

Africa Report by Douglas DeGroot

South Africa Hit by Ruling Party Split

Neither the perpetrators of the split, nor the population, will benefit from this destabilization.

A growing number of national and provincial leaders of South Africa's ruling African National Congress (ANC) are leaving the party, and threatening to start an opposition party. Since South Africa's first post-apartheid election in 1994, the ANC has dominated politics, winning two-thirds of the vote, or more. George Soros, representative of the Anglo-Dutch Liberal empire—the only force that will benefit from the breakup of the ANC—has denounced South Africa for not being democratic, because of the dominant role of the ANC in South Africa.

This has become the worst political crisis in South Africa in the post-apartheid era.

South Africa has the most powerful economy in Africa, and with the large base of the ANC, former President Thabo Mbeki used South Africa's power to attempt to counter the British empire's destabilization campaigns throughout the continent, and thereby defend African sovereignty (see *EIR*, Oct. 3, 2008).

Mbeki's slate was defeated on Dec. 18, 2007 at the national conference of the ANC, in Polokwane. In September, Mbeki was pushed out of the Presidency in a brutal manner, and he was forced to resign, instead of being allowed to finish his last six months in office. The subsequent gloating by his opponents and purges of Mbeki's backers in the ANC, led Mbeki's allies to think that they would have no future in the ANC, and numerous provincial and national ANC leaders began to support the idea of splitting from the ANC and forming a new party. Feeding the process was the head of the

ANC Youth League, Julius Malema, who talked about "killing for Zuma," and was not reproached by Jacob Zuma, who replaced Mbeki as head of the ANC.

Mbeki's Defense Minister, Monsiuoa Lekota, who resigned his position after Mbeki was ousted from the Presidency, started the process of splintering the ANC when he, along with Deputy Defense Minister Mluleki George, announced on Oct. 8, that he was serving "divorce papers" on the ANC. Lekota was chairman of the ANC up to December 2007, but did not even get re-elected to the National Executive Committee (NEC) at Polokwane. Lekota has said that people must be ready to spill blood to defend democracy.

On Oct. 15, former Gauteng provincial premier Mbhazima Shilowa left the ANC, saying he would join efforts to form a new party. Gauteng is South Africa's richest province. Shilowa, a political heavyweight, was once considered to be Presidential material, because he had a base in Gauteng, and was a former Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) general secretary, with connections to the Communist Party (SACP). He would have had the credentials to hold the ANC-SACP-COSATU alliance together. Shilowa also campaigned for Mbeki, and then also failed to be elected to the NEC at Polokwane. He described the ouster of Mbeki as a "putsch." Shilowa said that the conference, which could lead to a new party, will take place Nov. 2.

While there are no big economic policy differences between the two factions, those behind the move to

split the ANC are hoping to take enough votes away to force the ANC under Zuma, who could be brought up on corruption charges, into coalition negotiations at the different levels of national, provincial, and local government. The new party move is being launched just as the ANC is about to begin choosing candidates for the elections next year.

A number of provincial ANC leaders are moving to support the new party, as a way of opposing the purges that have been conducted against them in provincial ANC elections. *Business Day* on Oct. 9 cited a source in the new party movement, who said: "There is big money behind us, we are working in the provinces, talking to the unions and other opposition parties." *EIR's* sources report dissident activity within the ANC in eight out of nine provinces, and indicate that if 15% of the vote is taken by a new party, it would seriously weaken the ANC, and force negotiations.

South African sources indicate that there is enough disillusionment at the grass roots level with the ANC, and that people are sufficiently upset with the way Mbeki was humiliated, to give a new party enough power to be a threat.

Zuma initially vowed "radical action" against the dissidents, and suspended Lekota and George on Oct. 13. As the split continues to develop, Zuma has switched to calling for ANC unity, and talking about unemployment being the key challenge facing South Africa. But any campaign to improve conditions for the poor will fall flat in the short term, in the context of the global crisis.

This internal conflict is manipulated from London to destabilize South Africa. As in a Classical tragedy, none of the players are presently capable of seeing that they have to change their behavior, to break the dynamic that will destroy them all.