

The imminent re-election of controversial Mr Malema, 30, as leader of the ANC Youth League, which is drawn from ANC card-carrying members aged 18 to 35 years, as well as from not-yet ANC-eligible youth aged 14 to 18, raises some interesting questions. What do his supporters see in him, and should there be consequences?

With at least 55% of the formerly disadvantaged young folk unemployed (an unenviable world record), Malema's strong posturing about nationalizing the mines and killing boers, and disdain of everything non-black, will go down very well. In effect he offers the prospect of radical redistribution of wealth. Allied to this, he has identified building of self-belief as a prime requisite for his constituents, and most of his postures have this in mind.

However, his failure during his first stint as president to do anything to halt the calamitous decline in the fortunes of his flock does open the door to criticism. His defense in this regard is beautiful politics and perfect self-expression. It appears that in activism there is a tipping point if something like 4% of a population is active - thus one may achieve certain objectives if say one in twenty five persons becomes a committed disciple.

Not much imagination is needed to complete the scenario.

The new South African constitution, one of the best in the world apparently, was intended to facilitate a multi-racial land of milk and honey and Camembert. At the moment most black youths hardly have pap, and this after 17 years of perfect self-expression. There can be no doubt that their leaders have failed them.

Although there is talk of 'the ticking time-bomb of youth unemployment', given the above described landscape this seems unlikely. Rather, self-expression assisted by lack of education for the masses will continue until the trough becomes depleted enough to introduce real strife between the heavyweights.

As a consequence, it will be no surprise that I repeat the often made call for better education. Minister Nzimande has lamented the fact that 8 Billion Rand have been almost totally wasted in education - that's how simple our education crisis is really. Money wasted. If black youth is to be empowered to chose their leaders wisely, government must buckle down and stop wasting education funds. The trouble is it would more than likely also mean changes at the top.

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