**DEBATE ON BUDGET VOTE 18 ON HEALTH**

1. Greetings to all the leaders of the EFF, officials, commissars, fighters and ground forces of the only movement committed to the well-being of our people in this country.
2. We are here today, three years since the COVID pandemic struck us and exposed the rot in our public health system.
3. During this period, all of us learnt the depth to which the leaders of the ruling party are prepared to go to in pursuit of their self-enrichment goals, completely disregarding the health of the majority of our people.
4. Chairperson, over 84% of the people in this country do not have medical insurance and are therefore dependent on public health.
5. The past three years of the COVID pandemic have exposed that we do not have a public heath system in this country.
6. While nurses and doctors in public hospitals were crying for protective clothing at the height of the COVID pandemic, Mr Zweli Mkhize was busy devising plans to enrich himself and his family from the pandemic.
7. Repeated cries for a more compassionate government from these public servants, such as the heart wrenching letter written by one nurse from SS Gida Hospital in Keiskammahoek, Ms Monica Mbewu, who decried lack of protective clothing for health practitioners, received no attention from the State.
8. This budget today indicates that there is no appreciation of the depth of the rot in the public health system.
9. It is sadly a debilitating reality that the country's public healthcare system is plagued with the leadership of the ANC. If it isn’t the “Blame everyone but me who’s in charge” Aaron Motswaledi, the sticky fingers of Zweli Mkhize, it is the permanent state of slumber and laziness of Minister Joe Phaahla.
10. Minister Joe Phaahla has been in slumber from his days as deputy minister. Knowing nothing, accounting for nothing, depending on chairpersons of portfolio committees to hide his incompetence under the guise of political allegiance and loyalty.
11. Here we have a minister who to date has led the country to the worst state of healthcare as yet. His entities are plagued with racism and sexism as encompassed by NHLS who abuse Black women senior scientists (Mpho Seleka being one of them) and blatantly refuse to account.
12. We have SAHPRA which is in a constant state of lies and deception, mumbling over what they are saying over what they are doing. Two years later and SAHPRA has still not done the work to save and protect our people from Johnson and Johnson surgical mesh debacle because they eat Bill Gates money and would rather have women like Phindile Mncube be left with no choice but to completely remove their wombs because of toxic transvaginal mesh devices.
13. While they do this, SAHPRA is dead set against approving vaccines developed by companies from Russia and China. They are gambling with the health of our people in their pursuit of factional scientific preferences.
14. The CEO of Steve Biko Academic Hospital unreservedly denied taking in the victims of forced sterilization of Black women whose wombs continue to leak because the government of the ANC saw it fit to continue with eugenics on the bodies of Black women.
15. And I don’t blame her. She has been supposedly waiting for a go ahead from the department and the minister who is obviously sleeping on the job and knows absolutely nothing about the current state of the department he is leading.
16. Infants are dying, new mothers are dying, patients are starving in hospitals, we have a shortage of doctors and nurses whilst thousands sit at home unemployed, hospitals are burning, equipment in tertiary hospitals isn’t being serviced or replaced when damaged, women continue coming to hospitals with healthy pregnancies and leaving with disabled children because you have ran our public healthcare system to the ground.
17. We need free universal and quality healthcare for everyone.
18. We need to train, employ and remunerate properly all health care workers in this country.
19. We need to have public hospitals that are up to the task of servicing the health needs of the 86% of the citizens of this country who can’t afford medical aid.
20. This budget is a business as usual type of an arrangement by a government that has no clue of what we are dealing with.
21. The EFF will never legitimize this department and its lazy minister. We reject this budget