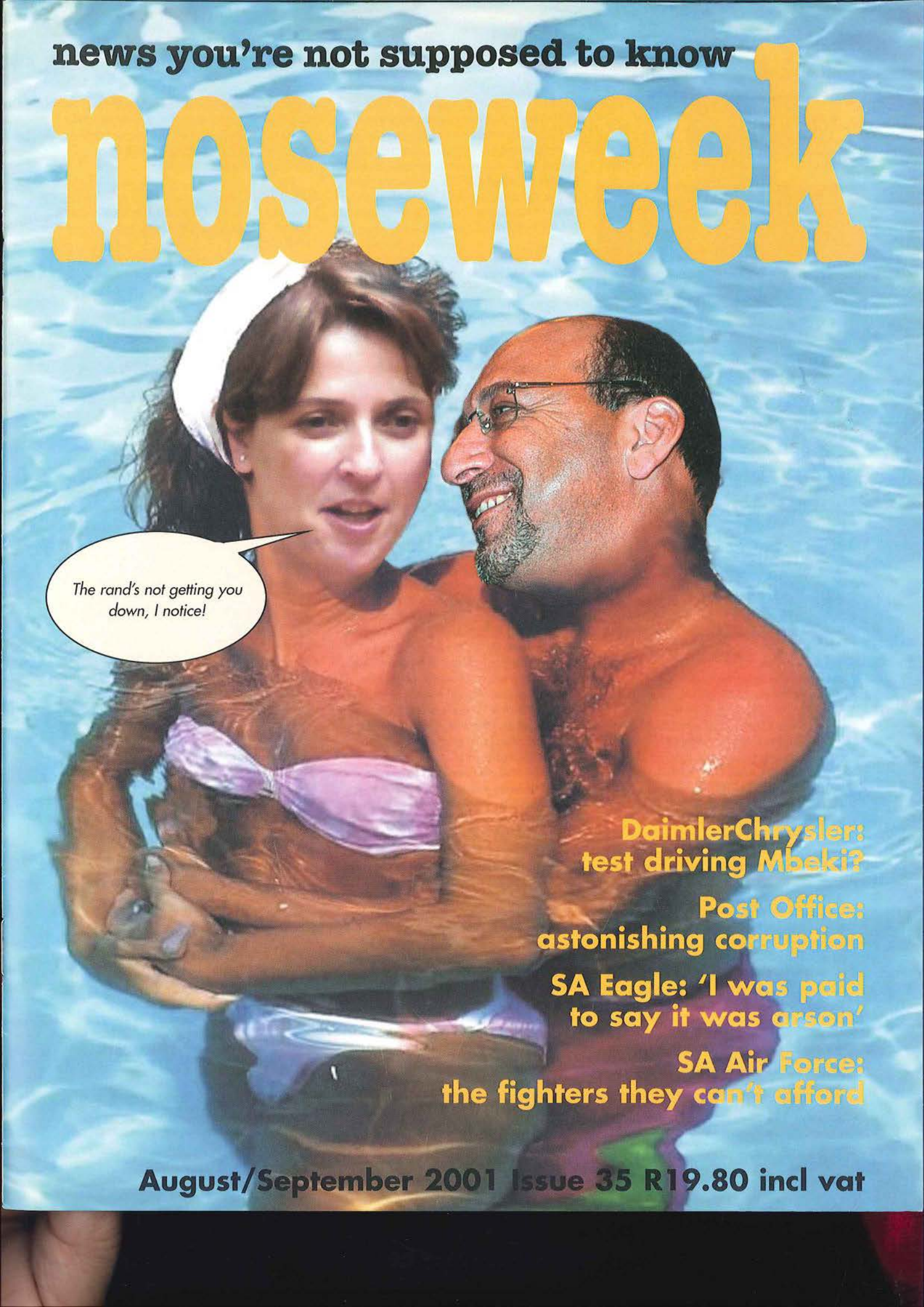


news you're not supposed to know

noseweek



The rand's not getting you down, I notice!

**DaimlerChrysler:
test driving Mbeki?**

**Post Office:
astonishing corruption**

**SA Eagle: 'I was paid
to say it was arson'**

**SA Air Force:
the fighters they can't afford**

August/September 2001 Issue 35 R19.80 incl vat



Mike Levett and special friend.

LEVETT'S "OBSCENE" PACKAGE

Days after you told of the corruption at Old Mutual under executive chairman Mike Levett and called for his departure (nose34) he had left his executive positions. Good! But then *Business Report* (July 17) revealed the obscene extent of his departure package – R150m! Levett may have served 42 years with OM, but he was, after all, an employee. No employee, outside of a family-owned enterprise where the family takes the risks, should be allowed to benefit to such an extent. My first OM policy was taken out in 1954. Throughout the years, until demutualisation, every blurb received from the OM contained the phrase "your society". Mike Levett's January 1999 letter, addressed to me as "a member of the Old Mutual", states that "the Board has carefully considered the proposal and believes that demutualisation will benefit the Old Mutual and you, the member. For this reason the Board believes that you should vote yes to the proposal ..." Yes, I did benefit from the issue of "free" shares, but, wow, nothing approaching the benefits enjoyed by Levett (and no doubt many other executives), especially those attributed to his inevitable move to London. Sadly, I needed to sell my shares, but, judging from *Business Report's* criticism of OM's performance, that may not have been a tragedy. It seems to me that my society became their society – a classic example of us and them. Keep up the good work.
RONALD COPPIN, Hillcrest

EX-MUTUAL MAN ALLAN GREYLING

I have no intention of entering into any dialogue on the issues raised [in nose34] as no purpose would be served by being tried by media. At the risk of spoiling a good story by including the facts, let me assure you that your conclusions are false, misleading and defamatory. Consequently I reserve my rights. ALLAN GREYLING, Sandton

Sure you want to avoid trial by media, just as you contrived to avoid every other sort of trial, you devious schmuck! You omitted including any facts at all. It seems you're not only a conman, you're also a coward. – Ed.

SUBMARINES: WHAT BENEFITS?

South Africa has had three "Daphne" submarines for years. What has the total cost, both to buy and to operate them, been over that period? Comparing cost with benefits, was the purchase of these vessels justified? Then let's look at the estimated total cost, purchase and operating, of the three new German submarines, spread over, say ten years. What benefits do we expect? Would it not be more cost effective to cancel the contract, and pay the cancellation cost? PETER DURING, Claremont

BMW JEKYLLS AND HYDES

Graham Higgs [nose34 letters] is right, a Beemer is a delight to drive. But South Africans are, in general, appalling and discourteous drivers. And Beemer drivers break all records for bad, impolite and reckless driving (although I, too, succumb to speed when driving my turbocharged Swedish contraption – far superior to any Beemer). The odd thing is that, when out of their cars, these same drivers change into the most charming, warm, gregarious people. So, please, BMW drivers, stop being so defensive. Just get out of your cars, find decent shrinks and get to grips with what really ails you. ARJUNA KANNANGARA, Pretoria

Graham Higgs calls my pig, branded with a BMW logo [nose32], an "appalling caricature ... tasteless in the extreme". I'm horrified! My fat little pig has no genitalia and, poor soul, doesn't even sport an arsehole, something one often finds behind the wheels of both BMWs and Mercls!
To avoid legal action from BMW, the SPCA or BMW drivers, I have melted down the

branding iron and fashioned a ploughshare in its place, an instrument that can dig up loads of the stuff that noseweek regularly exposes!
MYKE ASHLEY-COOPER, Cape Town
(Cartoonist and Merc owner)

CAMP CHRISTO

Thanks for the wonderful Christo Wiese exposé. The whole of Clifton is cheering!!!
HMB, Clifton

I note the *Sunday Times* is now also a noseweek follower. See their account of Wiese's Clifton development [ST July 22] which appeared the week after nose34.
ALFRED J ROBINSON, Somerset West

And the Cape Times, three weeks later! – Ed.

I was in Cape Town for the rugby, and went to Clifton to see if your story [on Camp Christo] was factual. Naturally it was! If anything the photo didn't do justice to the enormity of the development. My concern is the underground rooms will not have a sea view – so what can we expect to see next?
ALAN TAUROG, Springs



Before the stampede starts, where can I buy Michael Saltino's CD Flying Away? It's Africana in the making! Music that speaks of the struggle against the odds, of the little man prevailing against the SABC juggernaut, makes for a refreshing change – and must rise in value as more appreciate its worth on a Zen-value scale.
ANTHONY ABBOTT, McGregor

To listen to a sample and order the CD, go to <http://saltino.allafrica.net>

Editor Martin Welz
Tel (021) 671-4809
Fax (021) 683-8641

Managing Ed Marten du Plessis
Deputy Editor Sam Sole
Editorial Consultant Peter Soal

Production Editor Rob Meintjes
Design Consultant Ray Meylan
Contributor Glynnis Underhill

Gauteng Bureau Vivienne Vermaak
Subscriptions Jacqui Kadey
Advertising Adrienne de Jongh

e-mail/ noseweek@iafrica.com

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WHO DUMPED OUR HISTORY?

SA newspaper files on the Internet only go back to about 1993. Earlier material seems to have been unceremoniously dumped. So yes, you can indeed obliterate history – it's a done deal as far as English newspaper archives go. What have the newspaper houses done with *our* history?!

CHRIS MOORE, Pietermaritzburg

LOTTERY'S MISSING R560M

In July the Lottery Distribution Board announced that R7.8m would be distributed to 54 successful charity applicants. So, together with the R4m distributed in December, the "magnificent" sum of R12m has now been given to the cash-strapped welfare sector. But according to the Uthingo website, by 14th July 2001, tickets sales [income] totalled R4.48 billion. Of that, R550m was paid in VAT; prizes totalled R1.97b and the operator is allowed R786.36m (20%) for costs and profit. So far beneficiaries have received a mere R12m. That means R1.16b remains to be distributed to worthy causes. But the distributors say they only have about R600m still available. If so, what has happened to the missing R560m? In addition, scratch cards are selling at a rate of R5m a week. Those funds should by now total about R120m – after prize payouts. The R1.29b total (lotto and scratch cards) should be earning R2m a week in interest alone! When last year the Community Chest had to stop their scratch cards, they lost more than R2m in income – income the causes they support relied upon.

BRIAN BAILEY, Somerset West

The poor aren't our government's priority! – Ed.



ABSA's Schroeder Street branch, Uppington.

THE FULL CATASTROPHE ABOUT AN APOSTROPHE!

We take the liberty of drawing your attention to an incorrect use of the apostrophe in nose33: page 15, line 4 of "Sorry Nedcor": incorrect use of "it's [top executives]". Also, *ibid*, page 2: "1990's" in Koos Botha's letter.

Otherwise, our congratulations!

The rules are very simple:

- 1) Apostrophes are used to denote a missing letter or letters, eg "can't" instead of "cannot", "it's" instead of "it is".
 - 2) They are used to denote possession, e.g. "the dog's bone". But, note that "its" (denoting possession) does *not* take an apostrophe.
 - 3) They're never ever used to denote plurals.
- DA CRABTREE, Melrose,
for The Apostrophe Protection Society

We were paranoid; now we're neurotic! – Ed.

WHY PERCY AVOIDS TACKLES

Why do I get the same uneasy feeling watching Percy Montgomery play as I did watching Hansie Cronjeer? Many in my circle share the view that Percy will sell out the chap to whom he is passing – to avoid being tackled so that he can pick up second-phase ball (for more camera time?). Maybe his boot sponsorship, hairdresser and endorsements of hair-care products have something to do with this?

JOHN COETSEE, Cape

SAA CIRCUS PROPOSAL

I suggest we ask our government to do the following as part of our President's Millennium Africa Plan: Appoint a new SAA Chief Executive to fix up the mess left behind by Coleman Andrews. Offer the job to the present British Airways CEO with a "market-related, performance-driven" package. I'm sure increasing his current R10m BA package to R250m will entice him. Help the new SAA CEO by using taxpayers' money to destroy Comair's price-cutting initiative (by dropping SAA prices still further). When Comair is on its knees, let SAA buy up their fleet (for nothing) and then sell it to boost operating profits (and the CEO's remuneration package). Once Comair has been forced to close, quadruple SAA fares again so we can all brag about a new healthy SAA. Award the new CEO a medal and a R100m bonus for service to SA – and then take away his work permit. Register SAA as a circus and put it on circuit to recover taxpayers' lost billions.

As part of SA citizens' survival plan I make the following suggestions:

1. Tell the present Government that unless they make those responsible answerable for the wasted billions and a lack of good governance at SAA, we will never vote ANC again.
2. Only fly Comair and tell SAA to give its discounted tickets to politicians – to cut what it's currently costing us to fly them to Cape Town, where they fall asleep debating how to get new "damaged" discounted 4x4s from hungry First World arms dealers.

We also hope Coleman Andrews will agree to join the new SAA Circus. We are sure he will have the international audiences in "stitches" entertaining them on how he "rolled over" South Africa.

BASIL KRANSORFF, Melville

Have you read any good bottles lately?



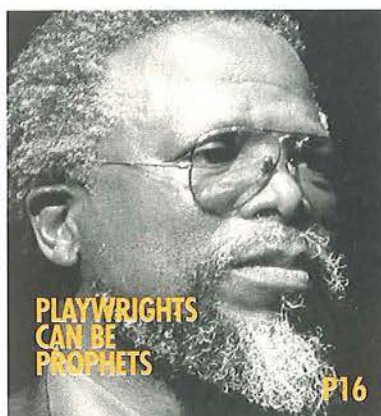
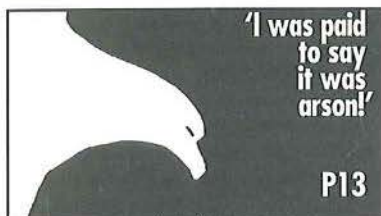
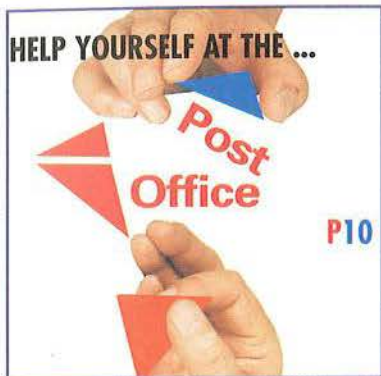
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editorial

Dear reader

While the sale of most publications in South Africa has been declining, nosweek's sales and readership have doubled since the beginning of this year! nosweek has an eminently respectable and influential readership of 40 000 or more for each issue. Without going into embarrassing details, we know they are the sort of people that advertisers slaver over.

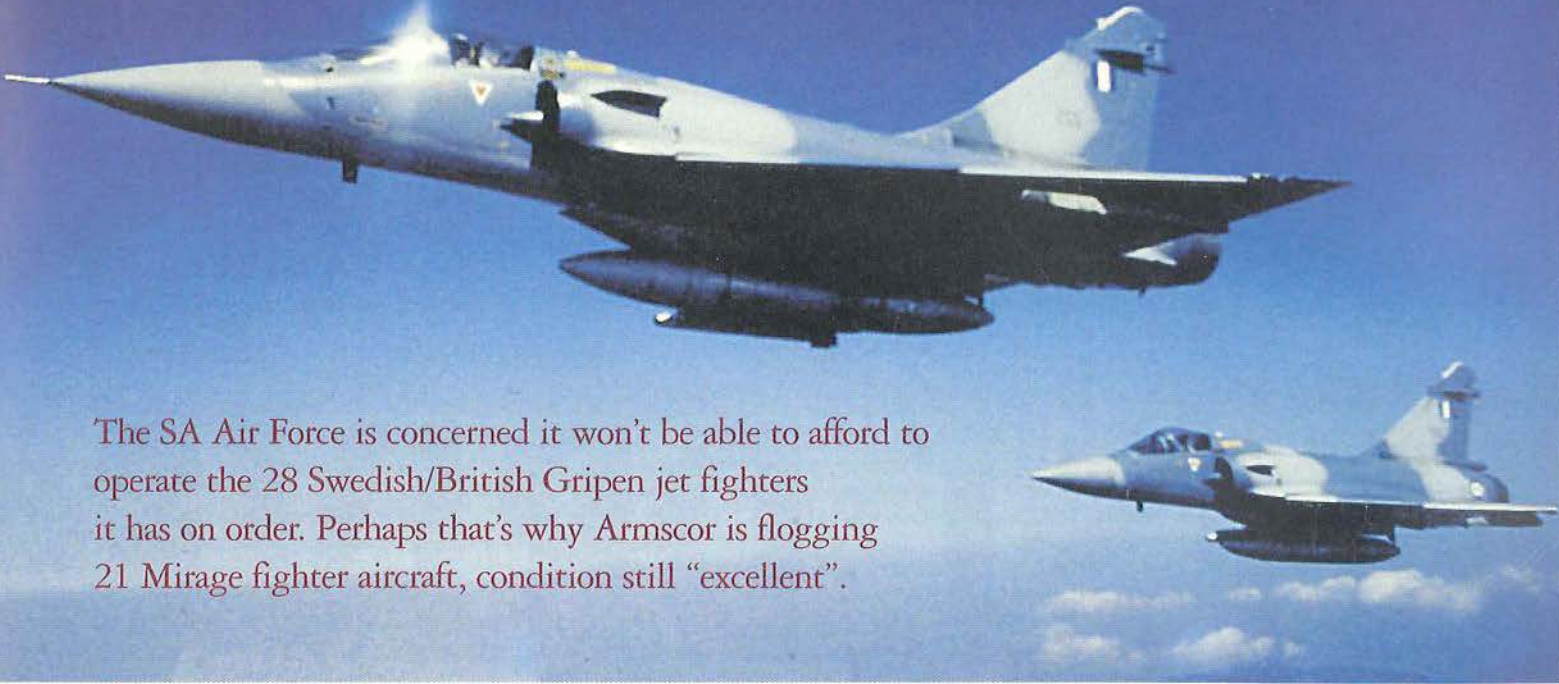
Does that prompt you to wonder why companies such as Old Mutual, SA Breweries, Mercedes and ABSA Bank don't advertise in nosweek? No, of course not, you say. They don't do so because of the things we publish about them! You're

perfectly correct. But what does that say about the publications in which they do advertise? It's simple logic: that they can be relied upon not to publish information which would cast a major advertiser in a negative light. Which is why, if you want to know what's really going on in corporate SA, you have to read nosweek.

As if you didn't know that! But then, wouldn't you want to boast if you were us?

The Editor

PS. The Mail & Guardian recently led with a report that they were being threatened with the Official Secrets Act for publishing information from the minutes of meetings chaired by the Department of Defence's Chief of Acquisitions, Chippy Shaik. We found all the excitement strange – since we had published all that information (and more) two months earlier! Boasting again ...!



The SA Air Force is concerned it won't be able to afford to operate the 28 Swedish/British Gripen jet fighters it has on order. Perhaps that's why Armscor is flogging 21 Mirage fighter aircraft, condition still "excellent".

Mirages for sale!

Oho! noseweek has learned from our friends at Armscor that South Africa's stock of Mirage fighters is up for sale. Sure, these aircraft, 21 Mirage F1-AZs, are 25 years old, but they have been superbly maintained. You'll find no one claiming they're too old to fly.

In fact, in its sales pitch Armscor boasts that they underwent a major overhaul during 1994 and 1995, with the next major overhaul being required only in the period 2012 to 2013.

"The aircraft are in an excellent overall condition with a fatigue life remaining from 50% to 80% (20 years min)," say the helpful chaps at Surplus Stock Sales.

It appears they have to be sold in a hurry to help provide for the very high running cost of the 28 Gripen fighters on order from SAAB-British Aerospace.

The Air Force is concerned that it will not be able to afford to run its new fleet. noseweek has it on good authority that this fear is publicly expressed in the Department of Defence 2000/2001 annual report, which is still under wraps. *[What odds that that particular paragraph won't make it into the published version? - Ed.]* Predictions are that that the defence

budget will have to increase significantly in the next decade, not only to pay for the new equipment, but to run it.

That was why the Air Force's own panel of experts favoured the much cheaper Italian trainer aircraft and the French Mirage 2000 fighter: the costs were lower and further reduced by continuity with SAAF's current aircraft.

What is clear is that the Air Force cannot afford to run the aircraft it has, never mind new ones requiring expensive new maintenance systems and expertise.

Air Force pilots are already struggling to maintain flying hours because of budget cuts. The Air Force already needs an extra R160m – on top of the budgeted amount – to pay its aviation-fuel bill for the rest of the year.

The dire situation is not helped by our President's penchant for air travel abroad and at home – for which, by tradition, the Air Force collects the tab.

Defence Systems Daily reports that the SA Air Force spent more than R5 million on hiring aircraft for the President in June alone. This was due to President Mbeki and Deputy-President Jacob Zuma's extensive foreign commitments,

which show no sign of letting up. Aircraft had to be hired because Mbeki's own Falcon 900 was undergoing an extensive upgrade in Switzerland. (Why the upgrade is not clear, since a new Presidential Boeing is on the way for R600m.)

And then, as it turned out, Mbeki returned from the G8 summit on a commercial flight anyway. He had found the hired aircraft "too uncomfortable".

Defence Systems Daily also reports that the United States has offered SA four maritime helicopters – free of charge – to go with our new corvettes. Yippee!

The purchase of maritime helicopters was postponed because of cost concerns, but they remain an essential part of our defence package. The hangars and flight decks of the corvettes have been designed and are being built to accommodate British Westland's ultra-sophisticated (and expensive) Lynx helicopter.

Surely we should accept the US offer – or at least be told about it? Or might that just end Tony Blair's profound love for the African Renaissance? *n*

Er, sorry to ask, but do free choppers come with shares and 4x4s for those with connections? - Ed.



TEST DRIVE

Is Daimler test-driving Mbeki?

Just for a moment, as our eXtremely Well-Placed Source spoke, the thought crossed our minds: were DaimlerChrysler trying to drag President Thabo Mbeki into the firing line to help them escape the heat generated by their special, secret car deals for leading figures in SA's R50b arms programme?

Then, again, we might be wrong. But, whichever way you look at it, it's a curious tale ...

For months we had been badgering DaimlerChrysler SA to provide us with the names of all the senior politicians and officials who they and their sister company, Eads, have blessed with Yengeni-style car deals over the past two years. But no luck, week after week.

Then, suddenly, it was big time. No, they still wouldn't give us the names we asked for – but now a source “extremely well connected in DC circles” clearly felt the guys and gals at noseweek deserved a break. “Did you know,” said our XWPS, “that the President himself had a new, top-of-the-range Merc – R2m worth – for six months without paying a cent for it? He only returned it to DaimlerChrysler in March – at about the time the shit hit the fan with Yengeni's four-by-four.”

OK. Yes, excited about the call, we asked: What model? When? How? Why?

Mid 2000, the company lent President Mbeki a brand new, white Mercedes Benz S600 as a courtesy vehicle to drive while the older Merc he had inherited from President Mandela was being given a

complete overhaul by Mercedes engineers flown out from Germany to do the job.

“Just by chance,” said our XWPS, “DC happened to have an S600 suitably fitted out with R1m's worth of armour plating and landmine protection.”

It was at about this time that DaimlerChrysler were dishing out nice-but-slightly-dinged Mercs to all the members of the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce (Nafcoc) who are negotiating to merge with the old whiteys in Sacob. In June

President Mbeki test drove the S600 for another 3 months

this year – a year later – *Business Report* quoted one Nafcoc member as saying that he had acquired an expensive model for only R135 000, a fraction of the normal price, from DaimlerChrysler. While he took delivery of the vehicle in October last year, by June this year – nine months later – he had still to make a deposit or pay an instalment. He expressed surprise that no payment had been demanded from him. (Sadly for him, last month, as German prosecutors declared themselves interested in any underhand dealings that might have surrounded the

European arms deals with South Africa, all the Nafcoc vehicles were taken back by DaimlerChrysler.)

Back to the President's “courtesy” Merc. According to our XWPS, President Mbeki drove and drove his – for three months! He eventually brought it back when, it was said, he was given a top-model BMW to try. But in about December, the President's office asked DaimlerChrysler if he could have the S600 back again. This time they allegedly gave it to him to *test drive*, and not as a “courtesy” vehicle. He proceeded to test drive it for a further three months – and then returned it “towards the end of March, when there was all that fuss about Mr Yengeni's car”.

The punch line to our story came a few days later, when our XWPS phoned and declared in a low whisper: “The Minister of Safety and Security, Steve Tshwete, and National Police Commissioner Jackie Selebi are at DaimlerChrysler, as we speak! They're looking over the car and checking the paperwork!”

Dear reader, we're now talking mid July 2001, three months after Mbeki is alleged to have returned the car to DC for the second time. What were we to make of things now? Having investigated the President for murder, were Tshwete and Selebi now investigating the President's car dealings as well? Had it crossed Tshwete and Selebi's minds, too, that he had “test” driven the car for a suspiciously long time? Next day, the answer –

at least according to our XWPS. "It's all kosher after all. The President's buying the car. Tshwete's back to organise the paperwork!" The S600 retails for R860 000, but the bullet-proofing and anti-limpet mine devices probably push up the price to close to R2 million.

Dear reader, do you, too, find something about this story a bit odd, a bit too good to be true? To us it smelled more and more as if someone was dragging grandmother's old fur coat across the real fox's trail, in order to confuse the hounds.

What had become of Mandela's "old" Merc, the one overhauled by the engineers flown from Germany? "It was an old crock and had to go," said our XWPS.

BMW spokesman Deon Ebersohn says BMW lends vehicles to government figures for test-driving for a period usually not exceeding two weeks.

President Mbeki's spokesman Bheki Khumalo declined to comment on the purchase of the Mercedes-Benz S600. "I don't comment on such matters. You should speak to Minister Tshwete, the line minister responsible for the security of the President," he said. Which is odd. No one can explain how it came to be Tshwete's job to handle paperwork for the purchase of a new car for the President.

His spokesman André Martin was as puzzled as we were. "There is a new policy for the acquisition of vehicles. It was a cabinet decision that Ministers will be responsible for buying their own vehicles. Why would our Minister be involved in buying a vehicle for the President?" he asked in response to our question. At our insistence, Martin asked Tshwete personally for comment. "He says I must tell you that he is not prepared to comment," a bemused Mr Martin reported next day.

According to the Department of Transport, the President's vehicles are organised by Mbeki's VIP unit. A helpful member of this unit, Johan Bonzaaier, said he was not able to talk to the press, but suggested noseweek ask the questions of Selby Bokaba, Commissioner Selebi's spokesman.

Bokaba responded by telephone to faxed questions, as requested, with a reply that was by now familiar:

"I don't have good news for you. I have consulted with my seniors. This has got nothing to do with us. You said that neither Bheki Khumalo would comment, nor André Martin, and this office is not commenting either."

Lulama Chakela, DaimlerChrysler spokesman, said she was unable to talk about any acquisition by the President or say whether a discount had been offered on the vehicle. There has been a clampdown on staff at DaimlerChrysler speaking to the press, with instructions coming from German headquarters. Chakela said that even though she was an official spokesman, she could not talk.

"I cannot comment due to DaimlerChrysler's policy of providing no comment to the press until the investigation into the arms deal has been concluded."

Chakela was referring to the investigation by German prosecutors into the activities of Eads in SA. DaimlerChrysler's own aerospace division was incorporated into a new, multi-national company, Eads in 1999. Eads, in turn, has a stake in the multi-billion rand South African arms procurement programme.

Eads has admitted to having assisted about 33 South African VIPs – many of them known to have been directly involved in the arms deal – in obtaining luxury vehicles from DaimlerChrysler at substantial discounts. Eads managing director Michael Woerfel has been

continued on next page

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Characteristic of South Africa's Transition has been the continuity provided by fixers and bagmen who once served the apartheid regime – and have been only too willing to put together deals with the new black elite. An interesting case in point is the role Jean Yves Ollivier plays for Thomson-CSF, the giant French arms and electronics company.

VOULEZ VOUS COUCHER AVEC JEAN → OU ALAIN?*

* Translated from *Essential French for Dummies*: "Do you want to sleep with Jean or Alain?"

Jean Yves Ollivier is notorious as a front man for French intelligence, political and business interests in Africa. He was a key sanctions buster for apartheid SA, supplying Iranian oil via fronts established in the Comores.

He also set up the 1989 deal to channel money via the Strategic Fuel Fund to support Ivory Coast politician Henri Bedie on behalf of the SA Department of Foreign Affairs – a scheme inadvertently brought to light when the Public Protector undertook his now famous investigation of the affairs of the SFF.

He is said to display only two personal photographs in his office, and one of them is of our spookish former director general of Foreign Affairs, Rusty Evans.

Ollivier has long been one of French arms merchant Thomson's men in South-

ern Africa and the indications are it was he who put Thomson together with the ambitious Shabir Shaik of Nkobi Investments. Thomson's link with Shaik dates back to some time before the company bought into a generous slice of the R43b arms deal via its purchase of one of the main subcontractors, African Defence Systems. But then, with the defence review well on its way and brother Mo Shaik at the heart of it, Shabir and Thomson knew there had to be a good thing coming down the line.

In 1996, Thomson formed Thomson-CSF Southern Africa, in which Shaik's mystery company ("now it's raising funds for the ANC, now it isn't"), Nkobi Investments, had a 10% shareholding. Another – offshore – company (one of those with anonymous shareholders) called Gestilac

had 5%. Gestilac's main operative, it now emerges, was Ollivier. Whether he is the actual beneficiary, or whether he, in turn, is fronting for some other beneficiary whose identity is still more politically sensitive, is not certain.

In a recent interview with the BBC, Shaik was keen to defend his association with the French. Dismissing allegations of corruption he said: "I also want to emphasise there are different foreign intelligence agencies who are trying to get this information [*about corruption in the arms deal*] to destabilise the French influence in South Africa ... We are aware of CIA interest in destabilising this position." [*It sounds as if, for once, the CIA is up to something good!* – Ed.]

But just what is this French influence Shaik is speaking of? And who are his

TEST DRIVE

continued from previous page

suspended from his post pending an investigation into kick-back allegations.

Among the beneficiaries of the Eads/DaimlerChrysler largesse is ANC Chief Whip Tony Yengeni, who defiantly refuses to tell Parliament how he came to drive a R359 000 Mercedes-Benz within days of it being ordered as a staff vehicle by Eads.

Yengeni was previously head of the Joint Standing Committee for Defence, which played a key role in the decision to buy the arms in the first place.

More recently Defence Force chief Siphwe Nyanda has also admitted to receiving a discounted vehicle from Eads. This was followed by revelations that Llew Swan, former Armscor chief executive, and Van Pillay, one of the

Department of Trade and Industries representatives in the arms deal, also received discounted vehicles from Eads.

Business Report said in an article that Christoph Kopke, DaimlerChrysler's local chairman and Sacob's president, initially denied knowledge of the special deal to supply Nafcoc members with Mercedes cars but minutes of a Sacob national council meeting held on April 28 showed otherwise. The public controversy obviously hit a raw nerve, with all the Nafcoc vehicles suddenly being recalled by DaimlerChrysler. In this particular case, spokesperson Chakela said she was allowed to comment: "There was no bribery at all. This is absolute mischief-making on the part of journalists." Asked why Nafcoc members had not paid for their vehicles several months after they had received them, she said: "It was an administrative glitch. The cars are now

back. There was never any wrong-doing."

An administrative glitch it is most unlikely to have been. A serious error of judgement it most certainly was. As for the question of wrong-doing, that's not for DaimlerChrysler to decide. That's for the courts and the SA public to decide.

But what's the pitch with the story about Thabo's new car? Are we supposed to think that because the President drives around for six or seven months in a new car without paying for it, it's normal practice? So there's nothing odd about 25 influential Nafcoc members and 30-odd senior government officials having done the same?

Quite the contrary: the President's approach to car purchasing is really very odd. The best we can say for it is that, in the end, he decided to do the decent thing and pay for the car. Or at least Fixit Tshwete has. *n*

French friends? The jibe about the CIA is cute, because Shaik's association with Thomson and Ollivier puts him in the pocket of an intelligence and business network with a reputation for being particularly ruthless in promoting French (and their own) interests in Africa. They make the CIA look like boy scouts.

Shaik's boss at Thomson SA, Alain Thetard, was the man who signed the notorious Thomson contract to sell frigates to Taiwan, a deal still being investigated by authorities in France and Taipei over claims of massive kick-backs and the murder of a whistle-blower.

And friend/agent Ollivier was among those cited by a special UN report in April as being associated with the "mass-scale looting and systematic exploitation" of natural resources in the war-torn Democratic Republic of the Congo.

dropped out of sight on the casino front. Ollivier himself was publicly an associate of Sol Kerzner's, and reportedly had a 20% shareholding in Kerzner's World Leisure Management, a shareholding apparently received for having paved the way for Kerzner in the Comores (hello French Intelligence and Bob Denard). Spies and casinos go together like fish and chips.

Ollivier also had a share in the Maputo Polana Hotel, again as a result of his work as a mediator in Mozambique. A good friend of his was Jacinto Veloso, the Mozambican Co-operation Minister, whose company, JV Consultores, ended up with a 5% stake in the Polana casino.

French journalists Stephen Smith and Antoine Glaser have also accused Ollivier

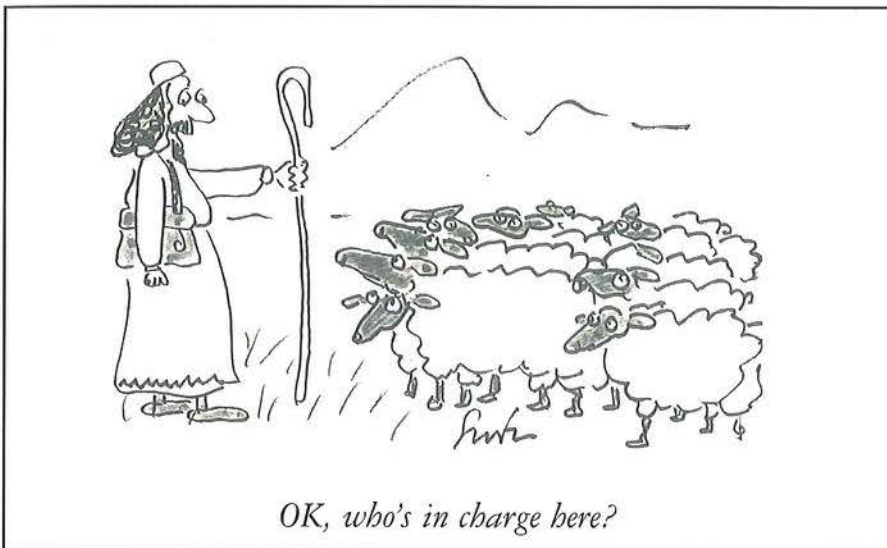
Guenon was introduced to Lubowski by the French Embassy as being someone who wanted to help Swapo. It was in turn Guenon who introduced Lubowski to Military Intelligence agent Rob Colesky, who was posing as a furniture salesman for a company of which Guenon was a director, Gijima Express.

Gijima was a front for MI. Swapo bought R2m worth of furniture from Gijima and MI paid (indirectly) a commission on the deal into Lubowski's bank account. It was this payment which allowed Magnus Malan to claim (after Lubowski's murder) that Anton had been a South African agent.

Guenon also served as a representative of several big French companies in SA, in particular Sagem, a French electronics multi-national. According to De Jongh, Guenon got to know Tokyo Sexwale well and Sivule Xayiya also, for whom he arranged a visit to France (April 1991), paid for by Sagem. And Sagem brings us back to Thomson and Schabir Shaik.

The first SA Government contract for which Thomson bid after acquiring their influential new SA partners (Shaik & co.) had nothing to do with defence. It was for the new credit-card style driver's licence. Part of their winning consortium was French company Sagem, which supplied the fingerprint technology. Sagem is also supplying the Automated Fingerprint Identification System to the South African Police Service.

Thomson and Shaik are, we understand, also among those bidding for the multi-billion rand contract to supply the Department of Home Affairs with smart card identity cards to replace the green ID books. Watch this space. *n*



OK, who's in charge here?

During the apartheid era, he was a key go-between for the SA Department of Foreign Affairs and was paid by them (presumably very well paid, to judge by the photo of Evans still displayed on his desk) to lobby in Francophone Africa.

According to Dutch anti-apartheid activist and researcher, Klaas de Jongh, Ollivier worked especially closely with senior officers in the SA Defence Force and had the support of Defence Minister Magnus Malan and General Jannie Geldenhuys (former SADF Chief).

There is at least one other South African company where the mystery offshore company Gestilac is known to have featured. When Afrisun, Sun International's empowerment vehicle to bid for casino sites around the country, was launched, Gestilac was included in the publicly announced line-up. Later, just as mysteriously, Gestilac simply

of playing a key role – with French Co-operation Minister Michel Roussin – in supporting the violent overthrow of Pascal Lissouba in Congo Brazzaville.

According to a report prepared for the Truth Commission by Klaas de Jongh, another of Ollivier's "good friends" is Alain Guenon (who is also known to have done the odd thing or two for Thomson).

Like Ollivier, Guenon appears to have played both sides of the apartheid fence. Resident in South Africa since 1984, he reportedly channelled money (whose, we'd like to know?) from Paris to Winnie Mandela up until 1990 and was for a time her lover. At the same time he appears to have played a role in the military intelligence operation to try to compromise Swapo leader Anton Lubowski before his murder by the Civil Co-operation Bureau in Windhoek in 1989. According to a Mail & Guardian report,

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help
yourself
at the
Post
Office

In January the new Chief Executive Officer of the Post Office, Maanda Manyatshe, wrote an extraordinary letter to the Minister of Communications, Dr Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri, setting out to what extent corruption now pervades South Africa's Postal Service.

Unwittingly, Manyatshe has possibly offered an explanation for why the New Zealand Post Office so suddenly abandoned its lucrative management contract earlier this year.

In his letter, the Post Office chief starts out by listing the people who, at that stage, had either resigned or been fired as a result of corruption investigations. A particular hotspot of corruption was the

Post Office's express parcel service, XPS. Amongst the XPS staff members named in the list:

Alan Howle, the MD of XPS (and at the time of his suspension, pending a disciplinary hearing, MD designate of the PO's entire courier and freight Group).

Tim Bacon, XPS National Marketing Manager, who was fired after he confessed to diverting at least R467 000 that was due to the Post Office to his own private companies. When found out, he offered to repay the money. Whether he has yet done so is not known.

Rosa Balona, financial director of XPS, who was initially only suspended for negligence. On further investigation,

however, it was discovered that she had been using the XPS debtors book to pay off her own personal debts.

Nathan Finlay was paid his salary by XPS but was in fact a fulltime executive of Refpack, a private company which, unknown to the PO, belonged to Messrs Howle and Bacon. Finlay was suspended from his Post Office "job", not for being paid for a job he did not do, but for authorising payment by XPS of R1.5m to himself and his father for packaging materials they supplied "to an isolated warehouse" (presumably not the PO's warehouse!). Mr Manyatshe reported that Finlay had offered to repay the money, but a deal had still to be finalised. XPS head office in Johannesburg recently confirmed that Finlay left "some time in December". ("And he hasn't even called us since!" said the switchboard lady.)

It appears from the PO chief's letter that lesser officials at XPS were not long in following the example of their bosses: Sarah Hendricks, admin clerk in the XPS accounts department, set up two little express package companies of her own, to which she diverted XPS business. She, too, has been suspended.

Mrs Sharon Prodehl, XPS's business unit manager in Cape Town, left XPS at short notice earlier this year to "go on her own", according to an XPS spokesperson. Well, yes. In his letter to the Minister of Communications, the Post Office's new CEO had noted that Mrs Prodehl was under investigation for running Howle and Bacon's private companies within XPS ("ie the PO pays the running costs, they get the revenue").

Last but not least, XPS's national operations manager, Steven Marais, was under investigation for awarding a contract for work which should have cost R5 000, to one of his relatives for R269 000. He was also under investigation for approving payments to "a contractor" for work that was, in fact, never done.

That was just in the PO's parcel and courier company.

At the Post Office itself, things were easily as bad, particularly when it came to the privatisation or "outsourcing" of functions previously performed by Post office staff. Top of the list was the "Airworld" contract, which the new CEO notes in his letter, was given "evergreen" status just before he arrived to take over his post. Post Office auditors Gobodo Inc informed the PO that there was evidence which indicated that a bribe had been paid to a PO employee "for a contract with such unfavourable terms to be concluded".

Transparent government, is it a Mirage or just plane invisible?

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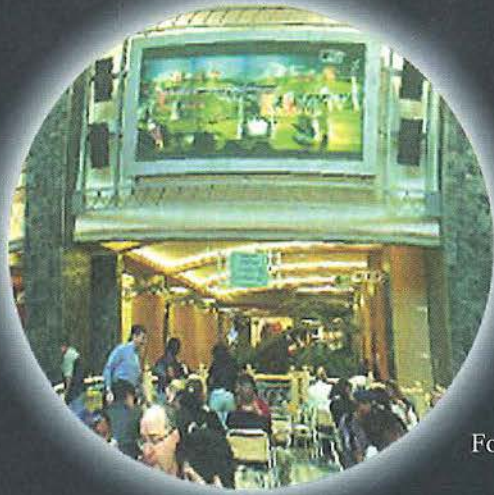
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The Minister of Communications, Dr Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri.

four hours but are remunerated for an eight-hour day. As a result the centre employs twice as many employees as it should. It costs the centre R150 000 per month extra just in transport costs to get the extra workers home each day!

To illustrate the general lack of controls at the Post Office, Mr Manyatshe notes that senior officials have been free to give special discounts to businesses controlled by their relatives. One senior manager gave a 38% discount on freight to a company owned by his wife. Sales representatives were rated by the turnover they generated, not on the profit they earned the PO. As a result, in order to get Sanlam listed as his client, a PO salesman gave the insurer a 55% discount on all its mailings.

The new CEO rounded off his letter with a stirring declaration of his commitment to improving matters:

"The challenge for me is to bring in discipline and financial control, transform the way we do business, bring in 'disciples' for change and contribute towards the transformation of our country, whilst making the Post Office a financially viable institution." n

PS. Not long after it was written, a copy of the CEO's letter to the Minister was being offered to the media for R5 000. We thought he ought to be told.

Unfortunately, writes Mr Manyatshe, the official responsible, Mr W Joubert, "did not take the matter further". The CEO notes that if the contract is not renegotiated quickly "the Post Office will battle to turn around". The contract currently costs the Post Office more than R35 million per month.

A similar situation prevails with a multi-million rand contract the PO management concluded with a company called Rainmaker again just before the new CEO arrived.

Corruption is rampant in the PO's transport department. Vehicles are bought as PO fleet vehicles, but in fact used by employees' private businesses. PO vehicles damaged in accidents are written off, then repaired at the Post Office's expense and sold privately. When the PO changed from company-owned vehicles (the PO is registered as a company) to leased vehicles, its whole fleet of vehicles had to be disposed of. In the process 200 vehicles "disappeared".

When asked to explain this, senior officials claimed they had not followed up the matter "due to lack of resources". The CEO notes that "the employees who were involved were seen flagrantly living beyond their means".

Fraud with pre-paid stock of revenue stamps and Telkom and MTN pay-as-you-go vouchers is described as "virulent".

No follow-ups have been done and employees have been allowed to resign as soon as an investigation is implemented, frustrating any attempt at bringing the wrongdoers to account," the CEO told the Minister.

Just two examples from a long list:

At Bloemfontein and Jet Park a shortfall of R728 482 was found on pre-paid stock. This only came to light when the senior managers who were responsible for the fraud fired one of their juniors. Only then did he suddenly find the courage to inform on them. Stamps worth

R120 000 were subsequently found in the car boot of one of the officials.

At PMM, Silvertown, revenue stamps worth R1.25m could not be accounted for. This loss was reported to senior management in April last year, but no follow-up was done. But in mid year, shortly before the new CEO arrived, the managers in charge were all given voluntary retrenchment packages.

Are we surprised, therefore, if it also emerges that there are all sorts of schemes going down to fiddle overtime pay? Mr Manyatshe had reason to believe, he informed the Minister, that at the Wits Mail Centre a practice has developed whereby employees work only





'I was
paid
to say
it was
arson!'

Did SA Eagle pay for false evidence to discredit fire claims?

Leon van Wyk had no reason to be suspicious. It was an ordinary June afternoon on the Highveld when he received a call to say that his friend and former business partner, Danie Murray, had a problem and needed help. Leon didn't hesitate. He made the trip from Springs to Alberton in no time at all. Imagine his surprise when he got there, however, and eight people leaped from behind shelves in Murray's factory with cameras flashing and whirring.

"What the hell is going on?" he exclaimed. Nobody answered. Instead, policemen under the leadership of Superintendent Henry Beukes stepped forward to arrest both Van Wyk and the friend he'd come to assist, Murray.

Van Wyk is a big man, well-built, strong-willed and used to defending himself. But here he was powerless. "What are you arresting me for. What are the charges?" he protested. No answer.

It's a great success story for the police. The media love it. Both Murray and Van Wyk star as the baddies of a crime syndicate on that evening's TV news. "More arrests in huge arson scam expected soon," cried the newspaper headlines next morning.

Because of his detention, Van Wyk missed an important appointment in court the next day. His attorney waited in vain and frustration when Van Wyk didn't show up for the hearing relating to his insurance claim against insurance giant SA Eagle. In the case, Van Wyk was suing SA Eagle for R2m for damage he sustained as a result of a fire which gutted his motor spares business in November 1998. SA Eagle repudiated the claim, alleging that Van Wyk had started the fire himself. The insurer also claimed to have evidence that Van Wyk was involved in a car theft and spares scam. After their arrest, Murray signed a statement confirming that Van Wyk was involved in the spares scam, and

implicating Van Wyk in the arson charge. Murray's affidavit was the clincher, from the prosecution's point of view. Van Wyk was later arrested a second time on his 42nd birthday for arson and fraud. He spent a week in "Sun City", Johannesburg Prison.

"Criminals" - zero! National Special Investigations Unit - one point.

What's wrong with the above story? Well, almost everything, according to Van Wyk and Murray. This is how it really happened, they say. For starters, they were falsely arrested. The policeman, Henry Beukes, wasn't really a policeman at the time of Van Wyk's second arrest.

Beukes was really working for Ain (Associated Intelligence Network), a company contracted to investigate the fire claim on behalf of SA Eagle. (Beukes is currently an Ain employee.) The evidence SA Eagle has that Van Wyk had his own factory burnt? That was "manufactured" and paid for by Ain. Furthermore, Van Wyk is not really a car thief and arsonist. He is a respected, successful member of the Springs business community who goes to church on Sunday and (apart from traffic fines) has a clean record. In short, Murray's state-

ment against Van Wyk was incorrect. Murray has since retracted his original statement, claiming the contents were false and made under duress.

"I had no choice but to sign the statement the police had typed up for me," Murray said. "They threatened to lock me up if I didn't."

Bottom line: "It's a conspiracy. We've been framed," say Van Wyk and Murray.

Which version of the story should we believe? According to documents lodged at the High Court and other documents noseweek has seen, we'd be foolish to dismiss Van Wyk and Murray's version.

Murray has recently issued summons against SA Eagle in the High Court, in which he is claiming R2.3m from the insurer. He aims to prove that the newspapers and police have been chasing the wrong insurance arson scam. It's the insurance company that's been ripping people off, he says. According to him, the scam works like this: SA Eagle, via its claims manager Wynand Janse Van Vuuren, paid Ain between R570 000 and R1.5m to manufacture false evidence (by whatever means necessary) enabling SA Eagle to repudiate legitimate claims to the value of approximately R40m. In

Leon van Wyk, left, and former business partner, Danie Murray.



short, if SA Eagle wants the fire to be arson, Ain gets someone to say it was arson. Van Vuuren allegedly gets a kick-back for playing the game.

Van Vuuren has categorically denied all the accusations against him and SA Eagle will defend the claims, reserving their right to sue for defamation.

The claims in Murray's summons certainly are very bold and far-reaching, implicating members of the police force, the justice system, the insurance industry, private security companies and the deep, dark underbelly of the criminal underworld. Not that difficult actually, argues Murray, since many of the employees of Ain are former members of the security police, intelligence or security forces. They know how to manipulate the system, who to bribe, where to steal case dockets and, most importantly, when to tip off the press. "They do it all the time," he says.

Whether Murray can prove his case remains to be seen, but noseweek is aware of the names and details of four other cases being prepared along similar lines. The same names, companies and modus operandi appear to be involved. Murray is suing for damages for deprivation of freedom, loss of stock and loss of profit arising from his wrongful arrest and the seizure of his stock.

On 20 August 1999, all charges of arson and car theft were withdrawn against Van Wyk and Murray when the testimony of key witnesses was deemed unreliable. It also emerged that some of Van Wyk's employees were approached to give false testimony against him in return for money or benefits.

Let's take it from the top, slowly. Van Wyk ran a company called MBV Spares in Selby. Murray was his manager. The company mostly dealt in secondhand spares and stripping vehicles to this end. Call it a junkyard, if you will. On 8 November 1998, the premises were

gutted by fire. The cause remains a topic for speculation. Van Wyk submitted a R2m claim, which SA Eagle challenged on three grounds: Firstly, that his policy was not valid (a small technicality which was later overcome). Secondly, that the fire amounted to arson. Thirdly, that Van Wyk was involved in criminal activities (dealing in stolen vehicles and parts). The second and third grounds would automatically rule out payment to Van Wyk.

The claims manager at SA Eagle, Wynand Janse Van Vuuren, is said to have repudiated the claim on the basis of a report submitted by Ain.

Ain's evidence included signed admissions by three people claiming to have actually committed the arson on Van Wyk's behalf and instructions.

The police docket also contained statements made by former workers of MBV Spares, implicating Van Wyk in dubious activities.

The statement made by Murray was the clincher. "From the beginning of September 1998 up until the last week in October 1998, Van Wyk continually suggested that we should burn down the MBV Spares premises, claim from the insurance, and that he would then look after us," reads Murray's original statement to the police - the one he later claimed was signed under duress.

After the fire, Murray started his own spares business, called BM Spares. While MBV Spares and BM Spares had technically nothing to do with each other, both Van Wyk and Murray were arrested for allegedly stolen parts found at Murray's business.

Murray says that all the parts he had on the premises could be accounted for legally and that he had no knowledge of any stolen vehicles on his premises.

Van Wyk says that he and his legal team have since established that all three "arsonists" were paid for their "confessions". All they had to do was claim they

had started the fire in return for a payment of R100 000. With a little bit of background information about the factory, it wasn't that difficult to fool police. [If that is what they did.]

A "confession" by one of the alleged arsonists includes the following detail: "We had brought 20 plastic jerry cans of petrol, each holding 25 litres of petrol." And: "I then ignited the petrol underneath the blue gate, which by this time was again locked. The flames immediately found their way across the car park, under the roller shutter door and into the warehouse." To "tidy up the deal", the "arsonists", as state witnesses, were indemnified from prosecution.

As Van Wyk explains it, he was an easy target. "When all of this started, I was an innocent. I didn't even know how to submit a claim or that one needed expert testimony or anything. I just paid my premium every month and didn't think about it twice. You don't expect this, not in your wildest dreams," he says.

Van Wyk is no longer that innocent. His week in jail toughened him up. "In jail, it's a matter of survival. The only language everyone there understands is violence. I got into a fist fight within five minutes. There are all of these gangs. The 28s, the 24s, and so on. Everyone wants to test you, to see if you could become one of them. It got so that I would 'connect' someone almost immediately after they started talking to me. That's the only way to stay outside of it all. The conditions are appalling. I lost 11 kilograms in seven days in there. I cannot describe the fear."

Even after criminal charges against Van Wyk were withdrawn, SA Eagle refused to pay out the claim, leaving him to fight the matter in a civil suit, which is still pending. He doesn't have the money to do it. "This thing has destroyed my life. I used to be a respected member of the



Fire damage at MBV Spares



SA Eagle

SA Eagle, the third largest short term insurer in SA, now forms part of international group Zurich Financial Services.

Eagle has been chaired by Patrick O'Sullivan since February this year. The Managing Director is NV Beyers, who joined Eagle in 1971. The Deputy MD is JM Carter. Non-executive directors include PT Martin, JPG de Rauville and Joe Pamenski, life member of the United Cricket Board of South Africa. Pamenski was appointed to the board in 1988. ■



Leon van Wyk and Danie Murray, left background, square up for a court battle.

community. I earned good money. After my arrest, nobody would have anything to do with me. I have submitted 63 applications for new jobs, from mechanic to manager. Nobody wants me. The dominee even called me in after a service to say that people were complaining that I was attending services. They have pushed me out of society. I cannot describe the embarrassment this thing has caused my family."

It's just as well Van Wyk has toughened up, because he never imagined that the questions he was asking would bring him face to face with the darkest corner of the criminal underworld. After a tip-off, Van Wyk starting playing sleuth and soon he got an opportunity to meet one of the persons who claimed to have started the fire in person.

"It was like in the movies. I was told to go this pub. Two men frisked me and told me to sit down. I was told not to make sudden moves with my hands and to look around slowly. One by one, people in the pub were pointed out to me. As each one was pointed out, they lifted their jackets to reveal a gun. Even the barman. They told me to relax and enjoy the drink."

One part of Van Wyk wanted to reach out and strangle the man who was facing him. For destroying his life. For the fear. The other part wanted to listen.

He gratefully knocked back the double whiskeys and listened, knowing he could do absolutely nothing about it.

"This guy says to me, pleased to meet you. I've never met one of my victims before. I must tell you, you're the softest target we've ever hit. He then 'confesses', without remorse, to everything. How he was paid for making his statement."

Rumours also did the rounds that the death of Gary Lazarus of Ain was mysterious. Lazarus is named in Murray's summons as Wynand Van Vuuren's co-conspirator.

It's difficult to judge how much value can be placed on what Van Wyk was told,

he admits, because, by their own admission, the people he was dealing with were professional liars. But some pieces of the puzzle appeared to start falling in place.

His investigations revealed that the same names kept popping up in various arson claims relating to SA Eagle. Each time Ain was the company contracted to do the investigation.

One case was a criminal case, similar to MBV's, which was settled in a Johannesburg regional court last month. Prakazan Pillay and Kisten Pillay were criminally charged with ordering the arson of their own furniture business, Woodini cc. The Pillays denied the charges, claiming a conspiracy against them. SA Eagle repudiated Woodini's R15m claim on the basis of the evidence of two accomplices, who claimed to have burnt the building on the Pillays' instructions, conveyed to them via intermediaries. Ain was in charge of the investigation which produced the names Lourens Swanepoel and Jonathan Dolgoy as confessed arsonists. On 9 July, the Pillays were discharged on the grounds that the arsonists' testimony was unreliable.

Now some of the same names have been linked to the MBV case. Warren

Goldblatt, a director of Ain, has categorically denied that it paid "witnesses" to fabricate statements.

noseweek has, however, obtained evidence from various sources, some from within Ain, which claim that the network did in fact manipulate evidence.

Goldblatt also dismissed suggestions that "foul play" was involved in Gary Lazarus' death. Advocate Neil Lazarus, brother of the late Gary Lazarus, denied all allegations levelled against his brother. "All of the accusations are strongly denied," Lazarus told noseweek, adding that his brother had intimated before his death that he knew about the allegations, but was unconcerned as they were all untrue. Neil Lazarus said he was told by his late brother that Van Wyk's attorney had approached him with allegations of the scam, but that Gary had felt the purpose of the approach was opportunistic, simply to get a settlement from SA Eagle.

When asked to comment on the rumours that his brother might have been a regular drug user and that his death was regarded as mysterious by some people, Advocate Lazarus was indignant. "I was with my brother at his bedside at the time, at 5am. He passed away in his sleep of natural causes. It is simply one of those things." Advocate Lazarus also said his brother did not have any health problems before his death and was not a drug user.

Warren Goldblatt, however, a colleague and friend of Lazarus, told noseweek that Gary had been on heavy medication for some time before his death and had been under "medical supervision". Gary Lazarus' death certificate states the cause of death as "aspiration". He passed away in December 2000.

According to noseweek's sources, SA Eagle was made aware of various allegations in December 2000, but no formal investigation has yet been launched. #

Ain's rating

Ain is rated as one of the largest private detective agencies in South Africa, with resources equalling those of the government's intelligence agencies. It has been described as the "new CCB", as many former members of the Security Branch, murder and robbery units of the SAP, National Intelligence, police commercial crime and forensic units now work for Ain. High profile employees include General "Suiker" Brits and forensic psychologist Dr Micki Pistorius. The company consists of the following divisions:

- Associated Credit Management (ACM). A credit bureau service advising clients on whether to give credit or not.
- Associated Intelligence Electronics (AIE), which supplies and installs covert and overt surveillance equipment.
- APS: Associated Prevention Services. Bodyguard and VIP protection.
- Ain: Associated Intelligence Network offers an investigation service to clients.
- Associated Intelligence Professionals (AIP) renders auditing facilities to clients. n

When will playwrights take up

The ANC resurrected Gauteng's State Theatre in Pretoria at a time when playwrights seemed to be losing their nerve. A flicker of life came, not at the State, but from two plays at the Grahamstown Festival: *SeZaR* and *Big Dada*.

The two plays examined despotism in Africa and its spectre close to home. *SeZaR*, an adaptation of Julius Caesar, cast Mbeki as Caesar. Just before Brutus, Cassius (sic) and Sinna (sic) murder Sezar, they question his views on HIV/Aids and his apparent focus on his international image to the detriment of domestic affairs: stage echoes of the real-life plot against Mbeki, with pungent comment and maybe a whiff of prophecy.

An extended look at tyranny in Africa, dedicated to Robert Mugabe, *Big Dada* is an impressionistic account of the on-upmanship of Idi Amin, leavened with local topicality.

Both were an encouraging – and much-needed – sign of life in the theatre world.

In the years since the 1994 election, existing and emerging performance forms have been evolving slowly. Under National Party rule, the arts were always slightly ahead of political developments, serving as a vehicle for political dissent and prefiguring change. But they were blighted and stunted by the agit-prop demands placed on them.

Post-election, the arts have won their independence but seem at times unable to figure out exactly what to do with it.

A striking exception is dance. In the works of choreographers such as Boyzie Cekwana and Vincent Mantsoe, contemporary and traditional issues bristle side by side. Dance is forging new tongues for a discourse on what it is like to be and live in SA in the 21st century.

Theatre has not been so lucky. In the bad old days, the enemy was clearly identifiable. Now things are not quite so easy. A life more normal (though in Gauteng that by definition includes

extreme levels of hijacking, armed robbery and rape) seems to have posed almost insurmountable problems for playwrights. Works are either didactic in the mode that characterized struggle work of the 1980s or absurdly over-produced, such as *The Stadium* by the East Rand company, the Sibikwa Players, which flopped spectacularly at the Standard Bank National Arts Festival in Grahamstown in July.

The occasional gem, speaking to and with a texture of the times, invariably can't afford to run for an extended season, or has appeal to a limited audience.

There's the factor, also, of disappearing theatre audiences; if you're looking for a fair portion of the traditional audience of The Market Theatre in Johannesburg, cast your eyes southwards to Cape Town, or westwards to Perth, Sydney and Melbourne, with a glimpse the other way to the UK, US and Canada.

Makers of theatre have a new audience; younger, quicker almost dismissive of the issues of the past, caring more for fashion than politics and valuing entertainment over arts and culture. This is the audience that *Love Life's* ad campaign for safe sex reaches most effectively; they greet and go with an *Eita!*, watch *Isidingo*, love Bevan Cullinan and revere Phat Joe.

While this younger potential audience might be reachable through work that deals in timeless and universal truths, spectacle and speed rather than words and considered deed are their currency.

It was they who flocked some years ago to see The Market Theatre staging of the British hit play, *Shopping and Fucking*, which dealt with consumerism, addiction, betrayal, gangsterism and loyalty.

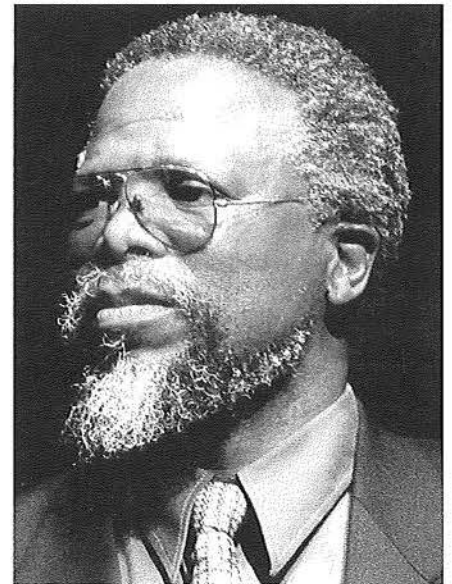
Theatre does not, of course, have an antipathy for the spectacular but it does rather like words. There is still a theatre audience in Gauteng for classics, as proven by the run and repeated returns of last years production of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*.

Growing theatre audiences, however, will need novel issues to be addressed in innovative ways for new audiences. That principle applies equally to other cultural activities in the province. Museums, libraries and heritage organisations have all experienced cutbacks in state, provincial, metropolitan and local

funding. The grand-sounding designation "Declared Cultural Institution" will not ensure the viability or survival of museums: more visitors will.

But ideas of creative ways to achieve this seem thin on the ground. It's here that politics intrudes, in the form of the great loyalty question. The centralising and authoritarian tendencies of the ANC should make great subject matter for performing and creative artists. But writers have been loath to tackle it.

In the past there would have been no hesitation, on the part of those who



John Kani wore his MC hat to the reopening of the State Theatre in April, and was paid more than handsomely.

wished to do so, to attack the Nationalist Government through art. The Nats, said satirist Pieter-Dirk Uys, wrote his scripts for him. Uys has slowly, ever so slowly, been lining up a lampooning of the great of the new regime. It's an eloquent summary of the state of play that it has taken this long for such a master – of the arrow directed at the foibles and folly of power – to string his bow.

Why the reluctance? Because to speak out raises the risk of being branded reactionary, and/or racist if white, disloyal if black. The concept of criticism springing from loyalty, the political equivalent of friends telling each other the truth, no

the prophets' mantle?

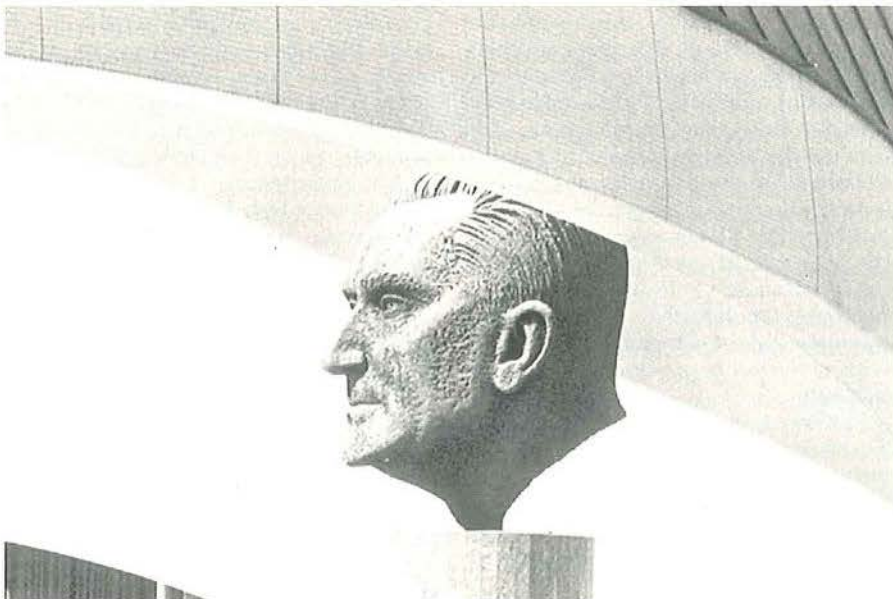
matter how bitter, has not taken root. Critique from civil society, of which the arts is an influential constituency, is scarcely appreciated in government quarters. Any critics brave or foolhardy enough to emerge from within the ANC have been quickly stifled.

Look at the list of silenced dissenters within the party, ranging from Cyril Ramaphosa and Tokyo Sexwale to Matthews Phosa, Andrew Feinstein and Pallo Jordan.

A reality of coming to power is the new perspective on skepticism, dissent and alternative viewpoints. It's with us increasingly and artists are too frightened to speak out lest they prejudice future funding applications to the National Arts Council, the body that decides on disbursement of the annual R25m grant from government.

To compound the problem many of the country's newspapers seem set on embracing something less than an arm's length relationship with government. The sweetheart's affair between Independent News and Media and government became public when the group's numerous titles published, gratis, a government advertisement on HIV/Aids, in the wake of the reaction to President

Before the fall! Was it an omen when the giant bust of JG Strijdom shattered on the square before the State Theatre?



Mbeki's heterodox views on the subject.

Instead of drawing on this rich seam as satire, or for a contemplation of the expedience that characterises our society, in which yesterday's foes are today's sleeping partners, no one said anything.

Artistic apathy and, worse still, fear, stalk the creative landscape. Unless artists wake up and ring the bells of civil society, there won't be much art worth watching. Our culture and heritage will be impoverished.

One looks for signs of resistance to the stifling new atmosphere, even an omen,

In the past there would have been no hesitation in attacking the government through art.

such as that provided by the collapse of the giant head of former prime minister JG Strijdom on the square that adjoined the beleaguered State Theatre.

The State was reopened in early April after Arts Minister Dr Ben Ngubane mothballed it midway through last year.

The reopening was celebrated with a glittering gala concert. As the evening's master of ceremonies, John Kani, cranked up the hurrahs from the audience, you could have been forgiven

for not noticing that the theatre was half-empty. Man of many hats – lionised actor, CEO of Jo'burg's Market Theatre, National Arts Council chairman – Kani was doffing the beret of rousing orator-cum-demagogue and clearly enjoying his part in raising this theatrical Lazarus. That he earned a cool R75 000 for the evening, not including expenses, was revealed only months later. It seemed as if it was back to business as usual in the monolithic complex, a legacy of the cultural pretensions and cultural cringe of the former government.

The State originated as a National Party project to propagate the dominance of the high arts. Though burdened also by the cultural cringe factor, the ANC's agenda is far broader than that of their predecessors. In what might be interpreted as an audacious high-wire double act, the ANC has ambitions of preserving vestiges, or at least a sense, of the high arts, while funding and providing stages for previously-neglected performance forms. Former performing arts councils have been abolished to be replaced by playhouses that do not mount their own works but receive them from outside: in other words, they rent space and facilities while maintaining the infrastructure at state taxpayers' expense.

Flagship for this policy is the State Theatre, because of its high visibility in political and diplomatic spheres. That has not, however, stopped naked nepotism in funding for Minister Ngubane's home province, KwaZulu Natal, where the equivalent of the State, the Playhouse in Durban, has received remarkably generous grants from the National Arts Council (NAC).

In contrast, the State sails on in ever-choppier waters. Estimates of its overall debt go as high as R80.4m, though State acting CEO Sikkie Kajee is on record as acknowledging a figure close to R50m.

Some of the debt is due to that bugbear, the legacy of apartheid: an amount thought to be at least R18m was salted away by a previous administrative regime and slipped out of the coffers in the form of golden handshakes and extraordinary pensions.

But all that is mere money. The hangover from apartheid that is more devastating for the State Theatre and the arts in general to have to face is the seismic change in the arts and culture landscape of the country and, more particularly, Gauteng.

Playwrights can be prophets. In SA they often have been. They should take up that mantle once more, for love of arts, audiences and, most of all, country. *n*

The absence of government controls over Aids-drug trials in South Africa has won the favour of the world's pharmaceutical companies. Aids researchers also benefit from SA's reputedly excellent scientific infrastructure. And then there's the ultimate attraction: a steady flow of desperately poor and illiterate patients prepared to take unlicensed medication for as little as \$10 per trial! The advent of Aids, with sub-Saharan Africa's poor townships as its epicentre, has seen a major sector of the medical research establishment descend on SA. This is the story of trial FTC 302, run in SA on behalf of an American company, Triangle Pharmaceuticals.

How many died in Trial FTC 302?

It's been more than a year now since the Medicines Control Council (MCC) put a hold on trial FTC 302. Run on behalf of the United States company Triangle Pharmaceuticals, the trial was designed to test FTC, a supposed anti-retroviral, in combination with other anti-retrovirals. Pretoria's Kalafong Hospital, which serves a vast impoverished township, was one of 16 SA sites at which the trial was conducted. A "no wrong-doing" verdict has since been passed by investigators appointed by the hospital itself. The verdict may or may not be correct – but a compelling question still cries out for an answer: how many patients on the trial died at Kalafong?

In April 2000, the Minister of Health, Dr Manto Tshabalala-Msimang, using information forwarded to her by the MCC, claimed in press statements that five women had died. This was confirmed by the chairman of the ethics committee of Pretoria University, Professor Geoffrey Falkson, who a month later, too, claimed that five women patients had died at the Kalafong site. Later it was reported in the press, quoting hospital sources, that "only two" women had died. Kalafong Hospital superintendent Dr Hanli Dafel then denied this, claiming that "only one" man had died. By August last year Dr Ian Sanne, Triangle's spokesperson and lead investigator for the FTC trial in SA, was adamant that *not a single person* had died at the Kalafong site.

When the Medicines Control Council put a hold on the trial, it cited reported

A drug trial conducted in the US would typically cost a pharmaceutical company from \$2 000 to \$5 000 per patient.

deaths, concerns over liver toxicities and the management of the study as reasons.

To complicate matters, a group of Kalafong patients, supported by the PAC's Patricia De Lille, complained to the ethics committee at Pretoria University about Kalafong's Aids trials. Patients said they didn't understand the complicated consent forms they had signed, and claimed the pills were making them ill. Patients said the doctor reacted to their complaints by telling them the virus was making them ill, not the drugs. Many of the patients had never been in a hospital superintendent's office before. They nervously submitted their written complaints, most of them crudely written without access to medical files or legal guidance.

For Doctor Mariette Botes, who headed Kalafong's Aids clinic and its Aids trials, it was a stressful time. Her legal adviser was constantly on call.

In April 2000, with the added issues raised before Kalafong's ethics commit-

tee, the Medicines Control Council terminated the FTC trial at all sites in SA. The Pretoria University ethics committee announced that it, too, would halt all Aids drug trials at the Kalafong (which serves as one of the university's teaching hospitals), pending assessment of the situation. The American Food and Drug Administration (FDA) told Triangle not to count on their new-drug application being passed. But doctors at Kalafong had an interesting interpretation of all these instructions to terminate the trial. According to Dr Helen Rees, who chairs the MCC's research committee, it's illegal to conduct clinical trials without MCC approval. Yet the doctors at Kalafong forged ahead, their allegiance to their sponsors apparently outweighing possible health risks to the patients. Both Dr Botes and Dr Ian Sanne declined interviews, citing secrecy agreements with industry and confidentiality undertakings to patients – the latter, particularly, being sanctimoniously invoked as protection against "difficult" questions. (For example, see the tale of Gladys Mamosadi on the facing page.)

Mysteries such as those that surround Gladys's case are not unique, and fuel Wouter Basson-like rumours in the township that something sinister might be happening at the hospital. The case of Miriam Mashego (true name withheld at her family's request) is another Kalafong curiosity.

continued on page 20

... and what happened to Gladys Mamosadi's medical records?

Gladys Mamosadi wanted to die. Kneeling on the cold cement floor of her Atteridgeville room, her head resting in my lap, the 30-year-old woman grasped me around the waist as she wailed: "Take me! Please, God ... Take me!"

Her family sent her two young children out of the room before they changed her makeshift nappy.

When she was lifted onto a plastic chair, a shock wave of pain shot through her emaciated body. For one long minute she shouted – in anguish, in anger. Gladys Mamosadi was angry with her doctor and her priest. She was angry with her family for pushing pills and ointments up her rectum three times a day. She was angry because she was HIV positive. She was dying and had questions about her imminent death that called for honest answers. None was forthcoming.

Gladys noticed a connection between the special tablets she got from her doctor and the sudden deterioration in her health. She wondered why.

Why, when she started asking questions was she told that her medical file had "gone missing". Why, when she confronted the doctor for her file, did the doctor falsely accuse her of having torn up the file herself? Gladys died terrified and bewildered. Her family suspected a cover-up at the hospital.

On her death certificate it states she died of tuberculosis. At subsequent enquiries and in reports, her doctor seemingly went to great lengths to explain how TB was one of the main Aids-related diseases, implying that there was nothing unusual about Gladys's death, as her family kept alleging.

The doctor's argument sounded solid enough. Gladys had, after all, spent much of the last months of her life in Kalafong Hospital's TB clinic.

But there's one serious flaw in the argument – Gladys didn't have TB! The results of four laboratory tests confirm it. Her transfer from the general wards to the TB clinic was done at her own request and was not based on a diagnosis. She



Gladys Mamosadi, second from left, at her 31st birthday, shortly before her death.

had asked for the transfer in a bid to get away from her employer, a priest and colleague of her doctor, who, she claimed, was putting pressure on her to withdraw complaints about her tablets.

Indeed, most of the symptoms Gladys complained of, could have been caused by the special tablets she was given.

Gladys Mamosadi was a central figure in the drug trials controversy at Kalafong Hospital which made news headlines last year. But, as things now stand, we might never know if the drugs Gladys took had anything to do with her death.

Asked if she was aware that patients had a constitutional right to their own medical information, Dr Botes said:

"I'm not aware of that. I'm not a legal expert."

Gladys did social work and Aids counselling at the Mohau Care Centre, situated in the hospital grounds. From there she was recruited to join the drug trials being conducted at the hospital's Aids clinic – and became a symbol of the confusion surrounding the trials.

Gladys claimed to various media that she was a participant in the FTC trial. She also claimed to have been "quite well" until she took the anti-retroviral medicines supplied by Dr Mariette Botes, who was in charge of the Aids clinic and headed the Aids trials there.

Gladys claimed that after taking the drugs, she suddenly went blind. She also complained of abdominal pains and headaches. When she stopped taking the drugs, she said, her eyesight and health improved slightly. According to Gladys, Dr Botes said her complaints didn't arise

from the pills, but from the Aids virus. Most of her complaints could, however, have been attributable to the Nevirapene and Zalcitabene she was taking.

She claimed she and her mother confronted Dr Botes in an attempt to get answers. She also wanted her medical files. Dr Botes allegedly told them they could not have the files as Gladys had torn them up herself. Why say this to a desperate, dying woman when the files were in fact in Dr Botes' possession?

In response to Gladys's allegations, the hospital has denied that Gladys participated in the FTC trial or in any other anti-retroviral trial, acknowledging only that she took part in a trial for anti-fungal drugs at the time, as she had a fungal infection in her throat.

Dr Botes declined to give the name of the anti-fungal to journalists, saying it was an "innocent" pill which "couldn't cause the side effects Gladys complained of". Imagine our surprise when, after a long struggle, we finally obtained a copy of the consent form Gladys signed for participating in trial BMS 207-147 – and saw not only that the drug *can* cause many of the symptoms Gladys complained of, but that the consent form specifically warns of some of these side effects. Drugs in that class have also been known to cause visual disturbances.

More importantly, if Gladys was not participating in a trial for anti-retroviral drugs, under what circumstances had she been given the anti-retroviral medication which might make any negative side effects less worthy of note? The most comprehensive explanation from the hospital thus far is that the pills given to her were trial medication (from another, unspecified, trial) although Gladys was not actually on the trial. Dr Botes had apparently given Gladys the medication for humanitarian reasons. To dispense trial medication to a patient not recorded as participating in the trial – and with no record in the patient's own hospital file – must be irregular.

But Dr Botes' response to her own university's committee of inquiry was a belligerent: "Why? We don't have to record it in the file!" Most curious. Let alone trial protocols; in terms of the Supplementary Health Services Act, doctors must provide a written prescription for this class of drug. No such prescription features in Gladys's hospital records. There are more questions about that file: why, when the media were first given access to it, were there sections missing? Why would the hospital or Dr Botes want to withhold medical infor-

continued on next page

Miriam died during April 2000, as media interest in Kalafong's drug trials peaked. The cause of her death was recorded as "meningitis", an Aids-related disease. Miriam had been HIV positive for years. While healthy enough to work, she had periodically had health problems. But her family was confused by the death certificate. Miriam's complaints towards the end of her life had been liver related. The sudden meningitis was unexpected and the family wanted an explanation.

A family friend and counsellor clearly recalled seeing an entry in Miriam's medical file which concerning a possible liver problem. A senior Kalafong medical representative told noseweek that he, too, had seen a reference in her file to "hepatotoxicity", a liver condition caused by drugs or chemicals – and definitely not Aids-induced.

The family believed that Miriam had received two different sets of trial medication from Dr Botes. The first allegedly involved unnamed bottles of pills in white boxes, while the second trial medication had allegedly been administered via intravenous injection. The family said Miriam's health declined rapidly after she took these trial medications. As in Gladys Mamosadi's case, Miriam's family were under the impression that she had participated in FTC 302. This was

denied by Dr Botes and the hospital.

Unfortunately, Miriam's family got the dates wrong in their complaint, apparently thereby forfeiting their right to an unambiguous explanation. This enabled Dr Botes simply to reply that she was not the patient's doctor "at the time", and therefore could not comment on treatment Miriam had received "at the time" (being the time referred to in the complaint).

But Dr Botes knows, as we now do, that Miriam *was* involved in a drug trial – called FK 463. Run by Dr Botes herself, it set out to test the effective-

**The side effects of many
Aids drugs mimick the
symptoms of the
disease, making it
difficult to distinguish
between the two.**

ness of a new anti-fungal drug manufactured by Fujisawa Healthcare Inc. Not much is known about the drug, but the consent form warned of possible fever, hearing loss, headache and kidney toxicity. Might this medication have had something to do with Miriam's decline in health? Technically, Dr Botes hasn't been asked.

To confound the issue, when noseweek finally received copies of the patient's file, it did not contain the

reported reference to "hepatotoxicity". The doctor who originally told noseweek about the entry was at a loss to explain this. What he claimed to have seen clearly was no longer there. Since the file had been in the hospital safe since the patient's death, the information could only have been removed by someone at the hospital.

Miriam's alleged liver toxicity was never reported to the industry as having occurred whilst she took part in a trial. Nor was the sudden blindness that afflicted Gladys Mamosadi reported.

But they were poor and ignorant and now they're dead – so who's to worry?

"Guidelines for Good Practice in the conduct of clinical trials on human participants" was submitted to the Department of Health in June this year.

Dr Ian Sanne was one of the authors. Guidelines, of course are useless if no one is charged with monitoring trials and enforce the guidelines. Presently there is no independent monitoring of drug trials in SA. With enormous political and psychological pressure being brought to bear on government and the Medicines Control Council to provide as many anti-HIV and Aids drugs as quickly as possible, things are unlikely to change in the near future. Until things do change, however, people like Gladys Mamosadi, who might have a problem with their treatment, have to either take their chances by confronting the doctor themselves, or contact their friendly local ethics committee – in the Kalafong case, a fax machine in an office with no permanent staff. *n*

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noseweek@iafrica.com

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Our DRAW takes place on 12 September 2001.

MAMOSADI'S MEDICAL RECORDS

Continued from previous page

mation from a patient? Gladys had her suspicions. So do we.

Dr Botes was asked by journalists if she was aware patients had a constitutional right to their own medical information. Again her reply was unexpected: "I'm not aware of that," she told Sapa, "I'm not a legal expert." Maybe, but she has a legal consultant that she could ask.

Gladys's family remains dumbfounded at the hospital's failure to answer their questions about her treatment and death, directly and openly. Was there something unspeakably dreadful and immoral about those trials, or is it just a hangover from the old days, when you had more rights if you were white, and fewer if you were black? *n*

Directors of Mouldmed, the listed medical supplies company, have announced the long-awaited commercial launch of EeZeeWee, a device they claim is not only poised to replace the traditional bedpan in hospitals, but also to provide relief to housewives caught short between the supermarket shelves. The company predicts turnover in EeZeeWees of R54m in the first year of sales in SA.

Somehow we doubt it.

Apart from use in hospitals the EeZeeWee is also touted as a "portable urinal".

"Public toilet facilities worldwide have become increasingly unhygienic," claims Mouldmed. "The versatile and portable EeZeeWee can easily be carried in a cosmetically designed bag for use anywhere and in any situation. (Presumably this includes EeZee squatting behind the frozen food section.)"

The latest in peeing technology must be a marvel of engineering, if noseweek's anatomical knowledge is even ballpark correct. (Try to say the following in dulcet tones) "The rim, moulded in monoprene rubber, ensures a comfortable and watertight fit. It is reversible to provide a perfect fit for male and female use, in both an upright and supine position."

Mouldmed will be charging licensees and hospitals approximately R25 for each EeZeeWee. This means that the company will have to sell at least two million EeZeeWees in the first year to meet the predicted R56m turnover (even allowing for brisk sales in the disposable rims).

But then that's just more typical Mouldmed big talk.

We were surprised to learn from the Mouldmed press release that they were now in a strategic alliance with Sun Couriers – a company with a somewhat more impressive track record – to bring the "world acclaimed" EeZeeWee to the SA market. We were further surprised to learn from *Die Burger* that EeZeeWee was in fact a joint Mouldmed/Sun Couriers undertaking.

"I wouldn't say strategic partnership," Andy Stembridge, sales director for Sun, told noseweek cautiously. "As far as I know, all we are involved in will be distribution, and adding value with distribution advice. So far it's all on the basis of projected sales."

More unlikely Mouldmed talk.

noseweek has received a document, headed "Mouldmed South Africa", which arranges in a convenient organogram all who are alleged to be conspiring to undermine the company. noseweek features. Prominent on the organogram are Assie Slabber and John During, directors of Bayview Consulting, who have spent

some time investigating Mouldmed. We visited Slabber and During in Bellville to seek their comment. Slabber immediately phoned Mouldmed's new MD, Gerritt Theron, to ask about the organogram.

"You're talking to the wrong Theron, you should be talking to my father," said the new MD. "I don't know anything about that letter." Father is of course Gert Theron snr, con-artist supreme, former inmate of Safford penitentiary in Arizona, and the driving force behind Mouldmed.

In 1999 Mouldmed tried unsuccessfully to interdict Slabber and During from making public a report on their inves-

notes & a wee update

tigations. They also summonsed the pair for libel, and claimed damages of R30m. Two years later, however, they still haven't applied for a court date. Slabber has now warned Theron jnr that unless the company does so soon, he will himself apply for an urgent court date.

"We stand by what we've said about Mouldmed before, now more than ever," Slabber said. "The sooner the truth is tested in the Supreme Court the better."

In nose30 (Aug 2000) we revealed how Lowenthals, the sponsoring brokers of Mouldmed, had been taken for a R30m

ride after bringing Mouldmed to the floor of the venture-capital exchange. Norman Lowenthal chaired the JSE at the time.

The sting involved orders placed from the Nedbank trading floor by Nedbank trader Mohamed Moosa through Lowenthals' dealer Hennie le Roes.

After the sad affair various Theron family members and minions all bought magnificent boere-paleise in Bellville.

Lowenthals was left praying that Lloyds would pay out on their claim.

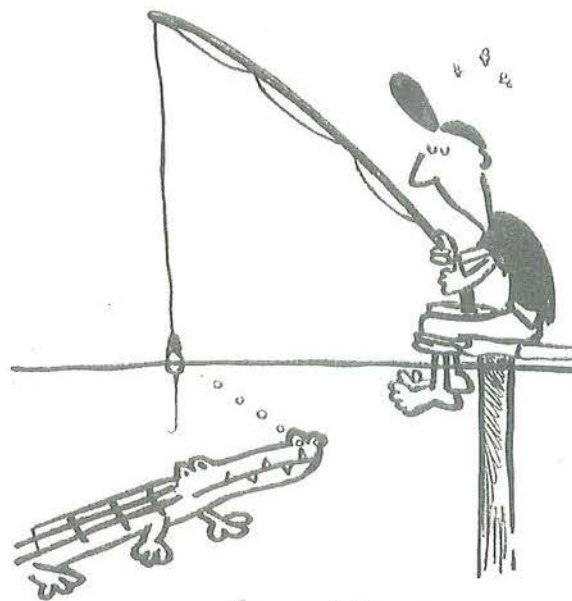
Lowenthals have submitted a claim to Lloyds for fraud. This raises some interesting questions. If their claim alleges fraud involving some of the directors of Mouldmed – which is how it happened – have they informed their clients? The success of the claim will depend on the nitty-gritty of how the fraud was carried out.

Unfortunately most of the tapes of conversations between Moosa and Le Roes over the critical period (all conversations from the Nedbank trading floor are recorded) have been erased by Nedbank, despite earlier undertakings from the bank to preserve them.

In the meantime Mouldmed shares continue to trade on the JSE's venture capital sector. Since the venture capital markets are presumably there for a serious purpose, we asked John Burke, JSE GM, listings, why Mouldmed hadn't been thrown off the exchange.

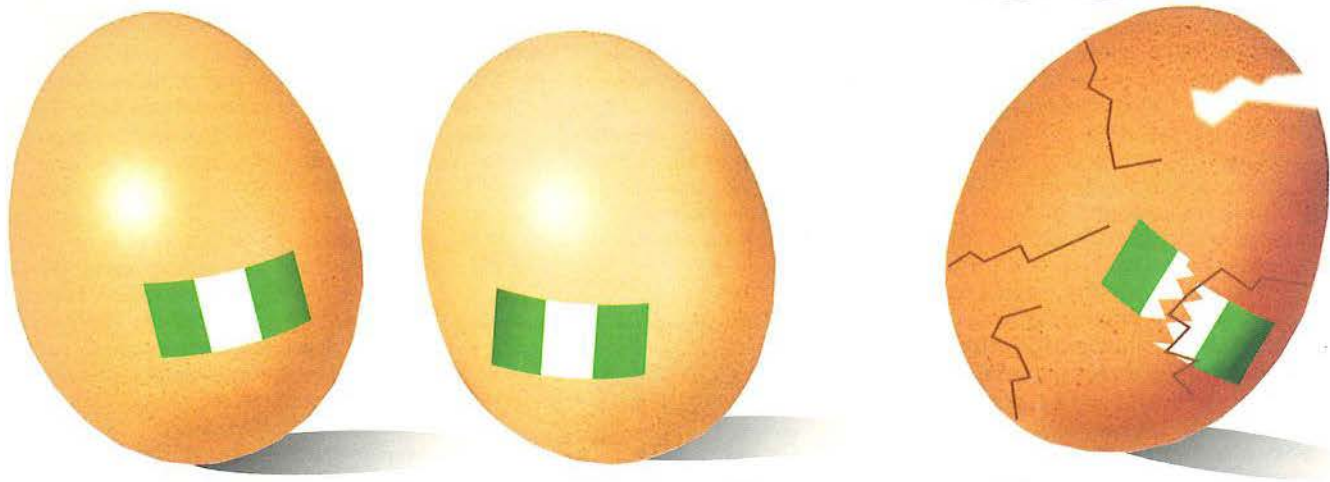
"Mouldmed is a difficult customer; we are looking at them very carefully," Burke told noseweek. "We wish them every success, as with all our companies."

C'mon. By the sound of things, Burke would make a good spokesman for Mouldmed. Why not give Mr Theron a call, John? n



Scud a more

Three bad eggs



from Nigeria

one a bit fresh!

E-MAIL NUMBER ONE

From: idriskutacbn@yahoo.com
Sent: 07 July 2001
To: cth@cthcpt.co.za
Subject: GOOD LUCK

**ATTN: PRESIDENT / CEO
FROM THE DESK OF DR IDRIS KUTA
RE: US\$ 25 000 000 PAYMENT**

I am the newly appointed Director International Remittance on Foreign Contracts in Central Bank of Nigeria. I got your contact [details] from the Nigerian Chamber of Commerce, and was impressed because of your position to contact you for assistance.

I have with me an outstanding debt of US\$25 million cash, which is now in Central Bank of Nigeria awaiting for further transfer into a nominated bank account overseas for safe keeping. This money belongs to a foreign based business man, late Engr Stanley Jones, that handled contracts in Nigeria under Nigeria National Petroleum Co-operation to rehabilitate and maintenance of Port-Harcourt and Warri Oil refinery.

So, as newly-appointed Director, International Remittance Foreign Contracts, the Senate Committee on Foreign

Contract have mandated me to remit this fund to late Engr Stanley Jones's account.

To my greatest surprise the information I got was that he was in an aircraft that crashed into an ocean here in August 1997. I have tried my best to locate his relatives but all to no avail. You know as a civil servant the Federal Government of Nigeria does not allow us to operate foreign account. That is why I contacted you, so that I can use my position to divert this fund immediately into your private bank account.

When this fund is finally transferred into your account, both of us will move down to your country for the sharing. Please endeavour to tell me what percentage you would want me to offer you as your commission.

Please, if you are interested, all you need to do is send to me your *name*, and your company's name and address, as well as your banking details, including your fax numbers for easy commission, and also to enable me to change all the documents in your name as the original beneficiary of the fund. If you are interested do not hesitate to contact me. Yours faithfully
DR IDRIS KUTA

REPLY:

From: Anton Steenkamp [a noseweek reader]
Sent: 09 July 2001
To: "idris kuta"

RE GOOD LUCK

Fuck off. I'm not interested in your Nigerian scam.
ANTON STEENKAMP
Cheadles, Cape Town

IDRIS'S (FRESH) RESPONSE:

[From: idriskutacbn@yahoo.com]
Sent: 18 July 2001
To: ANTON STEENKAMP

VERY URGENT REPLY

I received your e-mail message dated 8 July. I am sorry to not have reached you on time, this is because I travelled to overseas on official visit. I can understand that you're interested to do this deal with me but due to the bad eggs here in Nigeria, maybe some foreigners, when proposing a genuine business with them they will be afraid.

So please I want you to know that the deal I am proposing is genuine and risk free. I know it might interest you to hear about the new development concerning

this deal. I have concluded, with some of my colleagues to move this fund immediately to Johannesburg, South Africa, through a diplomatic arrangement. So if you're interested, do not hesitate to inform me immediately. I will [then] furnish you with the necessary document to claim this fund from the diplomat immediately he arrives in SA.

Best regards,
DR IDRIS KUTA

E-MAIL NUMBER TWO

From: david momo [dmptf@yahoo.com]
Sent: 18 July 2001
To: rose@rosehare.co.za
PETROLEUM TRUST FUND
LAGOS, NIGERIA / CONFIDENTIAL

REQUEST FOR URGENT BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP

Sir, first I must solicit your strictest confidence in this transaction. This is by virtue of it's being utterly top secret. You were introduced to us in confidence by the Nigerian Chamber of Commerce. We are top officials of the Petroleum (Special

Trust Fund, Federal Ministry of Finance and the Presidency, making up the Contract Review Panel set up by the Federal Government of Nigeria to review contracts payment approvals.

On the Panel we discovered this fund, which resulted from grossly over-invoiced contracts executed for the Petroleum Trust Fund during the last administration. The companies that executed the contracts have been duly paid, leaving the sum of US\$21.8m floating in the escrow account of the Central Bank of Nigeria. I was mandated as a matter of trust by my colleagues to look for oversea partner to whom we could transfer the sum of US\$21.8m Our service code forbids us from owning foreign company or running foreign account, hence the need for an overseas partner.

We have agreed that after it has been paid into your account: 1.3% will go to you for acting as the beneficiary [etc etc].

To enable us get this fund paid out we have to present an international business outfit. Upon your agreement we shall put an application to appropriate ministries

Once interested, the victim is asked to deposit money into a specified foreign bank account to help cover expenses (eg bribes) in Nigeria for completing the deal. As soon as the original fee has been paid, "complications" will immediately arise which necessitate the payment of still more fees. Ultimately, the by-now desperate victim is invited to a meeting in Nigeria where, on arrival, his passport is confiscated and he is held to ransom.

The operators might also just use the victim's bank details and letterhead to transfer money out of his bank account.

in favour of you or your company. [Yadda, yadda.] ... a lifetime opportunity ... We have done our homework ... it will only take us days to transfer this fund into your bank account ...

Note: your discussions should be limited. We intend to retire peacefully at the end of this transaction. Let honesty and trust be our watchword.

Best regards
DR DAVID MOMO

AND, FAR AWAY IN THE UK ...

E-MAIL NUMBER THREE

To: <jaygoldberg@att.net>
Sent: Saturday, June 23, 2001
VERY URGENT INFORMATION
From: [Dr Yinka Yusuf@lycos.com]
Lagos, Nigeria.

REQUEST FOR URGENT BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP

Sir, first I must solicit your strictest confidence ... [yadda, yadda] ... top secret ... member Nigeria Export Promotion Council ... gave your particulars to me. I have decided to seek a confidential with you. Within ministry of Petroleum ... we have overdue contract payments totalling US\$31m, which we want to transfer to a foreign account ... your co-operation ... foreign company to receive funds on our behalf. During military government, officials awarded themselves contracts which were grossly over-invoiced ... present government not aware ... a lot of such over-invoiced payments pending ... at the central bank of Nigeria ...

I delegated to look for overseas partner into whose account we would transfer US\$31m ... your share \$6.2m ... complete picture ... when I have heard from you.

Yours faithfully,
DR YINKA YUSUF
Lagos, Nigeria

The scam that feeds on greed

The scam is essentially an advance-fee fraud. A Nigerian-based syndicate, posing as a group of senior government officials, contacts a targeted foreign company or person with a business proposal. The proposal entails the transfer of "over-budgeted" money to a bank account outside of Nigeria.

A plausible explanation is given, but the basic appeal is to the victim's greed.

Mass Washington protest against Nigerian corruption

A mass protest against Nigerian corruption and "419 fraud" is to be staged at the White House in Washington on October 11, when a Nigerian delegation led by President Obasanjo is due to call on President Bush.

The "Nigerian Scam" is a postal and internet scam which has run since the early 1980's. (It is sometimes referred to as the "419 Fraud" after the relevant section of the Criminal Code of Nigeria.) According to US estimates, by 1996 it had netted as much as US\$5 billion, making it Nigeria's third to fifth largest "industry".

According to the US Secret Service, in 1997 American victims lost at least another \$100 million to the scam, and 15 foreigners, including two US Citizens,

were murdered while in Nigeria in connection with the scam.

An American group established to track the fraud, claims that the governing elites of Nigeria are the scammers – therefore victims should expect little help from the Nigerian authorities.

The Nigerian consulate in Johannesburg's official spokesperson, Stella (she refused to disclose her surname) declared that, since the Nigerian Reserve Bank had issued warnings, and anyone who fell victim to the scam "had to have criminal tendencies", Nigeria should not be expected to do anything about it.

She did not appear concerned that people were being lured into crime, and that, in the process, an image of a corrupt

Nigeria was being actively promoted to millions of internet users all over the English-speaking world.

No-one at the Nigerian embassy in Pretoria was available for comment. The entire embassy staff was involved in talks with President Mbeki about the Millennium Africa Plan ... mmm ... now there's a uniquely African idea for increasing South Africa's foreign "trade": scam e-mails mass-mailed from Pretoria!

That way we can market SA's increasingly corrupt image abroad – for profit! The scam could also help fulfill our president's dream by inspiring all those old MK vets to become IT literate. Sorry chaps, all the franchises have already gone to cabinet relatives. (Only joking!) n

In 1992 SAB
went to war against
Namibia Breweries
Objective: destroy NBL!
Campaign
codename

Project Sahara

South African Breweries' game has always been Monopoly, and its dream – Empire! In the days of Apartheid it rolled into Namibia in the wake of the SA Army, and even sold beer to Unita.

That early 25% stake in Namibia Breweries Ltd was its first try at the thin-end-of-the-wedge strategy that was to work so well all over Africa once the Apartheid curtain fell. Former SAB chief executive Meyer Kahn spelt it out to the Investment Analysts Society in 1993: "SAB is not interested in large scale invasion, but rather in establishing a beachhead, then slowly entrenching its presence in ever-increasing circles until it has the region firmly under control."

And so it happened in the early Nineties in Botswana, Zambia, Swaziland, Lesotho, Tanzania, Mozambique – even Seychelles. In most countries, SAB acquired a 40 to 60 per cent equity stake in a local brewery – plus management control. Once Meyer's shock troops were dug in, they made sure local product was only sold locally; there were no exports to countries where SAB's front-line troops were deployed to sell SAB product (which increasingly meant most of Africa). Product lines local to other African countries were trimmed and the gaps were filled with beverages imported from SA. The actual investment made by SAB in those countries was small cheese. The royalties, management fees and profits that flowed back to SA were not.

"The beer market in Africa is ours and everybody (had) better understand this!" declared Kahn.

Monopolists are always looking over their shoulders, knowing that the nearer one can get to 100% domination, the better the monopoly works. This gave rise to slogans like: "The best way to kill an oak tree is to kill the acorn." Two acorns crushed by SAB were the black empow-

erment groups National Sorghum Breweries (Vivo clear beer) and New Age Beverages (NAB), the Pepsi bottler. Promotional campaigns launched by the two groups were forestalled by SAB's own spur-of-the-moment informer-based marketing jamborees. NAB was caught in a cash-flow bind. For various reasons, some of them less fortunate, NSB's US partner, Pepsi, was unwilling to help fund its battle with Coca Cola in SA. (Coke, of course, is in bed with SAB.)

Namibia Breweries Limited (NBL) has proved a harder acorn to crush. When, in early 1992 it became apparent that SAB could not gain control of Namibia Breweries by its usual subtle stratagems, Meyer Kahn's men decided on all-out war, with the objective of destroying NBL. They had raised a N\$25m war chest from the sale of SAB's last 5% holding in NBL.

The SAB campaign was codenamed Project Sahara.

The campaign had, in fact, already begun in 1991, when Stellenbosch Farmers' Winery (SFW) took over the distribution of SAB products in Namibia. SAB beers were priced to undercut NBL products. And – a nifty innovation – SAB paid a premium for returned quart bottles belonging to *both* SAB and NBL. The empties were taken back across the border to SA, where the NBL ones were crushed. Since 75% of NBL beer was sold in quarts, and a bottle can be refilled up to ten times, the Namibian brewer's packaging costs shot up tenfold. NBL might have folded, had the Namibian brewer not twigged so soon, and complained to the Namibian Government. In December 1992 exportation of bottles from Namibia was banned.

It was time for Plan B ... "B" for Beachhead, that is. In 1993, SAB offered to put up a bottling plant in Namibia. The

Namibian Government rejected the offer. The country already had NBL, a small home-grown family firm with empowerment and reinvestment policies designed to keep Nujoma's government happy. The Namibian beer market could not have supported a second plant, anyway.

In 1994 SAB upped the stakes by dangling bigger bait under President Nujoma's nose: this time SAB proposed building a N\$100m brewery, ostensibly to supply N\$53m's worth of quarts – 172 000 hectolitres by the third year – to the *Angolan* market. Odd, considering that SAB had a management contract with an Angolan brewer which precluded it from bringing SAB product into the Angolan market – but that detail was not revealed to the Namibian government.

The SAB plan was energetically hyped, but the prospectus was mostly pie-in-the-sky (including a gearing ratio of 89%). Calculated at the industry average of one employee per hectolitre, the proposed new brewery could have provided 172 jobs; SAB trumpeted that there would be 300. Most of the investment was to be in the form of used plant – an aspect SAB chose rather not to emphasise. When analysed, the small print revealed that by the tenth year, N\$42,24m would have been repatriated to SA. Namibia would have retained only N\$15.6m profit.

SAB had just closed a brewery in the Free State because it wasn't viable – and the province could be more profitably supplied by SAB plants elsewhere. The Namibian beer market is much smaller than that of the Free State. Why was SAB displaying such lack of business acumen in Namibia?

There is only one rational answer: once SAB had its beachhead, it could undercut NBL and drive it to closure or a takeover. Undoubtedly an expensive strategy, but once SAB had gained control and



"We believe in free competition ... we must not abuse our market position or unfairly prevent others from competing too."

lies to be found on SAB website

downsized, the cost of Project Sahara could be recouped with an uncontested rise in Namibia's beer price and, ultimately, by following the Free State route.

A little bird tipped off the Namibians, and SAB didn't get their brewery. Kahn's attempt to recruit a Namibian partner also failed. The SAB PR machine wailed "blatant protectionism!" SAB even had the *chutzpah* to complain that NBL was a monopoly. Within the SA Customs Union, SAB had a 98% market share. It was selling more than 70% of Africa's beer. NBL's output equalled 2.3% of SAB's.

The SAB high command were irked by the failure of Project Sahara and infuriated by the success of NBL, which, by 1997, was exporting 25% of its production; Windhoek Light had become such a success in SA that SAB was forced to relaunch Castle Lite in 1996. SAB was also left with egg – or should we say chemicals – on its face after a controversy over the medieval German beer purity law (*reinheitsgebot*) adhered to by NBL.

NBL, owned by the Ohlthaver and List Group, successfully went public on the Namibian Stock Exchange in 1996 with a market cap of N\$650m – the biggest listed company in Namibia.

But SAB did not give up the struggle. The next move, pulled off with the help of some good ol' boys in Pretoria, does bring the words "blatant protectionism" to mind. Customs officials in Pretoria, who have traditionally determined duty rates in the Southern African Customs Union, have generally accepted proposals from SAB when it comes to fixing import duties on beer. In 1993 SAB proposed that excise-duty rates should be based on the size of the brewery and the alcohol content of the product. The smaller breweries agreed with the second criterion but protested that SAB's size would give it an unfair advantage.

Nothing more was heard until March 1996, when SA sprang a whole new set of regulations on its Customs Union partners. The effect was to increase the duty on Windhoek Light by 60%!

This time the Namibian Government protested at the lack of consultation, and advised NBL not to pay the new duties. Pretoria hurriedly invited all the parties to an *in camera* hearing, where all agreed that the new regulations were discriminatory. But, they decided, the brewers should hammer out a fair rate among themselves. SAB took the gap: it refused to participate in the industry meeting set for May 1997 – unless NBL immediately started paying the increased duty. That ended the meeting. Forced into a corner, NBL started paying the new duty, while the SAB PR machine churned out material portraying its Namibian competitor as a dog-in-the-manger company using unfair tactics to thwart SAB's legitimate ambitions. The matter was finally resolved only a year later, when the finance ministries of South Africa and Namibia agreed to scrap the duties that had been gazetted. This was a major defeat for SAB.

But, it seems, SAB was only temporarily shaken. More recently it has been flogging off its "non-core" interests such as Lion Match, and appears set to get out of gambling as soon as it conveniently can – to concentrate its efforts on its python-like advance on the world beer market.

Now the world's fifth biggest brewer, with a turnover of nearly R27b, SAB has 79 plants in 21 countries and employs 34 000 people. It is casting beady eyes on Bass plc, the UK giant which, it is said, may come up for sale at around R22b.

But in South Africa, its 2001 profits were down by seven per cent. The reasons given by SAB boss Graham Mackay, were

the strong dollar, competition from cell-phones and the National Lottery – which all resulted in "weak demand for product".

But why, then, was "weak demand" not a problem at Namibia Breweries Ltd? NBL continues to thrive: it hit the million hectolitre mark in 2000 and last year it sold 100 000 cases of Windhoek Lager in the UK. Its depot in Johannesburg distributes Draught Guinness and Kilkenny and, in a joint venture with Beck's Bier, it also distributes the Bremen company's product in South Africa.

A happy ending for NBL and free enterprise, no doubt. But the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. The diplodocus is still out there, coiled from Poland to China, with a glint in its beady eye. ■

Castle Lager doesn't qualify as beer?

South African Breweries has had to abort billboards advertising its Castle Lager as "Windhoek's lager".

Namibia Breweries Limited, which brews Windhoek Lager, threatened High Court action, saying that SAB's billboards infringed on its registered trademark and were likely to deceive.

NBL also lodged a complaint with the Advertising Association of Namibia to protest SAB's marketing gimmick, describing it as "antagonistic and dishonest".

"What is offensive to us is that they are associating a quality beer (Windhoek Lager) with what by *Reinheitsgebot* standards does not even qualify as a beer (Castle Lager)," said NBL Marketing Manager Paddy Pirrow.

The Namibian reports from the frontline in May 2000.

Grand Marnier

HAROLD STRACHAN



Let me tell you, my comrades, you can make a damn fine Grand Marnier generic by putting half a dozen small tough naartjies in a jar and covering them with two bottles of cane spirit and a cup of sugar. Not mandarins. Put to one side for six months. Remember to save the fruit thus pickled for your home-made marmalade.

Such naartjies are R2.99 a kg on special at the corner Spar just now, so I'm on the bike and off yet again to the Bottlestore Galactica for the cane, with a picture of a Polynesian canoe; R15.95. I put the decrepit Ducati on its side-stand, and leave it quietly groaning and stinking there like a wounded warthog. A nearby *malalaphayipheni* regards it dreamily. He-who-sleeps-in-a-drainpipe. Known in prison as a Road Inspector.

His Michelle Pfeiffer pale grey eyes widen when he sees me emerge with the booze. Set deep in his abraded raw windblasted sunshrivelled face, he runs these eyes over the bony as I load the liquor in the saddle-bags.

He steps up to me as I throw a leg across the saddle and kick back the sidestand, and breathes a fog of *spook-endiesel* all about, fit to knock insects out of the air. Cane-n-Coke. He's already got enough alcohol in him to run the entire 2001 Spanish Motorcycle Grand Prix, but he covets mine.

He chunes me this is the most magnificent *moerse* motorcycle he has ever had the good fortune to lay his gaze upon. You must of paid for it orraait, says he. We-e-ell, think I, it's not his business that I bought it for two hundred rands thirty years ago at a marine salvage auction in

Point Road. We-e-ell, sort of, I say. This is the most remarkable and most beautiful machine ever to sail across the Mediterranean Ocean from the Italian shore! he exclaims. Furthermore, think I, it is not for me to point out that the overall earth-red colour scheme comes from outdoor accommodation at the beach, and that the dragonflies and beetles and things busy cooking on the engine are stuck there with fork-oil leaking from the stanchions and grease flung all over from chain and sprocket.

Since the starter is kaput I kick the bike. On about kick # 28 it comes to banging cackling life like a giant 750cc two-stroke lawnmower. Midst a great grinding roaring sound like a monster coffee-mill. A big brown cloud bursts from the zorsts, containing small brown particles of something which could well be coffee, for aught I know, and various molecules of metal which scorch the skin. The air turns dark greasy grey, and a nameless fluid dribbles from the tailpipes.

Man, says this ou, and cups his hand behind his ear, you got a helse eye for a piece of fine-adjusted engineering, hey! You must of seen it a mile away! Name your price for this motorcycle, my man, I need to possess it! No, it's not for sale, I say. Ah well, he sighs; by the way, would you have a couple of rands about five for me to take the bus to visit my poor little daughter who is in hospital? Never to worry, say I, jump on the pillion and I'll take you there, you will see how *lekker* the bike runs. No, he says, I haven't got a helmet. *Ja*, I say, if you look on this side

you'll see a spare helmet tied on the crash bar. No, he says, I must go home first for some chocolates. *Ja*, I say, I'll buy her chocolates, man. No, he says, I suddenly remember I got to take a book back to the library. *Ja*, say I, here take a beer for the journey, and I toss him a Black Label from the sixpack in the saddle-bag.

Well anyway. I pull in at the Ducati agents about six months later, a bit embarrassed, you know, because Ducatis are not just anybody's bike, they're *class*, I tell you, and I've left mine round the corner because, you know ...

I ask this expert old dad in Spares has he maybe got a head gasket for a 1969 three-cylinder two-stroke 750cc GT bike, the one with the wire wheels.

A what? he cries. Jesus, man, where is it? and were out and round the corner where the bony leans against a pole doing its frying-flying-ant sizzle. He sits staring and stammering on a hydrant; Ducati made only six of these, he gasps, and they're scouring the world for one of them now, for their museum in Milan.

Leave it with me he says. You'll get one of their 2001 *Desmoquattros* and I'll get a commission. Oh Jesus! he moans.

So here I sit without my Duke, together with whom I have grown old. What do I do with a 300kph missile at 75? Polish it? I couldn't bring myself to sell a thing of such wondrous lust. And my car rusts in its outdoor accommodation at the beach whilst this piece of sculpture occupies my garage. Scarlet, gleaming.

And I can't even find the Road Inspector at the Galactica, to give him a bottle of spook with a Polynesian canoe on it; R15.95. #

smalls

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We'd like to keep you informed.

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Happy 60th birthday Big John.
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