Malema: White people are criminals

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White people should be treated as “criminals” for “stealing” land from black people, ANC Youth League president Julius Malema told an enthusiastic crowd in Kimberley yesterday where he appeared on the same platform as President Jacob Zuma.

Malema was the main attraction as he pulled out all the stops in his campaign for local elections, now just days away.

“They (whites) have turned our land into game farms... The willing-buyer, willing-seller (system) has failed,” Malema said.

“We must take the land without paying. They took our land without paying. Once we agree they stole our land, we can agree they are criminals and must be treated as such,” he said to cheers from a crowd of about 3 000 people at the Galeshewe stadium, just outside Kimberley.

Although Zuma was billed as the main speaker, it was Malema – affectionately known as “Juju-baby” in these parts – who stole the show.

As service delivery protests continue across the country, Malema chastised the “spoilt brats” who complained that the ANC had not delivered basic services.

He said protesters were “burning tyres in townships on a tar road delivered to them by the ANC”.

The youth leader also said he had seen people interviewed on television who said they were not going to vote in the coming election.

“But this person is watering his garden and behind him stands an RDP house – and then he says he doesn’t see delivery. We must never entertain such spoilt brats,” he said to more cheers.

Malema also criticised corrupt practices by councillors, such as selling on RDP houses or giving preference to family and friends on housing lists. This went down well with the crowd, which got to its feet and roared with approval when he said: “You shouldn’t have to sleep with a councillor to get an RDP house.”

Malema pushed his nationalisation agenda, saying the government could not afford to create jobs or to build a university in the Northern Cape – a 2009 campaign promise made by Zuma – because “there is no money”.

“Where is the money? It is in the hands of the Oppenheimers, who mine diamonds right here in Kimberley and leave nothing behind.

“One family has benefited for generation after generation, but there is nothing looking like a diamond here in Galeshewe,” he said to enthusiastic applause.

“Political freedom without economic power means nothing. You can vote until you turn yellow, but without economic freedom it means nothing,” he added, saying the youth league was not “requesting permission” to nationalise the country’s natural assets.

In its recently released economic policy discussion document, the league makes it clear that land,
minerals and other key assets should be nationalised, without compensation to current title holders.

The issue will be debated at the ANC’s policy conference next year after the league succeeded on getting it on to the party’s agenda at its national general council in September last year.

Malema said his calls for nationalisation were “nothing new” as the Freedom Charter spelt out the same goals. Former president Nelson Mandela himself had urged the party to strive for economic emancipation once political freedom was attained, according to Malema.

He went on to dish out his customary insults to opposition parties, calling DA leader Helen Zille a “dancing monkey” from “monkey town”.

“You allow the madam to kiss your children when you know the madam does not care about your children. They kill our people when they confuse them with baboons. The madam will never be president,” he said.

Cope, the PAC and the IFP received similar treatment.

Referring to Cope’s leadership squabbles, Malema joked, “You can’t form a political party when you are angry because the day you smile that party will die – you must then be angry forever.”

The PAC was a spent force and the IFP was never a political party, but was formed as a “cultural organisation”, he said.

Malema also came to the defence of Northern Cape ANC provincial chairman John Block, who is facing corruption charges. Block has been implicated in a multi-million rand tender scandal related to the provision of medical oxygen and water purification plants.

People were out to “destroy” Block because he was the face of the ANC in the province, but such attacks were in fact attacks on the “integrity” of the ANC, Malema said.

Malema’s wooing of the crowd quickly dissipated when Zuma took to the stage, however. People listened intently to what he had to say.

The president urged people not to “waste” their votes on opposition parties and criticised those who planned not to vote as having fallen victim to “effective propaganda”.

“If you love yourself and you love your vote, why do you vote for a party that you know is going to lose anyway? What is the logic – to vote to lose?” he asked.

Zuma said the ANC was different to other parties, saying it was a “movement of the people” first, and a political party second. - Deon de Lange