

South Africa is blessed with the **most accessible coal for electricity generation** and the **world's second richest mineral hoard**, as well as an **excellent climate**, **plentiful water** and **good soils**. It is a land with a glittering future as bright as the gold rings on the hands of the newly-weds, but only as substantial as the whisper of gas passing through a platinum catalytic converter. **Because there is this problem with facilitation and leadership**.

Facilitation is about **easing the process** (say reconciliation, redistribution of wealth, corruption, troughing), whilst **leadership is about going somewhere**. Two gratis quotations in my diary are: 'Outstanding leaders appeal to the hearts of their followers, not their minds' and **'Dream no small dreams for they have no power to move the hearts of men (and women)'**. Well said, I think, although maybe one needs to add 'And lead us not into temptation' with the practical consequence: 'Beware the rousing orator, who turns fool's gold into gold, and believers into fools'.

At a recent public education gathering the facilitation versus leadership issue was starkly evident. **There were brilliant people present** unable to lead because of the absence of a 'dream', and **reduced to hopeful facilitation going nowhere**. Even some well-practiced oratory could not inspire optimism because of the lack of substance. There were no signs that general education in this country will rise from the pits anytime soon.

Which returns me to **'our glittering future': Is it real gold or only fool's gold which will be shining?** And the answer lies fair and square with our leadership, or what must presently be termed our 'facilitatorship'.

Continue with the current facilitation of troughing and corruption, continue with facilitating Mugabe and illegal immigration, continue with facilitating the emigration of skilled people and continue with misguided education policies, and we will continue to not come close to fulfilling our potential.

Or start with formulating an **'African dream'**, in which South Africa's unique advantages are utilized: **Strong encouragement of organic farming methods** (more jobs); **money poured into sports, arts and culture** (better quality of life, less emphasis on materialism, less inequality); **schools with 11 and 13 year diplomas**, the latter available to potential university entrants (similar to most other countries, more effective resource use, vastly better results); **more local manufacturing with import controls** (more jobs); **more open labour legislation** (more jobs); **probably no BEE** (apparently actually counter-productive); and much more.

And there is every chance of at least matching pace with our peers **Brazil and India**.

But realistically that will only happen **if a second political party were to challenge strongly at the polls**. That would greatly improve the outlook for getting a leader, instead of a facilitator, who through inspiration - a dream - a vision, is able to release the genie from the South African bottle.

That would be very nice, because then I could have another free wish.

(Letter (edited) in The Star, 4<sup>th</sup> Dec 2010)