



Written by on October 15, 2008

Dissension Within the African National Congress

Shilowa stepped down as premier of Gauteng as a show of protest against the ANC's removal of former President Thabo Mbeki. Mbeki had announced his resignation on September 21, after the ANC National Executive Committee decided to withdraw support for him in parliament. According to the BBC: "Mr Mbeki stood down after a judge suggested he had interfered in the prosecution of Mr Zuma on corruption charges, something the former South African leader denies."



"I have decided to resign my membership from the ANC with immediate effect and to lend my support to the initiative by making myself available on a full-time basis as a convener and volunteer-in-chief together with comrade Mosiuoa," Shilowa was quoted by Reuters.

Mbeki's falling out of favor with the ANC was attributed to his prior dismissal of South African Deputy President Jacob Zuma on charges of corruption. However, Zuma maintained his position as Deputy President of the ANC, and continued to enjoy strong support within the party. In December 2005, Zuma was charged with rape and was suspended as deputy president of the ANC. But after being acquitted of the rape charges, he was reinstated in his party leadership position.

Following Mbeki's forced resignation, Zuma as ANC President named his deputy, Kgalema Motlanthe, as president to serve until the 2009 general elections. Motlanthe is regarded as a caretaker who is expected to step down after next year's elections and Zuma is considered a favorite to replace him as president.

In a statement made on October 14, Zuma said the party would crack down on dissent. He said the ANC would act "very decisively" to rid the party of what he described as factionalism.

Reuters reported that "Investors are worried that Zuma and Motlanthe, strongly backed by the Communist Party and powerful trade unions, may tilt South Africa to the left."

However, with the ANC having been in charge of South Africa since 1994, there may not be much more room on the left towards which to tilt. The ANC grew out of the South African Native National Congress, a group begun in 1912 by moderate black lawyers. In 1925, it became the South African National Congress (SANC), and later the ANC. In 1921, the South African Communist Party (SACP) was formed and immediately welcomed to Comintern membership in Moscow. SACP members who attended the Third Comintern International held in Moscow in 1927-28 were directed to increase contacts with the ANC and make it "the sole representative of the oppressed masses of South Africa." By 1946, the SACP had gained total control of ANC leadership.

The U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism reported in 1982 that of 22 top leaders of the ANC, 11 were also members of the SACP, and 13 belonged to Umkhonto We Sizwe ("Spear of the Nation"), the terrorist faction of the ANC.

An entry about the ANC in [Wikipedia](#) notes:



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The African National Congress (ANC) has been South Africa's governing party, supported by its tripartite alliance with the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African Communist Party (SACP), since the establishment of majority rule in May 1994. It defines itself as a "disciplined force of the left."

Former President Mbeki has a long association with communists. His father, Govan Mbeki, who was a teacher, writer, and newspaper publisher, was a leading SACP member. After his father was arrested with ANC leader Nelson Mandela, Mbeki went to Sussex University in the UK, received a Masters degree and worked for the ANC's London office. He then traveled to the Soviet Union for military training.

The political proclivities of Zuma, the kingmaker behind current President Motlanthe, were revealed in a 2006 interview he gave with the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, in which he said of the Marxist tyrant Robert Mugabe of neighboring Zimbabwe: "Europeans often ignore the fact that Mugabe is very popular among Africans. In their eyes, he has given blacks their country back after centuries of colonialism.... The people love him, so how can we condemn him?"

None of the reports about the dissent among ANC leaders indicate that South Africa will soon enjoy true representative government.



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