

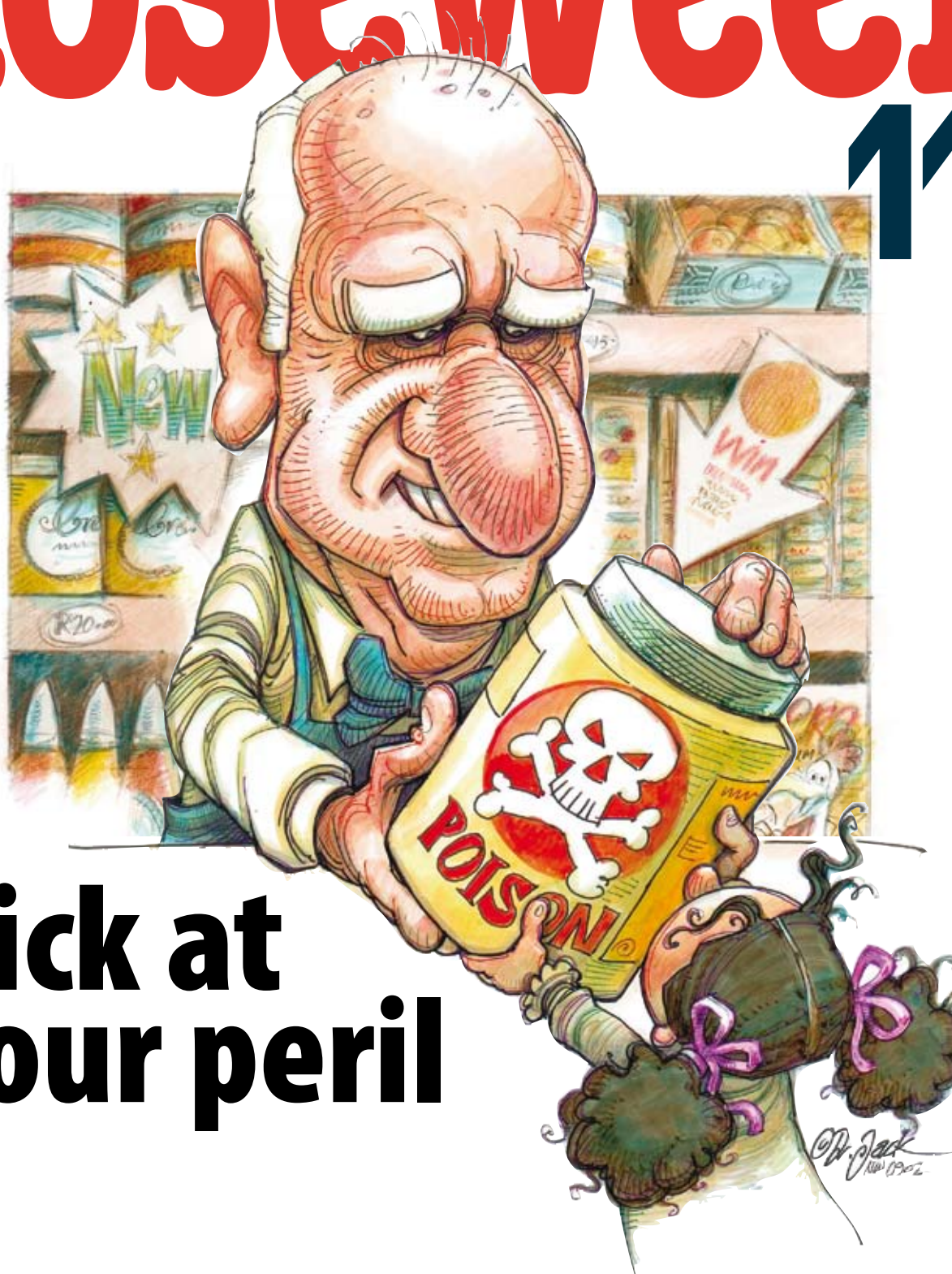
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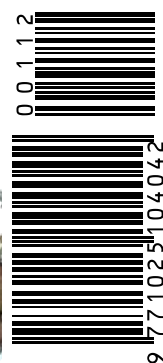
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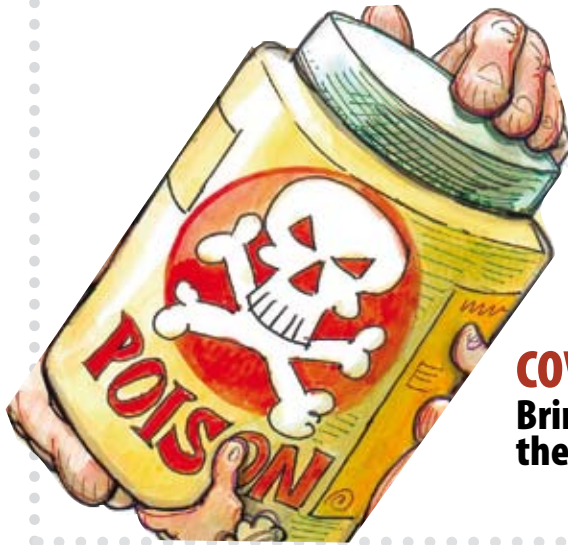
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Auditors are not tops

You ask (in *nose111*) if we should be adding auditors to the list of untrustworthy professionals. Absolutely – and they must be firmly placed at the top of the list.

Most are well-spoken and educated, but don't be fooled; these are predators of the worst kind, which

Catch 'em and cage 'em to eliminate corruption, I say.

Len Palmer

North Riding, Johannesburg

Beware Greek brothers

We live behind Bel Air mall and since building operations began, we have experienced constant noise, pollution, inconvenience and

one resident, I knew we were in for a nasty surprise! I told him that we are not prepared to sign, and since then haven't heard anything from him or his architects. Now I know why!

About 70% of the floor space in Bel Air Mall is vacant – they wanted the Virgin Active to generate

general's office. After going through the documentation they agreed that there was a case to be answered, but – “so much water has flowed under the bridge since you raised this matter (i.e. the thirty months I had spent trying to get Moratoba to do something!) that there is little that we can now do”.

The ESETA's training programme in the electrical industry has collapsed. The “learnership” system that was supposed to be the answer to a dream has been abandoned. We have returned to the tried and tested apprenticeship system, which even the ESETA cannot f#@k up.

Bernie Carr

Durban

Auditors must be placed firmly at the top of the list of untrustworthy professionals

they are taught to be at the universities. Students think Milton Friedman's bullshit is clever, then graduate and become “creative” accountants, setting example for other professionals with their tricks of the trade – tax evasion, Vat theft, overcharging, theft of investors' funds, etc.

“Independent” auditors and their clients need to be spot-audited regularly by the Dept of Finance; the recovery would cover the expense and make a profit.

unprofessionalism from the developers (*nose111*).

Last year, Dimitri Theodosiou approached us with a plan to build a Virgin Active gym on top of the basement parking adjacent to our property. He assured us that we would not have to tolerate noise or inconvenience. I was very sceptical. He referred us to the Virgin Active at Lonehill Mall and said we could speak to some of the residents who live adjacent to it. After speaking to just

more traffic through the centre. I hope ABSA have learnt their lesson.

Ilona Ferreira

Sharonlea

Learning from lousy Setas

I have followed your story about the INSETA with interest, not only because I was a representative of the Electrical Contractors' Association on the Energy SETA (Eseta) Board, but also because you managed to raise Sam Moratoba: I had thought he did not exist.

It is common cause that SETAs in general have failed to live up to expectations. Many have been in the headlines for all the wrong reasons, in particular the number of CEOs who have been ousted from their highly-paid jobs. The ESETA has a similar dismal history. After three years on the ESETA board they declared me *persona non grata* and would not answer my queries. I decided I would take up just one complaint with the Department of Labour: an alleged irregular expenditure of R1.36m.

I wrote to Mr Moratoba – not once but nineteen times – without response. I then wrote to the Minister, who said he would instruct Mr Moratoba to investigate. Mr Moratoba ignored his Minister.

I eventually took up the matter with the auditor

WEE hogging it

It's not just our BEE heroes who were pillaging the country. There are also our WEE brothers, with more money than morals, lining their already fat pockets with even more dosh. It makes me positively sick reading of the lying, cheating, thieving greed of those who can manipulate the law, bribe the authorities and fool the uninformed public. These are supposedly the pillars of society, the “celebrities” seen dishing out ill-gotten gains at “charity” functions.

Have these gluttons ever given a thought to what they are leaving to their descendents – apart from stolen money?

Jo Maxwell

Rosebank, Western Cape

Catalogue of library woes

Following on the report on the state of the National Library (*nose108*), I would like to know why the situation at the Cape Town branch is being allowed to deteriorate so markedly.

I am a regular visitor, and every time I go there something else does not work. Among recent examples are the staff entrance security door and the clocking-in system.

Gus



Everywhere paint is peeling off the walls.

Thank you for drawing the public's attention to the ongoing deterioration – please help keep it there until someone in high places does something about it.

Troy
Cape Town

Harold's sweet stuff

I just have to tell you how much I enjoy Harold Strachan. I always read your mag Chinese style – back to front – and have a good chuckle. Then on to Marike's bittersweet webdreams – always worth it for the interesting internet trawl based on her recommendations. All this before tackling the meat-and-potatoes that make your mag what it is – a bloody good read.

But I do like to start with the sweet stuff; and Harold – sigh – well, he's the cherry on top!

Melody Mitchell
By email

Inside shrink's mind

Psychiatrist Ray Berard (*nose109*) doesn't just have sex on his mind: he's as obsessed with money. Berard and his partner Michael Edwards are not only directors of Prestige Cosmetics – they also own a care facility, St Anthony's Home, in Little Mowbray. It is very expensive and well run, with excellent staff.

Staff Nurse Angela Croft (58), has been working for St Anthony's for 23 years. She has been, so to say, the home's backbone and is loved by staff and patients.

When she was diagnosed with advanced colon cancer in October 2008, "Angel" Croft carried on working for a while, but eventually had to go on sick leave, during which she received her normal salary. But, unable to go back to work, she found,

two days before Christmas, that she was to get only R1600, instead of her usual R10,000 per month.

After 23 years of service they could have been a bit more compassionate. It suggests that Dr Berard is there to fuck the patients

and Michael Edwards the staff.

Angela now stands to lose the house she is renting, and can't pay her living expenses and doctors' bills.

It's a disgrace!

Tony De Gouveia
by email

Loneliness of the Lonehill shopkeeper

I opened a shop in the Lonehill centre in 2000, on the strength of a list of firms the Theodosiou brothers said were taking tenancy – among those mentioned were all the banks, Ster Kinekor and Woolworths. (Woolies opened about five years later, but Ster Kinekor never did.) "Lonehill will be the Hyde Park of the north," they told me.

Oh to turn back the clock! Lonehill is a village and needs only a village-style shopping centre. That's what the centre should go back to being.

I invested my entire pension into my new shop. I didn't even mind the continuous dust, rubble, noise and drilling. I guess I should have seen the writing on the wall when I was asked to pay my rent to Fedlife/Fedsure. My shop lasted three years, a little longer than most.

As their leases expired, tenants were suddenly asked to pay exorbitant rents and to refurbish their premises to suit the brothers' ideas – but at their own cost. It wasn't long before shops began closing around me. Suddenly Lonehill was becoming Lonelyhill.

The LRA (Lonehill Residents' Association) did their best to stop the centre from getting any bigger. Apparently papers were served, but the centre just got bigger and bigger.

Engineers condemned the undercover parking as unsafe, saying that large delivery trucks driving over the area could cause shifts in the structure – or

even fall through into the basement parking!

When prospective tenants come to meet the brothers they are impressed by the number of cars in the parking lot, and are hoodwinked into thinking a lot more people visit the centre than actually do – in fact the majority of cars belong to tenants, who don't get their own designated parking. Virgin Active has sole use of the underground parking for their clients, a clause they put in their lease. (I bet they don't know that delivery trucks could fall through the roof.)

Right now 19 shops are closed and 45 are open (many of them restaurants). Nedbank and two more tenants are closing soon. Tenants that have come and gone (sometimes quietly in the night) include: at least five eating places, two jewellery stores, a Cardies, five fashion outlets, a perfume shop, health shop, CD shop, computer shop, cell shop, a beautician, two hardware stores, a home industry place, an Indian shop, a craft shop, a toy shop, a chocolate shop and at least two estate agents.

By the way... the Theodosiou brothers' holding company is called Immobili – might this be an abbreviated version of Immobiliare, Don Corleone's company in *Godfather 3*? In a nutshell: anyone who buys Lonehill shopping centre needs their head(s) read. Lonehill doesn't need, and can't support, a mall of this size.

Name withheld
Lonehill



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In the court of public opinion

HAD MR ZUMA BEEN a private citizen, the public might have presumed his innocence and patiently awaited the conclusion of his trial. But he is not just a private citizen. He is seeking the highest public office in the land and, for that reason, his trial in the court of public opinion is already in full swing.

It has become common to speak of Jacob Zuma as having “merely” sought a R500,000 annual bribe from the French arms company Thales (formerly Thompson CSF). That’s not true, of course, but let’s just for the moment concede that a R500,000 bribe is, in relation to the amounts flowing in the arms deal, but small cheese – hardly worth mentioning, let alone prosecuting him for. Especially since, so that argument goes, he didn’t swing the corrupt arms deal as such, but merely helped out with a bit of after-the-event cover-up.

The trouble is that when people talk like that they’ve forgotten all about Zuma’s “generally corrupt relationship” with Schabir Shaik. When Schabir was charged, tried and sentenced, the prosecutors were only able to prove a total of R1.2m that Shaik had paid to a public office-bearer – one Jacob Zuma – to secure his favour and influence in advancing Shaik’s general business interests. Like helping Shaik secure a stake in the proposed Durban Point waterfront development and Hilton Hotel, or in a major tourism project that was to have been launched by Scottish investor Professor John Lennon. Schabir Shaik collected a hefty prison sentence on that score alone. His conviction and sentence were confirmed by both the appeal court and the constitutional court.

Logically, of course, the identical case holds against Zuma, the other half of the same “generally corrupt” relationship – except that since the Shaik trial the Scorpions have unearthed documentation to show that, in fact, Shaik had over the years paid Zuma not just R1.2m, but more than R4m, to advance their sweet but generally corrupt relationship. Shaik did try pleading that these payments were part of a “revolving loan” agreement he had with Zuma.

The trouble was that it never revolved: Zuma never paid interest, or even a cent in capital. And they could not produce a signed agreement. None of the judges believed them.

Unless Zuma is able successfully to plead insanity or mental retardation, on these charges alone the odds are 1000-to-one he’s a goner. All the prosecution has to do is play it again Sam.

That settled, let’s take another look at his role in the arms deal. There, closer examination reveals a lot, lot more than we had originally imagined. By no means was he the poor Zulu waiter left to collect the after-party dregs! Our man, it transpires, had already, early on, elbowed his way onto the main table. Come to think of it, with his friend Schabir Shaik as his money-mate, it would have been extremely odd if he hadn’t been. The Shaik brothers were running it, with brother Chippy the official producer-director of the entire arms deal show. (Which explains why he is now living in Australia, whose courts don’t generally favour extradition to South Africa.)

In 1992 – yes, the arms dealers were then already closing in – Schabir Shaik and Thomson (“The French”) drafted a memorandum of understanding according to which all Thomson’s interests in South Africa were to be held and controlled through a new company called Nkobi Holdings, in which the Shaiks, the French and the ANC (or a faction of it) would be shareholders. Contemporaneous notes made by Shaik suggest that, even at that point, the plan was to have Zuma as a ghost or “occult” stakeholder, entitling him to a percentage of the profits.

When, however, soon thereafter, the French got warnings from people close to Nelson Mandela (such as silk-shirt/arms-trader Yussuf Surtee) that the Shaiks’ Nkobi Holdings was not a “suitable” partner, Thomson CSF bought a stake in South African arms company ADS, in preparation for its part of the arms deal – leaving Nkobi and the Shaiks out in the cold.

Documents that have since come to light suggest that the French had been encouraged by parties close to Mandela and his

then deputy, Thabo Mbeki, to rather do a deal with another ANC outfit, led by Reuel Khoza, called Consolidated Network Investments (CNI).

In fact, things were going really badly for the Nkobi crowd – until Zuma actively intervened on their behalf.

On about 3 July 1998 Zuma met Jean-Paul Perrier of Thomson in London, and persuaded the French to consider restructuring their holding of ADS – giving Nkobi its promised share. They clearly took him seriously: On the same day they sought a meeting with Chippy Shaik, the official arms deal co-ordinator. At their subsequent two-hour meeting, held a week later, Chippy stated that if Thomson's partners and friends suited him, he would make things easier, and, if not, he would make things difficult. He also informed them that, within a year, Jacob Zuma would be a member of the South African cabinet.

The French could take a hint. Three weeks later they were in Durban negotiating with Schabir. Zuma popped in at the meeting, just for a cup of tea.

That, take note, was more than a year before the arms deal was signed.

Zuma's role gets poignant play in a vignette offered by Schabir Shaik's former assistant, Bianca Singh, in her court evidence. In her recollection, it must have been late in 1998 when her boss, Schabir, received a telephone call from his brother, defence procurement co-ordinator Chippy Shaik. She recalled Schabir assuring Chippy: "No, don't worry. Not to worry." Immediately thereafter Schabir had telephoned Jacob Zuma – she knew it was him, because Schabir said "Hello my brother! Hi JZ!". Schabir, according to Singh, had then told Zuma: "Chippy is under pressure and we really need your help to land this deal."

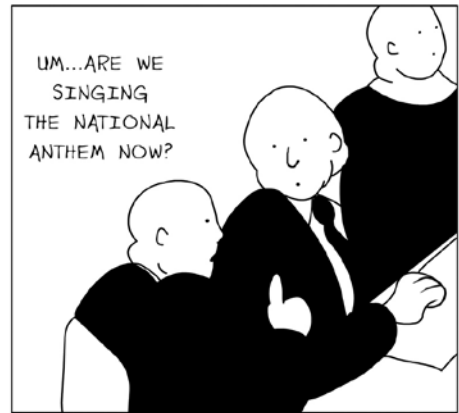
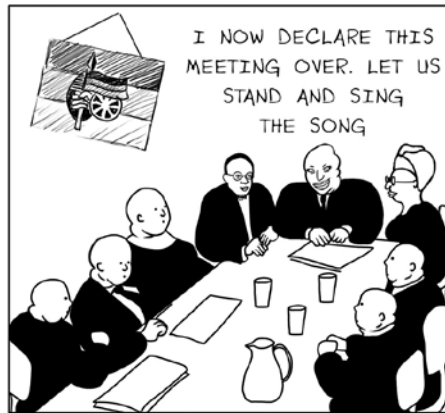
There was, she declared, only one deal they could have been talking about: the arms deal. That "problem", too, was sorted out.

A year later Schabir was writing to the French about "our understanding, Re: Deputy President Jacob Zuma and issues raised".

So JZ was using his political leverage to gain some profitable access to the arms deal before it was concluded, and later he was involved in the cover-up for a small consideration.

But, as the late night TV ad says, There's more!

The deal struck with the French



on Zuma's behalf, according to one of their now notorious encrypted faxes, entailed his receiving R500,000 per year until the ADS's dividends began to flow. The fax, sent by Thomson's then "delegate" in SA, to his head office in Paris (with a copy to the chairman of Thomson International), also sets out what they expected from Mr Zuma in return.

"May I remind you," says the delegate, "that the two main objectives of the 'effort' requested of Thomson are: Protection of Thomson CSF during the current investigations (Citron), [and] permanent support of JZ for the future projects."

Future projects? Yes, dear reader, Thomson, now Thales and/or Thint, are indeed, right now, lined up for yet more lucrative deals with the SA Defence Force, presumably with Zuma's support. This time it's a R2.2bn order from the army for short-range missiles. Please note: no tender was required.

Back in 1994 the ANC might have been a simpering virgin being led to the dance floor by arms dealers. But the South African dame now floating comfortably in the European arms

dealers' embrace is undoubtedly an old whore.

The fact that Jacob Zuma thinks he doesn't have to explain and come clean with the public on these matters before asking us for his vote is sufficient warning of serious trouble in the making.

Southern Africa already has one psychopathic, sometimes charming, president – do we need another?

It would be well that Zuma's madly enthusiastic supporters take note of the vast numbers of Zimbabweans desperately seeking food and shelter in South Africa. When it is our turn, where do we take the bus to help, or walk a thousand miles to a bite to eat? Ah, yes, sorry – there is the ferry. To Robben Island.

They should also note that, when we pass judgment on Zuma, we will also pass judgment on the party that saw fit to elect him as its leader.

Don't wait until tomorrow. Get out there and join – and actively support, with muscle and money – the opposition party of your choice.

The odds are bigger than we'd like them to be, but change is possible. Ask Barak Obama.

The Editor

Going... going... not Gono



DR GIDEON GONO'S FAME as a turnaround strategist derives from his time as head of the Commercial Bank of Zimbabwe (formerly the local branch of notoriously corrupt Bank of Credit and Commerce International – BCCI). That, it was said, explained his selection as governor of the Zimbabwe Reserve Bank in 2003. But Mr Nose and others of more cynical bent believe his appointment to the job was to facilitate concealment of monies being spirited out of the country.

Whatever the case, Zimbabwe's central bank governor is accustomed to fighting his way out of corners. But this latest round, even Mr Nose must concede, was special.

Last September's deal between Zanu and the MDC meant that the bell had rung for Gono's last round. When his five-year term ended in November, it was not to be renewed. He stood to become the first Governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe to serve only one term. Oh, the shame and pity of it!

Mr Nose had already drafted a note of commiseration along those lines when, suddenly, rescue was at hand – from some most unexpected quarters. He hadn't been fired; he'd just got some much better offers, he now revealed.

"Just as I was being dragged to the UN Security Council to be put on the sanctions list, I was offered a job by the World Bank as Senior Vice-President in Washington or at the African Development Bank in Tunis, Tunisia, with the full blessing of none other than George W Bush himself and of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice!" Gono writes in his recently published book, *Zimbabwe's Casino Economy: Extraordinary Measures for Extraordinary Challenges*. It was launched just before Christmas.

Said to have been written in 60 days, this would situate its commencement two months before expiry of his term. With only weeks left, Mugabe changed his mind and renewed Gono's term of office, putting paid to speculation that the aging ruler, who

turns 85 this month, had decided to leave nomination of the central bank governor to the MDC-T. (The party is supposed to hold the Finance portfolio under the stalled 15 September 2008 power-sharing deal.)

By his own admission, Gono had already begun packing his bags at the central bank. Was it the book that changed Mugabe's mind? Financial analysts, among them John



Gideon 'No Go' Gono

Robertson, suggest that *Zimbabwe's Casino Economy* is nothing "but an expression of Gono's commitment to support every Zanu PF policy decision to the hilt".

Robertson, who is one of only three respectable analysts left in the country, adds: "A distillation of (Gono's) basic thesis would be that Mugabe's decisions have always been right and that every one of them would have worked brilliantly but for the imposition of sanctions."

So, it seems, the book has more to do with Gono's wish to canvass for the renewal of his mandate at the central bank rather than offering any genuine insight into the spectacular collapse of Zimbabwe's economy and the forces – real or imagined – behind it.

But was Mugabe, who had been prepared to let the MDC-T appoint their own man to the central bank, really persuaded to change his mind by Gono's breathtaking demonstra-

tion of "patriotism" in turning down the "World Bank job offer"?

Being the chameleon that Mugabe is, he could just as easily have decided to frustrate Morgan Tsvangirai's MDC into abandoning the power-sharing deal so he would not have to jettison 16 of his trusted cronies from the Cabinet.

Gono's latest justification of the system, while predictable, remains reprehensible. His claims of international job offers are clearly laughable: The US only nominates the president of the World Bank Group; the rest of the World Bank Group appointments are made by the bank itself; there is no "Senior Vice-President" position in the World Bank Group; and while Gono is adept at disclosing confidential correspondence – and he does it several times in the book – in this instance he has nothing to show to substantiate the allegation of the offer, either from ex-President Bush or the World Bank.

The US Embassy described the offer allegation as "complete fiction".

No matter, Gono is up again and doing another round. At the time of writing, he was off to Malaysia with the First Family for a well-deserved holiday. The Mugabe nest-egg is reportedly stashed in Malaysia.

■ Disgruntled Zimbabwean soldiers have twice in as many months revolted over the cash crisis in their country. In the first incident that demonstrated the rank and file in the army was not solidly behind President Robert Mugabe, the officers went on the rampage after they found themselves spending more on transport to their banks than they were permitted by the central bank to withdraw.

The infuriated soldiers raided New Donnington Farm, about 40km west of Harare and took away 175 chickens at gun point. The value of the chickens is estimated at US\$800, according to police records. The soldiers told the farm manager they would not pay for the chickens because the owner of the farm – the Governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, Dr Gono – owed them money.



Pick n Poison

Food and deadly substances are often crammed together on the shelves of your friendly supermarket – sometimes within reach of toddlers, writes Adam Welz

TUESDAY 13 JANUARY 2009, just after 10am, in the Pinelands, Cape Town, Pick n Pay. The store, in the uninspiring Howard Centre, isn't very busy. Grannies prod tomatoes, shelf-packers twist tins so their labels face forward; checkout ladies banter in Flats-Afrikaans, enjoying a little downtime.

I'm heading towards the garden care section where my target, a white tubular plastic container with a blue top, is crammed on the shelf next to an upright freezer stacked with frozen seafood.

As I reach for the container I notice it carries an irregular dusting of white powder. The cap is slightly askew and the package, lacking an internal seal, has been leaking, and Bexadust has spread onto the products around it. I gingerly place the container in my basket, not breathing too deeply and using as few fingers as possible: Bexadust contains lindane, also called gamma-BHC or gamma-HCH, a chemical



banned in many countries and which scientists think may cause aplastic anaemia (which kills you, rather slowly), birth disorders, breast cancer and so on. I'm feeling ridiculously over-cautious – there are probably only a few micrograms of lindane in

the tub's patina of spilled powder and I'm not planning to give birth or grow breasts anytime soon.

Over the last 18 months or so I've complained three times to the management on duty at this branch of Pick n Pay about their stocking Bexadust. They listen each time with half-interested patience to my detailing of the product's dangers, and write down my internet info-page recommendations. Once they sent me to the shelf with that section's buyer, who told me blithely that the manufacturer had told him it was safe.

In November 2008 lindane received wide publicity because ten-year-old Lachlan van Rensburg had developed aplastic anaemia after using anti-lice shampoo containing lindane. Other youngsters lost their hair from using the same or similar products. The Department of Agriculture quickly announced a total ban on lindane for agricultural, home, garden or public-health use, which will come into full effect on 31 March.

Agrochemical industry spokesperson Gerhard Verdoorn told the media: "It scares me to think that the pesticide industry and the department have taken definitive action on a pesticide and yet it's still an over-the-counter drug available to the public, in particular as a medicinal remedy. This product should be taken off the shelves immediately by the Department of Health."

That was November. More than two months later, supermarkets like Pick n Pay are still selling products containing lindane.

In the garden section alongside Bexadust are a number of other interesting products, and I pack a selection in my basket for further examination.

Then it's over to the household pest-killer section, in the end aisle, by the cereals and petfoods, where I'm confronted by a colourful, floor-to-top-shelf array of shiny





cans of insect-death. One of them is on three-for-the-price-of-two special.

I select a little box of the ominously-named Finale, a rat poison, and a can of spray insecticide that's marketed for outdoor use. As I'm about to leave, a little bucket of MX-19 brand caustic soda, on the cleaning products shelf, catches my eye. It's less than a metre high, within reach of a three-year old. My mother's dire warnings about caustic soda echo down the years; as I stack it into my already crammed basket I can hear crystals rattling tantalizingly inside, like rock salt.

At the checkout Maria silently rings up my large poison-buy, but when the eleven toxic items start going into my bag, Olga the bag-packer finds her voice: "Jirre!" she exclaims, laughing, "You're going to kill every living thing in your garden! There's not going to be one left! Not a single one!"

"Ja" I say, "*elke lieve ding*" (every blessed thing). I think she disapproves, but she's not going to argue. She grabs the box of Finale and sidles up to me: "You need to put this stuff in a plastic thing, so that when the mouse eats it it can't run off and die where you can't find it". She nudges me with her elbow, tosses the Finale back in the bag, and chuckles again: "Every living thing."

AT HOME, I PACK OUT MY POISONS and crack open the internet to learn more about my haul. Some of the chemicals turn out to be fairly harmless: Kombat Dithane M-45, in a bright orange box, looks more dangerous than the rest, but this fungicide is actually judged by most authorities to be almost non-toxic when taken by mouth, though there's concern that one of the chemicals it breaks down into might cause cancer. The two snail baits, Efekto Snailban and Kombat Snails,

are a little more caution-inducing to non-snails, but not much. Doom Blue Death powder, "for gardens & homes", carries some fine-print warnings, like "keep cats away from treated areas for at least one week", that make it sound extremely dangerous and impractical. Closer inspection reveals fairly low concentrations of active poison – so it's probably just plain dangerous and impractical.

Baygon Outdoor spray doesn't seem to have high concentrations of dangerous compounds, but it does make me wonder why people can't just leave

insects outdoors alone. (The spray "damages plastic and rubber"; what else will it harm?)

My first real surprise comes in the form of another Efekto product, Chlorporifos 480 EC.

Dr Roberts explains that the vast majority of child poisonings treated by the Red Cross Hospital are of kids between one and five



This is based on the organo-phosphate nerve poison chlorpyrifos, which has sparked much controversy and in 2001 residential use was banned in the USA. Scientists have found that pregnant women who are exposed to the amounts regularly found in households where chlorpyrifos is used, give birth to babies with low birthweight and retarded mental development. Advocacy groups want its agricultural use banned outright.

So I'm amazed at how concentrated this Efekto product is: a few small sips from the little 100ml bottle would kill me. Nowhere on the box do I see a skull and crossbones, or big, bright warnings of "danger" or "poison". The only thing that looks like a warning is a little yellow strip on the back of the box with minute, barely legible pictograms showing gloves, a cross that looks like a voting mark, and a miniscule "harmful".

I'm not an expert on poisoning, but just up the road is the famous Red Cross Children's Hospital and its well-known poison information centre. Armed with my bag of Pick n Pay-supplied poisons, I head for the centre.

MEET DR CLARE ROBERTS, Dr Katherine Dacombe and Professor Mike Mann in a cramped fourth-floor office, where we gather around a small table on which I unpack my containers. Checking against the centre's database we confirm that Chlorporifos 480 EC is indeed extremely dangerous. The 100ml bottle contains 48 grams of chlorpyrifos, and we learn that a dose of over 8.775 grams of this poison (just over three teaspoonsful of the product), taken by mouth, is likely to kill a 65kg adult; that's only one sixth of a bottle. A child of 20kg (a typical five-year-old) would be at risk of a quick death after one gulp – a mere two teaspoonsful.

A 100ml bottle of organophosphate-based poison in my haul, Bayer's Lebaycid, proves even more acutely hazardous [see *Who killed Cock Robin?*]. Next up is Efekto Karbaspray, a high-concentration carbamate powder made up of 85%



Who killed Cock Robin?

TWO OF THE POISONS in our Pick 'n Pay basket are particularly fatal to birds, and both are made by chemical and pharmaceutical giant Bayer. Lebaycid is a "fruit insecticide" for the "control of fruit fly and codling moth in the home garden", and Finale is a pellet bait used to kill rodents.

LEBAYCID's active ingredient, fenthion, is an organophosphate nerve poison, to which birds are especially sensitive. Fenthion products are sprayed on roosting "pest" birds from crop-spraying aircraft or tractors – in South Africa a Bayer product called Queletox has been used to kill millions of red-billed quelea, a small, grain-eating bird (along with thousands of other birds that happened to be sprayed alongside them, or which fed on poisoned quelea).

Decades ago fenthion had many registered uses in the USA, including as an injectable "medication" for internal parasites in animals.

As it was found to be progressively dangerous, and accumulates in human and animal fatty tissue, its uses were legally curtailed. Its use on food crops was disallowed, and by the early 2000s fenthion was being used only as an aerially-delivered mosquito-spray in Florida – though this still killed thousands of birds. In 2002 the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) and other conservation groups sued the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – which had expressed doubts as to the safety of fenthion – for failing to properly regulate the pesticide. In 2003 US manufacturers of fenthion, under pressure from the conservation lobby, "voluntarily" withdrew the product from the market, and from 30

November 2004 its use was banned in the US.

Noseweek asked Dr Michael Fry, a pesticide expert with the ABC, if birds were likely to be killed by Lebaycid if they came into contact with its normal dilute form, for example by eating fruit that had been sprayed, or by drinking water from contaminated garden puddles. Fry told *noseweek* that it would take only about 0.2ml, or one twenty-fifth of a teaspoon, of dilute Lebaycid to kill a bird of 20 grams (about the size of a weaver), indicating that it was highly likely that garden birds would be killed by the recommended application of the product. The Lebaycid bought at Pick n Pay included no specific warnings regarding its danger to birds – there is only a general warning in the fine print, that it is "toxic



to fish, bees and wild life". (The fine print also says that after cleaning the applicator one should "dispose of wash water where it will not contaminate crops or drain-water" – where might that be?) Birds poisoned by fenthion are also themselves – whether dead or alive – toxic to anything that feeds on them; of this, too, not a word.

Lebaycid is also very poisonous to humans: according to doctors at the Red Cross Children's Hospital specialist poisons unit, fenthion becomes fatal to mammals at oral doses higher than 88 milligrams per kilo of

bodyweight. This means that a mere 11.4 mls of neat Lebaycid – little more than two teaspoonsful – could kill the average human adult. A toddler would need to gulp less than a teaspoonful to be at risk of death.

FINALE is a "second generation", single-dose, rat and mouse poison with the active ingredient difethialone. Death normally takes a week or two: difethialone, an anticoagulant that interferes with the vitamin K cycle, preventing the formation of blood-clotting agents, and the affected animal dies of internal bleeding. Difethialone is incredibly toxic to rodents, and, unlike with "first generation" rodenticides like warfarin, rats and mice are not known to develop tolerance to it.

Birds of prey, and other predators, face "secondary poisoning" when they feed on rodents that have ingested difethialone. Because a rodent dies days after a first dose, it may accumulate a super-lethal dose in its body (which does not appreciably hasten death). Rodents approaching death from anticoagulants tend to become thirsty, and will sometimes range widely outdoors searching for water, becoming easy targets for house pets and birds of prey – sometimes with disastrous consequences.

Because of difethialone's high secondary-poisoning potential, it has been restricted by the US EPA. Only qualified pest-controllers may use it, and only where secondary poisoning is unlikely. San Francisco has banned its use, and other cities will be following suit. Buying it off a supermarket shelf, as one can do here, is impossible in the US.

Because difethialone takes days to kill and is easily treated with vitamin K injections, very few humans die from ingesting it.

active ingredient carbaryl. Taken by mouth, 8.32 grams of carbaryl (less than two teaspoonsful) will likely kill a 65kg adult; a curious one-year-old that eats a mere half teaspoonful of the interesting-looking powder will be in mortal danger. The plastic container is similar to the Bexadust one – easy to open and with no inner seal. I twist off the cap while holding the bottle upright, and the assembled

experts look unimpressed as a small shower of carbaryl powder falls on to the table. (It was in the thread of the cap, so spillage was unavoidable.)

The most disapproving reactions of the interview, however, are triggered by my attempt to open the little bucket of MX-19 crystalline caustic soda. As I pick it up to peel off the lid (the bucket is not double-sealed) my three hosts quickly move back

from the table. "Don't open that" says Professor Mann sharply. Dr Roberts shakes her head, explaining that a single crystal held on slightly moist skin will burn a hole in you. Caustic soda crystals, when ingested, corrode the mouth and food pipe, leading to horrific injuries that can result in victims having to be fed by stomach-tubes for the rest of their lives.

Dr Roberts explains that the vast



majority of child poisonings treated with by the Red Cross Hospital are of kids between one and five – when they're mobile and naturally curious, and don't understand warnings or the dangers inherent in many substances.

I'd found my caustic soda, of course, within easy reach on a low shelf in the Pinelands Pick 'n Pay, along with other corrosive products, all lacking any store warning notices. (The poison centre has a special category in their statistics for poisonings caused by caustic soda and related products, like drain and oven cleaners.)

Dr Dacombe hands me a set of statistics: in the five years from 2003 to the end of 2007 the total number of actual and suspected cases of child poisoning seen at this one hospital was 2404. Of these, 244 were attributed to household cleaning products and 223 to pesticides. Of the pesticide victims, 63 were "severely poisoned", in other words, in danger of death; five of them died.

Although the annual total of poisoning cases (from all causes) stayed roughly constant across the five-year

ON 23 NOVEMBER 2008 I visited the Starke Ayres Garden Centre in Rosebank, Cape Town to see what pesticides they had for sale. I noticed many of the same products that Pick n Pay Pinelands stocks, including Bexadust, but also a number of other organophosphate and carbamate nerve poisons. I complained to the manager on duty, Diane Ziman, about their stocking such dangerous poisons.

She was initially defensive, explaining that certain customers demanded these products and were

reluctant to accept organic alternatives (which Starke Ayres also stocks), but after some conversation agreed to research their dangers.

period, at about 480, Dr Dacombe's figures show a sharp increase of those attributed to pesticides, from 25 in 2003 to 70 in 2007. Most of these were likely due to organophosphates or carbamates.

The Red Cross team will not speculate on what might have caused such an increase, and they say it's very hard to give a national figure – it's

thought that many poisonings either go unreported or are misattributed. (Other academics confirm this.)

If just one hospital, albeit a big one, saw 467 cases in five years of poisonings attributed to household cleaners and pesticides, it's possible that hundreds of people are poisoned annually by dangerous chemicals sold without restriction at neighbourhood shops like Pick n Pay.

Three complaints to the Pinelands Pick n Pay about Bexadust, over eighteen months, had not triggered any action.

Prof Mann is keen to emphasise that he and his colleagues are not against the use of pesticides. They'd simply prefer to see them properly packaged and stored – and safely used. As our meeting ends, he carefully cleans up the spilled Karbaspray powder. He turns to ask, encouragingly, if I'd like to wash my hands. "It's a good habit."

EMAIL SOME QUESTIONS to Efekto, manufacturer of Bexadust, including if Efekto is exposed to any legal liability claims resulting from harm that may be caused to users by Bexadust. In his reply, Efekto technical marketing manager Riaan van der Merwe is very keen to dissociate Bexadust from the term "lindane". Bexadust, he says, is not the long-banned high-concentration liquid agricultural product brand-named Lindane. Bexadust, he says, is a "low-toxicity" pesticide containing a small amount of gamma-BHC.

Of course Bexadust for gardens is low-concentration and thus less harmful than banned agricultural pesticides, but Mr van der Merwe is trying his luck: lindane is a synonym for



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gamma-BHC, and when I check with the Department of Agriculture they make it very clear that they will not be re-registering products containing "lindane/gamma-BHC" because they consider it unacceptably harmful. Bexadust will not be registered by them from 31 March 2009 onwards.

Van der Merwe will not say where Efekto sources its lindane, neither does he offer any opinion on the department's decision to ban it. He claims that using Bexadust in the garden or home according to the instructions on the label will not be harmful to "you personally".

The Association of Veterinary and Crop Associations of South Africa



(Avcasa), the agrochemical industry body, tell me that they fully support the Department of Agriculture's decision to ban lindane, because it is dangerous to people and the environment.

They add that they are also aware of problems with concentrated home and garden formulations of chlorpyrifos (such as my bottle of Chlorpyrifos 480 EC) and that "accidental, suicidal and deliberate" deaths have been caused by these formulations. They fully support the Department of Agriculture's long-announced decision not to re-register them come 31 March 2009.

Pick n Pay reiterated that it "would never compromise the safety of its customers", but had not replied to detailed questions by the time *noseweek* went to press.

It strikes me, looking at the minute measuring cups that come with Bayer Lebaycid and Efekto Chlorpyrifos 480 EC, that most people using them would undoubtedly get the poisonous concentrate on

their hands and clothing. And what one is supposed to do with left-over pesticide, besides illegally throwing it down the drain or into municipal rubbish bins, is a mystery. Warnings on most pesticide products sold in Pick n Pay are confusing, usually in tiny print next to odd pictures, and are written in technical language not readily understood by ordinary householders, never mind illiterates. Only one of the bottles came with a (semi) childproof screw cap. I still can't believe that poisons and dangerous household cleaners are stocked in close proximity to food.

Pick n Pay had just announced that it has been voted "best retailer in the world" by the American-based National Retail Federation. I suppose that "protecting your clients and the planet from dangerous poisons" was not a judging criterion. Or was it?

While, technically, the ban on these dangerous poisonous products comes into effect only on 31 March, the nation's "family grocer" – indeed all retailers – ought to have pulled them off the shelves at the earliest sign of trouble, as they have done in response to food-safety scares. These products are not half as funny as bug-killer TV ads might suggest.

■ *As noseweek was going to press Pick n Pay told us they were removing Bexadust from the shelves of their stores countrywide, and reviewing the packaging of caustic soda.* □



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LOCAL ONLINE AD MARKETING agency Entelligence is to take its battle with international behemoth Google to another level. It has filed an appeal to the Competition Tribunal against last year's Competition Commission ruling which rejected Entelligence's charge that Google is abusing its dominance of the South African market.

The Competition Commission did concede that Google was trying to steal one of Entelligence's major clients, Yellow Pages, but said this did not amount to anti-competitive behaviour. A curious twist to the tale: Yellow Pages wasn't interested in doing business directly with Google. The managing director of Yellow Pages sent Google's country manager, Stafford Masie, an email, asking them to respect the contractual relationship between the business directory and its online marketing agent, Entelligence.

But Google was in no mood to listen: later, in a conversation with Entelligence CEO Sean Riley, Masie said: "I do not respect this agreement" and "Google intends servicing this customer directly".

Late last year the Competition Commission found that Google's actions "may amount to inducing a customer into not dealing with Entelligence" (sic), but stated that this was not anti-competitive as the impact on the market place couldn't be determined. "It is our view that even if Google was found to have induced TDS [Yellow Pages] into not dealing with Entelligence, this would not result in a substantial lessening or prevention of competition in the relevant market," the ruling read.

Riley decided that the commission didn't appreciate the complexity of the search marketing industry, and launched round two of a costly crusade to prove that one of the world's biggest companies is "doing evil".

In his affidavit Riley says Google is involved in business practices that flout the leviathan's founding code of conduct. "Google threatened that it would stop servicing Yellow Pages or switch off our Google accounts to prohibit Entelligence from offering service to our client. They broke their own terms and conditions while trying to unfairly benefit themselves..." says Riley.



The search-engine behemoth stands accused of unethical conduct, writes Mandy de Waal

The affidavit claims that "Google is guilty of 'requiring or inducing a customer to not deal with a supplier', [contravening] Section 8(d)(i) of the Competition Act", and that Google manipulated accounts to adversely affect the performance of online advertising, which, Riley says, "amounts to fraud".

And it appears that Entelligence aren't the only agency compromised by Google. Riley's affidavit reads: "Whilst our experience with Google reflects the extreme situation of being openly bullied off an account, there are many other instances where Google has 'partnered' with an agency to win a customer account, while in the background pitching directly against the very same agency in an attempt to solicit the customer to deal with Google directly."

Entelligence say they will subpoena a number of these agencies in order to get more evidence of the search giant's alleged unethical conduct,

which, they say, is causing confusion amongst customers, and abuses agencies that have helped to develop the Google brand in this country.

Started as a research project by Stanford geeks Larry Page and Sergey Brin in 1996, Google entered the world of business as a garage outfit in 1998, and went on to list in 2004, raising \$1.67bn and realising a market cap of over \$23bn.

Like many, they started out with lofty ideals. The company's core mantra "don't be evil", is a motto held so dear that they included it in the prospectus for their first public offering, declaring: "We believe strongly that, in the long term, we will be better served by a company that does good things for the world, even if we forgoe some short-term gains."

While the management of Google SA might not have read that first letter from the founders, they must surely have read "The Google Code of Conduct" on their own website.

All Google's revenues go offshore. Which says plenty about their lack of interest in African development

There it is stated: "The code is one of the ways we put 'Don't be evil' into practice. It's built around the recognition that everything we do in connection with our work at Google will be, and should be, measured against the highest possible standards of ethical business conduct" and "trust and mutual respect underlie our success, and we need to earn it every day".

Beside ethics and trust, there are a couple of other crucial issues to bear in mind regarding the local search industry market.

Google has a near monopoly in paid search marketing in South Africa, where digital advertising is in its infancy. This is still a largely unregulated market with no codes of practice, unlike the situation in the US or Europe.

Search is the crown jewel of online marketing, generating millions in revenue for internet advertising agencies who service both local and offshore accounts. It's difficult to estimate the exact size of the local search marketing pie because Google doesn't disclose figures, but one search agency interviewed by *noseweek* claimed they were turning some \$100m per annum, with about 50 search marketing companies operating in Cape Town alone.

Google's dominance, and apparent determination to cut out local online marketing companies, could mean the death of the local search marketing industry, which is in its infancy and has yet to achieve significant skills transfer. Search marketing has the potential to generate enormous taxable revenues, create employment, attract foreign investment and set Cape Town up as a local "Silicon Valley". That's if the industry is allowed to mature, local outfits are encouraged to grow and, say the locals, Google doesn't abuse its dominance.

Google could have levelled the e-marketing playing fields by establishing a search marketing academy for skills transfer. They could have seeded local BEE agencies or created development programmes, or offered incentives to bring diversity to a lily white industry. Instead they appear to be exploiting every gap and weakness to their own advantage.

Noseweek questioned Masie about the company's equity policy, procurement procedures and efforts to promote diversity. All we got was the standard rhetoric: "Google is

committed to the overall black empowerment objectives and transformation of South Africa. We concur with the broad-based black economic empowerment (BBBEE) objectives and guidelines published by the South African Department of Trade and Industry." And so on and so forth – all the right blurb but nothing to show they're actually doing anything to help anyone.

By way of comparison, Hewlett Packard – with a similar market cap to Google – has sought to work with government to alleviate the ICT skills shortage in this country by creating a multi-million rand institute that promotes entrepreneurship, offers skills development to PDI SMEs, and trains graduates to work in those SMEs.

But Google SA simply pays salaries and other expenses incurred while doing business in this country – none of the directors of the local operation are South African or even sit on South African soil. All revenues go directly offshore. Which says plenty about Google's lack of interest in African development and plenty about their commitment to "me first".

Speaking on condition of anonymity, sources close to the company claimed that contracts between local agencies, their clients and Google, circumvent the South African office. Business originated in South Africa is signed and sealed by Google in Ireland, ensuring that little or no tax is paid in South Africa. In response, Masie says this practice is a norm in the IT industry and was a "structure" used at Novell when he was country manager of that global software company.

The Google founders' high ideals and noble purpose have, it seems, been sacrificed on the altar of power and greed. A case in point is an

allegation of media manipulation made by another search marketing expert who did not want to be named. This source said Masie assembled a "cabal" of local journalists who received privileged information from Google on the proviso that they were favourable toward Google in the media. The source said that ITWeb journalist Paul Vecchiatto had been invited to participate, but that Vecchiatto was disgusted by the idea and declined.

Masie rubbished the allegation, while his PR representative, Craig Rodney of Emerging Media, said he would resign the Google account "on the spot" if the claim was corroborated. Well Mr Rodney – let's see some action. Paul Vecchiatto confirmed to *noseweek* that Masie had indeed invited him to join a group of 12 to 15 journalists who were to meet Masie every quarter. Vecchiatto added that information given at these sessions would be "off the record".

"Basically it's like us doing Google's PR. The implication is that the journalists become an unofficial mouthpiece for Google – which is ridiculous because, as an international company listed on NASDAQ, everything Google does should be open and transparent. Google is a market in their own right, such as the JSE, and has to be very fair about what it does and the way it disseminates information."

Vecchiatto says Masie told him: "This is a strategy Google has used in other geographies that has worked very well for us."

The conversation between Masie and Vecchiatto was witnessed by freelance journalist Morgan Behr, who corroborated Vecchiatto's account in every detail.

■ While SARS spokesperson Adrian Lackay could not comment on the affairs of a specific taxpayer, he observed that SARS would expect a South African company providing services in South Africa to a foreign affiliate to be remunerated on a market-related basis for those services and to pay tax on its profits. If this were not the case it would invite a "transfer pricing" adjustment in terms of section 31 of the Income Tax Act, 1962, as well as any appropriate additional tax, or other penalties. ■



Net tightens around fraudster lawyer

Is the game up for Spyridon Akritidis or is this just another wild sleuth chase?

THE NET IS FINALLY TIGHTENING around Spyridon “Spyro” Akritidis, will-o’-the-wisp attorney who did a runner from his Sandton law firm over eight years ago after shunting R580m of investors’ money offshore – most of it for himself.

Or is it? Over the years an army of (often-dubious) private investigators has claimed to have tracked the fugitive 40-year-old to various exotic offshore lairs. Small wonder that Stephen Anticevich of Admiral Trust, trustee of Akritidis’ insolvent estate, is wary about the latest claim.

It has, however, excited Sakkie Duvenage, a forensic investigator at Absa – the bank that obligingly wafted those millions offshore for Akritidis in defiance of exchange control regulations. According to Duvenage, a private investigator recently told him: “Akritidis has been traced and we’re busy getting his assets listed.”

The story goes that those in pursuit of Akritidis plan to “neutralise” his bodyguards, transport him to some secluded spot, and then scare him into coughing up R300m to R400m to settle his creditors’ claims.

The more likely scenario is that they will need court orders to seize his assets as the proceeds of crime.

What is certain is that the successful investigator will deduct 20% to 30% of recovered funds as his fee. The idea in this case is that, once the rogue attorney has paid up, he will be free to continue his runaway lifestyle.

The investigator is naturally reluctant to disclose the target area, although he hints at an island and a luxury yacht moored on a river that forms a demarcation line.

Shadowy players assisting the investigator, it is claimed, include a former Serbian general and a shady criminal lawyer in Mediterranean climes, who is said to have secured an ID for Akritidis under a false name, based on yet another island – one not too distant from South Africa.

Trustee Anticevich, whose task it is to recoup the millions that Akritidis stole from investors who have submitted claims against the attorney’s insolvent estate, sighs. In eight years he’s managed to recover only R1.2m, and he’s heard it all before. “It’s always confusing with this lot,” he says. Does he think the private investigator is on the level? “At this stage, I’m

A forensic report is said to give a breathtaking account of Akritidis's money-shunting activities

totally unsure.”

The trustee recalls, with a shudder, some claims made by earlier “bounty hunters”:

■ The sleuths who claimed to be in touch with the Bulgarian and Cypriot mafias. “They were going to do a settlement with Akritidis and bring back the money to pay creditors,” says Anticevich. “They phoned to say the plane was landing at Lanseria and could I come and help carry the suitcases full of money? Then the money became a draft that had to be cashed. After that they disappeared.”

■ The sleuth who claimed to have tracked Akritidis to Swaziland, from where he allegedly made clandestine trips into South Africa.

■ The sleuth who located Akritidis in Angola, up to his neck in diamond-dealing.

■ The sleuths who claimed to have



Could embezzling attorney Spyridion Akritidis be hiding out in Athens, where his wife has allegedly been spotted

bugged the phone of Akritidis' parents, then living in the mountain village of Yanista in northern Greece. “The detectives said they had intercepted cellphone calls from Akritidis' wife Georgina, saying ‘I'm going to see the Greek singer’,” says Anticevich.

■ The sleuths who told the trustee that Akritidis had used his ill-gotten millions to make a further fortune out of property speculation in Romania and Bulgaria, where property prices went through the roof after the two countries joined the European Union in 2007.

“Absolute drivel, all of it. Absolute rubbish,” declares Anticevich, who adds that a close friend of Akritidis has told him that, four or five months ago, he was standing by a traffic light in central Athens when he saw Georgina Akritidis drive past. “He was absolutely positive it was her.”

Anticevich himself has flown on a wild goose chase to Athens after being given the address of a villa where Akritidis's wife was said to be living. He got nowhere, hitting a stoney wall of Grecian silence and non-co-operation.

The trustee is not exactly the most efficient investigator in the world. After promising *noseweek* photos he took of the Athens house, he now says he cannot find them.

The Reserve Bank commissioned a forensic report from Ernst & Young, which is said to give a breathtaking account of Akritidis's money-shunting activities. Anticevich tells us that he's issued a high court claim against the Reserve Bank, which refuses to release some R900,000 of Akritidis' assets to his estate. “They say he breached exchange control regula-

tions. We say they are acting in an unconstitutional and draconian manner,” says Anticevich.

At present, says the trustee, the matter has been adjourned *sine die* – and in view of the costs involved the action is unlikely to proceed. A lawyer involved confirms: “The Reserve Bank has blocked certain funds and there was a threat by the trustee to try and take some kind of civil action to get that money released.”

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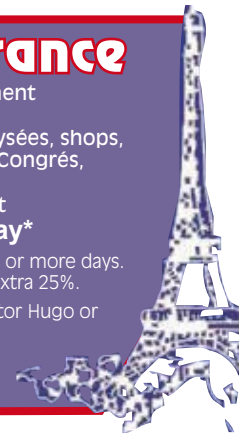
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Tsumbedzo Charles Nevhutanda, deputy general manager in the Reserve Bank's exchange control department, tells *noseweek*: "The Reserve Bank does not comment on its investigations and is not aware of any pending litigation as alleged. The Reserve Bank is not prepared to discuss the [Ernst & Young] forensic report."

Back in September 2003, in *nose49*, we published brief details of claims filed by 10 of Akritidis's victims to the Attorneys Fidelity Fund, which compensates victims of rogue attorneys. Here (*see table*) we give details of all 68 claims eventually filed, and the result of each of them.

Of a claims total of R74,430,186, at the end of the day the fund only paid out R12,015,093. According to Hendrik du Plessis, the fund's claims director, the reason that so many petered out, and are marked "not proceeded with", is that the claimants had been exporting funds in defiance of exchange control regulations and wanted to avoid attention from the Reserve Bank.

The identities of some of the claimants are concealed behind corporate veils.

Amounts claimed by the 68 range from R5000 by No.40 (Retail & Commercial Development CC), to R10.6m by No.18 (Zdenek "Stan" Fischer). Not one of the 68 ever filed a complaint with the police.

There only appears to have been one such complaint, back in March 2000, which reported fraud of R148m in terms of the SA Reserve Bank Act. The complainant was Wynand Johannes Erasmus, at the time branch manager of Absa Durbanville, in Cape Town – one of the Absa branches where obliging forex staff had shunted the Akritidis loot offshore, fudging the paperwork (*nose48*).

Absa's acting group legal counsel Marthinus van Rensberg explains: "The money was stolen by Akritidis from his investors and because of staff involvement in the matter Absa expected a potential claim from these investors and we notified our insurers. But when no claims came – the investors were engaged in activities that were in any event illegal, so they could not go to court with clean hands – our brokers, Alexander Forbes, closed the file."

The private investigator promises to deliver to *noseweek*, in due course, a full report, plus a video of the scene when Akritidis is apprehended and his assets are seized. But, says the investigator, it's a question of being in the right place at the right moment. He won't be hurried. **■**

Claims filed with the attorneys' fidelity fund after attorney Spyridon Akritidis stole his clients' money and fled the country

Claimant	Result	Finalised	Claimed Amount
01 Morrison, James	Not Proceeded With	15/02/2001	R1,500.00
02 Tollemache, Laurence Ronold	Not Proceeded With	13/12/2002	R2,200,000.00
03 Pachis, Elie Obo Mr Peter Pachis	Paid (R 109,500.00)	26/10/2000	R109,500.00 Pd
04 Westley, Richard Douglas & Others	Not Proceeded With	19/09/2003	R1,462,820.40
05 Myburgh, Alwyn Francois & Colleen Elizabeth	Rejected	01/03/2001	R381,444.10
06 Geere, Tucson & Elsie	Rejected	01/03/2001	R100,000.00
07 Stewart, Estelle Elizabeth	Rejected	01/03/2001	R43,000.00
08 Magill, Robert John	Not Proceeded With	18/01/2007	R1,040,000.00
09 Omnitrade 78 (Pty) Ltd /Acero Intl (Pty),	Paid (R4,100,000.00)	01/03/2005	R4,500,000.00
10 Cobb, Ian John Michael	Paid (R531,400.97)	19/12/2002	R531,400.97
11 Strydom, J P	Rejected	27/06/2001	R--
12 Mcgurk, Gerald Patrick (E.Late)	Not Proceeded With	10/07/2002	R1,818,057.00
13 Stylianou, Christos	Not Proceeded With	09/03/2001	R639,157.00
14 Fred Driver & Son (Pty) T/A D R Hendry (1987)	Rejected	19/04/2001	R1,971,527.68
15 Michael Yeats Family Trust,	Not Proceeded With	30/07/2003	R1,000,000.00
16 Bic Southern Africa (Pty),	Paid (R4,005,138.91)	16/09/2003	R4,005,139.00 Pd
17 Peer, Daniel	Not Proceeded With	16/10/2001	R2,600,000.00
18 Fischer, Zdenek (Stan) (Mr)	Rejected	27/06/2003	R10,631,360.00
19 SA Atlantic Meat Imports & Exports cc	Rejected	07/06/2002	R189,146.65
20 Petersen, Leslie Carole	Rejected	12/02/2001	R600,000.00
21 Barella, Melinda Gillian	Rejected	12/02/2001	R1,103,400.96
22 Renney, Mark Stephen	Rejected	12/02/2001	R 250,000.00
23 Freeman, Anthony Leon	Paid (R 270,000.00)	27/10/2004	R370,000.00 Pd
24 Smith, Ian Julian (R A Hellmann),	Paid (R 828,462.00)	23/03/2004	R828,426.00 Pd
25 Payne, Alan	Rejected	27/03/2001	R--
26 Dewpoint Refrigeration Cc	Rejected	02/07/2001	R500,000.00
27 De Sousa, E F (Mr)	Not Proceeded With	20/02/2001	R100,000.00
28 Lamb, Ian (Mr)	Paid (R 297,500.00)	08/10/2001	R297,500.00
29 Mackenzie, S M (Mr)	Not Proceeded With	13/07/2001	R100,000.00
30 Kadie Trust, The	Not Proceeded With	24/05/2001	R115,000.00
31 Anderson, Violet & Alice	Not Proceeded With	13/11/2006	R1,100,000.00
32 Le Tour Distributors cc,	Not Proceeded With	15/03/2006	R358,800.00
33 Ross, Robert William	Not Proceeded With	02/09/2003	R3,000,000.00
34 Adventure Zone (Pty) Ltd	Not Proceeded With	05/11/2001	R500,000.00
35 Bastani, H	Not Proceeded With	05/11/2001	R10,000.00
36 Bastani, P J	Not Proceeded With	05/11/2001	R 85,000.00
37 Nava Property Investments cc	Not Proceeded With	05/11/2001	R770,000.00
38 Projects Group (Pty) Ltd	Not Proceeded With	05/11/2001	R840,000.00
39 Portion 4 OF Lot 2174 Cc	Not Proceeded With	05/11/2001	R25,000.00
40 Retail And Commercial Dev cc	Not Proceeded With	05/11/2001	R5,000.00
41 Lewis, Deborah	Paid (R 510,000.00)	11/09/2001	R510,000.00
42 Nobili, Graziela	Paid (R 110,000.00)	28/11/2000	R110,000.00
43 Prokopoulos, Fotios & Michalopoulos, Spiros	Not Proceeded With	19/07/2005	R667,630.00
44 Michalopoulos, Spiros	Rejected	07/11/2000	R504,630.00
45 Burns, Elsabe /Dynamic Services Invtmnt	Not Proceeded With	02/02/2005	R3,010,000.00
46 Briant, Gavin	Not Proceeded With	11/10/2001	R9,000,000.00
47 Moses Sario Family Trust	Paid (R 465,000.00)	13/06/2001	R465,000.00
48 Catering, Hotels & Allied Workers Union	Not Proceeded With	20/03/2002	R 82,000.00
49 Malamas, Demetrios	Not Proceeded With	07/06/2002	R405,000.00
50 Holton, Mark Collins	Not Proceeded With	31/05/2001	R3,120,000.00
51 Sahaye, Damarnath	Not Proceeded With	17/02/2004	R750,000.00
52 Chinon Limited	Not Proceeded With	20/09/2005	R2,120,000.00
53 Thompson, Michelle & Mark	Rejected	22/06/2001	R--
54 Mclintock, Catherine Christine	Not Proceeded With	04/07/2001	R196,000.00
55 Holgate, P (Mr)	Paid (R 731,000.00)	07/12/2001	R731,000.00
56 Fisher, Andrew	Rejected	19/04/2001	R4,550,000.00
58 3c Trading (Pty) Ltd	Paid (R 8,917.00)	19/09/2001	R10,000.00
59 Lordan. Jhc (Mr)	Rejected	13/06/2001	R100,000.00
60 Raubenheimer, Petrus Willem	Rejected	02/10/2001	R500,000.00
61 Fuchs, Peter	Paid (R 48,176.00)	16/11/2001	R50,000.00
62 Venter, Wjh	Not Proceeded With	14/05/2002	R35,000.00
63 Kleinveld, Ds. J	Not Proceeded With	14/05/2002	R250,000.00
64 Zietsman, Ds. A	Not Proceeded With	14/05/2002	R70,000.00
65 Zietsman, JH	Not Proceeded With	14/05/2002	R175,000.00
66 Konidaris, Peter (& Others)	Rejected	11/06/2002	R1,205,250.00



Grounded cement barges Dar1 and Dar2 along the KZN coast

Argy bargy over Cape Vidal wrecks

Sunken hulks may threaten endangered marine species

THE SCUTTLING OF TWO enormous barges in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park has sparked a furious row between the park's management and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, who are jointly responsible for protecting the sensitive World Heritage Site.

The empty barges – *Dar 1* and *Dar 2* – washed up on a beach near Cape Vidal last October after parting company with the tug which had been towing them to the Arabian Gulf. When the owners walked away from the problem, the 124m hulks, each weighing 3,300 tons, were left to the iSimangaliso park authority to deal with.

Nobody disputes that the vessels had to be removed. The *Dar 2* was badly damaged and it might have proved impossible to refloat if left to deteriorate further in the heavy seas.

According to both the iSimangaliso management and the South African Marine Authority (SAMSA), which is responsible for shipwrecks, no harbour master would allow a vessel in such poor condition to enter port.

The only option was to tow the *Dar 2* out to sea and scuttle it.

But where? Over the horizon in international waters, or just offshore, as a handy dive site for aqua tourists? iSimangaliso management plumped for the latter, reasoning that there was no point in wasting a good barge that could be recycled as an income-generating recreational facility.

They apparently didn't think they needed to consult their conservation partners at Ezemvelo before dropping the huge metal structure, possibly carrying pollutants, into the highly sensitive biodiversity hotspot, which is subject to a wide spread of protective regulations under various international agreements and Acts of Parliament.

Nor did the park seek the advice of the Durban-based Oceanographic Research Institute (ORI), the internationally renowned marine research organisation that was instrumental in having the park declared a World Heritage Site in 1999.

Ezemvelo said it was informed of the decision only by sms. All its attempts to engage with the park authority were rebuffed. "Their only response was that they had all the permissions they needed," says the head of

environmental management, Andy Blackmore.

The boffins at the Oceanographic Research Institute didn't even know what was afoot until it was too late.

At the next spring tide, on 4 and 5 November, just two weeks after the barges were stranded, salvors under the direction of SAMSA hauled *Dar 2* off the beach and towed it to three different locations before scuttling it in 18m of water – 1.3km offshore and within the

boundaries of the protected area.

The action was greeted with anger and dismay by Ezemvelo and the ORI, neither of which had had a chance to assess the state of the barge, the suitability of the site and the possible impact on endangered marine species.

An anonymous source has kindly sent *noseweek* some of the correspondence which has flown between the various interested parties since the *Dar 2* went down. Apart from providing a good summary of the arguments, the tone of some of the letters, particularly those from iSimangaliso CEO, Andrew Zaloumis, reveal how high feelings are running on both sides.

Ezemvelo's first official response was a letter of protest to SAMSA, alleging that a number of laws and international conventions had been breached, and that the marine authority could be guilty of negligence in approving the scuttling site.

"Given the sensitivity of the receiving environment ... and that it is common and accepted international practice to scuttle stricken vessels in international waters, it is of concern that SAMSA has subjected the World Heritage Site and the biodiversity therein to unnecessary risk," says the letter, signed by Ezemvelo acting CEO Bheki Khosa.

Since the barge was towed around for many hours, it could easily have been scuttled at a safe depth, far from the protected area, the letter said.

When iSimangaliso CEO Andrew Zaloumis got wind of Ezemvelo's complaint, his response was less than collegial. He wrote to Khosa accusing the conservation authority of not knowing its place, of being ignorant of the park's layout and the law, and of "intellectual dishonesty".



On the beach: Dar 1

Not just that, but “Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife has no locus in its own right” but is merely an “agent” expected to carry out park management policy.

Zaloumis insists that the park authority had “shared the plans, process and location of the establishment of the artificial reef” with Ezemvelo.

Zaloumis also makes the startling claim that the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) has “limited application” to World Heritage Sites “which as you know, are regulated by the World Heritage Convention Act”.

But he then adds that the World Heritage Convention Act is itself “not applicable to an authorised official in relation to the performance of their functions or exercise of their power”.

In its reply, Ezemvelo expresses its objection to the “disrespectful and denigrating tone” of Zaloumis’ letter.

“It is astounding that the Wetland Authority, [which] is mandated to enforce and comply with the World Heritage Convention Act, considers this and other legislation cited in the document irrelevant.”

On the question of “locus”, the law provides for Ezemvelo “to act in both the public interest or in the interest of protecting the environment”, and that “the World Heritage Convention Act specifically cites Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife as being responsible for, inter alia, conservation within the park”.

Ezemvelo flatly denies that it was ever consulted and challenges Zaloumis’ claim that “marine biologists throughout the world ... have all concluded that artificial reefs are beneficial [to biodiversity]”.

“You fail to mention the host of freely available scientific literature that shows that artificial reefs often have significant long-term negative impacts on natural systems and are currently being removed from World Heritage sites and other sensitive areas”.

While this heated exchange was going on, another one had begun between Zaloumis and the Oceanographic Research Institute head, Professor Rudy van der Elst.

The day the *Dar 2* was sunk, Van der Elst wrote to Ezemvelo coastal manager Cedric Coetzee expressing “considerable concern” about the scuttling, and asking for more information. It is clear from the letter that he’d only just heard the news – and second-hand at that.

In reply Zaloumis let fly at the professor, telling him to get his facts straight before “issuing letters that do nothing other than to undermine the credibility of the organisation”.

“Why no one at ORI contacted the iSimangaliso Authority, in spite of existing working protocols, to establish the simple but critical fact as to the location of the artificial reef is disturbing,” he writes – clumsily attempting

to sidestep the fact that it was the iSimangaliso authority itself, i.e. he himself, who kept the ORI in the dark.

Zaloumis goes on to tell the distinguished marine scientist that all his fears about the negative impacts of artificial reefs are unfounded. And, as a final insult, he adds: “We have taken the liberty of appending a list of literature with respect to artificial reefs with which you may wish to update yourself”. A long list of website addresses is kindly provided.

Not only is Zaloumis’ tone unexpected from a professional point of view, but it is also aimed at an old family friend – Van der Elst was close to Andrew’s late father, Nolly, a respected environmentalist and long-time champion of the wetlands park.

Taken aback by “the tone and confused contents” of Zaloumis’ letter, Van der Elst replied that his query to Ezemvelo had been “purely a request for information and clarity on a rumour that barges were to be sunk as artificial reefs in the park”.

“Surely it was you that should have approached ORI for advice and guidance rather than the other way around as you suggest. ORI has extensive practical and scientific experience in artificial reef ecology and it seems incredible that you did not approach the very agency that could have given you the best scientific advice.”

In fact, the institute had gathered “compelling evidence that such reefs can pose conservation risks”, including the migration and aggregations of vulnerable fish species, which are then easily picked off by fishermen.

There is also the danger of attracting unnatural concentrations of large predators, which could have a serious impact on biodiversity, and of creating “stepping stones” between different bioregions, with negative effects on their unique ecologies.

The literature, Van der Elst says, does not support “the universal virtues of artificial reefs, notwithstanding the long list of websites you attached”.

As for Zaloumis’ assurance that the barge was cleaned and “made safe” to the highest international standards, Van der Elst says he has no way of knowing, because he was not there.

“However, based on our own experience with the *Pontao* (a Mozambican trawler scuttled off Umhlanga Rocks in 1991) this is a major and expensive task that should culminate in a

comprehensive report. It would be useful to have sight of such information, especially to exclude the possibility that the barge was coated in tributyl-tin (TBT) antifouling paint – which is highly toxic to marine life.”

In mid-December, in the teeth of this storm of protest, the second barge, *Dar 1*, was dragged off the beach and scuttled just 900 metres offshore, inside the protected area, at a depth of less than 17 metres. Perfect for rookie divers.

According to SAMSA, the huge hulk was used for target practice by the navy before it sank. An aerial photograph taken shortly afterwards shows what looks like an oil slick emanating from the wreck. Eyewitnesses say it was around 500m long and 10m wide.

When *noseweek* asked iSimangaliso about the slick, it said the wreck had been monitored by air, sea and divers, and there was no pollution.

In a lengthy (but reasonably polite) reply to emailed questions, the park authority maintained that “it was faced with an adverse situation which it turned into a positive outcome for the park”, and that its actions were “appropriate in the circumstances”.

It argues that the new artificial reefs will not only increase revenue and take the pressure off other dive sites, but contrary to the opinion of the ORI, will be a boon for biodiversity and provide important data for scientific research.

Noseweek was assured that all the necessary technical and environmental studies had been done, although iSimangaliso did not provide any of the requested documents, or names of the experts allegedly involved.

The park authority also maintained

In the teeth of a storm, the second barge was dragged off the beach and scuttled inside the protected area

that the scuttlings “were undertaken with the full knowledge of and written approval” of the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT).

DEAT, however, told *noseweek* that it had been consulted only after the decision had been taken, and had given its approval “reluctantly” since SAMSA’s directive was “already in effect”. It also said that it had initially been told that the situation was an emergency, and only later informed that the intention was to sink the barges within the park. Evidence, Ezemvelo suggests, of a deliberate attempt by the park authority to mislead the regulators.

When *noseweek* asked SAMSA operations executive Sobantu Tilayi for his version of events, he acknowledged that *Dar 2* was towed to

various different positions, including one 24 nautical miles out to sea, before reaching its final resting place.

He explained that this was because the first site was discovered to be within the super-restricted Marine Protected Area, into which neither SAMSA nor the salvors were prepared to drop a 3,300 ton wreck. According to Tilayi, the salvage tug then tried to reach deeper waters, but turned back because of concerns about the barge’s stability in the rough seas.

Tilayi said the less-damaged *Dar 1* could have made the longer voyage if it had been taken off the beach earlier, but its condition had deteriorated during weeks of delay, and by the time it was refloated the risk was considered too great. He acknowledged that in both cases, the outcome fitted neatly with the park authority’s wishes, but insisted those weren’t the only consideration.

On the other hand iSimangaliso’s version of events to *noseweek* was that the scuttling sites were approved before the first barge had been pulled off the beach – so someone’s memory is faulty.

To clear things up, Ezemvelo has asked DEAT for a copy of all the relevant documents and correspondence, but the department has yet to respond.

Andy Blackmore said the organisation was considering asking Minister of the Environment Martinus van Schalkwyk to “withdraw us as the conservation partner as we cannot continue with [Zaloumis’] unethical approach”. This request would necessitate a departmental investigation into the whole affair.

“This is a very serious recommendation to make and reflects the state of the relationship,” Blackmore said.

Prof Van der Elst has suggested that the issue be debated at a public forum that would include representatives from UNESCO and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

If Mr Zaloumis were to be involved in something like that, it should make for a very lively discussion.

■ A report in the *Sunday Tribune* just before *noseweek* went to press says Andy Zaloumis and the new Ezemvelo CEO, Bandile Mkhize, have agreed to meet regularly to “improve the relationship” between the two organisations. ■

Jacuzzi on the rocks

ANDREW ZALOUMIS, an urban planner by training, was appointed CEO of the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park Authority (now iSimangaliso) in 2002.

His father Solly, who died in 2003, served on the board of the ORI and as national president of the Wildlife Society (WESSA). In the 1990s he led the successful campaign against dune mining in the park.

Zaloumis jnr is well-connected po-

litically. His appointment to his current position is said to have had much to do with his friendship with former Minister of the Environment Valli Moosa.

He lives in an idyllic spot in the park, with a jacuzzi overlooking the ocean. He recently had the Mbekis over to stay in one of the private lodges. *Noseweek* is not sure at whose expense.



Andrew Zaloumis

At Sixes and Sevens

Why has the resettlement of Cape Town's cause célèbre, District Six, proved so intractable for so long?

ONGOING DISAGREEMENTS between the City of Cape Town and two groupings representing former inhabitants of District Six are holding up redevelopment of this internationally symbolic site.

Fourteen years after the process of land restitution began, and five years after Nelson Mandela handed keys to a first group of returning residents, only 25 of around 2800 claimant families have moved back to the District.

While the process was never set to be completed in a hurry, the knots tied by the latest antagonism won't easily be loosened – the huge open space that's been fought over for decades may remain vacant on Table Mountain's lower slopes for some years yet.

In the present episode, former landowners who, decades ago, were compensated by the apartheid government for land lost when the site was declared a "white group area", are demanding millions of rand from the Land Claims Commission, and stalling the whole process of resettlement with a court challenge – which will only be heard in several years' time.

The 40 former landowners (800 former landowners are officially recognised claimants), who have formed the District Six Advocacy Committee, charge that the District Six Beneficiary Development Trust, which claims to represent all former inhabitants, was not a legally constituted body at the point in 2000 when a crucial development plan was agreed between the Trust, the City (ANC-led at the time) and the Land Affairs Commis-



District Six in its heyday

sion – an agreement which gave the Trust veto powers.

The present DA-led City administration has provided supporting affidavits to the Advocacy Committee's legal challenge – notwithstanding legal opinion that the challenge can go nowhere, as the City, in signing the agreement, in fact accepted the Trust as a legal body at the time.

The DA-led City's aim in supporting the legal challenge is clearly that they hope this will pave the way to

having the 2000 agreement dissolved. In a July 2008 *Cape Times* article Mayor Helen Zille claimed that the 2000 agreement was unwieldy and legally invalid, and says the Trust "did not represent all the land claimants". The DA-led City is clearly frustrated by the Trust using its veto to challenge attempts to involve big business – which Zille argues is the only way sufficient funds for development of the site can be generated.

The Trust's Anwah Nagia, however, accuses Zille of changing sides, arguing that the City doesn't want a "working class" suburb so close to the city: "I worked with Helen Zille in 1980-81 through Hands off District Six [but] that old Zille is no more. When Zille became mayor we expected her to continue from where she left in the early eighties, but she has allowed herself to be controlled by business and political interests. She would dance with the poor as long as they remain in the townships."

It was, apparently, only after a group of the former ex-landowners failed to gain representation on the Trust's executive a few years ago – and seeing the battlelines being drawn between the DA-led City and the "people's struggle" oriented Trust – that they formed the Advocacy Committee to challenge the Trust's legal standing.

(Among many ironies littering the terrain is

that when it made its legal challenge against the Trust, the Committee was itself not yet a legally constituted body.)

Insisting that the amounts paid to them by the National Party government were inadequate, the Committee also upped their demands for individual compensation – and vice-chairperson JL Gihwala says they will do "everything to be considered for additional compensation before anyone else is resettled in the area".



Disputed turf: District Six lies fallow while warring parties fight over its control

The Gihwala family were paid out R50,000 for their land (which now lies under the Cape Peninsula University of Technology), but JL Gihwala began his own claims for further compensation around 1998. The Land Commission finally offered him R285,000 – but having gone the new Advocacy Committee route, he now wants to be paid out at current property values: R28m. Such a demand would appear to stand in contradiction to the Land Restitution Act, which does not provide for this level of individual compensation where entire communities were removed from a site.

In line with their demand for special treatment, the Committee, led by Gihwala and chairperson Tania Kleinhans, is especially opposed to equal treatment being given to all former inhabitants evicted from the area.

Gihwala tells *noseweek*: “[They are] advocating for everyone who lived in District Six to be treated the same. How can a landowner be treated equally to former tenants?”

The Trust’s Anwah Nagia dismisses this view, pointing out that Gihwala and Co themselves benefited from prior removals in the area. Says Nagia: “The first evictions were made by the colonial government between 1901 and 1913, when Africans were driven from the area and dumped in Ndabeni, and later in Langa and Guguletu. This created room for the group now waving title deeds.

“They claim land ownership of the District but you cannot selectively rewrite history.”

Nagia and the Beneficiary Trust accuse the Committee of greed and selfishness, and say that according to property experts the former landowners were adequately compensated for their land by the apartheid state.

Advocacy Committee chairperson Tania Kleinhans adds that earlier evictions are irrelevant: “The Land Restitution Act doesn’t acknowledge those earlier evictions and they



JL Gihwala at Cape Peninsula University of Technology, which he says was built on land owned by his family before the removals

Who nose and 'ears
everything on
the Garden Route?

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should not be addressed.”

Gihwala owns a number of properties across the province, and claims to be in contact with politicians from across the spectrum. He insists: “I am not opposed to the resettlement. I just don’t want those who never owned land there in the 1960s to benefit from the prime land.”

Anwah Nagia replies: “If Gihwala and his Committee would like to be resettled at the District, they are more than welcome. But they should not wave title deeds that were given by a flawed system. Had they declined the [apartheid government’s] financial offers, their current claims might make some sense.”

To prove his thesis that big business involvement is not needed, Anwah Nagia himself funded a pilot project, through a bank loan to build 25 housing units.

‘Gihwala and his committee should not wave title deeds given by a flawed system’

Removals: clearing up the facts

“REMOVALS” WERE NOT THE INVENTION of the apartheid state, and District Six had had its share of “clearances” by 1950 and the Group Areas Act.

The first recorded removals from the District were in the early 1900s, when, claiming that its inhabitants were threatened by “bubonic plague”, the authorities moved several thousand people out to what is now Ndabeni and then to Langa.

Around 1935, to create room for an extension of the harbour, District Six was declared a slum and unfit for human habitation. When the proposed harbour extension failed to take off, the clearance was called off.

The Government Gazette of 5 July 1957 proclaimed the “Table Mountain Area” a “White Only Area”, and from 1963 people were evicted from suburbs around the Cape Peninsula, including Newlands, Claremont, Mowbray, Greenpoint, Lansdowne, Constantia and Simon’s Town.

Then in February 1966, PW Botha formally proclaimed District Six a “White Group Area”. Over the next 15 years, nearly 60,000 people were given notice to give up their homes and move to newly designated townships on the Cape Flats – some named after streets in

District Six.

In 1981 a body of organisations and individuals came together to form Hands Off District Six, including Father Basil van Rensburg, Rev Stanley Abrahams, Dr Terence Fredericks, Prof Ciraj Rasool, Judge Desai, various religious groups, the Cape Action League, the District Six Civic Association and many others.

Their campaigns aimed at preventing any development and settlement within District Six that did not include the involvement of evicted residents. District Six quickly became a theatre for international anti-apartheid protest.

Hands Off District Six managed to prevent the National Party government from developing the area, apart from building Cape Technikon – now a campus of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT).

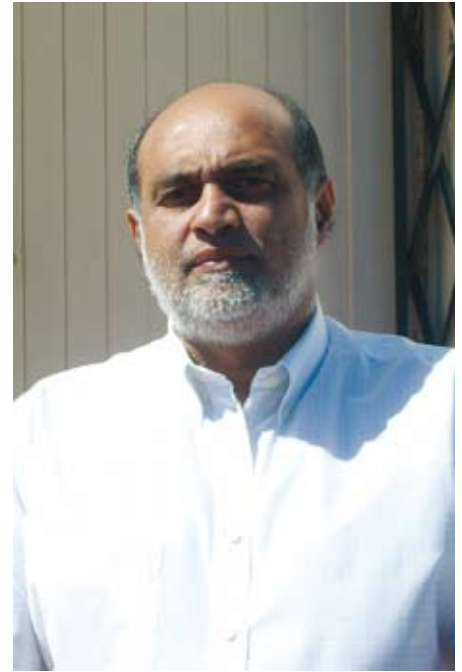
In 1994, the Restitution of Land Rights Act was passed, but only those who lost their land after 1913 were recognised as claimants.

To carry forward the resettlement, Hands Off constituted itself as the District Six Beneficiary and Redevelopment Trust, with the purpose of acquiring and holding land in District Six on behalf of claimants.

It was this development that was opened by Nelson Mandela in 2004, when he handed keys to Ebrahim Murat (87) and Dan Ndzabela (82).

Gihwala says the Committee is on the warpath against Nagia, and wants to ensure that his pilot project fails. He tells *noseweek* that they will drag out for as long as possible their court challenge to the Trust’s legal standing.

Of Nagia’s project Mayor Zille says: “Even without delays, the pilot



Anwah Nagia

project approach would take about 100 years to settle the claims of all beneficiaries who have chosen to return to the District.”

Nagia responds: “If everyone was committed to the resettlement, we would not be talking about 100 years.”

The situation appears intractable, replete with the unresolved divisions and antagonisms of the city’s colonial and apartheid history. Perhaps the only imaginable resolution would involve national government stepping in to fund a full resettlement programme, but such intervention would also require the endurance and finance to fight the legal issues in court. Given the massive credit that this could earn the government in the tricky territory of Cape politics, it’s surprising they’re nowhere to be seen. ■

Absa's role in car theft racket

Rogue cops and bank staffers suspected of complicity

SUSPICIONS HAVE BEEN RAISED that staff of Absa bank are working with rogue cops to export illegally impounded vehicles. The bank and SARS are refusing to explain how two cars seized by police as stolen are now shown on the Department of Transport eNatis database to have left the country.

The vehicles were among the thirteen impounded (as stolen) by Superintendent "Liebs" Liebenberg and Inspector Barry Steenberg, from clients of the Goodwood, Cape Town, dealership of Sharief Modack (*nose103*). The vehicles all carried police clearance certificates, and eNatis didn't reflect any of them as stolen.

Soon after the raid, Absa cancelled the finance agreements on those vehicles and demanded that Modack pay the bank the full amount on each, plus interest – plus the bank's legal costs. When he challenged Absa, Modack was blacklisted until he paid R913,400 to the bank to clear the "debt".

But when Modack tried to obtain the original registration papers of the cars from the bank, nobody would talk to

him, although, technically he now owned the cars, until it was proven that they had in fact been stolen. All the SAPS would say was that they were holding the vehicles pending an "upcoming trial".

When Modack continued to insist that the situation be clarified, Patrick Wadula of Absa's communication department arranged for him to speak to their attorneys. But, at a May 2008 meeting (which *noseweek* attended) attorney Leon Sandenbergh told Modack that he was holding the vehicle registration papers, and they would not be handed over. His explanation was that because the SAPS had declared the vehicles stolen, handing the papers to Modack would make the attorneys and their client (Absa) accomplices in handling stolen property. When *noseweek* pointed out that the police had given not a shred of evidence to back up their allegations, and that only the courts could finally decide whether the vehicles had been stolen, the attorney terminated the discussion.

The following day Sandenbergh slapped Modack with a legal bill for Absa's previous case against him, a cost Modack believed he had already paid.

The whole thing was looking highly suspicious. Then a spot of investigating showed that the can of worms hadn't even been opened: eNatis registration reflected that two of the "stolen" vehicles had been exported soon after being taken away by Liebenberg and Steenberg.

These were a VW Golf, still registered to LM Saunders and Absa Finance, and a Toyota Tazz, registered to M Triskey and Absa Finance.

Contacted for comment the SAPS refused to discuss the issue, or comment on their previous claim that the vehicles were being held for safekeep-



ing.

On hearing that the two cars had left the country, Absa's Wadula begged for time to do his own investigation into the matter. Forty days later this senior Absa official had to admit he could get no answers from his own organisation.

To obtain clearance for export, documents must be presented to the SARS Customs Department, including registration papers, owner's ID, police clearance forms and export permit. Yet Absa's attorney Sandenbergh claimed to be holding the registration papers – and Absa, as registered co-owners of the vehicles would have had to give consent.

Noseweek's attempt to learn from the SARS Customs Department who might have exported the vehicles simply got nowhere. SARS spokesperson, Adrian Lackay once again (see *nose111*) refused to provide any information: "You have a rogue editor and as long as he remains your editor, don't expect any information from SARS."

Noseweek: "Is that the official SARS' position? That you'll not respond to issues of public importance as long as they are raised by *noseweek*?"

Lackay: "What public? You run circulation of a mere 20,000 copies a month – that doesn't constitute the public."

Noseweek: "That's 20,000 taxpayers."

Lackey: "You'll write what you want, so why waste time with you?"

When *noseweek* patiently reminded Mr Lackay that cars impounded as stolen have been exported, and that Mr Modack appears to be the victim of serious fraud, he agreed to respond to an email enquiry.

But yes – *noseweek* is still waiting for a response... and so, Mr Lackay, is the public. **W**



Car dealer Sharief Modack

IT'S A GLITTERING GALA dinner in London's Sheraton Park Lane Hotel in September 2008. The revellers roar acclaim for luxury homes builders MKB, who have just scooped the Best Property in Africa prize at these prestigious CNBCTV/European Property Awards.

Twelve weeks later, on 17 December, the triumph becomes a nightmare when, without warning, MKB's main funder, Investec, pulls the plug and plunges the group's flagship company, MKB Property Developments, into provisional liquidation with a claim of R97m. It looks like the end of a brave but fatally flawed dream.

The rise and fall of MKB was played out over six helter-skelter years, following its launch in 2002 by its two ambitious and trendy young partners – Andrew Botha, then 26, and Jonathan Killik, 27.

MKB prided itself – fatally, as it turned out – on providing a complete in-house turnkey service for its well-heeled clients, through a plethora of subsidiary companies such as MKB Property Developments (sales), MKB Properties (construction and property management), MKB Plumbing, MKB Electrical, MKB Cabinetry, MKB Security and MKB Design. At its peak it employed almost 1000 people.

There were some initial hiccups. *Nose72* told of Adriana Bertheil's list of 44 complaints – uneven floor tiles, a leaking roof, peeling paint etc etc – at her newly-completed R5m cluster home in Sandhurst. *Nose74* recorded the case



of the tumbling Alessi loo at Liz and Michael Griffin's new R3m MKB-built pad in Athol, Johannesburg.

Botha and Killik took the flak in reasonably good spirit – although they did launch a R7.7m defamation action against Liz Griffin for her comments to *noseweek*, such as: "They agreed they'd fucked up so badly that we couldn't live in the house while they fixed it". (Michael Griffin says the action was settled: "We've sold the house and moved



Des res: one of the company's lush pads

Rise and fall of MKB

Investec reduces ambitious development company to rubble

on with our lives.")

Says Andrew Botha, now an older and wiser 33: "We've come a long way since the Adriana Bertheil story. The quality of our homes is now top of the market. They're mind-blowing." And they must be, for 18a Redhill Road in Joburg's Morningside – the home, as it happens, of Andrew Botha and his young family – to have won that Best Property in Africa gong last year.

Now everything else has gone – the fleet of silver logo-bearing cars, the partners' Porsches, the helicopter company and the rest of it. "It was a fire sale," says Botha. "It's terrible."

Despite the mauling *noseweek* gave the partners in the early days, Botha now answers questions with courtesy. "The biggest mistake we made was having too many staff and doing the construction ourselves," he says. "We were a great ideas business; great entrepreneurial spirit; great brand. We started off with a small team of construction people and as we got bigger and bigger, instead of sub-contracting, we elected to keep it in-house. And we lost control over managing the people and the theft and the fraud, with people clocking in their friends when they weren't at work.

"Investec waited for me to go on holiday before bringing the [liquidation] ap-

plication," he says. "I was in Mauritius at the time. When I came back all hell had broken loose. My partner [Jonathan Killik] was having an operation, so he couldn't go to attorneys and draw up affidavits and what not."

There had been warning signs. Last September, just three days before the London awards dinner, MKB issued a statement saying it had closed its construction company MKB Properties, with the loss of some 250 skilled and unskilled staff, in order to streamline and consolidate its business operations. Botha said then that all current and future building work would be outsourced. The following month MKB Properties – under the new name of Kadoma Trading – was liquidated by the Johannesburg High Court after failing to file an answering affidavit to a claim of R154,000.

"We'd pumped in so much money to keep the construction division going. Eventually we decided to call it a day and MKB Properties went into liquidation," says Botha. "We thought that by closing down the construction company the rest of the group would be safe."

Investec's move against the flagship MKB Property Developments, therefore, was a major shock. "I didn't see it coming," says Botha. "We've got 12 properties either complete or 65% complete:

Last September MKB issued a statement saying it had closed its construction company



two in Sandhurst selling at R20m each; two more in Sandhurst for R30m each; one in Hyde Park for R20m; two in Morningside for R17/R18m each; three more in Morningside for R7m each.

“But Investec is nervous of the market. When they could see that the houses we had finished weren’t selling they stopped paying on the facilities where the houses needed to be completed.

“We had really good contractors doing work in good faith and we had a written guarantee from Investec to pay these people for their work. But Investec wasn’t releasing money from the facility to pay these people, so they weren’t doing the work.

“Property Developments didn’t have to be liquidated. We had the management skill. By June this year those houses would have fetched at least R140m. But suddenly Investec wouldn’t pay. Their excuse was they were assessing the whole MKB situation.

“Investec pulled quite a slimy move, because they didn’t even demand money from us. There was no letter calling up the loan – they went straight for liquidation.”

MKB’s most ambitious project was an enormous office block in Sandton, within which the group briefly had its head office. Last year they sold the “immaculate” premises to diversified investment group Abalengani, which has just flogged half the block and is looking to offload the rest for R30m.

“We sold all of our fixed assets during the course of 2008, just to try and keep liquid,” says Botha. “We put all that money back, but it wasn’t enough.

“The kind of stress you have to go through every month to find R2.5m for your salary run. And if you’ve got banks that aren’t paying you for work that you’ve done, where do you find the money? There were many months that Jonathan and I had to write personal cheques into the company for R1m each, just to cover salaries. Then we’d get it back in a month, or maybe two, when the money came back in.

“It’s not the way to run a company. I don’t want to be there again.”

The demise of the MKB group – Investec’s provisional liquidation order has a return date at Johannesburg High Court this month – has brought an end to the partnership duo of Andrew Botha and Jonathan Killik. “Jonathan and I have decided

to go our separate ways,” says Botha. Provisional liquidator Allan Pellow says: “Our investigations into the affairs of the company have commenced. However, no decisions have yet been made with regard to the disposal of (its) assets.”

Investec refuses to comment on its without-warning liquidation strike.

■ Standard Bank has filed a R10m claim against MKB Property Developments with joint provisional liquidator Allan Pellow. This is for financing the revamp of an old house at Camps Bay and a 10-unit development in Morningside. Both projects are partly-completed, but there’s enough collateral there and Standard isn’t worried. **W**

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Pesky blogger shuts his trap

...but other timeshare victims remain bitterly angry

DONN EDWARDS' SLEEPLESS NIGHTS are over. In a sealed settlement, Quality Vacation Club has agreed to spare the pesky blogger time in jail – on condition that he keeps his trap shut and his fingers off the keyboard whenever he suffers a desire to moan about the “timeshare bully”. That much we gather from his suddenly blank website and friendly silence.

The settlement was reached just three days after a Pretoria senior counsel wrote to *noseweek* offering to assist the besieged blogger. According to the senior counsel: “I found it disturbing that [...] Edwards has to submit to the bullying of a large corporation, not because he is in the wrong (he does not appear to be), but

because he hasn't the money with which to fight the corporation.”

Edwards politely thanked us for the referral – and then turned down the offer. “I've done my bit and said all I needed to say,” was all the explanation he offered for his sudden silence. But while Edwards quietly forgets the threat of heavy-duty legal action, others find themselves cash-strapped in worse timeshare predicaments.

Isaac Boshomane of Pretoria, for one. He's been fighting for nearly two years with another timeshare bully, the Club Leisure Group, owned by Stuart Lamont and Anthony Ridl. Boshomane has been trying to reclaim over R12,000 that Club Leisure siphoned from his bank account, a salesman having seduced him into

thinking he was sure to make a healthy income.

He tells *noseweek*: “I was called on my cellphone a few days before 25 May 2007 by a lady whose name I forget. She said my wife and I had won a prize and we needed to go to a place in Centurion to collect. We just needed to watch a 25-minute presentation and the prize would be ours.”

The couple duly went to the presentation. Says Boshomane: “Thereafter, a salesperson called Freddie Mabalane explained that they had the package on special.

I told him that I was busy cutting down on my expenses so I couldn't afford to join the club. He mentioned that by the time the first debit went through, we would have made money because he was going to sell the package to visitors from the first month.”

In other words Isaac Boshomane was being assured that his timeshare would be sold on to holiday makers, earning him a healthy return from the first month.

“I told him that I could only sign up if what he was saying were true – if not, I was going to cancel after the first month. He assured me there wouldn't be a problem. I filled in the form and swiped my card for the deposit of R4500.”

The Boshomanes got no prizes that day – “the gifts had run out”. And Isaac learned later, from Club Leisure Development executives he complained to, that the assurances given by salesperson Mabalane had no legal standing whatsoever.

Boshomane didn't see a return of any kind by the end of the first month, or the month after – or ever. Twelve months down the line, Isaac Boshomane had begun to realise that there simply wasn't any way he would benefit from being a club member. He'd been fooled.

All attempts to have the agreement cancelled were thwarted by the groups' head office in Pinetown, who referred him to the “fine print” – he could cancel only within six days of signing up. When he referred to Mabalane's assurances, he was told that the group would not take responsibility for their salesperson's tactics.

For a year Club Leisure Development debited Boshomane's account monthly for some seven hundred Rands. When he finally "wised up" and made sure there were no funds in his account to pay the stop-order, Michael Matzopoulos, from the group's subsidiary Club Leisure Management, approached him with a new offer. To make his problems go away, including being blacklisted, Boshomane was asked to sign a new contract. This time he took a look at the fine print – and discovered that Flexiclub and Club Leisure Development were no more. The new entities were Holiday Access and Club Leisure Management – and the new agreement was designed to absolve Flexiclub of liabilities.

The agreement, which he declined to sign, reads: "I, Isaac Boshomane, Flexi Club No 115672 hereby acknowledge, understand and accept the following addendum conditions:


1. I will no longer be responsible to Flexi Club/Vacation Properties (Pty) Ltd/Club Leisure Development (Pty) Ltd for any arrears, nor any of the legal claims due by me.

2. My record on Trans Union ITC, will be removed

3. I have applied for membership to Holiday Access, Contract No (blank). I hereby acknowledge that over and above the terms and conditions of the contract we are liable to pay an annual subscription of R420 subject to an annual escalation for the duration of the contract

4. Should I default on any payments due in terms of my Holiday Access agreement and addendum thereto, clause 1&2 above may be rendered null and void."

Boshomane is still blacklisted – and he's still trying to find a way to get his money back. *Noseweek* has established that the owners of Club Leisure Group, Stuart Lamont and Anthony Ridl, have over one hundred timeshare companies registered between them. (Also listed as a director is thirteen-year-old Emmanuel Deodate Testa!) The listed directors were not taking calls, and *noseweek* isn't holding its breath waiting for Ridl's personal assistant, Debbie Patterson, to get back to us as promised.

Boshomane isn't alone. By 15 January this year 226 complaints had been filed against Flexiclub by unhappy victims, at helloworld.com and mypetition.co.za. 

Timeshare? Give it to someone you hate

SOME STATEMENTS made by angry victims, at mypetition.co.za:

David Viljoen: Lost R18,000. Wish there was an effective way to warn prospective clients to refrain from joining this venture. Petition is a start, but not effective enough against their marketing campaign.

Rachel Bouer: The apartment Flexiclub booked for me in Durban was supposed to be for four persons: there was place for two only, and far below standard. I had to run around at great expense for the extra two.

Tamsyn Chetty: Their service is pathetic – they are con artists!

Christine Marlor: My partner and I wish we had never converted. The salesman spun us a yarn, then took our money – but when we wanted to speak to him he never returned our calls. Pathetic service.


Tinnie Momberg: Cannot get rid of it. No resale value. Cost per year is as much as a week's holiday

would cost anyway. Never get a reservation in school holidays, so I cannot use it.

Jan Roodt: Impossible to sell your points. Impossible to stop your membership! I have tried for three years, with no luck. Flexi Club is a parasite that won't leave you alone.

Pheladi Sebati: I am one of those who were conned by club representatives. I was told the points are paid back, but this is not true. I was told to sell them myself, without any help.

Willie Oosthuizen: Wish we never joined. Would give membership away for free, but don't have an enemy we hate enough!

Lindiwe Mahlangu: They promised not to use my credit card, and next thing it was debited – but the consultant was too busy to speak to me. Head office could not even find me in their system – yet my card was debited. 

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Pretoria lawyers fight Nedbank over R26m

FINDLAY & NIEMEYER, one of Pretoria's oldest law firms (founded 1891), is bracing itself for a battle against Nedbank that will mean liquidation if it loses. And a secret forensic report, commissioned by Nedbank from PricewaterhouseCoopers, could turn out to be a smoking gun.

Nose111 told how Findlay & Niemeyer's trusted partner, André Croucamp, was jailed for 15 years last September after pleading guilty to a R26.7m scam involving 935 charges of fraud, theft, money-laundering and corruption. *Noseweek* named senior members of Nedbank's home loans division who, wittingly or unwittingly, helped the 42-year-old attorney to plunder his firm's trust account in a seven-year spree.

Now Nedbank has filed a provisional claim to recover the R26m from the Attorneys' Fidelity Fund, which exists to protect the public against theft of attorneys' trust money – but the fund has responded that Nedbank's claim would be considered only after all legal avenues have been exhausted.

"The bank must look to Croucamp and the partners of Findlay & Niemeyer to meet their claim," says the fund's claims director, Hendrik du Plessis. "Anything the bank cannot recover from those sources will be considered on its merits."

Counsel has assured John Price, Findlay & Niemeyer's 78-year-old senior partner, that he and his partners have a clear defence. Far from Croucamp stealing R26m from Nedbank, Price maintains that "most of the money was in fact stolen from our trust account. The money was ours and it seems probable that Nedbank owes money to us!"

However, Findlay & Niemeyer cannot submit its own claim to the Attorneys Fidelity Fund – claims may not be made against the fund by partners in respect of theft by other partners.

In its letter of demand, Nedbank refers to a forensic report it commis-

sioned from PricewaterhouseCoopers as justification for its claim. Nedbank is desperate to keep the report's contents secret, but *noseweek* can reveal its main conclusion: On balance, it is not clear that Nedbank is entitled to any money at all.

John Price has made repeated requests to Nedbank for a copy of the PwC report. If it is not forthcoming, a subpoena will be issued. And since Nedbank has referred to the report in its letter of demand, it is unlikely the

On balance it is not clear that Nedbank is entitled to any money at all

bank will be able to keep its damning contents under wraps.

Price challenges Croucamp's confession statement, quoted in *nose111*, in which the attorney justified his "spiral of criminality" by saying that although he generated "truly substantial fees", he received only a "meagre salary" at Findlay & Niemeyer. In fact, says Price, Croucamp received a "generous salary" (over R70,000 per month, says another source).

"Croucamp's statement that we were 'about to be liquidated' for a R350,000 overdraft facility, and that I had to mortgage my home to inject cash into the practice, is absurd," continues Price. "Operating with a modest

overdraft facility is normal, and we still do so. I never had to mortgage my home to provide cash for the firm.

"Croucamp's real failings were dishonesty, greed and extravagance, plus gross stupidity. His hard work was a sham and it has since become apparent that much of his time was spent working his fraudulent scheme."

■ In *nose111*, it was incorrectly reported that John Price's letter to the control prosecutor, objecting to Croucamp's 15-year sentence under a plea bargain, was not mentioned in court. In fact, the magistrate read out portions of the letter, and said that the court would decide the matter. This was, however, not included in his written judgment.

STOP PRESS

As *noseweek* went to press we received a letter from attorneys acting for Sonia Fifield, a former employee in Nedbank's internal audit division, in which they charge that *noseweek* "maliciously" defamed her in our report in *nose111*. They say the story's subheading insinuated that she was among bank employees who had taken bribes or been accomplices to fraud; whereas in the story itself we merely quoted the bank's convicted former attorney, Andre Croucamp, as declaring in his confession that, of the millions he had stolen, he had paid R126,507 to Ms Fifield, in four instalments, *as gifts* while involved in a relationship with her.

They started a relationship in 2002 when Ms Fifield worked in the (bond) Shortfall Recoveries division of the bank – for which Croucamp's firm did recoveries – but she was then transferred to internal audit where, she declares, she had no influence over the auditing of matters related to her lover's dealings with the bank. She terminated their relationship in 2005.

She emphatically denies having taken bribes or having any part in fraud.

We are happy to note this clarification and her objection. While we emphatically deny any malice, we do apologise for any omission that might have created an unfair impression.

Noseweek also records that, following the Croucamp disclosures, Ms Fifield was subjected to disciplinary proceedings at the bank, where she was cautioned but not discharged or otherwise penalised. She chose to leave the bank's employ shortly thereafter. – Ed. ▣



Flying footwear I

WHEN I WAS A CHILD, I didn't like to wear shoes. Not for me socks and lace-ups, or cutesy buckle-up sandals. I liked to feel the grass under my feet and the mud between my toes. Especially the mud between my toes. I still do, but one has to grow up some time, and shoeless adults tend to be viewed with some suspicion in polite circles.

Now that I'm considered an adult, I feel obliged to wear shoes in the interests of practicality and public decency. I still prefer to go barefoot, but lately there's a pair of shoes I've been coveting. Yes, those shoes – the Ducati 271 model, size 10, that everyone I know wants.

That is, ever since Iraqi journalist Muntazer al-Zaidi threw his pair, one by one, at President Bush, while yelling something in Arabic, which roughly translates as: "Please leave our country you nasty fellow, and by the way your mama wears army boots".

Immediately following the "shoes heard around the world", there was a veritable firestorm of Internet commentary and opinion, most of it complimentary, or at least grudgingly appreciative. One well-reported rumour was that a well-heeled Saudi businessman had offered \$10m for al-Zaidi's shoes. But alas, as befits such a comic-opera, they were destroyed soon after the incident by investigators checking whether or not they contained some sort of explosive device – which is unfortunate, as they would certainly have garnered a small fortune on e-bay, enabling Mr al-Zaidi to pay his lawyer's fees after being arrested on charges of "assaulting a foreign head of state visiting Iraq". Not that he needs to pay legal fees – lawyers from all over the world have volunteered their services *gratis* in return for the privilege of defending a folk hero.

Sales of any shoe resembling the infamous Ducati 271 have rocketed in the meantime, with cobblers all around the place claiming to be the original designers of the flying footwear. (www.watan.com/en/the-news/163-shoe-sale-booms-cobbler-thank-bush-.html)



Sales of any shoe resembling the infamous Ducati 271 have rocketed

As the Iraqi election drew nearer, the treatment and potential punishment of Mr al-Zaidi became an issue, with what seemed like the entire Arab world, and most of the rest of us, seeing him as more deserving of honours than punishment.

Additionally, many have lamented Bush's amazingly quick reflexes, which were undoubtedly developed from untold years of ducking and diving. As the spectacle quickly reverberated around the world and became an instant Internet sensation, a number of online games were quickly developed by those with little else to do. So now anyone with web access can try his or her own hand at beaming Bush.

(blog.wired.com/underwire/2008/12/attack-of-the-b.html)

My personal favourite is the "Sock and Awe" game (www.sockandawe.com/).

If you really want to get in on the fun you can visit www.thankyouforthrowingyourshoe.com, and upload a picture of yourself along with the shoes you would like to throw at Mr Bush.

Nowadays, with suicide bombers blowing up innocent people, demented pirates shooting innocent bystanders and embezzlers stealing billions from taxpayers, throwing shoes seems quite a harmless, even constructive, way to vent one's frustrations and express distaste at the injustices perpetrated by bullies and scoundrels.

As for ex-President Bush – his ignoble exit from the world stage will forever be associated with a pair of shoes hurled by a righteously indignant journalist. The only question is why this didn't happen countless times over the last eight years. What were journalists thinking?

I don't really understand why the hurling of shoes is such a grievous insult in the Muslim world, but I think I might try it out for myself whenever I encounter nasty people who perpetually get away with their misdeeds.

I somehow hope that the rest of the Western world feels the same. This practice could be the greatest gift to the world from Arab culture since algebra.

And I don't mind walking home barefoot. ■



Flying footwear II

WELL ALL RIGHT, OKAY, I am one of those. I think it was a good idea to throw one's shoe at President Bush. Just a pity there wasn't a half-brick lying around. It's not easy to aim a shoe, but the president had to duck this one, so his dignity was dented and I suppose that's enough, one shouldn't be greedy. Yet the best sight perhaps was dear ol' Maliki trying not to laugh as he grabbed at the flying footwear up there on the podium before the whole world's media. I mean he didn't have to duck so he could afford to see the funny side – there aren't many funny sides to anything in Iraq anymore. But protocol, man, protocol; good manners are the destruction of too much pleasure on this miserable ball of planetary mud, and to make sure nobody construe this robust boot-flinging as an act of expressionist art, some bloody court had to charge the filthy chucker with attempted something-or-other disgraceful, like trying to shoot President Lincoln, forsooth. I mean it's enough to make one side with President Ahmadinejad, perish the thought, who also thinks it was a pretty cool idea and only sorry he couldn't do it himself. Come to think of it, I might just email President Chavez for his take on it all, I mean he's been calling the former prezzie Comrade George of late, because he's done more to vindicate the thinking of Karl Marx than any living being on Earth.

I don't know if kids these days do Last Touch. Back in my day, when you'd been with a buddy and said your farewells, just as you moved away you'd quickly touch an arm or shoulder and nip back saying Last Touch! And it was this quaint old civilized thing that ol' Dubya was doing before leaving office, just saying a sentimental ta-ta to his Iraqi buddies on whom he'd bestowed Libdy, Freem from Terrism and Dmahcracy in the mode of Uncle Sam. Also thinned them out a bit by a couple of million. I mean pressure on the land was extreme, everybody knows that. Why, this is Mesopotamia, remember, older than Akhen-atun and Moses, older than Old Kingdom Egypt



**Good manners
are the
destruction
of too much
pleasure on
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ball of
planetary
mud**

itself, and after five thousand years it's time it got dusted down, smartened up, cleaned out, given a good dose of opening medicine, like a cupful of castor oil for a cart-horse. Ol' Dubya beamed, did that up-and-down thing with his head, bounced a bit toe-to-toe, Texas style. Why, he was about to say, once this new dmahcracy has taken root everybody will be entitled to an American-style dream, to stand for president, like me, all he needs is a hundred million dollars like this new boy...er, um, yeah... Bayrack Obama, and remember where he comes from. And he was about to tell us where Bayrack comes from when the shoe arrived. Sad, apart from the bad protocol, because he might have told us where Bayrack Obama intends to go. Where any new prez can in a country with a single ideology. I mean maybe he'll go to Gaza and get the poor buggers out from under, but then he'll get shot dead for sure, won't he?

So there you have it. But don't think Dubs does his jogs round the US Capitol exhausting his bodyguard for nothing, hey? He goes down saluting, as the ocean of floating corpses closes over his head. Nemmine the Republican neocons who believe in rule #1 of freemarketism – Government Never Meddles in Markets – Dubs raises by various witchdoctory \$13.7bn for the US motor industry, declaring with utmost moral majesty that they will henceforth rationalise expenditures and modernise their costing – a nice euphonious way of saying sack half the work force and oblige the survivors to accept wages at the level of autoworkers in the sweatshops of South Korea. And THAT'S where you have it, matey. O ghosts of the proletariat in the Great Depression, where are you? Greatgrandchildren of the haggard unsleeping Trade Union organisers in the dark bitter years – RISE UP! You have nothing to lose but...er... what was it again you had nothing to lose but? Ah yes, nothing but the fancy house on which you took an excessive mortgage. In the 1980s capitalism triumphed over communism. In the 1990s it triumphed over democracy. In the 2000s it imploded under the gravity of its own greed.

So-o le-e-et's a-drinkadrinkadrink to Lily the Pinkapinkapink, saviour of the Human Rahahace; For she-e-e invented medicinal compounds efficacious in every case.

Remember the old army song. Remember it desperately. Somebody's got to come and save us, and it might be her (I mean she). ▣

PAYMENT & TERMS FOR SMALLS

Deadline for smalls is the 1st of the month prior to publication.

Smalls ads are prepaid at R120 for up to 15 words, thereafter R15 per word.

Boxed ads are R200 per column cm ex VAT (min 3cm deep).

Payment by cheque should be made to Chaucer Publications, PO Box 44538, Claremont 7735.

Payment by direct transfer should be made to Chaucer Publications; Account 591 7001 7966; First National Bank; Vineyard Branch; Branch code 204 209.

Payment online at www.noseweek.co.za.

Email ads to ads@noseweek.co.za.

Further info Adrienne 021 686 0570.

PERSONAL

Best wishes to *noseweek* for another year of successful nose-ing. William, Cape Town.

With love to my chick, Lorna – from Brian.

Scharie, Nicole and Taryn: Good luck for your fourth and final years' studies, girls – Love Karl.

Lorraine, I love you high as the sky, deep as the sea and more. AB Harris.

To my wonderful husband Mike. Happy reading. Love always, Joan.

Love and dedication are your great virtues, my dear four ladies: Nicky, Christina, Daphney and Joyce. Demos Takoulas.

Personal thank you for the lovely surprise but I'll need a clue... hvdm@incelaw.co.za.

Happy New Year! It's time to treat yourself. Call Bang and Olufson on 0860 106 219

Gabi, Happy Birthday to a double digit girl. Ruth.

HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

Arniston Stunning seafront home perched on cliff top overlooking beach. Breathtaking position and panoramic sea views. 5 bedrooms, 3 en-suite, serviced. 082 706 5902.

Clarens Near Golden Gate in the beautiful eastern Free State: Rosewood Corner B&B offers all you want for a break from it all. 058 256 1252.

Friston Lodge Guest House B&B Upper Newlands, near Kirstenbosch Gardens, UCT and the Waterfront. Comfortable affordable accommodation, in garden setting. Solar-heated pool, DSTV. Sabine 076 156 2381; Sabine@cape-stay.com.

Plettenberg Bay Anlin Beach House B&B/Self-Catering. Four-star luxury 100m from Robberg Beach. 044 533 3694; www.anlinbeachhouse.co.za stay@anlin-beachhouse.co.za.

Surfers' Corner, Muizenberg Overlooking beach. Brand new luxury self-catering apartments, 1bed & 2bed with sea views.

Sleeps 10. www.surferscorner.com. Wolfgang 082 567 1600.

Umhlanga 2 bed/2 bath stunning, serviced sea-facing apartment with DSTV. putz@icon.co.za; 082 900 1202.

Hermanus Luxury home sleeps 10; ideal for two families; walking distance to village/cliff path. 083 564 8162.

Montagu Next time stay at the luxury Harmonie Farm Cottage in Montagu. Call 023 614 1218.

Kalk Bay, Cape Town The Majestic Cottage and Spa. Luxury apartment for sale or rental. Contact Paul 082 492 2869.

Underberg Bentwood Inn B&B. Your break in the Berg. Glynis on 033 701 2920 or 082 678 6469.

Knysna holiday accommodation Self-catering, three-bedrooms, sleeps four. To view: www.rodic.co.za/knysnaholiday.htm. 082 442 7631.

Howick, KZN Self-catering accommodation in quiet area of town. Sleeps eight. Has pool. 084 582 2723 or 082 872 4333.

Sunnycove Fish Hoek Spacious comfortable apartment for 6, spectacular sea views, near beach. 021 7823789 gillis@gmail.com.

Hermanus Holiday home to let. 4 beds en-suite, swimming pool. 083 455 7555.

Richards Bay to let, furnished, serviced, upmarket townhouses suitable for professionals, contractors and holiday makers. 035 753 2007.

Manaba, KZN Holiday flat to let 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms 150m from beach. 083 463 5031.

Cape Agulhas Summer Place B&B. Sea views Phone Kathy 128 435 6843 082 826 3499.

PROPERTY TO BUY, SELL OR RENT

Amanzimtoti, Durban Stunning beachfront properties for sale with breathtaking seaviews! From R490K–R3m+. Call Nikki 083 764 8622.

Vredehoek, Cape Town City Bowl Luxury renovated spacious double-storey 3 & 4 bed townhouses, magnificent city & harbour views, o/plan kitchens, fireplaces, 3 bathrooms, mes, bics, alarm, balconies, one with pool, one with garage, off-street parking. All offers on R2.65m considered. Email its@polka.co.za for info.

Eden Island, Seychelles Visit paradise at www.edenisland.sc.

Scarborough Six acres. A river runs through it. R3,9m. Call Martin 083 700 3311.

Sedgefield, Garden Route Two-bedroom house in a milkwood forest crescent. Only R1.3m onco. Wally 082 902 8797.

Wilderness Dunes Beachfront house 240m square. Buy share-certificate (R25,000) and enjoy one week yearly, forever. Walter 021 554 1564.

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Light industrial property available for the small investor. R650,000 + VAT.

www.susstoltz.co.za. Call 083 308 9133.

Brackenridge Estate, Plettenberg Bay Plot for sale. R800,000 onco. 082 490 7035.

Zevenwacht Estate W/Cape, 250m2 for sale or swop for smallholding George/Sedgefield main route. 082 458 0575.

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Guided casual walking in beautiful southwest France. Be our house guests enjoying excellent cuisine. www.frenchcooks.com; +44 208 776 2045.

Mike Levy The Voice Of Experience – handles all enquiries. Specialises in cruising and senior travel insurance. 011 882 8107 or 082 679 0706;

mike.gulliversbruma@galileosa.co.za. **Paris** Beautiful sunny apartment 5 mins from Champs Elysees, fully equipped, sleeps 2. putz@icon.co.za; +33 617 045 290. Apologies for any previous unacknowledged emails whilst the address was out of order.

Take the Virtual Tours at www.walkerbouts.co.za, www.highlandsinfo.co.za and www.wildtrout.co.za for information about Walkerbouts, Self-catering houses & the Wild Trout Association.

KwaZulu-Natal All Out Adventures. Northern Drakensberg Adventure Centre. Open daily. All welcome. 036 438 6242. www.alloutadventures.co.za.

LEGAL, INSURANCE & FINANCIAL

Final Accounts & Claims For contractors. Martin 082 900 1410.

Legal services in Kenya? Wanam Associates specialize in IP, Trade Mark, Corporate Law, Conveyancing/Property Law, ICT Law, Litigation, Legal Support/Resources; mail@wanam.co.ke.

For adequate life, dread disease and permanent disability cover and a professional analysis & assessment contact Johan Beukman 021 712 4352/ 083 448 2512; jbeukman@netactive.co.za.

Insurance Those in the know(se) use a good insurance broker. Contact Kearney-Forbes on 011 460 1644.

011 823 2962 or fivasogle@telkomsa.net. **Helping you** maintain your good name. IPA. 011 828 6052.

FOR SALE

Tinus & Gabriel de Jongh paintings bought, sold and valued. Art prints sold. Gallery open by appointment; 021 686 4141 dejongh@yebo.co.za www.tinusdejongh.co.za.

Unique, one-off patchwork heirlooms for the people you love – all ages, genders and styles. 083 300 7558.

Secondhand plastic pallets bought and sold. www.premierpallets.co.za or 083 756 6897.

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Bio-Systems SA Biological additives for septic sewage systems and grease traps. Call 021 786 2972.

Ultra Silent (52Db) standby diesel generators for business and home use. 5–85 kVA. Call Tom Bloom on 011 284 2000.

Hobie 16 for sale Call 083 280 0009.

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES

Flying Dutchman For all your graphic design work – logos, adverts, print, packaging, corporate ID. Mich 072 141 8854.

Silver Spoon Function Hire Hiring of cutlery, crockery, linen, glasses, marquees, heaters etc. For all your hiring requirements 011 262 2227; www.silverspoonhire.co.za.

Translations English to Afrikaans. Ina 082 978 9846.

Visas For superb, swift service in all your visa requirements, deal with Jan and Anton and the team at Visa Ex-

press. 021 425 8527.

Nomsa's Tailoring, Dry-Cleaning, Laundry and Ironing. 148 Queen Street, Kensington, Jhb. 011 616 1615.

All your labour and HR problems sorted. PE area. Call Gruskin Consulting. 041 585 5870.

Fivas Ogle and Associates We deal with large/problematic insurance claims.

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QI Logistics Superior Freight Forwarding and Customs Clearing Services. Call Gerry Robinson on 011 974 4813.

Postnet Sandton City has mailboxes available. Open seven days a week.

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Fight the flab Lose weight. Correct body alignment and posture. Free assessment. Pilates, sports training and rehabilitation, comprehensive stretching. Sandton 082 373 2409.

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COURSES

Art Classes, Muizenberg General art & drawing skills. Meg 021 788 5974 or 082 926 7666. jordi@telkomsa.net.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Magazine publisher Specialist in sales and marketing short and long-term assignments. 083 252 8380.

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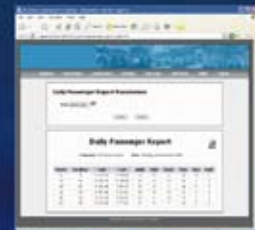
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