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**Response to the Executive Mayor's State of the City Address held on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 2008.**

The CDP (a member of the Christian Democratic Alliance) would like to thank the Executive Mayor for giving us a very comprehensive report on the city. I have examined it closely and can find very little in the way of omissions. Although we might disagree on the method we can't fault the clarity, preciseness and the technique in which this report was put together.

The Mayor touched on the most sensitive areas such as crime and the electricity crises, showing concern. We trust that the same concern will be shown when our residents need to foot the bill for the mismanagement of Eskom as we ask them to put their hands deeper into their pockets to get us out of the mess they have put us in. It is a pity that the report appears to be one sided as it focuses on the poor and overlooks the fact that the ANC is progressively impoverishing those that they perceive as the more affluent.

The Mayor touched every sphere and all sections explaining to us the problems and the future plans which were described as "a new dawn and an even better day". But unfortunately all we see is darkness and a very long night as Eskom tries to sort out its problems.

There was one area though that many of us have been questioning amongst ourselves and wondering what is happening. The report was strangely silent on this issue. Is it because there is no answer? In 2005 a decision was made by council to implode the present Munitorium. That was to be done by January 2008. We are still sitting here and waiting to find out what is going to happen. And we are being given mixed messages. Does any body know what is going on and would they please inform council. As councillors we are finding that we are being given less and less information and that is dangerous. More items are going through the Mayoral Committee than ever before, and some are missing out the committees completely, which means we are left in the dark in more ways than one.

But, for the CDP, the most interesting part of the speech was the reference to the Biblical story of Nehemiah. This was very encouraging and refreshing. When one begins to go to the Bible for examples, for our daily life, we find much is opened up to us in the way of sound advice and wisdom. As an entire page was given to this example there is a lot one could say about it.

One needs to begin with Nehemiah himself and the kind of man he was. As politicians and those that are involved in governing there is much we can learn. For example, in chapter 5:14 Nehemiah stated "from the time I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year even unto the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that is twelve years, I and my brethren have not eaten the bread of the governor." Although there was corruption with some of the other leaders Nehemiah set an example as a righteous man and did not enrich himself. Neither did he make nepotistic appointments. As appears to be the order of the day.

Another incident, which the Executive Mayor touched on was that "he had a vision of a better life for his **tribe**." One needs to take note that in part that was true but it was not only one tribe but it was two tribes (Judah and Benjamin) that he came back to. What many may not be aware of, is that there were ten other tribes to the north that made up the whole of Israel. But they were taken captive many years

before and were punished to such an extent that they disappeared and never returned to their land. The reason why they were so harshly punished is because they practiced interfaith and mixed their Hebrew religion with all sorts of pagan and other religious practices. *God wiped them out.*

What of course was lacking with this example, that the Mayor gave us, was the focus on who actually assisted Nehemiah to complete the work. Never once in the Executive Mayor's speech was God mentioned when in fact God was the primary force behind Nehemiah and the entire group of people. Their faith sent them back to Jerusalem their faith helped them to continue and prevail against their enemies and their faith helped them to achieve their goals.

With the Mayor turning to the Word of God for inspiration the CDP would suggest that she also honours the God of the Word by opening Council Meetings in prayer to the Creator God in the Name of His Son Jesus Christ instead of the meaningless moment of silence that is being forced upon us.

Thank you Madam Executive Mayor.