





ANC of the 50s while Mbeki is seeking to 'modernise' the ANC and model it partly on the social democratic parties of Europe and Australia.

- He appeared to lend a sympathetic ear to Cosatu and often facilitated alliance meetings when tensions erupted. 'He is a listening person, who seeks to find solutions. He does not come across as the big chief who says I have made my decision. His approach is trying to find a collective solution'. As a political analyst says, it is about being listened to and being heard. While Zuma never actually defended a 'left' position, he never went out on a limb to attack the left.
- While the Zuma saga might not be about a battle between the left and the right within the ANC, there could well be a power struggle. There is a view in Cosatu that the initial investigation into Zuma was politically motivated and spearheaded by a group within the ANC who wanted to protect their interests. This group, comprising emerging black capital and an educated elite (with possible backing from white capital) who no longer believed that Zuma could or would promote their business interests. Hence, they sought to settle the ANC succession debate through the use of the levers of the state instead of through ANC structures. If this theory is correct, then it has implications for the functioning of the ANC, its use of state power and internal democracy.
- A political analyst says support for Zuma could reflect 'an alliance of the disaffected' - those who oppose Mbeki. In the case of the likes of Cosatu and the Party, it could be bitterness over being

marginalised in the policy arena as well as a range of personal issues.

#### CHALLENGES FOR COSATU

Mbeki sought to move quickly to contain the fallout of his decision to remove Zuma from his position. Similarly, organisations such as Cosatu need to evaluate their strategy of pinning their flag to Zuma. What happens if he is unable to make a comeback before the next elections? There is some disquiet within the left and from observers that Cosatu has appeared to link itself to one individual instead of taking a stand on broad issues of principle and policy. One alliance leader says, Cosatu is missing the bigger picture and the potential impact of recent developments on the left. 'It is wrong to portray Zuma or anyone (in the past it was Terror Lekota) as a patron of the left or to think that one individual will deliver to the left.'

This view is presented at a time when debate is taking place in various structures of both the ANC and in government on key aspects of policy. 'The crisis inside the ANC is such that the principled support of good programmes is the right way to go,' an official says. Some in Cosatu support the view that there has been a significant shift in policy (away from Gear) and that some space remains for the left to impact on policy and how the ANC is being redefined.

In view of these developments, what then are the critical issues that Cosatu needs to consider?

- Is the federation doing enough to influence these processes, debate on policy and the future direction of the ANC? The Zuma saga has revealed, yet again, the organisational weaknesses in the ANC (internal democracy, shifting of



Jacob Zuma



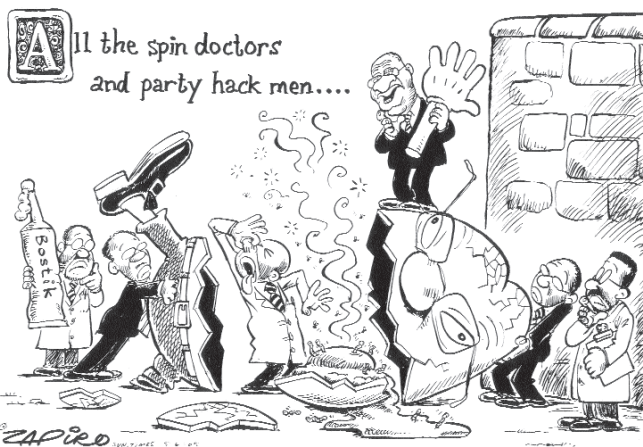
Zwelanzima Vavi



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power away from the ANC to the state etc). Can Cosatu utilise some of the fundamental weaknesses in the ANC to reclaim lost ground or has the emerging black bourgeoisie, government technocrats and the like already filled the space? Has Cosatu lost its ability to influence the ANC in government? Are proper strategies in place to address this, if it is the case? Are organisational weaknesses being addressed? Cosatu and other organisations did not survive the anti-left attack because of Zuma, but because of the strength of the organisation.

- While this saga has revealed organisational problems in the ANC, similar trends are evident in Cosatu, which need to be properly explored.



- If Zuma is unable to make a comeback, what will happen to those in the federation who support him? Will the 'Luthuli house detachment' - those Cosatu leaders who have positioned themselves loyal to Mbeki - attempt to become more dominant?
- It is hoped that a trial will reveal the extent to which the Zuma case has been based on political manoeuvrings. That aside, there is still a fundamental issue

around corruption and how Cosatu deals with this. Is the proper utilisation of resources used to tackle an anti-corruption agenda not a fundamental part of a left agenda? While Cosatu has reaffirmed its opposition to any form of corruption and the misuse of power, the federation should go further in locating corruption with a broader frame of activities, which could impact on service delivery.

## CONCLUSION

It is important to remember that the scandal is more than three years old. Zuma's reputation has been under threat throughout - plenty of opportunity and reason to rally support to his cause. This is the trap Cosatu must avoid. What matters is not Zuma's cause, even if he has been unjustly accused. It is Cosatu's cause and the ultimate focus of the alliance that is important. Too important, in fact, for the risk to be taken of hanging on to the coat tails of any individual.

Loyalty is a wonderful thing and highly commendable, but politics is about power and Cosatu's leaders are politicians as long as they stay in the alliance. The job is not to save Zuma but to save, strengthen and finally make paramount, Cosatu's power to create a better South Africa.

## PROFILE OF JACOB ZUMA

Jacob Zuma is the same age as Mbeki. He was born on 12 April 1942 into a poor family in Inkandla, KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) where he spent his early years looking after his father's cattle. By the age of 15 he had to leave school and took on odd jobs to supplement his mother's income. Owing to his deprived childhood, Zuma did not receive any formal schooling, which was later supplemented while on Robben Island. Heavily influenced by a trade unionist family member, he became involved in politics at an early age and joined the African National Congress in 1959. He became an active member of Umkhonto We Sizwe in 1962, following the banning of the ANC in 1960. There has been some speculation that through his close ties with Harry Gwala, he became involved with SA Congress of Trade Unions (Sactu) in the late 50s and early 60s.

While on his way out of the country in 1963, he was arrested and convicted of conspiring to overthrow the government,

he was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment, which he served on Robben Island. On his release, Zuma was instrumental in the establishment of the ANC's underground structures, especially those in KwaZulu-Natal. He left SA in 1975 and lived in several African countries while working for the ANC. By 1977 he had become a member of the ANC National Executive Committee and by the mid-80s he had become head of ANC intelligence.

Zuma was one of the very first activists to return to South Africa in 1990, and the following year, he was elected deputy secretary general of the ANC. During the political violence in KwaZulu-Natal in the run-up to the 1994 elections, Zuma took a leading role in fighting violence in the region.

In January 1994, he was nominated as the ANC candidate for the premiership of the KZN province. He is generally regarded as the person most instrumental in achieving the peace in the region and he

received the Nelson Mandela Award for Outstanding Leadership in Washington. After 1994, Zuma was appointed MEC of Economic Affairs and Tourism in the province.

He is also a patron and founding member of the KZN Reconstruction and Development Project (RDP) Bursary Fund - the funds were used to help educate the rural poor in the area.

In December 1994, Zuma was elected national chairperson of the ANC and chairperson of the ANC in KZN. He was elected deputy president of the ANC at the national conference held at Mafikeng in December 1997. He was appointed Mbeki's deputy in 1999 after Buthelezi declined the job, which was in exchange for giving the ANC control of KwaZulu-Natal.

*This profile is drawn from a number of reports including a BBC Africa report on Zuma published in June 1999 and official government profiles on Zuma.*