

*Q: The idea of non-racialism has a rich history in the ANC. How far do you think non-racialism has travelled in the last 17 years?*

I speak with the hat on of the ANC. To understand the 17 years you have to go into history. South Africa has always talked non-racialism, in a society that was actually practising multiracialism. Even today when we talk of non-racialism, the elements of multiracialism come to the fore. I am not sure we can outgrow that easily, or you should have to work on it.

Multiracialism is keeping identities of people in different races. You keep them as Coloured, Indian, white, black. Everything that is discussed is on the view that there are distinct races that keep being identified as those races. Now non-racialism is an ideal of society where colour and race do not count. We become a normal society. Features of that non-racialism will be where people stay together, that people will begin to intermarry, that people will begin to practice religion together, the people to practice their different cultures within the same society. And therefore race and colour will not be an issue. That is the ideal of non-racialism. That is the ideal party still strives for. We must have a nation we must not have races.

*Q: Do you feel the last 17 years that the idea of non-racialism in the party has changed? Do you feel it is consistent?*

It has not changed. What has changed is the environment in which we work. Let me give you an example, the signal to us that there are problems. The trends and voting. They give us very clear signals whether we are making progress or not. It is always something you cannot avoid. You begin to look at how integrated are we. Are parties becoming more integrated? What are the underlying factors to voting behaviours? From where I am seated, I think it is the most conscious in society who appreciate the need for non-racialism.

*Q: What do you mean by 'the most conscious'?*

I mean people who have ideological and political consciousness, people who will appreciate the fact that non-racialism is a noble principle. But we are still battling to educate South Africans about this principle and I don't think there is a big and strong inclination towards non-racialism.

Let me give you an example: When you go to the elections, for e.g., Africans vote in the main for the ANC and others, and whenever you see a visible group voting DA, it is a big issue. That shows we are still very racially conscious.

Number two: there is one racist statement I always detest, this question of every time black people vote ANC it is always because of sentiment. They are making a choice. It is a very racist statement actually, if you listen carefully whites have the brains and they can make choices. Africans have no brains and they can only follow sentiments.

*Q: is this something you see expressed in the media, or generally?*

It is expressed in the media, and it is applied by commentators. Unfortunately what is expressed in the media and by commentators becomes the line of thinking in society. They are both very powerful instruments in society. In the last elections we saw very disturbing trends. We lost wards that used to be typically ANC wards, in Lenasia, in Elderado Park, etc. which means that there is an element of racial polarisation, from where I sit. What is the reason for that is something I cannot explain. But if you go to the Western Cape, we have lost the coloured vote. But there is a different trend in the coloured vote in the Northern Cape. And to a greater extent the rural Western Cape. This requires us to do an analysis of what is that trend. We have a term in southern Africa called coloureds, which is a

term that covers many different people. An analysis of the different trends in the Northern Cape and the rural Western Cape is that there the so called Coloureds, the descendants of the Khoisan, are more African. Their behaviour and their relationships with their African brothers is almost natural, is seamless. If you go to the Northern Cape you will see they inter-marry they drink together, they do everything together. Their behaviour and their voting trends are different. That is why we said in the last elections we lost a lot of ground in some areas, but we gained 28,000 more votes in Coloured communities. That is what saved the Northern Cape from invasion.

*Q: Why do you think there is an element of racial polarisation going on in society?*

There are a few things. I think it is this over emphasis on racial groupings. If you see the manifestation of the debate you see a situation of: I think the example of the Manyi/ Trevor situation highlighted the debate. Because whilst Manyi talked about the Coloureds, the offensive on him stopped being political it became racial. How dare you say this about us? Talking about this thing of over representation, where people need to be spread out around the country, I was thinking I am from the Eastern Cape, to ask it is normal. We are all over; in fact you will find us in Zimbabwe and Botswana. The question of mobility is an inbuilt culture in that society. I don't know whether it is racist when you say people should be mobile.

I looked at the analysis of the employment Equity report. Here you find that the breakdown of representivity in management positions shows there is still domination of one race group over another. A high percentage of white managers, in the 70s, are in senior positions. You cannot say you are non-racial because you have to declare that in law, if it does not reflect in the structures of society. This is one example. Non-racialism must be seen in the structures of society.

*Q: What do you think the ANC could have done, and do in the future to strengthen non-racialism in society and overcome these challenges?*

The ANC must be bolder in its pronouncements on non-racialism. Let me give you traditions and cultures. In the ANC we are conscious about our structures being representative. Very very conscious. We even go the extra mile to correct imbalances. But when we do that we bump into different cultures. For example you go to Indian communities, while you begin to do that you look at who is on the list, what you see is stratification of that society playing out. You cannot take so-and-so from that grouping, because if you do you have left out another grouping. Which means it is not just a question of non-racialism; it is also a question of stratification in society. This means it is a question of stratification of various communities. This plays itself out when you begin to make interventions. If you take a Padachee, he is in one grouping, and you cannot overlook another person. Therefore you have to go and look for someone else to represent a different group. When you don't do that there is a culture that will translate, in politics, as gatekeeping. This is where there are people who must determine what is happening in those communities.

My own view is that one thing that is delaying progress, is the question of being stuck with a small group we know in those communities. We are not seeing new, young activists coming through as active in the structures as we would like. As a result we still have the old guard acting in a particular way. They may not been meeting the needs of those very communities today. But the ANC enters those communities through the small circle. And the circle, because people are older, becomes smaller and smaller and smaller. The influence of their group becomes smaller in the community. This reflects in the trends. My own view is that if we can go into those communities more actively and create more structures will make a change. If you go into African townships there is a natural evolution of structures. They get younger and more vibrant. But when you go to other communities there are more conservative, older, regulated and so forth. That reflects in the performance of those

communities. The consciousness, the smaller we become in those communities, the less the appreciation of that integration.

*Q: Is one way of breaking down racism trying to have representation from different communities in your structures?*

We would not set quotas. But we have said this is not an organisation for Africans, it is an organisation for everybody. That is why when you go to the NEC of the ANC you will find everybody, or you go to Parliament, or various structures, you find everyone there. It is a conscious exercise in our view. We go to local government it is more difficult and more complex, but we always ask the question of how representative teams are in terms of the national question, this question of non-racialism geographical spread etc. There is a conscious effort to ensure there is representativity in the structures.

*Q: Do you think intervention is a constructive way to reduce racialism?*

It is correct, but its effect is very limited. Non-racialism must be a conscious behaviour in society. You cannot manage it. 17 years into our democracy, if you sit in a restaurant, and a mixed couple walks in, people still look up. Still 17 years into our democracy! Consciousness in our society has not reached the level it must reach.

*Q: What do you think can be done to help it reach this level, as government?*

Government can do so much, but the media must promote non-racialism. Commentators, analysts, politicians, journalists, everybody must promote non-racialism.

*Q: Do you think there are elements of society that are not promoting non-racialism?*

No there are. If you follow debates in newspapers, you can take any, you will see what is promoted in the majority of articles is racial polarisation.

*Q: I have asked the media editor what they feel their role is in promoting non-racialism. They say their role is to reflect the realities of society. My question is to what extent do you think media can build non-racialism, as well as reflecting what you see in society?*

In any newspaper you will see a features or opinion section. In the Star it is the verve section. These are the sections that must be used to actually shape the thinking of society. The news section will report on what is happening. Even the news section can do much better. On Sunday I phoned a manager in E-TV. They covered the 90th anniversary of the SACP. There was a stadium full to capacity, but in one corner there were a few troublemakers. They were trying to disrupt the proceedings. E-TV's reporting said the celebration was not that successful as there was some disruption. They do not show the sea of people and the rally continuing despite that and that they had the minimum effect. It is the media that elevated that to the main focus of the rally, while it was not in reality. When you do that in the news you are actually distorting thinking in society. You encourage anarchy. The more objective reporting is the better society is. The feature articles must be educational, must help us think another box, help us promote ideas. That is where the idea of non-racialism belongs.

*Q: What do you think the key features of non-racialism are? What do you think underlies the values of non-racialism?*

Non-racialism is a society where race is not a factor. Where one's ability is a factor. When you look for Fiona, you get Fiona. We must deploy or employ Fiona because of who she is and not because of what racial group she belongs to. Until we reach that stage we have not achieved the objectives of non-racialism.

*Q: How does that tie into affirmative action and BEE?*

Affirmative action and BEE are interventions that seek to correct the wrongs of the past. Let me give you an example: I went to the mining industry in 1975. When I went I had Matric from Bantu education, from a Bantustan. I could not hold a blasting certificate because I was African. That was the basic qualification for mining. You had whites who were getting blasting certificates without any qualification. That was the entry point for them. The damage that was done by that system is not going to disappear naturally because of law changing. You must give people exposure. Even if you talk about BEE, I'm not the one person who believes in the share deals and equity deals, as the thing. I believe in operational exposure as the most important exercise. I give extra premium to a BEE partner that gets into a company but insists that they want to be in the board, they want to have people in management, they want to bring in young engineers to understudy. When you do that you are really empowering a group of people.

*Q: Commentators have argued that the values of affirmative action and BEE are right, but that in practice it has not worked. What is your view on this?*

If you simply look at the equity results recently published you will come to that conclusion. But I am more practical and I know that is not the full story. Let's take mining again. You may not have 50% black managers, but you will have 70s percent black miners now. You will have 70% black miners or more. You will begin to see 40 to 50% shift overseers, 20% mine overseers, not that number becomes smaller will when you get to section managers etc. Unless you see the whole picture, you cannot come up with an opinion on what progress is being made. If you make this thing a numbers issue you are going to make mistakes. But if it is an intervention that has developmental content in it you will do it right. In 1993 I was on the board of Eskom. Actually to sit on the board we had to go on a number of strikes to ensure that Labour had representation on the board. I was in the trade union movement thing. Ultimately we got that as again. One of the things that drove us was an affirmative action programme. Today Eskom's management structure is very much more representative than many other institutions in the country. At that time we insisted on two things. First train your managers, give them exposure, take them through programs. When you have a manager you want to promote to a senior position give us the history of exposure and development. If that was done there would be a group of them that was ready to move to the next level. The first black CEO of Eskom: At one point, he was given to the London office of Eskom; he was originally a land and town planner. He understood every element of the business, he had lots of exposure. By the time he was appointed CEO he knew a lot about Eskom. Brian, for example the current CEO had lots of exposure to starting at the bottom of the ladder. It is very important to be developmental and recruit people who understand the business and have lots of experience. is different to playing the numbers game.

*Q: I'm going to play devil's advocate, and say that a lot of criticism comes to the ANC about cadre deployment, and putting people without experience into posts.*

Actually that criticism is unfair. I make it my business to understand what is happening. I ask researchers to go to governments and take the last group of DGs. Take their skills profile and qualifications and then take the current DGs and look at their qualifications. You will see it is miles apart. Where a DG in the apartheid regime was having Matric experience in government, you will find a person with a Masters degree there now. I am one of those people who was not ashamed of cadre deployment. You are giving them exposure. We put someone in the health Department for example

and you will criticise us of cadre deployment. But he will turn the department around. And if he resigns, then a company like Discovery will pick up the day after he leaves. But if he goes to Discovery, it is no longer cadre deployment it is a competent person being employed. What is important is exposure, because qualifications on their own give you no skill. It is exposure or where you apply the knowledge you acquired through the academic process that makes a difference. If we did not insist on cadre development, the public services would remain White up till today. The argument of saying 'retaining skills' is a pseudo code for retaining white skills.

*Q: Is it anything else you would like to add about the features of a non-racial society?*

In the ANC we talk about something that is hated by many people called the National Democratic Revolution. There are three principles that anchor this.

One) liberation of black people in general and Africans in particular

Two) building a non-racial, non-sexist democratic society.

Three) it is a program that is intended to unite the people of South Africa.

This is how we describe the National Democratic Revolution. People ask, why an emphasis on black people in general and Africans in particular. We always clarify by saying that is the majority that was dominated, oppressed, and exploited by the minority. Unless you liberate them and create an equal citizenry you cannot talk of non-racialism.

*Q: Is this a task you feel has an end goal or is it an ongoing process?*

It should be ongoing. At this point in time you can take anything: unemployment, poverty, inequality. When you look deep you will see the racial content of that problem. We must address that problem and it's a racial content.

*Q: Do you think other parts of society can play a role in building a non-racial state? And if so which parts of society?*

I said the media, commentators, analysts, the academia. Think of anything. You can think of NGOs, you can think of civil society. All those sectors of society must drive the programme of non-racialism.

*Q: Education, religion?*

Education fine. Religion is a very conservative sector. It operates in a particular way. You cannot walk into a church and say 'please change what you are doing'. You will never succeed in that.

*Q: Do you want to say anything more about the role of education?*

It should play a role and I think it is. One of the areas we have made big progress, is model C schools. There is a lot of criticism of model C schools but they have made progress.

You can go to many of these schools. I stay in Boksburg, in an area called Freeway. When I went there in 1995 that school was white, but today if you walk to Freeway Park primary school it is 80 to 90% black. I had two sons who went through there. The older one, who was more conservative always had black friends. The younger one, who is 13 comes home with his friends, who are all white. He goes over to have sleepovers in a white family. That is what education should do. But the teachers who are in our generation are delaying progress there. Sometimes in dealing with those kids you find a number of incidents where they begin to be racist in dealing with children. If you can liberate teachers to appreciate those kids, win their fight in the field, is not a black child against a white child. It is just kids fighting. But I can see sometimes with these fights happen the teacher will phone the white parents and they will come and bombard the black child on his own, his parents are not there. That is

racism. We need to help teachers realise that they have children where there are developing a future society. Teachers must intervene in a way that just deals with young people. So education can play a massive role. But what we are not seeing is integration of all schools. Schools in townships, and schools in the villagers remain very black. This delays progress.

*Q: Are there any other challengers to building a non-racial society that you would like to discuss? Particularly in view of the challenges that the ANC faces.*

One of the problems is that a generation that is us and, that generation is a generation of people who experienced apartheid. Social behaviour is not like natural behaviour, you don't just open and close a tap like water. That legacy is going to stay with us for a long time. People often said don't blame apartheid, but that will stay with us for a long time, until the younger generation coming. This is because we are from there we experience it. We are more conscious of when racism happens. Racism is not only prejudicial it is also a stereotype. It is in the subconscious mind of a person. When racist behaviour happens we are more conscious about it understanding it as racism. This is because we experienced it, when it is practised even if it is subtle we will see it. For example when you give somebody money in a shop he doesn't touch your hand. I have seen racism in practice and I will know this is a racist because he doesn't want a touch my hand. The younger people do not notice this.

I really think young people don't notice this. Can I tell you about my experience with my own children. I have four kids. My two daughters were in those mixed schools. The only time they actually experienced racism was at university. The second time they sought more crudely was in the workplace

*Q: Can you tell me your views on the youth league and their role in building a non-racial society? Critics say the youth league is putting forward an agenda of African nationalism, which is entrenching racism? Is there truth in that?*

Yes there is truth in that. But the effect of that is not less than an organisation like Afriforum is doing. That is the flipside of the same coin.

*Q: Do you have any views on the youth league in particular?*

It has a serious impact because it alienates sections of society.

*Q: Is this something to be concerned about in the long run?*

We are concerned about it. We are trying to deal with it. We are raising it and we are trying to rub sense into their thinking. We say listen society works differently. If you go out and say 'white stole land and they are criminals', it is not helpful. It may be the same message as saying it is not sustainable to have the current distribution of land. But the reaction and the impact is not the same.

*Q: Would you say the values and what they argue is okay, the problem is with how they say it?*

Sometimes they raise relevant issues. For example the nationalisation debate that they are raising. Leave the word nationalisation, look at the issues. A look at people are sitting around a mine, but they are so poor they don't even smell the platinum. They are raising the relevant issues, the level of high unemployment level of inequality et cetera. But the language used alienates society.

*Q: Does South Africa first need to address economic inequality before it can address non-racialism?*

Society does not change that way. You cannot say I will address racism, and then I will come underdressed patriotically. When I have finished patriotically I will address economic society. Society doesn't work that way you don't do one, and finish and then the next. You address all problems at the same time. You address societal problems at the same time. It depends on the reaction of society, those sectors become important. If sectors of society take an aggressive view on a particular issue those things will move faster. The others will lag behind.

*Q: If one looks at the racial underpinnings of unemployment for example you could argue that one has to look at racial difference to affect redress?*

You cannot build a non-racial society without looking at racial tensions in society. You cannot say we are going to stop calling people white, Indian, coloured and African and then we are non-racial. It does not work that way. Those numbers will always be thrown around, that 6% of managerial positions are holed by Indians. And we will argue that is over representation by Indians for example 13% by Africans, and under representation. Those numbers will be thrown around for some time to come. Only when society begins to look normal, and various institutions have changed to those demographics, will that begin to disappear.

*Q: Is there a time in the future when you see South Africans not having to take the boxes of what race you are when filling in forms?*

My own view is that that should stop sooner. We must find a different way of looking at these issues. Asking what race you are always irritates me. Sometimes I spoil it deliberately and say Xhosa. Do you think finding an alternative way of trying to understand difference can be helpful. The question of demographics must never disappear. If you go to Brazil, you will see it has the biggest concentration of Africans than any other country in the continent. But Brazil decided to close racial classification. But there were consequences of this. In their legislature Africans represent only 3%. The country has not accounted for its racial demographics. There are 80 million Africans in Brazil. That 80 million Africans are at the bottom of society for ever.

*Q: Do you see any new ways of understanding racial classification that aren't in the old ways of the apartheid divisions?*

I don't know, really I have no solution. But I hate it, it irritates me all the time.

*Q: It seems that people do struggle with the first identifying themselves as a race group and then as a South African.*

*Q: At a practical, everyday level, is anything you do in your own life to build non-racialism?*

I can give you three examples:

- I think way the government has more authority we have made progress in these situations, to try and integrate people. Using tools like affirmative action and BEE. Progress is easier way the state has authority
- In the state institutions, like state owned enterprises, we need more progress because there are semiprivate in the way they operate. But there are serious about state interventions and we are making progress.
- In the private sector we have made little progress.

*Q: Can you elaborate on the progress you are talking about?*

If you go to the management structure of Eskom or Telkom or Transnet, it is not the same as you will find in a BHP Billiton or Anglo-American.

I always look at what we did in Eskom and what we did in mining. I am a mine worker I have been in the NUM. I am not concerned about who is the general manager, I am concerned about who are the

qualified miners. The first group of miners qualified around 1987. That was the first time Africans got a blasting certificate. But today, 70% of those miners are black. That is the practical part I see. Go and look at NUM and what it has done with its investment arm. It has sent mine workers and their children to school. You find many of those young chaps being engineers in the industry, some running shafts, and being managers. That is practical.

*Q: Do you have any ideas of what the foundation can do in its future work?*

It must be more bold in intervening at a public level. We're bored of always sharing the same commentators on everything. We need them to influence thinking in society. The problem is the current analysts are overexposed. There is a small group of people having this influence on society. They can also research many other things. For example if there is a criticism of non-performance of government, there are people like you who can do an evaluation. Drill deep and look at what is the impact. Rather than just looking at numbers.