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Nkosazana's side**

**Paedophile
thief mining the
Waterberg**

218 DECEMBER 2017

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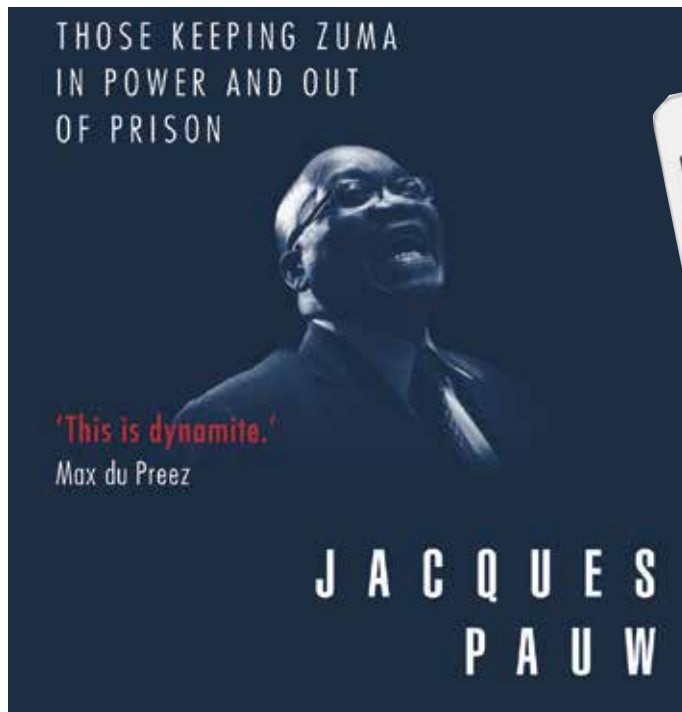
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noseweek

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Letters



Thank you so much

I AM LACTOSE INTOLERANT AND FOR MANY years suffered from painful allergic reactions to dairy products – but no longer! Having learned from your exposé (“Bad Milk”, *nose212*) that cows carry either the A1 or A2 protein, I did some research and discovered Gay’s Guernsey Dairy in Prince Albert that produces A2 milk, yoghurt and prize winning cheeses – which are now delivered to us in Rondebosch every Friday by Doorbell Deli. After decades of abstinence, I am once again able to enjoy dairy products. I recommend that anyone with lactose intolerance make this change for the better.

Carol Henshilwood
Cape Town

Vodacom’s thievery

AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT, LIKE WILIAM Douglas (*nose217*), I too have discovered that I am being billed by Vodacom at R100 per month, including VAT, for “content” from MobiTeacher – for which I never subscribed. I also feel a simple refund does not appreciate the fact that I had been defrauded to begin with.

I am very keen to get in touch with Mr Douglas to see where he stands with regards to the class action law suit he proposed.

Thanks for your good work. It is

a pity other media outlets are so dependent on mobile network operators’ ad revenues that they will not expose this abhorrent practice for what it really is. Whilst I can probably afford a fraudulent R100pm charge, I reel when I think that this may also be happening to impoverished South Africans for whom such a fraudulent collection will probably mean the difference between having and not having bread at home for the second half of the month.

Mauritz Robertson
4C Group, Cape Town

We have forwarded your letter and contact details to Mr Douglas. –Ed.

■ JUST SENT VODACOM A *STOP ALL* TO 30050. The sms cost me nothing. Back came the immediate response: I was not subscribed to any WASPS! So *Noseweek’s* advice works. (Oct 2017).

I’m also sending the “Big Pharma is making us sick” article to my doctor, dentist, ophthalmologist, etc, advising them to subscribe to *Noseweek*. I’ve just done my dance with death because of antibiotics that cost me around R700! Threw most of them out when I realised why I was so ill.

Pam
Cape Town

Wayne be praised

WAYNE DUVENAGE’S COMMENT (IN THE profile “Action Man” by Sue Segar, *nose217*) that business and the corporate world are reluctant to challenge the State, is 100% correct.

It’s high time that large corporates and their leaders grew a backbone, along with some balls, and challenged the State whenever the latter steps out of line, because as fellow taxpayers in this country, it’s up to all of us, big and small, to pull errant and wayward politicians into line.

Regarding the various charges which OUTA has laid at various Police Stations against certain corrupt individuals mentioned in the above article, can Wayne please give us some feedback on what’s happened with these cases and how far they have progressed?

Wayne, good luck and keep up your good work holding this corrupt and incompetent government to account.

Nick McConnell

The Kendal Group, Howick, KZN

Scrambled eggs

I AGREE THAT MAJOR MEDIA IS INFECTED by vested interests, but *Noseweek* is not always completely objective either. Sometimes reporting on a story soon leaves you with egg on your face – your reporting on the KPMG debacle being a case in point. When that story ends, the real truths will emerge and you will find you were quite wrong in some of your assertions. Right now, you need some sensationalism to sell your rag.

Lance Hurly

Namutoni Gate, Oshikoto, Namibia

We’ve reported on KPMG’s shady dealings for over a decade and they have yet to challenge us. Their handling of the Gupta account is a clear indication that there exists a culture of lawlessness within the organisation. If anything this “rag” has been vindicated. KPMG has been exposed as nothing more than a hired gun that knowingly takes part in criminal activity along with their high rolling customers. The only egg on anyone’s face right now is on theirs (and maybe a little on yours?). – Ed.

Research before you write

YOUR JOURNALISM IN “JSE INVESTIGATORS assess Bonamour’s offshore frolics” (*nose217* online edition) is terrible. Research before you write. Even when statements are factual the context is so derived it amounts to misrepresentation. Perhaps the author can share the secrets of his investment success (considering his clearly superior understanding of company valuations and concert parties and share swops). Consider how many TMG shares the PIC still owned before swapping into Tiso Blackstar and how many they must have sold thereafter before making statements about its holding.

WTF?

Sandton

Jack Lundin replies: I note that you fail to mention that your firm, the “boutique” corporate advisory company One Capital, acted as sole corporate advisor and transaction sponsor to Blackstar SE on its acquisition of the remainder of Times Media’s share capital in February 2015. And as sole corporate advisor to Tiso Investment Holdings and the Tiso Foundation Charitable Trust on their disposal of their 22.9% interest in Kagiso Tiso Holdings to Blackstar Group SE in December 2014. So it’s easy to see where your misplaced loyalty lies.

■ GIVEN ANDREW BONAMOUR’S PERSONAL history (as quite brilliantly revealed by *Noseweek*) I am simply amazed that WTF? (whose response first appeared in the *nose217* online edition) dares to come to his defence. Jack Lundin deserves a medal for his persistence

in revealing the real facts and for bringing the sordid goings-on at Tiso Blackstar to the attention of the public. One wonders what WTF?’s connection is with the evil empire. Is this yet another public relations exercise?

Jimmy Mould
Diep River, Cape Town

Fishy business

RICHARD GOUDVIS (*nose217*): BLOODY hell – you’d have to be a halfwit to invest with this bloke. He screams con-artist!

Adrian Stevens
Cape Town

Hobson’s choice

I REALLY LIKE THIS MAGAZINE, ESPECIALLY when I was able to read it at my mate’s, who bought it religiously. Now I have to spend over R20 a

month and expend data that I could use to download “adult content”? The otherwise quandary of it all!

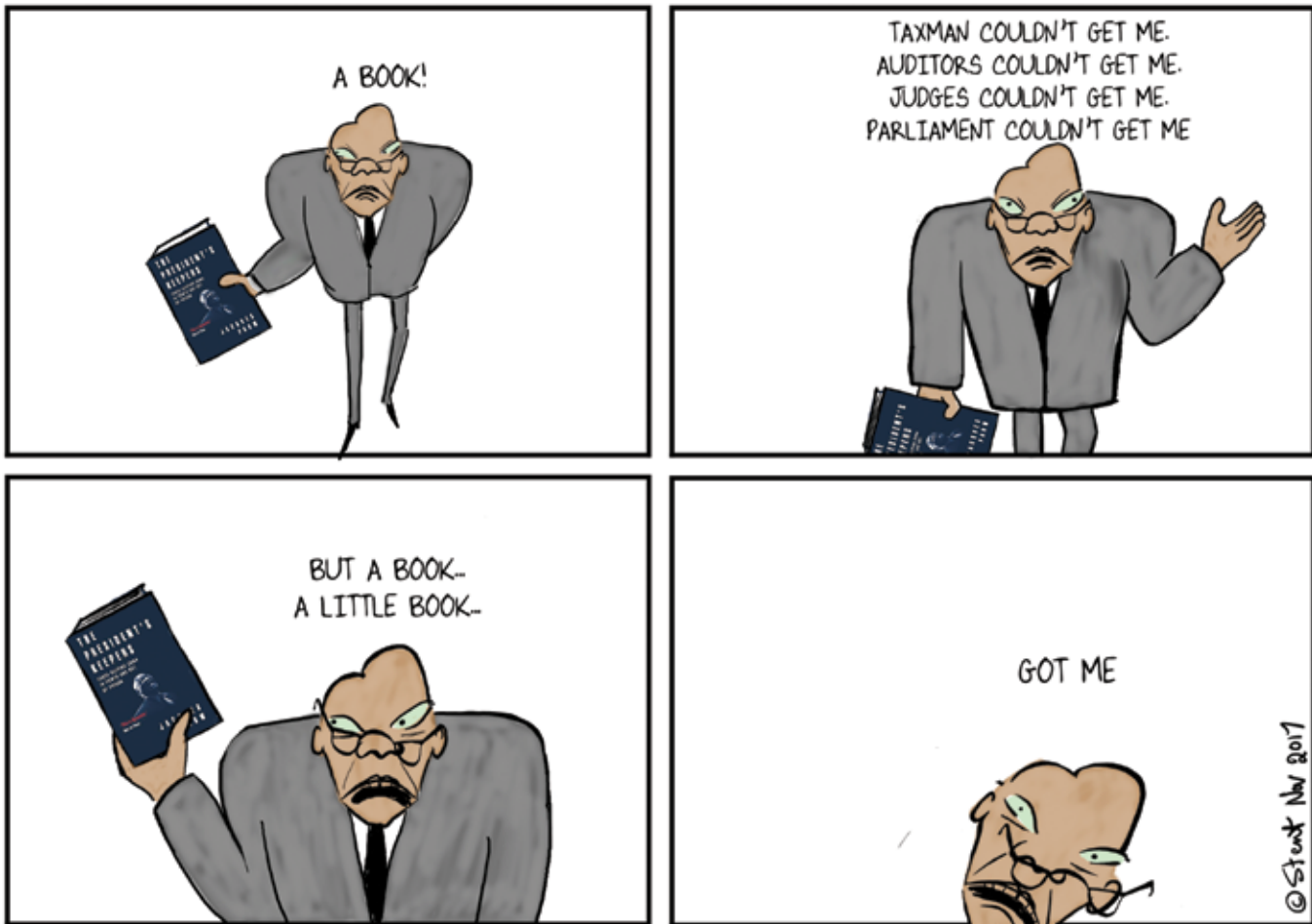
Raymond Murray
Springs

And here we were thinking *Noseweek* only publishes adult content! Except, it now transpires, occasionally on its letters pages. – Ed.

Bidvest still to support e-tolls?

I MUST ASK: ARE BIDVEST AND OTHER HIRE car companies going to continue to charge clients e-toll fees? E-toll fees are unconstitutional and therefore illegal, so the companies are charging clients illegal fees. If it weren’t for hire car companies and some other companies and a handful of individuals e-tolls would have been scrapped. It’s only through them that e-tolls survive.

Noel Brady
Johannesburg



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Editorial

Zuma: the tipping point

JACQUES PAUW'S *The President's Keepers* and Adriaan Basson and Pieter du Toit's *Enemy of the People* – have had media and citizens riveted for weeks. Deservedly so.

Much of what they contain is not news; they have simply loaded the scale to tipping point with an agglomeration of stories, contextualised and catalogued in shocking detail, one event after another. They each provide a perfect demonstration of what a book – or a long-form magazine such as *Noseweek* – can achieve, that, with rare exception, other media cannot.

The addictive rush of social and other online media offers you your daily/hourly dose of shock-horror – which is quickly forgotten or obliterated by the irresistible drive to imbibe the next quick dose.

Noseweek readers will have found themselves familiar with many of the subjects tackled in these two important books. Some examples:

In March 2012 *Noseweek* began a series of reports exposing the campaign by corrupt Zuma cadres to close down the KZN unit of the Hawks and get rid of its head, Gen. Johan Booyesen. At the time, most media stayed away from this politically dangerous subject.

From March 2015 we followed the unraveling of the criminal political machinations used to install and protect Advocate Nomgcobo Jiba as head of the NPA.

In August 2015 we ran two long articles exposing how the *Sunday Times* was manipulated by agents of the State Security Agency (SSA) to assist them in the criminal capture of SARS. The first was headlined “Sex, drugs, lies and blackmail”, the second headlined: “SARS spies, damned spies and more lies”. While *Noseweek* did not know about SARS’s plans to tax Zuma, and how those plans were thwarted, we did know that dishonest political agendas were being served.

But then we also knew that such things were not unheard of at SARS, even under Gordhan’s efficient rule. (He and his deputy, Pillay were, after all, themselves political employees. They had seen fit to condone Brett Kebble, a major tax defaulter, being let off the hook with token taxation – as a reward for his support of the ANC. See *nose63*, December 2005.)

Mirroring a chapter in Pauw’s book, five and a half years ago (in *nose150*) *Noseweek* reported – quoting an official document classified ‘secret’ – how the Police Crime Intelligence Unit had been captured by criminals allied to the President. And that the Inspector General of Intelligence, too, had been ‘captured’ to

provide the ultimate cover for the criminal subversion of legitimate intelligence gathering and law enforcement by Zuma and his allies.

Several paragraphs from that *Noseweek* report deserve repeating:

“The Crime Intelligence Division of the police performs a highly sophisticated function, collecting often sensitive information about high-level crime and criminals. But a secret report that has been buried in the files of the National Intelligence Service since November [2011], shows that the SAPS Crime Intelligence Division is too busy defrauding and stealing from the public to be much bothered with other people’s criminal activities.

“The criminal network operating within the division is headed by no less than Divisional Commissioner of Crime Intelligence Lieutenant General Richard Mdluli himself – and a mysterious, unnamed person, whom the author of the report dares refer to only as ‘the Prominent Individual in KwaZulu-Natal’.

“Mdluli was hand-picked by Minister of Police Nathi Mthethwa and a committee of ANC ministers. Normally heads of police divisions are selected by the Commissioner of Police, advised by senior policemen. Former Police Commissioner Tim Williams declared it a political hijacking.

“The damning report, dated 4 November 2011 and marked ‘secret’ on every one of its 13 pages, was written by the Head: Intelligence Analysis, Co-ordination and Surveillance, Major General Mark Hankel, and countersigned by the Acting Divisional Commissioner: Crime Intelligence, Major General C P Kock. “It was addressed to the Inspector General of Intelligence and the National Commissioner of Police.

“In July 2011 a case of corruption and fraud was registered by the Hawks at Silverton Police Station, as Silverton CAS 155/07/2011. The accused was Lieutenant General Richard Mdluli, head of police Crime Intelligence.

“Informed sources have confirmed that, within three months, extensive evidence of corruption involving Mdluli, senior police officers and even journalists had been uncovered. However once the investigation began to look at renovations carried out at Police Minister Nathi Mthethwa’s home, and a Mercedes Benz ML350 bought by Mthethwa with secret police funds, it did not take too long for the Inspector General of Intelligence to become involved.

“Hankel was ordered to submit a report to the Inspector General of Intelligence, detailing exactly what it was that the probe

Facebook defaces Noseweek

By Jonathan Erasmus

had uncovered so far.

"In the concluding paragraphs of his report, Hankel found it necessary to state the following: 'It is submitted that the Intelligence Services Oversight Act does not negate the statutory duty to report corruption to the police for purposes of criminal investigation.'

"Which suggests it had been proposed that the intelligence service take over the investigation to the exclusion of the police.

"Shortly afterwards Mthethwa ordered that all the investigation dockets be sent to the Inspector General of Intelligence. They were not seen again – and all charges were 'provisionally' withdrawn against Mdluli.

"The situation echoed that of the case registered at the Berea police station in Durban by DA MP Diane Kohler-Barnard against Jacob Zuma's lawyer, Michael Hulley, after it emerged that Hulley had obtained recordings of telephone interceptions between senior prosecutors involved in the case against Zuma. [Now see our report on page 10 of this issue for the latest developments on that front.]

"Since this complaint made its way to the Inspector General of Intelligence there has only been one development: the Inspector General confirmed that the phone interceptions were legally undertaken. But Kohler-Barnard has never been told whether Hulley legally has possession of the tapes – a key part of her complaint.

"I suspect the Inspector General is a whole new way for those in power to defeat the ends of justice,' she said."

Noseweek's report concluded with the following editorial comment:

"The extraordinary and damning report, exposed here, is an example of the sort that we may not in the future be able to publish, for fear of facing a stiff jail sentence – should the Protection of State Information Bill before Parliament become law.

"We publish it here not to be provocative, or to make sensational headlines, but because publication is so clearly and urgently in the public interest. When our police service is run by criminals, where are honest citizens to turn for protection against crime and corruption?"

Yes, Dear Reader, that appeared in *Noseweek* five years ago!

The Editor

● For your Christmas subscription to *Noseweek* call 021 686 0570.

EVERY MONTH *NOSEWEEK* ADVERTISES its current issue on Facebook.

It's an entirely automated affair and every advert is "reviewed" by an algorithm, and either approved or disapproved within minutes of its creation.

In *nose217* the magazine featured an extract from a recently published book titled *Done* by eminent BBC journalist Jacques Peretti. In it Peretti describes how the world's ultra-rich actually identified global inequality as a business opportunity that they planned to exploit – and widen. To them, he reported, it was a gift-horse like no other.

Peretti revealed that in 2006, a Citigroup consultant had

within 24 hours of the advert going live, Facebook censored it. Why? Because Facebook owner Mark Zuckerberg is one of the eight.

Their official explanation: "We don't allow adverts to use the image of Mark Zuckerberg when promoting a product or service". Does that include a serious news story published in the public interest? Their reply: *Noseweek* was free to appeal against their decision.

We appealed – and got no response. In any event, appealing for the right to advertise a news story so obviously in the public interest just seemed daft. So we changed the advert and instead of using Zuckerberg's image we replaced it with "censored". The Facebook police appeared to be happy with this.

We have since learnt that Facebook is awash with "do-nots" in its attempt to occupy the moral high ground. For instance you cannot advertise tobacco related products, weapons or "sensational content" defined as imagery that may "shock or scare viewers". You can't

have "controversial content" that "exploits controversial political or social issues for commercial purposes" – the mainstay of newspapers – and you can't ask a person "Are you a Christian?" or have a leading sentence such as "Meet other Buddhists".

Yet you can advertise alcohol, dating, gambling, natural remedies and online pharmacies, although these must have prior written approval.

They do have one quirky rule *Noseweek* approves of: "Adverts must not contain ... bad grammar and punctuation. Symbols, numbers and letters must be used properly."

Absolutely! Apostrophe abusers should be banned from the internet! ■

The world's eight richest people



predicted that by 2015 the 100 richest people would own the same as half the world's population. In fact by 2015 just eight men owned as much as the poorest half of the world's population: 3.7 billion people. Peretti named these extremely well-known and vastly wealthy eight men; *Noseweek* published their portraits to illustrate this remarkable must-read story.

The story was the obvious one to feature in a Facebook ad announcing the publication of the November issue of *Noseweek* – accompanied by the portraits of the eight richest men. But

How Lowe can you go?

The dirty business of the CEO of mining company Resgen includes environmental pillage, theft and paedophilia. By Martin Welz

RESOURCE GENERATION LTD (Resgen), a company listed both in Australia and on the JSE, is currently seeking to raise funds to develop the controversial Boikarabelo open-cast coal mine in the Waterberg region. The project is to be undertaken by its BEE-compliant local subsidiary, Ledjadja Coal.

Various NGOs have been desperately campaigning to stop coal mining there, as it threatens to permanently poison the water supply to huge swathes of already drought-stricken South Africa. Besides its impact on human settlements and agriculture, it could destroy the Kruger National Park.

No surprise: in keeping with the culture of the Zuma era, Resgen's single biggest shareholder is the government-controlled Public Investment Corporation.

In October the Resgen Board issued a statement announcing that, "given the current state of negotiations with proposed financiers", it has deemed it in the best interests of the company to



Resgen CEO Rob Lowe

extend the employment contract of its CEO, Rob Lowe, for at least a further 12 months. His contract provides for a large salary and a very good success bonus.

Who is Rob Lowe? Where have we come across his name before? What

sort of man would determinedly set about promoting for personal profit a mining operation which threatens such huge potential cost to nature and the country?

This is what *Noseweek* has discovered:

In November 1994 police in the county of Dorset in England raided the home of a Bournemouth solicitor (*attorney*) named Robert David Norman Lowe. There they seized 164 video cassettes, 362 magazines, 271 photographs and nine camcorder tapes, all of a paedophile nature. The following day Lowe was arrested on his return to the UK from a business trip abroad – in all probability, to Thailand.

In February 1995 Robert Lowe was sentenced by the Bournemouth Crown Court to seven months imprisonment for having illegally imported indecent and obscene material.

In November of that year an application was brought before the Solicitors Tribunal in London to have him struck off the roll of solicitors for having brought the profession into disrepute. Lowe did not appear and was not represented. He had, however, written a letter to the UK Solicitors' Complaints Bureau six months earlier in which he made "certain admissions". In the letter, which he wrote from a hotel room in Zimbabwe, Lowe said he would shortly be leaving for the Far East and would not have a permanent address in the foreseeable future. He accepted that his conduct had brought the solicitors' profession into disrepute and assured them that he had no intention to ever again practice law. He suggested that the Tribunal might find the psychiatric report prepared for his criminal trial of some assistance – which it did.



The Tribunal expressed considerable sympathy for Lowe, having taken into account the report of the psychiatrist who was in no doubt that his problems had their roots in his own unfortunate childhood. It nevertheless remained a serious criminal offence, and he was struck from the roll of solicitors.

In *nose49 Noseweek* revealed how, in 1998, Dr Frank Carlisle, a well-respected educationalist, had been defrauded by Mercantile Bank and its crooked head of corporate banking, Rob Lowe. Yes, the same Robert Lowe had joined the bank in Johannesburg in 1997 and down the line arranged a dozen unauthorised withdrawals from Carlisle's bank account, into his own, before fleeing the country – for Thailand.

Carlisle had first discovered there was something seriously up (or down) with his Mercantile bank account when, on holiday in Durban he attempted to draw some cash, and was informed there were insufficient funds in an account that, when he last heard, held more than R25m.

He set up a meeting with his bank manager, Lowe, for 18 January 1999.

In 1995 Lowe was sentenced to seven months imprisonment for having illegally imported indecent and obscene material

But by then Lowe had disappeared. On 21 January, Carlisle received, by fax, a handwritten note from Lowe on the stationery of the Meridien Park hotel in Frankfurt. "Dear Frank," the fax began, "After careful reflection I have decided to absent myself". Alan Greenstein, Mercantile's head of operations too received, a few days later, a fax from Lowe, this one from Thailand. In it Lowe revealed that he had left his company BMW at Johannesburg International Airport.

Experienced forensic accountant Frik Botha, upon examining the entire record, found that the unauthorised and unexplained debits from Carlisle's bank account totalled a staggering

R20,962,624.70.

For example, one of the debits was described on the bank's records (kept hidden by Lowe) as a payment to a company called African Capital. A Cipro search reveals that Robert David Norman Lowe registered the company African Capital Group, and became its first director in October 1997 – at about the time Carlisle approached Mercantile Bank to open an account. The company was said to be based at an address in Edenvale, Johannesburg

Mercantile, rather than disclose who benefited by the transactions, and showing what authorisation they had – or did not have – took to the trenches with their lawyers. It was well known that their counsel's instructions were to "drag the matter out till Carlisle runs out of money or dies".

They succeeded. Carlisle ran out of money, and in March 2006 he died aged 68. This was not before Mercantile had

tried to have him committed to prison for being in contempt of a court order restraining him from communicating with anyone regarding his case.

At the end of the day, seven years after the sorry saga began, the final and only defence, offered by Mercantile to Carlisle's claims was Prescription – a legal rule that after a certain time (usually three years) a debt falls away.

A year or two after his disappearance to an unknown address in Thailand, Robert Lowe quietly returned – to Cape Town. In 2002 he is recorded as a director of various Cape Town based companies, with his residential addresses in the Greenpoint area. By 2013 he had moved up a notch: to an apartment on the sparkling waters of the V&A Marina on the Waterfront.

That, dear reader, is the sort of man who wants to rip up the coal beds of the Waterberg, regardless of the consequences for the environment and the people of South Africa. Coal



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The spy who got Zuma off the hook

Notorious tapes used to quash 783 charges against President may have been engineered by Number One's cronies. By Paul Kirk

INTERNATIONAL MAN OF MYSTERY, codenamed “Luciano” – the star actor on the so called “Spy Tapes” which got President Jacob Zuma off 783 charges of fraud, racketeering and money laundering – has popped up again, this time as a “Council Member” of the mysterious African Union Foundation headed by Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma.

Over the past several years, numerous sources, from former colleagues to South African law enforcement agencies, have confirmed that “Luciano” is one Andries “André” Pienaar – a mysterious and some say dangerous free-lance intelligence operator who spins a supremely plausible tale.

He started his career with international investigators, Kroll and soon became head of their South African operation where, in the early years of ANC rule they got themselves signed up as secret advisors to any number of government departments.

In 2004 Pienaar decided to break with Kroll and started up his own private investigations company in London called Good Governance Group, “G3” for short. (See box story for its fascinating history.) Picking up on old connections and his claims to have been a long-standing member of the ANC, Pienaar soon established a branch of G3 in South Africa and, within a few years, was a multi-millionaire.

Fast-forward to the present: The African Union Foundation is a free-flying satellite of the African Union, operating with little or no supervision from AU headquarters in Addis Ababa.

According to an AU document, the African Union Foundation was registered in Mauritius in January 2014.

But, curiously, a not-for-profit company called African Union Foundation was registered in South Africa in September 2015. Its operations are, in fact, directed from an office in Midrand. Official records show that Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma resigned as a director on 15 May this year – around the time her candidacy to succeed her ex-husband as president became publicly known.

The foundation website appears designed to boost the president's ex-wife's image and lists many worthies, including Cheryl Carolus and the former president of Jamaica, as “Council Members”. Since first being tipped as a presidential hopeful, Dlamini-Zuma's campaign has made much of the allegedly sterling work she did while head of the AU. (Many beg to differ, describing her performance as, at best, lacklustre.) The African Union Foundation pushes the line that her time at the AU was extremely productive and that she is a great statesperson.

The foundation's website boasts thus: “Launched in January 2015 following approval at the 21st Ordinary Assembly of Heads of States and Government in May 2013, the AU Foundation raises funds from the private sector and individuals on the continent and beyond towards the financing of African development priorities”.

The foundation uses the website www.africaunionfoundation.org and email address @africaunion.org. The



André Pienaar (aka 'Luciano')

AU has the website <https://au.int/>. Calls to the AU revealed that nobody answering the switchboard in Addis Ababa had heard of an African Union Foundation. Nor is it mentioned on the AU website where all the AU's agencies and divisions are listed.

The sudden appearance of André Pienaar – the real name of “Luciano” – as a key figure in the African Union Foundation, and by implication in the NDZ election campaign, is certain to raise eyebrows.

Ever since Zuma escaped his many corruption charges the well-informed have speculated how on earth veteran prosecutor Leonard McCarthy and “Luciano” – an astute private intelligence agent – could have let themselves be recorded plotting against

Zuma using infantile “codenames” on phones they had every reason to suspect were monitored. And, having been caught at it, after Zuma’s ascent to power, they could have expected his wrath and revenge to be visited upon them by his loyal cronies. It hasn’t happened.

At the time, Pienaar was said to be acting as a proxy for Thabo Mbeki in colluding with McCarthy to bring down Zuma. However, more recent developments – and closer scrutiny of company records from that time – suggest that Pienaar was far more likely a proxy of Jacob Zuma than of Thabo Mbeki. In which case the recorded conversations may well have been a deliberate set-up.

In early April 2009 Mokotedi Mpshe, then head of the National Prosecuting Authority called a press conference to announce he would be withdrawing all 783 charges against Jacob Zuma. Mpshe claimed that he was forced to withdraw the charges as he had found “devastating evidence of collusion” between former prosecuting authority officials – mainly Leonard McCarthy – and President Thabo Mbeki. McCarthy was at the time the head of the Directorate of Special Operations – the Scorpions.

The collusion, which has since been rubbished by the Supreme Court of Appeal, supposedly involved proxies of Mbeki colluding with McCarthy and others to abuse the prosecutorial process in order to wreck Zuma’s political ambitions. Mpshe released some intercepted conversations between McCarthy and others, including a particularly damning one with a mystery man named “Luciano”, about whom Mpshe said: “As far as can be established, ‘Luciano’ is a private intelligence operative.”

When the NPA released transcripts of some of these conversations, notes were appended to them pointing out that “Luciano” was “believed to be close to Mbeki”.

Among the conversations were a series between “Luciano” and McCarthy where code names were used for prominent politicians and “Luciano” showed off his knowledge of Latin. Mpshe identified the man referred to as “Ouboet” as disgraced former police commissioner Jackie Selebi, while “Oujan” was code for

Luciano’s charmed circle

ANDRIES “ANDRÉ” PIENAAR IS A director of only one company registered in South Africa, called ParcelNinja.

Other directors and former directors include Arno Robbertse and Pieter Bernardus “Bernard” Pienaar (André’s brother).

Robbertse is a cyber security expert, and is currently also a Managing Partner of G3 Good Governance Group. Bernard Pienaar was also a director of Iku Investments, which was deregistered in 2013. A co-director of Iku Investments was Wandile Nxele (sole director of G3 Good Governance Group South Africa.)

Still more intriguing: previous directors of Iku Investments include Hlula Msimang and Thembekile Kunene. Msimang is a former head of the Johannesburg Metro Police and is presently standing trial for two murders. He is the son of former ANC Treasurer General Mendi Msimang and former ANC cabinet minister Manto Tshabalala Msimang.

Kunene is a director of the IDC.

Wandile Nxele’s *Twitter* account includes a link to a company called Iku Capital, but *Nosweek* could find no trace of a company of that name ever being registered in SA.

It could be established however,

that Iku Capital did once have a website which claimed:

“We interface between governments, multi-lateral institutions, developmental institutes, equity partners and businesses across the globe. The breadth and depth of our service offering is unparalleled ...”

A June 2016 article in *Business Day* linked Iku Capital to some potentially suspicious business dealings in Mozambique. That story named Nhlanhla Magubane as the founder of Iku Capital. Magubane has been described as the “Secretary General of South Africa-China People’s Friendship Association” on a website of the South Africa-China Economy and Trade Association.

Other news stories named Ellen Tshabalala – notorious for having forged her CV when applying for the position of chairman of the SABC board – as chairperson of Iku Capital (as also asserted in that notorious CV).

True or not, Ms Tshabalala clearly thought it would be seen as a recommendation in presidential circles.

More credibly, Tshabalala has been named in the media as being a girlfriend of Jacob Zuma. She serves on the board of a number of state owned companies and is the president’s official advisor on black economic empowerment. ■

then presidential hopeful Jacob Zuma. McCarthy complains to then still mysterious “Luciano” that he has been advised to give Selebi and Zuma “a break” in the interests of South Africa – in other words to let them escape prosecution.

In the first conversation McCarthy mentions that Selebi and Zuma’s legal teams are asking for a review of their cases, and threatening to expose “number one” – at the time meaning Mbeki. To quote the transcript:

Discussion with person in private intelligence industry about seemingly

political solutions to NPA cases:

18. Date 16.12.07 SMS exchange between Luciano and LM:

LM: I have been advised to give Ouboet & Oujan a break in the interest of SA. Tenous times. QV

L: What did Jesus say? Give to the emperor what is due to him and to the church what is due to her. You serve at the pleasure of the emperor. Any other choice would mean not serving at the pleasure of the emperor.

LM: I hear you emperor sir. They’re asking for a review. What ...

L: Primus salus amicus et familia.

*(Honour first your friends and family)
That's the motto.*

LM: Yea. Threatening to expose no. 1.

The second intercepted conversation has Luciano discussing how he can help McCarthy by organizing international lawyers who are “sympathetic”, to sit on the review panels and would also, in the case of Selebi, “deal decisively” with Paul O’Sullivan – the maverick private investigator who hounded Selebi and produced much of the evidence used to convict him.

19. Date 17.12.07 SMS exchange between Luciano and LM.

L: Thought overnight 1. Recommend we help you find two sympathetic and credible international lawyers that can join each of the two reviews.

2. International component important for SA's reputation and your own.

If carefully selected will support objective.

3. In Ouboet's case need international component to deal decisively with O'Sullivan factor. Matter also high profile given K allegations, media interest and focus on crime in lead up to 2010.

4. I.r.o Oujan recommend a comprehensive review is done of ALL MLA and prosecution cases flowing from arms deal, not just his by review panel with international lawyers as you originally recommended.

5. You can then deal with Oujan in context of broader review.

6. If you are going to do this in interest of SA, recommended you request

6.1 [That] You submit review report to Special Committee of four ministers – justice, intel, foreign affairs and safety

and security. Do not take sole responsibility. Yr current line management structure will result in sole responsibility. 6.2 Recommend you come to clear agreement about SAG support for the next phase of yr career including a date.

6.3 You are going to need resources incl special budget because, above all, the media will have to be managed locally and globally. End.

An aside: Luciano's was the name of an Italian restaurant near the offices of British investigations company G3, The Good Governance Group, where Leonard McCarthy and G3's controlling member – André Pienaar – could often be spotted lunching. André Pienaar appears to have adopted the name of their favourite eatery.

Despite what Mpshe alleged at his press conference, there is a fair amount

Luciano abroad

SO, JUST HOW DID ANDRÉ PIENAAR manage to persuade the likes of Chester Crocker, the famed US diplomat to serve on his company's board?

For a start, it helped to have the right clients. In London one of the first Pienaar signed up was the Duke of Westminster, Gerald Grosvenor, the largest landowner in that great city. The dear old Duke had a bad reputation for chasing high class call girls – and the fortune to be among the wealthiest men in Britain.

When the Duke was involved in a blackmail scandal involving a gorgeous young Russian lady of dubious reputation, André stepped in and solved the problem by investigating, then threatening to expose, the call girl and her associates. The Duke, since deceased, was apparently ever so grateful – and got Pienaar an invitation to the wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton. It also earned him the company of men who were close to the British crown and aristocracy – and to British Minister of Defence Liam Fox.

In October 2011 it was revealed that Pienaar had been bankrolling Adam Werritty – the travelling companion and special friend of Fox,

by setting up a bogus charity which claimed to benefit Sri Lankan reconstruction but was used to channel money to Werritty. Liam Fox resigned soon after this became public.

In October 2011 The UK *Daily Telegraph* wrote: “André Pienaar, a multi-millionaire who keeps out of the public limelight, runs G3 Good Governance Group, a corporate security and intelligence company whose clients include defence contractor BAE Systems.

“In a lucrative industry reliant on insider information and expertise, Mr Pienaar has made it his business to be well-connected. The chairman of G3's advisory board is the Duke of Westminster. As a result, Mr Pienaar received an invite to the wedding ceremony as a guest of Buckingham Palace.”

Lieutenant General Sir Graeme Lamb (KBE, CMG, DSO etc etc) a former director of UK Special Forces, is also listed as a G3 special advisor, while Lord Macdonald, a former director of public prosecutions, is a non-executive director of Proven, an investigatory arm of G3.

Geoffrey Tantom, a former MI6 Middle East director with wide-ranging connections, is on the advisory

council. Mr Tantom's daughter Laura operates Universal Exports, G3's charitable foundation. This is also the name of the fictitious company used as a cover by James Bond.

“Bahrain Watch,” an NGO and website that monitors the kingdom of Bahrain, appears to have been the first to blow the whistle on Lt Gen Lamb, writing: “G3 was hired by the Bahrain government's Information Affairs Authority in July 2011 for a sum of £1.5 million. G3 was tasked with developing a “media campaign to support Bahrain's position in the international community”.

Lamb has been particularly outspoken in the media about his views on the political unrest in Bahrain – without clarifying that his company has been contracted to do PR for the government. Lamb has followed Pienaar to C5 Capital.

Pienaar left G3 in 2014 – apparently to the relief of some former colleagues. “He has no training or proper experience as a spy or an investigator – and yet for decades he has managed to fool and convince even the most experienced spies, investigative journalists and detectives,” one of his former associates told *Noseweek*. “Someone should write a book about him.” ■

of circumstantial evidence to suggest Pienaar was more likely to be close to Zuma than to Mbeki. His company employed a close relative of Nkosazana Zuma as their South African representative, while one of Zuma's nephews was on the payroll of G3 in London.

Good Governance Group UK (G3) was established in London on 27 February 2004. Its first listed director was Mungo Soggot (son of human rights lawyer David Soggot SC, famous for having defended both Steve Biko and Winnie Mandela), for several years prior an investigative journalist on the *Mail&Guardian*.

Within weeks, Andries Daniel Faber Pienaar – the true owner – also signed on as a director, and another *Mail&Guardian* luminary, former editor Phillip van Niekerk, was signed up as a member of the team.

As former head of the Africa branch of international investigators, Kroll, Pienaar was by then supremely well-connected – to the point that he could get heavyweights like former US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Chester Crocker to serve on his company's board.

(As a member of President Ronald Reagan's cabinet in the 1980s, Crocker was famous for promoting a policy of "constructive engagement" with the apartheid government. See box story on how Pienaar managed to access UK high-society.)

Mungo Soggot, too, was no mean asset when it came to connections in the right places, both in ANC South Africa and in Conservative Britain: he had his schooling in London at Westminster, the school most favoured by England's urban aristocracy. One of his classmates was George Osborne, who served as Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Cameron cabinet from 2010-2016.

On 15 December 2004 Good Governance Group launched its South African operation. Described as a "political risk and business intelligence consultancy", G3(SA) had only one director at the time – Wandile Nxele.

While he had no experience as an investigator, Nxele was excellently placed for a political risk consultancy job: he is a nephew of President Jacob Zuma, is close to many businessmen in the BEE sphere, and was involved in a number of business ventures in mining and resources.

To practise law in SA Pienaar would need an LLB law degree from an SA university, and no trace could be found of Andries Pienaar on any LLB graduate list

The members and directors of G3 (UK) were all well-known businessmen and investigators but almost nothing can be found about Pienaar on the internet – and none of his companies show his photograph. The African Union Foundation website says only this: "André Pienaar is a private investor in specialist areas of tech-

nology. He is a founder of C5 Capital Limited. He is a trustee of several African charities." All the foundation's council members are pictured – except for Pienaar.

The website of Pienaar's latest corporate adventure, C5 Capital, has photographs of each of the senior managers and directors of the firm, but has a company logo standing in for André – who is described as a "founder". There is no indication as to whether he is a director or a shareholder in the firm.

Some of the personalities on the C5 website were also once directors of G3 Good Governance Group – notably Graeme Lamb and Jamie Lowther Pinkerton, both ex-senior British army officers with long experience in the British special forces. The pair are listed as "strategic partners" of C5.

G3 also featured some security and public service heavyweights on its board. Curiously, while Chester Crocker is widely reported in the media as having been chairman of the board of G3, all references to him have been removed from the G3 website. Crocker remains a senior executive at the World Bank.

The small biographical précis for



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André Pienaar on the C5 Capital website reads:

“André is an entrepreneur and private investor with a record of building and leading fast-growing businesses. He is the founder of the Good Governance Group, a leading international strategic advisory firm. Previously he built and led Kroll’s Africa & Natural Resources Division out of London. André is an advocate of the Supreme Court of South Africa.”

Former colleagues claim that Pienaar studied law at the University of Aberystwyth in Wales, but to practice law in South Africa he would need an LLB law degree from a South African university, and no trace could be found of an Andries Pienaar on any LLB graduate list. The High Court roll of admitted advocates shows no André or Andries Pienaar.

Almost as intriguing: in September 2007 when the ANC resolved to close down the Scorpions – and, as it happens, not long before the conversations between McCarthy and “Luciano” were recorded – McCarthy told colleagues he was considering taking up a job abroad. Ironically, crime boss Glenn Agliotti was the first to reveal that McCarthy wanted to leave South Africa and move his family to France. McCarthy told associates at work that he had received job offers from the World Bank and from “risk consulting” firm Kroll in France.

In March 2008 he announced that he was leaving to take up a job at the World Bank in the USA. His lucrative position there, as vice president in charge of combatting corruption, saw him reporting directly to Pienaar’s friend Chester Crocker, chairman of the advisory board of the World Bank –

Nxele had no experience as an investigator, but was excellently placed for a political risk consultancy job: he is a nephew of President Jacob Zuma and is close to many businessmen

and then also still the chair of G3 Good Governance Group.

McCarthy has never publicly commented on the “Luciano” tapes, and as far as can be ascertained the World Bank has neither investigated him nor passed any comment.

What of erstwhile reporter and G3 founder-director Mungo Soggot? Approached for comment, Soggot sent *Noseweek* the following email: “I can’t comment about specific clients or work at G3. André was the driving force at G3, which grew rapidly. Within the company, there was a range of experiences, and on some matters we had differing views. I decided to leave in 2010.”

Pienaar is said to have sold his

interest in G3 to a Swedish bank in 2012 – allegedly for more than £20m – but stayed on until 2014.

A competitor tells *Noseweek* that Pienaar earned a major part of his considerable fortune acting for “oil interests” and, latterly, for Russian clients.

Private investigator Paul O’Sullivan, among the first to work out the true identity of “Luciano”, says of Pienaar: “He’s a bloody crook and an intelligence player of note.”

Since leaving G3 Pienaar has been active in at least one business start-up in South Africa – the aforementioned C5 Capital – and is said to be very close to the Zuma presidency.

There has been no attempt by the South African authorities to question McCarthy – not even after Jacob Zuma, the alleged victim of the recorded conspiracy, came to power and appointed his trusted allies to the National Prosecuting Authority. The fact that “Luciano” is now associated with Jacob Zuma’s anointed successor – and proxy – suggests there may be a lot more to the spy tapes story than anyone previously imagined.

● In March this year the African Union Foundation launched its African Economic Platform at a conference in Mauritius. Among honoured guests at the conference were President Robert Mugabe, Dr Kelvin Kemm (long-time promoter of nuclear interests and Zuma appointee as chairman of Necsa), and Vuyani Jarana, CO of the Vodacom Group.

● In July, at the 25th AU Summit in Johannesburg, Robert Mugabe, presented the foundation with a cheque for US\$1m.

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Robbing the poor to make the rich richer

Billionaire Douw Steyn's 1Life Insurance is tricking pensioners into paying their social grant money into policies they neither need, want, nor can afford. By Jack Lundin

EVERY MONTH INSURANCE BILLIONAIRE Douw Steyn's 1Life snatches R110 in funeral insurance premiums from the social grants of each of 190,300 – mostly impoverished – South Africans. This captured monthly revenue delivers a guaranteed R250m-plus annual income, that pours, year after year, into the magnate's corporate coffers.

Pensioner Mrs Sanna Marinana 73, and her disabled 40-year-old daughter Latitia never wanted their funeral policies with 1Life in the first place. For six years they'd been paying R65 per month each into perfectly good ones with Doves. But 1Life's agent would brook no argument: "She said she'd been sent by SASSA and all people who get social grants and pensions must take the policy," recalls Mrs Marinana. "We thought all the people on grants had to do it and we didn't want to get into trouble by refusing."

It was in November 2013 that 1Life's bluntly demanding agent knocked at their door in Khayaletu South, part of Nekkies township outside the Garden Route tourist town of Knysna. And ever since 1Life has been drawing R110 per month from each of the mother and daughter's SASSA grants. In the last four years Douw Steyn's long term life insurer has made deductions totalling R10,560 for funeral policies that Mrs Marinana and Latitia hadn't asked for, didn't want – and couldn't stop.

1Life lies within the long term insurance arm of Steyn's Telesure Group, whose chairman is Douw Steyn's long-serving second in command Stephen Klinkert. Telesure houses Steyn's South



Latitia Marinana (left) and her mother, Sanna

African interests that include Auto & General, Budget Insurance, Dial Direct and Hippo, as well as his property holdings: Steyn City, The Saxon boutique hotel in Joburg's Sandhurst and Steyn's Shambala private game reserve in the Waterberg.

Mrs Marinana, a widow since her gardener husband died 11 years ago,

is a respected elder at Pastor Vubu's church and lives a quiet life with Latitia in their trim RDP house in Khayaletu South. Since Latitia was a baby she has suffered from hydrocephalus – water on the brain – and following neurosurgery at Groote Schuur hospital in Cape Town when she was 19 she has received a permanent disability grant.

Mother and disabled daughter pool their R1,610pm grants, which just about meets their food costs. They have no other source of income, so maintaining payments of R110pm apiece to 1Life for four years to keep SASSA happy, as they thought, has been a major sacrifice.

The Marinanas are not alone. Colleen Ryan, Black Sash's regional manager in the Western Cape, tells *Noseweek* that on her visits to advice centres across the province she is besieged by pensioners battling unsuccessfully to cancel unwanted 1Life funeral policies. Many of these, like the Marinanas, were hooked by 1Life's commission-hungry agents with the line that they were from SASSA and the policies were compulsory.

Black Sash took up the cudgels for 18 1Life victims in Franschhoek. "Then we had 45 cases which took over a year to cancel," says Colleen Ryan. "Since then I've been working on 10 more. It's disgraceful. When you see the poverty on the ground, when you know how these people could use that R110 to buy 11 loaves of bread. The pensioners we're helping in Mossel Bay already had funeral policies with funeral brokers they knew."

The Financial Services Board is investigating Black Sash's claims of misrepresentation by 1Life's agents. The board has called for affidavits for the 10 latest cases, which are in Mossel Bay, Beaufort West, Oudtshoorn and Paarl. Highlights from these:

Cylia Nteyi, aged 90, from Beaufort

West: "I was given a policy by 1Life without my consent in 2016. I tried to cancel it but it never stopped. It's still deducting from my SASSA card."

John Petrus Campell, aged 81, of Mossel Bay: "An agent from 1Life came to my house and said she was from SASSA and told me I must take a policy. When I asked her who pays for this policy she said it's the state. I then noticed the money coming off from my SASSA card. I went to Child Welfare in Mossel Bay to ask for help. They asked Black Sash to assist and on 19 March 2016 it was cancelled. To date I have not received my refunds."

Mona Brinkhuis, aged 76, from Mossel Bay: "Two agents from 1Life came to my house and said they were from SASSA and that I must take a policy. I went to Child Welfare in Mossel Bay and tried to cancel it. I signed an affidavit on 3 March 2016. The policy is still being deducted."

Somza Norman Tsolo, aged 68, of Wellington: "Since January 2015 they are deducting money from my SASSA card. I didn't apply for this policy. I never signed any policy with 1Life. I need my money back."

Novakalisa Kahlana, aged 64, of Paarl: "I want to cancel the stop order for a 1Life funeral policy which is deducting R130 from my SASSA card every month. I never joined any policy. I need my money."

As for Mrs Marinana and Latitia in Khayaletu South, at their request *Noseweek* entered the fray and on May 25 this year we sent a letter by registered post, on their behalf, to 1Life's compliance officer, terminating both policies with immediate effect and withdrawing mother and daughter's authority allowing 1Life to deduct premiums from their social grants. This letter was not even acknowledged. For five months the R110 deductions continued, until *Noseweek* escalated the complaint to the office of Laurence Hillman, chief executive of Telesure's long-term insurance business.

Within days Hillman was assuring us that both Mrs Marinana's and Latitia's funeral policies had now been cancelled "and we have refunded all premiums received since the cancellation request of 25 May, and compensated them for interest lost and bank charges incurred due to this incident". This grand gesture came to R700.40

The Financial Services Board is investigating Black Sash's claims of misrepresentation by 1Life's agents



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each for mother and daughter.

Hillman added: "It is important to note that we are committed to processing all cancellation requests in less than two working days of being received. With regard to Mrs Marinana and her daughter's policy, we can confirm that this was an administrative oversight and we are undertaking a full review to determine why the

process failed in this instance, and why the policy was not cancelled when the instruction was received."

Well, it is clear from the complaints gathered by Black Sash that 1Life policies are not all processed within two working days. As for their agents' lies, claiming to represent SASSA and that 1Life's funeral policies were compulsory, Hillman places the blame

squarely on the shoulder of those agents, independent financial service providers Emerald Wealth. "They are not part of 1Life and are liable for the advice that they offer as well as the manner in which they sell their products," maintains Hillman. He adds: "Emerald Wealth are no longer contracted to enter into any new policy sales on behalf of 1Life." ■

UK empire running on R7bn debt facilities

THE OTHER DAY A VUVUZELA-BLASTING convoy of trucks rolled into the sprawling Midrand township of Diepsloot bearing Santa Claus and Yuletide gifts for 12,000 primary school children. Each child received a schoolbag, stuffed with toys, sweets and stationery, a Yuletide gesture from their billionaire neighbour Douw Steyn, who's building his very own state-of-the-art Steyn City next door.

So far the Auto & General founder has pumped more than R6.5bn into his Steyn City dream, shrugging off criticism that it perpetuates an apartheid notion and undermines Johannesburg's "spatial fabric". Property and site sales, launched in March 2015, have reached R1.7bn, and 400 residents are now installed in easy-living apartments and luxurious clusters. The idea is that the mogul's private city, which could cost a staggering R50bn, will be self-financing through sales over the next 12-15 years.

The annual schoolbag distribution is a useful image-polisher for the oft-controversial Steyn, who shared the R3m cost of the Christmas spectacular with sponsors who supplied most of the bags' contents. And the PR pays off. When Economic Freedom Fighter leader Julius Malema urged the township residents to march in protest at this white man's invasion of 800 African hectares, they flatly refused, saying: "Not this man, he's part of us."

Steyn City Properties chief executive Giuseppe Plumari tells *Noseweek* that after a bumper first year property and site sales have slowed due to political instability and dwindling consumer confidence. So may Douw Steyn have to pay a big chunk of the R50bn final cost himself? Well, there are some shadows



Giuseppe Plumari helps to hand out school bags to the children in Diepsloot

on the horizon.

On the face of it, the insurance mogul's pockets are bottomless despite his legendary squanderings. In May he was ranked 152nd in the latest *Sunday Times* Rich List of Britain's wealthiest, with a UK net worth of £850m (R15.7bn).

His home in Steyn City, the sumptuous Palazzo Steyn, is valued at R250m. His 10-bedroomed mansion in London's Belgravia cost £62m (R1.1bn). In September he picked up the lion's share of a £138m (R2.5bn) dividend from his UK insurance and financial services BGL Group (Steyn and the Enthoven family, who own Nando's, hold 92% of the stock between them). Their previous year's payout was a more modest £59.3m (R1bn-plus). These jaw-dropping numbers just go on and on.

The massive dividend award, though, is surprising. For although BGL's consolidated revenue for the year to June was 12% up at £585.2m, with a pre-tax profit of £122m, current group net liabilities at year end were running at £65.1m and liquidity was only preserved by going into hock for £410m (around R7bn) with the bank through an unsecured £210m revolving credit facility (£117m of which was swallowed up by June) and a £200m securitisation facility (£35m already drawn). Both facilities mature in March 2019.

Steyn's board planned to resolve the liquidity problem – and in the process give BGL's founder and principal shareholder Douw Steyn another dollop of millions to complete Steyn City – by floating BGL Group on the London Stock Exchange. Scheduled for 2017, the listing has now been put on



Aerial view of Steyn City (above) and Palazzo Steyn (right), Douw Steyn's 3,000m² residence in the luxury development



the back burner after the UK media revealed that the group's best earner, its price comparison website *comparethemarket.com*, is under investigation by the Competition and Markets Authority, the UK's competition watchdog.

The authority's probe follows concerns that *comparethemarket.com* website, first choice for 5.1m customers in the UK thanks to its famous talking meerkats TV ads, may have done deals with insurers that forced up customers' premiums and could be in breach of competition law.

Disturbing though the listing hold-up is, Douw Steyn's perennial cash cow remains BGL's Guernsey-registered parent company BHL Holdings, whose own offshore ownership trail winds through Reef Holdings to something called The Concrete Trust, for whom the Reef Foundation acts as trustee. It's BHL Holdings that's pumping all these billions into Steyn City, through its local Telesure Investment Holdings. The financial statements of BHL Holdings and the offshore daisy chain, naturally, are not for public consumption.

An irritant that continues to plague Douw Steyn, who celebrates his 65th

birthday on December 19, is the ongoing high court battle initiated by his former fiancée Donné Botha, who seeks the court's ruling that she and Steyn were legally married in London in 2007. Steyn claims there was only a "blessing ceremony". Donné, who has already sought R30m in settlement of her claim, has been described by Steyn's attorney as gold-digger. However, should she be successful in Durban High Court, Steyn could lose up to half his fortune – and his subsequent remarriage to actress Carolyn Steyn would be declared invalid.

Donné's turbulent relationship with Douw Steyn has been exhaustively chronicled in *Noseweek* (noses106,107, 109,111,114) including a memorable account (nose111) of Steyn's 2009 subpoenaed appearance at Wynberg regional court (Gauteng). Donné was in the dock, facing an attempted murder charge for her attack on Sicilian Bianca Ferrante with a champagne bottle, after surprising the beauty in bed with Steyn at his Saxon boutique

hotel. (She was found guilty of assault with intent to commit grievous bodily harm and fined R3,000 or 12 months imprisonment suspended for three years).

But in court it was Steyn who commanded attention. After a vodka-fuelled display of incoherence in the witness box he stepped down to take a wild swing at Bianca's attorney Ian Levitt; on court premises he slashed the legs off the trousers of his Armani suit at the knee; he abandoned socks and shoes and mesmerised magistrate Renier Boshoff and prosecutor Adele Barnard by enveloping them in a bear-hug, pleading: "Can I give you some money?" The charade ended with a bodyguard racing *Fawlty Towers*-style through the court with an armful of pink champagne bottles to cheer up the boss with a courtroom party.

These days, Carolyn Steyn is a bedrock to the mercurial Steyn. Their first marriage in 2003 lasted just five months and they remarried in 2013. "He's a very difficult man, not easy," admitted Carolyn in a radio interview several months ago. "I could never get him out of my system – and I tried so hard! He's a fascinating man, a visionary. Douw has taught me a lot of things, and one is: go big or go home."

Mrs Steyn is a full-time charity worker, prison visitor and founder of 67 Blankets for Mandela Day, and in the past three years has distributed 30,000 blankets, hand-crocheted by volunteers, from prisoners to school children, to the needy. So has this remarkable woman calmed Douw Steyn down a bit? "We do not comment on personal matters relating to Mr Steyn, nor shall we comment on commercially confidential matters or business affairs of Mr Steyn," replies Steyn's PA, Jonathan Butt.

Steyn City chief executive Giuseppe Plumari tells *Noseweek*: "Steyn City is running independent of Mr Steyn by a board which oversees its operations and fiscal policy." Latest initiative to go on stream, says Plumari, is the Steyn City Foundation, a multi-million rand upliftment project with as-yet undefined priorities. Although the foundation will carry Douw Steyn's name, the canny billionaire won't be contributing a cent – funding will come from a 0.5% levy on the price of incoming residents' property purchases. ■

Long walk to the DA

Committed ANC member Bonginkosi Madikizela told Helen Zille he would never join her party. Now he's the DA leader in the Western Cape. Sue Segar traces an extraordinary political journey

SOME TIME BACK IN THE MID-2000s, bruised by his internal battles with the ANC – his political home since childhood – Bonginkosi Madikizela, spent a couple of hours with DA stalwart Helen Zille. He came out of that meeting convinced the DA was the party for him.

“She shared with me the DA’s principles and vision. That conversation, and seeing how seriously the DA took service delivery, and the freedom to express your views without censure, was important for me, as I speak my mind,” Madikizela told *Noseweek* in an interview.

Today, the DA’s newly-elected leader in the Western Cape stands in pole position to become the province’s new premier in 2019. As leader in the only province which the DA currently governs, he’s highly aware of the critical role he plays in the party and in the greater political landscape.

Naturally, Madikizela’s key focus will be on getting the DA to knock the ANC’s national support to below 50 percent in the 2019 poll, and he’s determined to grow the party’s black support base in the Western Cape.

“The DA will lead South Africa. It’s not a question of whether it can,” Madikizela said. “As leader of the only DA-governed province, I’m required to lead a team that makes the maximum contribution to our target to be the government in 2019.”

Sitting in the Wale Street office which he occupies as MEC for Housing, the single father in his early 40s spoke openly about his childhood in KwaZulu-Natal, during which he lost two brothers to political violence, his own inevitable involvement in politics, his ambitions – and some of the controversies linked to his name.

A long-time ANC member, Madikizela’s political turning point came in 2005 when he led a group of disgruntled Khayelitsha ANC members who supported Ebrahim Rasool in his leadership struggle with Mcebisi Skwatsha for the position of ANC chairperson in the Western Cape. The ANC in the province was divided between the two, with Skwatsha as provincial secretary challenging the incumbent, Rasool. (*See Box story.*)

Skwatsha won the battle – and the group’s support for Rasool led to them being sidelined and overlooked as ANC candidates in the 2006 local government elections. Madikizela and a few others decided to contest the local government elections as independent candidates. When the results of the local government elections came out, the ANC got just over 39 percent of the votes and the DA over 42 percent. The DA formed a coalition government, the ANC lost the city of Cape Town and Zille became mayor of Cape Town.

After a short stint with Bantu Holomisa’s UDM as the party’s Cape Town Metro secretary, Madikizela got a call from Zille asking him to work in her office as stakeholder relations manager “in her capacity as mayor and not as a leader of the DA”. It was while working in this position that Zille convinced him to join the party. He later became MEC for Human Settlements under Zille’s premiership.

“It didn’t take me long to realize that Helen and I had the same agenda to improve the lives of our people. Our hearts were in the same place,” said Madikizela. We didn’t have time to play politics. I gave my job my all and that’s what I saw in her as well, I realised I could work with a person like this.”

In October this year, Madikizela beat

former Western Cape police commissioner, and DA member of the provincial legislature, Lennit Max, in a contest for the DA Western Cape leadership, by 16 votes. There’s no love lost between the two and Max’s supporters claimed there had been irregularities in the elections.

Madikizela believes he’s in a prime political position to assist DA growth. “Firstly, I understand the political dynamics of the country better than many. I understand the importance of growing into new markets, particularly the opposition stronghold.

“The biggest issue we face in the opposition market is trust. My understanding of this market, because of my background, puts me in a good position to convince them to come over to this blue machine. I understand their fears and am able to break that barrier.”

Madikizela believes SA is “still grappling with colonialism and apartheid. As a South African who was affected by apartheid, I understand where most South Africans come from. The country is very racially polarized because many South Africans are still marginalized, and are uneducated, poor and not part of the mainstream economy. We need to unite South Africa across racial lines, to grow our economy, create jobs and create political stability.

“While it’s important to acknowledge the past, we also need people preaching the message of progress and the future – it’s not going to help us as a country to dwell in the past. I bring a message of hope, a message of unity, a message that talks more about the future than the past. That message resonates with many people.”

As the new DA leader in the Western Cape, his four-point plan, besides growing the party in opposition strong-



Bonginkosi Madikizela

holds, includes rebuilding trust with loyal supporters, building the DA's auxiliary structures and building trust with farm workers.

Farmworkers hold a special place in his heart "because I was born on a farm and we're not doing very well in the farming communities. The perception is that the DA is more for farmers than farmworkers. Farmworkers must feel that we care for them, that we're a party for all".

Madikizela told *Noseweek* he believes one of the biggest challenges facing the DA is the perception that it is a white party. "Perception in politics is reality. We must avoid doing or saying anything that feeds into that perception. To grow, we must walk the talk and be seen to be doing what we say we are."

Madikizela conceded the DA might have been a party just for white people

15 years ago. "But if you go to any DA gathering you'll see it is no longer the case. We currently have only one white provincial leader out of nine provinces and that is Jacques Smalle in Limpopo. In the four metros where we are in government, we only have one white mayor, Athol Trollip. We have black mayors in Joburg and Tshwane and a coloured mayor in Cape Town.

"Also, in this province we are in government in 29 municipalities where only ten mayors are white. The perception that the DA is a white party is not true."

What fascinates Madikizela is the way South African voters are maturing. "In countries like the USA, it took them years. In 23 years, if you look at the changes in patterns of how people in SA are voting, who would have thought we'd progress to where we are now – that people would be in a position to now vote for a different political party on the basis of issues and policies. In many countries, the soft issues lock people into perpetual loyalty to liberation movements, but in SA we are breaking that barrier and moving to real issues. People are voting on the basis of 'what a party is going to do for me to change my life'."

This political maturity, he believes, can be ascribed in no small measure, to "the things SA did right" by ensuring a progressive constitution, a number of chapter nine institutions and structures that put checks and balances in place to avoid abuse of power.

"The more people realise their power as individuals because of these checks and balances, the more they understand they can exercise their democratic right. We South Africans can pat ourselves on the back for this."

Madikizela says the DA is making a mistake by ignoring "soft issues" affecting ordinary South Africans. "Yes we focus on growing the economy and creating jobs, but we must never underestimate the emotional connection that many blacks have with parties like the ANC. We miss that point completely. We have to understand that it's not just about hard and visible issues. Many South Africans vote with hearts, not their heads, and our message must resonate with that.

"We mustn't under-estimate the scars that were caused by apartheid and focus on everything wrong that the

ANC is now doing. We need to tread carefully and strike a balance between those soft issues and what we need to do as a country to move forward."

What disturbs him the most about SA today is "the rate of corruption, the lack of accountability of some leaders and the fact that SA is so poor despite its massive potential.

"We are rich in mineral resources, and should be able to provide for our citizens. The good thing coming out of this political instability and the rate of looting is that South Africans are becoming mature voters.

"The quicker we can get people to understand that they are the bosses of politicians and not the other way round the quicker we get to a situation where people understand the power of 'if you don't deliver, I vote you out'."

Madikizela believes the biggest challenges facing the Western Cape today are gangsterism, alcohol abuse, and abuse of children and women.

"These have become a permanent feature of this province, and keep me awake. There are no easy solutions. It will take us time to restore the moral fibre of our province and our country ... and to restore the most important values of society. Most of these things happen because parents have abdicated responsibility.

Madikizela said the highlight of his tenure as Human Settlements MEC is the impact he has made in improving many people's lives. "The most rewarding thing is when I give a house and a title deed to the most deserving individual, like an elderly person who was directly affected by apartheid, or to people living with disabilities and child-headed households."

On the negative side: "We sometimes raise unrealistic expectations. Many people who qualify for free subsidized state houses are not the most deserving. The sooner we change that the better. We are entrenching a culture of dependency and entitlement in a country with a shrinking fiscus and growing demand. We need to unleash the potential of our people by creating a conducive environment for them to be active participants in housing delivery, instead of passive recipients."

Madikizela has been criticized for being overly close to Premier Helen Zille, and for being a lackey of a conservative group in the DA. He

supported Zille during the aftermath of her contentious tweets on the virtues of colonialism, and lodged a complaint against former DA Youth leader Mbali Ntuli for posting 'like' when somebody called Zille a racist on *Facebook*.

But, during our interview, he scoffed at this perception, saying "I am my own man", and that the ANC is on a mission to tarnish the image of black DA leaders. His track record in working for poor communities, he says, should speak for itself.

Madikizela was also criticized – and

the ANC called on Zille to fire him – for comments, in September 2010, that "unfortunately" there was no influx control to regulate the movement of people into the Western Cape.

"This comment was taken out of context. I was not born in the Western Cape and here I am, so why would I suggest migration of people from other areas should be controlled? Comments like that from the ANC don't deserve a serious response. This is a party that has lost its moral compass. It uses every opportunity to play the race card.

That's why it's disintegrated in the Western Cape."

On accusations by the Mandela Park Backyarders that he broke his promise to give residents houses in new Mandela Park developments, he says: "This was another twisted story by people who wanted to hold me to ransom by forcing me to give them houses without following due processes and the principle of first come, first served.

"I met them several times and they made these unreasonable demands,

From township to leadership

BONGINKOSI MADIKIZELA WAS born in 1975 in Murchison, Port Shepstone. His father, Magabishane Madikizela, a farm worker and chief, hailed from Mbizana in the Eastern Cape. Bonginkosi's mother, Nyabuzana, was Magabishane's first of eight wives and Bonginkosi the last of eight children – four sons and four daughters. His mother died when he was seven; his father when he was 11.

Bonginkosi's grandfather and Winnie Madikizela-Mandela's father and were brothers, but while Winnie was part of the family, he did not see her much.

Madikizela began his schooling in Murchison aged ten and, after his father's death, was left in the care of his older siblings. This was during the mid-1980s, at the height of the war on the ground in KZN between the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party.

It was inevitable that the teenage Madikizela would become involved. "I didn't join the ANC, the ANC joined me! We were Madikizelas in KZN, so by association we were ANC. I knew I had to fight Inkatha."

He became part of a group of young boys who went to camps and slept in the bush, returning home in the early hours to go to school. "Then, at school, we'd hear gun shots and run away. That was our life."

In 1988 when Madikizela was 13 he and his oldest brother Moses were attacked by IFP supporters and Moses was hacked to death. The

young Madikizela went to live with his second eldest brother, Amos, who was killed in similar circumstances in 1991, when Madikizela was 16.

"Then they came after me," he says.

After Amos's death, Madikizela moved to Durban to live with a sister, a domestic worker, in the Welbedacht squatter camp near Chatsworth. "That shack, made from neighbours' discarded materials, was our home for years. The holes in the walls were so big you could count the stars."

When political tensions worsened, he moved to Mbizana, Eastern Cape, to live with an aunt and uncle, and matriculated with university exemption from the Ntabezulu High School, before returning to Durban. There he worked for an RDP housing company and studied housing policy for a year at the University of Natal.

Madikizela moved to Cape Town in 1994, living in Khayelitsha while working for a construction company and studying at computer school. He also enrolled for a B.Comm in Human Resource Management with Unisa. In 2000, he moved to Durban to be with his third brother Mdu who had become ill, and who later died. There he worked for Stats SA, continued with his IT studies and became involved with NGOs and youth organisations.

He returned to Cape Town in 2002 to work as a computer teacher. Now back in Khayelitsha, he became involved in fighting corruption around a new mall development in Macassar. He found himself back in politics

and active in the ANC, and was soon elected as secretary of the ANC's Macassar branch. In 2003, while working in HR at the Ravensmead police station, he was elected as secretary of the Khayelitsha Development Forum (KDF). A year later he became an executive member of the KDF.

In the election year of 2004, Madikizela was at the forefront of campaigns for the ANC in his ward. The ANC did well and Ebrahim Rasool became premier of the Western Cape.

Then Madikizela became embroiled in the debate about who to support in the next elections, between Rasool and Mcebisi Skwatsha, who was provincial secretary. "Rasool had not done a bad job but some believed the ANC must be led by black people. I had always known the ANC as a non-racial party. That was when I started seeing their true colours. There was a big split among ANC members, Rasool lost and a witchhunt began against those who had supported Rasool.

"Unbelievable things were going on in our ward conferences. People were imposed on us. A close friend, a councillor who supported Rasool, was hit on the head with a brick and was in hospital for weeks. It left a bad taste. You'd go to a meeting, but be given a brief to toe a certain line, and told that you couldn't speak your mind. I said I couldn't be part of that. I decided I was not going to take that nonsense."

Madikizela became the face of a campaign to stand as independents to contest the ANC in the elections,

until it was no longer necessary to meet them.”

On what his role in the Western Cape’s pending water crisis is, he said: “As the leader of the ruling party in the province, I have an important role. There were different choices and decisions to make based on the information at our disposal at the time. Drought is a global phenomenon which has affected 130 mega cities in the last seven years, due to climate change. Government is always faced with difficult choices in these situations. It’s also unfortunate

that experts did not make the right predictions about the amount of rain we were going to get.

“Perhaps people have a right to blame the government, but if you are faced with a choice to either deal with immediate social challenges or with long-term perceived challenges, and you have very limited resources – the obvious choice becomes the first one. We are now doing everything to deal with this problem, from water recycling, aquifers, water-saving and desalination plants.

”This multi-pronged approach will

help us deal with the problem. The DA didn’t mess up. Water is a national government competence. The DA has been asking for necessary assistance from national government but unfortunately without luck.”

His long-term ambitions, he said, are “to grow the party in the Western Cape, break the barriers in opposition strongholds and contribute to our goal of becoming the national government. I believe in doing the work first – only after achieving those goals will I decide on the next step for me personally.” ■

starting in January 2006. He received numerous threats as well as phone calls from ANC leaders telling him to stop what he was doing. A week before the elections (2006) he even had a call from Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. “She shouted at me, saying she would send a delegation to talk some sense into me. And she did. Mandela’s own praise singer, Zolani Mkiva, came to deliver a message from my family and the royal family, to stop what I was doing because it was hurting the ANC.

Madikizela had first met Helen Zille in 2003 in Khayelitsha and, while meeting with people to raise funds for his cause, he went to visit her. “In politics there are trade-offs. I said, ‘Helen, you’re leader of the DA and we are now campaigning against the ANC ... and this will hurt them. Help us.’

“She said, ‘what’s in it for me,’ and we said we would take a lot of support from the ANC, and she said, ‘how do I know I can trust you’ and I said, ‘you just have to take my word for it’. I think she appreciated that kind of honesty. We went to campaign and we hurt the ANC big time.”

The ANC lost the city of Cape Town and the DA formed a coalition government in the city. According to Madikizela, the last thing on his mind was to join the DA. He spent a short stint with the UDM after the elections “because I needed a political home but it was not for me.

“The rest is history. Not long after Helen was inaugurated I got a call from her, asking me to work in her office as stakeholder relations manager.

“I said you must understand I will never join your party. She said she wanted me to work with her as mayor and not as DA leader and I began

working with her in June 2006. She put me on probation and I soon realised we were both in politics to improve peoples lives”. In 2007 they had a conversation that changed things. “It was about the political environment and the role of the DA and the role she saw me playing as part of the DA.

“She described why it was important to have people like me in the DA to get political realignment in SA.

“I called my sisters who said they’d support whatever decision I made.”

Two days later, Madikizela joined the DA, and became part of the provincial election team. “We were crisscrossing the province, campaigning, and we got more than 51 percent of the votes in 2009. Madikizela became an MPL for the first time. “I was very nervous, there was a lot to learn.” A day before Zille announced her cabinet, she called him and asked him to be Minister of Housing.

‘I didn’t have an easy life growing up. People like [Winnie Mandela] made me realise it’s a jungle out there and only the fittest survive’

“I said, ‘are you insane?’ I accepted reluctantly and hardly slept for six months, learning everything about this department.” He was reappointed minister in 2014.

“It has become my passion and I don’t believe I have done a bad job.” Of Zille he says: “I don’t think there’s anybody who challenges her as I do, yet I don’t think there’s anyone who has shown as much faith in me as she has. She engages and is prepared to change her mind. She doesn’t pretend to know everything and gives you the space to do your job. She only intervenes if you mess up. You don’t find that in many leaders – most lead with their egos.”

Another woman he admires is Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. “I’m not suggesting she’s a saint, but to go through what she did and stay standing inspires me. I didn’t have an easy life growing up. People like her made me realise it’s a jungle out there and only the fittest survive. Those traits and values have got me where I am today.”

Madikizela is a single father to a son Sihle (17) and daughter Mihle (7). “There are values I’m determined to instil in my kids. When I compare their lives with how I grew up, I can say I am rich, but my kids don’t get everything they want. I’d like them to experience some of the difficulty I went through so they appreciate what they have.”

Other people he deeply admires and who helped shape him are his four sisters, Agnes, Princess, Flora and the late Mildred. “My sisters made me who I am by showing me love and compassion, and I’ll be indebted to them till the day I die.” ■

Polokwane's rocky road to better public transport

There's more to a rapid transit system than buying buses and building roads – as Limpopo's capital, and several other South African cities, are discovering.

By Warren Blunt

JOBURG HAS ITS *REA VAYA* BUS RAPID Transit System and Tshwane its *A Re Yeng* 'Connecting the Capital' version – and so far neither system is quite meeting expectations.

While *Rea Vaya* has been plagued by bus driver strikes, issues of punctuality and failure to adhere to routes, *A Re Yeng* is proving significantly more expensive than originally projected. Current opinion is that by the time it becomes fully operational the new bus system will have cost Tshwane double the amount originally projected. This will largely be due to an agreement with taxi operators made by the then ANC municipality (it is now DA-led) to compensate them for loss of earnings on routes designated for *A Re Yeng*. So far the system has cost the taxpayer more than R2.6bn.

Now the ANC-led Polokwane municipality is moving to set in place *Leeto la Polokwane* to provide faster, cheaper transport to communities living within a 30km radius of the capital of Limpopo. This is in line with the municipality's *Polokwane 2030 Smart City Vision*, that envisages a vibrant up-to-date inner city infrastructure to encourage economic growth and investment.

When plans for the system were unveiled to the media toward the end of 2014, the projected cost was R1.8bn. At that point the municipality had yet to decide on the type of buses to be used, and had not engaged with the various transport operators presently ferrying passengers on the designated routes.

Taxi associations are now demanding compensation for loss of earnings as they presently carry around 70% of commuters to and from

the city. Failure to reach agreement could lead to community protests and disruptions to *Leeto la Polokwane*.

City residents are also questioning the need for the new transport system as there are already three provincial government-subsidised bus operators transporting commuters. Great North Transport, Bahwaduba Bus Service and Madodi Bus Company will all be affected in some way or another by the new system. Communities are saying the municipality should rather focus on upgrading the water infrastructure and the ageing sewage system, neither of which were designed to cope with the rapidly-growing population of a city with more than 600,000 residents.

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), official opposition in the Polokwane municipal council, have expressed dissatisfaction with the timing of *Leeto la Polokwane*. "Our people need housing and job opportunities, not an elaborate transport system with dedicated cycle lanes – most of our people are too poor to afford bicycles let alone an expensive public transport system," said EFF municipal councillor, Ronnie Malema.

The idea for Integrated Rapid Public Transport Networks (IRPTNs) stems from the approval by Parliament in March 2007 for the improvement and overhaul of public transport across the country. This has led to the implementation of 'accelerated modal upgrading' projects and IRPTNs, as part of a public transport action plan overseen by the national Department of Transport.

Phase one of the IRPTN introduced rail-priority and bus transit corridors in twelve cities, costing huge amounts of taxpayer money and providing perfect ground for corrupt activities

and underhand tender practices.

One only has to look at the recent railway locomotive corruption scandal involving the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (Prasa), the Department of Transport and Swifambo, a dodgy company meant to supply the locomotives.

Leeto la Polokwane will be the fifth bus rapid transport system to be implemented, joining, besides Johannesburg and Tshwane, Cape Town and Nelson Mandela Bay. Of the four systems currently in operation, only Cape Town's MyCiti is operating efficiently, although it only caters for 12% of commuters using public transport in the 'Mother City'.

The R2bn Nelson Mandela Bay system has been plagued by delays over the past six years, with 60 buses gathering dust while five engineering companies and four project managers came and went before the first phase was finally launched toward the end of last year. Buying the wrong buses and having to negotiate a way out of that was a major reason for delay.

In Polokwane, simply naming the bus system took over 18 months – and cost R2.8m. When *Leeto la Polokwane* (*Journey of Polokwane*) was finally decided on in August 2016, then minister of transport Dipuo Peters, Polokwane Mayor Thembi Nkadimeng and Limpopo Premier Stan Mathabatha celebrated to much fanfare and jubilation.

Peters, congratulating the Limpopo provincial government and the Polokwane municipality, declared: "We are pleased to see that the Polokwane new system penetrates through the heart of the CBD, with a transit mall planned. You have done South Africa proud. Together we move South Africa



Polokwane Mayor Thembi Nkadimeng and Limpopo Premier Stanley Mathabatha unveiling the name of the city's integrated public transport system in 2016

forward.”

Whether *Leeto la Polokwane* will indeed move the people of Polokwane forward or not – or in any direction at all – remains to be seen. Proof of the pudding will come when the first commuters climb onto the first bus in October 2018 – or whenever they do, as not much is certain except that costs will escalate and it is way behind schedule. So far – as confirmed by Mantlako Sebaka, communication officer for *Leeto la Polokwane* – R876m has been spent on 3.85kms of bus lanes and the infrastructure and planning for Phase 1 and 2, but this does not include procurement of buses.

Phase 1 will integrate the system within a 20km radius and carry as many as 50,000 passengers a day. The route links outlying Seshego to the CBD via Nelson Mandela Drive, with designated bus lanes in both directions and separate cycling and pedestrian lanes on one side of the busy carriageway.

Funding comes from the National Treasury and is disbursed through the Department of Transport, under the leadership of its new minister,

Joe Maswanganyi. This is the man who was fired in 2006 from his post of Limpopo MEC for Sport, Arts and Culture by then premier Sello Moloto, for being unable to account for funds allocated for the annual Mapungubwe Festival.

Proof of the pudding will come when commuters climb onto the first bus as not much is certain except that costs will escalate and that it is way behind schedule

People in Limpopo have wondered quite how he got to be made transport minister, but Maswanganyi must surely be licking his lips, having climbed the ladder from being in charge of a couple of hundred million rand as an MEC to now being custodian of many billions. The Department of Transport will also foot the bill for the buses – each to cost around R12m.

Asked about progress on purchasing the buses and the number needed, Sebaka replied that a service provider has not yet been appointed: “The specifications and negotiations with the industry are nearing completion and the municipality should have clear indications of how many buses will be required.”

Sebaka also said the municipality is currently negotiating with the four operators affected by Phase 1 and 2 – the Flora Park Pietersburg, Moletjie, Seshego Polokwane and Westenburg taxi associations. “The municipality is further engaging the bus operator, Great North Transport. Determination of what should happen with operators in these four affected minibus taxi associations, and the bus operator and their vehicles, will be a negotiated agreement as the system goes live in October 2018,” Sebaka explained. Not much to go on there about what’s actually going on. Failure to reach satisfactory agreements with taxi operators could put the brakes on the entire project.

Chairperson for Seshego Polokwane Taxi Association, Solly Ledwaba, said they have been talking to the municipality for three years about *Leeto la Polokwane*, describing discussions with the four affected taxi associations and the municipality as “fair and transparent”, with market research currently underway to determine the number of commuters presently using the route.

He said no agreement had been reached with the municipality to date but a memorandum of understanding on the rules of engagement had been issued to taxi associations. Discussions will resume after the current recess of council in preparation for the new 2017/18 financial year.

Will *Leeto la Polokwane* roll out as envisaged by October 2018?

The people of the North will ‘wait and see’. ■



Hidden depths. Light – and dark – reading

SO, WHAT GIFTS ARE YOU PLANNING TO lavish on which deserving parties this year? What about a little light reading for our beloved President? Perhaps Jacques Pauw's *The President's Keepers* would be appreciated.

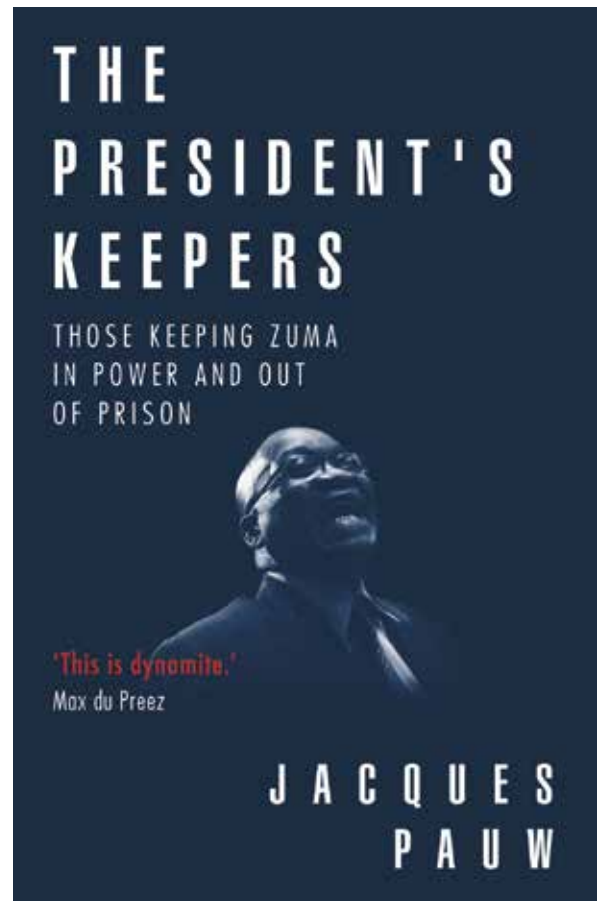
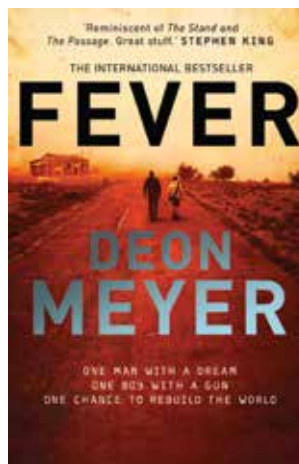
Mind you, El Presidente's keepers are so anxious to hamper distribution of this wildly popular tome that we may be reduced to paying black market prices for the privilege. Perhaps *Decline and Fall* would be more appropriate for this recipient.

In any case, holiday reading is generally an escapist activity, so it's probably wise to focus on entertaining Christmas gifts, rather than realistic *Gottedammerung* treatises on the agonies of our time.

And what could be more amusing than Anthony Horowitz's *Magpie Murders* (Orion Books), a (British) *Sunday Times* best-seller, awash with praise from thriller fans internationally. It's constructed like those sets of Russian dolls, plot within plot, and cunningly scattered with scores of clues to tantalise amateur sleuths. Cruciverbalists and other would-be gumshoes will savour the challenges posed to alert readers.

What is it that attracts us to murder mysteries? Is it the crime or the solution? Horowitz shamelessly sends up the Agatha Christie lala land of stock characters (the vicar, the local magnate preening in his stately home, and the Miss Marples of the world), but he does so tenderly. And he teases with shoals of clues. This period stuff is presented within a second, contemporary, murder mystery set in latter-day London, so it's a case of Pay Attention Children! Otherwise you will have to retrace your steps to sort out the various dark doings. Perhaps the killer actually WAS the butler in the drawing room.

If readers' lust for mayhem remains unslaked after reading *Magpie*, try *Fever* (Hodder and Stoughton), the latest Deon Meyer, who rises and rises in critical esteem with each offering. South Africa's leading crime writer, he is even admired by creepy Stephen King of horror tales notoriety, who



rhapsodises about our very own Meyer.

Fever is a departure for Meyer. His familiar, disillusioned detective character Bennie Griessel does not figure in *Fever* to beguile the reader with his world-weary atmospheric tales. This is survival in another dimension entirely – a hunt for refuge in a blighted world, where survivors of a killer virus fight feral dogs, motorcycle gangs and nuclear contamination. Just like Camps Bay on New Year's Day. Faced with such ghastliness, Bennie would probably have glugged a bottle or two and floated into nowhereville. Again.

The cover notes say *Fever* is "the epic story of a group of people determined to

carve a city out of chaos". Sounds familiar. South African readers will quail at the depiction of familiar landscapes in post-apocalyptic ruination.

Winston Churchill and Jan Smuts were, of course, jointly attempting to salvage humanity on a global scale. Author/historian Richard Steyn has produced a sequel to his lucid *Jan Smuts: Unafraid of Greatness*. Now **Churchill & Smuts – The Friendship** (Jonathan Ball Publishers) studies the mutual respect of two vividly contrasted figures.

On Smuts' death, Churchill's letter of condolence to Mrs Issie Smuts said: "He was probably more fitted to guide struggling and blundering humanity through its sufferings and perils towards a better day than anyone who lived in any country during his epoch". Not too many of that ilk around these days. They make contemporary leaders look like vertically challenged persons.

If holiday languor palls, a dose of reality might be forthcoming in **Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?** (Scribe) by Graham Allison. He chides the West for lagging dangerously behind China.

Allison says Chinese President Xi is formidable because he has known real suffering, so is very different "from Western leaders obsessed with the frivolous spin-cycles of domestic politics". He believes Xi sees his responsibility is to ensure that China's renaissance returns the country to its position as the richest, strongest and most advanced culture on earth.

China has invested in weapons with powerful "asymmetrical" advantages: cheap missiles can sink an aircraft carrier costing billions. China is more serious than Europe, because it invests growth gains in education and technology, for example in genetic engineering and artificial intelligence.

Well, if that lot doesn't scare you out of your deckchair, nothing will.

Why not, instead, something soothing? **Rapid Fire – Remarkable Miscellany** by broadcaster/actor John Maytham (Tafelberg). Rather than fulminating about the desperate state of the world, the author reminds us of its infinite wonders, and answers many questions that puzzle humankind. And some that you might prefer not to know.

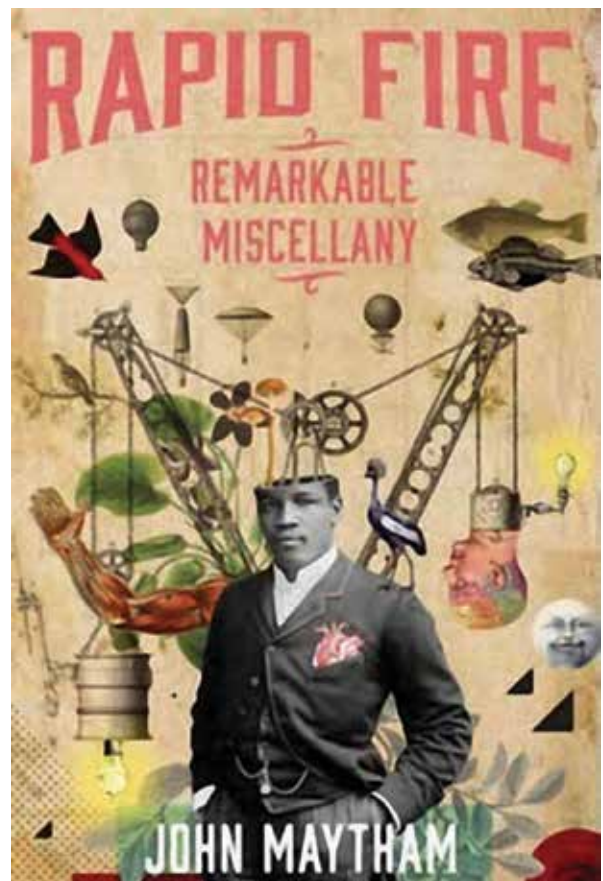
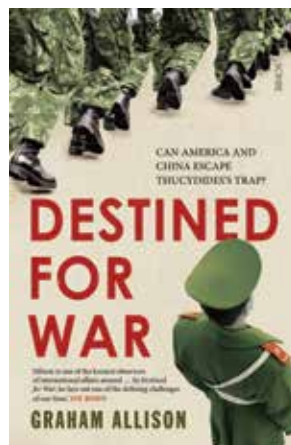
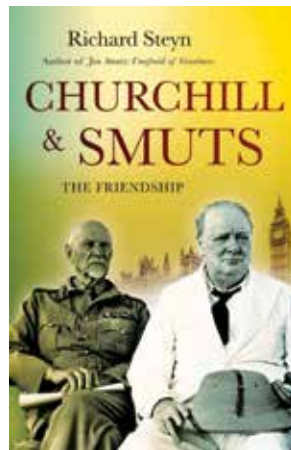
Consider, at random, the matter of whether it is better to be a man or a woman, if one is bitten by a Brazilian wandering spider. Who has not tossed and turned in the night, agonising about

that? Maytham says many would have answered: a woman. But the bite can cause severe prolonged erection in men, which can lead to impotence. The venom is being studied for possible use in erectile dysfunction treatments.

What common anatomical trait is shared only between humans and elephants? The chin, apparently. But no less an expert than James Pampush of Duke University in North Carolina doesn't know why humans have one. Anyone who has been unfortunate enough to suffer a blow to that bit of the anatomy could enlighten the learned academic as to the relief arising from the fact that a sturdy jaw provides a shield of some kind against damage to oral structures, dentistry etc.

Readers of modest and retiring nature should not read aloud the definition of a tompion. But it's perfectly acceptable to give mixed company a reading on the most ticklish part of the human body. And even to discuss the vital issue of the body part added to Barbie dolls in the momentous year AD 2000.

On a superficial reading (what else?), *Rapid Fire* does not offer an answer as to the meaning of life. ■





Grim picture. Think of the children

OUR PRESIDENT IS EMBROILED IN YET another scandal, some nostalgic folk have been flying the ol' flag, and very disgruntled students have been throwing poo at the police. There's a large share of anger going around in South Africa – but who has any left to express on behalf of the country's hungry children?

South Africa has an overwhelming number of families that go hungry each and every day, yet the statistics in full view of the public seem to produce little more than a whimper in the social discourse out there of people going on and on about what supposedly really matters.

How bad is it, this seemingly entrenched situation of poverty and hunger?

Marianne Merten recently did a stellar analysis of the state of poverty in South Africa, in an article published in *Daily Maverick*. She paints a grim picture of the country reversing what gains we might have made in the fight against poverty.

The way Merten frames it, while more and more South Africans starve, government stubbornly sticks to policies which aren't functional, finding it easier to blame the country's woes on a global economic crisis – as we have seen the honourable President do so many times in Parliament (when he is not laughing at his critics).

According to the latest Stats SA report on poverty trends in South Africa, while poverty decreased overall between 2006 and 2015, by 2015 a distinct rise in poverty was visible compared to 2011. Stats SA defines poverty as having less than R992 (per person per month), and in 2015, by that standard, one in two South Africans were poor.

Consider a working paper by Dr. Stephen Devereux, written for the Centre of Excellence in Food Security (a joint venture of University of Western



Cape and University of Pretoria), where he shows that social grants have failed to stop malnutrition. Devereux and co-author Jennifer Waidler ponder the seeming paradox that although food security has improved malnutrition has not been defeated. Instead it's getting worse

Social grants in South Africa are relatively generous compared to other countries, but they fall short because they are diluted among several family members. According to Devereux, poor families will spend between one-third and two-thirds of their social grant on food; in the case of a child-support grant that amounts to between R130 to R224 of the R360 they get every month.

Many publications in the country, including *Noseweek*, have revealed unscrupulous actions by grant payment providers such as CPS (and company), that unnecessarily and unjustly erode this measly amount. Unethical service providers are exploiting loopholes in the system – and ordinary people's trust – to turn the convenience and supposed safety of everyday banking into a perfect storm (*See story pg 14*). That is nothing short of monstrous and much anger has been aired around it, but the bigger picture of poverty must

not be forgotten.

For Devereux, food security goes beyond issues of food production. He writes that poor food access, poor child-care, and poor health services hamper efforts to fight malnutrition. Social grants on their own are not enough to deal with these issues.

Now, there is plenty of research being done and plenty of meetings being held where experts are doing their best to find solutions to these problems. For instance, in November 2017 experts will have gathered to investigate the effectiveness of school-feeding interventions, at a symposium aptly named *You can't teach a hungry child* – another event by the Centre of Excellence in Food Security.

There is so much anger being expressed and circulated online about a myriad of things, and I am not one to make light of whatever issues people are angry about. But clearly this particular issue isn't as important to as many people as I believe it should be.

Here I am anyway, angry enough to be bending your ear to spare a thought for the fellow citizens our country fails every day – the increasing number of children going hungry across the land. ■

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Eel technique. Liquor on the road to ruin

SUPPOSE ONLY A TOWNIE COULD BECOME so enthused about fishing.

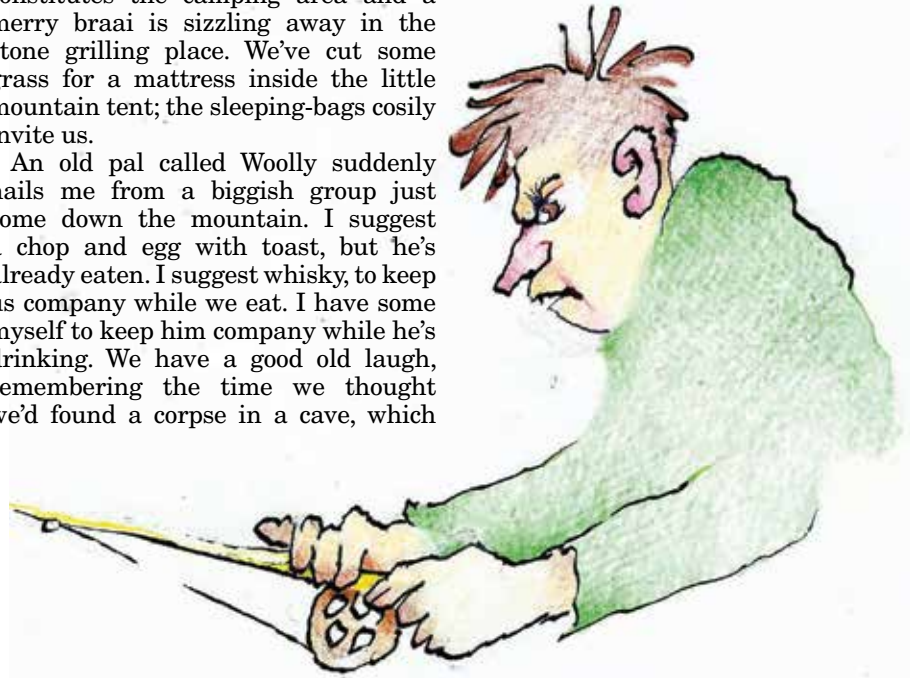
I suppose it's a reasonable habit, taking fishing tackle on a mountain trip, but come on, man, I mean.... Well, Polly did. She always had such tackle in her boot, trout rods for two, always found her way to some piece of water, anywhere would do, if only for an hour, and it didn't really have to be much water either, come to think of it. Polly, said I, I am a rock and surf angler, I don't really have the skill one could use in dam or river, though I suppose I might manage some phutu on a trout stick with a fixed spool reel. Splendid, splendid, said she in her strange Pommy way of speaking.

So now we're off to the escarpment, a sharp haul up the Drakensberg. And what's it going to be, then? I ask – a short stern clamber up Gray's Pass, and hang around there looking at the view, the whole lot three days, how about that, hey? Aah yes! she exclaims in her ladylike manner. In that case, I declare in an unpolished sort of way, we should take along some whisky for enhancing the sensibilities as the sun sets over old Natal. True, she murmurs, a bottle of something nice. Two bottles, say I. Two bottles are a party, says she. Not at all, say I, two people for three days means a sixth of one bottle per day per person, which is ridiculous, and in any case it would be unfair if only one of us had to carry the weight of a bottle. I take your point, says she, in her genteel way, so we're off to the Bottlestore Galactica for the Vat 69 and the Spar for dehydrated and dry providence, you know, soya protein, Smash potatoes, sundried tomatoes, powdered milk, sweeteners, all things light and airy, except the two bottles of whisky of course, for humping up the escarpment like a pair of mules.

We pull in at an Estcourt supermarket for heavy grub for tonight in the campsite below Mike's Pass: lamb chops, eggs, the like, and by sunset we're all rigged up in that really

romantic little sylvan grove which constitutes the camping area and a merry braai is sizzling away in the stone grilling place. We've cut some grass for a mattress inside the little mountain tent; the sleeping-bags cosily invite us.

An old pal called Woolly suddenly hails me from a biggish group just come down the mountain. I suggest a chop and egg with toast, but he's already eaten. I suggest whisky, to keep us company while we eat. I have some myself to keep him company while he's drinking. We have a good old laugh, remembering the time we thought we'd found a corpse in a cave, which



turned out to be bedsheets somebody had nicked from the Cathedral Peak Hotel. We remember being snowed in somewhere for two days. We are jolly company. We drink more whisky.

And more. Suddenly he spies the rods. Fishing! he cries. Have you got a rod for me? There's no water here, says Polly, but very politely. Yes there is, says Woolly, the Mlambonja River. That's a tiny little stream, says Polly. Not at this time of the year, says Woolly, it's full of eels, delicious, and we'll catch some and grill them right away! You may borrow my rod, says Polly. So we cut up some left-over mutton fat for bait and put the ailing bottle of Vat 69 to a merciful death and jauntily set out in the pitch-dark of the moonless clouded night for the rain-swollen Mlambonja full of eels. We stumble all about, searching, searching, before Woolly suddenly cries Ha! The Mlambonja! and there indeed down a small bank is the river, indis-

tinct in the dark to be sure and a little cloudy with silt from the rains, but eels don't mind that, they hunt by smell, says Woolly.

We bait up with No.2 surf hooks and a good lump of fat, eels are greedy feeders, he declares, and their mouths are BIG, hey! We put sinkers on a swivel about 25cms up the line, to anchor the bait against the current, and wait. After a bit Woolly says I think something has stripped my bait, and reels in. The bait is intact, but he professionally feels the sinker for temperature. Well the water's quite nice and warm, he declares. Polly has been unusually silent. Wotcher think, hey Polly? says he cheerfully. I think it's not a river, it's a road, says Polly, but very politely.

Distant headlights rapidly advance. One million candlepower. As the bakkie squashes our mutton fat the driver hoots at us: peep peepeepeepee peep peep. ■

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