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SOCIAL GRANTS DISASTER LOOMS



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ISSUE 201 • JULY 2016

In the mind of the EFF

Page 29

FEATURES

4 Letters

6 Editorial

7 Notes & Updates

42 Smalls

COLUMNS

34 Down & Out

35 Books

40 Letter from Umjindi

41 Last Word

8 The impending social grant meltdown

Mass deprivation forecast, if government fails in setting up new payment system

10 Taxman's 12-year squeeze on innocent man

Honest businessman's life in ruins after vicious bribery battle

14 Kangaroo cowboys on the West Coast

Murder and menaces ignored as Australian mining outfit trashes SA environment laws

16 The fleecing of Limpopo

While minnows are netted for tender irregularities, big fish continue feasting on provincial coffers

20 Dead Man's Chest

After years in the dark, widow uncovers family conspiracy to snatch departed husband's estate

24 Bitter battle over multi-million rand estate

Forged signatures and fraud alleged as Hawks and NPA probe disputed will

26 Heads roll and bullets fly in KZN

As ANC factions go to war, it's back to the killing fields of 1990

36 The fire beneath

Love and tragedy in the life and work of pioneering social anthropologist Monica Wilson

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Letters

Lesson for one and all

YOUR PROFILE OF GG ALCOCK, "THE WHITE Zulu..." [nose200] is an absolute eye-opener for anyone in the marketing industry but more importantly, a lesson for everyone that we are clueless about our society. Most inspiring.

Lloyd Macklin,
Vaal Marina

Jansen's imperfect opinion

I WAS APPALLED BY YOUR RADIO ADVERT crediting Jonathan Jansen's racist and deliberately provocative opinion on the future of SA's universities as your selling point. Is this the kind of drivel you like to pass on to your readers?

I have been a great fan of Jansen but no man is perfect. When imperfect people air opinions at odds with their general contribution, it may well be discreet and politically savvy to disregard that comment, especially when he is under considerable personal stress.

Your paper *Noseweek* plays a valuable role in drawing attention to contentious issues, but this salacious advertising shows a lack of judgement. Please recall the ad immediately to avoid building a racially polarised society in a politically tense time. I have submitted a complaint to the Advertising Standards Authority and the Broadcasting Complaints Commission.

Alison Gwynne-Evans
Rondebosch

Professor Jansen hardly deserves to be patronised. If anyone has the moral authority to express the views quoted in our ad, it is he. He saw fit to express them from a public platform to a large

audience at the Franschhoek Literary Festival. That is news.

I, too, feel discomforted by what he had to say; most sensible, right-thinking people will be; all the more reason to take note. By all means, have a different view of the developments on our campuses over the past six months. But when you condemn Jansen's seriously held views as "drivel", "gossip", "unethical", "salacious", "racist" and "deliberately provocative", it is your lack of judgement that must be called into question. Our advert fairly advertised an important feature of that issue's contents. – Ed.

■ PROFESSOR JONATHAN JANSEN IS AN extraordinarily open-minded man of courage and insight. He has been intuitively in-touch with the reality of South



Waiting for Godot

Africa's education woes and expressed his views without fear or favour.

His departure is a great loss to our academia, but I cannot blame him for leaving. The students of today need to better identify their targets, and vent their anger in a way that respects the institutions and those within them that have given them an enviable international reputation.

Charlie Macgillivray,
Howick

Knott-Craig's odious stance

THANK YOU FOR THE INFORMATIVE ARTICLE on Alan Knott-Craig and his despicable behaviour towards Kenneth Makate (nose200). It is hard to believe someone of Knott-Craig's reputation and vast wealth, would be prepared to stoop so low, and try to screw someone out of his just rewards. His reputation is gone forever – the Constitutional Court made sure of that. He will now be remembered for the man he really is.

K Schmulow
Port Elizabeth

■ ANOTHER GREAT AND INCISIVE ARTICLE from Barry Sergeant, undoubtedly one of SA's best investigative journalists.

Clive Varejes
Gallo Manor

■ VODACOM IS NOTORIOUSLY ARROGANT when dealing with claims and dismisses them usually with no response. So it was especially pleasing to see this particular Goliath slain by a very worthy David in "Please call me, maybe" [nose200].

Anthony Krijger
Westville




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Incorrect assumptions as facts

In "THE CONTESTED MIDAS TOUCH" [nose200] you have portrayed me as a villain. You have driven Barry Sneeche's version hard and completely downplayed, inter alia, that I have been to arbitration and successfully defeated Sneeche before some of the greatest legal minds in South Africa today. These outcomes were not some random errors of judgment by Kuper SC and every legal mind after him, as you seem to suggest. High court actions for review failed, and Sneeche hasn't paid my costs, yet he persists with litigation in the hope of deferring payment.

You have populated your entire piece with blatantly incorrect assumptions made to read as facts. For example, I don't own Tarrystone [Earl Spencer's former home in Constantia]. You should be ashamed of yourselves for dragging your publication and your own journalistic integrity down to this level.

Rui Nobre
London

On closer inspection it emerges you indeed do not own Tarrystone, the Constantia home that formerly belonged to

Charles Spencer: You do, however, own the property across the road that, as it happens, also previously belonged to The Eighth Earl Spencer Family Trust. (We note it's up for sale at R36m.)

Does that make for a different reading of our story? In nose200 we duly noted the eminence of the various lawyers you refer to and their rulings, but then took our own view of the story. You have taken a view of us. It's a free country. – Ed.

The real f***** crisis

A NOTE TO BHEKI REGARDING HIS COLUMN "Letter from Umjindi" [nose200], if you have issues with the Barberton (state) Hospital, then voice these at your beloved ANC, whose greatness you have espoused in recent posts. Vote for them – as you say you must – then see if they listen to the electorate about the condition of state hospitals everywhere.

Also, [re your headline: "F*** crisis. TAC tactics urgent"] there is no F*** crisis; correctly it should be a F***ing crisis!

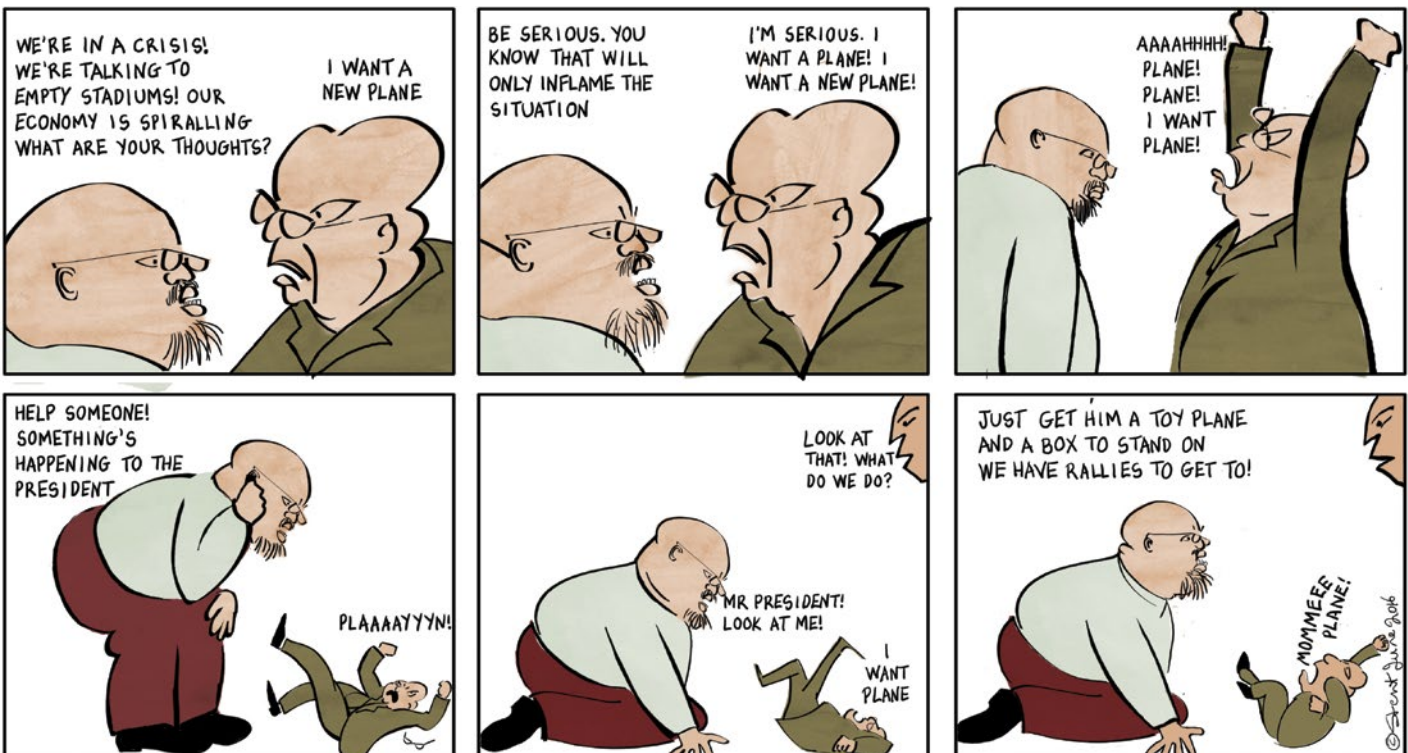
John Binns
Tableview

Birds at Bellagio

Except for the undertaker-crows sneering in sartorial black and gray from elegant branches overhead, the birds at Bellagio, small and large, expect to die from gunshot wounds on autumn afternoons. So when Tony lifts his binoculars, they shy from him as from a hunter, into impenetrable green gloom, their pewter throats sealing song in the trussed cypresses that sightless guard mass graveyards of Italian birds, shot once for food, and then for sport over three venal centuries, in peace and war.

Ingrid de Kok

Only the first six lines of this sonnet were published in nose199. The poet has objected to the mutilation and we publish the full poem here to make amends. – Ed.



Stent

Editor

Martin Welz
editor@noseweek.co.za

Special Correspondent

Jack Lundin

Designer

Tony Pinchuck

Consultant

Len Ashton

Sub-editor

Fiona Harrison

Contributors

Len Ashton, Glenn Ashton, Warren Blunt,
John GI Clarke, Alan Elsdon,
Jonathan Erasmus,
Bheki Mashile, Ciaran Ryan, Barry Sergeant,
Harold Strachan, Anne Susskind,
Sue Waterstone

Cartoon

Gus Ferguson, Dr Jack, Stacey Stent

Accounts

Nicci van Doesburgh
accounts@noseweek.co.za

Subscriptions

Maud Petersen
subs@noseweek.co.za

Advertising sales executive

Godfrey Lancellas
godfrey@madhattermedia.co.za

Advertising

021 686 0570
ads@noseweek.co.za

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Further information

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email info@noseweek.co.za

Let them live on R753 a month

JUSTICE MALALA'S NOT-TO-BE-MISSED WEEKLY TV show on eNCA ends with his nomination of a Winner and a Loser of the Week. *Noseweek* readers will have rejoiced at his choice of loser on 13 June: SARS's boss – and Pravin Gordhan's bête noir – Tom Moyane.

There are, no doubt, many reasons why Moyane might aspire to this accolade, but the one that moved Malala to despair was the fact that he had agreed to SARS's paying auditors KPMG R23 million for a short and totally useless report on the so-called "rogue" spy unit. No slander here: KPMG had, themselves, certified it useless.

Noseweek, on several occasions over the years, has noted KPMG's willingness – for a handsome fee – to apply an audit gloss to some or other unsavoury business in order to give it the appearance of probity. (See *noses* 34,41,43,49,53,65,110,167,176,180,187,190,191&194.) The drift is always the same. Early on we noted that KPMG had absorbed what remained of Arthur Anderson, the auditing company that collapsed under the weight of its bad reputation. It seems KPMG may have absorbed more than just the remains. Look at the record and you will see their SARS forensic report – that challenge to sanity – was just business as usual. But what (that we don't know about) justified a R23m fee? Were there gold coins stuck to each page, as Malala facetiously suggested?

If KPMG can get away with that, they can get away with anything. That's the really scary bit. And if Moyane and his cronies can dish out taxpayers' money like that without embarrassment, what else are they spending it on?

There's more: On Page 10 we tell the weird and shocking tale of Sandton jeweller Jacob Dozet's 12-year torture and ultimate destruction at the hands of SARS officials, all triggered by an extortionist wanting to extract protection money, inter alia on behalf of the late Police Commissioner Jackie Selebi.

As unbelievable as it seems, the story has a precedent! Ten years ago (in *nose*89) we told the story of another Johannesburg jeweller, Steven Ferrer – he had a shop in Rosebank, Johannesburg – who was extorted by a major tax-evader into making regular payments to Selebi and then to Gauteng Police Commissioner Sharma Maharaj. Neither SARS nor the police wished to

know anything about it.

Instead, SARS proceeded to persecute with malice – there is no other word for it – the whistleblower who had first identified Ferrer and had offered them all the evidence they needed to expose a billion-rand tax evasion and money laundering syndicate and its police collaborators.

Noseweek's account of how Michael Addinall was relentlessly prosecuted on false tax-evasion charges ran over several issues. See *noses* 56, 58, 59 and, particularly the Editorial in *nose*60. SARS has long not been as straight and innocent as Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan would have us believe.

While Justice Malala's targeting of Moyane was on the mark, the tax boss is only one of many who are recklessly dishing out taxpayers' money. The very next day observant DA MP Bridget Masango revealed to the world that our jet-setting Social Development Minister Bathabile Dlamini, while on a working trip to Durban, had checked in for the night at the luxurious Oyster Box Hotel in Umhlanga Rocks.

On its website, this deluxe five-star boutique hotel, which "stands majestically on Umhlanga's beachfront overlooking the Indian Ocean and the iconic lighthouse", is described as "the ultimate in colonial charm and style". It has hosted the likes of Prince Albert II and Princess Charlene of Monaco, princes William and Harry, supermodel Naomi Campbell and, no doubt, various ANC celebrities.

The DA MP revealed that Dlamini had checked into an ocean-facing suite just after midnight on Sunday 12 June, that her one-night stay cost a mere R11,000 and that, astonishingly, this was her 31st stay at the hotel.

It was this minister who, while weeping for the poor, informed us that the government's research (in 2014) had shown that pensioners should be able to survive on R753 per month – and that the Treasury, in any event, cannot afford to pay them much more. That may be true, but coming from a minister fresh from her latest night at the Oyster Box, it's no wonder that in everyone's imagination a bewigged and begowned Marie-Antoinette immediately comes flouncing on screen to promote the latest flavour in cake for the starving masses.

Followed by gunfire and revolution.

The Editor

Notes & Updates

Mantashe plays Game of Thrones

JUDGE JOHN MURPHY HAS GRANTED Princess Wezizwe Sigcau and her mother Queen Regent Lombekiso MaSobhuza Sigcau leave to appeal his December 2015 judgment (*nose200*), which ruled that President Jacob Zuma was not obliged to follow a process of consultation with the Mpondo Royal Family before naming the princess's second cousin, Zanozuko Sigcau, as the legitimate successor to her father as King of amaMpondo ase-Qaukeni.

"The Supreme Court of Appeal has never been seized with the interpretative issue that served before me, and which I have resolved by a process of interpretation that other judges might consider too extensive," said Judge Murphy. He also dismissed the argument that irreparable harm would ensue if the President's appointment of Zanozuko was not made "immediately operational".

The causes of harm were alleged to be the continued uncertainty about the succession and the alleged absence of authoritative control over the traditional initiation schools to stem the deaths and injuries to initiates.

"The President, the Minister and the Commission, the applicants in the section 18(3) application, will not suffer irreparable harm by the delay in resolving the dispute and the continued contested title. Indeed, greater harm will result if the third respondent is el-

evated to the throne and another court sets aside the decision of the Commission on review, or directs the President to embark upon further consultation."

With regard to the initiation schools, the judge said no connection had been shown between those problems and who happened to hold title to the throne. So, for the time being, Queen Sigcau continues as Regent, Zanozuko cannot call himself king, and more judicial resources will be spent on resolving the six-year-old dispute.

Meanwhile, anxious to pave the way for the N2 Wild Coast Toll Road and the Xolobeni mining venture to proceed, ANC Secretary General Gwede Mantashe continues in the footsteps of Sanral CEO Nazir Alli to heap royal salutations on Zanozuko in contempt of the standing legal position.

Two weeks before the judgment was handed down, Mantashe was defiantly engaged in talks with Zanozuko and invited mayors of Pondo towns to discuss the "development of Pondoland".

"In June 2013 the Constitutional Court set aside the President's appointment of Zanozuko. That is the status quo. Zanozuko is not the king of amaMpondo. It is disturbing, misleading, confusing and contemptuous of the Constitutional Court for anyone to address Zanozuko as *iKumkani* [*his Majesty*]" says Queen Regent Sigcau. –

John GI Clarke



"Most of them are mysteries to me, but that one on the right gives stock-market averages"

Solara Anytime



Jana Loots

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SA's impending social grant meltdown

THE COMPANY THAT DISTRIBUTES millions of state social security grants, has not only the government but all South Africa hanging from a cliff by a proverbial computer cable.

This year Cash Paymaster Services (CPS), a subsidiary of the US-based Net1 Group will distribute R130 billion (close on R11bn a month) to 17 million South Africans (30% of the population) who are dependent on social security for their survival. But on 30 March next year, the company's contract comes to an end. The Department of Social Development – by way of its division known as the SA Social Security Agency (SASSA) – proposes to take back that mammoth responsibility.

It wasn't doing the job too well last time – when far fewer people received grants – which is why the job was contracted out to a major cash-distribution company in the first place.

Now, with less than a year to go to D-Day, 1 April 2017, the Department of Social Security still won't tell anxious opposition MPs exactly how it plans to do the job; it is still "considering options".

The government's record at managing state enterprises is not good and the minister in charge of Social Development does not inspire confidence.

If SASSA for any reason is unable to make an instant, smooth takeover, and payments fail to reach the 17 million people dependent on their "survival" grants on time, or at all, the consequences could be dire, if not catastrophic. One third of the population will immediately be without the means to feed themselves. The national crisis would be on the scale of war.

Experts close to the situation (and



Minister of Social Development
Bathabile Dlamini

unconnected to Net1 or its subsidiaries) tell *Noseweek* that in the time available, the government has only one option. It will have to take over Cash Paymaster's entire infrastructure, with all its flaws. The snag there is that CPS has already formally indicated (in

court papers) that it wants R900 million for its nearly obsolete computers and technology – that is the computer cable by which we are left hanging.

And the relationship between the government and Net1/CPS is not exactly friendly: shortly before *Noseweek* went to press, SASSA laid criminal charges against CPS and the Net1 group's banking subsidiary, Grindrod Bank, for allegedly persisting with illegal deductions from grant recipients' monthly payments. This was after the two companies had written to SASSA saying they refused to stop the deductions as they believed the government had no legal right to forbid the deductions. (More about this issue below.)

The massive social security system pays R53.5bn in grants to three million pensioners; R48bn to 12 million children in need of support (half of them, infants under the age of one year); R20bn to more than one million disabled people; and R5.5bn for the care of 460,000 children in foster homes.

Just for the verification and approval of grant applications, SASSA employs 10,700 people at a cost of R3bn a year. Other costs bring SASSA's budget up to close on R5bn. (Its annual budget for fraud investigations was recently increased to R83 million.)

To do the actual distribution and payout (by means of a cash-card system), CPS is paid a flat rate of R18 for each grant paid each month, a total of over R300 million a month and R3.6bn over the past year.

But the colossal cash flow of over R10bn each month creates other billion-rand opportunities for profit-hungry financial agencies, such as Net1 and its own banking subsidiary,

'Social grant money in private accounts is game for predatory behaviour, keeping beneficiaries in a debt trap'

Minister of Social Development
Bathabile Dlamini

Grindrod Bank (which has a bank licence but no branch network to speak of). These include transaction and cash-withdrawal fees charged to grant recipients every time they use their card either to make a purchase or to withdraw cash at an ATM. (Grant recipients report that they are only able to use their cards at Bidvest and Nedbank ATMs, suggesting that CPS has struck a financial deal with those banks, but causing considerable hardship for the poor and disabled who frequently have to travel long distances to find those sparsely distributed ATMs.)

And, for an astute operator not too concerned with social and moral issues, there are even more profit opportunities. Regulations instituted by Minister of Social Development Bathabile Dlamini disallow any advance deductions from social grants other than for a funeral policy premium (which may not exceed 10% of the grant amount).

Not satisfied with their takings from funeral policies (Net1 had an insurance subsidiary already lined up to market those to all grant recipients), within no time, the clever people at Net1 had devised a way around that restriction.

The Black Sash and a group of diligent DA MPs (all women) who have made it their business to visit rural constituencies to research the subject,

have received numerous complaints from grant recipients who say they were coerced and "tricked" into opening bank accounts with EasyPay, another Net1 subsidiary. Funds from SASSA-branded cards are then automatically transferred to the private EasyPay account, to which SASSA has no access and over which it can assert no control.

And it emerges that Net1 has devised an irresistible strategy to lure the poor to its new venture: they are persuaded to sign up with the offer of an instant R1,000 cash loan, repayable over six months (interest rate unspecified).

Black Sash declared in a statement issued in May: "Corporates should refrain from interfering with the state's duty to provide social security to the most vulnerable members of society."

EasyPay was launched by Net1, the holding company of CPS that distributes grants on behalf of the state, in 2014. According to reports, it managed to sign up between 800,000 and one million clients, mainly rural social grant beneficiaries, within a few months. As Minister Dlamini, too, noted in a statement: "Social grant money in private accounts is game for predatory behaviour, keeping beneficiaries in a debt trap."

At a press conference called in early May she related with great emotion the tales of suffering told her by poor and elderly women who were dependent for their survival on state social security grants: ever-larger sums were being deducted from the grants, even before they were paid out. Some were receiving as little as 20% of the grant amount.

Dlamini made no mention of the fact that DA MPs Bridget Masango, Elza van Lingen, Karen de Kock and Lindy Wilson had been raising this issue for months already with SASSA, and peppering her with parliamentary questions on the subject.

On field trips visiting their constituencies, these MPs had learnt that numerous deductions were being made: for various types of insurance, for loan repayments, for electricity and cell-phone airtime – deductions that frequently totalled half, or more than half of the total social grant.

In the next issue, *Noseweek* will deal with the question: How might the government have addressed all these problems? ■



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Destroyed by SARS

Taxman seized his business, sold all his assets and put Jacob Dozetas on trial for eight years, despite having no evidence. By Alan Elsdon

JACOB DOZETAS ARRIVED IN SOUTH Africa in 1981 after running a successful butchery and biltong factory in Zimbabwe. He set himself up in the jewellery wholesale trade, operating from his home in Gauteng. In 1986 he acquired his first jewellery shop in Johannesburg and later, two more in Pretoria, another in Durban, and one in Tyger Valley, Bellville, near Cape Town.

The glamorous Kew Jewellers in Sandton Square, Johannesburg was Dozetas's dream shop. But shortly after acquiring the premises, the former owner lodged a dispute that ended up in the High Court. After three separate cases – and huge costs – Dozetas emerged victorious.

Over the years, Dozetas's business expanded to other centres in South Africa. Clients arrived from all over the world to buy his diamonds and exotic jewellery. When Hicham Gamroni, a flamboyant Moroccan who spent his days rotating between Sandton's fashionable restaurants and coffee shops, took to bringing in wealthy Middle Eastern clients – for a commission – business got even better.

During 2002 Gamroni mentioned that, years earlier, he and the late Jackie Selebi, then National Commissioner of SAPS and head of Interpol, had received military training together at an ANC training camp in Russia. Selebi had promised he would be well looked after in the future if he ever decided to settle in South Africa when the ANC came to power.

Gamroni said Selebi had kept his

promise and life in his new home, Johannesburg, was good. He said Selebi wished to receive a monthly "donation" from Dozetas "to ensure continued success in the jewellery industry". He suggested a figure of R18,000 a month.

"I told him I ran an honourable business; I did not engage in any illegal deals; nor did I make 'donations' or pay bribe money to top government officials or anyone else," said Dozetas.

Soon afterwards, a concerned Gamroni warned that if Dozetas did not co-operate, he and his businesses would be "destroyed".

Still, Dozetas refused to change his mind. There was never any contact between Dozetas and Selebi.

Later that year a summons from SARS arrived at Kew Jewellers, demanding R100 million that was "due".

Given Dozetas's personal and business income, the directive was as unbelievable as it was absurd. "I had never seen anything near that amount of money in my life," he said. But bearing in mind the recent threat conveyed to him, Dozetas realised it may not have been an error but possibly part of a devious plot, and he braced himself for whatever might follow.

Soon afterwards a SARS delegation inspected all his shops and began an in-depth "investigation" of his personal and business tax affairs. In addition, the SARS officials also visited all his long-standing customers. In turn, their books too were scrutinised, as were their tax returns.

The completely unwarranted "investigation" caused concerned clients and

customers to avoid dealing with Jacob Dozetas. His business suffered huge financial losses as the action entered its second, then third and unbelievably its fourth year. In addition to his financial losses, top tax consultants had to be hired at huge expense to interact with the SARS investigation team.

Four years after the investigation began, on a Friday afternoon in 2006, a squad of police officers arrived at Dozetas's Tyger Valley shop. They arrested him – without producing a warrant – and cited various charges relating to SARS fraud and tax evasion. He was detained at the Bellville Police Station.

Attorney William Booth, having received instruction via a colleague, visited the Bellville police cells. Booth explained that Monday morning was the earliest that a bail application could be heard at the Bellville Magistrate's Court. At about 2am on that Sunday morning two police officers came to the holding cell; one of whom instructed Dozetas to get dressed as he was going to Johannesburg. When he refused to accompany them, they handcuffed him and forced him into their vehicle.

Booth soon became aware of developments and complained that the action by the police was unlawful. He made a formal demand that his client be returned to Bellville.

"One of the police officers in Joburg told me I was an extremely lucky man, explaining that the reason they had brought me to Johannesburg had been to hold a kangaroo court hearing" – of which the obvious outcome would not have been in his favour. The next day



Attorney William Booth (left)
with Jacob Dozetras

Dozetras was taken back to Bellville by police vehicle.

At the crowded bail hearing, a large number of senior members of the SAPS and SARS were present to oppose the application. They branded Jacob Dozetras a criminal and a “dangerous criminal who had access to firearms”. It was claimed he was also a flight risk.

Attorney Booth pointed out that his client was a respected and well-known business executive with no criminal record. When challenged, the State could not produce any proof to back up their earlier accusations.

In summing up the application, the magistrate said he could “smell a rat” – especially given the matter’s high profile. He granted bail of R100,000, together with a list of strict bail conditions, one of which was to surrender his two passports. Asked about the location of his passports, Dozetras explained they were at his home in Sea Point. The next few hours saw the bail

money transferred and the conditions of release formalised.

By the time Dozetras and Booth arrived at his Sea Point apartment, “unknown persons” had already been and

**They branded Jacob
Dozetras a criminal
and an extremely
dangerous man even
capable of murder**

gone. There was no sign of forced entry but the apartment had been turned upside down.

Had the “burglars” found and removed the two passports, it would have been impossible to comply with the bail conditions. The result would have meant detention until the completion of the criminal matter. Luckily, the passports had been in Dozetras’s car and Booth was able to hand them to a senior police officer early the next morning at Cape Town International Airport in compliance with the strict bail conditions.

The action taken by the SAPS and the conditions imposed by SARS, compelled Dozetras to close his shops and sell all his stock pending the criminal case outcome. SARS confiscated all the items in Kew Jewellers, Sandton – selling them for a pittance at auction – and instead of the proceeds going to Dozetras, SARS used it to “credit” his account.

Booth, who is based in Cape Town, continued to represent Dozetras in the Joburg-registered criminal court case. Apart from the huge financial costs involved in a case of such magnitude, there was also the added financial burden of regular trips to Johannesburg, including flights, accommodation and related expenses. Mostly the purpose was to have the matter postponed to allow the SAPS in conjunction with SARS to conclude their investigation.

Meantime, Dozetras could not operate as a registered jeweller. Apart from the devastating effect the ordeal had on his financial affairs, it took its toll on him personally and on his family life.

During this trying phase of his life, a close friend confided in him that his loved ones were worried that he might contemplate suicide. Dozetras had laughed at the very suggestion, responding: “This entire case is built on malicious lies. God knows the truth. He is on my side and I will win.”

The first formal hearing took place on 15 November 2007 in the Regional Court. Prosecutor MR Mulaudzi provided a host of reasons and excuses why the matter should be postponed – all of which Booth challenged. When Booth asked why the policemen who had abducted him to Johannesburg were not in court, he was told they were “on stress leave”.

Magistrate Simon Radasi ordered

the State to be ready for trial on 6 March 2008.

Jacob Dozetwas duly pleaded not guilty to all the charges – the five main counts being allegations of fraud. The alternative counts 1-3 related to contravening Section 104 (1)(d) of the Income Tax Act of 1962. Counts 4-5 related to contravening Section 75(1)(a) of the Income Tax Act. As its first witness, the State called Olga de Villiers, an Inspector Investigator in the audit section of SARS at the time. She had only a matric certificate and no audit qualification.

The case was adjourned and resumed on 4 June 2008, when Booth complained about the unreasonable delay in the case – and that most of the evidence presented by De Villiers was hearsay and had been obtained from SARS records – to which the Defence had no legal access and could not properly prepare a defence. He added that without that information, De Villiers had nothing to tell the court.

To enable Dozetwas to visit his son who was to be married in Australia, Booth applied to have the passports of his client returned. He was successful and Dozetwas was able to make unhindered trips to Europe, England, Israel and Australia. In a sense, the return of Dozetwas's passports made a mockery of the serious allegations he had to fend off at the bail hearing.

The money owed to SARS appeared to be R13m, not R100m. Often the SARS witness complained of a lack of recall

In the months that followed, the prosecution continued to present new reasons why the matter should be postponed. Booth tried to convince the court that nothing that SARS had discovered even remotely suggested fraud or tax evasion. But the prosecutor insisted the State had a strong case.

In 2010, Dozetwas became aware of a front-page article in which his former friend and business associate, the

Moroccan businessman Gamroni, was bestowed the title of “Mr Sandton” because of his fame and success.

Back in court in August 2011, Booth accepted several documents accompanied by affidavits handed in by the prosecutor as preliminary evidence.

In her evidence, De Villiers said all monies going into the Dozetwas's five business bank accounts were deemed income. She conceded that at the time of her assessment she had not taken any expenses into account, nor loans or transfers from one bank to another. She appeared not to understand that businesses are taxed on their profit and not on their gross turnover. The money owed to SARS in tax over a five-year period appeared to be R13 million and not the R100m claimed by De Villiers. Often she complained of a lack of recall when confronted with inconvenient questions.

Other witnesses for the State included Patricia Cozen and a Trevor Dalton – not one of whom could shed any light on who had laid the criminal charge against the accused. The matter was yet again postponed to obtain clarity on a number of issues presented by the State.

At proceedings in June 2012, it emerged that the criminal charges were laid at the Honeydew Police Station in September 2005 by SARS “investigators” – at the request of De Villiers. In her testimony, she had said she had had “nothing to do with the laying of criminal charges”.

Recalled to testify, De Villiers was shown her affidavit of 11 March 2005 which read: “Charge under Section 75 of the IT Act for Fraud.” She then conceded to having made “certain commendations” to the investigators relating to criminal charges.

After further postponements for legal argument, on 10 April 2014 – 12 years down the line – the time for judgment arrived. The magistrate said the State had relied mostly on the evidence of two witnesses, De Villiers and Coetzee. De Villiers, he said, had been a pathetic witness: “When she started to give evidence-in-chief, she gave the impression that she had done a proper auditing of the accused's accounts as well as the business accounts.

“It transpired during cross-examination that she had deemed all monies going into the accused's accounts and



Hicham Gamroni as Mr Sandton

business accounts as income.

"She did not make any calculations at all on the expenses the business had incurred. A right-thinking person would have thought that any business would have expenses, overheads and salaries. She conceded that she did not even consider a single cent as an expense. That is not proper auditing."

The magistrate had much the same to say about the testimony of Coetzee: "She did an auditing of the accused's account but disallowed certain expenses as deductions and cash cheques were not allowed as deductions."

He could not understand how they could say the accused had committed fraud, when they could not clearly indicate that he had intentionally misrepresented himself to the revenue services. "This was a civil dispute that ended up in a criminal court. The evidence that was presented by the State witnesses was of such poor quality that no reasonable court acting carefully might convict the accused."

At the previous hearing, the magistrate had found Dozetas not guilty of the five criminal charges and he was acquitted of the first three alternate charges after SARS conceded it was unbelievable that at the time of the investigation Dozetas had been granted an extension to file all outstanding tax documents with SARS.

"Clearly the evidence shows that the accused was not negligent and therefore cannot be convicted on the remaining charges. The State has failed to prove the accused guilty beyond any reasonable doubt. He is also acquitted in respect of the remaining charges, alternative counts 4 and 5."

At last, after 12 gruelling years, it was all over. By declaring that the entire affair should have been a civil matter and not have ended up in a criminal court, the magistrate confirmed that the action taken by the State and SARS was nothing less than malicious prosecution from the outset. Against enormous odds, Jacob Dozetas had stood steadfast and won his case.

Strangely, for a tax evasion criminal matter of such magnitude, the case escaped being reported in the media.

On a subsequent visit to Johannesburg, Jacob Dozetas crossed paths with Hicham Gamroni – "Mr Sandton". The Moroccan embraced him and begged forgiveness for the role he had played



Jacob Dozetas

in Dozetas's personal and business downfall. Hicham stressed that if there was any manner in which he could make amends, he pledged to stand by and provide his support. No amount of apologies could make up for the horrific ordeal Dozetas had suffered. His once-thriving businesses and once-carefree but meticulous lifestyle was nothing but a memory; he was divorced, alone, and financially stricken.

Today, at an age when he should have retired comfortably, Jacob Dozetas has had to pick up the pieces of his life. Still in the jewellery trade, he travels the country by car visiting some old but mostly new customers to make ends meet. Recently he decided to publish a book about the life-changing consequences the malicious prosecution brought upon him. And to set the record straight.

People in high government positions

were able to misuse or abuse the system to "destroy" an honest law-abiding citizen simply because he would not be bribed. It is an ordeal that any other successful South African businessman could have suffered during those times.

Dozetas later contacted Hicham Gamroni to take him up on the promise he had made. Their initial contact after a few years was friendly and pleasant. This is what the Moroccan had to say on WhatsApp:

Gamroni: "Hello Jacob, how are you? I am in Morocco doing very well and relaxing with my family. How is business with you? The economy in Morocco is very good, better than SA with a lot of cash money around. I think I am going to start a new life in Morocco!"

"I am sad to hear that you lost everything. I am sorry and I apologise again for all harm that I caused you! I will help you and you don't have to give me anything for it! You can phone me or email whatever you want, I promise you please do not worry!"

"If you need anything else, please let me know! I can help you with business and I can connect you with people in SA and overseas so you can start standing on your feet. I can help you with money if you need a loan in future to start a business!"

In further discussions, Dozetas made it clear to Gamroni that he was planning a civil case against the SAPS, SARS and the NPA. The Moroccan then changed his mind and said he did not want to be involved in any legal matters. Since then he has refused to take Dozetas's calls. This is Gamroni's last message on WhatsApp: "I am sorry Jacob. I can't help with this information. I don't want to be a public figure in books with everybody reading about my history with you. I am not going to give any private information. By the way, I am not coming back to South Africa. I will stay in Morocco for ever."

The outcome of Dozetas's criminal trial is testimony to how senior members of the government, at huge financial cost, made use of the SAPS, SARS and the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), to launch and fuel a 12-year-long unfounded and malicious case of prosecution. In a sense, they may have achieved their desired goal. But the same people might soon have their credibility and evidence tested under a spotlight. ■

Kangaroo cowboys go wild on the West Coast

Murder and menaces ignored as Oz mining outfit trashes SA environment laws. By Glenn Ashton

SIKHOSIPHI BAZOOKA RHADEBE, A leader among anti-mining activists in the Amadiba area of Pondoland on the Wild Coast, was murdered on 22 March this year. He had led opposition to attempts by Australian company Mineral (Resource) Commodities Ltd (MRC) to extract the titanium-rich mineral sands that lie at the heart of his people's Wild Coast territory.

While MRC strenuously denied any connection with Rhadebe's as-yet unsolved murder – he was shot eight times outside his Xolobeni home – at least three other MRC opponents in the area have died or been killed under suspicious circumstances.

Locals recall that Patrick Caruso, brother of MRC's CEO Mark Caruso,

said in 2007, "...there is always blood where there are these types of projects and in my experience, you cannot have development without blood".

The *Sunday Times* reported that Mark Caruso, emailed the Pondoland community quoting Samuel Jackson's famous speech from *Pulp Fiction*: "And I will strike down upon thee with great vengeance and furious anger, those who attempt to poison and destroy my brothers. And you will know my name is the Lord when I lay my vengeance upon thee." He goaded detractors to continue their "campaign" against the mine: "I am enlivened by [the] opportunity to grind all resistance to my presence and the presence of Mineral Sands Resources (MSR) [their company that owns the Tormin Mine on the West

Coast] into the animals [sic] of history as a failed campaign." Developments at the Australians' mine on the West Coast do not bode well for what the amaMpondo can expect were they also to start mining on the Wild Coast.

Since *Noseweek* last reported (in *nose188*) on the shenanigans at their West Coast mine, Tormin – inter alia their illegal expansion of that mine and the collapse of the cliff on to the beach – things have gone further downhill. In order to legitimate mining methods they were not permitted to use in terms of their licences, Tormin retroactively applied for permission under the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA), as well as for condonation under the National Environmental Management Act (Nema). The latter transgression alone can trigger fines of up to R1m per event.

Noseweek's questions to both Tormin or the now-suspiciously secretive Department of Mineral Resources (DMR) regarding the approval remain unanswered. However, a related court case revealed that authorisation was granted in May 2015, permitting the change in processing method and expansion of the plant from 2.6 hectares to 6ha.

Since then, MRC has unilaterally increased the plant's footprint to over 10ha, of which 2ha is earmarked to build a dam of around 50,000 litres. Outraged farmers say the water is to be sourced from the drought-stricken Olifants River irrigation scheme. (Clanwilliam Dam is less than 15% full.)

Debbie Ntombela spins the revolving door

LAWYER DEBBIE NTOMBELA, WHO HAS long had a close relationship with MRC and Tormin, previously worked in the legal directorate of the Department of Mineral Resources (DMR), drafting and implementing the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act.

She then shifted into private practice, maintaining a "good working relationship" with ex-colleagues in the DMR and since her departure, has moved between various law firms

who sought her expertise and connections. Her input evidently continues to carry weight, given her role in "regularising" Tormin's activities.

Ntombela is an example of how, unless prevented by regulation, experienced officials or regulators shift to lucrative positions in private practice or vice versa – a global problem. For connected players with hands in the mining trough, these sorts of ties are indispensable when gaming the system. ■

Perhaps the mine's most heinous recent activity that was undertaken without permission has been to construct a massive rock groyne from the beach into the surf zone.

In 2008 the government passed the Integrated Coastal Management Act (ICMA), described as among the best coastal legislation in the world. It took more than 12 years to finalise, at great expense, mainly through donor funds.

ICMA specifically forbids any ad hoc disturbance within the beach zone. Authorisation is only permitted under stringent conditions after detailed environmental assessments are completed. However the cowboys in charge of Tormin appear to believe their mine is part of Australia, somehow exempting them from South African law: the general manager of the mine, Gary Thompson, allegedly informed employees that they enter Australia when they enter the mine.

The *Mail & Guardian* reported that in October last year Thompson ordered his security staff to shoot at a gyrocopter flying over the mine, after aerial photographs showing illegal activity was made available to environmental authorities (and *Noseweek*).

As far as the illegal groyne is concerned, several parties have informed the provincial environmental authority, as well as the regional Coastal Management directorate of this serious transgression.

Yet, inexplicably, in May 2015, the DMR not only declined to prosecute this flagrant breach, but instead sanctioned this "jetty like structure," without following ordained procedures.

The department also granted Tormin "permission" to expand the plant area to 20ha, far more than the 6ha applied for in late 2014.

These "permits" reveal the hand of Tormin's well-connected lawyer, Debbie Ntombela (see box), who has been instrumental in applying for condonation of their unilateral alterations to the environmental and mine management programmes. All correspondence from the DMR is addressed to Ntombela.

This case exposes both the profound flaws of the One System and the lack of legal nous and capacity (or is it will?) of the DMR to manage the environmental governance of mining activities that cause permanent damage to the environment, agricultural land and criti-

Tormin and the 'One System'

FROM AN ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE mining in South Africa was largely unregulated before 1994. Look no further than the mine dumps of the Gauteng, the scars of coal mining in Mpumalanga and the mess diamond miners have made of the West Coast.

Democracy delivered new regulatory dispensations. Mining was regulated by the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA) while the environment was protected under the National Environmental Management Act (Nema) and its related acts dealing with waste, air quality, protected areas, the coast, and biodiversity.

This meant mining was regulated through a twin-track system where mining permits were granted by the DMR and environmental permits

overseen by the DEA. This inevitably led to tensions between the two, with Environment portrayed by Mining as a "spoiler". Consequently the industry pressed for the government to reform the system and remove interference by the far less politically powerful Environment branch.

The result was termed the "One System", and turned the DMR into the fox guarding the henhouse. It came into effect at the end of 2015, a year after Tormin began operations. The result has been seriously compromising, especially for environmental oversight. The only way for the DEA to step in is if an appeal is lodged against a decision made by the DMR. This has not yet been tested. However the DEA has indicated that it has begun investigations into Tormin. ■

cally scarce water resources.

But there is more. In order to either cover up, or in a botched attempt to rehabilitate the massive cliff collapse, Tormin has unilaterally dumped thousands of tonnes of overburden on top of and in front of the collapse. It is now pumping the entire run-of-mine overburden on top of this, directly in contravention of the original mine authorisation, which says overburden must be returned to the mined-out areas.

The original authorisation only dealt with the removal of the zircon and rutile component of the beach sands, which comprise less than 5% of the beach by volume. Tormin is now also removing garnet and ilmenite. This amounts to nearly half of the beach sand, by volume. As a result the beach profile has been significantly lowered.

This creates two environmental impacts. First, the beach is far more vulnerable to wave action and run-up, exposing the foot of the cliff to further erosion. Second, the cliff stability is reduced due to removal of its sand foundation. This radical change in mining extraction carries far greater environmental impacts than were considered in the EIA studies that led to environmental authorisation. Tormin has also ignored the 10m no-go setback from the

cliff and is mining right up to the foot of the cliff. Parts of both the cliff and approved access roads have been washed away.

The pipes to and from the beach appear to be incorrectly laid. Allegations have been made of illegal disposal of sewage, even into the sea. Trucks are using unauthorised routes that are being destroyed because the higher mine volumes place up to 100 trucks a day on unsuitable roads to avoid weighbridges. The original permit allowed only four trucks per day and they were restricted to the national N7 route.

All these transgressions have been raised with the relevant national and provincial authorities, yet no action appears to have been taken.

Will Environment Minister Edna Molewa rein in the cowboys? Or is she simply waiting for an invitation to climb on the gravy train?

Tormin has recently applied for enhanced exploration and mining rights. The relevant laws state that further rights cannot be granted to companies that are in breach of existing laws and regulations. What bets on the Zuma administration having as little regard for South Africa's excellent environmental legislation as it has for our Constitution? ■

Property moguls continue to fleece Limpopo government

Observers say rich Jimmy the Greek is the Life Honorary Premier of poverty-stricken province. **By Warren Blunt**

LIMPOPO IS CONSIDERED TO BE ONE OF the smaller provinces in South Africa in terms of contribution to GDP but it ranks high when it comes to corruption.

Government officials and service providers with political connections have long been reaping the benefits of inflated or irregular tenders, while the majority of the people, especially those living in rural communities, have had to suffer poor service delivery.

Most of Limpopo's municipalities continue to rate poor financial audits; likewise, some government departments that deal with issues like infrastructure development, education and health – resulting in the need for national government intervention a few years ago. Not that it mattered much; the problem remains.

A few smaller fish have been netted for tender irregularities and financial mismanagement – often with only a slap on the wrist – but the big fish have been left to feed from the coffers of the provincial treasury. This, despite attempts by current Limpopo Premier Chupu Stanley Mathabatha to restore some respectability to the tarnished reputation of the ANC in the province.

The South African Citizens' Bribery Survey released towards the end of 2015 reveals that 48% of Limpopo government officials demand bribes for applications for tenders, jobs, driver's licences and avoidance of traffic fines. The survey also found that soliciting illicit discounts from businesses and

stealing from the state featured high on the list of corrupt activities.

Former MEC for the Limpopo Treasury, Sa'ad Cachalia, often lamented the fact that local government paid double what the average man-in-the-street would pay for "a pencil or packet of soap powder". (When a tender is acquired by means of a backhander to the official involved, the price tends to escalate dramatically – up to five times the value in some of the cases

that have recently come to light.)

Insider trading involving the sale of municipal and state land and inflated rentals being charged to various provincial departments are high on the list of continued "wasteful" expenditure in Limpopo. In the past few years new premises have been built by private developers to accommodate:

- the Office of the Premier;
- the Department of Public Works;
- the Department of Transport;
- the Roads Agency Limpopo;
- the Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs (CoGHSTA);
- the Department of Sport, Arts Culture and Recreation.

Long-term leases were secured for all of these at rates well above normal rentals. Property investors/business people with close links to the Limpopo government's leadership have made spectacular fortunes.

Polokwane property tycoon David Mabilu netted a cool R20 million in 2008 by buying land from one arm of the government and re-selling it to another through the now-disbanded parastatal Thubelisha Homes.

Mabilu's company, Promafco, did a land-swap deal towards the end of 2007 with the Polokwane Municipality in which he secured two lucrative properties in return for four barren pieces of farmland. A year later, Mabilu sold one of the plots to CoGHSTA through Thubelisha, at five times the value, after the land had been identified as



Limpopo Premier Chupu Stanley Mathabatha



Demetrios Kourtoumbellides flanked by daughter Evridiki and wife Ismini

suitable for a low-to-middle-income housing project. At the same time that the land-swap deal with the municipality took place, Promafco privately bought another two pieces of adjacent land. They, too, soared in value – by 500% in a year – netting the company another R20m in profit.

Insiders in the property industry claim Mabilu is close to Limpopo's leadership. Business associates describe him as a shrewd operator who forges relationships with "all the right people". Whatever the reason, Promafco and another company owned by Mabilu, Vharanani Properties, have experienced phenomenal growth since the early 2000s and now boast a portfolio of thousands of RDP houses and buildings, specifically developed for local government in Limpopo and Gauteng.

A similar case can be made for the "flagship" Bendor 100 Integrated Human Settlement project (see *nose187*) initiated by CoGHSTA and the Polokwane Municipality. Land was acquired through Thubelisha Homes at five times the going price when the area was identified as the site for the "groundbreaking" housing development by former Limpopo MEC for CoGHSTA and now Minister of International Relations and Coopera-

tion, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane. (*She with a hole in her head from carrying buckets.* – Ed.)

After irregularities with the original Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) studies were unearthed by the local Frog Watch group (and revealed to the world by *Noseweek*), construc-

**Land was acquired
at five times the
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housing
development**

tion work on the project was stalled in January this year.

CoGHSTA spokesperson Callies Matlala claims construction was also hampered by delays relating to electrical installations that were only approved in January this year by the Polokwane Municipality. (Strange, since officials from CoGHSTA and the municipality were present when the project was unveiled and building commenced in August 2015.)

Matlala said the delay in construction was only temporary; that the contractor, Mabone Construction, had met the CoGHSTA MEC Makoma Grace Makhurupetje on 18 February to discuss the blockages, and that work would proceed before the end of February.

As for the preservation of the endangered frog species in a neighbouring wetland, Matlala says the municipality had accepted responsibility to resolve the issue and protect the area in question. "An alternative site close by has been identified for the purposes of nurturing and rehabilitating this endangered species," Matlala said in reply to questions put to her by *Noseweek* earlier this year about the Bendor 100 project.

Despite these assurances from CoGHSTA and the municipality, the Polokwane Frog Watch group still has reservations about the continuation of the project until the municipality has complied with the EIA regulations.

Besides raking in a considerable profit from the sale of the land earmarked for the Bendor 100 development, the number one player connected with benefiting from a number of dubious local government property and building projects in Limpopo is the mysterious ANC benefactor Demetrios Kourtoumbellides.

Known locally as Jimmy the Greek, Kourtoumbellides – introduced to *Noseweek* readers in *nose187* – is said to have contributed to the struggle against apartheid by hiding ANC members from the security police. If so, he continues to be handsomely rewarded.

Kourtoumbellides, as co-director with former Health MEC Seaparo Charles Sekoati in Alpha-Veta (sic) Entertainment Enterprises, has been accused of selling a number of Polokwane properties to the government at

inflated prices. He was also involved in the construction of the multi-million-rand Olympic Towers, the new premises for the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture.

Documents of the Department of Public Works reveal that Jimmy the Greek was involved in four of the five new government office blocks in Polok-

wane. Together with another Polokwane property magnate, Jannie Moolman, through a company called Night Fire Investment 8, the premier's office was extended for R119m.

Then, as the co-director of Phamog Folang Joint Venture, Kourtoumbelides was involved in the construction of Works Towers for Limpopo's Public

Works department, and the Phamoko Towers for the Department of Transport. Phamog Properties was also owner of Temo Towers which houses the Limpopo Department of Agriculture.

Both Temo and Phamoko Towers were sold last year to JSE-listed black-owned property loan stock company Delta Property Fund for R136m and

How Julius Malema fits into the Polokwane picture

LIMPOPO'S NUMBER ONE CITIZEN and Commander-in-Chief of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), Julius Malema, has been making a name for himself on the political front, but the thorny issue of non-compliance regarding money owed to SARS from 2005 to 2011 returns ever so often to haunt him.

At the heart of it is the manner in which he ended up with the huge tax bill – through funds raised by the Ratanang Family Trust and the acquisition of tenders from the Limpopo government by On-Point Engineering, of which the trust was a shareholder.

When Malema's tax woes first came to light in 2012, Ratanang owed SARS R15 million in unpaid taxes. And On-Point Engineers – partly owned by the trust – owed a further R3m in tax.

The Ratanang Family Trust was registered in Pretoria on 13 May 2008, five weeks after Malema was elected President of the ANC Youth League. The trust was named after his nine-year-old son Ratanang Malema, who was the sole beneficiary. His grandmother Sarah was sole trustee and Julius Malema, sole signatory, according to a PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC's) forensic audit report commissioned by SARS in 2012.

However, *City Press* reported in 2011, that the trust was mainly used to support Malema's lavish lifestyle and that money was paid into the trust by various benefactors for helping them with government tenders. A Polokwane businessman told *City Press* that he deposited R200,000 into the trust's bank account after Malema facilitated a government tender for his benefit. According to the businessman, there were at least 20 other business people from Limpopo doing



the same.

The PWC audit report found that the millions deposited into the Ratanang Family Trust bank account were subsequently paid out by way of cheques signed by Malema.

Auditor Trevor White believed the trust was set up by Malema to channel money, which "in many instances" was received from contractors doing work for the Limpopo government.

Management of the Limpopo Roads and Transport Department's programme management unit (PMU) was outsourced to On-Point Engineering in November 2011, when the Section 100 national government intervention took place. The national government was forced to intervene when the Limpopo Treasury applied for an additional overdraft of R1 billion to cover its huge budget overruns.

On-Point Engineering, owned by Malema's friend and political ally Lesiba Gwangwa – with the Ratanang Family Trust being a minority shareholder – was contracted to run the unit for three years at a fee of R52m. The *Mail & Guardian* report-

ed at the time that Malema had indirect influence over who was awarded tenders from a three-year budget allocation of R4.6bn by the Limpopo Department of Roads and Transport.

The *M&G* reported that companies linked to Malema, his business partner Gwangwa, and his friend and political ally, Limpopo Premier Cassel Mathale, shared in some of the contracts administered by the PMU.

Malema and Gwangwa were similarly involved in a company called SGL Engineering.

Public Protector Thuli Madonsela found no evidence that Malema had manipulated the tender processes, adding that much of the required paper trail could not be found.

Meanwhile, Malema has managed to settle some of his outstanding by-now-R20m tax bill inter alia by selling his Sandton and Polokwane mansions.

After he established the EFF, he reached a compromise with SARS, thereby avoiding sequestration. (Insolvency would have cost him his seat in Parliament.)

Malema's advocate Piet Louw SC said his client had paid off his SARS debt with the help of donors and that he now had a clean slate.

But in April this year, SARS called off the deal and resurrected the sequestration application, only to withdraw it once more on June 6.

In September 2012, 50 charges of money laundering, racketeering and corruption relating to Limpopo road contracts were brought against Malema and Gwangwa. The case was struck from the roll in August 2015 because of the State's endless delays in bringing its prosecution. The case could be reinstated at a later date. ■

R242m respectively, at yields of just under 10% – based on leases to government departments at rentals five times higher than that of local malls.

Delta Property Fund also owns Hensa Towers – the building housing CoGHSTA – making it the landlord of Limpopo’s low-cost housing department, implementing agents for the R300m Bendor 100 integrated housing project. (More about that as well in *nose187*.)

Spokesperson for Limpopo’s Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure (DPWRI), Paena Galane, provided the current monthly rentals for some of the government buildings. He said there were currently six leases of over R1m per month, of which five leases are subject to criminal investigation following claims of overcharging. The monthly rentals are: Temo Towers (Agriculture) – R1,575,863.19; Hensa Towers (CoGHSTA) – R2,504,925.69; Phamoko Towers (Transport) – R2,493,962.40; Works Towers (DPWRI) – R2,917,322.35 and the Olympic Towers (Sport, Arts and Culture) – R1,968,843.42.

According to the 2015 last quarter Rode Report for office rentals, Polokwane’s office rentals range from R75/m² to R140/m², with the local government paying well above the average rental for office space.

With the inclusion of the South African Revenue Services, approximately 70% of Delta’s property portfolio is leased to the government. At the time of the purchase of Hensa and Temo Towers in 2015, Delta CEO Sandile Nomvete commented that one of the company’s strategies was to focus on smaller towns.

“We tend to find better value in the smaller towns and Polokwane is one of those places,” Nomvete added that Delta, one of JSE’s newest property listings – having listed in November 2012 – was taking steps to “bring confidence back” into the government niche.

Kourtoumbellides’s transactions to acquire the properties earmarked for the Bendor 100 development were made through a number of companies listed as Aeterno Investments.

Among the many businesses falling under the Aeterno Investments umbrella is Aeterno Investments 118: Reg no: 2005/000737/07 under the directorship of Cassel Charlie Mathale, the

‘While some are satisfied with a piece of the cake, this man insists on taking the entire bakery’

former Limpopo Premier at the time of national government’s intervention at the beginning of 2012.

Mathale was at the helm in Limpopo at the end of November 2011 when wasteful and fruitless expenditure resulted in the provincial treasury applying for an additional overdraft of R1 billion to pay service providers and the salaries of civil servants, because

the funds allocated for the 2011/2012 budget had already been exhausted.

At the time of the Section 100 national government intervention, Limpopo’s treasury already had an overdraft of R787m with the South African Reserve Bank. The application for an additional R1bn loan sent alarm bells ringing at national government level, culminating in the removal of Mathale and his replacement with current Premier Stan Mathabatha.

A highly respected member of the ANC, who declined to be named, commented to *Noseweek*: “The party cannot forever be beholden to one man for his contribution to the struggle, when other comrades have done far more” – suggesting that the current train of thought in local ANC circles is simply that it is others’ turn to feed at the trough.

“When you consider the exaggerated wealth of one man, while government is battling to meet the needs of millions who remain without basic amenities, it makes one lose respect.

“Irrespective of who is made Premier of Limpopo, everyone close to home knows there is only one Life Honorary Premier, and that is Jimmy the Greek. While some are satisfied with a piece of the cake, this man insists on taking the entire bakery,” he concluded. ■



GREATER CAPE TOWN 101.3 | ATLANTIC SEABOARD 97.1
FISH HOEK/NOORD HOEK 107.9 | HOUTBAY 94.7

Dead Man's Chest

When Johannesburg businessman Imtiaz Mohammed was murdered in 2010, it fell to his widow Hajira to wrap up his estate. Only years later she discovered a family conspiracy to keep her late husband's assets out of her hands. By Ciaran Ryan

IMTIAZ MOHAMMED RAN A SUCCESSFUL hardware and property business in the east of Johannesburg until he was shot dead by a disgruntled employee in July 2010. He left four young children and his wife, Hajira, who was executor and sole heir of his estate. The extended family rallied around with comfort and support.

Hajira Mohammed had little knowledge of business, and entrusted her brother-in-law, Mahomed Akoon, a former ANC councillor in Ekurhuleni, with her late husband's business affairs. In terms of the will, Hajira inherited her husband's entire estate comprising the hardware business (trading as Hire World & Hardware) and 50% of I&I Properties (which owned three properties in the east of Johannesburg that brought in a monthly rental income of about R50,000 – of which she was entitled to half). The other 50% of the company was owned by Hajira's father-in-law, Ismail Mohammed, although she left the day-to-day management of the business to Akoon.

Mahomed Akoon, alleges Hajira, could scarcely wait for the requisite Islamic mourning period of four months and 10 days after her husband's death before proposing marriage to her. Akoon denies this in papers presented to the South Gauteng High Court in March.

But Hajira insists her rejection of his amorous advances is critical to understanding the acrimony and disputes over the spoils of the family business that were aired in court. It was after the alleged marriage proposal (and rejection) that familial relations started to break down.

Some time in 2013 Hajira stopped receiving her late husband's 50% portion of the property portfolio's rental income. And, she says, she was prevented from having access to the bank statements and financial records related to the business.

In 2013, three years after her husband's death, Hajira decided to marry the new love of her life, Mohammed Sibda, a businessman recently returned from Saudi Arabia where he worked as a commodities broker. At this point, the already frosty relations with the rest of the family had deteriorated into open hostility.

As Mohammed Sibda was more business-savvy than Hajira, he started looking into Imtiaz's business affairs. He didn't like what he saw.

Until 2014, Hajira had assumed that all Imtiaz's business was conducted through the I&I Properties' bank account held at Standard Bank's Boksburg branch. Later Sibda inadvertently discovered a second Standard Bank business account in the name of Hire World & Hardware, which had been 100% owned by Imtiaz Mohammed, and therefore was the rightful property of his only heir, Hajira.

Hajira claims the Hire World business account had been kept secret from her – and apparently for good reason. She says she knew about Hire World business, but not about the bank account. When Sibda managed to get bank statements for Hire World – which had subsequently been sold for R2.5 million to a Sasol employee, Feroza Syed, and renamed Nebuplex – he found that the account had been operated for 18 months after Imtiaz's murder, and then was mysteriously closed – though no-one knows who closed it.

To this day, Standard Bank refuses to divulge who authorised the operation of a dead man's account, or who closed it. Nearly R5m had passed through the account after Imtiaz's murder – not all of it in the normal course of business. (Inter alia, Hajira discovered that Akoon and Ismail had used money from the account to fund their legal battles with her.)

Hajira also discovered that the company was issuing invoices using two VAT numbers, which would no doubt

Hajira insists her rejection of his amorous advances is critical to understanding the acrimony and disputes over the spoils of the family business



Mahomed Akoon (above, in black shirt) and Hajira Sibda (right)



be of huge interest to the VAT investigators at SA Revenue Services.

In an application before Judge Kathleen Satchwell in the South Gauteng High Court in March, Hajira asked the court to force Akoon, (her father-in-law) Ismail, I&I Properties and Standad Bank to give her unrestricted access to the properties, bank accounts and records of the business so that she could fulfil her duties as executor of the estate.

Akoon and Ismail brought a counter application claiming that Imtiaz's will had been forged, in support of which they produced reports by two handwriting experts. Hajira produced a handwriting expert of her own, who claimed the opposite. Akoon and Ismail further claimed that Hajira had consented to distribute her late husband's estate according to Sharia law – which would mean she would get just one-eighth of the benefit. She denied this.

Hajira said she had previously agreed to gift certain of her late husband's assets to her father-in-law Ismail as an act of good faith – but this was before she found out about the

secret bank account, and what she claims was the family's attempt to dispossess her of her late husband's assets.

Judge Satchwell made short work of the counter application by Ismail and Akoon, dismissing their claims on the grounds they had no *locus standi* as they were not heirs to the estate. Further, the Master of the High Court had accepted the will as valid, and had not been joined to the proceedings. On the matter of the alleged forgery, she ruled that the matter could not be decided on the papers.

Judge Satchwell ordered Akoon and Ismail to hand over to Hajira all financial records, bank statements and contracts related to her late husband's business, and to give her unfettered access to the properties in the I&I portfolio. Judge Satchwell also ordered that Hajira be granted access to the company bank accounts, while Akoon was to be "divested of any right to manage the business... or represent it in any way", and he was interdicted from operating the company bank accounts.

Standard Bank was ordered to re-

voke any power held by Akoon to operate the company bank account. Akoon and Ismail were ordered to pay costs.

The court also ordered that Hajira's right to sell her interest in I&I Properties be referred to trial.

As is almost inevitable in such cases, a fair amount of family dirty laundry was hung out to air in the course of the case. Hajira claimed that Ismail, her late husband's father and business partner, was a spendthrift with a gambling problem and that her late husband Imtiaz had had to block the old man's access to the company account for fear he would gamble it away.

Ismail called these statements "vexatious and defamatory" and fired back with some dirt of his own, calling Hajira "untruthful and untrustworthy". He also claimed, based on the supposed evidence of Hajira's children, that her new husband Mohammed Sibda was causing dissension in the family in an effort to get his hands on the assets of their late father Imtiaz.

Judge Satchwell saw it differently, praising Mohammed Sibda for stepping in to support Hajira's two younger

daughters, even though he was not a blood relative. "When I inquired I was told that the applicant [*Hajira*] has remarried and that it is her current husband who is supporting these minor daughters. I expressed then, and do now, my appreciation that a person who is not a blood relative has taken on the financial care of the children of the late Imtiaz Mohammed," wrote Judge Satchwell in her judgment.

Hajira claims Mahomed Akoon's attitude towards her turned sour after she spurned his offer of marriage. She claims in her affidavit that Akoon had had ulterior motives as marriage was now out of the question, "he had to find a different way of securing the benefits of the business". This had become evident when the regular payments she received from I&I Properties started to peter out and the properties fell into disrepair.

In 2012 a representative from Standard Bank visited Mohamed Akoon's home, with Hajira present, to sign documents opening a new account under the name of I&I Properties – making Akoon a signatory to the account. There were now three signatories to the account: Ismail Mohammed, Mahomed Akoon and Hajira, though Akoon was the chief signatory.

When Hajira stopped receiving income from the property business, she decided she had better take a more active interest in the affairs of the business. In January 2014 she visited the Boksburg branch of Standard Bank to inquire into the financial affairs of I&I Properties. The business manager at the branch refused her access to bank statements, at which point Hajira demanded that the bank immediately freeze the account.

Standard Bank said it could only do so if it received written instructions from both Ismail and herself. Ismail Mohammed was not prepared to comply, so the bank account continued trading, with Hajira being kept in the dark as to what payments were being made to whom.

Hajira fired off emails to Mahomed Akoon and Ismail Mohammed asking why the monthly rental payments had stopped, and demanding a full reckoning of the company accounts. Months went by without a reply so Hajira instructed attorney Emraan Dasoo to demand that Standard Bank imme-

As the family feud over the assets escalated, Hajira was forced to leave, taking her two younger children with her

diately suspend Akoon's access to the account.

Hajira still had no luck getting bank statements for I&I Properties – neither from the family members, nor from Standard Bank. She then decided to approach I&I Properties' accounting officer, only to be told the books had not been completed. She approached SARS to find out when tax returns had last been filed. That was in 2010, the year her husband was murdered.

Seeing no other way out of the mess, in February 2014 Hajira offered to buy Ismail's 50% share of the business for R2.5m. Ismail did not respond, so she asked an Imam in the local mosque to mediate... which went precisely nowhere.

She eventually managed to get bank statements for I&I Properties and it soon became clear why Ismail had been so reluctant to share this information with his daughter-in-law. In the year to May 2015, the old man had doled out R285,000 to Sikander Attorneys to pay his legal bills in the fight with Hajira, and a further R194,411 to himself.

Up to this point, Hajira assumed that the two family members entrusted with her late husband's business affairs had simply neglected their

duties. But now Mahomed Akoon reneged on his offer to assist in managing the business, referring tenant complaints to Hajira and Ismail. Ismail claimed he had nothing to do with the business.

Hajira started questioning whether the Standard Bank mortgage bonds over the properties were being serviced, and whether a sale in execution was about to snuff out her sole source of income.

Ismail claims Hajira (as executor) allowed the properties to fall into disrepair. She had no access to the company funds – these being under the charge of Ismail Mohammed and Mahomed Akoon – and was therefore unable to attend to basic maintenance of the buildings.

"I have... referred to the fact that (Ismail) is a signatory on the Hire World account and, given the fact that I was not even aware of the account still being operational after the death of Imtiaz, he is the only person who should have been able to transact on the account," Hajira declared.

Hajira, as executor, sold Hire World to Feroza Syed for R2.5m. She decided to share half of this with her father-in-law, although he was not a shareholder in the business nor an heir to her late husband's estate. In return she was allowed to stay on in his house with her children. But as the family feud over the assets escalated, Hajira was forced to leave, taking her two younger children with her.

The Hire World bank account was not the only secret kept from Hajira. She later found out that her late husband had a 20% interest in a company called Hassim Investments cc, a property-owning company.

Ismail, it turns out, was also a member in that close corporation, but had omitted to mention to Hajira his murdered son's interest in the company.

An inspection of the members' register of Hassim Investments reveals there were two dead men still recorded: Imtiaz, and his cousin Moulana Hashim, who had died in 2011. This would be convenient for the surviving three members of the cc, who it seems were pocketing the dead men's share of the profits.

What's that old saying? "Family and business don't mix well – because if you lose one, you can lose both." ■

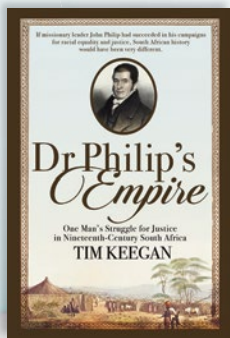
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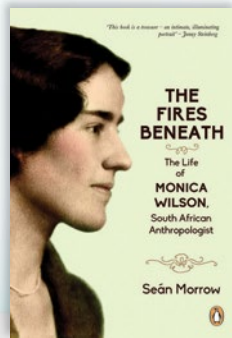
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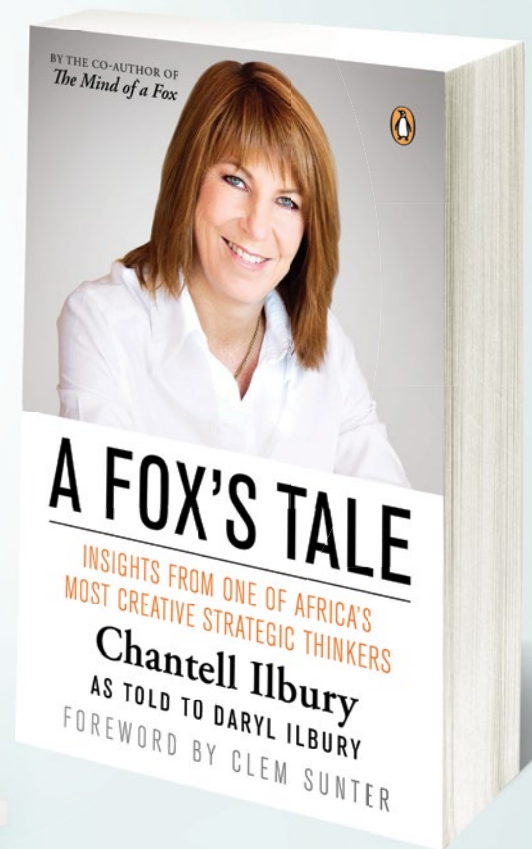
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Bitter battle over multi-million rand estate of Polokwane accountant

Forged signatures and fraud alleged as Hawks and NPA probe disputed will. By Warren Blunt

THE LATE AKBAR ALI AYOB WAS A respected accountant and business advisor in Polokwane, the sort of man one would expect to leave his affairs in impeccable order. But his sudden death from a heart attack on 4 July 2013 triggered a bitter court battle over his estate which continues to this day – in the process, putting the reputations of several pillars of the local establishment on the line.

Contenders for the estate are, on one hand, his life-partner of 30 years Hilda Watkins and their three children (two at university, the youngest in matric) and on the other, are the deceased's brother and sister, Mohamed and Halima Ayob. Mohamed is the imam of a local mosque; Hilda is a shop assistant working at one of the businesses owned by Akbar.

Although Ayob and his family lived a frugal and simple lifestyle, Hilda and the three children were well taken care of and the children received a good education. During his career as an accountant, Ayob accumulated a considerable fortune through a number of astute business ventures and investments in shares, unit trusts and properties. The exact value of the estate has yet to be disclosed due to the pending civil and criminal cases but is expected to amount to several million rand.

As a result of his good account-



Akbar Ali Ayob

ing skills and sound business advice both in Polokwane and other parts of Limpopo, Ayob was involved with most of the top Indian businessmen in the province but kept his various business transactions to himself, even without disclosing such matters to his immediate family.

As a young man, Ayob also followed his own mind when it came to choosing his life partner – by having refused an arranged marriage. He then

fell in love with Hilda Watkins, who was not Muslim, and the couple lived together as man and wife until his death in 2013.

“We never officially got married due to his family not accepting me as his wife. Everybody knows he is the father of our three children and he always had their best interests close at heart. As far as I know, he had no last will and testament at the time of his death,” says Hilda Watkins.

As is Muslim custom, Ayob was buried within 24 hours of his death. The funeral was attended by many respected Muslim business people from Limpopo, including his brother and sister.

A week after the funeral Hilda went to Ayob's bank to inquire whether her partner had left a last will and testament with them for safekeeping. She was informed there was no will but that a considerable fortune was held by the bank in the way of investments and shares in a number of companies. In addition, Ayob owned a number of valuable properties in the CBD of Polokwane (formerly Pietersburg) and in Nirvana, the suburb where the majority of the city's Muslim community resides.

Hilda Watkins approached the Master of the High Court in Polokwane to determine who would act as the executor of the estate. There, to her surprise, she learned that Mohamed

and Halima Ayob had produced a last will and testament that was allegedly signed by Ayob on 29 June 2013 – just five days before his sudden death – listing them as the sole beneficiaries of his entire estate and effects, which they would inherit equally, on a 50/50 basis. The will had been prepared by Polokwane attorney Mohamed Salim Shaik, who on occasion has been an acting-magistrate in Polokwane. In the will Shaik was also appointed as the executor and administrator of Akbar Ayob's estate. This will and testament was certified and approved by the Master of the High Court in Polokwane on 27 August 2013.

As the will was drawn up only days before her husband's unexpected death – and without her knowledge – Hilda Watkins immediately questioned the validity of the will and, together with the children, paid for two private handwriting experts to examine the document. Specimens of Ayob's signature were obtained by the family from various bank documents, hospital receipts and a college registration contract, and examined by the handwriting experts.

Both found the signature on the will to be a forgery. The report of one reads: "Based on all of the factual evidence... the disputed signatures of the deceased on the will and testament were not created by the same person who created the specimen signatures and are therefore classified as forgeries."

When the matter was heard on 16 February last year in a civil case in the North Gauteng High Court in Pretoria, the judge ruled that, on the basis of the handwriting experts' evidence, the last will and testament of Akbar Ali Ayob be declared null and void.

Watkins and her children then opened a case of fraud against Shaik, who was still acting as executor of Ayob's estate. The Watkins family suspected Shaik of being the author of the forged will.

The fraud case against Shaik was opened at the Polokwane Police Station on 25 September 2015. Case number 416/13 was registered and the Watkins family waited for justice to take its course in both the fraud case and the administration of Akbar Ayob's estate.

Shortly after the fraud charge was

laid, the Watkins family was approached by a representative of Mohamed and Halima Ayob to discuss whether the estate could be settled amicably. The Watkins family refused their offer and waited for news from the investigating officer regarding the case of fraud opened against Mohamed Shaik.

After that, nothing much seemed to happen and the Watkins family – who by then had forked out more than R200,000 on legal fees in the civil case disputing the will, plus the costs of the two handwriting experts and a private investigator – were desperate to find closure.

In December the Watkins family paid a visit to the Polokwane Police Station to ask about progress in the fraud case against Shaik. They say they were told that there had been almost no progress.

Hilda Watkins states in an affidavit that the investigating officer, Sergeant Matimela told them: "The case involves a high-profile attorney and judge and cannot be attended to – even the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) cannot follow it up."

Says Hilda's brother, Steven Watkins, who is assisting his sister in the matter: "We cannot allow the case to be swept under the carpet. The family needs fair justice no matter what the profile of the accused."

Early in May the Watkins family, fearing a cover-up in Polokwane, handed over all the evidence of the alleged fraud case against Shaik to the Hawks in Pretoria. Certified copies of the documents were also handed to the Office of the Public Protector, the Human Rights Commission, Office of the Magistrate's Commission and the National Prosecuting Authority.

And to keep the police and justice system in Polokwane up to date, the family even handed in an acknowledgement of receipt of all the documents handed over to the various authorities to the Chief Magistrate, Polokwane Magistrate's Court on 9 May 2016.

But for now, the matter of the estate of Akbar Ali Ayob, and of who will be appointed as the new executor, lies in the hands of the Master of the High Court, Polokwane. The case of fraud against Mohamed Shaik is currently being investigated by the Hawks. ■

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Heads roll and bullets fly in KZN

As ANC factions go to war, it's back to the killing fields of 1990. By Desiree Erasmus

THREE DAYS AFTER COUNCILLOR Zodwa Sibiya was shot dead in front of her children in April, eThekweni Mayor James Nxumalo lashed out at the police for “not coming to the party” to protect politicians and officials.

Nxumalo was speaking at the municipality's executive council, and in a rare moment of solidarity, councillors from all parties expressed horror and sadness at the killing. They called for the police to do their part, saying eThekweni's power was limited when it came to providing safety.

Sibiya, an ANC PR councillor, was shot multiple times, allegedly at point blank range, at Glebelands in Umlazi, a notorious, crime-riddled hostel complex where 62 people have been killed since 2014. Sibiya was reported to have been intent on rooting out corruption, rampant in the complex.

A visibly shaken Nxumalo would have understood the need for the police to step up their efforts better than most. In January, while at his Inchanga home, he heard what he described as “about 50 bullets” being fired from a nearby sportsground where an SACP rally was taking place. Nxumalo, as chairman of the provincial SACP, was supposed to be giving a speech there at the time, but had been delayed by guests.

Soon afterwards a senior SACP leader told *Noseweek* there was “no doubt” it was a planned hit on Nxumalo that had been foiled. Two people were killed in the incident and another four were injured. Witnesses said the conflict began when SACP members approached four men in a Mercedes who “looked suspicious” and who allegedly had guns in the vehicle. The men

‘ There are so many killings that it is difficult to tell a political assassination from just another run-of-the-mill murder ’

OBSERVER

refused to identify themselves when asked and instead started shooting.

Three kilometres away an ANC meeting was taking place to nominate candidates for Ward 4 in the city council elections. Interviewed by *Noseweek* on the day of the shooting at the SACP rally, Ward 4 councillor Dennis “Boy” Shoji (who was at the ANC meeting), said he “really didn’t have any idea this thing had happened”.

While witnesses later accused him of firing into the crowd at the SACP meeting (which he denied), police have not linked Shoji to the shootings. *Noseweek* has, however, since learned

that two of the five men arrested for the shooting spree, Buka and Zamokwake Shoji, are the brothers of councillor Dennis Shoji. (He could not be reached for comment on this development.) Another man who was arrested was an ANC branch executive committee member.

About three weeks earlier, eThekweni ANC councillor Zandile Gumede had to be escorted from the Inchanga area by police while she was canvassing.

It was Gumede who ousted Mayor Nxumalo from his position as eThekweni regional ANC chairperson in December last year during the area's regional conference. (This was after the conference had had to be postponed four times because of infighting, open brawling, death threats and overall chaos.)

The once-tight ANC/SACP romance in eThekweni has reached critical levels, with the SACP openly expressing its distaste at its alliance partner. The most vocal comments came in late May after Senzo Mchunu was told to step down as premier, a move that the SACP was not consulted on and with which they said they disagreed. Nationally, they have not shied away from speaking out on allegations of “state capture” or how the ANC has to get its house in order.

The ANC and SACP are, of course, not alone in experiencing allegedly politically motivated murders in the region or the province this year.

In February, National Freedom Party (NFP) publicist Phositshe Mbatha was shot dead near Ulundi.

In March, NFP provincial councillor Beauty Nompumelelo Zondi was shot dead outside her home in the Nhlan-



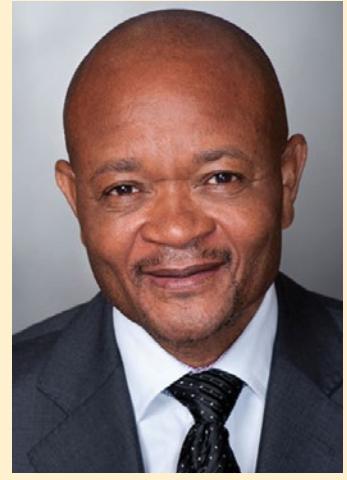
eThekweni mayor and provincial SACP chairman James Nxumalo escaped an alleged assassination plot this year. Nxumalo is expected to lose his position as mayor to the ANC's Zandile Gumede



ANC eThekweni executive councillor Zandile Gumede, a die-hard Zuma loyalist has been touted to take over as mayor of eThekweni after the elections



Current KZN premier and ANC deputy chairperson, Willie Mchunu shuffled his cabinet in an apparent purge of Senzo Mchunu supporters two weeks after being sworn in



Former KZN premier Senzo Mchunu stepped down from his post in May after being asked to do so by the ANC. He has turned down the offer of a seat in Parliament

hleni area in Msinga.

The year has, however, been particularly brutal for the ANC.

In January, ANC member Bongani Dladla was shot dead outside his Inchanga home. He was standing as a candidate for ward councillor and it was widely thought he would be successful.

ANCYL regional deputy chairman for the eMalahleni Region (Newcastle), Wandile Ngubeni, was shot dead at a public drinking spot. The youth league's regional secretary for the same area, Mafika Mndebele, was critically injured during the shooting.

Councillor Bhekithemba "Thami" Goodwill Nyembe was shot dead in Nongoma after being ambushed while driving. Nyembe's wife was with him at the time and survived the ordeal.

The chief financial officer of Mooi-Mpofana Municipality and ANC Edendale (Pietermaritzburg area) executive member, Simo Mncwabe, was shot dead in Edendale a day after he had resigned his post, allegedly because of death threats.

A day later, the ANC's branch chairman in Edendale, Nathi Hlongwa, was shot dead while returning from a party meeting in nearby iMbali. Hlongwa and Mncwabe (shot the previous day) were said to have been close allies.

On the same day, SACP member Siyabonga Dominic Ngubo was murdered in Inchanga. He was incorrectly reported as being a member of the ANC by the media.

In June, ANC members Badedile Tshapa and Phetheni Ngubane were shot while they were returning home after a branch general meeting at Imbali. Tshapa died at the scene and Ngubane, in hospital.

While some of the ingredients in these murders would make for salacious political killing headlines, determining if a murder is politically motivated has become "increasingly difficult", according to Mary de Haas of the KZN Violence Monitor.

If officials or councillors are involved in running businesses in competitive industries, such as the taxi industry, motivation becomes even more difficult to ascertain. "In the taxi industry, their competition may also be politicians," said De Haas.

But proving that councillors and officials own taxis is equally difficult, particularly because the vehicles will be registered in the names of family members or friends, who will receive a cut of the cash takings.

In order to determine a political motivation, De Haas says the context of the crime needs to be examined, and

family and colleagues interviewed.

There is the possibility that those who have done the killing will turn State witness and confess to political motivation. Even then, taking the word of a murderer/hitman, who may be hoping for leniency, is iffy at best.

South Africa's high murder rate also confounds the situation. In Umlazi, for example, where Cllr Sibiba was gunned down at Glebelands, 175 murders and 275 attempted murders were recorded last year, according to SAPS crime statistics. This is staggering if one considers that in Alexandra, with a population of about 100,000 more than Umlazi's 400,000, only 68 murders and 126 attempted murders were recorded last year.

eThekweni's bill for guarding councillors in 2015 apparently stood at R45.6 million. Twenty-one of the 26 councillors under guard at that time were from the ANC. Many of them no longer live in their own wards, apparently due to security concerns. Instead they have moved to council housing in the city's suburbs.

Perched on a gently terraced hill, Glebelands is a complex of facebrick hostels in Umlazi, south of Durban, that houses over 20,000 people. It has been a political hotspot since the Apartheid era when it was known for

A job to die for

TO BECOME A COUNCILLOR one does not need a degree, nor formal sector training, or even experience. Political savvy, the ability to make promises, and (ideally) a large dose of party-aligned charm are the best ingredients.

eThekweni Metro has 206 councillors, two per ward in 103 wards, each raking in an annual package of about R430,000. Salaries are largely determined by the municipality's budget and size.

A councillor may structure his/her salary to include a housing allowance and a cell-phone and airtime allowance. (Councillors receive free laptops and 3G cards for internet access as tools of the trade). They also get a travel allowance of up to 25% of their total remuneration package.

In addition, the council contributes 15% of the basic salary to a pension scheme and pays two-thirds of the monthly cost of a medical aid scheme.

Even conviction and imprisonment for murder will still see councillors employed and drawing salaries.

The Mercury reported in June that eThekweni ANC councillors Velile Lutsheku and Mduduzi Ngcobo are drawing salaries of about R35,000 a month while serving life sentences in Westville Prison. They were convicted of hiring a hitman to kill a Pinetown-based community activist in 2014.

According to *The Mercury*, council Speaker Logie Naidoo said that the men could not be dismissed from their posts until they had exhausted the appeal process in accordance with the Municipal Structures Act. ■

faction fighting, weapons' storage and criminality.

In the past two years, violence has flared to such an extent that some residents made a call for intervention by the United Nations' Human Rights Commission. Public Protector Thuli Madonsela has visited the hostel complex twice in the past six months; she started an investigation into the violence and allegations of a hit-list in February. Her findings are yet to be released.

eThekweni Municipality has erected fencing at Glebelands which reportedly cost R10 million; CCTV has also been installed, as has private security. Police patrols have been increased. Some residents, however, are not happy with the fencing, saying that it hampers their escape routes when fleeing violence.

Despite the security upgrades, as recently as 1 June, three armed hijackers were shot dead by police when they tried to enter Glebelands. After a high-speed chase in the hijacked vehicle, the men rolled the car at the complex's entrance and opened fire on police, who retaliated.

In May, a man was arrested for allegedly committing three murders and six attempted murders at Glebelands; he was dubbed a "most wanted suspect".

Stories of thugs and warlords armed with assault rifles are not sparse in the history of Glebelands, and several criminal gangs are said to work from the complex. Allegations of police and

criminals colluding are rife.

In April, SAPS KwaZulu-Natal spokesperson Brigadier Jay Naicker, said that during the two years that police had been deployed at the hostel, eight people had been arrested for murder and six for attempted murder. In the same period, 43 rifles and handguns had been recovered and 550 rounds of ammunition. However opposition political parties say that, despite these arrests, there is yet to be a trial leading to a conviction.

The ANC's regional and provincial in-fighting is the background to the violence at Glebelands, says De Haas.

"The context in this province is one in which the competition between Willem Mchunu, newly installed premier, and his predecessor, Senzo Mchunu, informs much, or perhaps most of the intra-ANC conflict," De Haas told *Noseweek*.

"eThekweni has been the scene of a bloody struggle to shore up support for Zandile Gumede to run the Metro as mayor. Incumbent mayor [*James Nxumalo*] is not on the party list, or is very low down on it." She said similar political posturing to promote a certain faction of the ANC had been occurring at municipalities throughout the province. "While every death at Glebelands may not be political, most of them are," she said.

This is all compounded by what De Haas calls "appalling policing". Her research indicates that "many local police" are apparently colluding with "thugs" who are allegedly close to the "[*eThekweni regional chairperson*] Gumede camp" in Glebelands.

The sitting councillor at Glebelands, Robert Mzobe, is also said to be a Gumede ally. Although the area experiences massive service delivery problems, the *Daily Dispatch* reported that Mzobe has recently been nominated to stand for another term as councillor. He refused to answer any of *Noseweek's* questions.

"Millions of rands have been spent on Glebelands and there is very little to show for it," said De Haas.

Mzobe's office is set on a hill overlooking the Glebelands complex. And like a king, he sits, protected by bodyguards, surveying the serfs below. He has been accused of racketeering and intimidation. eThekweni allegedly pays nearly R500,000 a year to protect him. ■

**It's so bad, UN
Human Rights
Commission has been
called to intervene**

In the mind of the EFF

Ndlozi says Malema is the future

WITHOUT EDUCATION THERE IS NO running of a sophisticated modern state, says Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) spokesman Mbuyiseni Ndlozi. “But it’s not just about running the country,” he adds, “Education is good for the soul.”

Ndlozi, 31, beams broadly and orders another caffè latte. “When I say education, I am talking about that life-long relationship with questioning power; the capacity to learn and to research. Universities give us the ability to self-educate. That’s what I love about education.”

Our interview is taking place in the Spur at Cape Town International Airport. Ndlozi has flown in from Johannesburg, where he had taken part in an SABC election debate with ANC MP Ayanda Dlodlo and DA spokeswoman Phumzile van Damme.

Ndlozi bemoans the fact that work on his PhD in Political Sociology through

By Sue Waterstone

the University of the Witwatersrand has had to be put on hold. His round-the-clock work for the EFF leaves no time for any extramurals.

The good-looking Ndlozi, wearing EFF kit, is clearly recognisable to many of the diners around us. At one stage it’s apparent that not only is the waitress hovering, but people at nearby tables are looking at us with unguarded fascination. After all, this is the guy who yelled out at International Relations Minister Maite Nkomo-Mashabane, “You are sleeping on duty,” as she snored through President Jacob Zuma’s impeachment debate in the National Assembly. The video footage went viral. It was also he who addressed National Assembly Speaker Baleka Mbete as “Magogo Mbete”, and Higher Education Minister Blade Nzimande as “Bra Blade” – having previously called Baleka a “constitutional

illiterate” and Nzimande, an “intellectual dwarf”.

During the debate on the Vuwani school-burning crisis, he questioned why the “weekend special” (Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Minister Des van Rooyen) should be allowed to speak during the week.

Last year, Ndlozi was evicted from Parliament for addressing the DA’s Dean Macpherson as “white boy”. He has also publicly accused Zuma and the ANC of being “morally, ethically and cognitively sick” and, during a questions session with the president last year, told Zuma: “This is not the Trevor Noah show,” when he giggled his way through the proceedings.

But, one-to-one, Ndlozi is charming to everyone, from the waitress, to the woman at the next table who is obviously eavesdropping on the interview (and who eventually cannot contain herself and walks over to tell him “You speak *bee-ootiful* English!”).

On the subject of studying, it turns out the entire leadership of the EFF is busy advancing their education. “Yes, we are all studying... the CIC (Commander-in-Chief, Julius Malema) is doing his Honours in Philosophy, the SG (Secretary-General Godrich Gardde) is studying law, and Deputy President Floyd Shivambu was awarded his Master’s last year.

Ndlozi says the most important thing ultimately is the capacity to constantly educate yourself as a collective. “If a party is offering a political alternative... you cannot say your ideas are alternative and unique before you have made the diagnosis that what we have now does not work. University gives us research tools. We want to make South Africa successful. The best countries in the world are those that invest in education, particularly post-graduate education.”

In the SABC interview the previous day, Ndlozi had spelled out the EFF manifesto, which is all about localising the EFF’s “Seven Cardinal Pillars” into local government. These include:

- land expropriation without compensation for equal redistribution;
- nationalisation of mines, banks and other strategic sectors of the economy, without compensation;
- building state and government capacity (leading to abolition of tenders);
- free quality education, healthcare, houses and sanitation;
- massive protected industrial development to create millions of sustainable jobs, including minimum wages;
- massive development of the African economy; and
- open, accountable, corrupt-free government and society.

Each of the issues is likely to provoke enough controversy to feed hours of debate. But to make the point, *Noseweek* poses a few challenging questions:

Where will the high-risk capital needed for nationalised mines come from, if not from investors in shares on various stock exchanges?

“Capital does not have to come from foreign investors, as is often suggested. There is substantial capital available locally. When we talk about nationalisation, we are not excluding partnerships with private capital where we agree on percentages, as has occurred successfully in Botswana and even in Zimbabwe where, as it happens, for-

eign mining capital did not leave when the mines were nationalised. Mines have a long life and are the bedrock of industrialisation.”

How do you distribute land “equally”? Does everyone get, say, a 100m² or a 250m² plot?

“Equality does not mean sameness. It depends on the specific land-use: e.g. whether it is for settlement, agriculture or industrial development. The majority of land must be allocated as far as possible to black people, to achieve proportionality. Beyond that, when land is allocated for a specific purpose, it must be used for that. A farmer must farm, he cannot use his land to become a slum landlord.”

Some of the biggest shareholders in banks are pension funds and trade unions, including the Public Investment Corporation. If they are nationalised without compensation, millions of pensioners and workers will suffer. How do you explain that?

“They hold big stakes, yes. But government won’t take all shares; it only needs to acquire majority control. No developmental country can progress without access to capital. To advance innovation and the required scale of industrialisation, you need projects only a government can afford to pursue. Historically that has been shown to be the case in many countries, even in the US and Britain – and in Korea. Read Cambridge’s “heterodox” economist Ha-Joon Chang on the subject.

When we talk about nationalisation, we are not excluding partnerships with private capital

“The DA has consistently stated the issue most needing urgent intervention is jobs – and it is unemployment that Ndlozi hones in on immediately.

“The reality for many poor and black people – who remain the majority of the population – is that, in the past 22 years of this thing we call a promise... they remain without decent jobs. This is the most important challenge for us.

“In the promise of a job is a whole set of assumptions: ‘I will not depend on anyone to eat, but I know I worked for what I have’. A quality job has medical aid, a pension, and proper working conditions.”

In the build-up to their manifesto launch, the EFF leadership visited no fewer than 200 communities in Gauteng alone. Decent jobs and the lack of basic services were the dominant issues – issues the EFF manifesto addresses, says Ndlozi. Land remains one of the most pressing bugbears.

“First, there is a huge demand for settlement land. People are even reusing graves. Two generations of a family still live in the same yard, there are numerous backroom dwellers in old townships like Mamelodi, Dobsonville, Thembisa and in countless new informal settlements which are informal precisely because people are identifying land and occupying it. There, there are no basic services.

“But to those who have services, they are very expensive because of the neoliberal state which, since 1996, has conceptualised its relationship to the people through payment, yet is unable to provide the means for people to actually make the payment it has structured itself around.

“So you have the increasingly devastating phenomenon of old-age pensioners who are unable to get services because they owe rates to the value of, in some instances, R50,000. And there are no concrete explanations for how rates for water and electricity can become that expensive.

“Most people live in houses they don’t own and for which they don’t have title deeds. They cannot say, ‘when I die I know that this house will go to my children’.”

Ndlozi finds it appalling “that our people have these problems because we have a government whose macro-economic performance, even in the days of growth, has been unable

to translate into quality jobs.

"The government of the ANC, and the DA, too, celebrate Extended Public Works Programmes, which are no more than precarious labour contracts that perpetuate the phenomenon of black, cheap and easily disposable labour, which was at the core of the apartheid labour policy. That cannot be.

"This neoliberal state – even though it gives social grants – won't ever be able to create jobs because of the way they think about the economy. The diagnosis of the economy that informs these policies for both the DA and the ANC – what they think is wrong with the economy – is the wrong diagnosis."

He cites an example: "Yesterday I went to a debate in the city of Tshwane. The way the Mayor of Tshwane speaks is big policy: how to attract investment... He speaks in this intellectual manner because the audience, in his mind, are the investors. His goal is to be affirmed by Moody's [*credit rating*]. That's the audience he has in mind. He doesn't say, 'How will the city make sure the clinic (which presently hands out Panados for everything) will work?'"

"He does not address the severe frustrations people get when they go to the clinics, the police stations. Or about rates and burials, or how to build and maintain the roads that serve most people. He doesn't do that because his sense of what the city should do is that it should service the people who can pay for the services. It is conceptualised in a corporate way. It is the absolute corporatisation of municipal local government."

Still on the subject of the DA: "And they celebrate that they created 11,000 jobs, half of which are precarious labour contracts, having spent billions. It is embarrassing. Our manifesto is centred on trying to address these issues."

What role in the future would you like to play in South African politics?

"You call it politics, I call it the revolution," he says. "The future is a question of the collective. One's hope is to constantly be part of making this alternative a success."

What, in your view, is the state of the nation?

"This nation is on its knees. Apart from what Zuma has done, the ideological force of the liberation movement is exhausted and it has refused renewal. Anything that refuses to be renewed

will die. When the ANC excluded and expelled the Economic Freedom Fighters in 2012, it showed us that the ANC was refusing to be reborn. It refused generational renewal, so it took the country to its knees. Today, the government has no political direction. The centre is not holding because there is no vision of the future. Their ideas are exhausted, outdated, and they've refused renewal."

In addition, he says, the ANC is "turning dictatorial". "I don't think people appreciate that. If you can kill 34 people and then, three years down the line, no single politician has lost his job for that, then I don't know. You set the army on your own people. You kill unarmed workers with rifles in front of the whole world and no single politician is held accountable."

"Life's moved on. That is the inhumanity that characterises dictators. How can [*former police minister*] Nathi Mthethwa, [*mining minister*] Susan Shabangu and [*Deputy President*] Cyril Ramaphosa still be there when there is clear evidence of their direct involvement? Any government that takes the lives of its people with impunity is an illegitimate government, because the right to life is so central. There's little difference between Marikana and Sharpeville. This is worse because you are killing people without even the laws to support it. Apartheid

'This nation is on its knees. Apart from what Zuma has done, the ideological force of the liberation movement is exhausted'

had laws that supported the way it treated black people, so the treatment of black people as waste was legal. The ANC are going to become even more dictatorial. That is the trend to watch."

Zuma, he agrees, is showing no signs of going away. "Look at the Gauteng conference last week. We thought at least in the Gauteng ANC, there were people with some pride. But there they were, singing and dancing with him."

"When a system is not legitimate it is essential to not have a normal relationship... to disrupt that relationship. Otherwise, the system does not know it has to change. We can't act normal in an abnormal situation."

He says the reason there are so few brave voices in the ANC now is "because of how they are all eating. They are afraid to separate from their privileges to fight for what is right. That is why I say that the most important test of a modern revolutionary is what Julius Malema is doing."

Will Malema become president and what qualities would he bring?

"It will be very beneficial not only for this country but for the continent, if the CIC became president. There has never been a president who knows what they want, presiding over the economy in clear, consistent ways in the interests of the African revolution, defined as the absolute dismantling of the treatment of Africans as waste."

He returns to the question of land: "And that begs the question of the land... the land is everything. Just ask the obvious question: Why are there townships? Why are there these spaceless spaces as [*revolutionary writer Frantz*] Fanon put it, 'where Africans live in proximity to rats, pigs and rubbish, with no services, infested with crime and lawlessness, where people die and it matters little how and why?'"

"You cannot transform that reality without addressing the question of land, and you can't buy the land back ... That is why the CIC must be president... because, on all these issues, he will not compromise."

"Malema has been tried and tested. You can say whatever you want but everything he has been through has tested him, his beliefs and his commitments. He has been totally dispossessed of the little he had [*not so little – see box, Page 33*] and he had the whole state machinery chasing

after him. [See editorial for comment.]

"I don't know what has tested [DA leader Mmusi] Maimane; I don't know him. I don't know what drums beat in his soul. He doesn't have the necessary inclination to try and test, that's important for change to happen."

What drums beat in Malema's soul?

"The African socialist revolution, that's what. His commitment to these ideals is tested. He's been consistent in those beliefs. He was at the height of the ANC's leadership. He risked all that influence. He didn't have to stick to the demands of the economic freedom programme, but he did. I just hope we can get him (as president) while he's still young and full of energy."

"Remember, in South Africa the terms are limited to ten years, so we have to get him as young as we got Obama, not as old as we got Mandela. Old people care more about peace, but there are important disruptions needed for the shackles of the past to be shed and for a truly new nation to be born."

Ndlozi is adamant that the EFF leadership should come to power "whilst they can run". "I am hoping that in our early 40s we are able to take power in the country and place Malema as president. That's my personal wish, but of course it's the absolute prerogative of the collective EFF."

"The EFF ascension," says Ndlozi, "will be as important as the Haitian revolution, which inspired black radicals across the world to demand an end to slavery ...if we in South Africa can truly forge a revolution here that can be sustainable, that can be democratic and in which there is rule of law and a limitation of terms of office, and a separation of powers. That is us".

Does Malema work his EFF colleagues hard?

"Eish, that one, he is a workaholic. He has that excruciating attention to detail. He's a perfectionist and doesn't compromise on quality. You should see the quality of EFF events."

"He is sharp... he cuts like a knife into butter... with military precision in anything he does. He is committed. He's moved by the state of this country. I am very close to him by virtue of my role in the organisation and he is very genuine, that comrade. Floyd too. The word for me is 'authentic'... They don't lie to themselves. The only thing

that matters to them... is to get South Africa working in a way that works also for black people who have been at the periphery for so long. He will not be fulfilled until that happens on the continent as a whole.

"The Fees-must-fall movement would never have taken place if the EFF had not already inserted the idea of economic freedom into the political discourse. That's the genius I speak of when I talk about Julius and Floyd. It is they who have agitated this generation to its core... the spirit they have been breathing has captured everybody. They began to challenge the status quo, inspired by a completely different set of ideas. That is what it means to be revolutionaries... Malema has a vow. He will go to whatever extent for the liberation of black people."

"Maimane does not move the youth. The leader of this generation is Malema. Maimane knows there are no drums beating in Maimane. The black people who join the DA are careerists, they're not driven by a passionate mission. It's mechanical, meritocratic, and all about CVs and interviews."

"The black youth represented by the EFF are the criminalised, bastardised, nyaope delinquents. Those people are not in the DA. There is no black youth in the DA, just middle-class blacks who want careers."

"What the EFF are about is the historic moment – what in Biblical terms they would call the Kairotic

moment.

"Julius, like Jesus, Moses and David in their time, is a leader like Anton Lembede was the leader of 1944 generation out of whom Sobukwe, Mandela and many other leaders were born."

What are your predictions for the upcoming elections?

"Look, we are going to do very well. Society is going to shock us by giving us huge responsibilities."

What will South Africa look like in 20 years' time?

"The land question will be closed, education, until the attainment of the first degree, will be of quality and free for all. You won't access education because of the size of your pocket, but because you're smart and you deserve it. We will be light years into the establishment, reindustrialisation and definition of new industries as well. And we will be feeding ourselves. It's a shame we depend on the world for food. I think more than 60% of the food we consume comes from outside."

"The financial sector will be undergoing huge transformations... we'll have a state bank... that fights the anarchy of the financial markets. A state bank will also be critical for the huge industrialisation programmes we must engage in. We have to produce our own electronics – refrigerators, cellphones, TV sets. There's no reason for all those goods to come from outside. At least 40% of those should be produced in factories in South Africa to start with. That gives you two things, growth and sustainable jobs."

We meet the day before Zuma is answering questions again in Parliament; the nation waiting for another EFF disruption in the National Assembly. The next day, their caucus was forcibly removed from the chamber by Parliament's security officers.

Do the EFF MPs get nervous ahead of their disruptions of Parliament?

"Conviction is conviction. There's a lot of solidarity in the collective. Before we go in, we sing together. We know what's possibly going to happen, and we tell each other, we must just stick together."

"The project we're involved in is, by its nature, a project of bravery, a storming of the Bastille. Julius Malema is our inspiration. He leads from the front, in absolutely everything – and his bravery is very contagious." ■

'Old people care more about peace, but there are important disruptions needed for the shackles of the past to be shed and for a truly new nation to be born'

The making of a revolutionary

MBUYISENI QUINTIN NDLOZI was born in 1985 in Everton township, near Johannesburg, to a single mother, Zithelile, a domestic worker and, later, a shopkeeper. The family moved to Sasolburg when Ndlozi was five. His mother had two more children, but when Ndlozi was nine years his stepfather became abusive, so the family returned to Everton “to start afresh”. These days his mother lives in Orange Farm and runs her own catering and decorations business.

His father, says Ndlozi, was simply “not there”. “I mean it when I say my mother is an absolute black queen – representative of many, many black women across South Africa. Very few men I know of are constructively engaged in the lives of their families. Most of us in the township grew up without fathers. But it is not a problem... If love and care from one parent is there, then it doesn’t matter whether the other parent is there or not.

“My mother was everything to me. She is essentially my maker. I saw her last night. I know she’s proud of me.”

Ndlozi himself is neither married nor has children. “We are focused on the revolution now,” he smiles.

He was a driven, ambitious child who read a great deal and taught himself at every opportunity.

As a dedicated churchgoer, he read the Bible and spoke confidently in public from an early age. “In primary school, even before the charismatic faith captured me, my capacity for organised speaking, was already well developed. In Grade 4, I took part in a speech contest at school. My mother coached me. The kids were blown away; my teacher was mesmerised and took me from class to class to repeat the speech. That’s where my confidence in speaking my mind to large groups of people started.”

But it was his “huge participation” in the charismatic church that really set him on the path of public speaking. “One Good Friday, the pastor asked me to speak to a crowd of more than 3,000

people. I was 16. He gave me the mic and made me speak for 15 minutes. I opened the Bible and started speaking – about repentance. Five minutes in, everybody was on their feet. It was a big affirmation.

Ndlozi has trophies for Latin dancing and he sang in various choirs, including a gospel group, Vaal Sounds.

His family voted ANC, but there were no activists he knew, apart from one relative. “In the early 1990s, the boers came to get him in the early hours. That you don’t forget as a child.”

Ndlozi attended the Khutlo-Tharo High School in Sebokeng, where he officially joined the ANC.

He was a keen debater at school. “I was determined to have content, so I learnt to read widely.”

In standard nine, he won the Sowetan Anglo American Young Communicators Award receiving a bursary to a university of his choice. “I was in the newspapers and on TV. Winning that competition also revived my father! He started trying to make contact. But that’s a story for another day.”

Ndlozi started studying at Wits University in 2004 and graduated with a BA in International Relations and Politics, followed by Honours in Politics, then a Master’s in Sociology. “After that, I enrolled for my PhD, which I am still doing. Eish,” he grins, in weary testament to a gruelling schedule with scant spare time.

At university, he joined the ANC Youth League, the SA Students Congress (Sasco) and the Young Communist League. He was also president of the Christian Action Fellowship.

“I fellowshiped for my first four years at university... but it became difficult to belong to an organised church because we started interacting with a whole new set of people, like (activists and clerics) Frank Chikane, Maurice Ngakani and Caesar Malebatsi. “Their views on spirituality really challenged us to think very hard. Ngakane, a former South African Council of Churches leader, at 81 remains a very close friend.

Others who have inspired him include Black Consciousness Movement founder Steve Biko, revolutionary Afro-Caribbean writer Frantz Fanon, Karl Marx and Lenin – “a super-great intellectual of the left”.

“The Communist Manifesto remains one of the most important documents about capitalism, whether you are left or right. It is a must-read if you want to understand how the world works.

“I am also fascinated by what PAC founder Robert Sobukwe represented. He was possibly an even bigger personality than Mandela – he was smarter and more educated. Mandela admitted he struggled academically.

“I still have my faith but I’m not a member of a specific church. I do believe there is a transcendental being”

Ndlozi’s PhD research is exploring the question of how black youth is constituted.

He was recruited to the ANC Youth League by Floyd Shivambu, at the time Wits SRC president (and now deputy president of the EFF). Soon after Ndlozi was elected as treasurer of the ANCYL. Only last year, when some EFF leaders were reflecting on the past, Ndlozi learned Shivambu had talent-spotted him preaching at a Christian service for first-years.

Ndlozi also served on the Wits SRC. In 2013, shortly before the EFF was formed, Shivambu approached him again and invited him to a meeting during Obama’s visit to South Africa. He had been presiding over the No Obama Campaign.

“So, I sat with Floyd... and he was saying we should go and participate in the launch of the EFF. I had never met Julius Malema, even though I was in the Youth League when he was its president.

“And Floyd said ... ‘look we want you to come and do our communications’, which was a big job because I didn’t have half the experience they required. A few days after meeting with Floyd, I met with Julius, just the three of us.

“It was at that meeting that I fully comprehended how great Julius

Malema is, and I remain absolutely humbled to this day. I think Julius Malema and Floyd Shivambu are the best of our generation. They are what (ANC Youth League co-founders) Anton Lembede and A.P. Mda were like in 1944, wanting to reform the ANC, from being too much like a body of gentlemen with clean hands.)

"Malema and Shivambu are like Che Guevara and Fidel Castro. They had already shaken the foundations of this country by then.

"I knew that day that I had met a true revolutionary for the first time.

We spoke for about six hours. I left that meeting very humble and with a lot of fear. I felt that I had been anointed by that guy. It was a huge responsibility."

He continues: "I've told Floyd on many occasions that I didn't feel I was doing the party justice. I always thought the rest of the big names of our generation from the ANC Youth League – like (former Young Communist League national chair and now ANC spokesman) David Masekela – would come to us and that I wouldn't have to do this for long.

"But Julius and Floyd were light years ahead. They still are. They exist in a far more advanced paradigm than I'd ever comprehended. Most of the time in the EFF, I feel I'm at school. Half the time I was unlearning a lot... and the process of unlearning is far more painful than that of learning."

About ten days after that meeting with Shivambu and Malema, they announced the process to begin to establish the EFF.

"It took place at Constitution Hill. I knew this would be my destiny for a while." ■

Lowdown. Down under

THE SUPERSTORM ON AUSTRALIA'S east coast, which claimed at least six lives and saw the ocean attack Sydney beachfront properties and destroy promenades, has been classified an "insurance catastrophe". Its intensity is a taste of things to come in a warming world, say climate scientists.

So, which way will Australia jump in the 2 July election? It's between the Liberals with the very wealthy PM Malcolm Turnbull at the helm, once upon a time, a Goldman Sachs banker (who recently told the media he started out life poor, sometimes with not enough food, and was the son of a single dad – generating sarcastic tweets such as #MalcolmWasSoPoor he couldn't even afford to use a tax haven), and the Australian Labor Party with its man-of-the-people, the rather dull but apparently worthy former trade unionist Bill Shorten (who however has had the good grace to say some of Trump's views were "barking mad", for which he was criticised by Turnbull).

Shorten and his ALP are steadily climbing in the polls. The hobbled Turnbull has been a disappointment, pleasing no one really: to keep faith with his party's conservatives – as he reportedly undertook to do when he did the deal that toppled his predecessor Tony Abbott, he broke faith with those hoping he would bring a more humane attitude on climate change, gay marriage, refugees and support for public health and education.

Meantime, there are 54 parties on

By Anne Susskind

the ballot papers and the Australian Sex Party has pinned its hopes on an opportunistic coupling with the Hemp (Help End Marijuana Prohibition) Party in most states, and an agreement to preference each other in the rest. Voting is compulsory in Australia, and there is a fine for not doing so.

It's the way of the world, tourists destroying what they have come to see. Now, in Thailand, the government has closed a popular island under threat of irreversible damage. Koh Tachai is one of the Similan Islands, known for their white sand beaches, crystalline water, coral and scuba diving. "A beach on the island can hold up to 70 people. But sometimes tourists numbered well over 1,000 on the beach, already crowded with food stalls and tour boats. This caused the island to quickly deteriorate," said Thon Thamrongnawasawat, deputy dean of the Fisheries faculty at Kasetsart University in Bangkok.

So, let the defence force try to raise funds with chook (chicken) raffles instead of schools having to do so, says the outspoken principal of a Queensland Primary School, protesting about the Turnbull government's cuts to the Gonski funding programme for schools (the South African born David Gonski has become a household name in Australia, generating car bumper stickers "I give a Gonski", which translates into I'm a public education supporter). The principal, who fears she may lose teachers without the Gonski funds,

said the defence department could also try selling tea towels to raise funds.

A somewhat less illustrious South African connection: the federal Liberal candidate in Fremantle, Perth, Sherry Sufi, resigned after news surfaced of his impersonation of his former South African boss Michael Sutherland. Sufi (an opponent of same-sex marriage and of indigenous recognition) in 2013 mocked Sutherland, mimicking his South African accent to impersonate him and his description of a series of sexual adventures: "When I was a freshman in college, you know, I f-d every hot bitch in the University of Johannesburg..." and more. Now Speaker of the West Australian Parliament, Sutherland said he hadn't alerted his party's state council to Sufi's bad behaviour because he felt the issue was closed. Not surprising, really, since it is hard to say who is more reprehensible.

While the federal immigration minister, Peter Dutton, said in May that "illiterate and innumerate" refugees will take Australian jobs, the NSW Government, also Liberal, is more welcoming and has announced the creation of at least 100 public sector jobs for refugees over the next year.

In the Northern Territory (where the prison population is 84.4% Aboriginal), there's been a sharp rise in the number of women imprisoned, with Indigenous women said to be becoming more violent, most likely as a consequence of the violence being visited on them by men, speculates a Northern Territory lawyer. ■



Life force. Keep on keeping on

THEY DON'T MAKE MOVIES LIKE THIS ANY more – and more's the pity. Carnie Matisonn calls himself a maverick, but swashbuckler would be a more appropriate tag. The quirkily entertaining *Degas' Dust* chronicles the adventures of a poverty-stricken Joburg kid who defied misery to become... what? Nazi war loot detective, theatre producer, lawyer... oh, and violinist, helicopter pilot, property developer. Plus philosopher.

The vivid range and energy captured in this dizzyingly crowded autobiography (with editorial assistance from journalist/writer Charles Cilliers) would require a dramatic documentary series for comprehensive presentation. It's a rags-to-riches-to-rags-and-back-to-riches tale of operatic complexity.

All the classic dramatic elements are there. Depressed parents, shadowed by holocaust horrors, were less than ideal guides to a new life in Africa. Young Carnie records that he was beaten about the head with wooden coat hangers by his frustrated mother, and generally ignored by a father who sought consolation in alcohol.

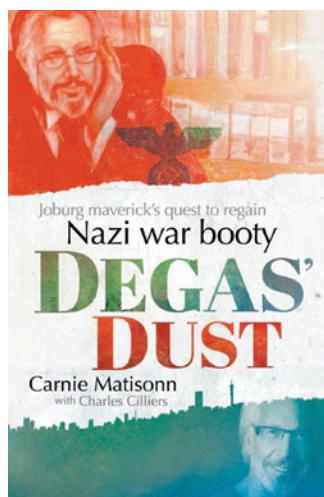
Did these sorrows daunt Carnie's tenacious survival instincts? Nope. They honed his determination to fight for the good life – and for his stolen heritage.

Humble beginnings and hard work slowly bear fruit as the boy earns and learns independence in the less salubrious areas of the raffish town that was white Joburg in the 1960s. A sustaining myth of a distinguished artistic grand-uncle, who was robbed and killed by German troops in Norway during WWII, keeps the lad's romantic imagination alive. And so does the suggestion that uncle's missing Impressionist paintings might turn up one day.

His plan was to educate himself, qualify professionally (hectic tales of hit-and-miss survival endeavours are detailed with verve) and then to find the killer and the Nazi war booty.

Pipe dreams? Not at all. The dream is eventually realised, more or less, and involves cloak and dagger encounters with the Mossad, KGB

DEGAS' DUST
By Carnie Matisonn
(With Charles Cilliers)
(Tafelberg)



and other assorted spooks in Europe and in South Africa. Dr Matisonn (yes, a law doctorate despite huge obstacles) qualified after applying a sharp mind to his studies while keeping himself fed, housed, and sometimes amused, with an eventually profitable practice, creative investment in art, and some merry ventures in show business. He founded The Stage Door supper theatre in the then-booming Hillbrow of the 1960s, The Stage Door in Melville, and much else besides.

Matisonn was no arms-length operator in any of the extraordinarily varied fields in which he laboured. In an emergency, he could whip out his violin (named Mehitabel), chivvy the chefs knowledgeably, and contrasted all this with interest in bricklaying, electrical wiring and other skills required for his responsibilities as hotelier.

Degas' Dust is at times bewildering in its dramatic variations, but succeeds in conveying the vitality of a driven mind. Firm believer in the Nelson Mandela dictum of using failure to ignite energy, Matisonn came back from the brink time and again. When The Stage Door in Melville, crammed with the boss's paintings, sculptures and other assorted treasures, was destroyed by a suspiciously timed fire, he was, once again, in deep trouble. The insurance coverage was negligible because he had forgotten to effect the necessary policy changes when he bought what had been a three-bedroom house. But, buoyant as ever, he routed the heartless bankers who sought to bankrupt him, and even piloted his helicopter to the then Johannesburg Airport in a bid to effect a runway arrest of a suspected arsonist.

It's no wonder Matisonn's first marriage collapsed under the combined weight of disapproving snooty in-laws and the maverick adventures of the young Carnie. But it seems true romance bloomed in due course, and Matisonn, his wife Amoi and two daughters now spend their time in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Miami, where they are based.

Did Carnie eventually confront the Nazi villain who killed his uncle? Did he recover the stolen artworks? That would be telling. ■

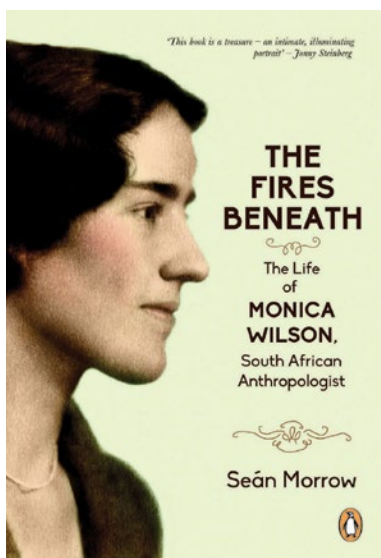
The fires beneath

Monica Wilson, née Hunter, was the most prominent social anthropologist of her day in South Africa. Her groundbreaking research in African communities continues to influence anthropological and ethnographic studies. Seán Morrow's just-published biography of this remarkable woman and her husband and fellow anthropologist Godfrey Wilson, has been described by Professor Chris Saunders as one of the great biographies of a South African, part a great love story, ultimately tragic. *Noseweek* is privileged to publish a short extract, with the permission of the publisher, Penguin Books.

USING THE IDEAS OF EM FORSTER, Godfrey Wilson argued that human connection results in a more intense experience of life. In doing so he boldly summoned Christ's parable of the mustard seed. He wrote to Monica: "... as 'finding the connection' between you and me began life for me, in the same way 'finding the connection' between different parts of our life together (as between the loving intercourse with facts and my passion for your arms) will deepen that life all over. It is like a mustard seed."

Godfrey had undergone Freudian psychoanalysis, though he regarded Freud's attempt at sociology as completely inadequate. If sex alone is fundamental, Godfrey argued that the possibility offered by Forster of a connection between sex and other "occasions of feeling" is removed. If he himself had not been an ambitious sociologist as well as Monica's lover, he "could never find a symbolic connection between [her] and sociology". Godfrey maintained: "The truth is not that everything else is really a thin disguise for sex, but that passion is so important and so intense that no one can be happy until he has found the connection between it and his other interests."

Godfrey described the beauty of an evening without her as "remote like Chinese script – or rather like a wonderful carved frame, each detail perfect and peculiar, but surrounding a blank space... there was no relevance,



nothing to love, no proof of God in all the flawlessness of the night".

Monica wrote to Godfrey simply and plainly: "I go to sleep and wake up longing for you. I should just die inside if I did not know that you love me so much. I would die and become a hard efficient selfish shell."

Her love letters, unlike Godfrey's which were frequently florid, are strikingly simple: "Feel me loving you... and comforting you thro' these stiff words."

The correspondence also addresses anthropology, with many eager discussions about fieldwork or analysis. One letter conjures up a vivid picture of

Monica at work, gleefully pursuing facts as if she were a Nyakyusa hunter: "... you have, I suppose, been pursuing facts all day with your brows knitted in your own peculiar hunting look – ijo! ijo! – but never knitted for long at a time because the facts are on people, and you just love them, and you stop in the middle to laugh and greet them – and then your conscience says 'Fellow of the African Institute', to you, and you knit your brows again and pursue the facts all over your informants' lives, like fleas – ijo! ijo! But the smile is still there in your eyes."

Without any sense of discontinuity, the letter flows from Godfrey's desire for Monica to his current anthropological preoccupation, the analysis of the spiritual and ritual significance of copulation among pagan traditionalists. He loved her, he wrote, for her "scholarship as well as for other things".

Monica had a keen sense of how, as a couple, they were united in and by anthropology. "You see sweet, we are in it together ..."

'SO MUCH OF THE PAIN AND suffering of war is known only to lovers who suffer it."

Godfrey had not been well, and his depression hit him again "like a storm" as he arrived in Pretoria, where he was posted to the Engineers' Training Centre (ETC) at Zonderwater.

"Damn the army and its ways! It is grimly disappointing for us," he wrote. But with Monica's help he could hold

on: "I love you, Moché, and because you love me I can fight back against the sense of futility and failure that had momentarily overwhelmed me. Damn war. So much of the pain and suffering of war is known only to lovers who suffer it."

Eeyore [*his personification of his own gloomy side*] was "desire gone sullen" from being starved of her. He could only "smile ruefully" when Monica commented that he had successfully hidden Eeyore for nine years. It was, he explained, precisely because he had managed to conceal him so successfully that he had now broken out again: "one has to let him out a bit sometimes."

Godfrey sought the origins of his condition in "the phantasies of childhood... one tries to live up to one's phantasies and is fearful and anxious because one cannot do so". He had reacted strongly against his family, especially his mother, who had both "spoiled and frightened" him, [*and was*] ashamed of what he had been conditioned to perceive as arrogance, self-centredness and "satanic pride".

Invoking Francis Thompson's great poem, he said that Monica's love was the *Hound of Heaven*, and only she could hunt down and transform his burden. There are many other agitated and desperate letters at this time, but they are leavened with passages of "normality" and humour, asking Monica for "forgiveness" in a way that would nevertheless have burdened her with an impossible responsibility.

Despite all this, Godfrey did his job well and led an active and apparently successful social life. He gave lectures on Yugoslavia and Russia, and even addressed a group of black soldiers on the topic of "native representation", a "somewhat daring" undertaking, he said. He wrote notes on 17 themes for talks and workshops, on a variety of matters, such as savings and inflation. His notes on nationalism argue that small states have been superseded, federal arrangements as in the Soviet Union were required, and the feasibility of a pan-African federation should be explored.

But on 14 May, he wrote to Monica: "Darling, Try and forgive me. My weakness has betrayed us both. You

have done everything possible for me: waited for me, encouraged me, loved me truly; no one could have done more, few as much. It was the real thing our love, don't let my failure make you doubt that. Godfrey."

The official form reported that on 16 May 1944 "Deceased was found hanging by his neck at the Garrison Swimming Bath." Until she arrived in Pretoria for the funeral, Monica was not certain that he had taken his own life.

Godfrey Wilson lies buried in grave 288 in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery, part of the military cemetery at Thaba Tshwane, previously Voortrekkerhoogte and Roberts Heights. By 21 May, Monica was back at Hogsback.

A SORT OF PROGRESSIVE CLIQUE within the staff of UCT at the time," Archie Mafeje was just one of the African students whose interests Monica Wilson protected and promoted at UCT. Another was Fikile "Fiks" Bam, who eventually became judge president of the Land Claims Court.

Born in Tsolo, Transkei, in 1937, Fikile and his siblings were largely brought up by their mother, Temperance Eugenia, a devout Anglican. During the war years, her husband had been in the army, and he died soon afterwards in 1952. Temperance Bam had been trained as a teacher, but the rules of the day prevented her from practising her profession once she got married. She took a job as a domestic worker at the mission station, and afterwards as a hospital worker in Sophiatown.

Fikile's sister Brigalia reports that

**Until she arrived
in Pretoria for the
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young Fiks admired Father Trevor Huddleston, "who would often come knocking at township doors to collect his altar boys for the Sunday service".

Fikile attended the Anglican St Peter's College in Rosettenville, Johannesburg, where he was taught by Oliver Tambo, among others. Though he was awarded a scholarship to Wits, his mother, fearing the big-city temptations of Johannesburg, arranged for him to go to UCT instead. In Cape Town he stayed with A.C. "Joe" Jordan – who also came from Tsolo – his wife Phyllis, and their family. Before Fikile Bam had even registered as an undergraduate, Jordan took him to meet Monica and Francis.

Only seven black students were registered at UCT at this time. In addition, there were also a few coloured students. Fikile Bam was one of the last black students to register before the paradoxically named Extension of University Education Act came into effect. Even allowing for well-disposed white students and staff, the tiny group of black students found themselves in an alien environment, hedged in by racism and restrictions not only outside of, but also within the university itself. The Group Areas Act forbade black students from entering campus residences, and a "gentleman's agreement" functioned similarly to prevent them from attending parties such as those organised by the anti-apartheid National Union of South African Students (NUSAS).

Dismissing all such conventions, Monica encouraged participation in the full range of university activities, even though black students lacked the middle-class experience and social capital which generally enabled students to manage. Few staff members comprehended this. Fikile noted that there were three who did, a "sort of progressive clique within the staff of UCT at the time", who strove in an unpatronising manner to support and protect black students. The three were A.C. Jordan, who taught African languages, Jack Simons, and Monica, all good friends though with differing socio-political orientations: NEUM, communist and Christian liberal, respectively.

When Jordan fled South Africa, never to return, he chose Monica to help settle his financial affairs at the university. These three staff members

were, Fikile said, “people who went out of their way”, as indeed his own case demonstrates.

Fikile Bam registered for a BA in law, but Jordan and Monica, feeling he needed something to fall back on, guided him towards social anthropology and African languages, much as Monica had done in encouraging Archie Mafeje to take anthropology when he was floundering in biological sciences. The environment was more sympathetic in these departments, and the subject matter itself provided a foothold for African students.

As Bam later recalled, both Jordan and Monica took the opportunity to teach students “the routines and the disciplines”, so that after a year or two they would “be able to manage the other courses as well”. Monica’s classes were, however, not a soft option. Though maternal, her demeanour was “queen-like... there was a kind of stiffness, of the old order”. She was a strict disciplinarian, demanding punctuality in class attendance and also in submitting assignments, but “she had an aura about her... and you always wanted to do well... and you would listen very carefully”.

Occasionally, she would invite the class to her home, and Bam remembered sitting on the pavement outside, with his classmates, “because we didn’t want to get there too early – it might be improper: at the same time we wanted to make sure that we were not late!”

The group included Ruth, Bram Fischer’s daughter, and Carmel Schrire, who was later an eminent archaeologist. The two young women usually brought flowers, and many years later Bam disarmingly noted that the black students “knew nothing about these kinds of graces, and were, you know, sort of fidgety”.

Bam was drawn to Monica’s lectures, which were “very exciting” and relevant: “She talked to us about things that mattered to us and to our lives”, that is, not merely about kinship and other anthropological staples, but also about history, thereby enabling students to perceive social change and to make their own connections and draw their own inferences. Bam was raised an Anglican, and so the Christian underpinning of Monica’s thought was clear to him, but she said nothing to inhibit, and never condescended to, their

**Though maternal,
her demeanour
was ‘queen-like...
there was a kind of
stiffness, of the
old order’**

eager socialism. She reminded him of “the celibate priests who had been at St Peter’s, who were socialists in every sense of the word and yet ...were wearing these cassocks, and were very, what’s the word?, anti-class in their living and in their behaviour”.

But it was not merely as “a mentor” that the students got to know her: they “also got to know her as a parent”. Bam had an English girlfriend, a fraught relationship, given the politics of the day, and in his second year she committed suicide. He was devastated, and Monica supported him, persuading him to abandon examinations and rather to repeat his courses. She extended similar support to all her students, but what especially appealed to him was her utterly unpatronising attitude. There could be no attempt to manipulate her: “you couldn’t say to her, as you sometimes were tempted to with the other professors, Dzoh! You know, I come from a poor family, and I’m a poor black person... somehow, when she spoke to you, you wouldn’t insult her with that kind of nonsense. You had to come with a real problem.”

Fikile Bam was arrested in 1963 and incarcerated on Robben Island for ten years. While in prison, he remembered Monica’s words to her students: “at the end of the day it’s not what happens to you that matters, but how you react to it”, and years later it struck him that “she was really speaking about herself, and her own experiences”.

Monica wrote to him as frequently as regulations allowed, her letters circulating among the prisoners. She had the knack of writing in a manner that escaped the attentions of the prison censor. She was instrumental in organising Fikile Bam’s legal studies on the

island, as is clear from a considerable correspondence. Monica closely studied the UNISA distance education courses available to him. She sent him the first volume of the *Oxford History of South Africa*, and got Alan Paton to send him law reports, which the prison officials seemed to regard as innocuous.

After Bam’s release from the island, he went first to the Transkei. The Wilsons brought two sheep for slaughter to the Bams’ cleansing ceremony. It was not long before Fikile Bam was made persona non grata and confined to the ostensibly independent homeland. This did not, however, prevent him from travelling the back roads to Hogsback to visit Monica, by then retired, and her sons.

As her earlier assistance to Godfrey Pitje and others shows, Monica helped not only those black students who were formally her responsibility, nor only those working in her field. She responded to a request for advice from Gabriel Setiloane, a family friend and later a prominent figure in African theology, urging him to limit and focus his expansive research plans, to take account of urban as well as rural contexts, and to modify some of his terms, suggesting, for instance, “reverence for”, rather than “worship of”, the shades.

In the face of scepticism by funders, she successfully supported Setiloane in his application for an overseas scholarship. Monica went further, preparing the head of anthropology at Edinburgh University for what would “not be orthodox professional anthropology”, though acknowledging to Kenneth Little: “Perhaps I always have a soft spot for the men of two worlds or those of two disciplines because anthropology itself was so much a fringe subject when I began at Cambridge.”

She read and commented in detail on Setiloane’s research proposal, and later, on his thesis, which, she felt, “must be published”, as indeed it was.

Aware of the disadvantages endured by black students, Monica assisted wherever she could. However, where a student failed to measure up to her high academic standards she was cool and unsentimental. Sympathetic to Fort Hare lecturer Curnick Ndamse’s travails at the university, she was unpromising about his doctoral studies: he had, she said, made no progress. ■

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Land. Eradication before expropriation

AS I THOUGHT ABOUT THE ABOVE headline and what prompted it – the policy screw-ups in Land Reform – I had to question whether I was being an anti-revolutionary or at the very least, was going against the black pride movement that is gathering ground in this-here Mzansi. If you have not noticed it, then you need to wake up and smell the umqombothi (traditional beer – think of SABC Chief Operating Officer Hlaudi's 90% and smell the umqombothi). Coffee wouldn't do the trick.

The critical issue on my mind – well, not just my mind but that of many an Mzansi citizen – is the bugger-up that is being made of the land reform programme. *Nose* readers will be aware that I am part of this scheme, as I have shared my *boer-maak-'n-plan* belief in various editions hereintobefore.

Recently however, even I have been at my wits' end over the failure by those in charge of the programme to implement policy; policy they have set, yet fail to implement – or are taking far too long to do so.

A case in point: I cannot access an approved loan from the Land Bank, simply because I and many others in my Barberton farming district have not been given our new 30-year leases as per the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform's State Land Lease and Disposal Policy that dates back to 2013, to be exact, signed off by the minister on July 25, 2013.

Clearly all were overjoyed at this new policy. After all, the previous policy of three-to-five-year renewable leases did not make sense. Think about it: you plant macadamias, which take roughly seven years for first harvest, but you are working with or have the right to the land for only five years. Clearly there is something wrong with such a scenario and yes, Pretoria saw that, and thus the new policy in 2013.

Now *Nosey* ones, you take this new policy and you throw in a loan pro-

gramme, Retail Emerging Markets (REM) instituted by the Land Bank – and heck, you have a lifeline for black emerging farmers.

The Land Bank's REM programme is very progressive. Applicants do not need security but instead must secure market contracts or offtake agreements.

So what does this-here writer, sorry, Mr Boer-maak-'n-plan do? He does exactly that – secures contracts, impresses Land Bank and gets financial assistance approval.

Now however this-here very frustrated black "submerging" farmer finds himself, along with others, pulling at his beloved dreadlocks because three years later we still do not have the new leases. And naturally, there is bugger-all that the Land Bank or any other institutions can do to assist without that document. After all without it we have the right to *nada*, no land.

So, back to my million-dollar question: how is the land reform programme going to deal with the acquisition of

additional farms through expropriation when those it already controls are hindered by the simple failure of policy implementation once again, and again?

No expropriation without eradication of such seemingly simple problems.

What is painful about this state of affairs is that such failures to implement policies begin from as soon as the programme purchases the land – which in too many instances leads to delays in funding allocations.

Of course this is especially disastrous for beneficiaries who are allocated non-productive farms. And, sorry, but for those who receive productive farms, there is no excuse.

Adding to this pain are the many comments – be they in newspaper columns or just from the man in the street – about "black failures" in farming. So much for the black pride movement.

And *Nosey* ones, if you think this here "submerging" farmer is frustrated it is nothing compared to that felt by the officials at the Land Bank. Kudos to those guys. They have tried everything in their power to bitch and moan about this lease matter and the same goes to one Ms Thoko Gexa, at the department's property management division in Nelspruit.

She called us all to a meeting in May to assure us she was doing her level best to address this matter, and others, such as the threats of warrants of execution that are constantly being thrown at the department by irrigation boards.

So, the next time you want to write a newspaper column or make a nasty comment while in a queue at the local Pick n Pay about the failure of black emerging farmers, please be reminded that the heart of the problem lies in policy implementation. And with that, ask, how can expropriation take place without the eradication of existing failures?

You do that, you will be a man or woman after my own heart. ■



Tending macadamia trees in Limpopo



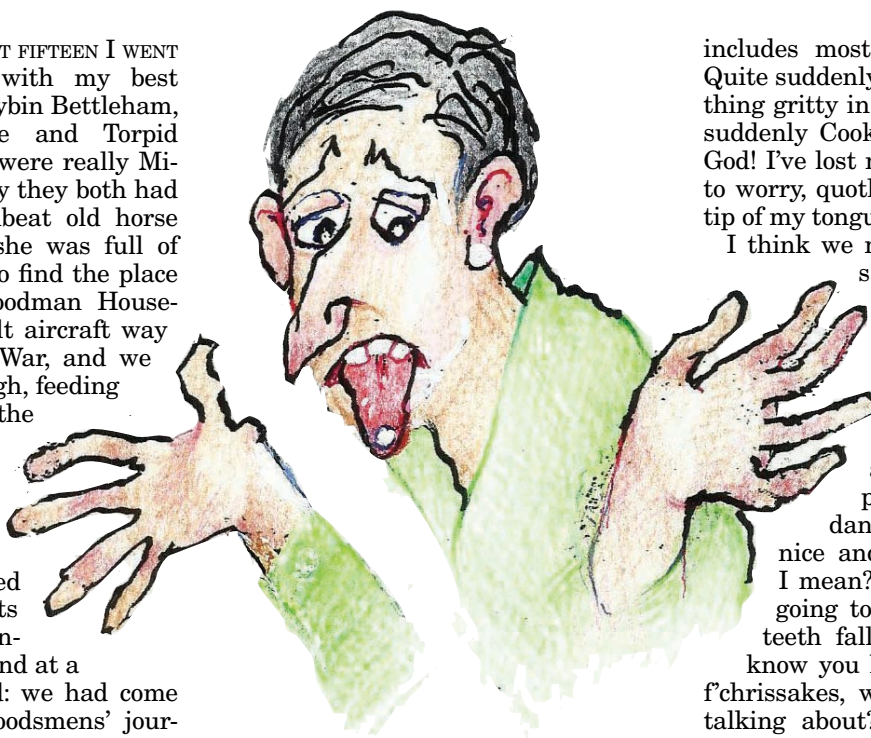
Cookie. Food of love

WHEN I WAS BUT FIFTEEN I WENT walkabout with my best friend Loonybin Bettlehem, also Barkle and Torpid Jarvis who were really Michael and Norman, only they both had adenoids. Also a deadbeat old horse called Mary because she was full of grass. We were going to find the place at Karkloof where Goodman Household flew his homebuilt aircraft way back before the Zulu War, and we were going to do it rough, feeding on phutu, sleeping on the ground, all that pioneer stuff.

But farm to farm motherly farmwives fed us at the supper table and put us to bed between white sheets and Mary in a stable, until finally we revolted and at a certain farm explained: we had come on this manly backwoodsmens' journey and so far we had not had a single night out of doors. Their kids were 14-year-old twins, boy and girl, and both enchanted. In their whole long lives as country kids they had never slept in the outers, and it took a quartet of Maritzburg townies to suggest it. The incongruity of it! They were coming with us for a night in the plantation.

Where would you like to sleep then? asked Dad. Oh, over there where the gums have been felled, so we can make a fire without setting the plantation alight we said. Sound thinking, lads! said he. So into the bakkie: ground-sheets, blankets, thermos flasks, a big pot full of curried chicken, rice all cooked, matches for the fire – this is winter, hey? See you in the morning, Mom called after us.

In the Southern Hemisphere you look into the galaxy. The Milky Way is just all matter and radiation; who the hell ever saw space as empty? The seething light of it! Red giants, white dwarves,



blue close stars, orange distant ones, novae, supernovae, neutron stars, pulsars, cosmic strings, superstrings, everything imaginable and unimaginable blasting its energy down upon us as we lie here in the vast field of stripped gum logs. You can hear the frost forming on a night like this: small cracklings in the bits of bark and stuff lying on the ground. Cold, cold, cold, but we're snug, snug, snug, and the perfume of eucalyptus leaves on the fire. And there is this girl with beautiful hemispherical breasts and I love her totally, totally, both of her. Eternally, so help me Jesus!

Man, I'm a sucker for romance and blue eyes, though I'm not too sure about the latter. Permit me to digress: some years later I find myself in a night club in Joburg in the dark days of war, with this lovely blue-eyed lass called Cookie, doing oyster kisses around mouth and elsewhere, as is the custom of the time, and which, according to the morals of the time and the lighting in this place,

includes most of the human body. Quite suddenly I realise I have something gritty in my teeth, and equally suddenly Cookie says to me Oh my God! I've lost my contact lens! Never to worry, quoth I, taking it from the tip of my tongue.

I think we must go and sit down, says Cookie. We do. My God, she says, I feel so embarrassed I must go home. Oh come on Cookie, say I, put it back or take them both out and stick them in my pocket and we'll go on dancing, we're just getting nice and friendly, know what I mean? No, she says, it's like going to laugh and your false teeth fall out. Oh come ON, I know you haven't got false teeth f'chrissakes, what the hell are you talking about? No, we must leave, says Cookie.

Anyway. So here we all are 'mongst the gum logs on this really sneaky night and I'm at least 103% in love, with this awesome erection under the blankets. I haul out of my pocket my E-minor blues mondfuitjie, for I'm sleeping in my clothes, cowboy style, and I play, for her only:

Well the first time I went a-hoboin'

I took a freight train to see my frien'

She looks at me and after a bit she says; Do you only play native music? and I say No, anything, really; because I'm still quite a lot in love with her, though the erection is not what it was. What would you like me to play then, eh? *The Blue Danube*, says she, and I realise it is her mother who is the admirable woman in this family, on account of the date loaf and things all wrapped up in wax paper for tomorrow's journey and the crunchies we're going to have just now with coffee from the Thermos flasks.

Romance sucks. ■

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Call centres are the eighth plague. There must be a better way. Robby **Rose**, Hopefully Zuma will leave as president and the ANC will implode and the country will forge ahead! MS **Happy** 30th birthday Jules xxx **Beth**, all my love. Ian

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