**Why The ANC Must Give Up On Ramaphosa To Save South Africa**

A saying goes thus: when a man hides a rotting sore, he has determined to rot and die along with it. South Africa and its ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC) seem ready to die with the rotting sore that is Cyril Ramaphosa.

South Africa’s President Cyril Ramaphosa is like a black sheep walking about in the daylight when a hunt for him is on, but he is surrounded by other thoughtless sheep who have decided to shield him with their lives.

Ramaphosa survived an impeachment attempt by South Africa’s national assembly on the 13th of December 2022. Opposition parties in the house called for the vote over allegations that huge sums of foreign currency were stored up in Ramaphosa’s private Phala Phala game farm and he failed to declare the money missing in 2020. The conclusion of a parliamentary inquiry report pointed to the fact that Ramaphosa may have “committed misconduct and violated the constitution”.

In spite of public outcry and the ugly truth staring everyone in the face, the ruling African National Congress Party (ANC), where Ramaphosa belongs voted against it and sent a marching order to the parliamentary caucus to vote against adopting the Phala Phala farm report. In their worthless defense, it was in the best interests of the country.

The party’s game plan when it decided to protect Ramaphosa from impeachment was so that he could shamelessly fight the corruption allegations in court as he continues to claim that he is innocent while remaining in power. That way, the ANC can still have a future in government.

But what do this say of the ANC and its over-sung mantra of fighting corruption? The situation has led to major divisions within the party, and it must be careful because a house divided against itself cannot stand.

A walk back to 2017 will remind you of the decision of the ANC decided that party members charged with serious crimes or corruption must voluntarily “step aside” from government or party activities or be suspended until the resolution of the case.

Party members such as the then-party secretary-general Ace Magashule who was suspended in May 2021, for refusing to step down due to corruption allegations faced the brunt of this decision.

So why did the tables turn with the ANC’s decision to support Ramaphosa’s presidency even with the explicit details of the Phala Phala farm report? Your guess is as good as mine.

 Interestingly, there have been claims that some members were bullied into rejecting Ramaphosa’s removal. Former Health Minister Zweli Mkhize claims that allies of the president such as the ANC chairperson Gwede Mantashe bullied party members into rejecting the report during a national executive committee meeting that was held on December 5.

Despite the threat, some high-ranking party members who haven’t sold their conscience either for money or a source of self-preservation, including cabinet minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, went against the party and voted to adopt the Phala Phala and impeach the president.

 A closer look at the happenings shows that not all party members were bullied into voting against Ramaphosa’s removal, because leading ANC stakeholders publicly supported Ramaphosa to keep leading even before the day of the impeachment proceeding. The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), said the calls to Ramaphosa to step aside were “premature”.

 There are claims that ministers such as Pravin Gordhan, Fikile Mbalula, Mmamoloko Kubayi, and Barbara Creecy convinced Ramaphosa to remain in office when he wanted to resign following the report’s release. According to them, the negative reactions from party members and the markets meant he should remain in power. Why that wasn’t the standard used to judge other party members remains a mystery.

When Ramaphosa took office in 2018, he had all the traits of a just, honest and sincere reformer whose mission was to rid South Africa of all forms of corruption and resuscitate the poor economy that had suffered at the hands of Jacob Zuma.

But what do we see? Mismanagement of states, power, and institutions is the order of the day. Corruption has been enthroned, and there has been a fast-climbing unemployment rate that has reached 32.9 percent and doesn’t seem to be stopping.

In the wake of the Phala Phala farm saga, Ramaphosa’s image is nothing short of shattered and rubbed in the mud, perhaps beyond repair, and unless some magic happens, the ANC will lose its hold on power and any hopes of being at the helm of South Africa’s democracy.

Ramaphosa’s time in office so far has been nothing short of a colossal failure, and instead of going down alone, he seems comfortable bringing down the party with him.

All the promises he made before entering into office have simply added to the list of things South Africans are disappointed about, just as his party is slowly moving from the people’s favorite to the people’s nightmare.

What is the fate of the ANC if it continues in its reckless decision to stand by mud-dripping, corruption-soaked Ramaphosa? Definitely nothing positive.

The ANC is only shooting itself in the foot and awaiting a slow, painful death if it is hoping that Ramaphosa will be able to fulfil the promise he made to the people and become the leader South Africans deserve.

South Africa is behaving just like its other African sister nations such as Angola and Zimbabwe that chose to prioritise party interests over national interest even in the face of the worst and most unimaginable scandals, lackadaisical leadership, and bad governance.

When Angola did it with Jose Eduardo dos Santos, and Zimbabwe with Robert Mugabe, the world watched as the disastrous effects unfolded and enveloped both the parties and the nations.

 If the ANC allows the same fate to occur in South Africa and continues to walk blindly in defence of its leader and political interest without a second thought to the electorate who voted them into power, they will go down the drain when Ramaphosa eventually gets swept away by the flood of his crimes and misdeeds.

 No democracy can truly be called such if the interest of the party comes before the interests of the nation. History has shown us, howbeit painfully, that when a cult is established behind a personality, subservience, repression, maladministration, and chaos are the result, even if this personality was never bad in the first instance.

How much more in a situation where fingers, tongues and even reports are pointing to the fact that the skeletons in Ramaphosa’s presidency are probably so much more than investigations can unveil in several years?

If the ANC continue to hold onto the back of the vehicle driving towards destruction at full speed, then it ought to be ready to be driven away from the democratic scene and end up as just that party that nearly hit the mark of true democracy.

Like the biblical troubled ship, Ramaphosa must be thrown out for calm to return to the party and the country as a whole. Otherwise, Ramaphosa should check deep into his mind for conscience and resign as the president of South Africa while answering to all corruption allegations as a private citizen with no power or backing so that the world can see what lies behind his façade and his mantra of good governance and anti-corruption.