legislature. Shortage of funds hampers oversight and constituency work to be done by members. We hope that the passing and assent by the Hon Premier to the North West Political Party Funding bill will ease the matter.

This chamber has to be refurbished but that can't be done because there are no funds. We are fortunate that at inception it was built to last.

The legislature can pride itself in that it has given effect to the recommendation of the Public Protector to put in place a provincial Pounds Act. The North West Petitions Act is also in place and has attracted unprecedented responses from members of the public who are not being served or treated well. As members of the legislature have to go out there to do trouble shooting the need for more funds cannot be over emphasized.

The office of the Speaker has to be commended for tidying up relations between the legislature and the National Council of Provinces where our permanent delegates tend to be aloof from matters and business of the province and come at a time when they have to make briefings on Section 76 bills, some of which are not presented in the best of ways.

The Speaker's office is on record as saying, and correctly so, our colleagues in the NCOP are ambassadors of this legislature and province they should be *au fait* with what is going on in the legislature and similarly our special delegate should not attend sittings of the NCOP as strangers.

We take note that the lifts in the institution are the baby of Public Works but if a member or anyone can be marooned in any lift here it is the Speaker who will answer. The functionality of all amenities are the responsibility of the Speaker regardless of to whom such responsibility has been devolved.

The UCDP supports the budget vote of the legislature.