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# **NOW HEAR THIS!** WITH **KENNETH MESHOE**

## **For peace, harmony and Sepp Blatter ...**

**I**T'S BEEN SAID that nothing can affect, motivate and empower people so much as the right words fitly spoken. Words have power. With words we can build relationships or destroy them, we can encourage or discourage, we can promote unity or division.

Many in our country today seem to be ignorant of this fact. That is why they are careless and irresponsible in the use of words.

The reports about the tensions and clashes that took place earlier in the week outside a Ventersdorp court during the first court appearance of two men charged with the murder of the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) leader, Eugene Terre'Blanche, are frightening.

The swearing, insults and hatred between different race groups is a major concern and that must be addressed urgently before something ugly happens.

Undermining court orders also is not helpful either. When a High Court bans the singing of a controversial song that polarises society, and you have leaders in three levels of government defy the ban and sing it anyway, then the rule of law is being undermined.

What kind of society is being created by such behaviour? Is it acceptable for the Gauteng premier, the arts and culture minister and Tshwane mayor, to sing *Dubula ibhunu* amid the controversy and allegations that the AWB leader was killed because of, among other reasons, the singing of this divisive song? Is it wise to sing such a song when part of our community is in mourning over the death of their leader?

*I'm just asking.*

Is it wise to sing such a song when some British newspapers report that "machete gangs are roaming the streets" after Eugene Terre'Blanche's murder, and that a "civil war" could erupt, and that South Africa's hosting of the World Cup is under "threat"?

Are we so naïve and so over-confident to believe that soccer fans will ignore their national newspapers that warn them that they might be caught up in a "machete race war" should they attend the Fifa World Cup in June?

*I'm just asking.*

If the ruling party does not ban the singing of the controversial and divisive song, then attendance of the World Cup in our country will be jeopardised. The singing of *Dubula ibhunu* will affect the attendance of the World Cup in our country and will "kill" the chances of the jovial mood that always characterises it. Let us not blow away this once in a lifetime opportunity for Africa to host a successful world cup.

The fact is, if South Africa fails, then no other African country will be given this rare privilege of hosting this prestigious Cup. The whole continent of Africa will be judged by our success or failure as hosts. It is not only South Africa's credibility that is at stake, but Africa as a whole.

**S**O, FOR THE sake of peace and racial harmony in our country, and for the sake of Sepp Blatter, the Fifa president, who put his head on the block promoting and defending South Africa as qualified and competent to stage the best Fifa World Cup ever, this divisive song should be banned by the ANC leadership in support of the South Gauteng High Court ruling.

The mouth we use to sing is a powerful weapon which can work for us or against us. The words we speak or sing have the power of life and death. Let us use our mouths to speak life, to build healthy relationships in our nation, to sing praises unto God our Saviour, and not to sing about shooting fellow human beings.

■ **The Rev Kenneth Meshoe MP is the president of the African Christian Democratic Party**