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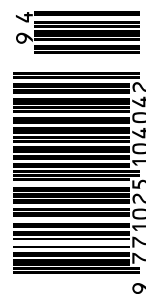
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noseweek

94

AUGUST 2007

**Rand Water
pulls the
chain**



**Media24's big-bucks snake oil diplomas How Fifa's got us
by the balls First, poisoned pineapples, now cadmium eggs
FirstRand and Ansbacher: it gets worse**



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noseweek

AUGUST 2007

ISSUE 94



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The largest water utility in the southern hemisphere has flushed away the last of its trouble-making paler-hued directors

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Formula for success

Joburg's assistant town planning enforcement chief Alan Wheeler claimed he knew nothing about the stash of objections to the Theodosious' Lone Hill development (nose93) – but shortly thereafter was suspended for taking bribes from developers, then quickly resigned. You don't mention where he went: he became sporting manager for off-circuit racing at Motorsport SA – based near Kyalami.

The Theodosious got involved with Kyalami when two rogu-



Flying colours: Stephen Simpson's website shows his car bedecked in Kyalami and SA flag colours. Note the total lack of other large stickers on the car, implying no other major commercial income source in a series which costs at least US\$300 000 (R2m) to compete in per season ...

See: Formula for success

Just why an SA race track, with no international events scheduled, would sponsor a car in a junior US series with no TV audience to speak of was a mystery – until your Greek piece suggested a possible answer.

Simpson's sponsorship appears to have been negotiated at about the same time that the Theodosious announced plans to develop yet another shopping mall – on Kyalami.

And Cape Town-based Paul Simpson, Stephen's father, is Woolworths' head of real estate

Net greed

Dr Johan Botha is a very special doctor if he thinks his colleagues will suspend dealings with Discovery (Letters, nose93).

Most doctors are firmly entrenched in an incestuous relationship between medical aids, hospital groups and medical practitioners. It's all about greed.

An example: a friend of mine recently went for an insurance medical and was advised to see a cardiologist – who wanted him booked into the Netcare Umhlanga Hospital for the check-up. (Netcare is SA's largest hospital and doctor group). When requesting permission from his medical aid, he was asked what was wrong. He could not answer and permission was refused. The cardiologist ranted that he's going to report the medical aid to the authorities ... but eventually the tests were done without booking into Umhlanga Hospital. They consisted of a urine test, an x-ray and an ECG.

Netcare and their doctors obviously wanted to net an extra R5000 for an unnecessary day in hospital. On that rare occasion they lost out.

Dave Bennett
Westville

The medical aid fund in your case was clearly not Discovery. My own GP is in a large CT Southern Suburbs practice. In the reception area a notice declares that the practice will not accept directives from Discovery Health. The reason? When they wished to have a patient, in extremis with viral encephalitis, admitted to the nearest hospital, her medical aid, Discovery, refused permission and insisted that she be redirected to the more distant Christiaan Barnard in the city – a Netcare facility with whom Discovery no doubt have some confidential financial arrangement. – Ed.

Scary pines

Congratulations on the serious matter of the pineapple "scare" (nose93) – you were first once again! I now wonder how Pick'nPay can sell very nice pineapples for only R2.99 each? Can't someone have samples analysed, in case we're ignorantly consuming lead, cadmium etc...

Marie Roux
Ceres

An interesting coincidence involving the Theodosiou development at Kyalami

ish shareholders – former world motorcycle champion Jim Redman (Golden Products, Sierra Ranch...) and inept former bike racer Mike Fogg (who has a string of dodgy deals to his name) – cashed in their 40% shareholding. Kyalami's majority shareholder, Imperial Bank, is suing them for alleged breach of their contract by selling out to the Greeks.

But it's your Woolworths reference that I found most interesting. While still in his teens, a modestly talented,

British-born race driver called Stephen Simpson won a few junior category races in SA. He then moved to the UK, where his success level was rather less than spectacular. He was called up to race the South African A1GP car in its first season there, but did not make it into the second.

In May/June he announced his switch to a junior US series known as the Indy Pro Series – the title is more impressive than the horsepower output – with sponsorship from Kyalami!

development.

So: 1. Daddy Simpson does deal with Greeks putting Woolworths into their controversial Lone Hill Mall as very desirable anchor tenant.

2. Stephen's Kyalami sponsorship is announced within the same time frame as the Greeks announced plans to "redevelop" Kyalami, which, they are no doubt trusting, will also open with a Woolworths.

Coincidence?

Caliban
Durban

We called Woolworths, who assure us that their lawyers have assured them that all is legal with their shop at Lone Hill. They say they know nothing about motor racing. But, within hours we get two unsolicited calls: the first from JCI/Investec spin doctor Brian Gibson, who announces that he has been hired by the Theodosious to explain to the world what misunderstood but honourable gentlemen they are, and to offer his assistance in the event of a follow-up. Call two comes from another PR-man, Robert Synge in England – he's been hired to tell the world what a great guy Stephen Simpson is – and to offer us his assistance should we be considering doing a follow-up on his client. So much synchronicity! – Ed.

■ See story page 13.

Gus



"He never recovered from the trauma of a blissful childhood"

Beautiful revelations

It was great to see Chris and Silke Erasmus and their Temple Beautiful brought into the open (*nose92*). And a little concerning that there are still people who support them. I do not wish to reveal details of my encounters with this man – but your story has closed the book for me on something I could not put out there myself.

Thank you.

A new *noseweek* reader
Cape Town

Cosmic foo-foo

The Temple Beautiful (*nose92*) brings to mind Voltaire's utterance: "Doubt is an uncomfortable condition, but certainly a ridiculous one." The road less travelled is now a five-lane highway for cosmic commuters, hell-bent on enlightenment. With Chris Erasmus at the helm, *Odyssey* has mutated from the home-spun, earnest little rag of the '70s to a glossy rag bloated with advertising: New Age healers beam out at the reader with botoxed serenity, offering panaceas for an age of rampant materialism.

A lot of what passes for "spirituality" seems merely to prop up the ego and endorse unhealthy levels of self-absorption.

N A Newsome
Kenilworth

Gross confusion

In the ongoing Dlamini versus ABSA saga (*nose93*), reference is again made to "the attorney firm of Bloch, Gross of Pretoria (a firm which was closely linked to S A Hefferman)". As I previously pointed out, there is no such firm. The firm is Bloch Gross & Associates Inc, of which Ernst Serfontein is the director.

Nathan Bloch and myself are not associated with the firm of Bloch Gross & Associates and/or Bloch Gross & Associates Inc.

It would be appreciated if you would kindly make reference to this fact in your next issue as both Nathan Bloch and myself have been embarrassed as a result of the references to the firm which appeared in your last two issues.

Solly Gross

Gross Papadopolu & Associates, Pretoria

We are not to be blamed for the confusion arising from carelessly selling your practice with your names still attached to it. – Ed.

Sweet by another name

Shame on you for referring to Ronald Suresh Roberts as "Shuga Mon"! Is it because he comes from a sugar- (and rum-) producing island? That's as childishly rude as referring to a Free Stater as a "mealie-muncher".

IT

Johannesburg

No. It's because he is so sweet. – Ed.

De La Rip-off?

I have been wondering for some time why the song *De La Rey* rings bells for me. Then it came to me: some years ago I visited 32 Battalion's Buffalo Base, and during a major parade the troops sang a whole raft of their very moving marching songs, which I recorded with a hand-held recorder. One of the songs was called *Generaal, Generaal, Generaal*. Sure the timing is different but the song, obviously composed by an unknown black soldier, seems to me to be the "Afrikaner" song in question. You can hear it on our web site www.galago.co.za under details relating to *The Buffalo Soldiers* by Col Jan Breytenbach. I would be inter-

ested to hear your music commentator Herbert K's views.

Peter Stiff

Johannesburg

I've listened to the song on your website – and you're right, there is a remarkable similarity. There need not be a direct influence; both songs – "yours" and DLR – use pretty standard melodic clichés (though I find yours more interesting!). But it certainly is a fascinating coincidence ... – HK

Cheating NoseArk

There is yet another untruth about me, in *nose92*. In a letter, Jim Phelps writes that I was "it seems, employed by RBM" to "purvey the view that mining would be good for the dunes [at St Lucia]". The *noseweek* editor adds his endorsement to this view. But I've never been employed by RBM, never earned a cent from RBM, never had anything to do with RBM and never campaigned for RBM on the mining of the dunes.

In April, *noseweek* claimed I did not answer Robert Kirby's challenge to me. I did, and my letter was published in the *Mail & Guardian*. When I sent *noseweek* evidence, it wasn't published. This means *noseweek* is lying. I believe in complete openness. I have challenged the cowardly author who hides behind the nom-de-plume "NoseArk" to a public debate on the matters on which he or she attacks me and others. In this debate we would both give full disclosure about our identities, our qualifications and our funding. There has been complete silence on this challenge.

Andrew Kenny

Noordhoek

The debate on energy and global warming in our NoseArk column is public. We simply give as good as we get, Mr Kenny.

I do apologise, however, for omitting to publish your correction about Kirby – an oversight.

Funding? Had you said "my cheque is in the post" we might have talked about funding. For the rest, maybe your opinions, once seen as cleverly, amusingly "maverick", have, over the years become so inappropriate, self-indulgent and predictable that others now just find them irritating ... and boring? – Ed.

Birds of a Kenny

My main memory of Andrew Kenny and the St Lucia dune mining threat comes from his sensational article, "The Rudest Boom Town in Africa," *Sidelines*, December 1994, in which he wrote in favour of the mining and against the conservation proposal. He claimed to speak for "poor blacks," who, he said, wanted the mining, and against "rich whites," who, he said, didn't. Since this simplistic and indeed distorted view of the issues was similar to the propaganda the mining interests used, it gave those working to save St Lucia the impression he worked for them. As I said, he seemed to work for RBM — we knew at the time he was an engineer at Mondri, another of the so-called "Big 5" industries in Richards Bay — big, amongst other things, in their destructive environmental impacts.

Jim Phelps

Empangeni

Letters

Letters offered for publication in *noseweek* should be sent to The Editor, *noseweek*, PO Box 44538, Claremont 7735 or emailed to editor@noseweek.co.za. Submissions should be no longer than 150 words.



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Arms and the Middle Man

FORGET RONALD'S BITTER and mostly unreadable contortions about Thabo – if you want to know what the ANC is about today, read Terry Crawford-Brown's long-anticipated book on the Arms Deal, called *Eye on the Money*. As its title suggests, the book reveals how the ANC government's defence policy has had little or nothing to do with "native" intelligence.

Arms-deal politics is unravelling everywhere in the world, not just in our country. It's a subject of our time. Besides giving the inside track on the South African deal, Crawford-Brown's book shows how shockingly obvious some of its more shocking features have always been – looked at by anyone with morals and some common sense. *Eye on the Money* is in bookshops this month. Add it to your shopping list.

Farewell Van Zyl

READERS WILL HAVE GATHERED from our last edition that Dr Frederik van Zyl Slabbert has resigned as chairman of our publishing company, because of the conflict of interest and embarrassment that he experienced as a result of our most recent critical reporting on the FirstRand Group – where he is still a director. Other factors conceivably also came into play: prestige and remuneration being the most obvious. (*noseweek*: nil / FirstRand: substantial in both cases.)

We may have appeared somewhat cheeky in our footnote response in the last issue, but it is with regret, and some understanding, that we received his letter of resignation. In politics he was for many years a reassuring symbol of youthful optimism that a more just society and

a better world are attainable. After politics, his intelligence and ready good humour made him a mediator of note. There is no doubt that we owe him enormous gratitude for what he has done for us over the past several years, by lending his good name to our cause and our defence. (Distance and our assertively independent style of journalism did not allow him any more influence than that.) Most particularly, it is by his intercession with George Soros's Media Development Loan Fund in our time of direst need that he, in effect, saved us. (Sorry, I know we shouldn't be reminding his friends at FirstRand of that.)

So thank you again – and Farewell.

Maybe we should just say totsiens?

The Editor

Mr Nose puts it about

Truth will out

MR NOSE, too, has had a look at that amazing bundle of Ansbacher documents handed into court by those honest men at FirstRand – and finds that his less diligent colleagues omitted one of the interesting names featured there. In a document dated 1 December 2000, a sweet bank official called Carol Barton briefly describes the accounts operated by Ansbacher Specialised Advisory Services. It is this document that introduced *noseweek* and the world to the account used for the deals "structured" for the benefit of Discovery directors, Barry Swartzberg and Adrian Gore.

But on rechecking the document Mr Nose finds that it lists three such structured deals: Ms Barton names the third honoured client as ... [Datatec MD] Jens Montanana!

A couple of years back Jens was in the news for his (probably innocent) involvement in an insider trading case brought against a Deutsche fund manager. The mass dumping of Datatec shares that resulted from the bit of information privately imparted by Montanana to a man from Deutsche over breakfast sent the share price plummeting. Not long after Jens was in the news, buying a large parcel of still low-priced Datatec shares. And not long after that it was reported he had

exercised a "put" option forcing some unidentified (and unfortunate) party to buy masses of Datatec shares off him at a vastly inflated price.

So Mr Nose asked his friend Jens: what's this all about with you and Ansbachers? Why've the bastards at FirstRand thrown your name into the pot? What did you do to them? Yes, he tells Mr Nose, the buying of Datatec shares and the exercise of the put option was all part of one of those Ansbacher "structured" deals. In fact, way back, he'd had "argy-bargy" with the Ansbacher people, trying to get to the bottom of the "structure", but he hadn't succeeded. Basically, when he'd wanted to borrow R200m from Ansbacher to buy Datatec shares, they suggested the "structure". The bank kept the shares he bought as collateral and demanded that he buy a put option which would guarantee the value of the shares. Yes, he recalls, the "structure" was supposed to be a "tax-friendly mechanism". It was supposed to somehow turn interest into dividends or capital. Anyway, the collapse in the share price triggered by the Deutsche man reduced the value of Ansbacher's security to the point where – inadvertently – it triggered the "put", which, ironically, he thinks may have been on Deutsche! Whoever it was, they took a knock of R70m-plus.

OK, so the FirstRand boys might want to give the "outsiders" at Discovery a rev – even see them on their way. But why might someone at FirstRand want to put Montanana on the agenda again? Jens and Mr Nose are giving it a thought.



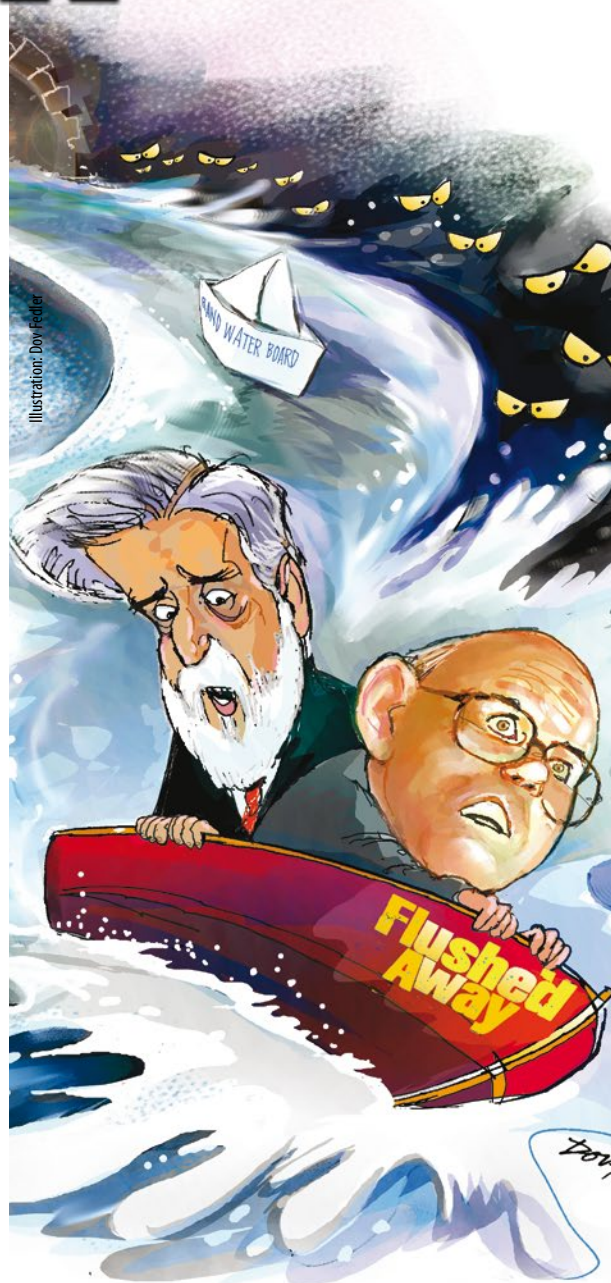
Flushed Away

Rand Water Board directors ousted as white staff drain away

THE BOARD OF RAND WATER, largest water utility in the Southern Hemisphere, and supplier of drinking water to Joburg and the rest of Gauteng, last year became “dys-functional and useless” following “disruptive and destructive behaviour” by two non-executive directors – or so its chairperson Jean Ngubane reported to then Water Affairs Minister Buyelwa Sonjica.

The boardroom war became so vicious, *noseweek* can reveal, that Ngubane presented an ultimatum to Minister Sonjica: either these trouble-makers go – or she and her chief executive would quit.

In an attempt to keep the crisis under wraps, the parastatal’s 2006 annual report simply states “resigned” under the names of David Dalling and Phiroshaw Camay. This was a lie – both directors were summarily dismissed without explanation by Minister Sonjica on 14 February 2006. Dalling, once Prog, later ANC MP, had been the sole surviving pale male on the



Storm tossed: Phiroshaw Camay and Dave Dalling

19-strong board, and Camay, a former Rand Water chairman, the last “Indian”.

As *noseweek* went to press, lawyers were in the final stages of negotiating a settlement with the sacked duo, who brought a high court action against present Water Affairs Minister Lindiwe Hendricks, and Rand Water, seeking an order that their sackings be set aside and that Rand Water pay them fees they would have earned from the date of their dismissals.

Court papers reveal that Dalling had demanded R363 458 and Camay R486 089. Rand Water has offered R200 000 each, but the rebels have been holding out for an additional R40 000 apiece.

The unreported boardroom rumpus has had far-reaching effects within Rand Water, the 104-year-old utility that supplies Gauteng with 3 457 million litres of water daily, and pulls in revenue of R3,7bn a year.

Both David Dalling and Phiroshaw Camay had long associations with Rand Water. Dalling, a one-time attorney and former ANC Parliamentary Whip, joined the board in 1995. Camay, founder and director of the Co-operative for Research and Education and winner of the South African Human Rights Commission’s Human Rights and Democracy award, was appointed in 1993 and was elevated to become non-executive chairman, a position he held up to 2005. The prestigious slot – and its R273 000 annual remuneration – then fell to its present incumbent, 53-year-old Jean Ngubane, a fierce advocate of black women’s empowerment who also sits on the board of women’s investment group Nozala Investments.

Soon chairperson Ngubane was at breaking point over “the problem of Mr Camay and Mr Dalling”. In desperation she wrote to Minister Sonjica on 20 December 2005 complaining about the “disgruntled and disruptive nature that is crippling the functioning and the effectiveness of the board”.

Ngubane believed that Camay, now 60, blamed her, and then chief executive officer Simo Lushaba, for the fact that he was no longer chairman. “The disruptive and destructive behaviour of Mr Camay and Mr Dalling takes place in the meetings of the full board and in the sub-committees,” she told the minister.

“The nature of the problem is that Mr Camay and Mr Dalling believe and act in a manner to demonstrate that they are above everyone and have more authority and power than the whole board,” she complained. “The highest decision-making structure, the board, is held to ransom, and the impact of the above situation on the company is very severe.”

When Ngubane wrote these words to the minister, Rand Water’s chief executive Simo Lushaba, on a pay package of R1.8m, had just put in his resignation. His departure, Ngubane

Picture: Robert Botha/Business Day



Waterpower: Jean Ngubane



up to 15%.

“Dalling wanted more people to be tested to establish their own HIV status. This was available, but less than 50% of the staff was going for testing. Dalling and Jean clashed because he kept raising HIV/Aids at board meetings on a regular basis. I think he over-pushed the issue.”

Dalling, now 67, was perceived as pernickety, argumentative and always questioning, in and outside the boardroom. After he and Camay were booted off the utility’s Exco they were vocal in criticism of its decisions.

The insider continues: “Jean’s a not-very-competent chairperson who wants to get involved in the management of Rand Water. She was satisfied with the HIV/Aids programme and didn’t want it to be questioned. Jean doesn’t like to be questioned in any

way. The board is very much a yes-man board.”

Dalling and Camay declined to speak to *noseweek* for fear of jeopardising their pending payouts.

After the departure of the troublesome duo, Rand Water was hit by a number of disquieting events which

forced its forensic audit manager Barry Badenhorst into overdrive. Such as:

■ The “inappropriate approval of expenditure” concerning an R80 000 donation by Rand Water to the Girl Guides Association, facilitated by Mandiza Mbekeni, general manager (corporate services). The donation was not on the charity list approved by the board. Her mother, Eugenia Mbekeni, is Girl Guides national president. Badenhorst’s audit team investigated and internal disciplinary charges were brought last year against Mbekeni. She resigned and left before the disciplinary inquiry could reach its conclusions.

■ Group shared services executive Thami Sithole’s special bursaries. Rand Water spends some R2m a year

‘I am terminating your term of office as from the date of this letter’ – Minister

told the minister, had been partly due to the “way the board has been undermined by Mr Camay and Mr Dalling”. Lushaba had been “dealt with in a very despicable manner in full view of the senior managers by Mr Camay and Mr Dalling”.

Ngubane ended her letter with an appeal that the minister “remove the two board members from the board with immediate effect”.

Two months later, on 14 February 2006, Minister Sonjica – she’s now Minister of Minerals and Energy – wrote identical four-line letters to Dalling and Camay thanking both for the “immense contribution” they had made to the board of Rand Water over the years. She added: “I am, however, terminating your term of office as from

the date of this letter.”

Dalling’s attorneys complained that the termination was “irregular and unlawful” in that no reasons for the decision had been provided; he was not given notice of the right of review or internal appeal; or an opportunity to make representations.

Insiders at Rand Water believe that once Ngubane became chairperson, a clash between her and the fired directors was inevitable. The issue that triggered their fallout was the issue of HIV/Aids within the 3000-strong Rand Water staff. “We had saliva testing on an anonymous basis, where you don’t get your own results,” says one senior source. “About 70% of the staff responded and the infection rate at that stage was about 11%, later re-assessed

on bursaries and in fiscal 2006 assisted 83 students at universities, technikons and tertiary institutions. Of these 43 were the children of staff members; the rest open bursaries for the public. There are strict selection criteria based on merit, financial need and "employment equity status" (race and gender) and all awards must go through the bursary committee.

Sithole wanted additional bursaries to be given to "four needy children" who all attended a school she had selected. Moreover, she stipulated that the recipients should be selected not by Rand Water's bursary committee, but the school's principal. This departure from the normal procedure – why had Sithole selected this particular school for the bursaries? – raised eyebrows, and her idea was vetoed by a new level of senior managers – the portfolio heads who sit on the Portfolio Integration Committee.

Sithole, a portfolio head herself, lobbied members of the committee separately and persuaded them to withdraw their objections. The four bursaries – for R30 000 each – were paid. Badenhorst's forensic audit team unravelled the whole affair and Sithole was reprimanded by the newly-arrived chief executive Themba Nkabinde (from middle-management at South African Breweries).

■ The chairperson's daughter. Last year Rand Water executives went on an all-expenses-paid trip to Beijing, where they attended a conference and found time to negotiate a R100m tender with a Chinese company called 3W-BSP (it was duly awarded last December). As *City Press* reported this June, Rand Water has been forced to suspend the tender after it was claimed that chief executive Nkabinde and his wife were feted by 3W-BSP executives in Beijing, as well as other irregularities. Now it emerges that chairperson Jean Ngubane took her daughter along for the ride. Eyebrows were again raised and Barry Badenhorst's forensic sleuths dug out the details – and discreetly suggested the chairperson should repay her daughter's substantial costs. *[Did she? – Ed.]*

Badenhorst snaps to *noseweek*: "I don't know what gave you the idea that I would be discussing anything of this nature with you. Who gave you my number?"

Recent high level departures include that of general manager (human resources) Geoff Verschoor. CEO Nkabinde laid three charges of insubordination against Verschoor last October for "not carrying out his instructions" and the HR chief was suspended. An



Fresh: New chief executive Themba Nkabinde

internal inquiry found Verschoor not guilty and he returned to work last December, but it became apparent that a good working relationship with the chief executive was now impossible. A parting settlement was negotiated and Verschoor left at the end of March.

Of mounting concern at embattled Rand Water is the flood of mainly white

engineers – water, civil, mechanical and electrical – departing for less stressed surroundings. Up to 20 have left in the past six months, say senior insiders. Only 28% of Rand Water's 200 water engineers are black, a figure Nkabinde's board is determined to boost. "It's a very serious problem," says one source. "The board tends to look fairly negatively on the engineers because of their white maleness." ■

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Media24's diploma circus

Are Damelin and Intec qualifications worth the paper they're printed on?

TENS OF THOUSANDS of South Africans are registering each year with Intec and Damelin Correspondence Colleges – under the impression

that the courses offered by these high-profile colleges will advance their careers. But what if those courses aren't officially accredited under the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), and therefore aren't recognised in the job market and professional arena, or by other institutions of higher learning?

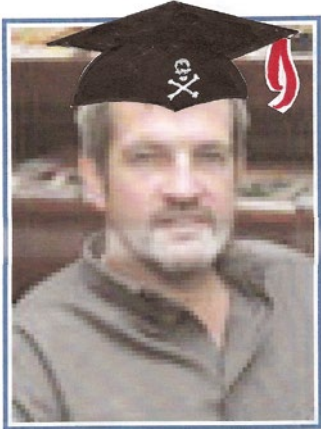
Not good for the students, or for the development of the country's skills base. But no problem for Naspers-owned Media24, that owns the International Colleges Group (ICG), which controls Intec and Damelin.

A source close to ICG tells *noseweek* that in 2003 the company created the slogan “One B in Three” – R1bn in three years’ time. The focus was shifted to enrolment rates, with course-completion being deliberately side-lined. Sales agents were given targets, and operated under supervision of a sales director who reported directly to the CEO.

Intec and Damelin correspondence courses are targeted at high school drop-outs, unskilled workers aiming to improve their skills and matriculants who have not secured university admission. Admission to either correspond-

ence college is almost as easy as boarding a taxi – pay a deposit and sign a standing order securing the balance.

If this smacks of apartheid-style exploitation of the



Media24 CEO Floris Brand



disadvantaged's dreams of education, *noseweek* won't disagree. Whereas the NQF was designed to regulate and assure industry-related standards of education and training, correspondence colleges like Intec and Damelin are exploiting loopholes and "hiccups" in the current accreditation system to claim that they are committed to the process – but in fact are getting away with "business as usual". Given that both advertise weekly in Media24 publications like *You* and *Drum*, the colleges are also heavily exploiting the career dreams of a new class of the disadvantaged.

Both correspondence colleges do claim “provisional accreditation” by Umalusi (see box) and both promote the image that they are “committed to meeting legislative requirements” in terms of the NQF. Students are given the impression that they are registering for courses designed to meet industry related training standards. Which is hardly the case – it’s quite clear neither

correspondence college has much, if any, chance of having their courses accredited by SAQA. Seven years after “provisional accreditation”,

Intec has yet to even approach the various SETAs that oversee such accreditation. *Noseweek* contacted eight of the relevant SETAs that oversee accreditation of courses such as those offered by Intec/Damelin. None of them has yet been approached by either correspondence college.

Both offer hundreds of courses, in fields from management and administration to childcare, to chemical and electrical engineering, the cheapest being VIP Protection at R1289, and the most expensive being a multimedia course at R44 700. With tens of thousands of students (neither college would provide numbers), each of whom would be registered for several courses, at an average of R3000 each, that R1bn figure begins to make sense. ICG has every reason to create the impression that its colleges are taking official SAQA accreditation seriously.

The two high profile colleges, do, of course, claim that they are in the process of seeking accreditation – the Intec website proclaims: “We were among the first private education and training providers to receive provisional accreditation from Umalusi, the Council for General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance.”

This loses its ring of progressive enthusiasm, when you discover what most prospective students won't know – that the original act required that education institutions register with SAQA, and in return *automatically* received provisional accreditation. They were given three years to comply with standards in order to get accreditation. Many years on, the Intec website says: "At present, this is the maximum accreditation status possible." At worst this is simply an outright fabrication. At best it's an ambiguous confession that Intec cannot move beyond merely registering its existence with the regulatory authority.

And besides – Umalusi accreditation

Quality time

THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK, established following the enactment of the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) Act in 1995, is aimed at ensuring that the quality of education and training offered by the country's education institutions is on a par with international standards.

But its implementation has been dogged by incompetent government officials and manipulation by private corporations eager to make quick bucks. Among the requirements of the legislation was that every new education provider be registered and accredited by SAQA before commencement of operations. Existing private education providers received provisional accreditation for simply registering – but years on, some, including Intec and Damelin Correspondence Colleges, have yet to make real moves to get actual accreditation.

In 1998 SAQA officially established the Education and Training Quality Assurance Bodies – Umalusi, which oversees accreditation of institutions, and 23 Skills Education Training Authorities (SETAs), which manage accredita-

tion of courses. Their job is to: monitor and moderate learners' progress, issue certificates, evaluate the capacity of education and training providers, and evaluate qualifications and curricula.

These bodies have received at least R7,9bn from the Treasury over the past seven years, with the budget for the current financial year estimated at R1,9bn.

Disturbingly, some SETAs spend a good portion of these massive allocations on outsourcing the actual accreditation process to private corporations, while private public relations firms deal with Umalusi's public image.

Most SETAs say they pay private companies to do their work due to "lack of capacities and skills". Umalusi directed *noseweek's* queries (which it could easily have answered) to PR company Stone Soup's managing director Bette Kun (who thus got paid to do their job).

With big money shielding communication between Umalusi and the public, what chance do applicants have of knowing the status of courses they plan to undertake?

of an institution does not lead to full SAQA accreditation. For this Damelin/Intec would have to get course accreditation from the various SETAs as well, from all their correspondence courses.

When *noseweek* contacted Umalusi, specifically asking about the case of Intec and Damelin correspondence colleges, the official answer (via a PR company) addressed only the case of the Damelin "face-to-face learning" College – an entirely separate matter. Pointing this out to Umalusi was to no avail. *noseweek* received the exact same long explanation of the difficulties relating to accrediting Damelin College, with a firm note that the matter was "now complete".

In other words Umalusi was "unable", or not prepared, to comment on the accreditation of distance-learning colleges that are riding on the back of face-to-face accreditation, and thereby exploiting a massive market. It's clear that Damelin distance-learning is intending to ride on the back of Damelin "face-to-face" accreditation.

The one course for

which, it seems, Intec does have accreditation, is "Early Childhood Development", an important field in South Africa, for obvious reasons, and a potentially lucrative one for those offering training. Our source tells us that the college convinced the relevant body that it had a country-wide network of mentors who would facilitate the necessary face-to-face practical aspect of such a course. When it was subsequently discovered that in fact there was no such network, and no practical support component to the Intec course, the accreditation was not annulled.

An educator in an applied psychology institution, whose courses in early childhood development are accredited, tells *noseweek* that the Intec course is based on an Australian module – and in that country the Intec "course" is the theoretical component of a training process that has substantial face-to-face learning.

Both Intec and Damelin correspondence colleges are employing strategies designed to convince prospective students to believe that the professional world will take their diplomas seriously.

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advertisement carries the picture of a bright and successful young woman who happily declares: "I believe I can trust a Damelin qualification". Billed as office administrator at "Golf Development International Holdings", it turns out she is a secretary at this company, and has no part in hiring anyone. Her own Damelin secretarial qualification was obtained at a face-to-face Damelin college, and not by correspondence. She admits to *noseweek* that this was a "photo gig" and that the statement alongside her picture is not her own.

CEO Don Paul of Oscar Tango, who did the ad, tells *noseweek* that the lady picked this statement from a list of options handed her – which had all been "profiled" as suitable for Damelin's ad campaign. "Not everyone can write," says Mr Paul.

Ton Vosloo's Naspers acquired ICG in 1998, and in 1999 Hendrik Gideon (Hennie) Louw – formerly of Deloitte & Touche Auditors – was appointed the chief financial executive (later managing director) of the new venture. The post-1994 period had created a goldmine for institutions offering post-matric education to a previously disadvantaged populace in search of qualifications for the new job opportunities opening up to them – especially in the new political administration. In the absence of government regulation in this field, anybody offering diplomas found plenty of applicants.

But a few months after Naspers took over ICG, SAQA gazetted new regulations meant to enforce the 1995 Act that had established the new regulatory body. Institutions offering higher education were required to register with various Skills Education Training Authorities (SETAs) and Umalusi.

However, to obtain full accreditation, various requirements had to be met – for example that practical classes be provided where appropriate. Which dropped a near impossible obstacle in the way of colleges dedicated to straight correspondence learning in fields that are essentially practical, or have a strong practical component – website design, photography, corporate forensic investigation or customer relations being obvious examples of hands-on subjects one can study by correspondence through the two colleges.

A source within Naspers tells us that through the urging of Louw, and with Media24 CEO Heinrich (Hein) Brand's approval, Educor has a highly equipped call centre that would rival that of a New York Stock Exchange brokerage firm.

"It is a high tech world in there," the source told us. "Every call for Intec and

The latest inspection of Damelin, conducted by Umalusi in May, found that the college was still non-compliant

Damelin is logged, and the marketing teams are given targets to translate two of every five calls into sales [students].

"Analysts translate the data and establish the patterns showing which time of the year is the most productive, and the type of callers that should be concentrated on. They are told not to waste time with callers who ask a lot of questions. All a caller has to do is give his or her address and course brochures will be in the post. If a caller doesn't register in three months, they are sent another set of brochures with an offer of either a discount on courses or prizes to be won for registration before a deadline. It goes on until the caller registers. And if you cannot afford it, the group will offer you a student loan, which must be repaid."

One such Intec offer brochure announces: "Enrol Today Beat the July Fee Increase Plus SAVE BIG! Plus WIN one of the three R5 000 Vouchers when you Enrol." And: "Enrol before 31 July 2007 and save up to R6 587."

Disgruntled applicants can't afford to hold Educor to account: "They can afford the best legal representation and their sister-corporations own the media – to whom would a dissatisfied applicant turn?" comments our source. (www.hel-lopeter.com/Intec will take readers to student complaints about the college.)

Hennie Louw himself recently lost his job with Naspers, apparently in the wake of the loss of R75m spent in unsuccessfully seeking accreditation for Damelin and Intec. The latest inspection of Damelin "face-to-face", conducted by Umalusi in May, found that the college was still non-compliant. Soon after, Louw and Andries Greyling, Educor's financial executive, were summarily fired. A source close to Media24 tells

noseweek that the two were personally held responsible for failing to obtain the Umalusi accreditation after spending R75m.

Another source says that the two opted out after they disagreed with Naspers' reluctance to discontinue some courses that cannot be offered without practical classes. Naspers had also refused to release further funds to the colleges. Apparently the scheme to get accreditation included an ambitious plan to network ICG correspondence students with public education bodies across the country – if so, it seems that at least someone in Naspers/ICG was attempting to address the complex and obstacle-bound issue of accrediting correspondence courses which require practical learning components.

Noseweek could not reach Louw for comment. Brand would not comment, accusing our writer of "behaving like a tabloid reporter". Curious irony for a Media24 executive. Minutes later, ICG chief executive Adrian Morris called to clarify the matter. According to Morris Intec and Damelin are not the only colleges that have not attained full accreditation. He would not comment on the departure of Louw and Greyling, asking us to email our enquiries – which were then not answered.

Last year Damelin withdrew its BCom Accounting degree after Raymond Martin, who was then Dean of studies at its West Rand campus, learned that several courses in the degree were neither registered nor accredited with the National Qualification Framework. Martin resigned after his attempts to have the courses accredited were ignored by Educor's administration. The situation worsened when all leading universities in the country declined to recognise the Damelin degree.

In August 2006, *Business Report* quoted JE Rowland, head of the accounting department at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, as having written to Martin: "The Damelin qualification [BCom Accounting] is not recognised by my university ... This decision was reached three years ago [2003] when we allowed two Damelin graduates to write admission examinations for the honours [in accounting] programme. The Damelin graduates failed these examinations miserably despite having obtained outstanding results in their degree courses."

Media24 was unable to tell *noseweek* whether the group has ever hired an Intec-trained (no practicals) TV producer (R6 614). And would Ton Vosloo hire an Intec-trained VIP Protection (no practicals) graduate to protect him, or indeed any of his staff? **■**



Now it's poisoned eggs



ZINC SULPHATE IMPORTED for agricultural use from China by local distributor Protea Chemicals was known to be contaminated with cadmium – a poisonous heavy metal – since at least 2004. Rainbow Chickens in Durban had discovered that the eggs laid by their breeding hens were infertile, and that their young chickens were not growing – after Protea's zinc sulphate was added to their feed. Laboratory tests revealed it was contaminated with cadmium. (Later tests revealed that the supplement also contains unacceptable levels of arsenic.)

Despite this discovery and the threat of legal action, Protea, a subsidiary of JSE-listed Omnia Holdings (market capitalisation R3bn) kept quiet about the problem – and ruthlessly, even devily, continued to sell the contaminated product into the entire agricultural sector for a further three years – until *noseweek* publicly raised the issue for the first time in June this year.

By then, pig and dairy farmers (BASF, a major supplier of vitamin and mineral supplements to pig and dairy farmers, had added Protea's zinc sulphate to their mix) had a hushed-up crisis on their hands, and the contaminated chemical had devastated the pineapple industry (two-thirds of the workers in the related canning industry have lost their jobs as a result). Now we are told citrus farmers could be facing a similar export crisis.

Clearly, the Department of Agriculture read *noseweek* – they woke up and announced they would be impounding all Protea's remaining stock. How? Why now? Why would anyone believe them?

At a recent news conference in Beijing, China's food and drug agency admitted it had a huge job ahead to improve its supervision of safety standards. "As a developing country, China's food and drug supervision work began late and its foundations are weak," spokeswoman Yan Jiangying said.

She added: "The food and drug safety situation is not something we can be optimistic about." (The previous head of the agency, Zheng Xiaoyu, had just been executed, having been caught taking bribes from drug manufacturers.)

Can we rely on the care and honesty of our own importers and regulatory authorities to protect us? Forget it.

Conditions here are no better than in China. Protea Chemicals' website carries the usual PR bullshit-speak: "Protea Chemicals ... strive to be innovators in the world of chemistry. The service ethic is paramount and emphasis is placed on integrity in all of the group's dealings with its ... suppliers and 6500 customers."

And how's this for a horror scenario: "Protea Chemicals is an active member of CAIA, the watchdog of the chemical industry in South Africa, and as such is a signatory to the worldwide Responsible Care programme ... an important aspect of Protea Chemicals concern for the environment." And there you are, puking cadmium, lead and arsenic.

There is one paragraph on their website that you can rely on – it's the one that best explains their ruthless and reckless conduct over the past three years. It reads: "Limitation of Liability ... The products ... are sold or provided by the Omnia Group without warranty, expressed or implied, ... of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose ... Under no circumstances shall the seller be liable for damages for loss of anticipated profits, consequential damages, incidental damages or losses or damages to persons or property arising from the use of these products."

And they mean it. Their main defence in the action brought against them by Rainbow Chickens is drafted in just those words. Steven Louw, head of Protea's import division, couldn't understand the problem. "It's an insurable event. We are covered by our insurers," he told *noseweek*.

Why had he continued to market the stuff after 2004? we asked Protea MD Edu Cloete. He refused to say. What was he going to do when my child got sick from it? He wouldn't say. What was he going to do about those Eastern Cape canning workers who lost their jobs? about the farmers who are going bust? He wouldn't say – because, he said (sounding more pig than chicken), "the matter is sub judice".

Isn't it time for consumers to demand that our major food suppliers assure the public that they only buy foodstuffs from farmers prepared to warrant that they use no products supplied or imported by Omnia or Protea Chemicals? **■**

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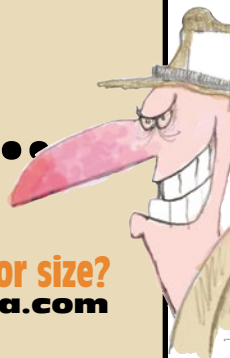
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FirstRand regrets

IN JUNE (*nose92*) we reported on a court case in which it was revealed that FirstRand's "Ansbacher" division had laundered funds for Adrian Gore and Barry Swartzberg, both senior directors of Discovery, another FirstRand subsidiary, as part of a "structure" clearly aimed at evading tax. The "structure" in question is a criminal scheme on more than one score, and exposes both directors – and the bank that devised and carried it out – to criminal prosecution.

On 5 June the directors of FirstRand issued a press statement, in which they start out with the bizarre claim that there is "absolutely no substance" to the *noseweek* report – which was based entirely on documents produced by FirstRand itself in a high court case. The statement was clearly issued by the bank in an attempt to pacify two very angry men, messrs Gore and Swartzberg, who, interestingly enough, did not complain to *noseweek*.

The real issue, it emerges, is who should take the rap for the illegal scheme: the bank, for devising the scheme and offering it to its clients (for a fat fee), or the clients – in this case messrs Gore and Swartzberg? The two Discovery directors have insisted that since FirstRand got them into the mess,

FirstRand must get them out of it. So the statement starts out by confirming that it is not Gore and Swartzberg who "structured" their financial affairs in an "inappropriate" manner.

This is followed by the admission: "The structure was provided to them by Ansbacher South Africa, which specialises in wealth management..." And then comes the excuse: "The structure (first implemented in August 1999) was subject to stringent due diligence, which included obtaining internal and external legal opinions." (In plain English: FirstRand's directors relied on lawyers' advice that the scheme was legal, so, even if the scheme is in fact criminal, they are innocent. That's what one pays lawyers for: to provide a defence.)

But who were the lawyers FirstRand/Ansbacher SA consulted? And may we see the advice they gave, please? Because, you see, we know that one of the lawyers they consulted was international tax law expert Barry Spitz – they employed him full time for that purpose. We also know that in 2000 he advised them that their "structures" were not legal. That's why they fired him within the year – and why his company is now suing them in the high court.

That the bank's directors knew they were pushing their luck emerges in the

next paragraph of their press statement:

"In 2002 the regulatory, tax and legal framework governing foreign-owned local companies was again reviewed by Ansbacher South Africa, which then took the decision to discontinue and redomicile the foreign entities involved in the structure."

OK, so the bank is guilty. And by 2002 they knew their cover was blown; it was time to bring their South African clients' money, hidden in offshore discretionary trusts (enabling them to pose as foreign investors in SA companies) back home. What were the words they used? "Reviewed", "discontinue", "redomicile", "foreign entities": the crooked language of a crooked bank.

What, then, of Mr Gore and Mr Swartzberg? Were they just ordinary customers who innocently bought the bank's "products"? C'mon! They're executive directors of a major financial institution. A plea of innocence by them would be as damning as a plea of guilty!

Which brings us to the final paragraph of FirstRand's press statement, which deals with "the real background to this article". They note that the case between themselves and Spitz's company did not involve Discovery, or Messrs Gore and Swartzberg, and that the issues raised in the *noseweek* article are "totally irrelevant to the case".

That is correct – or was the case, until FirstRand itself quite inappropriately introduced them into the case. (Mr Nose has some theories about why they did so. See page 6.) Whatever FirstRand's reasons were for introducing the documents relating to the Discovery directors' accounts, they are now undoubtedly an issue in the case.

When it comes to *noseweek*, the issues have never been irrelevant; they raise concerns that are of huge public interest.

The FirstRand statement concludes by declaring *noseweek*'s June story to be "defamatory, spurious and inaccurate in every material respect". And they regret the reference to Discovery and its directors in *noseweek*. (They apparently don't regret their own gratuitous "mention" of these directors in their own court papers.) The cheek!

Gentlemen, bluster is the last resort of the liar and the thief. It won't avail you. The truth will out.



"Okay – Let's review what you didn't know and when you didn't know it."

Glenrand's nose dive

THERE APPEAR TO be points of correlation between *noseweek* stories about Glenrand, and their share price. In the most recent case, when *nose92* revealed at the end of May that the Protector liquidators were suing Glenrand MIB for R63m over the "White Mischief" fiasco (*nose68*), the insurance broking group's shares were sitting at 143c, following a May high of 149c. Two trading days later, by which time the market had digested the implications of our report, 1 649 125 shares were dumped on the market and the share went into freefall, to hit an all-time low of 125c on June 18.

Investment in Glenrand has been a bumpy ride. The company listed in 1998 at an optimistic price of 450c, and investors must have heaved a desperate gasp as the share price dived by 283% in the first six months, to just 150c. But, after some ups and downs, 2003 saw the start of a heartening – if temporary – recovery.

That R50m which Mark Seelenbinder so kindly paid to Glenrand (via Namibia) for its worthless 65% shares in the Protector health care group (*nose68*) was received by Glenrand MIB about 22 June 2004, when its shares stood at around 337c. Did the R50m windfall provide the impetus that six months later saw the Glenrand share price hit an all-time, if short-lived, high of 410c on 7 January 2005?

By the time *nose68* hit the streets in June 2005 with the shameful story of the Great Empowerment Deal That Never Was, the share had fallen to under 250c. After the market had digested the *nose69* news that the Competition Commission was looking into the affair, the shares were down to under 225c.

Four months later *nose73* revealed that the Scorpions, SA Revenue Service and the JSE had launched their own investigations. Ironically, this provoked a small rally, but by the following January the counter was heading south – to under 150c by mid-year.

Not everyone has lost out in the rollercoaster ride. January 2006 saw the Glenrand counter hovering at a more



respectable 260c. In April 2006, with a steady slide gaining momentum, two Glenrand directors sold large parcels of their private shares in the company. Allan Mansfield sold 1 611 263 Glenrand shares at 227c – hauling in a handy R3,6m, and David Harpur sold 616 589 shares yielding him R1,4m. Within weeks the share had tumbled to under 150c.

■ Allan Mansfield is also managing director of the Attorneys Insurance Indemnity Fund, in which capacity he assured *noseweek* in early 2006 that he would personally speed up a claim by 16-year-old Thembi Mgcina for serious head and leg injuries sustained when she was hit by a car when she was five (*noses76,78,88*). Thembi's R4m claim against the fund followed the disappearance of her attorney Admiral Khoza. In 2005 Judge Piet Meyer found that the car driver was negligent. Glenrand, which administers the attorneys' indemnity fund, continues to question the amount that Thembi is due (their own medical expert concedes that plastic surgery to her mangled ankle will alone cost R200 000). On August 27 the Johannesburg High Court will hear arguments over the disputed quantum. **W**



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Cape Town's big hole

ALL THE TALK about how well construction is going at the new Green Point stadium is rather misleading. So far, it's been mainly digging. There is now a muddy great hole in what was the Metropolitan Golf Course, but whether the R2,85bn (and counting) African Renaissance Stadium will ever rise above the ground is still very much in the balance.

This month, opponents of the Green Point site are going back to court in an effort to have construction stopped.

The case has been brought by the recently-formed Cape Environmental Protection Association (CEPA), headed by former city councillor and repeat objector, Arthur Wienburg.

Wienburg insists CEPA fully supports Cape Town hosting part of the 2010 World Cup. What it objects to is "the blunt imposition of a massively (and unnecessarily) expensive stadium – at a staggering cost that will drain public coffers for decades to come – on the chosen site".

And he is "absolutely certain" that the judges will agree with him.

CEPA's core claim is that the Green Point decision was "unlawful". It was taken "behind closed doors, under heavy pressure from Fifa, before being rammed through an accelerated environmental approval and planning process with scant respect for the governing statutes, regulations and ordinances".

Green Point, as readers may know,



The great Green Point stadium row is far from over

was not part of the original bid presentation to Fifa. Back in 2004, Newlands was down as Cape Town's showcase venue. But by October 2005, all three tiers of government had thrown their weight behind Athlone because this would bring "more development benefits to the city".

Then, in November 2005, Sepp Blatter visited Cape Town. He was so impressed that he demanded the city host one of the semi-final matches as well as a quarter-final and a share of the pool games. To qualify for this honour, however, it would have to provide Fifa with a 68 000-seater stadium. That's only 1 000 seats fewer than the venue for the 2006 World Cup final in Germany, one of the richest countries in the world and also very good at foot-

ball. And a country within quick and easy reach by hundreds of thousands of other football mad Europeans.

The demand ruled out Newlands, which will only be able to seat 55 000, and Athlone, which will have space for just 45 000.

There were other options on the table. The South African Football Association's Western Province division envisaged a 65 000-seater stadium in the impoverished but soccer-mad township of Blue Downs on the Cape Flats. There was also strong support for the centrally-situated Culemborg site on the Foreshore.

But according to the official version of the story, Blatter had already made up his mind. He had visited the old Green Point stadium during a tour of proposed practice facilities, and decided the common had the prettiest view for a global TV audience. Not everyone accepts this version of events. And there is some evidence that our politicians



Sods: Western Cape Premier Ibrahim Rasool and Cape Town Mayor Helen Zille at the sod turning ceremony for the stadium; and (above) the building site

SUPPORTERS OF THE Green Point site are delighted with a recent survey that found 69% of Capetonians are in favour of the disputed stadium. This appears to confirm the frequently-expressed opinion that the only people against the project are a privileged minority of mainly local residents.

But as CEPA points out in its court affidavit, the wider community has never been properly consulted or informed about the long-term implications of the "super-venue". The only public meetings were held in the immediate neighbourhood. The environmental impact documents were only available at the Sea Point, Camps Bay and City libraries. And the few media notices that were published in the daily broadsheets and the Green and Sea Point knock-and-drop were in English or Afrikaans only.

CEPA says even those who knew enough to object had too little time to respond to the thousands of pages of official documents and were not given all the facts. They did not, for

Who wants it?

example, have access to the Grant Thornton report until after objections to the rezoning of the Common closed in November last year.

Aside from that, the survey was "fatally flawed" because the question asked tied the World Cup to the building of the stadium. "In effect, they were asking people whether they supported Cape Town hosting the World Cup, which is NOT the issue," says CEPA Chairman Arthur Wienburg.

It is also worth remembering that when the Green Point decision was first announced, it was widely criticised on the left.

The ANC admitted having "serious reservations" about Green Point. It said it would have preferred the new stadium to be built on the Cape Flats, not only because that's where most football fans live, but because of the party's "basic commitment to social redress, community development and upliftment".

This view was echoed by the Young Communist League which said the Green Point venue would divert funds away from housing for the poor. Co-satu agreed, and said "Fifa should not dictate to us on how to plan and develop our country".

The Cape Town Civil Society City-wide Forum, which represents 179 civic organizations, described the decision-making process as "authoritarian and dictatorial".

Spokesperson for the Provincial Department of Sport Mandla Yeki admitted that it was difficult to justify building a new stadium in light of the low attendance at local soccer matches.

And even while criticizing opponents of the Green Point site last year, Mayor Helen Zille is quoted as having said: "There can be no moral justification for this level of investment in such an area, given the great development needs in other parts of the city, such as Khayelitsha, Mitchell's Plain, Gugulethu and Athlone".

were as keen as Blatter for Fifa to accept Green Point.

Their final decision seems to have been taken on 21 January 2006 at a "secret" meeting attended by Rasool, the then Mayor Nomaindia Mfeketo, and unnamed government ministers. The city has been unable to provide the minutes of those discussions, but we can glean some idea of the outcome from a follow-up letter to Mfeketo from Rasool dated 24 January.

Rasool wrote that he "thought it urgent that we comply with the outcomes of that meeting" by working to "upgrade the presentation on the Green Point Stadium" in time for a report-back to central government and the Local Organising Committee three days later. So who was persuading whom, then?

Whatever the circumstances, the public was neither notified before the decision was announced in parliament in February 2006, nor invited to comment afterwards. Nor had any impact or economic feasibility studies been done.

In March, after the local elections, new Mayor Helen Zille expressed reservations about Green Point and called for an independent report into four alternative sites: Newlands, Athlone, Culemborg and Wingfield.

Two reports were produced, but neither was published. One concluded that Newlands would be the cheapest

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The point: Artist's impression of the stadium on the site

option and Athlone the best in terms of cost and developmental impact. The other rated Culemborg the best site, with Newlands in second place. According to the CEPA, these findings were concealed from the public and excluded from the environmental impact assessment. The only choice the public was given was between two alternative locations on Green Point common – the ex-

isting stadium site, or the golf course. Then, when the majority of those who expressed a preference said they'd prefer the old stadium site, they were told it had to be the golf course.

Since then, a number of independent environmental and economic reports have cast doubt on the wisdom of Green Point as a location. One of the most damning is a little-publicised document commissioned by the city from consultants Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC). It's a detailed review of the Green Point stadium business plan prepared by the firm Grant Thornton, the same people who have consistently forecast a nation-wide economic bonanza from the 2010 event.

The PwC report, which forms a large part of CEPA's evidence to the court, blows holes in Grant Thornton's optimistic projections. It says that not only has Grant Thornton overestimated the stadium's future revenue, but it has underestimated the running costs,

especially the cost of maintaining the structure after 2010 (see sidebar).

According to PwC, the only way to make the stadium sustainable would be to add a commercial component, like a hotel, casino or general office space, to the site. As the objectors point out, this would require a whole new rezoning process and go against every undertaking by the authorities not to allow commercial development on the common.

It will be up to the long-term operator to find a way to make the venue and the adjoining urban park profitable until 2040. Not surprisingly, only three applications for the job had been received by the time tenders closed on July 10. And there is no guarantee that any of these comply with the requirements of the Bid Adjudication Committee. The winner, if there is one, is expected to be announced by the end of August.

Anyone pinning their hopes on WP Rugby to bail the stadium out will be dis-

The devil in the details

GRANT THORNTON bases its business plan for Green Point on three "scenarios", Low, Base and High, with the Base model (the middle way) regarded as "most likely". All three scenarios, however, are claimed to be "financially sustainable".

By contrast, PricewaterhouseCoopers says the only likely scenario is the Low one – the one that projects "substantial losses" of around R7m a year for the three years following 2010, which is as far ahead as the projections go.

The Base and High scenarios, which could make "small profits", are dismissed in the PwC report. It says the Base scenario is "highly unlikely" while the High scenario, which depends on Western Province Rugby upping sticks from Newlands to Green Point, is so unlikely it "should be disregarded". Even if the profitable scenarios were feasible, says PwC, "if the substantial capital spent [and risk of loss – Ed.] is taken into account, the return on investment is very low".

So how could Grant Thornton, and the City, have got it so wrong?

Well, for one thing, they miscalculated the ticket revenue, both for the World Cup semi-final and for all other soccer and rugby games anticipated for the stadium. The business plan allocates 15% of the World Cup gate to the stadium operator while the City's contract with Fifa specifies 10%. This would cut the

stadium's 2010 revenue by R10m.

For regular soccer and rugby matches, the plan awards the stadium all the fees which by rights should go to the home team. Correcting this would "reduce the net ticket revenue considerably", according to PwC.

On top of that, it warns that attendance figures for local soccer games are over-optimistic. The business plan predicts crowds of between 15 000 and 20 000 for each Premier Soccer League game, while current attendance is less than 1 000 for local games and only approaches 15 000 when top teams visit. Fans are likely to be put off by the distance they would have to travel to reach Green Point. And every match scheduled there would mean less income for other council-owned venues.

Oddly, the PwC review does not adjust its calculations to take these anomalies into account, although it does discount income from Confederation Cup games which will no longer be played in Cape Town, and income from a non-existent PSL game, both of which feature in the Grant Thornton report. It also revises the income from business suites since Grant Thornton based its figures on 25-seater suites, while the stadium plan only allows for 14-seaters.

Under the Low scenario, these changes reduce the stadium revenue by more than R1,7m a year after 2010. But since PwC didn't take the other

anomalies into account, their conclusions, pessimistic though they are, are probably still on the rosy side.

Then there are the costs. One glaring omission from the Grant Thornton report is municipal charges for electricity, water, sewerage and solid waste removal. These services cost Newlands almost R3m a year.

To make matters worse, the cost of maintaining the stadium has been seriously underestimated, especially since the City hopes to keep the place operational for the next 30 years – the outer limit for such a structure.

The industry "rule of thumb" is that at least 10% of the annual operating budget be spent on maintenance. This would put the cost at about R1,3m year according to PwC figures, although some objectors say the amount could be as high as R3,6m. Grant Thornton has allowed for just R900 000.

This underestimation is a "high level risk", according to PwC and more money will have to be found, especially in later years as wear and tear and the sea air begin to take their toll.

When *newseweek* asked the city's 2010 spokesperson, Pieter Cronje, about the discrepancies between the two reports, he replied that both documents had been "superseded by events" and were in any case, "lengthy and technical".

"A debate on selective quotations would serve no constructive purpose. "

appointed to know that it is not among the bidders. According to CEO Theuns Roodtman, the Union is yet to make any decision regarding its future involvement, but is concerned that the new stadium could create an oversupply of big sporting venues in Cape Town.

Investec must be hoping like hell that someone is up to the challenge. Earlier this year, the banking group guaranteed the city R185m towards construction costs in the expectation that prospective operators would outbid that amount for the tender. The city claims the operating licence is worth R260m.

Asked whether Investec would accept the licence if there were no other takers, spokesperson Rob Nicolella said: "That was not our intention. We are not stadium managers. We made this commitment because we wanted to assist the city to meet the shortfall in construction costs".

Although he had seen both the Grant Thornton and PwC reports, Investec had "run its own numbers". It was "difficult", he said, to answer any questions about the need for commercial development on the stadium precinct. Of course, none of this will apply if the objectors succeed in having the brave new stadium reduced to an underground parking garage, which is one of the city's fall-back positions should the court challenge succeed.

The city received 130 objections to the revised building plans it advertised for public comment in May, most of them from CEPA. As things stand, no building plans have yet been passed and two reports crucial to their approval – the wind and noise studies – have still not been released.

Zille has pleaded with CEPA not to pursue its case, and to "think carefully about what they will cost Cape Town if they succeed". But for CEPA, a more relevant question is what it will cost the city, and taxpayers in general, if it fails.

One of the more immediate risks is the inevitable increase in building costs. "Even the anticipated escalation of 10% a year to 2009 would mean a final cost of almost R3,5bn," Wienburg says. "And according to international studies, the average cost overrun on this kind of stadium is typically 32%."

He also says the city has underestimated the infrastructure the stadium will require for bulk services like electricity and sewerage disposal.

According to the business plan, the stadium will drain an extra 10 megawatt amps from the faltering grid when all the lights are on. The electric-

ity distribution network will require "major reinforcement" including new cables running all the way from the Montague Gardens substation, new switching stations and a brand new R151m substation at the stadium itself. The city has budgeted R200m for the work. Wienburg says independent experts have put the cost at R1,4bn.

He says he has also been "reliably informed" that the existing sewerage outfall pipe, said to be adequate by the city, would not be able to meet the stadium's needs. There is no budget for upgrading this infrastructure.

In any event, the stadium will add to the pollution of Table Bay, which is already suffering the effects of its daily dose of 30 million litres of raw sewerage from the Green Point outfall.

For information technology and communications infrastructure, the city has estimated a cost of R57m, half of which it hopes to raise from the private sector. Wienburg claims the cost of providing these facilities up to Fifa's exacting standards would cost hundreds of millions of rand.

And then there's transport. The public will be contributing R1,9m towards upgrading Cape Town's roads, rails and parking lots. The official justification for this expense is that the city will be left with the "legacy" of a new integrated transport system, largely funded by non-resident taxpayers.

It's hard not to notice, however, that all the integrated roads and rails seem to lead ultimately to Green Point, which is not a daily, monthly or even annual destination for most citizens of the Mother City. And the cost of getting there is unlikely to make it any more popular in future, even among sports fans.

For CEPA, the only sensible alternative at this stage is Newlands. According to the Economic Specialist study prepared for the city council, the cost of upgrading the rugby stadium would be less than R1,8bn and transport infrastructure would require just R550m.

In May, Wienburg, wrote an impassioned plea to Sepp Blatter urging him to drop Fifa's insistence on a massive new stadium and clear the way for a more affordable option. "We appeal to you to recognise the problems and circumstances of Africa, the crying need for money to be used for more pressing and urgent requirements than 90 minutes of soccer," he wrote.

So far, he has received no reply. The case is due to be heard on 13 August in the Cape High Court. **■**

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Dune deal

A dicey Australian company has been playing fast and loose with the future of local communities in its bid to strip-mine along Pondoland's pristine coastline



RESIDENTS OF THE Xolobeni district of Pondoland, who have never been consulted on the matter, may soon find themselves displaced from their homes while a suspect Australian minerals company strip-mines the local coastal dunes and beaches for titanium.

The piece of coast that Mineral Commodities (MRC) and its local subsidiary Transworld Energy and Mineral Resources (TEM) are targeting lies within the 50km stretch known as the Pondoland Centre of Endemism, a centre of plant diversity, which Conservation International has

declared a global plant “hotspot” – an area where exceptional concentrations of endemic species are undergoing rapid loss of habitat. 196 species are endemic to Pondoland.

The dunes that MRC proposes to mine are hundreds of thousands of years old – and besides heavy minerals also contain Stone Age artefacts indicating early human settlements from the Sangoan era, dating back some 300 000 years. This makes the area an important heritage site, and MRC has commissioned the Albany Museum to conduct a heritage assessment.

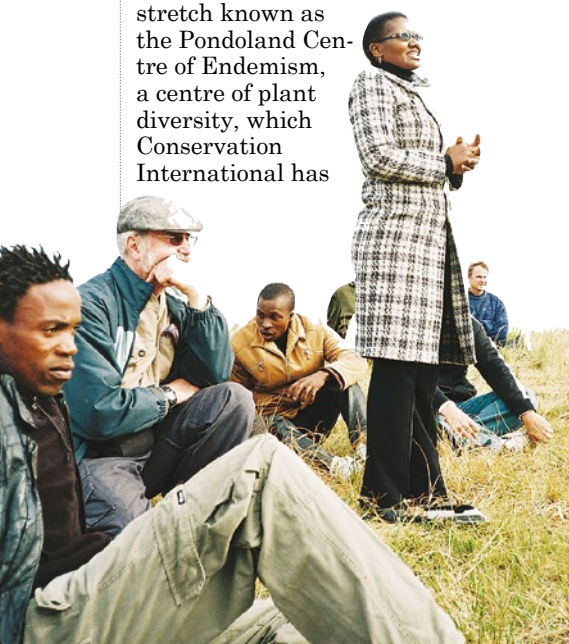
Residents who are objecting to the mining scheme find themselves up against the divisive and manipulative tactics of TEM, as well as the tunnel vision of the Department of Minerals and Energy, and a couple of scheming ANC bigwigs (ex Department of Trade and Industry) intent on becoming the BEE beneficiaries of the proposed deal. John Barnes, CEO of TEM, worked for controversial Richards Bay Minerals (RBM) before taking up his post at TEM. Local community members were

hosted by RBM as part of an introduction to mining. Instead of consulting with the local people whose lives will be severely affected by the proposed mining, TEM has been co-opting people of influence. Its most recent tactic has been to launch a smear campaign against those locals opposed to dune mining, and to sabotage community meetings.

Moreover, the BEE deal effectively lands the local shareholders in massive debt for the few shares they do get: they'll earn dividends only after their shares have been paid off – perhaps as far as three generations into the future.

MRC and TEM are punting titanium mining as the panacea for poverty and unemployment in the region, but an independent assessment compiled by accountants Grant Thornton shows that financial benefits from mining and nature-based tourism are virtually identical. The real and crucial difference lies in the massive social and environmental impacts of strip-mining an extraordinarily rich piece of virtually untouched coastline. (See www.wildernessfoundation.org for a full report.)

There are serious doubts about the viability of “rehabilitating” the



Law of the land: Attorney Andiswa Mdoni briefing Wild Coast residents about their rights to object to planned mining operations

dunes after the mining. University of KwaZulu-Natal geologist Dr Ron Uken says: "What is left after the heavy minerals have been removed are huge piles of sand, devoid of all life."

Instead of rehabilitation, there is mere "re-vegetation" with one or two fast-growing species. More often than not, the company responsible for mining simply gets put into liquidation before meeting its rehabilitation responsibilities and the community is left with the mess. Environmentalists say that a larger area than that actually mined will be negatively affected by dust, water shortages and pollution, leading to a strip of desert on what is now pristine coastal endemism. Two rivers will have to be dammed, with devastating consequences for groundwater sources and the wetland plants of the estuarine system. The endemism biome will be divided up and the animal corridors will be disrupted.

GCS (Pty) Ltd has been appointed by TEM to undertake the required Environmental Impact Assessment. But the impartiality and integrity of GCS has been questioned by James Jackelman, who submitted comments on the draft Environmental Scoping Report (ESR): "I find it worrying that the EIA will not comprehensively address issues arising from road construction/upgrading to site, traffic flow to site, water supply and storage, electrical supply to site, external bulk sewage disposal, external waste disposal, siting of the MSP and smelter, household relocation issues, employment issues, beneficiation issues, vegetation removal issues, financial feasibility issues, etc." Which suggests that there will be massive hidden costs and further degradation of the area than already revealed.

The pro-mining lobby cite the failure of previous eco-tourism initiatives in the area as evidence that mining offers better rewards. But, curiously, one of the central figures in the original community-based eco-tourism scheme in the area has become the main local advocate of mining – and is at the centre of manipulations designed to split the community and derail objections to the destruction of the coastal dunes and beaches.

Zamile "Madiba" Qunya was chairman of the Amadiba Coastal Communities Development Association (Accoda Trust) that was set up to represent villagers' interests and dis-



Big hole: What the Wild Coast could look like if mining goes ahead

tribute profits in the eco-tourism scheme. Accoda was ready, after lengthy negotiations, to sign a lucrative partnership contract with Wilderness Safaris, when Qunya rejected it.

And the rejection coincided with Qunya conspiring with PE-based attorney Max Boqwana to set up the Xolobeni

Community Empowerment Company (Pty) Ltd (Xolco) as the junior BEE partner in the mining deal. Qunya then changed the composition of Accoda so that 11 of the 12 members were mining supporters.

Indeed the biggest source of unhappiness in the region is MRC and TEM's claim to their shareholders that they have community support. The public

participation process was highly flawed and there have been frequent charges of bribery.

Xolco has repeatedly circumvented the protocol of tribal decision-making processes by organising alternative meetings with selected individuals. To counter this, the Amadiba Crisis Committee (ACC) was formed, and in early July it resorted to visiting King Mpondombini Sigcau and Queen MaSobhuza Sigcau to plead its case. At the time of going to press the royal house seemed sympathetic and scheduled two meetings to debate this matter further through the local tribal authority channels.

The ACC lodged a complaint with the police, and mandated the Xolobeni Paramount Chief Yalo to make objections to the OR Tambo Municipality. Petitions have already gone to the Department of Minerals and Energy,

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the MEC for Eastern Cape Economic Affairs and Tourism, and the Department of Public Enterprises, stating opposition to mining and expressing a preference for community development options that provide for the sustainable use and conservation of the natural wealth of the area. In addition, a complaint has been lodged with the Human Rights Commission, which is investigating the situation.

At a June meeting of the local community a mini rural rebellion was narrowly averted when 150 residents from the Xolobeni district met with their tribal authority at uMgungundlovu tribal court to find out why certain individuals had signed a BEE agreement as far back as 2003, without a full community mandate. On three occasions the crowd rose shouting "Amandla!" and threatened to toyi-toyi down the hill to remove weather stations and poles erected as part of the EIA monitoring process into the dune mining proposal.

By the end of the meeting, the residents from five villages affected by the dune mining proposal demanded a direct meeting with Mark Caruso, CEO of MRC, and John Barnes, to clear up the widespread confusion about the lack of consultation and public participation in the application process, as well as to respond to allegations that a front company had been set up, supposedly on behalf of those present.

According to the original agreement, Xolco has a junior shareholding of 9% that was ostensibly to channel benefits to the community. However the only Xolco directors are Max Boqwana (the PE attorney appointed by TEM to set up the structure) and Zamide Qunya.

The tribal council diffused the situation by proposing that two residents, Basheen Qunya (Madiba Qunya's brother) and Mavovo Ndovela, confront



No go: Local chief Nkosi Ntabazakhe Maleni has resisted planned mining operations

Neither the Qunya brothers nor Barnes arrived. Later that same day Barnes was seen driving in the area, accompanied by an official from the Department of Minerals and Energy

the GCS consultants, and ask John Barnes to personally consult the community. A date was set, but neither the Qunya brothers, Barnes nor the "social impact" consultant Ayanda Peters (who had assured *noseweek* he would be there) arrived. Later that same day Barnes was seen driving in the area, accompanied by an official from the Department of Minerals and Energy.

Enter the dirty tricks department. In a letter published in the *Sunday Tribune*, Xolco CEO, Nomangesi Malunga, disputes the attendance at the meeting of the journalist, who had reported on it under the headline, "Residents on warpath".

The letter was emailed to the *Sunday Tribune* from the computer of Anne Barnes, wife of mining boss John Barnes.

At the same time, public relations company Maverick issued a press release on behalf of MRC, titled "Xolobeni Tribal Authority Strongly Supports Mineral Sand Mining". The press release was accompanied by a photograph of enthusiastic tribesmen at a meeting. It was, indeed, not the meeting the reporter had attended, but an "alternative" meeting that had been set up by the mining company itself in an attempt to discredit the genuine tribal gathering. The photograph was shown to members of the ACC who identified

the site as the house of Madiba Qunya in Mzamba – outside the Xolobeni District.

Cultivating friends in high places has been a mark of the project from its inception. TEM/MRC's prospective senior BEE partner was Ehlobo Heavy Minerals (Pty) Ltd, (EHM) set up by former DTI director general Alistair Ruiters, and Rafiq Bagus, former advisor to Minister of Trade and Industries Alex Irwin. EHM was poised to secure a 50.1% controlling interest in the venture in return for capital investment. However EHM and MRC/TEM terminated their negotiations in February 2007 following allegations that MRC/TEM employees and agents were undermining the eco-tourism initiatives, to force the community into accepting mining as the only prospect for jobs and incomes.

Following the withdrawal of EHM, TEM/MRC says it "enhanced its relationship" with Xolco by offering them the option of taking the minimum shareholding valued at US\$18 million. Xolco directors signed up to take a 26% shareholding, and MRC cites this as an inducement for other investors to have confidence in the 74% balance. But they have not yet indicated how long it may take before the capital and technology-intensive operation yields a dividend to MRC shareholders.

Moreover, since Xolco does not have US\$18 million in cash to pay for its shareholding, its shares will be financed by a shareholder loan from MRC which will have to be repaid as a priority over other distributions of revenue, once mining commences. It will thus take even longer before Xolco shareholders break even on their "investment" because they will have to pay back \$18 million for MRC to mine their ancestral lands.

As at 31 December 2006, MRC's total consolidated book value amounted to only \$19 million. Xolco may as well contact the international donor community to raise an extra \$1 million – to buy the company outright!

The Department of Land Affairs (DLA) holds the land in trust for the communal landowners and any development or usage will require a back-to-back lease agreement from DLA in terms of the Interim Protection of Informal Land Rights Act (IPILRA). It will be interesting to see how DME gets to issue a prospecting right without having followed the procedures prescribed by the Act.

A final question concerns why the DME would even consider allowing a junior mining company like MRC to



Consultation breakdown: Meeting at uMgungundlovu tribal authority about the mining proposals

speculate in SA, especially one with a shady track record – it owns Erebus PLC, which in turn owns a Sierra Leone-based diamond tailing operation in Kariba Kono, that allegedly used “questionable” mining methods. “Preliminary information suggests that the proponent has no intent to operationalize the mining right. It has no financial resources, no technical mining expertise and no mining experience. It ... is entirely plausible that the mining proponent will simply sell on the mining right once secured and leave the implementation implications to the ‘buyer’ of the right [Richard’s Bay Minerals?],” says James Jackelman.

MRCs market capitalisation is very small, it has only three directors (including brothers Joseph and Mark Ca-

ruso), and the board meets only once a year at the AGM of shareholders – who have not received dividends for the past three years. In May a sudden 40% jump in the MRC share price prompted an investigation by the Australian Stock Exchange – the jump came after a report to the major shareholders giving a positive outline of developments in Pondoland. MRC denied hiding any price sensitive information, but could not explain the increase.

MRC does not comply with Australian Stock Exchange listing rules: the majority of the board of directors are not independent directors, and the chairman himself is not an independent director. Joseph and Mark Caruso both have an interest in Zurich Bay Holdings (Pty) Ltd, a company that

controls 14.92% of the issued shares of MRC. They are, therefore, not independent.

The real tragedy lies in the fact that the rights of rural landowners would not be getting much press coverage if the area was not of such particular interest to environmentalists. Elsewhere in the country, DME is also riding roughshod over community interests in favour of mining. In June this year the parliamentary minerals and energy portfolio committee expressed its concern about operations of junior companies that are owned by largely foreign shareholders. And a study by the Bench Marks Foundation for Southern Africa for Corporate Social Responsibility, released in June, questions whether mining houses in the North West Province are doing enough for the surrounding communities and for the environment.

The researchers found that although the mining houses had social plans as required by the Mining Charter, they were not available to the public and were not the product of consultation with communities. The report also found that the Department of Minerals and Energy has a reputation for corruption and has been the subject of numerous investigations. Ultimately, when it comes to MRC mining the Pondoland coastline, that’s where the buck stops. **W**

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My China

LATE LAST YEAR I played the bassoon on a concert tour of China. If that sounds impressive, well ... it was, but in ways I hadn't foreseen. I was part of a South African orchestra recruited to back Manchester-born saxophonist Andrew Young on a tour of that mysterious land.

Known locally for having played the sax with the KZN philharmonic orchestra, Young has since become famous as the Kenny G of China and Turkey. Now based in Vienna, he's done 15 years of tours to China, and as many to Turkey, playing to packed concert halls, season after season.

We were to tour the south-eastern industrial cities of China for a month – the pay wouldn't be great, but we'd get to see the land of the Great Wall, dragons, terracotta warriors, opera, chow mein, fireworks and the biggest nation on this planet.

The twenty-two members of the Andrew Young Orchestra (which also included five dancers and a bagpiper) arrived at Hong Kong International Airport in mid December. We were met by a lady who sign-language us to the bus that would transport us to

A new American
ideal has crept
in: the Chinese
Barbie, writes
Sophia Welz

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Great pall of China:

Skies over Dongguan (top), which has a population of over seven million and boasts the world's largest shopping mall

our first Chinese city, Shenzhen (population: a mere 8 million).

The lobby of our Shenzhen hotel was covered in Merry Christmas flyers and posters with Santa beaming down in gold, pink and red. Christmas is big in China. Why? I asked one of the Taiwanese girls in the group. Simple: "You make a lot of money out of Christmas."

Tired from our eleven-hour flight and just an hour and a half away from the sound check for our first show, we still found the energy for a scouting tour of the neighbourhood. Shenzhen at first seemed quite manageable, with a park just outside our hotel and lots of white and glass skyscrapers. It's

First stop is the 'disguising room', where we powder up and are given first taste of our staple backstage diet: fake Nescafé (it DOES exist)

also littered with karaoke bars and huge billboards picturing mountains and lakes with Hu Jintao in the corner; flashing neon lights and shops like "LOVE ME FOREVER WEDDING PHOTO", The Fat People Shop and the Cosmotology Centre.

We later discovered that though the city had taken just twenty years to be built, it's enormous: one performance venue was an hour's drive across just a small part of the city – and one which wasn't dominated by traffic.

Little mermaid:
Andrew Young on a billboard with his hideously Photoshopped hair

Rome and Delhi are both notorious traffic nightmares (in Delhi a friend had to get a taxi just to cross the road); China no one warned me about. People are so busy going on about the mind-blowing Great Wall that they forget to mention the traffic. Chinese traffic jams make for fantastic sightseeing and observation, and nails bitten to the quick.

The Shenzhen Civic Centre, venue for our first show, is an impressive building with undulating lines of unnecessary steel and huge sheets of glass, covering several blocks. The well-equipped theatre has fancy lighting, strobes and vast red velvet curtains. For the occasion the facade was covered in huge banners with bold red Chinese characters and a heroic portrait of the star of our show, Andrew Young.

First stop is the "disguising room", where we powder up and are given the first taste of our staple backstage diet: fake Nescafé (it DOES exist), bananas and sweet white buns. Then to our costumes: dresses that were a combination of an Eldorado Park wedding cake and Barbie's prom: shocking pink with meringue puffs and diamanté. Now, the ideal Chinese woman used to be plump, with small lips, porcelain skin and bound feet – I thought I'd pass on at least two counts. But that sort of beauty is long forgotten and a new American ideal



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has crept in: the Chinese Barbie, aided by the most amazing push-up bras (which, advertised on late night hotel TV, also have an extra gadget you strap underneath the bra to create a double chin uniboob), “fair and lovely” skin-whitening creams, and little lap dogs (which are kept in the birdcages they’re sold in).

Our show opens to a packed auditorium with the *overture* from *Carmen*. The second number has “Andelooo Yong” (the only part of the Chinese MC’s speech we could understand) emerging from the back of the audience under a spotlight, clad in red velvet jacket and blow-dried long dark hair and playing the solo from *My Heart Will Go On*, from *Titanic* ... the spot has difficulty holding him, focuses for a time on the wrong person, then hastily flashes back on to the star.

Women swoon and briefly applaud as Andeloo passes each section of the audience. He ends with a typical Kenny G gesture – a long note he holds and holds and holds. Then it’s greetings in Chinese, followed by *Bolero* and some Spanish dancers. Next, the can can. Yong flirts with the dancers – and gets to do that long note again. We go into our practised routine: the orchestra pauses and looks surprised ... the conductor hauls out his newspaper ... the note finally ends – and gets a three-second standing ovation. Yes, just three seconds. Was the stunt lost on them? No, clapping is a Western convention; silent waving of hands is the preferred Chinese expression of appreciation.

A Strauss overture is followed by

Andaloo playing the *Blue Danube*, followed by a medley of sea shanties to which the dancers do a comic drunken jig. Followed by a lullaby played to a spotlight sleeping child in the audience.

This is all just a warm-up to the main features: three Kenny G numbers, some Chinese popular songs and – the highlight – two bagpipe numbers: *Auld Lang Syne* and *Amazing Grace* played by born-again Brad from Durban. The hands wave silently, on and on. Nothing else is a match for the piper – even *Winter* from Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons*, played by super talented violinist Tzu-Fan Tang, ex Taiwan, now from Cape Town.

The only thing that wakes the audience after this is the appearance of dancer William Fisher from Durban. The reason, it eventually becomes clear: he is “coloured” – the first person of colour this audience has ever seen. This is not tourist China – these are the factory cities turning out the goods that have put the rest of the world out of work. Generally people have never seen foreigners of any sort.

Everywhere we went people gasped and stared shamelessly. When we went to the beach they gathered around and stared for hours. Indeed, in most places we went to – Fuzhou, Suzhou, Hangzhou, Dongguan, Zhuhai – people would stop, stare, gawk, and drag their children in front of us for photos.

And so it went: our morning wake-up call would put us on a very early bus, which would ferry us for a few hours to an airplane that would jump us back to the city we had just come from – that’s how similar these cities are.



Hang dog: How much is that doggie in the window?

Most of them displayed the same pollution (to the point of starlessness), the “China smell” (Secunda laced with petrol plus something sweetly, decidedly dead), the huge mass of new white buildings, no birds (in fact no live creatures outside of the buckets used to sell dinner) and massive propaganda billboards (the most aesthetically pleasing thing in modern China). With the constant smog my hankies were ghastly with black snot by day two.

Each new city meant a new concert hall, bedecked with the banners displaying Andrew Young hideously photoshopped with hair like the Little Mermaid’s blowing in the wind, garlands of balloons at the entrances, and serried rows of flowers in plantpots. (Even the parks seemed to hold only elaborate arrangements in red and yellow of potted flowers.) Andeloo Yong would make his spotlight entrance, followed by the Spanish dancing and naughty can canning ... with the applause at the end lasting about three seconds.

The more shows we did (I think we did seventeen in just twenty days), the more I realized what we were: a Western freak show. And as freaky: our show in Hangzhou was sponsored by Amway. Yes, Amway! We were all part of the same Western “mission”. Amway pamphlets on seats, Amway’s logo on the backdrop. Long Amway speeches. (For the occasion, the ribald

sea shanties and drunken sailors’ gig had been dropped from the programme.)



Pretty in pink: Members of Andrew Young’s backing orchestra

If that's what they saw of us, what did we see of them? After our first show in Shenzhen we were all hyped-up for an evening of discovery, so off we went to the night market. I already knew that "How much is that doggie in the window?" has a completely different meaning in China. What I was not prepared for were the rows of plastic buckets lining the streets, with all manner of things wriggling and writhing in them, some of them familiar: walkie talkies (chicken head and feet), crabs and fish; others completely alien: big silver snakes, little black ones, rats, bats and catfish, giant toads, piglets in cages, terrapins, crickets, odd things on sosatie sticks. (Light relief came in the form of fruit out of *StarTrek*: double the size of anything I'd ever seen before, generally with spikes – and completely scrumptious.)

Back at our hotel we were asked to choose our dinner, which was like strolling into a pet shop: the first row of tanks held eel, catfish and crab, the next row a few snakes and then fat bullfrogs all climbing on top of each other. Where Westerners cut everything into anonymous squares and circles, the Chinese make absolutely sure you know exactly what you're eating – every dish has a head (chicken) or ears and snout (piggy). Service station shops even sell dried snake (a kind of *droe wors*). Worried you might unknowingly eat something funny on your trip? Never fear, it's always only too clear. Anyway, we ended up with noodle soup with veggies for dinner with delicious coconut milk that tasted like melted vanilla ice cream. Fear of eating dog "or something" suppressed any South African desire for red meat.

Breakfast the next morning consisted of soy boiled eggs (tasty once you get used to the blackish look), egg fried rice, preserved or "hundred-

***Back at our hotel
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catfish and crab***

year-old" egg, noodles. This was when we learned that the Chinese government would like each citizen to ingest two eggs a day. Everyone goes on about the 1.6bn people in China, but has anyone thought to do a chicken census?

Markets house thousands of stalls with fake products – every memory card and flash drive bought at heavily discounted prices would end in buyer's remorse, iPods discarded when their inners were found out as some cellphone's missing operating system. The clothing labels were lapped up with glee, Abibas, Mike and Pamu the most common, as well as Vekhorinox and FCUK (except that the Chinese now blithely spell this FUCK). But more often than not, shopping in China tends to leave a bitter taste in the mouth.

The enjoyable things tended to be more consumable – the sushi was affordable, and beauty treatments a luxurious indulgence for an average of sixty bucks, and haircuts precise and chic, albeit with "for Chinese hair only" hairdye.

After our second show we went on a team-building exercise at the karaoke club just near the hotel. Much negotiation got us a room meant to house a party of twenty-five. Our karaoke experience had a bunch of musicians refusing to sing in front of each other, a wonderful offering of sliced fruit from the owner of the club as a friendly "face" gesture, and gallons of beer and laughter. Eric Clapton's *Tears in Heaven* had Babewatch scenes of lifesavers running across the beach on the video, and dramatic love songs were bound to



Singalong:
Andelooo
Yong in
concert

have tractors ploughing fields or something equally unrelated and splendid. The other booths in the club housed small groups of three to five aspiring singers and then something very strange: couples would come to Karaoke TV and he would serenade her (often on his knees) late into the night. One gathers that living with one's disapproving parents in a little flat makes dating really difficult.

People spit freely, and do other things on the streets that making walking the pavements a risky business. Food markets are unhygienic and filthy – yet the paranoia caused by the smallest hint of avian flu instantly has everyone in a Hello Kitty printed facemask. The apartment blocks have burglar bars up to the twentieth floor. I made up all sorts of theories; from child safety measures (because there are so many of them) to suicide (because there are so many of them), and finally concluded that the wonderfully gymnastic Chinese must produce the world's best cat burglars. The real reason is the (often unfounded) fear of a possible typhoon whisking up the propaganda billboards, so destroying the contents of your flat every four years.

Now I'm not saying that George Bush wasn't born with his eyes too close together, or that crime is not a problem; but you ain't seen nothin' until you've been to the real China.

I'm so happy to be home, looking through my window at a garden with a palisade fence and two very inedible dogs. We can see the stars (if you're in Kimberley) and the wonderful storms in the Highveld rarely bring more than a fabulous lightning display.

See you in dolled-up Beijing in 2008 – because this time it's the Shopfront Only for me. I hear that, in preparation for the Olympic games, the Chinese government is offering its citizens all sorts of sensitizing courses: no spitting, and don't go within 1.2m of a tourist, you'll freak them out. **W**





David Jackson & Liz Lacey (left); and Joseph Birikomawa, Jenny Altschuler and George Pambason (above)

Bites and

That's where I am today as the rain pisses down. It's the opening of the city's latest arts and crafts gallery, and I'm crushed in a crowd who're as curiously alien as refugees from Guatemala, in their berets, beads, braids, dreadlocks, head wraps, amber necklaces, flowing layers of black on black, sequinned ponchos, embroidered leggings, etc.

There are now legions of galleries in this new enclave of avant-garde culture. They all know a tourist opportunity when they see one. Clementina Ceramics and the A.R.T. Gallery is an offshoot of a highly successful Kalk Bay outfit run by Clementina van der Walt and Albie Bailey, and it's in a majestic old Deco building covered with twiddly bits, on St George's Mall. It used to be the Colosseum Theatre in the days when Marlene Dietrich sang at the Alhambra up the road.

The last movie screened here was in 1973. Then Cashbank moved in. Three decades later, in a R17m deal, the building gets its name back and is converted into one of those residential and commercial developments that estate agents like to call "prestigious".

For a change, people have put their money where their mouths are – in this case the thankfully art-loving developer Petra Wiese, and architect Alan Walt. Which is why, as we leave the lift on the second floor we find ourselves gawking at a dazzling field of huge glass flowers on the wall, soaring high above

the pebbled courtyard, in a glittering variety of colours. About 180 of them.

One visitor is not gobsmacked however. He dismisses it as being "too much like Chihuly." Dale Chihuly, I discover, is an American glass sculptor whose sensational artworks decorate buildings all over the world and are owned by Bill Gates, Mick Jagger and the Queen of England. Frankly I think our buildings can do with as much Chihuly-inspired beautification as they can get.

And if you think nobody's going to see this lot because it's on the second floor, you're wrong. Gallery spaces the world over can no longer afford to be on the ground level, or so Gerald Phillips informs me as we gaze at the glass flowers. Phillips is a ubiquitous Cape Town developer, just back from checking out New York's Chelsea art scene. He owns the landmark Fairweather building in Woodstock where Linda Givon now has her second Goodman Gallery – on the first floor naturally.

That Woodstock gallery is about five times the size of this one, which is not small either. It's by now so crammed



Lyn Hammer, Albie Bailey, Clementina van der Walt and Crain Soudine

UNDER ORDINARY circumstances you won't find me braving the bitten-down streets of the inner city on a soggy Saturday morning. Especially when it means having to fork out a fortune at Picbel Parkade.

But in case you hadn't noticed, the old Mother City's centre is experiencing a boom on all fronts. There's even a swimming pool in the sky on the Parade side of Adderley Street, now that the City Improvement District has minimised the risk of your being set upon by a pack of glue-crazed feral street kids on your way to Woolworths.

And since *Newsweek* deemed Cape Town "one of the world's great cultural meccas" – lumping us along with the ragged likes of Kabul, Tijuana and Zhongguan – the creatives of the world have been moving into the city's pumping heart even faster than the money men.



that I fear for the shelves full of red hot glass made by Red Hot Glass who did the flowers. The glass blowers, Liz Lacey and David Jackson, have a workshop on the Paarl wine estate, Seidelberg.

Also in danger are Clementina's vividly coloured ceramic vessels and wall

tile installations. A jet-setting, eccentric clay genius who goes in for quirky felt necklaces and embroidered Camper shoes, she's just returned from exhibiting on New York's SOFA expo – that's for Sculpture, Objects and Functional Art.

But it's the grimly compelling colour photos of Sudan's horrific Lord's Resistance Army that we are here to see today. The terrifyingly young guerilla rebels are depicted swanning around in fashionable camouflage gear covered with so many brand names that the photographer, Eric Miller, couldn't resist calling the exhibition Rebel Chic. He's purposely juxtaposed these visually lush images with text that highlights the hideous realities of their war. It will seriously limit sales, but sales are not the point.

Interest is heightened by the presence of the gutsy little Ugandan human rights lawyer who was abducted by the LRA and escaped after a year. Because she wasn't forced to kill her own par-

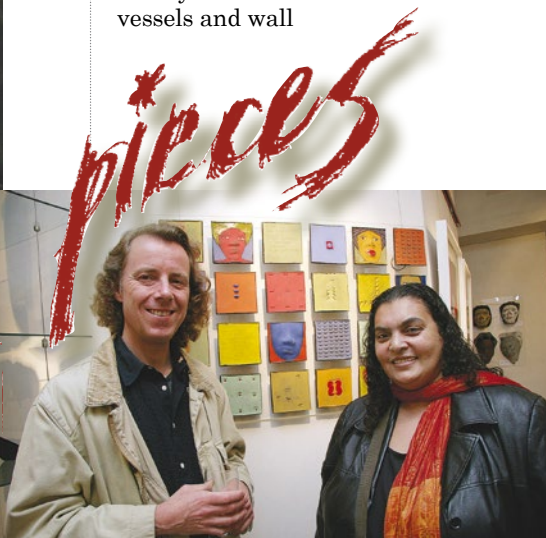
Robert Mulders and Vivienne Carelse



Laurine Platsky with lawyer Agnes Ocitti and photographer Eric Miller

ents to prevent her going home, Agnes Ocitti regards herself as luckier than most of the other thousands of young people abducted in the two decades that LRA leader Joseph Kony has been waging his war against the Ugandan Government. She was in an Italian convent when she was dragged off one night with 139 girls, at the age of 13, so when she eventually escaped and returned to her family, the rebels didn't know where she had gone.

It's a story of forced killings and rapes, that chills. Yet with her open-hearted smile and fashionable, chestnut-tinted plaits, the 26-year-old survivor doesn't look or sound at all like a young woman who's been to hell and back. Buoyant proof of the resilience of the human spirit. [W](#)

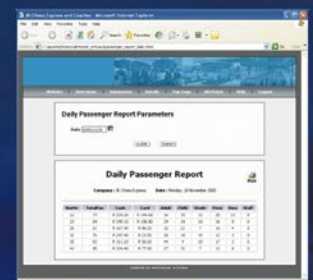


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Cold comfort

The claims of climate-change denialists appear to be a lot of hot air



PictureNet/AP Photo/Dr. Scott M. Lieberman

EVER SINCE NOSEARK started looking into claims by South Africa's climate change denialists and sceptics, a steady stream of emails telling us how wrong we are has been arriving at *noseweek*. Most have emanated from people connected to the Free Market Foundation, the Johannesburg-based libertarian "think-tank" whose climate change denialism and corporate supporters were covered in *nose89*.

One of the more persistent (and consistently polite) emailers is Marc Swanepoel, who introduced himself as a founder of the FMF. (He is still a member of their council.) Swanepoel has supplied a list of "climate change activists turned sceptics", which he's asked be taken seriously as proof that there really is fundamental disagreement among serious scientists that humans are changing the climate by emitting heat-trapping gases into the atmosphere.

The list was drawn up by Marc Morano, a well-known conservative public relations hitman in the US, and was posted on a right-wing Christian website of the type often used by the Republican Party to reach their faithful followers. However, at first glance the people on the list seemed to be reputable, and "real" scientists, so *noseweek* decided to look into some of them. The last thing we want to do is let prejudice get in the way of finding the truth about climate change.

One environmentalist-turned-sceptic we recognised was David Bellamy, a well-known British botanist and environmental campaigner. In 2005 he wrote a letter to *New Scientist* claiming that glaciers were not melting, but were in fact advancing across the globe. Climate change was nonsense, he said, because "555 of all the 625 glaciers under observation by the World Glacier Monitoring Service in Zurich, Switzerland, have been growing since 1980". Because of Bellamy's status, and that of *New Scientist*, this was immediately grasped to the bosoms of climate change sceptics around the globe.

Conversely, climate change activists were immediately struck by doubt. One of their own, a real scientist to boot, had claimed that 89% of the world's glaciers were in fact getting larger!

None were more concerned than well-known British journalist and environmental campaigner George Monbiot, who immediately set out to find the source of the data. He contacted the World Glacier Monitoring Service who told him they had no idea where Bellamy's numbers came from. ("This is complete bullshit" were their exact words.) Monbiot, now even more concerned, contacted Bellamy himself to find out where he got his numbers from. Bellamy said that he'd sourced them from a website called www.iceagenow.com.

Monbiot called up the website, which he describes as "so bonkers I thought it was a spoof".

Aged ice: A wall of ice and rock falls from the face of Margerie Glacier in Glacier Bay National Park, Alaska

**George Monbiot
contacted the World
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"This is complete
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It had been set up by a former architect with no scientific qualifications, to promote his book on the "coming ice age" (the website also promotes weight loss by hypnosis). iceagenow.com said that 55% of the world's 625 glaciers were growing – not 555 (or 89%) of them. However, even 55% wasn't anything close to the percentage from the World Glacier Monitoring Service, so where did iceagenow get the 55%? Monbiot found the figure quoted on numerous American right-wing websites and finally traced the ultimate source of the 55% statement to www.sepp.org, a website run by climate change denialist scientist Fred Singer.

Singer claims the numbers came from a 1989 edition of the ultra-prestigious journal *Science*, but didn't say which issue. Monbiot searched every edition of *Science* published in 1989 – but came up empty-handed. It seems that Singer had just made the numbers up, and that David Bellamy had stumbled upon them and uncritically put them in his letter to *New Scientist*. He then compounded his error by failing to hit the shift key while typing – thus "55%" got turned into "555" (the % symbol lives above 5 on the standard English qwerty keyboard).

David Bellamy eventually admitted that his "555" was the result of a "glitch in the electronics" – but did not immediately contact *New Scientist* to ask for a correction to be published, as any proper scientist should. He's now widely discredited in the British scientific and environmental community, and has joined a New Zealand-based coalition of

climate sceptics.

Research into many of the other names on Swanepoel's list revealed that most of them had something in common with Bellamy: a distaste for basic logic, disregard for basic facts, egomania, and unhealthy close connections to US oil giant Exxon.

One person on the list whose writing isn't so obviously off the wall is David Evans, an Australian engineer and mathematician who used to work for the Australian government, building mathematical models to estimate carbon emissions from different land uses. He doesn't seem to make such wild claims, or make so many obvious errors. Evans says he doesn't believe that humans are capable of appreciably changing the climate, although he used to. Hoping to find a sceptic that wasn't actually a denialist, we gave Evans a thorough looking-over.

He says mainstream climate change theory rests on four basic points:

- 1) Carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas, as proved in laboratories more than 100 years ago;
- 2) Carbon dioxide concentrations and global atmospheric temperatures have been rising together over the past century;
- 3) The ice-core record shows carbon dioxide levels and temperature in close correlation for hundreds of thousands of years;
- 4) There are no other good explanations for global atmospheric rise than increasing carbon dioxide concentrations in the atmosphere.

Evans says there is now evidence that the last three are incorrect.

A sober examination of Evans' writings, however, shows that he hasn't managed to disprove any of these points, nor substantially challenge mainstream climate change theory.

Regarding point 2, Evans says that the atmosphere actually cooled from 1940 to 1975, even as carbon dioxide levels rose, and this shows they aren't related. Mainstream scientists, however, have long accounted for this by invoking "global dimming", whereby incoming solar radiation is prevented from hitting the earth's surface by particulate pollution in the air (like soot and dust particles). If you prevent the sun's rays hitting the surface of the planet, then less energy will be absorbed by the surface and there will be less to radiate back out to space in the form of infrared "return" rays. (Global atmospheric warming is caused by the energy from these "return" rays being caught by carbon dioxide, and other greenhouse gas, molecules, not by the



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direct incoming rays of sun energy.)

Pollution restrictions in many parts of the world have reduced particulate pollution (the “dirty” pollution, typically from open coal fires, you can actually see) and the effects of global dimming have thus lessened. More rays from the sun are hitting the Earth, and more infra-red rays are being beamed out, whose energy is being trapped in the molecules of invisible global warming gases that are still increasing in concentration all the time. Thus, the observed slight reduction in the atmospheric temperature between 1940 and 1975 was due to global dimming overriding the greenhouse effect for a few decades.

Evans does not challenge this explanation – in fact he mentions it as possibly true, but somehow still refuses to accept it. He also counters points 3 and 4 with equally flimsy statements, but does not even attempt to challenge point 1, and is left by the roadside bawling “I don’t believe you because perhaps there are these other

reasons for global warming that I have virtually no evidence for and don’t even really believe myself”. It’s all a little pathetic.

Researchers and journalists around the world have documented in great detail how fake civil society groups have been set up across the world to obscure the science of global warming, just as they did on the the issue of smoking and cancer. Many of these have peculiar rightwing or religious agendas, and many take money from Exxon, the massive oil company whose top brass still deny the importance of global warming, and who have not invested nearly as heavily as the other oil majors in alternative energy.

Public relations gurus honed the tactics used by denialists in the US years ago during the fight by tobacco companies against regulation. They realised pretty early that fighting the consensus that smoking led to cancer in the scientific arena was a non-starter – there was simply too much evidence against them. The answer to this

problem was not to disprove the science, but rather to carefully sow doubt around it in the minds of the public. This means floating messages out into the public domain without any regard for their truth. If someone stands up to try to disprove them, the very fact that they have done so is used as evidence that there is no consensus around the issue, and that there’s still a debate, and still a reason to delay action.

The mainstream explanation of climate change is simple and compelling and has been confirmed by the work of thousands of scientists, not a few isolated crackpots. The fundamental facts that carbon dioxide traps heat and that the level of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere is rising because of our activities have not been disproved, and the danger of climate change should not be underestimated. The Free Market Foundation, the other denialists in our local media and their corporate funders are playing a harmful and self-indulgent game, and should be ignored. **■**

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2010® – THAT'S WHEN your boat finally comes in. Hundreds of happy Euro-laden fans descending day and night on that trendy Green Point bar you invested in.

Sorry – think again. The chances are your business won't even be allowed to open on match days – a combination of Fifa greed and paranoia, intellectual property rights and ambush marketing legislation will ensure that the benefits of 2010 trickle down, er .. well, not very far.

It's all way beyond simply steering clear of the Fifa logo – in Fifa-world, ambush marketing aims at anything in the wrong place at the wrong time. For a start Fifa has applied to have all sorts of words and emblems declared out of bounds, including "World Cup" and "2010". But they've also worked out a careful plan to colonise our host cities with their own advertising, and that of their designated sponsors.

To secure this, they can call on a new section added to the Merchandise Marks Act – at the time of the 2003 Cricket World Cup. If you're not an official sponsor of an event but allow your logo to derive promotional benefit from it, you are guilty of abusing your own brand (it was only a matter of time before self-abuse became unlawful) and committing the heinous crime of ambush marketing. Under this legislation even flying an aircraft over the stadium towing your company's banner would be breaking the law. As would handing out company t-shirts to spectators. And if you're thinking this kind of thing happens all the time – you're quite right, it does happen all the time. But in fact the self-abuse prohibition only applies to specially designated events – to date, only two events have been designated – the Cricket World Cup and the Fifa Football World Cup.

The most dramatic self-abuse at the Cricket World Cup involved a few kids getting kicked out of a stadium for wearing the wrong t-shirts, so we don't know what devious tactics promoters may use to take advantage of 2010. But Fifa has issued a public information sheet setting out what will and won't be acceptable, which distinguishes between blatant ambush marketing (conceptual promotion of brands), and the subtle form (physical promotion of brands around stadiums). Fifa concentrates on the blatant form and doesn't explain what it



*If you think
you're gonna
get your hands
on a piece of
the World Cup
pie come 2010,
think again*

regards as unlawful physical promotion of a brand around a stadium. Shouldn't brand owners – Pick'nPay, Southern Sun, Mugg & Bean – be entitled to know how this applies to them? *noseweek* looked for clues in the agreement between Fifa, the local organising committee (Danny Jordaan and Irvin Khoza) and the city of Cape Town – and, as a result, we can tell you that if you want to know where Danny and Irvin are at these days, you'd best employ a proctologist to conduct a detailed examination of Sepp Blatter. A more one-sided document would be hard to find – a veritable master class in one party (them) getting all the benefit, and the other party (us) taking all the risk.

We also got our grubby little paws on an interesting document called "Host City Requirements and Guiding Principles". Needless to say, the document is all Sepp, Sepp, Sepp. Fifa owns all the marketing and media rights to the event and can retain all the revenues generated from the exploitation of these rights, although each stadium will earn an income of 10% of ticket sales. Only companies licensed by Fifa will be able to sell consumable or non-consumable goods at the stadiums – and stadiums will help Fifa enforce its rights and even provide lock-up rooms for "enforcement activities".

Host cities are encouraged to get financial assistance from private companies for the construction of the stadiums, but reminded that such companies cannot associate themselves with the stadiums or promote their sponsorship role in any way. Furthermore, only a Fifa-authorised company will be able to advertise or display any commercial messages in, above, around or otherwise at the stadiums.

In the case of existing stadiums like Loftus and Ellis Park, all existing contracts regarding stadium naming, hospitality suites and the sales of food and drink will be suspended for the duration of the event – if necessary stadiums will have to be renamed and signage removed.

There will be exclusion zones around the stadiums, and each city will have to ensure that any business which usually operates within the exclusion zone is closed to the public on match days, unless otherwise agreed, and that no permits or licenses are granted for commercial activity within these zones on match days. That's right folks – restaurants, petrol stations, hotels and dry cleaners surrounding the stadium need to be

closed. Why? We really can't imagine!

Again, Fifa will tell us later how big this exclusion zone is, or how far "around" a stadium commercial messages will be prohibited. But there's good reason to suppose that it might be within a radius of 1km of the stadium: Fifa, as of Jan 2010 (six months before a ball is kicked), will get free advertising on all public advertising billboards within a 1km radius of each stadium. Fifa will also get free advertising on all public billboards within a 1km radius of each fan park – the places set aside for those poor sods who can't afford tickets to watch the games on giant screens.

Fifa will get free advertising on all public billboards visible from the main route to each stadium up to a distance of 2km from the stadium perimeter. And Fifa will also have a right of first refusal on all airport and other public

advertising media throughout the host city.

So, for six months Fifa gets to take over our cities. It also takes over our justice system (such as it is) – according to the Host City Requirements document, each city must provide Fifa with police officers to patrol public areas (anywhere, not just within exclusion zones), and with access to local court systems to ensure swift enforcement of Fifa's intellectual property rights. Each city must pass local ordinances to ensure that Fifa can immediately confiscate any material which infringes these rights. And who will decide the complex issue of whether or not rights have been infringed, an issue which vexes the most experienced of judges? The Fifa officials accompanying the police no doubt!

In consequence of all this you won't

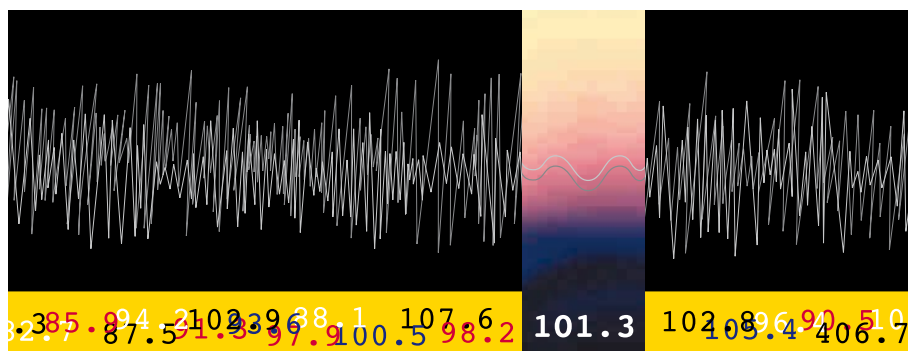
be able to use any name or logo which suggests any link with the tournament – little Sepp Blatter clones will be patrolling the streets confiscating whatever they don't like and instituting fast-track legal proceedings. If you're not Fifa-licensed you won't be selling your goods or advertising your products at the stadiums. If your business happens to be too close to a stadium, you'll need to close on match days. And perhaps even remove your signage. And, for the first half of 2010, only Fifa and its cronies will be advertising in our cities. Sounds like a lot of fun.

Fortunately, South Africans are no longer passive creatures. A few years back Justin Nurse showed that intellectual property rights can be challenged on constitutional grounds, and we suspect it's only a matter of time before someone takes on Fifa. We understand that even our Deputy President has asked Fifa to relax its intellectual property rights so that more South Africans can share in the spoils. We bet they won't listen.

■ Fifa responded to queries shortly before *noseweek* went to press – Alex Koch of the Media Department expressed great surprise that we had the Stadium Use Agreement, which, he said, was a confidential document. According to Koch, the exclusion zones are there for the public's benefit – "for security, transportation and environmental reasons the exclusion zone should be free of any kind of activities, including commercial ones." No promotions of any sort will be allowed around stadiums, so that "emergency accesses remain free, people are not receiving masses of give-aways and the amount of rubbish left behind is reduced to a minimum".

The exclusion zones will be determined, "stadium-by-stadium, to identify permanent businesses and to determine the policy that applies". Permanent businesses will not be stopped from operating on match days, only "mobile units" will be stopped, and no permanent business will have to remove signage. He did not deny that a 1km radius would be used, but reiterated that this still needs to be decided. On whether the Deputy President's call to relax IP rights would be heeded, he said local business would have plenty of opportunities to make money in 2010. And it was never Fifa's intention to stop local businesses from using "2010". There has been confusion with the rights protection programme said Koch: "Mistakes may arise in the complicated marks registration procedures and if that was the case we would correct them." ■

calm in chaos

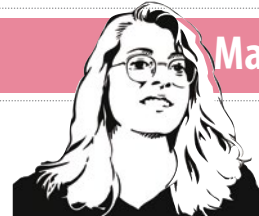


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Ashes and diamonds

MANY YEARS AGO I knew a guy who ate his own grandmother. He was only about a tenth of the way into consuming her when I met him, but he's probably finished her off by now.

'strue's Bob. He kept her cremated remains in a jar by the door, and every time he left home, he'd take a pinch and chow down. I was strangely impressed, but I was young then.

I never asked him why he was eating his grandmother. At the time I just passed it off as an eccentricity. Looking back, it was rather an odd pastime. No doubt Freud would eat this one up.

I wondered how common this practice is. Naturally, I turned to the internet, and googled "ate grandmother's ashes". I was quite surprised to get no results. I tried many search variations to find stories pertaining to the consumption of one's beloved's ashes, but apart from Keith Richards' claim – which he later recanted – that he snorted his father's ashes, it seems it's a unique and unpopular way of disposing of the remains of the dearly departed.

One does discover, however, that the internet provides a number of novel options for those in charge of deciding routes to necropolis. There is a lot more you can do with your loved one's ashes than simply scatter them in pretty places – or consume them.

Alexandra Lachini launched a company that makes "huggable urns" (www.huggableurns.com). The idea of enclosing ashes in teddy bears came to her soon after her dad passed away. "He started to communicate to me how upset he was that after living his life to the fullest he ended up in some ugly hard container," she explained. "This was just not acceptable to him. Was I surprised!" I would be too.

If my father did that to me, I'd ask him: "Hey, aren't you supposed to be in purgatory or something instead of scaring the bejesus out of me?" But some people don't think to ask these questions.

For some reason, I find the concept creepy. This might be related to my border collie's penchant for dismembering stuffed doggie toys. I'll leave the rest to your imagination.

More options? There's a market for those who prefer dispersing ashes by helium balloon (www.eternalascent.com/). Launching loved ones into space (

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flights.com/) has almost become cliché. Though spending eternity going around in circles might suit those who found earthly comfort in predictable routine.

For the politically correct, the dead can be recycled. You can incorporate your loved one into artwork via paintings, pottery, sculpture or glassware. You can even cast ashes into concrete memorial reefs which are placed in the sea to support marine life, giving new meaning to sleeping with the fishes (www.eternalreefs.com).

Or how about squeezing your dearly departed into diamonds? Algodanza (www.algodanza.org), a Swiss company that turns ashes into diamonds, has become so fashionable they now have a presence in 17 countries.

One testimonial from a wife who turned her husband into diamonds read: "I had earrings made out of two of the princess cut diamonds and have been offered money for them ... my come-back is you can't afford them ... they are worth more than you could ever pay me."

I know some wives who would swap their husbands for bling-bling, but I don't know – what if you lose him? For the rest of your life you'll be wondering who's wearing him now.

And then there are those who don't like to go quietly. The famously rebellious and talented gonzo-journalist Hunter S Thompson chose to go out with a bang. Twice. The first time he emulated Hemingway and shot himself. The second time he went up in a fireworks display. Johnny Depp, who played Thompson's character in the movie *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, sponsored the fireworks (www.heavensabovefireworks.com).

"He loved explosions," explained his wife, Anita Thompson.

I heard what he really wanted was to be shot out of a cannon, plain and simple. But when you're dead you don't have much say in the matter, do you?

And maybe that's the point. The dearly departed are past caring. A "special" send-off is more for the living than for the subject of the festivities. If Aunt Fanny or your grandchildren want to shoot you into the air or turn you into rosary beads, you should be glad for the adventure.

Thank the internet for the opportunity.

But face it – nothing beats a final trip through the murky recesses of a daft relative's digestive tract. **■**



Minor pleasures

ARE POLICEMEN allowed to drink on duty? Even French ones? Some responsible journalistic investigation would give an answer, but laziness reminds me, just in time, that this is not really the point. Which is that the great fictional French detective Commissaire Maigret drank like a fish, both off duty and on: wine and beer mostly, but also cognac, calvados, plum brandy and more. (Do fish really drink, even French ones? The need for investigation never ends.)

In one of my occasional half-hearted attempts to improve my language skills I have been reading Maigret stories, and have been struck anew by how often he pops into some or other bistro in the course of his working day – quite apart from a lunchtime tippie either at home with the good Madame Maigret, or with colleagues, or alone with his grumpiness at the Brasserie Dauphine.

What is interesting and marvellous to me is the pervading unselfconsciousness and naturalness of the wine-culture Maigret lives and drinks in. Simenon wrote the Maigret novels over some forty years, up till the early 1970s, but the Paris he so intimately describes is essentially always that of the 1930s, when people like Maigret helped give France the magnificent average wine consumption figures she enjoyed in those good old days.

Surprising, perhaps, that when Maigret asks for wine in a bistro it is almost invariably vin blanc, usually anonymous, but sometimes of sufficient interest and quality for him to wonder about its origin – though he is far from being either connoisseur or snob. It occurred to me recently, after asking for a glass of the house white at a modest Cape Town trattoria, just how well served we are with that kind of white wine in South Africa.

What they brought me was youthful Boland Chenin Blanc, and it was delicious – full of straightforward flavour (but not overly fruity), fresh (but not too acidic) and, well, delicious. And cheap. I don't wax patriotic about wine, but I wonder if any other place produces the range of decent, characterful but inexpensive white wines that the Cape does – although it must be said that reds are another story, and there are also some pretty awful whites around (especially lurking behind big-brand labels; my last experience of Graça doesn't fill me with nostalgic longing).

Maigret would have referred approvingly

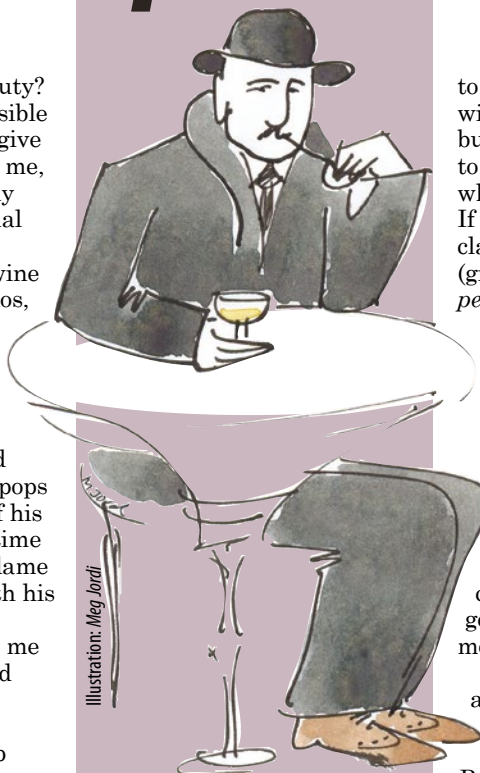


Illustration: Meg Jardi

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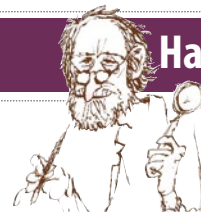
to wines of this kind as *petits vins*. “Small wines” would be the straight translation, but that doesn't quite work, and it's easy to sound patronising or contemptuous, which is wrong. “Minor” is perhaps closer. If the French *grand* means both big and claiming of profundity and importance (*grand* in English covers this aspect), then *petit* conveys a corresponding diffidence at another level.

What the phrase conveys to me is what the category offers at its best: decent, modestly characterful unpretentiousness. So start adding woodchips to give the impression that our “little” chenin is an expensively matured chardonnay, and you risk entering an area of unbalanced inappropriateness, where the wine is less convincing, and the drinker is cheated (to no good purpose) of the easy-going but not contemptible pleasure of a modest wine.

Someone who seems to find the concept as appealing as the wines themselves is Ken Forrester, who makes an always delightful Petit Chenin and a Petit Pinotage. Pinotage, in fact, can fit beautifully into this category – I'd say it was more innately suited to it than to “grander” categories, if I didn't fear violence from those who think pinotage should be freighted with oak and self-importance. But Beyerskloof's standard Pinotage, for example, is a *petit rouge* that's hard to beat. Furthermore, given that rosé is often a *petit vin* par excellence, it's worth mentioning a few rosés created from pinotage that are delightful and undemanding, without being too trivial or self-abasing: Beyerskloof again, for example, and Delheim and Blauwklippen Landau.

Another winery that likes the “little” idea is Armajaro in Voor-Paardeberg (on the Paarl-Swartland border), which is adding to their Vondeling range a Petit Blanc 2007, a happy blend of chenin, chardonnay and viognier. Not far distant across vineyards and wheatlands is Perdeberg Co-op, a veritable fountain of *petit vin blanc* – especially their Chenin Blanc, a famous bargain. In the Swartland proper, Riebeeck's ordinary little Chenin is also excellent value – and I prefer it to their more ambitious Reserve.

All good detectives should like such wines. Even South African ones. Though I have a sinking feeling most would choose beer or even (the more depraved of them) brandy and coke. **W**



Dysfunctional

IT'S A LONG TIME ago now, and I'd pretty well forgotten it. I asked for an Old Testament Bible in boep, you see, and they said I couldn't have it, want jy sal dit vir draadtrekdoeleindes gebruik, I would use it for purposes of onanism. Jews could have the Old Testament, because nobody much cared if they masturbated themselves to death, Hitler could have saved himself a lot of Zyklon B. But I am a Jew, said I, look at this nose. Well your file says you are an atheist, said they, and that's going to cost you three meals for telling us lies. But I want to convert to religion, said I. Ja, said they, and get a Jewish food parcel at Jewish Christmas time. You can convert to the Jewish community church when you get out. If you do.

Well I didn't want the New Testament and a lot of po-faced piety. And I didn't want the old one in modern homogenised pasteurised English either, thanks, I wanted a dinkum 100-octane fully leaded King James number, short of Shakespeare the best ever for roundness of vowel and fullness of phrase, and the morality so primitive you've got to believe it's all some sort of joke. But they stuck on my wall with Prestik a typed sheet of poetical platitudes in two languages, saying Jesus' Bible is a Glory-Paradise, it is a Rose of Rare Fragrance, it is the Mariner's Compass etc. etc. It is the Shepherd's Crook. Under this some crim has written: It is the Crook's Shepherd; another: Dit is die vokker se kondom.

Well all this was forgotten, as I say, until I read Richard Dawkins but yesterday; when he writes about virtue and the old Bible it fair fires one up to dig in there and get some of that majestic measure again. You can read him yourself, of course (ISBN 978-0-552-77331-7) or you can try the Bible yourself, of course, and if you think folks in the Middle East are having a rough time of it just now try the skiet donder reip gryp en eskeip of Lot's life (Genesis 19). You won't, of course, you're too bloody lazy or too heathen, but never to worry, I'll give it to you in précis and see if it fires you up. Hindu readers will love this one.

Now Lot was Abraham's nephew, you see, leading a quiet moral sort of life in Sodom, when God sent two male angels to tell him to hit the road, he's the only righteous citizen of Sodom and God is really the hell-in to all the buggery round here and he's going to smite the buggers with fire, brimstone and

KLAPOTZ!

God instructs them not to look back, for some godly reason, but Mrs Lot does, and He goes Klapotz! just like that, and smites her into a pillar of salt

unmentionable goeters of mass destruction. Lot invites these angels in, politely, as guests, but they're good-looking guys, as one would expect of angels, and all the poooves of Sodom arrive en masse and demand Lot bring these guys out so that they may know them.

Which is to say steek them. Nay nay, says Lot, I have obligations as host; take mine two virgin daughters instead, who have never known man, and do with them whatsoever kinky gang-rape high-jinks make you happy. But the daughters are saved from such paternal propriety because it's a bad bad mistake to try and steek an angel, and these two come out and smite every goddam sodomite stone blind, Klapotz! just like that. Same time.

So the whole Lot family takes off to the hills as instructed. Also God instructs them not to look back, for some godly reason, but Mrs Lot does, and He goes Klapotz! just like that, and smites her into a pillar of salt. Not a marble replica of herself, hey, nor even a plaster-of-Paris facsimile, nor even a swine nor a serpent, say now. A pillar of salt. I mean Abraham's God is nothing if not whimsical. But the family pushes on through the wilderness without toilet paper nor anything you could rightly call food except their own goats and stuff, and by the time they get to a handy cave way out there with a bit of water they're down to the last chicken. But there are plenty of bats around for protein, so they clean out the guano and settle down. Settle down? Are you kidding? These daughters are just ripe for it and never known man, and one night they tank ol' Lot up with booze so he's pissed unrecognisable and there and then steek him stupid, both of them. Well actually he's at that age when he can do it only once in 24 hrs, like, so the second one does him the second night, I mean, and they both of them get preppersfontein and start a new tribe of God's People. Dysfunctional family, sucks; that's modern psychogobbledegook.

So okay, all you heathens out there, forsake your elephant deities and monkey deities and that lady with all the arms and sign on with a true non-corporeal God of Love with a plan for all mankind. Dunno about womankind though. **W**

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Chelsea, good luck for matric. – Love Mum and Dad.

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