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# noseweek

ISSUE 235 MAY 2019

**Aces wild:**  
Magashule's  
cards on  
the table

**Rogue Unit:**  
WhatsApps  
that clinch it

*Fake news  
and Gaddafi's  
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# Letters

Letters to the editor should be sent by email to [editor@noseweek.co.za](mailto:editor@noseweek.co.za)

## Bleeps and blasphemy

WHY IS IT THAT WHEN AN ARTICLE HAS swearing in it you use \*\*\*\*\* instead of the full word, as on page 29 of *nose234*, but in the article on the very next page there is blasphemy – the writer uses the name of Jesus as a swear word – and you print that in full? I am sure that even some *Noseweek* readers might find that offensive, as I do.

**E Wright**  
Helderberg Village  
Somerset West

*Noted. But both are used by columnists, who have licence to offend – or not. – Ed.*

## Vodacom frauds on repeat dial

THANKS FOR THE GREAT MAGAZINE THAT you people produce. My husband has for the third time in less than a year, been scammed by Vodacom, who have been charging him for “content services” without his knowledge or consent. Complaints sent to them by email are simply ignored.

When I received an obviously excessive cell phone bill in March 2018 – R431 instead of the normal R280 a month – I went into the Vodacom shop at Shelly Beach, where the attendant checked my phone. As you had previously warned

your readers, she informed me my bill had increased because I was subscribed to Pocoyo and Vodafone Live! I don’t even know what these services are. The shop attendant immediately cancelled all services using my cell phone.

Next day I received an sms confirming that these services would be cancelled in 24 hours. No talk of a refund, so I sent an email to [vbsadmin@vodacom.co.za](mailto:vbsadmin@vodacom.co.za) informing them I have not subscribed to any services and that they were legally required to obtain my written permission before any charges are added to my account. I asked them to reverse any charges already made. Five days later an automatically generated SMS came advising me that “You have cancelled your premium membership Pocoyo house.”

No refund or further communication was received from Vodacom. Instead, at the end of that month I received a still higher cell phone account – more than double my usual! Again I emailed Vodacom demanding a refund. No reply.

At the end of February I realised that once again I was being scammed. The Vodacom shop at Oribi Plaza in Port Shepstone told me I was now subscribed to something called GameMine. They used my phone to cancel all services.

This time it took two weeks before their usual automated response arrived: “Your

request to unsubscribe from all content services has been received. You will receive confirmation of all stopped services soon.”

No such luck. In the meantime a new predator had arrived on my account, cheekily called “BeFit”. I cancelled it and again lodged a complaint with Vodacom.

On March 28 I received this email from [vbsadmin@vodacom.co.za](mailto:vbsadmin@vodacom.co.za): “Your request has been received and attended to. Content has been removed, blocked and credited to the account.” But the bill that arrived the next day was still way above what it should be. Maybe the account will be rectified at the end of this month?

**Helen Willmore**  
Annerley, Durban

*Hope springs eternal. Has Vodacom captured the state authorities that should long ago have prosecuted the company and its directors and senior executives, all in the know and sharing in the spoils? – Ed.*

## Juicy morsel from Sharks Board visit

JONATHAN ERASMUS’S ACCOUNT OF HIS VISIT to the Jacob Zuma Foundation at the offices it shares with the Sharks Board was hilarious. Well done, Jonathan!

**Michael Said**  
Sarnia

Stent



# The Ace of arts

**O**N PAGE 10 YOU WILL FIND AN EXTRACT from Pieter-Louis Myburgh's new book: *Gangster State – unravelling ANC Secretary General Ace Magashule's web of capture*. A must-read. That and similar exposés published over the past year, have persuaded me that to vote for the ANC in this election is to make yourself an accessory to crime – itself a crime.

Myburgh exposes mind-boggling misappropriation facilitated by Magashule of billions of rands intended for housing the poor – the same people the ANC now brazenly claims it will house if it is reelected.

But even “petty” theft apparently features on Magashule's agenda: the South African Heritage Resources Agency is deeply concerned about how last year a painting by renowned artist J H Pierneef that belonged to the Free State Administration and for decades had pride of place in the Premier's office, ended up being offered for auction to art auctioneers Strauss and company by ANC Secretary General Ace Magashule's notorious bagman-bodyguard, Ricardo Mettler.

A similar painting was recently sold by the auctioneers for R20 million.

Mettler claimed that the painting “ended up” in a “pile of things” that Magashule wanted his bodyguard to “dispose of” when he was packing up to leave the Premier's office in January

last year to take up his new top post at ANC head office, Luthuli House in Johannesburg.

In March last year Mettler is said to have asked “a wealthy Chinese businessman” in Bloemfontein to arrange for the painting to be sold by art auctioneers Strauss & Co.

At the prospect of such an important artwork becoming available for auction, Strauss's fine art expert, Dr Alistair Meredith immediately flew from Johannesburg to Bloemfontein to examine the painting. It was genuine, a rare find, unknown to the art-collector community. But Meredith was immediately suspicious when the intermediary refused to identify the seller or say anything about the painting's provenance. He became even more suspicious when the intermediary eventually identified the seller as the premier's bodyguard.

Fearing it might be stolen, Meredith accepted it for auction, but instead placed it in safe storage while he launched a months-long investigation to establish its origin. All major art galleries and museums in the country were asked if they knew anything about it. None did.

Finally it was decided to publish a picture of the painting in an ad campaign. Within hours two callers identified it as belonging in the Free State

Premier's office. Strauss contacted their lawyers and laid a charge with the Parkwood police station in Johannesburg in August.

Only in November did the police respond: a hostile group of policemen claiming to be from the Hawks arrived at Strauss's offices in Houghton with arrest warrants for Dr Meredith and Strauss CEO Suzie Goodman for being in possession of stolen goods. They demanded that the painting be handed to them. Outraged and doubly suspicious, they refused to hand over the painting and called their attorneys. An hour later, the initial group of policemen melted away to be replaced by a more polite group of senior Hawks officers, who took witness statements from Meredith and Goodman, and then took the painting having given Strauss a written assurance that it would be returned to Bloemfontein.

It has been returned – but all is not well. Five months later, still no-one has been charged or arrested. The intermediary who handled the transaction – and knew enough about the value of



the picture to know to approach Strauss with it – has not been named. The Strauss directors refused to tell *Noseweek*, claiming client confidentiality. When we expressed surprise that they would hide the identity of a client peddling stolen goods of considerable value, they hedged and said their attorneys had instructed them to say nothing that might prejudice the police

investigation. Which raises the question: how difficult, in the circumstances could the investigation be? Unless of course the real problem is that one of the obvious suspects is the most senior member of the ANC and his cohort.

Back to the concern of the Heritage Resources Agency: it emerges that spokesman Cuan Hahndiek is not only concerned about the Pierneef that went awol; he is doubly concerned about rumours that numerous paintings and antiques in the Premier's residence, Vrystaat House, might similarly have disappeared. “By law our permission is required before any of those may be disposed of. None has been asked for or been given.”

Another Pierneef is said to have featured, in an inventory compiled in 1994, together with paintings by the likes of Maggie Laubscher and Terence McCaw, Thinus de Jongh and Gregoire Boonzaier.

Asked by local newspaper, *Die Volksblad* to provide them with a copy of the inventory and to confirm that all the items on it were still in place, Tiisetso Makhele, spokesperson for the current premier, Sisi Ntombela (previously spokesperson for Magashule) refused to do so “because the Hawks are still investigating”. – **The Editor**

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# Rian Malan told you so...

**T**HE OTHER DAY, I WAS WOKEN FROM my afternoon nap by a thunderclap of stunned silence emanating from the United States, where special prosecutor Robert Mueller had just handed over the results of his probe into the allegedly cosy relationship between Donald Trump and Russian strongman Vladimir Putin.

In spite of 22 months of round-the-clock effort by an army of investigators who interviewed around 500 witnesses, issued 2,800 subpoenas and executed 500 search warrants, Mueller had found no evidence whatsoever of collusion between Trump and the Kremlin. On the contrary: the Trump campaign was inundated “by offers of assistance from Russia-affiliated individuals,” and according to Attorney General William Barr, spurned them all.

This came as a terrible disappointment to those who hoped the Russia scandal would cause Trump’s downfall. Many *Noseweek* readers initially fell into that category, but our expectations were downgraded by Rian Malan, who authored a prophetic piece on the subject back in February 2018 (*nose221*). Operating from his armchair, Malan had deduced that the collusion charges were largely based on a stop-Trump ploy funded by the Clinton campaign and executed by Christopher Steele, a retired British spy who claimed Trump and Putin were engaged in a “well-developed conspiracy of cooperation”.

“It was a fascinating charge,” says Malan, “but when it emerged that Steele was secretly paid by Team Hillary, it began to look flimsy.” Hence the piece in *Noseweek*, which bore the following headline: “The evil Russians who robbed Hillary of victory. Only they didn’t.”

I took some stick for publishing such a heresy, as did Malan, who claims some of his closest friends accused him of “falling off the edge into blind zealotry,” especially when Mueller started indicting Trump associates for obstruction of justice. “I

suggest you be cautious now,” wrote one adviser. “Wait until the plea bargainers start singing. There are exposés still to come.”

Various small fry in the Trump campaign were indeed collared and squeezed by Mueller, but all that emerged was a tacky yarn involving hush-money payments to a porn star plus criminal indictments for Trump’s lawyer, Michael Cohen, and Paul Manafort, his former campaign manager. But their crimes involved sleaze and tax evasion, not cuddling up to the Kremlin.

Does Trump’s vindication really matter? Well, yes. To Trump himself. After years of complaining that the Russia investigation was a “witch-hunt,” Donald now maintains the whole thing was an attempted coup on the part of the Deep State, a possibly imaginary alliance of senior intelligence bureaucrats and Democrats who could not live with the fact that a beauty contest impresario had been elected president of the USA.

Metinks this argument should be

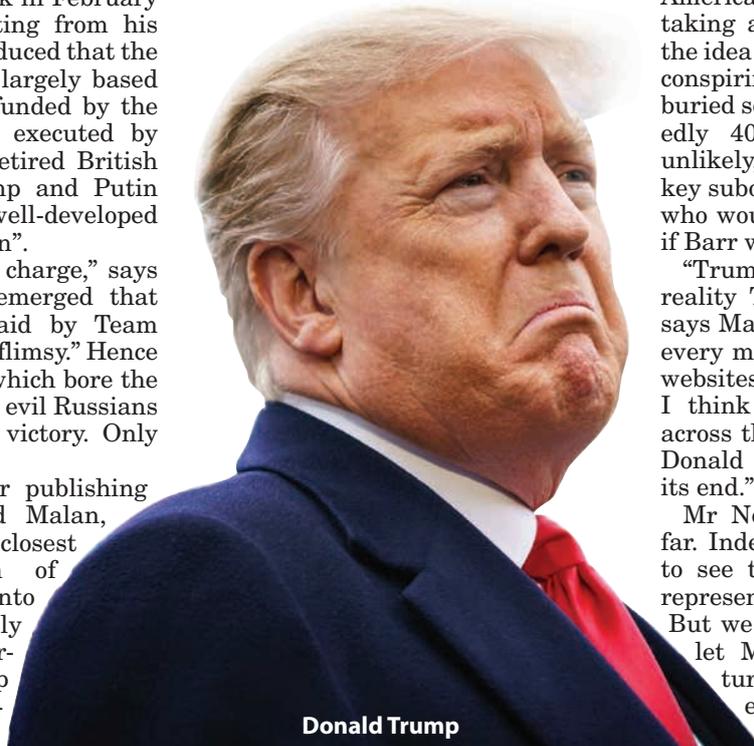
taken seriously, if only because Donald Trump is arguably the first president in US history not groomed for office by the ruling elite. Republicans were horrified when he crushed Jeb Bush in the GOP primaries in early 2016. As for Democrats, they became hysterical when Trump defeated the supposedly invincible Mrs Clinton. There had to be some other explanation, and they mistakenly seized on the idea that Russians were to blame. According to Malan, “America might have been better off if both establishments had looked in the mirror and tried to understand why many Americans were so pissed off as to vote for a buffoon whose only coherent campaign pledge was to drain the comfortable swamp they live in.”

Trump’s detractors seem unwilling to engage in painful self-examination. Congressman Adam Schiff, boss of the House Intelligence Committee, has vowed to pick up Mueller’s fallen standard and continue the hunt for proof of high crimes and treason. “Undoubtedly there is collusion,” Schiff told the *Washington Post*. “We will continue to investigate.” America’s great newspapers are taking a similar line, hammering at the idea that Attorney General Barr is conspiring to conceal explosive truths buried somewhere in Mueller’s reportedly 400-page report. This seems unlikely, given that most of Mueller’s key subordinates were liberal lawyers who would be leaking their heads off if Barr was distorting their findings.

“Trump remains the greatest reality TV show in human history,” says Malan. “The very first thing I do every morning is check out American websites for news of his latest outrage. I think there are billions like me across the planet, all addicted to The Donald Show and secretly dreading its end.”

Mr Nose would not quite go that far. Indeed, Mr Nose is rather eager to see the back of Mr Trump, who represents the uglier side of America.

But we believe in free speech, so we let Malan have his say, and he turned out to be right in the end. As often happens in these pages. — **The Editor**



Donald Trump

## 'Racist' Maritzburg magistrate in hot water again

**P**IETERMARITZBURG MAGISTRATE Ashin Singh, who is facing the possibility of being sacked from the bench after a plethora of complaints laid against him, has landed himself in hot water once again. This time he told a public meeting that “the only black Africans who are at the same level as Indians, whites and coloureds in terms of work ethic are Zimbabweans”.

It was Singh's organisation, the South African Minority Rights Equality Movement (Samrem) that called the public meeting, which was held in Raisethorpe, Pietermaritzburg in March to discuss the topic of “African racism” perpetrated against whites, coloureds and Indians.

But the local newspaper, *The Witness*, reported that the meeting soon degenerated into a “rowdy racism ruckus”. Singh had said black Africans are more racist than Afrikaners and that the minorities were being oppressed by the “racist” ANC government. The mushrooming of informal settlements in predominately Indian areas, he had said, was part of a concerted ANC

effort to influence voting patterns.

He is also reported to have said that homeless Africans “shit and pee on our streets” and that the state was deliberately excluding minorities from university.

“When they (squatters) are not happy with government they throw their shit at us,” he was quoted as saying.

Singh told *The Witness* journalist who attended the public hearing, that he was not a racist and he was being persecuted for “telling the truth”.

Oddly, Singh – who has long been recognised as the founder and face of Samrem – told *The Witness* he held no position in the organisation and that he would soon be lodging a complaint with the United Nations about the South African government's treatment of minority groups.

*Noseweek* has since learnt that Singh threatened *The Witness* over its reporting of the meeting. *Witness* editor Yves Vanderhaeghen confirmed that “Singh has threatened to sue”, but added that he couldn't say much more as it would be “imprudent”.

This is not Singh's first tango with *The Witness*. A criminal case was opened against him by *Witness* journalist Sharika Regchand (*nose227*) following a heated exchange at the Pietermaritzburg Magistrate's Court in July 2018 after Singh allegedly threatened Regchand's husband and children, called her “a bitch”, and intimated that she was sexually promiscuous with her sources.

*The Witness* also filed a complaint of abusive conduct against Singh with the Magistrate's Commission.

In a separate incident (*nose231*) in November 2018, Singh was called out by now retired magistrate Petronella Joubert who, on her last day on the bench, sent out an email on the magistrate's circuit effectively calling Singh a liar for making “wild and unfounded allegations” against her over a 14-year period. Joubert too has an outstanding matter against Singh lodged with the Magistrate's Commission.

In January Wendy Watson, one-time regional manager of the KwaZulu-



**Journalist Sharika Regchand**

Natal office of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission – to which Singh was seconded – told *Noseweek* that Singh was an “objectionable, self-opinionated, conflictual person, who always has his own interests at heart before those of justice. He has the ability to start litigation and nastiness on every issue”.

She said that because of his constant threats of litigation against her, she had kept a file on him up until 2009.

In January Singh told *Noseweek* in several broad statements that there was a cabal seeking to discredit him despite their own chequered histories and to stop him practising as a senior magistrate, often on the most sensitive of cases. He said this group involved magistrates, businessmen and journalists including a network in Pietermaritzburg of “old, liberal, confused, gay, white people” – although, he said, he had nothing against gay people.

While the Magistrate's Commission would not confirm the status of their investigations against Singh, *Noseweek* has learnt that a decision is imminent. – **Jonathan Erasmus** ■



**Magistrate Ashin Singh**

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# Notes & Updates

## A curious undervaluation

**W**HY WOULD JOHANNESBURG'S city council settle for an undervaluation of the property at 100 Grayston Drive?

Over a period of five years, and after notching up 30 bus trips, countless nights in Johannesburg backpacker hostels and many evening strolls through the City of Gold's upmarket suburbs, Howick-based rates crusader Rob McLaren is trying to have nearly the entire richest square mile in Africa, and its neighbours, revalued.

Without the assistance of a cell phone or an internet connection, he has uncovered what appears to be the deliberate, routine under-valuation of high-value buildings, resulting in the owners' paying significantly less than they should in municipal rates.

Shortly after Johannesburg's General Valuation Roll for 2018 was released for public comment in 2017 McLaren objected to the valuations of 67 high-end commercial buildings, among them was 100 Grayston Drive, Sandton, then owned by Growthpoint Properties Limited. The occupant was and still is Investec Bank Ltd.

The valuations company contracted by the city valued the Grayston Drive building at R1.17 billion, up from R608 million of the previous general valuation. McLaren objected, stating that the true value was closer to R2.2bn.

Growthpoint – unbeknown to McLaren – was in the midst of selling the building back to Investec. In 2003 Investec had sold the building, along with Merchant Place Parkade, to Growthpoint for R975m.

In March 2018 *Business Day* reported on the property's sale back to Investec for R2.2bn, although a deeds search shows that Investec Bank Limited purchased the property for R2,515,050,000 on 16 February 2018.

However despite that sale, earlier this year the city dismissed McLaren's objection to the latest rates valuation of just R1.17bn. He has since taken the dismissal on appeal.

The reason for the consistently low valuations of major buildings can

be found in the city's bid document supplied to all bidders for the contract to run the city's valuation process of nearly one million properties. The document, titled "Proposal No. A683: Request for Proposals for the Compilation of the General Valuation Roll 2018" makes it clear that over-valuations would negatively affect the profits of the successful bidder.

The document states that if the valuation appeals board reduces a

**It is in Evaluations' financial interest to under-value large corporates...**

value by 30% or more, the bidder – in this case, Evaluations Enhanced Property Appraisals (Pty) Ltd (recently acquired by EOH Holdings) – would be held liable for the rates refund the city would be obliged to pay as a result. Much safer therefore to under-value high-end properties.

*Noseweek* previously reported

that Evaluations was awarded the tender in October 2016 under dubious circumstances. Evaluations had miraculously reduced their bid from R167m to R99.9m for the same scope of work. Competitors noted at the time their price had dropped so much that they were unlikely to turn a profit. The bidder in second place bid R144m.

"It is in Evaluations' financial interest to under-value large corporates. Major corporates, unlike the middle classes, will appeal, armed with a team of lawyers and their own valuers. On almost every high-value commercial property in Johannesburg that I have objected on, I am the only person to do have done so – which is a clear sign that they are happy to be undervalued and therefore paying less in rates than they should," McLaren told *Noseweek*.

Among the buildings he has assessed to be under-valued are those belonging to Reboasis; the Estate Agency Affairs Board; Hobart Grove Shopping Centre; Sasol Place; The Zone@Rosebank; the JSE and several belonging to Standard Bank.

The city received a total of 50,595 objections during the inspection and objection period.

For more about McLaren's campaign, see *noses* 202; 203; 208; 211; 212; 215; 219; 222; 227 & 231. – **Jonathan Erasmus** ■



**Investec building on 100 Grayston Drive**

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# Public Protector finally nails those responsible for 'Killer Quantums'

**I**N AUGUST LAST YEAR *NOSEWEEK* exposed the shocking practice that non-compliant Toyota Quantum fake minibus taxis – which were in fact converted Toyota Quantum panel vans – had been allowed to bypass the safety standards and specifications that are compulsory for any other passenger vehicles on South African roads (*nose226*).

*Noseweek's* source, former Absa banker Hennie de Beer, had compiled evidence of no fewer than 165 major road accidents involving illegal Quantum panel-van taxis – until he was blocked from accessing the website on which the accidents were recorded. In 2012 De Beer took his evidence to the then Public Protector Thuli Madonsela, who started the investigation and handed it over to her successor, Busisiwe Mkhwebane.

De Beer had claimed that structurally defective and non-homologised Toyota panel vans were modified by the MIBs (manufacturer, importer, builder) and converted to taxis, despite the fact they were not safe for that purpose nor did they meet safety regulations, national standards and requirements. They should never have been permitted to operate as taxis, he said.

De Beer also alleged that despite having been warned of the scheme in 2005, banks and other taxi financiers continued to finance these vehicles knowing they were dealing with unwitting clients. Furthermore the Department of Transport had continued to illegally register these vehicles as minibus taxis that were permitted to carry up to 16 passengers, despite issuing registration certificates stating that they were only allowed to carry three persons as a panel van.

These shameful acts of negligence resulted in numerous deaths and countless incidents of serious injury. But nobody seemed to care, least of all Toyota, a world-renowned company that relies on its reputation as a manufacturer of reliable vehicles.

At the end of March De Beer, whose

investigation took more than ten years, was vindicated when the Public Protector Mkhwebane released her report, which called for those implicated to be prosecuted. She found that 2,353 illegally converted panel vans were operating as taxis on South Africa's roads.

The report made damning findings against the Department of Transport (DoT), Toyota South Africa Motors (TSAM), financial institutions and the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS):

- The evidence... demonstrates that, although the Department of Transport took some action, it was ultimately not efficient and effective to ensure the safety of commuters from injuries sustained when these vehicles are involved in accidents.

- The Department of Transport did not protect taxi owners from purchasing these vehicles

- The Department of Transport was warned about the vehicles in 2009 but failed to ensure they would be impounded and taken off the roads. It was only in 2018 that steps were taken to remove them from South African roads.

- The Department of Transport conceded that frontline staff at licensing offices had manipulated the e-NaTiS system for fraudulent activities.

- The NRCS failed to take effective and efficient steps to ensure that all MIBs comply with the compulsory specifications of the NRCS Act. The NRCS was advised by Toyota South Africa of the practice but failed to take steps to stop it.

- The South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) failed to conduct adequate quality assurance tests to ensure that the converted Quantum panel vans were safe as commuter vehicles.

- Toyota South Africa became aware of the practice in 2005 and, except for warning its dealerships in writing, it failed to take any practical steps to stop their vans being modified to look like taxis, despite the fact that

many accidents involving these vehicles "had been fatal".

South Africa's financial institutions were also not spared.

"Some financial institutions never assisted the illegally converted panel van owners to be reimbursed for their deposits and payments made when the owners became aware that they had purchased illegally converted vehicles. Instead, they repossessed the vehicles and then sold them on auction to another unsuspecting buyer, and the shortfall to the bank would be recorded as a failure by the illegally converted panel van owners to pay," Mkhwebane said.

To redress what the report calls gross negligence, undue delay, improper conduct and maladministration, the Public Protector demanded that the Minister of Transport, Blade Nzimande, take urgent steps to update its records of illegally-converted taxis and reconcile a database of vehicles that would be due for scrapping.

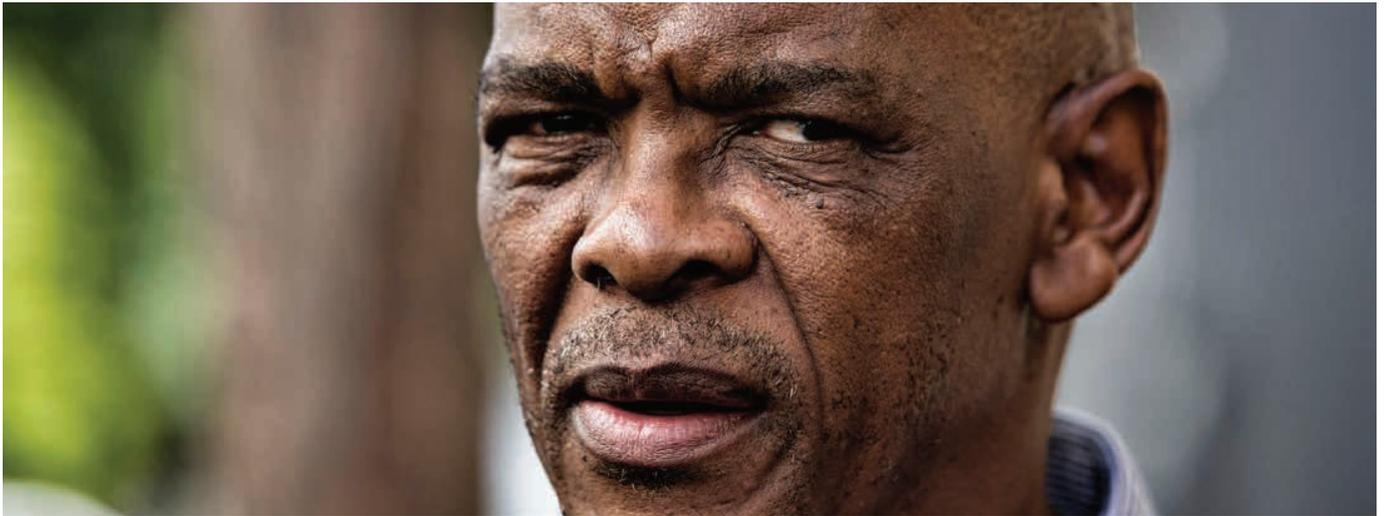
The director-general of the department of Transport was advised to take urgent steps to ensure, through surveillance and monitoring, that there would be no converted Toyota panel vans carrying passengers on South African roads.

Mkhwebane ordered the CEO of Toyota South Africa to take urgent steps to consult with the Minister of Transport to address the problem and assist in the identification and removal of the vehicles from the roads.

All affected taxi formations were told to take urgent steps to cooperate with the Department of Transport and assist in finding a lasting solution to the problem to minimise further loss of lives.

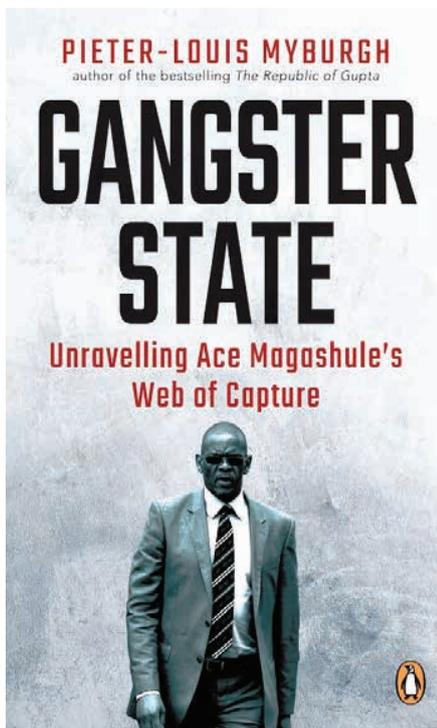
In conclusion, it is worth noting that, were it not for the efforts of one man, ex-Absa employee-turned-whistleblower Hennie de Beer, the killer fake taxis might never have been exposed.

*Noseweek* looks forward to finding his name on the President's next honours list. – **Susan Puren** ■



# Free State capture and the 'cattle thief'

An extract from *Gangster State: Unravelling Ace Magashule's Web of Capture* by Pieter-Louis Myburgh



Pieter-Louis Myburgh's book

**C**OME 1999 ACE MAGASHULE MUST have felt sure that the time had finally come for him to be appointed Free State premier. After all, he was the ruling party's chairperson in the Free State and the ANC had been very clear that it desired one person to lead both both the provincial party and the government.

But Thabo Mbeki, who took over from Mandela as ANC president in 1997, and as the man in charge of the country after the 1999 elections, clearly shared Mandela's reservations about Ace: he shocked the latter's support base by appointing Botshabelo local and NCOP member Winkie Direko as Free State premier.

Like Terror Lekota and Matsepe-Casaburri before her, Direko was labelled by the Magashule camp as an outsider imposed on the Free State.

But Direko was tough, and it quickly became clear that she would not be intimidated.

By mid-2000 the ongoing factional conflict necessitated yet another drastic intervention by the

ANC's national leadership. The Magashule-led Provincial Executive Committee (PEC) of the ANC was disbanded and an interim committee was appointed to lead the party in the province. The body was led by Godfrey Mosala, a former official in the education department, and Noby Ngobane, who was later shot dead in what is deemed to have been the most high-profile assassination as a result of the province's political discord.

The opportunity for Magashule to once again grab the ANC's top position in the province presented itself in 2002 when another elective provincial conference was to be held. Mbeki favoured Direko for chair, but Magashule comfortably defeated her by 100 votes, marking the start of a 15-year run of nearly uninterrupted rule as chairperson of the ANC in the Free State.

**T**HE 2002 VICTORY WAS CRUCIAL FOR Magashule's subsequent dominance of party politics in the Free State, as well as his iron grip on the



**Beatrice Marshoff**

provincial government's finances. This is when Ace started to consolidate his power and when he started to mastermind his capture of every level of government in the province.

He and his followers first focused on gaining control of the municipalities. As ANC chairperson and chair of the party's deployment committee, he used his power and influence to ensure that "his people" were appointed to key municipal positions all over the province, explained my source.

The most important positions were those of mayor and municipal manager. The Magashule-led PEC determined who the mayor of each

municipality would be. While the appointment of municipal managers was a prerogative of each municipality's council, ANC members who took their instructions from the party's provincial executive committee dominated those councils. The management tier that fell under the post of municipal manager was also stacked with Magashule allies. This included directors and chief financial officers (CFOs).

A source who later served as an MEC in Magashule's cabinet [told me]: "There is a pattern of municipal managers appointed from 2002 onwards who were from Fezile Dabi [the district around Magashule's hometown of Parys], or who were otherwise close to him."

After the national election in April 2004, President Mbeki appointed Beatrice Marshoff as the Free State's new premier. Marshoff had been the MEC for social development in Direko's cabinet.

Marshoff said that Magashule and his cronies approached her right after she became premier. "We had a meeting at Kopano Nokeng [a lodge and conference centre outside Bloemfontein] where they cornered me with a list of demands for people they wanted me to appoint as MECs," she told me. I said, "No, I'll decide who is going to get appointed." At that stage, she had no intention to include Magashule or any members of his clique in her government. "I had been warned by Terror [Lekota] how much time and energy it took to keep his [Magashule's] trouble under control," Marshoff told me.

Essop Pahad, who led the NEC's provincial committee for the Free State, asked Marshoff if she would

consider making room for Magashule and some of his people to "protect the peace" in the Free State. The national leadership put further pressure on her during a meeting at Luthuli House. According to Marshoff, a senior party leader told her that, for the sake of stability in the province, she should appoint Magashule in a department where there were not many resources for him to plunder.

**For the sake of stability  
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Magashule apparently wanted to be MEC for public works or economic affairs, but those departments were seen as too well-funded and important. Marshoff finally budged and agreed to appoint Magashule as the MEC for agriculture, a move she now regrets. "There is not a lot of money in that department, but it has access to or control over lots of resources, so it is still a very important portfolio," she said. "It was a big mistake to appoint him there."



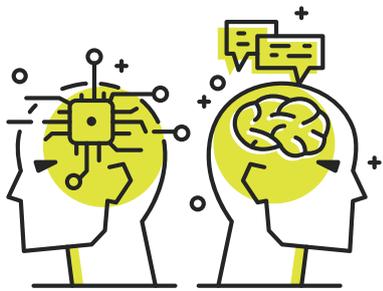
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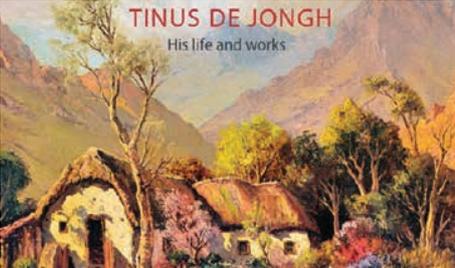
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**Glen College of Agriculture**

**L**ESS THAN A YEAR INTO HIS TENURE, in April 2005, Marshoff dropped Magashule when she reshuffled her executive council. Another victim of the reshuffle was economic affairs MEC Benny Malakoane. Both men were shifted to the provincial legislature.

Marshoff was rather cryptic about her reasons for axing the duo, saying at the time that the reshuffle was meant to “improve service delivery in the province”.

In an interview with Marshoff in 2018, she revealed to me the real reasons behind her decision. One Friday after work, she was at home in Bloemfontein when her phone rang. It was one of her staffers, calling to inform her about a pending political fiasco involving Magashule, his ANC region in the north and the Glen College of Agriculture, a state-funded agricultural college situated about twenty-five kilometres outside Bloemfontein. The college fell under the leadership of Magashule’s Department of Agriculture.

“This person told me that Ace had instructed staff members at the college to slaughter the college’s calves and to put the meat into separate parcels,” recalled Marshoff. At the time, the ANC’s Fezile Dabi region was about to hold a regional conference in Sasolburg. “The meat parcels were meant to be distributed among ANC members who were going to attend the conference so that they would vote for Magashule’s

slate,” she explained.

The heist was still under way by the time the premier got word of it, so she phoned the police to try to stop it. “The police managed to intercept three Department of Agriculture bakkies that were full of meat parcels and that were on their way to Sasolburg.”

Marshoff later learnt that there were more vehicles carrying meat than just the three apprehended, and that some of the conference attendees did get their meat parcels courtesy of Magashule. “The department staff who were driving the bakkies confirmed that Ace had ordered them to take the meat up north,” Marshoff said. “That is when I decided to fire Ace. This is what Ace does, he buys people’s support and he uses government resources to do that.”

Dumbfounded by these revelations, I endeavoured to find out more about Magashule’s alleged theft of state-owned cattle. A long-serving staff member at Glen College confirmed the incident. “If I remember correctly, there were about thirty-two cattle that were slaughtered, and the meat was taken to a political event somewhere up north,” he told me.

Magashule’s habit of abusing the college’s resources apparently continued after he became premier. “It became quite normal for them to fetch or slaughter cattle here when there were political funerals or other political events,” this source told

me in August 2018. "It is a scandal because it is the state's property, not theirs to just take. It has since become less common [after Magashule's departure from the province]. They have only come to fetch two [cattle] so far this year."

Marshoff, meanwhile, took the cattle incident and some of Magashule's other shortcomings as MEC for agriculture to the national leadership and asked them if she could fire him. "Apart from the cattle thing, his department was generally in a mess," she explained. "There was no coordination, he sometimes failed to attend ExCo meetings and he didn't submit the necessary reports for his department."

She told Mbeki that she could not work with Magashule, and the president agreed that she needed to remove him. "It caused a lot of problems for me in the ANC, seeing as I had dared to remove the all-powerful Ace," recalled Marshoff.

After being booted out of the Department of Agriculture, Magashule became the ANC's chief

whip in the provincial legislature. He now no longer had direct access to government coffers or contracts, but it seems he still managed to involve himself in dodgy deals.

In August 2007, the national leadership asked Marshoff once again to make room for Magashule in her executive council. "They wanted me to place him in another department that did not have access to a lot of money," she said.

This time, Magashule was appointed the Free State's new MEC for sport, arts, culture and recreation. His presence in this new government environment immediately caused friction and problems. Rachel Sempe, the department's then head, apparently had her hands full trying to stop Magashule from doing things that ran against the Public Finance Management Act and other rules and regulations. Magashule allegedly tried to force the department to employ people he had promised jobs.

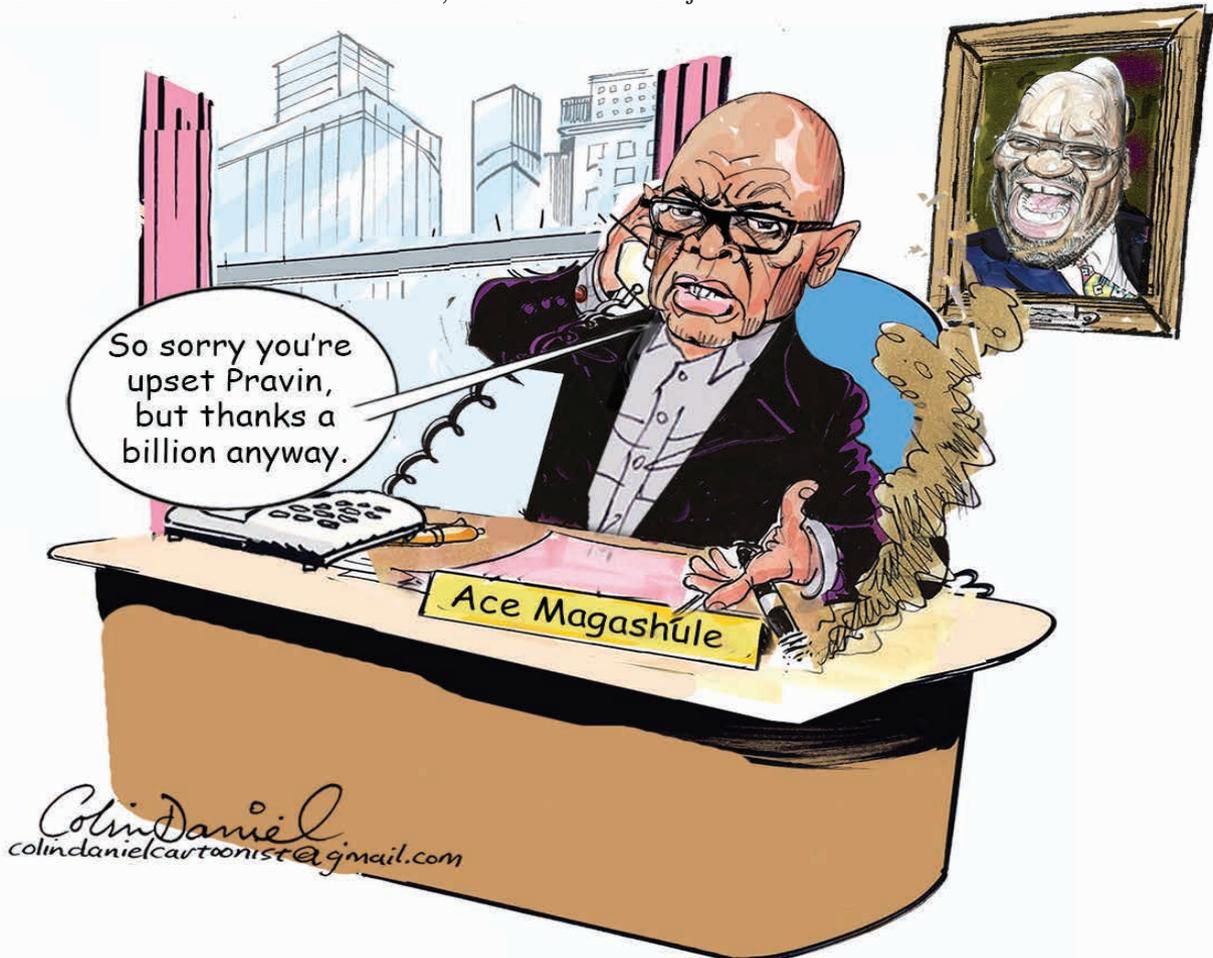
"People went to the department and said Ace told them to go and work there, but there were no jobs adver-

tised and the jobs weren't budgeted for," said Marshoff. She reiterated a claim made by almost every source I spoke to: Magashule deftly used the promise of employment in provincial and municipal structures to his advantage. As he did with the meat parcels from Glen College, he handed out jobs to buy patronage.

After less than a year, Magashule was once again fired by Marshoff. But his political power kept growing. The influence he wielded as ANC Free State leader and chairperson of the party's deployment committee had turned him into the province's most formidable political force.

"He determined who became mayor, municipal manager or CFO at all the municipalities," explained Marshoff. "He abused this scenario and influenced people at the municipalities to give tenders to people close to him or to people he needed to support him.

"Ace had the ability to instill a deathly fear in people," said Marshoff. "He was in control of people's careers, their futures, so they did as he asked them to do." ■



# Fake news and Gaddafi's loot: two great pre-election spoilers

**N**OSEWEEK DIDN'T GET THE \$30M (R417,000,000) version of the Zuma/King Mswati III/ Muammar Gaddafi/Nkandla treasure story. That went to the *Sunday Times* which splashed it on their front page. *Noseweek* got an even more implausible \$24 trillion one. Yes, US \$24,000,000,000,000. And mind your naughts: that's R333,600,000,000,000!

Back in 2011 former National Intelligence agent-turned-arms dealer Johan Erasmus and his New Generation Arms Management company were planning to make a killing selling a US-manufactured machine gun called the M134D Gatling minigun to the South African National Defence Force. Classified formally as a weapon of mass destruction, the minigun's six swivelling barrels deliver 3,000 rounds per minute. Erasmus thought he could supply 400 of them to the SANDF and make a cool R1m profit on each.

One of the miniguns was flown over from Dillon Aero in October 2011 for demonstration to South African Special Forces, which duly took place at the Special Forces school at Murrayhill north of Pretoria. But the following March the Hawks seized the weapon, along with a large consignment of rocket-propelled grenades, machine guns, rifles and ammunition which Erasmus had brought into the country from Bulgaria.

The Hawks claimed irregularities with the import permits. The weapons are all still locked in SANDF bunkers, although last December the Priority Crimes Litigation Unit (Hawks) admitted that, back in 2014, a decision had been made not to prosecute NGAM since it could not be proved that the company had the necessary guilty knowledge when it applied for and received the import permits.

The hiatus, claims Erasmus, forced his NGAM company into liquidation. He maintains that it's all a plot by Aramco and Denel, who have set their sights on putting him out of business so they can import and sell the minigun themselves, with the connivance of

greedy SANDF generals and a helping hand from the Hawks and the South African Revenue Service.

And it's those same greedy generals, claims Erasmus, who want to see him destroyed because of his Libya-mandated role as one of the tracers of the missing Gaddafi treasure, on which he stands to gain a 10% recovery fee.

The Gaddafi treasure story that Erasmus was offering to *Noseweek* went like this: Before the Libyan uprising of 2011, he said, Hilary Clinton and US President Barack Obama paid Gaddafi the staggering sum of \$24 trillion "via France, Belgium and Iraq" to "destabilise Africa". And within six months of receiving this money, according to Erasmus, Gaddafi was financing the Arab Spring.

Apart from the crazy amount – \$24 trillion would have been six times the entire US Federal budget of \$3.8 trillion that year – why would Gaddafi be financing an uprising throughout the Arab world that in Libya would displace and kill him?

Anyway, according to Johan Erasmus, \$7.8 trillion was hived off this unlikely sum to fund the dream of Thabo Mbeki and Gaddafi for an African bank.

"It's fucking serious!" insists Erasmus, who claims that in South Africa the Gaddafi treasure was an ANC operation "controlled" by Jessie Duarte, acerbic deputy secretary-general of the ANC. The loot, maintains Erasmus, was flown to SA in 179 flights aboard South African military and private planes. It came in bank transfers,

in gold and 6 million carats of diamonds – nothing smaller than 5 carats.

"The ANC has already stolen more than 10% of the money," claims the arms dealer. "Zuma shipped off 300 tonnes of gold to Russia to pay for five nuclear power stations. Then they were going to build the power stations and still stick us [*the taxpayer*] with the bill."

Where does all this come from? "Well-placed intelligence sources" replies Erasmus vaguely, under pressure naming one of them as George Darmanovich, an agent in the State Security Agency's Special Operations Unit. As reported in *nose231*, Darmanovich was killed in a motorbike drive-by shooting in Belgrade last May, a contract hit that Erasmus links to the agent's role in the Gaddafi treasure hunt.

The Gaddafi cash, claims Erasmus, was deposited in South African banks, including Standard and Nedbank. As evidence, he produces what appears to be an internal memo from Standard Bank's legal manager Maboi



Muammar Gaddafi



**Johan Erasmus demonstrating the M134D Gatling minigun to SA Special Forces**

Molepo. Dated 21 May 2013, it states: “We confirm hereby that we hold as of date in different accounts and entities on behalf of Libya the sum of \$206 billion (two hundred and six billion United States Dollars).

No indication as to the addressee of this photocopied document.

Only trouble with Erasmus’s “evidence” is that in May 2013 Maboi Molepo did not work at Standard Bank. He was employed at Absa Capital from October 2012 until August 2014. Standard’s spokesperson Ross Linstrom confirms that Maboi Molepo Mashabela did not join them until September 2014 and that “the letter is a fabrication and should not be acted upon”.

In June 2013 AFP reported that South Africa would return assets and cash stashed in the country by Gaddafi. This followed a meeting between then Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan and a Libyan government delegation, said the agency.

The following *Sunday City Press* reported that two Libyan factions were claiming rights to the Gaddafi treasure in South Africa. Johan Erasmus was named as being connected with one of them. In the story Erasmus said that two Libyan investigators had called on former president Zuma at his Nkandla homestead.

In the resulting furore, Zuma told the National Assembly he knew nothing

about billions of dollars cached in South Africa by Gaddafi. “I was never involved in what caused the money to be here,” said Zuma.

In an attempt to revive Zuma and the ANC’s involvement in the Gaddafi treasure, Erasmus now gives *Noseweek* a document allegedly written by suspended deputy national director of Public Prosecutions Nomgcobo Jiba. Addressed to the head of legal services at National Treasury, it speaks of 69 flights by Boeing 747 cargo aircraft, all painted white, arriving in southern Africa laden with Gaddafi’s loot, which had “an asset value of roughly \$1.38 billion or more”. Various “high ranking ANC and government officials from South Africa were involved,” says Jiba’s alleged letter.

*Noseweek* believes that, like the Standard Bank memo, the so-called Jiba letter is a forgery. This theory gains credence when Johan Erasmus insisted that his latest Gaddafi revelations must appear in *Noseweek* before the end of April, ie before the May 8 election.

If Erasmus feels that this article’s exposé of his shenanigans has let him down, the *Sunday Times* certainly obliged with a sensational page one splash on 7 April. Quoting unnamed “government sources, South African agents” and a “high-ranking intelligence source”, Zuma was again the bad boy for tucking away, this time \$30m of Gaddafi loot in an underground vault

at Nkandla before dispatching it “in five tranches” – nice bit of convincing-sounding detail there – to the care of King Mswati III in eSwatini (formerly Swaziland).

*Sunday Times* political writer Qaanitah Hunter claimed that the Swazi king had confirmed the existence of the \$30m (about R417m) to President Cyril Ramaphosa in a meeting at OR Tambo International Airport.

Ramaphosa hadn’t commented on his supposed meeting with King Mswati III before *Noseweek* went to press, but Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Lindiwe Sisulu denied that the king had confirmed anything to Ramaphosa. There was no Libyan money that she was aware of and Hunter’s piece was “a ghost story”.

Zuma has denied the story and announced his intention to sue Qaanitah Hunter, the 25-year-old much-acclaimed star reporter and author of the book *Diary of a Guji Girl*.

Sisulu’s denial draws an email from Johan Erasmus: “I see that Lindiwe Sisulu claims that there’s no Gaddafi moneys,” he writes. “This whilst she hid a load thereof in her house under the Oregon pine floorboards.”

Erasmus denied planting the *Sunday Times* story. “Was not me,” he insists. The arms dealer adds: “The issue is that Zuma had more than 300mt of gold at Nkandla which went with a ship to Russia.” – **Jack Lundin** ■

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# Bungle justice

*Along the way the matter sank into a morass of ridiculousness, a comedy of errors, a parody of dodgy endeavours masquerading as justice being seen to be done.*

**I**N NOVEMBER LAST YEAR *NOSEWEEK* posed the following rhetorical question about South Africa's justice system in an editorial: "Whether the accused are guilty or not, when a criminal prosecution has been in process for 16 years, isn't it time to question the morality, the sanity of it all? That's apart from questioning the competence of the prosecution, or reckoning the outrageous cost to the accused and the taxpayer." These remarks were prompted by the (still) ongoing trial, before Judge Brian Spilg in the South Gauteng High Court of Gary Porritt and Sue Bennett, who were arrested in December 2002 and March 2003 respectively on numerous criminal charges related to their management of a company called Tigon (*nose229*).

A reader brought another relatively recent case to *Noseweek's* attention where the same issues led to the termination of a case in the Western Cape High Court:

On 16 May last year acting Judge Rob Stelzner issued an order that 17 cases of fraud and theft against a former Southern Cape attorney, Koos Grobbelaar, be withdrawn and never be instituted again. Grobbelaar's bail money of R5,000 was returned, his passport handed back to him and he no longer had to report to the police once a week.

The order brought finality to a case that started seven years earlier in 2011 when Grobbelaar first appeared in court in Riversdale in the Southern Cape after being arrested by the Stilbaai police. Since then the case has dragged on and on with more and more people joining the list of alleged victims until there were 17 complainants. Yet the police and the prosecuting authority were seemingly unable to finalise the charge sheet.

The roles of the State and the accused were swapped in 2017 when

Grobbelaar filed a case against the Director of Public Prosecution, saying that years of delays had caused him irreversible harm and would continue to do so in the future. And after hundreds of pages of accusations made by both sides, the case against the self-confessed crooked lawyer was dropped and closed forever.

So why was Koos Grobbelaar, 69, able to walk away from 17 charges without even so much as a reprimand? There is no clear answer in the public domain because the parties came to an agreement, subsequently made an order of court, without any oral evidence proffered.

But the outcome of this astonishingly labyrinthine case now stands as a precedent in South African law. Whatever the reason for the unusual delays, the prosecuting authority dragged its feet for years before charging the perpetrator. Let it not be forgotten that crooks have the same rights as everyone else, especially when they are cognizant of the law.

Grobbelaar says his fall from grace started in 2005 when he took an option on land in Stilbaai where he planned to develop an exclusive estate inside a nature reserve. It was to have been known as Duinekraal and was similar to another very successful development in the area, called Fisantekraal. While several people were persuaded to invest in the Duinekraal project, it never got off the ground.

In Grobbelaar's 58-page affidavit, accompanied by another 40 pages of supporting documents, he admits he used money taken from his attorney's trust account to cover the cost he encountered with the development, and that his clients lost millions of rands as a result of what he calls his own shortcomings. (Read: I stole trust money and used it for purposes other than originally intended by my clients, and in contravention of the law

relating to attorneys' trust accounts.)

Grobbelaar claims that the case was postponed countless times since his first appearance in court in 2011. It was also struck off the court roll on more than one occasion because both the investigating officer and the prosecutor did not turn up in court. But what made the case more difficult for the prosecution was that the investigating officer, a Sergeant Piedt, was based in George and most of the witnesses and Grobbelaar's victims were in Stilbaai and the Swellendam area, 200km away. When his clients heard about his fraud, each one laid charges against him and soon the number of dockets increased from six to ten and then to 17.

In the meantime Grobbelaar was sequestered, became unemployed and was later forced to apply for legal aid. He was also struck off the roll of attorneys. But he claims he offered his full cooperation at all times, stating that he even informed Sgt Piedt that he was willing to admit guilt on some of the charges.

Then, in an unprecedented move,



**Accused attorney Koos Grobbelaar**

Grobbelaar convened a personal meeting with the prosecutor, advocate Herman Steyn, in the hope that the case could soon be finalised. But that was to no avail because in 2015 there was still no final charge sheet. Six years after his first appearance in court he had not been given an opportunity to plead on any charge.

The Legal Practitioners' Fidelity Fund paid out most of Grobbelaar's victims to the tune of R2.9 million. According to Grobbelaar the Cape Law Society was able to quickly gather enough evidence to compensate his clients for their financial losses, yet the State was in no hurry to tie up the case. And this, he says, was an infringement of his constitutional and common law rights.

Grobbelaar accuses Prosecutor Steyn of irregular and unprofessional conduct, which resulted in legal costs escalating to such an extent that a friend who had given him financial backing, later withdrew his support.

Perusing Grobbelaar's affidavit leaves one with the impression that the State has a case to answer.

But that impression fades somewhat on reading Steyn's counter arguments. In a 55-page affidavit Steyn denies that the State did not move forward with the case. He says Grobbelaar stood accused of theft, fraud and falsifying deeds but the allegations were not as straightforward as Grobbelaar maintained. Steyn said that not all the charges against Grobbelaar originated in the Duinekraal development. Only one was linked to that development while the others were mostly private property transactions.



**Prosecutor Herman Steyn**

In two of the cases Grobbelaar acted as the transfer attorney for properties sold either by his clients or to his clients. Amounts of R1.4m and R1.1m were not paid over to the sellers because Grobbelaar withdrew the buyers' money from his trust account before the properties were registered and legally transferred.

Also not related to Duinekraal were cases where Grobbelaar withdrew trust money and gave false reasons to his clients as to why monies could not be paid over to them.

One case refers to a so-called private

## **Steyn says he was worried that Van der Watt was withholding information**

loan, which Grobbelaar says should have been part of a civil and not a criminal case. Steyn agrees that there was a loan agreement in place, but says the agreement was only signed after Grobbelaar started withdrawing his client's money from the trust account. The Law Society later rejected the claim for compensation by the client, a Mr H J van der Watt.

Steyn says he was worried that Van der Watt was withholding information from the investigation and this was another reason why the charge sheet could not be finalised sooner.

About the alleged falsifying of deeds, Steyn explains that Grobbelaar showed the auditor a forged sales contract claiming that two of his clients, a Mr and Mrs Houston, purchased two smallholdings in the Duinekraal development from him. Grobbelaar told the auditor the Houstons paid for these with funds kept in trust with him after they had sold a property. This was false, says Steyn, because Grobbelaar could not sell stands in Duinekraal as the land did not belong to him and, as he admitted, the development never got off the ground.

Steyn also submitted several extracts from the investigator's diary that showed Grobbelaar did not

honour appointments and that he once switched off his phone when Sgt Piedt was supposed to be meeting with him. Another note in the diary refers to a phone call made to a lawyer who denied that he had taken instructions from Grobbelaar. The lawyer said he could not defend Grobbelaar as there was a conflict of interest.

According to Steyn, Grobbelaar's offer to assist the investigating officer did not help in any way to establish the truth about most of the allegations. For example Grobbelaar wanted Sgt Piedt to believe that he had invested certain funds, which was not the case.

Steyn acknowledges that he was absent from work in 2015 after he had been attacked by a burglar but says the postponements before and after his injury were requested by Grobbelaar.

And so the saga continued, with accusations and counter accusations flung from both sides. In the end an agreement was reached: the State withdrew the charges pending against Grobbelaar, while Grobbelaar withdrew his case against the Director of Public Prosecution. Each party paid its own costs.

This story is a damning indictment of the South African legal system where the potholes along the road to justice enable a self-confessed fraudster to walk away scot-free from punitive redress, while the prosecuting authority just couldn't make a case stick. Along the way the matter sank into a morass of ridiculousness, a comedy of errors, a parody of dodgy endeavours masquerading as justice being seen to be done.

The Prosecution was unable to firm up a case against a perpetrator who confessed unashamedly to serious fraud and the misappropriation of trust money. The investigating officer was 22km away from those he wanted to question and the perpetrator would not answer his phone. The prosecutor himself was unwell after being attacked by an intruder, while nobody seemed to turn up in court on designated dates.

Throwing in the towel seems to have been the only sane solution; a quick two-part settlement "on the steps of the courthouse". Nobody goes to jail and the State bears no blame for this breakdown of the system. – Susan Puren ■

# Rogue unit WhatsApps that clinch it

**Y**ES, IT'S TRUE, SARS DID HAVE A covert rogue unit. For years – unchecked and its existence officially denied – a group of high-tech specialists and former state spooks tapped phones and intercepted communications in flagrant defiance of the law. And here's the proof.

The evidence comes in the free-flowing words of its main denialist, Johann van Loggerenberg, leader of SARS's infamous High Risk Investigation Unit.

*Noseweek* has had access to the contents of an 800-page secret dossier held by the Hawks consisting of WhatsApp messages between Van Loggerenberg and his former lover, Pretoria attorney Belinda Walter.

Former police undercover agent Van Loggerenberg confirms his unit's shady and illegal activities in text messages to Walter. Walter handed the dossier to the Hawks, who made mirror images of all Walter's devices to authenticate the dossier.

For years the mainstream media has pumped out the denials and lies of Van Loggerenberg and his gang of former spooks, all long-trained in the art of lies and deception. Their latest dupe was retired Judge Robert Nugent,

whose commission of inquiry last year concluded: "Why such a unit was considered to be unlawful is not clear to me."

However, the retired judge, now in his seventies, had the grace to add the caveat: "The documentary evidence on the activities of the rogue unit is as presently advised thoroughly unsatisfactory. All we really have are the 'dashboard' reports that were made by the unit from time to time to SARS top management."

Van Loggerenberg, 50, along with former SARS deputy commissioner Ivan Pillay, 64, and Janse "Skollie" van Rensburg currently face unconnected charges of illegally bugging the offices of the National Prosecuting Authority in 2007. The case is set to resume in the Pretoria Magistrate's Court on 12 June.

*Noseweek's* edited selection of the Van Loggerenberg-Walter WhatsApp text messages covers a later period, 2013 and 2014. The SARS unit involved in the alleged NPA bugging case, the National Research Group, had been long disbanded – only to be reborn as the High Risk Investigation Unit under the leadership of Van Loggerenberg. Among its high-profile targets was the flourishing illicit tobacco industry.

Conducting their own parallel investigation was the State Security Agency (SSA) which had persuaded Pretoria attorney Belinda Walter to go undercover and bring the tobacco companies together into the Tobacco Fair-Trade Independent Association, which she chaired.

## Carnilinx's sick puppy

TIMED 4.34PM, 18 NOVEMBER 2013.

**JvL (Johann van Loggerenberg):** "Busy going through Phillips data. [Kyle Phillips of Carnilinx tobacco company]: Eish, sick puppy.

**BW (Belinda Walter):** Lol! You didn't need the data to tell you that?

**JvL:** ISS+Varejes=SSG [gossip about links between attorney Ian Small Smith, Richmark's Gavin Varejes and Warren Goldblatt's then-named Specialised

Services Group].

**BW:** Oi. Ok. I didn't know that. So they could just as easily be intercepting all my crap?

**JvL:** Yup. But they're not. Yet!

**BW:** Pissed at me?

**JvL:** I'm glad you decided to withdraw from them [*the Carnilinx directors*]. The more I read the more I realise. Nasty pieces of work.

**BW:** Are they planning anything I should know about?

**JvL:** No not pissed. Too worried about own asses.

**BW:** Ok. Has ISS [*Small Smith*] not tried to swing that leaks will be [from] me?

**JvL:** No. Move on.

**BW:** I have. I have a natural curiosity and I have the FITA [*Tobacco Fair-Trade Independent Association*] meeting on Wednesday so I don't want any nasty surprises.

**JvL:** They'll be super nice on Wednesday and try to make you feel guilty!

**BW:** Is that what they are saying?

**JvL:** Reading through emails. Boring. Cross-eyed already.

## Belinda: angry to discover Van Loggerenberg had been bugging her

TIMED 12.08 AM, 19 NOVEMBER 2013.

**JvL:** Now you can argue with me, you can hurt me with things you say like now, you can think you will deal with things in your own way – but on this one you are wrong. So for once you must listen. This isn't about me dealing with it or who you are. I sit at the helm of this and know exactly how this whole thing is going to unfold and play out. Nothing is out of control on my end. And I am really not uptight at all. The only thing that did upset me was your suggestion that I broke the law. And I was comfortable in expressing that to you.

**BW:** If I'd known I was in the bubble or on candid camera – who knows. I did not say you broke the law. I said you disregarded laws that were designed to provide me with privacy and dignity.



Johann van Loggerenberg

You have your reasons etc – it doesn't feel any different from where I am standing.

**JvL:** My projects are run by trusted and few people. None are voyeurs or perverts. They are professional in what they do. They are not "everybody at SARS".

**BW:** Yes, I understand that. But then society's interests overrides that of individuals who fail to consider society's interests. I cant have this debate with you. You know how things work. You just never considered the consequences. Im not going to try and justify what and why we do what we do. Our job is difficult enough as it is.

**JvL:** Okay. Whats the position. Make up your mind. This is killing me slowly. Are you with me 100%?

**BW:** I know I'm madly in love with you. I know you're the love of my life. I know I'm committed to you 100%. But tonight I don't have to like what you said or your lectures or how I feel about a million things.

**JvL:** You dont have to like it yes. In fact nobody will be expected to like it if they were in the same position. Its not something I like either. Its not a good thing. But you know what? You roll up your sleeves, you buckle down and deal with things and dispense with them. Like many other things in life that are also not very likeable.

### Faizal wasn't careful on the lines

TIMED 4.01PM, 20 NOVEMBER 2013.

**JvL:** All quiet. Word's gone out we are onto Mo \$ [*Mo Dollars*, alias for a high volume money-mover] so some people worried even more now.

**BW:** Oh. Lol. Simon R [*Simon Rudland, Gold Leaf Tobacco Company*] should be worrying. And Zunaid M [*Moti*].

**JvL:** Yup. And Faizal and co [*Faizal Hattia, Yusuf Kajee's partner in Delta Tobacco*]. He has no clue. He wasnt careful on the lines. Stupid.

### The HRIU listener ladies

TIMED 3.52 PM, 21 NOVEMBER 2013.

**JvL:** My watcher and listener ladies dont waste time to draft reports for me on personal stuff. I have not seen anything or heard anything of personal nature of anyone involved. Nada. They know it and I insist on that. Their contracts state that very clearly. So I cant form an opinion and dont want to. Its irrelevant to me. Relax. I wanted to make you smile, not make war. Join me

in being a pacifist. Life is so much more joyful then.

### Everything electronic leaves footprints

TIMED 2.21PM, 22 NOVEMBER 2013.

**JvL:** By the way. dont believe story that Facebook messages cannot be intercepted. Everything electronic leaves footprints. !

**BW:** I don't use FB for messages.

**JvL:** They will suggest that in future.

**Walter:** They can't be my FB friends.

**JvL:** I think FSS [*investigators Forensic Security Services*] is aware of my capabilities. So they will share this. Their counter-espionage guys in UK are good.

### HN and C are tap-dancing

TIMED 4.55PM, 28 NOVEMBER 2013:

**JvL:** HN [*Hennie Niemann of Crime Intelligence*] and C [*Chris Burger of SSA*] tap-dancing hectic. They even went to NPA to try to limit scope of case. I let them. I want service providers to internally investigate and find who gave info to AG [*Andre Grundling, a private investigator hired by Carnilinx to monitor SSA's Tobacco Task Team*]. Im playing dumb on that case. I just hope they dont fuck it up like everything else.

**BW:** C wouldn't do anything for me on his own. HN has integrity.

**JvL:** I know too. But I dont want to give them our tapes and stuff. It will complicate the case. Id prefer the service providers do it themselves. Its easy to id who accessed what numbers on what dates. We have done it before.

### Dead in the water

TIMED 10.18PM 28 NOVEMBER 2013:

**JvL:** Chottia [*Y Chotia of Tobacco Boyz*] and Shana [*his son*] have turned. Carni [*Carnilinx*] dead in the water now! We are pulling their and ATM's [*Amalgamated Tobacco Manufacturers*] warehouse licences and import/export licences next week. Its pretty much game over for them. All very desperate. Nobody wants to go to jail. And theyve invested a bit in PE which they know they will lose now. And their cash as good as gone. It has affected them badly. Everybody blaming each other. A lot of 'I told you so's'.

They didnt think SARS would be the ones coming. They were thinking FSS [*private investigators Forensic Security Services*] and police all the time. They thought their SARS problem

was restricted to Kumaren and Lizette [*SARS Enforcement*]. They never considered there were other people behind the scenes who were looking at the bigger picture.

**BW:** Do they realize that yet?

**JvL:** They broke our camera today. As if we were only going to use one. Kyle [*Carnilinx's Kyle Phillips*] has plans on going it alone. He's not as clever as you thought. I've gone through some of the older stuff. His ego very big. It makes him careless and impulsive. Arrogant.

### Carnilinx director Adriano Mazzotti was shell-shocked

TIMED 3.35PM, 5 DECEMBER 2013.

**JvL:** He [*Mazzotti*] came in, all cocky. But I cut him to size immediately. He was shaking like a leaf throughout. He didnt play any card. He was shell-shocked. I mentioned a few things only he would have been aware of, and that made him shit himself. He knows now that I know everything. He doesnt know what to do now.

**BW:** Did he even try say anything about us or ISS?

**JvL:** No. He didnt have to. He knows now that we had surveillance. For all his bravado, he was just so weak. His plan was to try to suggest you were part of things. But the penny dropped for him when I mentioned a few things only he would have known. So his whole strategy fell apart. He was really in a state.

**On 31 January 2014 the lovers fought over Van Loggerenberg's philandering. In retaliation Walter revealed their relationship and her links with the SSA to the Carnilinx directors and Sunday Times's Malcolm Rees. Van Loggerenberg persuaded her to retract her statements and they made up.**



Belinda Walter

TIMED 7.38PM, 3 FEBRUARY 2014.

**BW:** Are you going to call later?

**JvL:** Sure. But we must be careful of phones now, okay? Not everything is in my hands any more.

### Van Loggerenberg after being questioned by a SARS panel about taxpayer confidentiality

TIMED 3.18PM, 13 FEBRUARY 2014.

**JvL:** It's tough. I feel tired.

**BW:** Can you speak?

**JvL:** Yes, rather avoid tobacco.

**BW:** I'm so worried about you.

**JvL:** Not on phone anymore okay. Not safe and things can so easily be misunderstood. So I'm under a bit of pressure and stress now and you need to understand and accept that.

### Belinda: still angry at being bugged

TIMED 9.36 AM, 16 APRIL 2014.

**BW:** I'm tired of you thinking you know me and judging me because you are intruding on my personal life with your interception. You don't

know everything and you obviously don't know me very well at all...

**JvL:** Its okay to be angry. I understand.

**BW:** No. Sadly you don't. You don't have a clue. And I dont think you want me spelling it out while under interception order.

**JvL:** I really dont wish to respond to that. I will just repeat myself. And please dont discuss my mental well-being with other people. The fact that I took you into my confidence within a private relationship about matters I consider private is maybe not something you consider private, but that being the case – please be decent about something you clearly have no idea about.

**BW:** That's such an insult... And if you and your interception centre stick to my constitutional rights regarding privacy of private communications then you have no need to worry about who I speak to about anything.

• The couple's romance ended in May 2014. ■



**Erich Neethling, former Lieutenant Commander in military intelligence and head of surveillance in the SARS High Risk Investigation Unit. Neethling played golf at the Pretoria Country Club and regaled its members with stories about the HRIU in the bar after a few drinks. A mention of Neethling in the WhatsApps:**

TIMED 6.10PM, 12 MARCH 2014.

**JvL:** Poor Erich working late for stuff I need tomorrow morning.

**BW:** Won't kill him.

**JvL:** That's what I thought too! And Kums wants to start bringing booze to work!

## 'I lived triple lives for many many years'

**I**N A SERIES OF WHATSAPPS IN NOVEMBER 2013 and February 2014, Johann van Loggerenberg told Belinda Walter about his life as a deep-cover spy.

**JvL:** I was a spy for many years. Im a trained observer and analyst!

**BW:** In your 12 yrs away – did you have a family? Wife, kids or someone special you felt sorry to leave behind. Until today – I did not grasp the level what you had done.

**JvL:** You are my Love. You dont need to ask whether you can ask a question. Just ask. ! No. In my 12 years away I was alone. I had nobody. Just 3 handlers over time. We had contact once every 6 months roughly. 1 gave up on me, he couldnt keep up. And 1 psychologist who saw me once every 12 months for a day. No wife, no kids, no girlfriend. Many friends, but they didnt know the real Johann. They knew the person I pretended to be. And some business partners. Also not as Johann. I can write a dissertation on isolation stress and Im sure I will get 100%!

Our debriefings took place over a week usually. The rest of the time I used DLB's [dead letter boxes] to communicate and so did they. Two

teams of surveillance people worked on me all the time and I had my own equipment for video and audio.

**BW:** I trust you. I believe you.

**JvL:** I was deployed on 26 projects over time. Some overlapped. Some in SA, some in EU and some in South America. I operated from Durban, Jhb and Cape Town. I was terribly alone. But over time became used to it... Its been over for a long time. There were 3 of us that were that deep for so long. One committed suicide, one died of drug overdose and I was the lucky one who managed to see it through and move on...

Oom Pot [how Van Loggerenberg described his handler] used to say to me that for this game people are born. You cant teach someone the trade... I understand the game and what happens to people very well. I lived triple lives for many many years. Complicated scenarios that you wont even be able to begin to imagine. Trust me. We were terribly imaginative and had very novel ideas. But they were complex and asked for a lot.

I had a knack for it. I immediately understood the immense power that

came with it and how whatever I did, could potentially undo any good I was trying to do, if any of it became public. It was a golden rule to never do anything to compromise our integrity... We always accepted the risk was there that I would be blown and then would have to own up to everything. ■



**Young police spy Van Loggerenberg**

# A landslide disaster

## Mossel Bay homeowners sue authorities over wrecked homes

**S**IXTY-TWO OWNERS OF PROPERTIES in what used to be upmarket residential developments in Mossel Bay will soon be heading to court, claiming R200 million in damages from the Premier of the Western Cape and from the Mossel Bay Municipality. A third respondent is the National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBC)

In September 2016 the Mossel Bay Municipality told residents of Seemeeupark, Seemeeuvlug and Tuscan Village in Hartenbos that they had seven days to evacuate their properties after huge cracks had started to appear in buildings and roads in the area the previous year.

And soon after they had moved out, the municipality added insult to injury by ordering several owners to demolish their newly-built houses and a townhouse complex at their own expense.

The dwellings had been built near the N2 highway on land that was part of an old gravel quarry that had been excavated years ago on the side of a hill. In 2015 the ground began to slip downhill at a rate of several millimetres per day.

Needless to say the disaster was devastating for affected residents

who suffered severe emotional stress and huge financial loss. Many were pensioners who literally had nowhere else to go and found themselves on the streets. Properties bought for cash were in some cases not insured, others battled to get their insurers to pay because the smallprint in their policies excluded subsidence.

The municipality was the first to deny responsibility. In November 2016 Mossel Bay's lawyers wrote to Rinette van Niekerk, whose family was forced to move out of their home, saying Seemeeupark was part of a private development on land that was also previously under private ownership. The letter stated emphatically that the municipality was neither a party in the sale of the development property to the developer nor a party to the sale of properties in the development to private investors, therefore "...we are of the view that our client is not liable for the damage caused by the landslip," it said.

Van Niekerk was not convinced that her family had no claim against the municipality and found herself a lawyer. She has since sourced hundreds of pages of documents to support the pending court action.

Before Van Niekerk received the

letter of denial from the municipality's lawyers, the then acting municipal manager Harry Hill had informed the media that it was the responsibility of the developer and owners to prove to the authorities that the land was suitable for its intended purpose.

Hill said municipal records showed that none of the motivations – including authorisation by the Department of Environmental Affairs – had mentioned the possibility of a landslide in the area. He also claimed that a geotechnical assessment was not legally required at the time of the application for rezoning in 1999. But the experts were only called in 16 years later after the cracks started appearing.

Outeniqua Geotechnical Services found that gravel had either eroded from the slope or there was an old stockpile on the floor of the quarry, and that the foundations of some of the houses had been thrown on compacted sand and gravel-fill from the quarry.

Had this perhaps been overlooked by the municipal inspectors who signed off on the buildings? Hopefully the pending court case will establish the facts.

After the Outeniqua Geotechnical report was released, the municipality appointed Kantey and Templer Consulting Engineers to reassess the problem. The firm's Patrick Beales described the landslip as "an act of God", stating that not a hint of negligence or bad design and workmanship had existed. He emphasised that the landslip had occurred because the integrity of the ground had been naturally disturbed, the unstable layer was lying extremely deep and that conditions were exceptional and were not a result of human intervention. Beales also warned that the geotechnical risk was very high and that even experts could not believe the extent of the movement.

*Noseweek* finds it interesting that these "exceptional conditions" only seemed to surface where there had indeed been human intervention – in the form of a gravel quarry and, as far



**Newly built house in disarray**

as we know, landslips did not happen anywhere else in the area.

According to an article in Civil Engineering of April 2017, written by Beales and Iain Paton of Outeniqua Geotechnical Services, “geotechnical investigations are often overlooked or tend to be heavily constrained by time and costs, rather than ensuring a thorough understanding of the ground conditions and potential risks that may impact development” The “thorough understanding of the ground conditions” was of course a tad late and should have been established in 1999 before the authorisation for rezoning of the land was pushed through by a seemingly clueless bunch of municipal councillors. Back then they had even ignored the revealing findings and recommendations of their own town engineer!

The paper trail started 22 years ago in January 1997 when consulting engineers Ninham Shand in George wrote a letter to Cape Town urban and regional planners, The Planning Partnership. The letter was in response to earlier correspondence regarding the farm Vyf-Brakke-Fonteinen on the outskirts of Mossel Bay and the availability of bulk services for the planned rezoning of a portion of the farm. Ninham Shand said the area had been visited but that no test holes were drilled due to time and cost constraints.

Whose time and cost constraints? It is not clear but it is a damning indictment of a process that has now come to haunt them.

However, the Ninham Shand letter said that, from observations of the surface and walls of the old quarry, it appeared that services and foundations could be done without any rock excavation. Based on these superficial findings The Planning Partnership apparently then applied for the rezoning of the land on behalf of the then owners, Langeberg Foods.

But the Mossel Bay municipality had much more information available which revealed that the quarry area was not suitable for any future residential development. A memo, sent on the 3 March 1999 by the Town Engineer to the municipality’s Technical Service Committee, was tabled at a council meeting in April of that year. It referred to The Planning Partnership’s December 1997 application for the rezoning of a portion of Vyf Brakke Fonteinen from



**Townhouse complex is now uninhabitable**

an agricultural to a residential zone. The Town Engineer’s memo specifically mentioned the old gravel quarry, warning that “the embankment of the quarry is steep and probably unstable, with the result that this part of the site should not be considered for development”.

At a council meeting on 13 April 1999 the report, including the Town Engineer’s memo, was unanimously accepted and the recommendations adopted. But it looks as though the councillors soon forgot about the exclusion and the warning.

Curiously, minutes of that council meeting mentioned that Councillor A Nel recused himself before Item T62-4/99 (the town engineer’s report) was discussed and that he had left the Council Chamber.

So, who is Councillor Andre Nel and why did he recuse himself? It is not apparent from the minutes but the applicants in the pending court matter say Nel was Mossel Bay’s mayor at the time. More significant however is the fact that the farm Vyf Brakke Fonteinen once belonged to Nel’s father, Leo Nel. Nevertheless, after the land was rezoned, it changed hands several times in one year. In August 2000 Langeberg Foods (Pty) Ltd sold to Neonbel Twee en Twintig (Pty) Ltd for R837,900.

It was again sold for less in 2001, to Deolinda Visagie, for R749,000 and finally to Dynadeals Thirty Nine for R5 million.

Dynadeals Thirty Nine became

Seemeeupark (Pty) Ltd, the developer of the Seemeeupark housing project.

While different companies bought and sold the property, it appears to have stayed within the same family. Gideon Visagie is one of two directors of Neonbel Twee en Twintig which sold the land to Deolinda Visagie, Gideon’s daughter, who then sold it to Dynadeals Thirty Nine – of which Gideon Visagie is today still a director, according to company records.

When stands in Seemeeupark were sold to the people who were later evacuated, the Deeds Office added a curious restriction which stated that the land could only be used for the processing and recycling of factory runoff water and that only buildings directly linked to this process were allowed to be erected. Nobody appeared to have given any attention to this restrictive clause until after disaster struck. They say they were blindsided and believed the developers and agents’ claims that this was prime property overlooking the Indian Ocean.

This is yet another saga in a recurring tale where visions of a quiet life by the sea are shattered by lax research and denials of blame. People’s hopes and dreams end up in the court system where files of shattered plans pile up.

Summonses were delivered in November last year and the Mossel Bay Municipality has since announced that it will defend the case. – **Susan Puren** ■

# Trustees of posterity?

## A look into the minds of the new political generation

**F**OUR YOUNG, UP-AND-COMING politicians speak their minds about the state of the nation and their personal dreams ahead of the May elections.

### United Democratic Movement's Chief Whip Nqabayomzi Kwankwa

I WAS BORN AND RAISED IN MIDDELDRIFT, in the former Ciskei. Both my grandfathers were active members of the ANC, while my father was branch chair in my village.

After graduating, I worked in banking for nine years and in 2009 I went into full-time politics. I had left the ANC in 2006 because of all the infighting. I first joined Azapo, then the United Democratic Movement in 2007 and became an MP for the UDM in 2013 and the party's chief whip in 2014.

The UDM is a social democratic party that is pragmatic and pro-poor. We acknowledge that past imbalances must be addressed. The fact that the party's leaders had struggle credentials was critical to me.

There's a great deal of despair following the long years of Jacob Zuma's rule... As a politician it is difficult to campaign as the people think you too will lie or make promises you won't keep.

In my home town we have a mobile clinic that is meant to visit villages so that senior citizens can pick up their medication. It's not happening... it's not even being supervised. Ailing senior citizens are regularly transported in wheelbarrows to get their meds – sometimes only to find the clinic [randomly] closed on that day.

These stories are heartbreaking. And don't even think of getting any cooperation from the local health department if you're from an opposition party. If the councillor in that area is ANC, it's a zero-sum game if you try to escalate things.

The cry I am hearing is that there is a general lack of service delivery and basic amenities, especially in small villages. There is terrible unemployment and because there are no recreational facilities, young people are turning to drugs – even making their own drugs.

In my village, when I was growing up the situation was not so complicated. It was just alcohol and dagga. Today, there is nyaope and many people mix ARVs to turn it into a drug. They identify the people who are HIV-positive and target them to get their ARVs to smoke.

A cousin of mine who was HIV-positive was killed because

These were a source of employment for people, as they would get a cut from the produce, but that is no longer the case since those schemes closed down. The unemployed youth have two choices – stay in the village and depend on their grandmothers' social grants or move to the cities. Those who stay invariably end up using drugs to escape their reality. Many in my home village have tried to commit suicide. A friend of mine tried to hang himself in December, while I was home. Somebody walked in while he was hanging from the roof and pulled him down. We have been encouraging him to go for counselling but when you get to the clinics there is nobody available to help.

What happens in the villages is that the governing party takes food parcels and announces these Expanded Public Works Programmes (EPWPs) and then they disappear and there is nothing again.

The Eastern Cape has many mud schools. Education is really suffering in this province. One of the things we discovered in the Eastern Cape is that principals are telling learners that if they fail trials, they cannot sit down and write matric. This is to inflate the pass rates in that province.

The government has not been able to measure the economy's informal sector properly so as to make the necessary interventions for them to transition to the formal sector. Yes, we have chronic unemployment, but part of the problem is that we haven't measured it. Unfortunately the small-business ministry spends 80% of its budgets on the Setas.

The ANC has destroyed the



**The fact that the party's leaders had struggle credentials was critical to me**

people demanded his ARVs and he said no. They chopped him up with an axe, like a piece of wood. That was three years ago. The people responsible are languishing in jail, serving long terms but it won't bring my cousin back.

If we had provided opportunities for education and employment, most of these things would not be happening. In previous times, there were agricultural programmes in Alice, Middel drift and Keiskamma.

Transkei region. When they took over, the Transkei had a basic infrastructure and things functioned quite well. Go to Umtata, Queenstown, King Williams Town and Stutterheim and those towns in the former Transkei today and they are completely destroyed. There has been no maintenance of buildings and infrastructure.

Money should have been spent to turn the Transkei into an economic hub but this has not happened. Business people tell me they have tried to do business in the province but politicians keep asking for bribes.

We must give credit where it is due – the commissions of inquiry established by President Cyril Ramaphosa are a good thing, even though you cannot say he was not responsible, as Zuma’s deputy.

The issues to be addressed after the election are socio-economic: unemployment, poverty and inequality. This will only work by creating policy certainty for investors. The ANC government has not provided clarity on land expropriation without compensation.

One of the biggest problems in the country is a shortage of resources at municipal level. It is all very well to sort out issues at national level, but at provincial and municipal level there is not only a shortage of resources but also no capacity to do anything. It’s not just about finance, it’s about competent people in those positions.

I went into politics believing I believe I have a contribution to make in building a better South Africa for all. We have the best constitution in the world. All we need is committed leaders who believe in a better South Africa for all – and making it enforceable.

There are many things to be hopeful about in South Africa. We just need to pull together. Compared with some other countries I have visited on the African continent, we are lucky, we have the most industrialised economy in Africa, we have something to build on but we do not appreciate this, we don’t build on it. We continue to fight about peripheral issues. Look at what we are not talking about.

When it comes to human rights globally, the voice of South Africa carries a lot of weight. We are too parochial.”

## DA candidate for the Western Cape Provincial Parliament Deidre Baartman

“RECENTLY, WHEN WE were campaigning in Lotus River and Pelican Park, Western Cape Premier Helen Zille, along with Western Cape Premier-elect Alan Winde and Mayor of Cape Town Dan Plato were canvassing door-to-door. An older woman walked up to me and asked, ‘Will you help us?’ She told me how SAPS are nowhere to be found when the community needs them. The DA wants to run provincial policing.



**I come from a very public-service orientated family: my mother is a teacher and my father a policeman**

Currently, SAPS is under-trained, understaffed, under-resourced and under-equipped. We want to overhaul the SAPS to actually serve the needs of communities.

The community I grew up in is a small neighbourhood called Hillside in Port Elizabeth. I come from a very public-service orientated family: my mother is a grade two teacher and my father, a policeman.

My proudest achievement is admitting myself as an advocate in December 2017. I have always been passionate about the law and justice and how the main role of legislators is to ensure that South Africans are protected by the law; that we foster an inclusive economic environment for growth; that laws are not overly cumbersome on people; and that the most vulnerable are protected. I love the law because we as a society need

to be better than the individual.

I joined the DA in 2009 when I started studying at Stellenbosch University. I have worked as an activist and served as Stellenbosch branch leader of the DA Student Organisation (Daso), as well as dealing with campus-specific issues. Daso promoted the DA’s vision of an open society for all.

In September 2011 I was elected as the first politically affiliated SRC member at the University of Stellenbosch since 1994, with the support of Daso Stellenbosch.

I also participated in the DA’s Young Leaders development programme, designed to impart the skills, knowledge and confidence to be future leaders of the DA and of South Africa.

In 2012 I was elected as the Stellenbosch DA Youth leader and I remained involved while at university. In 2013 my mentor and I approached the Western Cape Premier with the idea for the Year Beyond project whereby selected young people acquire a leadership qualification and the chance to meet influential people. They also work in groups to come up with proposals to assist the Western Cape Government in preventing school drop-outs and improving academic excellence. The Year Beyond was officially launched in 2014 and the Premier allocated R10m to expand the programme.

I was appointed as DA NCOP Political Assistant in June 2015 and was promoted to DA NA Political Assistant to the Chief Whip and Whippery in 2018.

What disturbs me most about South Africa today is the rampant unemployment, especially among the youth.

I believe one needs to be a doer to achieve results for the most vulnerable of our communities, and a thinker to find the fairest solution when creating legislation and ensuring we move towards a more united South Africa.

I find hope in the fact that South Africa is a diverse nation with an abundance of skill, talent and

resources. It is a strength of South Africans to persevere through adversity. That gives me hope. What makes me optimistic is our collective determination to find innovative solutions in a country restrained by its painful and horrific past.

South Africans are resilient. We overcame apartheid, we can overcome our current state. I believe there are enough honest people in our country with integrity to help pull South Africa up by its bootstraps.

Everybody wants to be in government, that's the whole point of politics – you win votes so you can help govern. In the next ten years I'd love to serve the Western Cape community in provincial government and one day become Minister of Justice or of Finance. This is possible, especially given the academic records of previous ministers. I would love a portfolio where I could push for change."

### **IFP Member of Parliament Mkhuleko Hlengwa**

"IN 2014, WHEN I WAS CAMPAIGNING door-to-door in a deep rural area near Umzumbe in KwaZulu-Natal, an old lady said to me, 'I have no interest in speaking to politicians... we have come to expect that you guys will steal our money; if we give you 100, don't steal 80 and service us with 20, rather just steal 20 and service us with 80'. Politicians are just not seen as an honest group. That encounter will stay with me forever. It was a shocker.

Most South Africans, particularly young people, are in a state of complete uncertainty about the country as we go into elections. With each passing day, our problems in so far as economic growth, job creation, service delivery and general development are compounded. That 1994 promise of a better life for all has not materialised. There is a sense that the system has failed us all except of course those travelling on the gravy train. People are asking, 'to what end should I vote?'

But these elections are critical as they offer a chance to correct things. Based on the IFP's manifesto launch for the coming election, I've got a sense there's a real urge among people to make use of the election. The message I am hearing is, 'We are

troubled but, fair enough, we will vote'.

I have a strong sense that this coming election will be a landmark one. So many expectations hinge on it, from economic growth, jobs and social cohesion, to regional integration – all things required to turn our situation around.

I come from a province where we've had political violence and I've been saying to young people: 'Let's take our country back, but not through the barrel of a gun'.

I am the youngest of five children born and raised in the Imfume district of KwaZulu-Natal.

**I've got a sense  
there's a real urge  
among people to  
make use of the  
election**

I matriculated at Port Shepstone High School and went to the University of KZN where I studied political science and community development. At university I joined the party's student wing, became branch chair and served as national student spokesperson. I was on the national executive of the IFP Youth Brigade and was elected national chair in 2011, before being sent to Parliament in 2012.

Young people in my province want the dignity of a job; they want to fend for themselves. So many rural people say, 'We slog it out for 12 years in schools which are under-resourced, living in conditions of dire poverty, travel many kilometres to school and then we pass matric – and that's the end of it.'

NSFAS, the financial aid scheme is in disarray and there's limited space in the higher learning institutions. The education system does not work.



People ask 'What's the point of going to school when we won't get a job?' The whole system just fails young people.

Our political environment at present is toxic. We're dealing with increased levels of populism, anchored by a drive for power. Increasingly people are resorting to violence as a means to corrective action. We have seen violent, vulgar and disrespectful scenes playing out in Parliament. When the holiest of holies, Parliament, finds itself in

that kind of situation society will mirror that behaviour as a means to solving other problems. That's why you have an escalation in violent service delivery protests. A noble cause is expressed in burning down of libraries etc. People tend to conduct themselves in a way consistent with that of their leaders.

When I left high school in 2005, our principal said to us: 'As you go out into the world, never let things replace people'. That's stayed in my head. I strongly believe I am in the duty of serving people. I want to at least leave behind a better South Africa than I found.

I think that in this election parties like the IFP that have been written off by pundits will be the comeback kids and be a huge influence in the future discourse of the country. We are now governing 13 municipalities in KZN and we also co-govern with the DA in the City of Johannesburg. If you look at the by-election trajectory, in the main it speaks to an IFP that's growing. We have a proven track record of service delivery.

My constituency is the Umzinyathi district which covers towns like Msinga and Greytown.

I had the honour of being deployed to Nkandla for a while. The (IFP) mayor Thami Ntuli is doing well there. His name, through no fault of his own, is associated with all that was wrong with the Zuma years. But the IFP mayor is cleaning up Nkandla.

Just think: the municipality's budget is R181m a year to service 14 municipal wards – and here, in the middle of Nkandla,

you have a homestead for R246m, servicing one family... There is no better example of how the Zuma regime worked."

### ANC MP in the NCOP Tasneem Motara

THE YOUNGER MPs IN THE ANC should not have to be involved and co-opted into the fights of the older generations. Most issues relating to corruption do not involve us at all. I have focused on what I am supposed to do as an MP and have not allowed myself to get sidetracked by the politics of some of our older members.

I was born in the East Rand and

**I can go about with  
much less baggage  
being a public  
representative under  
President Ramaphosa**

still live in Benoni. I've been an MP since 2014. I grew up in a politically active family – some lived in exile and some are still active in politics. I have always been involved in community and volunteer work. I joined the ANC Youth League in 2000 and served in the ANC branch executive committees of different wards and branches in Benoni, where there are great disparities between poverty and wealth.

I studied psychology and am now doing a degree in economics. I am the youngest Member of Parliament for the ANC, but in the next administration there will be quite a few younger than me, which is a very good thing.

The years of Jacob Zuma's presidency were demoralising. It was difficult, in the public eye, to detach oneself from him because, being part of the ANC, we were all tainted with the same brush. It was really unfair.

I feel much better about being a public representative under President Cyril Ramaphosa. I can go out with much less baggage.

A lot of people are disappointed in the ANC, given that, for many, their quality of life has not changed and there is still so much inequality.

What disturbs me most about South Africa today is the resurgence of racism. I come from a mixed-race family. My mom is coloured, my dad is Indian and, growing up, it was never a problem that we had different races in our family.

Our government policies mean that many liberties have been given to women at the expense of men and it makes them feel inadequate – an unintended consequence of wanting to equalise society. You do so at the expense of someone else, who then gets to a point where they fight back.

It disturbs me that the ANC is taking too long to modernise from the way the party is structured, how

we do things and the culture of the organisation. The world is moving fast.

Some of us in the ANC don't believe the exiles and freedom fighters are still relevant to lead either the country or the ANC. It is failing to stay relevant.

There's definitely a new energy coming up from the younger people in the ANC. It is evident in Gauteng, where the oldest member of our executive is 51. We have nobody from the UDF, no exiles, no Robben Islanders... in fact there is nobody here from the pre-1970s – the only such executive committee in the country.

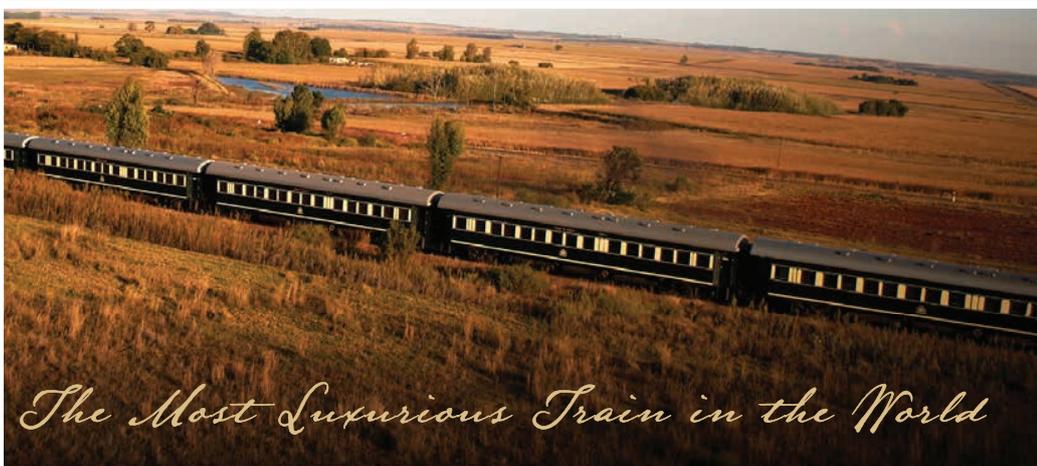
It's not that older members hold back the party, it's that there is a constant fight between what's relevant and current versus what is known, safe, tried and tested. Our views of how to fix things are different. We really need the old to go and the new to come in.

My long-term plan is to work in a multinational organisation like the United Nations. I don't want to be 60 and still at Parliament.

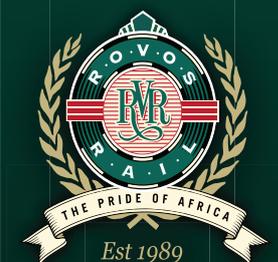
My hope is that South Africans will become their own liberators. Increasingly they are finding their voice, which is putting pressure on politicians. South Africans are beginning to demand a certain kind of politician.

South Africans have a lot to be grateful for. If we focus on what unites us, we can be a great country.

– Sue Segar ■



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## Paris Echo by Sebastian Faulks (Hutchinson)

SEBASTIAN FAULKS HAS OFTEN IN his fiction recreated past eras: the First World War in *Birdsong*, the Second in *Charlotte Gray*, the period in between in *The Girl at the Lion d'Or*, the Cold War in *On Green Dolphin Street*, the early twentieth century in *Human Traces*, Cambridge in the seventies in *Engleby*.

This new novel is set in contemporary Paris, but once again has strong links with the past: one of the main characters, Hannah, is an American academic researching the experience of women in war-time Nazi-occupied Paris; this is her second visit to the city, having studied there a decade earlier. The other, a 19-year-old runaway Moroccan named Tariq, by contrast, is entirely ignorant of the history of the city he finds himself in: he doesn't know who De Gaulle was, and doesn't realise that Paris was occupied by the Germans during the Second World War.

More or less by accident he becomes Hannah's lodger, and through her he absorbs something of the rich texture of the city. But it is central to Faulks's method and theme that the city he gets to know is not tourist Paris, not even the historical Paris, but the unknown Paris, the *banlieues*, where the immigrants and undocumented aliens survive as best they can, in makeshift shelters and squats. After a brief sojourn on the floor of an apartment in one of the tower blocks of the Olympiades, Tariq finds a job in the run-down Saint-Denis area, which "looked like it was home to people they didn't want inside the city walls", people from Africa or the Middle East, "from the bits that had been put on the map by famine or beheadings". Tariq's job is in the Paname Fried Poulet, a down-market version of Kentucky Fried, run by

two expatriate Algerians, who instruct him in another aspect of French history, the brutal France-Algerian war and the atrocities committed by both sides: what one character calls "the darker part of French colonialism".

As in his other contemporary novel, *A Week in December*, set in London, Faulks is fascinated by the city's network of underground railways. In that novel, London's Circle Line becomes the ruling metaphor uniting the various characters; here it is the Parisian Métro. Indeed, Faulks uses as one of his epigraphs Kafka's statement in his diary that "The Métro furnishes the best opportunity for the foreigner to imagine that he has understood the essence of Paris".

Faulks is clearly, through exploring the historical connections evoked by the Métro, trying to come to terms with "the essence of Paris", a city he evidently knows intimately. Through the alternating narratives of the knowledgeable Hannah and the uninformed but receptive Tariq, the history behind the rich variety of station names is unpacked. "These Métro stations, eh?" Tariq exclaims. "What names! Barbès-Rochechouart. What a mouthful!" (The chapters are all named after Métro stations.)

The city that emerges from Faulks's evocation is, as expressed in another of his epigraphs, this time from Baudelaire, a "teeming city... where daylight ghosts confront the passer by"; that is, a city in which the past remains to remind the passer-by of a history he or she may not even have been aware of, "the great world of the past – of injustice, of vanished, valuable lives".

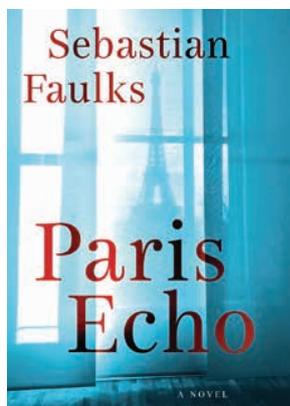
Largely through Hannah's research into the testimonies of women of the period, some of which are rendered verbatim, the novel also serves to

puncture the illusion that all Parisians were secret Resistance fighters. On this showing, most Parisians backed whichever side they thought was most likely to win, and collaborated, either actively or passively, with that side. ("Change horses, back the winner noisily and cover up your false start. Then deny you changed and keep on denying it until the clamour dies down.")

For all their differences, Hannah and Tariq share one quality: the ability to see ghosts. Indeed, they see some of the same ghosts, of women who lived in Paris during the German occupation, and find themselves at times in wartime Paris. Whereas this can still just pass as plausible in Hannah's case, since these are the women whose recorded testimonies she's been listening to, it's more difficult to ascribe a realistic origin to Tariq's visions.

Perhaps we should just accept the ghosts as Faulks's somewhat clumsy venture into fantasy fiction, rather like David Mitchell in *The Bone Clocks* and *Slade House*. I found the device an irritating distraction in Mitchell's otherwise highly crafted realistic fiction, and here, too, the ghosts add little to the gripping enough realistic surface. To my mind, the notion of the presence of the past is strongly enough dramatised by conventional means not to need supernatural aid; but perhaps other readers will be more amenable to such aid.

To give this evocation of the past a contemporary twist, Faulks grants both his protagonists a non-historical interest: in Hannah's case a wary relationship with Julian, a lecturer she got to know during her previous sojourn; in Tariq's, a hitherto unconsummated passion for one Laila in his native city of Tangier. It is probably not too much of a spoiler to reveal that both these relationships develop satisfactorily, if slightly perfunctorily. The novel's strength lies not here, but in its minute evocation of a city in which the past remains a living presence. It will come as a revelation to people who think they know Paris. ■



**PARIS ECHO**  
by Sebastian Faulks  
(Hutchinson)



## Who called Iqbal what?!

IT WAS LATE AFTERNOON ON THE 27TH of November 2014 and Tony Weaver paused and looked back at the *Cape Times* newsroom which he was leaving after having served as one of its most respected reporters and columnists for close on a quarter of a century.

The new editor, Gasant Abarder and his deputy, Aneez Salie, who had worked assiduously to drive out Weaver and other long-serving white staff members, had not organised the farewell party which was customary on such occasions and had not acknowledged his departure.

He heard the ping of an incoming email on his computer and hesitated for a moment, then he turned back. Perhaps it was a message from a well-wisher.

He was already late for his farewell party at the hotel on nearby Greenmarket Square. ANC acolytes Karima Brown and Vukani Mde, who had been appointed by the company's new owner, Iqbal Survé, and had written an article "Takeover is focused on transformation" in which white staff members were overtly and presciently threatened, were not expected to attend.

Age and infirmity prevented me from attending, but I was later told that Weaver arrived at the party pale and shaking with rage.

He quickly realised that the email – which was sent to him in error – had been addressed by Gasant Abarder to the now-retired deputy executive chairman, Tony Howard.

In the

email Abarder discussed strategies for getting rid of one of the country's leading environmental reporters, Melanie Gosling, who had written an accurate summary of Thuli Madonsela's "Docked Vessels" report on the controversial Sekunjalo tender to maintain our marine patrol and research vessels – which was subsequently withdrawn.

The fact that the *Cape Times*, on the watch of editor Alide Dasnois had had the temerity to publish an article questioning one of his companies, enraged Survé. Dasnois was dismissed and Gosling received a threatening letter from Survé's lawyers – something unprecedented in South African media history.

The mood of the party brightened however and morphed into unrestrained schadenfreude when Weaver and the Cape Regional Editor for Independent Newspapers, Chris Whitfield – who, like Gosling, also subsequently left Survé's employ along with more than a hundred other staffers, thereby ripping the intellectual heart out of the company – recounted the highlight of a disciplinary hearing in which Weaver faced trumped-up charges.

A robbery had occurred at a shopping mall and the photograph showed Pick n Pay in the background. Salie suggested cropping the picture to remove any evidence of Pick n Pay because they were major advertisers with the newspaper. Photo manipulation is, like plagiarism, anathema for newspapers so Weaver asked how this wilful distortion could be reconciled with the ethical code of the *Cape Times*.

He was immediately charged with gross "disrespect and insolence".

At his subsequent disciplinary hearing Abarder glared at Weaver and asked: "Is it true that you called Aneez Salie a Charlie Uniform November Tango?" – or words to that effect.

Weaver emphatically denied

this, saying that he was an ardent feminist and the word, accordingly, did not feature in his vocabulary.

Abarder then asked Chris Whitfield, who was appearing at the hearing as a character reference for the accused, whether Weaver had called Aneez Salie a Charlie Uniform November Tango – or words to that effect.

It was Whitfield's prompt riposte which had them rolling in the aisles at the Inn on the Square on 27 November 2014.

"No he didn't... but I can think of several people in the Cape Times newsroom who did!"

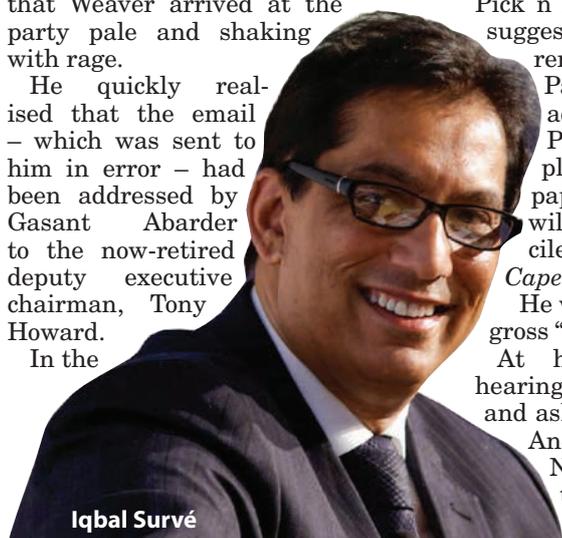
I'm told that Weaver has a digital recording of this appalling kangaroo court – part of a venomous purge of experienced white staff who were not sycophants and would be opposed to the coming gutter press, fake news regime of which the *Cape Times* would become a particularly odious example. The purge included the termination by Abarder of John Scott's column in a two-sentence email, not because Scott had done anything wrong or because his writing was not popular – but because he was white.

Weaver left on his own terms shortly thereafter and his Man Friday column is now published weekly in *Die Burger* – as is Scott's.

Ironically, Gasant Abarder, Karima Brown and Vukani Mde all subsequently abandoned Iqbal Survé's disreputable and insolvent media company thereby escaping the taint of what might justifiably be called the "Sekunjalo Stench".

As I write this, the sordid machinations which saw Survé benefit from more than R5 billion from the Public Investment Corporation, are being exposed before the Lex Mpati Commission.

Survé touts himself as a philanthropist but his philanthropy does not extend to his interns if an un-denied *Daily Maverick* article written by Dougie Oakes, the recently-retired political editor of the *Cape Times*, is to be believed. ■



Iqbal Survé



## Jürgen Witt, Museum Man of Tzaneen

Born 26/08/1930 Charlottenburg (Berlin), Germany  
– died 03/01/2019 Tzaneen South Africa

**D**ESPITE HAVING LED A REMARKABLY varied and eventful life, Jürgen Witt seemed destined to be a forgotten man who died in a forgotten corner of South Africa – but *Noseweek* could not allow that to happen.

The oldest of four children, Witt went to school in Germany and Ukraine. He left school early to join the army as a volunteer in 1944 to help defend Ukraine's border against the Russians. He was arrested and imprisoned, but managed to escape and fled to Sweden where an aunt of his was living. There he worked on a farm, studied agriculture, went to the North Pole as an assistant prospector, worked as a forester, a colporteur and even for a short while in the diplomatic service. In Stockholm he met his future wife Hilda.

In 1952 he came to South Africa in search of an uncle. He worked for a while on the roads in Botswana (then Bechuanaland) before joining a foreign trade business in Johannesburg, where he and Hilda got married. They had a daughter and two sons, all still in South Africa.

In 1960 the family settled in Tzaneen, where Witt stayed till his death. Initially he worked as a book-keeper for several companies before starting his own accounting business. In March 1962 he acquired South African citizenship.

Always interested in the world



Jürgen and his successor as curator of the museum, Florence Tshibeyahope

around him, Witt joined the Archeological Society. In 1969 he was employed part-time – along with a number of well-known international academics – by the German Research Council. Archaeology, geology, geo-morphology, ethnology and plant geography were amongst the disciplines involved.

Witt became scientific assistant to Professor Otto Fraenzle, a position he held until the latter's death. He was also co-founder of the Interdisciplinary Sahara Research Society, and a member of

the Institutum Canarium, concerned with the cultural heritage of the Canary Islands. In the course of his research, he was able to identify nearly 200 sites of archeological interest from Tzaneen, along the escarpment to the Indian Ocean.

In his spare time, he had discovered about 200 sites of archeological interest between Tzaneen and the Indian Ocean. In the process he covered a large part of the Kruger National Park on foot.

In 1970 he was persuaded by the town council of Tzaneen to sell his large collection of African art and artefacts to them for a nominal sum, with the promise that they would erect a proper building where the whole collection could be displayed and properly cared for, with Witt as permanent curator.

The building was also supposed to include a gallery for regular exhibitions and lectures.

Great was his shock and disappointment when he discovered shortly afterwards that a new town council had sold the collection to Potchefstroom University.

Not only did Tzaneen lose this precious heritage, but the university,



Exhibits cover every bit of space in the tiny museum

having just bought the collection, then closed the relevant department and sold the Witt collection to a member of staff. This man in turn sold off items to collectors.

Witt only became aware of this when people from all over the world started to contact him for information about items that they had acquired.

Unbowed, this spurred him on to starting a new collection. This time, the art and artefacts he acquired were not limited to those from the Limpopo area, but from Africa as a whole.

In 1995 the new museum was started in a very small dilapidated building made available by the Tzaneen town council. Witt had to spend his own money and that of private donors.

The inadequately small grant from the town council for the museum's running costs was stopped when Witt complained in his monthly report about the large amounts of money being spent on soccer stadiums while art and cultural museums suffered. What peevd the council especially in his report was the comment: "What we need is quality children, not quantity."

This forced Witt to start selling some of his precious book collection to help pay for the museum's expenses. When he was also forced to cancel his subscription to *Noseweek*, reporter Nicci van Doesburgh investigated. *Noseweek* not only published an illuminating article about the museum in August 2012 (*nose154*), but also gave Witt a free two-year renewal of his subscription. Later he reciprocated with a generous donation to *Noseweek*.

Fortunately the collection belongs to a trust. Jürgen Witt's trusted assistant Florence Tshibeyahope is still looking after the museum. One can only hope that his dream will be realised in that the collection will eventually be housed in the building and environment it deserves.

The Jürgen Witt Trust has been established by friends and family to help fund care of the collection. It pays the curator's salary.

Witt is survived by his widow, Hilda, and their three children.

● *Readers wishing to contribute to the trust should contact Noseweek for details. – Matthys Strydom ■*



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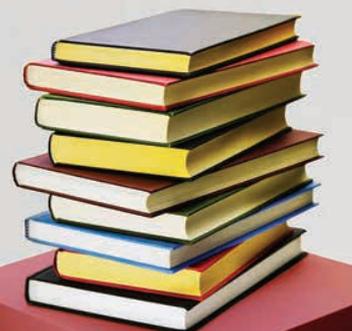
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