

Budget Debate: Vote 10
Public Service and Administration
by
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Hon Chairperson,

At the outset, on behalf of the Inkatha Freedom Party, I wish to re-convey our condolences to the Department of Public Service and Administration on the passing of the Hon Minister Collins Chabane who we believe had set this department and public service on a trajectory which inspires hope.

I wish to preface my contribution today with the words of the Hon late Minister who during the budget vote last year said "For us to succeed, we require well-run and effectively coordinated state institutions with skilled public servants who are committed to our people"

This department has one of the toughest mandates in government and I refer specifically to the mandate to improve the professionalisation of service delivery by government to the people of our country through a civil service which is keenly aware of the socio-economic conditions of our people.

Public service is no ordinary job, but rather a patriotic duty that makes or breaks the prospects of alleviating the plight of the people. In fact, public service is the yardstick measure of service delivery and a crucial benchmark about the health of our democratic discourse.

The Batho/Pele principles embody the ideal that people, the citizens, come first, regardless of their standing in society and as such, people relations should be foremost in the minds of government employees and officials. The treatment and interpersonal interactions should be equal with all citizens.

However, the continued politicisation of unions is the greatest threat to the professional functioning of the Public Service. The politics of the tripartite alliance in particular have often spilled over into the operational discourse of the public service, bringing service delivery to a painfully grinding halt, to the expense of communities, patients and learners.

The IFP supports, upholds and respects the right of workers to organise themselves into unions but all rights come with responsibilities.

The ANC in particular finds itself having to buckle to the whims of its Union allies who when they sneeze in the tripartite alliance the whole of the public service catches the cold.

Sadtu, in particular, ranks at the very top of the threats facing education and public service. The passion, dedication, altruism and commitment to develop the black child is something that is foreign in the vocabulary of Sadtu. This union is the unmatched bane of our education. The ease to strike and to leave learners wanting is a clear indication that Sadtu does not care about the black child.

The Institute for Justice and Reconciliation makes a noteworthy observation in that, "We have the additional challenge of young South Africans who have gone through a public system education that is struggling to equip them sufficiently.", in part because Sadtu is at the forefront of party politics and not continuously absent in classroom but still expecting a pay cheque at the end of each month.

The hard fact is that Sadtu is in breach of its social contract, and through its unprofessional conduct is guilty of dereliction of duty that has cost learners a quality future.

Any unprofessional and rogue public servant is earning stolen money, as they do not deserve the keep they what they earn.

Cosatu in particular continues to pull the government by the nose because it forms part, rightly or wrongly, of the machinery that has ensured the ANC is in government. This cheap, shallow, dirty and self-serving attitude is precisely the reason why public service is all but on its knees.

The public service remains one of the biggest employers in the country, as well as the face of our government. The effective implementation and coordination of interventions that would allow for an effective, efficient and development orientated public service are dependent on a proactive employer and committed civil servants; therefore the IFP thanks all public servants who on a daily basis go out of their way, and embark on that extra mile to ensure that even the most vulnerable and the poorest of the poor access services of the highest order.

The IFP will support the Departments initiatives aimed at entrenching Batho/Pele and professional administration in all spheres of government and at all sectors of public administration. South Africa deserves an impartial, transparent, competent, accountable, efficient, effective, non-political, nonpartisan and trustworthy Public Service.

As the IFP we support the budget vote and we will continue to work alongside the department to ensure that the principle of Batho Pele, as well as the vision of the NDP, is truly being fulfilled.

I thank-you!