



Letter to Minister of Transport

Dr B Nzimande

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Minister of Transport

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The Honourable Minister Nzimande

E-tolls, the Albatross around the Necks of Gauteng Professionals.

Comrade deployee of our glorious movement, the African National Congress (ANC), and Minister of the National Department of Transport (NDoT), we write this letter to you, as we metaphorically carrying an albatross around our necks as Gauteng-based Professionals, in the form of e-tolls. As the new saying goes, "*Silithwele idombolo*" in the form of e-Tolls in Gauteng.

These e-tolls are a burden that feels like a curse on us as professionals, and on the African National Congress here in Gauteng. We are hoping to invoke the revolutionary spirit and consciousness in you as an ANC deployee in government, and most importantly, a servant of our people. We hold a view that our movement, the ANC, has empowered you to free us from any burden that threatens us as a people and our movement through your role as Minister.

It is also our view that only you hold the power, unenviable as it is, to free us from the e-Tolls albatross. Our leadership failures to act decisively impacts negatively on our political will as a movement to act as per the directives from our people. As you know, we lead as a movement as per the will of the people, and our failure to move with speed on issues that impact on our people, contradicts and damages our mission to serve the people as a government of the people, by the people. We wish to emphasize that we mean no disrespect with this letter, either to our movement, the ANC, the Government, to the Honourable Minister, to other professionals, or to you personally. We feel this matter needs to be addressed, and acted upon now with the urgency it deserves.

Maybe let us start from the beginning comrade deployee. As you know, the authors of this letter are working towards the establishment of a fully-fledged ANC Professionals League, made up of South African professionals, or what you would call in classical Leninism, the "urban working class". As you know, in the theory of dialectical materialism used to analyse society correctly, our

dialectics have always concluded, that the stratum of professionals (working class) remains the advanced motive force of our National Democratic Revolution (NDR). We also have in our analysis deliberately identified professionals as "the advanced detachment", and we certainly know that you understand why they are characterised as such.

We have taken it upon ourselves as the founding leadership of the ANCPL to mobilize and organise this key stratum behind the banner of the ANC. It remains our key endeavour to ensure a decisive victory for the ANC in the 2019 national general elections, and we have identified this as our immediate task. This means that we must begin now and not later to capture the minds and imagination of our people, without delaying the revolution and or waiting for the 2022 National Conference of the ANC, where our fate lies as the ANCPL.

You will agree with us, that professionals in the urban setting in South Africa, are beginning to distance themselves from the ANC, as they feel neglected and unengaged politically by the governing party. As a result of this political distance between the ANC and professionals or the urban working class, we have lost power and influence in numerous key metropolitan municipalities. The urban voters in the cities are predominantly, professionals who form a critical mass of the urban working class, they are the main clients we need to service as the ANC. This shifting political support for the liberation movement (ANC) has further led to the rise of the right-wing movement as a political choice for professionals, especially in the major cities. These right-wing organisations pretends to support professionals and to be understanding of their needs, which you also know, are cynically shoring up support to maintain colonial power relations. They drive a neo-nationalist agenda, with a degree of "Truimpiesm", populism, nativism and protectionism, which is a serious threat to our national democratic revolution. These new challenges demands of all of us as ANC members and deployees, to really act in a different manner, we can't continue with the status quo.

As the ANCPL we have then begun a series of national consultative forums across the nine provinces, consulting professionals on the idea of the ANCPL. You will also understand that we have clearly outlined and articulated our triangular objectives as the ANCPL, which are as follows:

Objective 1 - The Implement Objective;

Objective 2 - The Serve & Defend Objective;

Objective 3 - The Recruit Objective.

We are writing to you with a pointed special focus on our second Objective – *The Serve & Defend Objective* – which addresses professional, labour needs, and challenges facing professionals. With this objective, we aim to deal with, *inter alia*, the slow pace of "qualitative transformation" within

corporate South Africa. E-Tolls remains one of the major challenges faced by professionals in Gauteng.

The current conundrum on the question of e-Tolls, has been a centre of confusion in the public domain, and has ANC leadership failing to speak in one voice. We can no longer fail to act as per the resolutions of the 13th Gauteng Provincial Conference. We are delaying the wishes of the people of Gauteng. The Gauteng Provincial Conference resolution specifically directs the ANC's cause of action regarding tolling in the streets of our beautiful province, Gauteng. We cannot ignore our own resolutions.

The tolling of Gauteng roads was and continues to be a subject, and a result of, many public and political engagements in Gauteng. Our people unanimously resolved that e-Tolls must be scrapped. Our people have been very clear on the issue of e-Tolls, we just need to see ANC deployees acting with speed as per the will of the people of Gauteng. The ANC has never led on the basis of fiat, nor by doing what is contrary to the wishes of the people.

The recent remarks made by the Honourable Minister in Parliament as a deployee of our movement in the Ministry of Transport are gravely concerning. The view that tolling is not going anywhere, and our people must get used to paying for these roads, undermines a clear directive by our people on this matter. This view must be withdrawn publicly. Comrade deployee, it remains our understanding that all ANC deployees in Government must always implement ANC policies and conference resolutions. The National Conference resolutions document on proposals by the Conference, reminds us as ANC members that

“we need to urgently close the gap between us and the people; strive to be a progressive presence in every community and sector that listens to the people, works with them, responds to their concerns and problems, respects all people, and builds organisations and campaigns of the people”.

The point at which our political trajectory starts and ends on e-Tolls, is confusing our people and lacks direction. The mixed-messaging from the leaders of our movement, is a bad reflection of the ANC to our people. The ANC remains a leader of society, and to remain true to this revolutionary task, the ANC must listen and act as per the wishes of the people. The current political grandstanding demonstrates a new alien tendency in our movement amongst our leaders. The ANC has lately been labeled arrogant, and some of our leaders are said to be becoming more of a political elite and removed from our people and their struggles.

Some hold the view that the ANC no longer reflects the aspirations, concerns and issues faced by our people. These askari tendencies, will compromise the revolutionary program of the NDR when not rooted out. As the ANCPL, we reject the above view about our glorious movement, but these recent developments on e-Tolls affirms this view as having some credibility. This worries

us, as this compromises the standing of the ANC in society. This would be what some label as the sins of incumbency. It is further our view that our movement remains the only hope for our people, the ANC remains the true representative of the people of South Africa and we must keep to that revolutionary spirit at all material times. The public needs leadership on e-Tolls. We need your office to immediately provide clarity and direction to assure our people of the timeframes to resolve this conundrum and deal decisively with e-Tolls in Gauteng. The ANC must always lead, our people.

As the ANCPL, we support the political direction adopted Gauteng ANC on e-Tolls as marshalled by the leadership of Gauteng provincial chairperson, Cde David Makhura, and the people of Gauteng. Their views on e-Tolls represent the views of the majority of urban working class professionals carrying the burden of the e-Tolls albatross. We all unanimously rejects e-tolls comrade deployee, and we expect of our deployees in government to implement that which we wish for.

We have the upcoming 2019 elections' political work ahead, we all have political task to ensure that our ANC remains at the helm of political leadership in Gauteng, the economic hub of South Africa. We must also to reclaim the Western Cape. We will not allow e-Tolls to remain a political divide between us and our urban voters, the professionals in Gauteng. Moreover we would also not wish to provide opposition parties with an opportunity to capitalise on either our mixed messages or to offer removal of the e-Tolls as an electioneering promise. Today we sit with the upcoming right-wing march to the Premier of Gauteng, these are unnecessary issues that we should have long resolved, and indeed "idombolo Silithwele", Minister.

As a deployee in government, it once again remains your immediate political task to resolve e-tolls in Gauteng before the New Year. We labour on this point because it has been sometime since the matter was brought up as a matter of serious concern by our people. The dead silence has always been the response from the responsible leadership. Without taking our Gauteng people into confidence on the stance of your Ministry and Government on this e-Tolls matter, we are doomed, as the ANC in Gauteng. We want to campaign freely for the ANC building up to the 2019 elections and we want to be able to answer all questions, during town hall meetings and door to door campaigns that our Gauteng voters asks us, amongst which will be the question on e-Tolls.

We would also like to register our opposition that we do not agree with the approach that was adopted by the ANC in Gauteng to march against the ANC on e-Tolls. It is these new alien tendencies in our movement that makes our Gauteng urban voters, professionals or those whom others call as the so called "Clever Blacks" to conclude that our movement does not take them seriously. It does not make sense to have ANC march against ANC, especially at a leadership level. It gives a view that this was a staged march, to pay lip service and grandstanding by the ANC at

the expense of our peoples genuine concerns. Again we are becoming victims of the sin of incumbency. The Chairperson of Gauteng, Comrade David Makhura, holds a key strategic position in our movement and government. He has key access to strategic ANC structures and national government at the highest level. It is further our view that he has access to you Cde Minister politically and privately, as well as access to Cabinet, and the ANC President, the Honourable Matamela Ramaphosa in his dual capacity, or to our Secretary General, Comrade Ace Magashule, and the National Executive Committee (NEC) of our movement, to air any political or Government Issue for a solution.

Our provincial secretary, Comrade Jacob Khawe, recently demonstrated this which we argue above in his capacity as the Mayor of Emfuleni Municipality, when he publicly declared how he used his access to President Ramaphosa, to deal with challenges of Emfuleni Municipality. That is how he received confirmation from the President, that Emfuleni will be rescued by the national government financially. That is exactly how we expect the leadership of our movement to engage and resolve our challenges and not march against each other and pay lip service to key societal issues. We are happy that the Mayor of Emfuleni did not lead the people of Emfuleni Municipality in a march to the Union Buildings.

The approach of ANC marching against ANC was unscientific and taboo in our movement. In the spirit of unity and renewal, we must make sure that our actions and new tendencies that we adopt, do not compromise the ANC. We must curtail political these tendencies, including those that are imposed on us by private capital, and when it is our people versus capital, we must always choose our people. As you know comrade deployee that the masses of our people are never wrong.

Nearly 5,000 ANC delegates gathered in NASREC, Johannesburg, from 16 to 20 December 2017, and took very clear and sober resolutions on many critical areas, including how we must take the ANC back to the people. The "Conference agreed on the urgent tasks to strengthen the movement and modernize the way we function, both as a liberation movement and an electoral party". We need to remain true to these resolutions as a movement. No individual person can, on their own, overturn conference decisions. We urge you comrade deployee to implement decisions of our movement, especially on the scraping of e-Tolls, and we assure that you have the backing of the masses of our people behind you.

Other recent views, well-communicated publicly by an outstanding professional, Comrade Lucky Montana, whom our movement the ANC armed with all the necessary skills and scientific knowledge in the rail/transport sector, are a clear sign of the neglectful relationship our movement has with our professionals. These people have the know-how, and some have answers to our challenges as a movement and as country. We need to effectively utilise their knowledge, skills, expertise, and acknowledge their existence. We need to have strong sector-specific forums

where these views are shared and ventilated, to help guide the leadership of our movement. This is why the ANCPL has identified professionals as a niche stratum that needs to be engaged. Our revolution remains incomplete, and it can never be complete if we don't organise the unorganized in our society. We cannot neglect our advanced detachment, the motive forces of our national democratic revolution.

We must further register that we do not agree entirely with Comrade Lucky Montana's views on the handling of e-Tolls. His presentation sharpens the spear of the ANC and raises an educated scientific argument, which perhaps we all needed to hear. Over the years, the ANC has proudly held up its character as a broad church, and has managed to deal with serious societal challenges by listening to and analyzing the most critical views in all sides of the political argument. We have managed to deal decisively and strategically with class contradictions in our country. This has always made the ANC rise with superior logic, which always prevails in society and appeals to both sides of the political divide. We are raising this in the context of dialectics, which we are certain the Honourable Minister will agree that we need all diverse views, even on e-Tolls, so that we come up with a solid approach, which serves all competing interests. We believe that having many others such as Montana's under one roof in search for answers to our conundrum, will help the movement to come up with very clear scientific, educated proposals that our leadership and employees can work on, to implement our key ANC resolutions. The Gauteng e-Tolls have moved beyond a developmental economic issue, but to a very serious political conundrum for our movement that needs an urgent political solution.

As the ANCPL, we intend to organise a Transport Sector Professionals dialogue in February 2019. We would like to be honoured by your presence, comrade employee. We will further invite ANC leadership in Gauteng and nationally. We have many submissions to make on this matter but we cannot exhaust all of them on this letter. Ours would be to bring the best possible professional minds in the transport sector to guide their movements and help with implementation. The time has passed where a matter of national importance can be left to the care of a few professional specialists or advisers because of their employment contracts with our government.

The ANCPL has access to a greater pool of professionals in academia, private sector, SOEs and government, who are activists in their special fields. They all love the ANC and their country, and when called upon, they will certainly be equal to the task of helping the ANC implement. We can no longer afford to use commonsense to guide and lead our people. We must be scientific, and we must use all the best available professional resources our country has to offer, to inform our policy directive and implementation, as per our conference objectives.

The 54th National Conference was held under the theme "*Remember Tambo: Towards Unity, Renewal and Radical Socio-economic Transformation*" to remind all of us of our ANC President, Isithwalandwe/Seaparankoe uBaba, Oliver Reginald Tambo, and his legacy of selflessness, in

serving our people and our duty to serve our people like he did. This is an expectation we have from all ANC Leaders, including yourself comrade deployee, to lead like Tambo.

E-Tolls remains a burden and an albatross on the necks of all professionals in Gauteng. We cannot afford this lifetime liability anymore. We cannot afford to lose state power in Gauteng province and elsewhere because we are out of touch with our people or private capital controls our political leadership. Our ANC shall remain a listening organisation, and the masses are never wrong Comrade deployee.

Honourable Minister, comrade deployee, of our glorious movement, the African National Congress, I hope that on behalf our rising giant, the African National Congress Professionals League and all professionals, I have maintained a professional decorum in content and spirit of this letter, and hope to receive your favourable response and attention.

Yours in the Struggle!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thulani Ngubane', with several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Thulani Ngubane

Acting Secretary General of ANCPL

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