

Time for a government that gets things done

By **Leon Schreiber MP** - DA Shadow Minister of Public Service and Administration

Honourable Speaker,

If there's one thing South Africa certainly does not want for, it is politicians who can deliver long-winded speeches promising to turn our country into the land of milk and honey overnight.

This current administration, which came to power in May 2019, is entirely built on telling people what they want to hear.

In the two years since that election, all we have heard about is bullet trains and smart cities, about corruption clean-ups and a professional public service.

We have read thousands of words in the President's newsletters.

We have heard hundreds of promises from Minister Mchunu.

In fact, if words were all it took to fill the bellies of hungry children and the bank accounts of the people, South Africa would be heaven on earth.

But sadly people cannot eat words.

They cannot pay their home loans with promises.

And flowery prose is of little use against an armed criminal.

This government will soon find that words can only go so far.

As South Africans look around them every day, they ask themselves: what has actually gotten done since this administration took office?

As the echo of empty promises slowly fades from their ears, they see only growing hardship and increasing corruption.

They see that nothing gets done in South Africa anymore.

In ANC-run municipalities, they see potholes that swallow up vehicles whole, and sewerage running down their streets.

They see businesses shutting down because the government monopoly cannot turn coal into electricity.

It's all a far cry from the glittering vision promised by that False Dawn.

The same applies to the public service.

Two years later, we still hear the same endless pledges to fight corruption and professionalise the civil service.

Two years later, we still hear the same promises to reduce a gigantic public sector wage bill that threatens to sink our economy.

But what has actually gotten done?

Just yesterday, the DA revealed that nine out of every ten officials flagged for corruption by the Public Service Commission last year got away scot free.

Nothing ever gets done.

While the government talks in ever more desperate tones on supposedly professionalising the civil service, President Ramaphosa last month doubled down on the evil policy of cadre deployment in front of the Zondo Commission.

Nothing ever gets done.

And we still hear during every budget speech about the supposed commitment to reducing the public sector wage bill.

Yet in reality, that commitment shrivelled up and died faster than Minister Mboweni's poor aloe.

At the start of this week, we learned that the ANC has caved to their radical union allies, as we always knew they would.

Instead of long-promised cuts to the wage bill, they now plan to increase the wage bill by at least R15.6 billion.

Nothing ever gets done.

The gap between the government's rhetoric and the South African reality has become a gaping chasm.

When you cut through all the hot air that wafts out of the Union Buildings, the reality is clear: this government is incapable of getting anything done.

It's like they are trapped in another universe, where simply promising something automatically gets it done.

But on this side of the veil, we all know that's not how life works.

Things get done through a process that must seem almost like magic to the ANC, whereby hard work turns words into concrete results.

The good news for South Africa is that everyone knows there is one party in this country that gets things done.

That party runs the only financially sustainable city in the country.

That party runs the only province in South Africa that is moving forward rather than backwards.

That party ensures that competent people are employed to collect your rubbish on time, fix the potholes in your street, and make sure that there is running water in your taps.

That party – the party that gets things done – is called the Democratic Alliance.

The DA is a party on the move that is now looking to get even more done than ever before.

Just like we get basic service delivery done in municipalities, the DA is also the only party that is determined to end load-shedding, restore public transport and unleash the power of private enterprise where we govern.

Madame Speaker,

Because we are the only party with a proven record of delivery, the DA is also the only party that can get the reforms done that our public sector so desperately needs.

While the President defends cadre deployment at every opportunity he gets, the DA has already introduced the End Cadre Deployment Bill.

This Bill, which is currently out for public consultation, has received overwhelming support.

Hundreds of South Africans have written submissions, and thousands have voiced their support through a public petition.

I want to make it very clear to this House today that we will not relent in our fight against this evil system, which is the very foundation of state capture.

I also invite everyone to keep an eye on their favourite newspaper over the coming days for proof of just how committed the DA is to getting the eradication of cadre deployment done.

The DA also has a plan to get cuts to the wage bill done.

Instead of appeasing union radicals at the cost of bankrupting South Africa, we have already sent our alternative proposal to Minister Mchunu.

Rather than continuing to reward millionaire cadres who do little more than sit in airconditioned offices all day, we would get it done by protecting frontline service delivery workers while still reducing the wage bill by R168 billion.

This is the only way to get cuts to the wage bill done in a fair, just and sustainable way.

Madame Speaker,

They say that lovers of words have no place where hard work needs to be done.

It is common cause that few could ever compete with our current President and his cabinet in their passionate love for words.

But it is also clear that this government has no place where things actually need to get done.

To South Africans I want to say: by all means, go out there and enjoy the factional freakshow playing out in the ANC.

Giggle at their empty promises and speeches filled with Soviet-era jargon.

In fact, go out and enjoy the weird and wonderful panoply of empty words offered by all other political parties in South Africa.

I would never begrudge anyone such quality entertainment.

But just remember that when you drive home from a long day of listening to all that noise, you will want to do so on roads that are paved or on trains that still have tracks beneath them.

When you get home, you will want to open the tap and switch on the oven to cook dinner for your family.

Just remember that words will not help you achieve any of that.

Words do not fix roads, generate electricity, or grow the economy.

Only a government that gets things done can do that.

If you want things to actually get done – if you want your rubbish picked up, electricity in your home and a competent public service free from cadre deployment – then the DA is the party for you.

Because where all the others only talk, we get things done.

Thank you.