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OLIVIA FORSYTH:

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The story of a mission that failed

What is the real truth about the Olivia Forsyth saga? The facts speak for themselves and show quite clearly that her mission to infiltrate the ANC was a pathetic flop. The so-called "master minds" of the South African security police spent many months conjuring up an elaborate plan to penetrate the ANC and the Front Line States and failed dismally.

The scheme was foiled before it had even got off the ground when Forsyth was unmasked by the ANC in February 1986 in Harare. She was confronted by our then Chief Representative, who had unknown to her been our national chief of security before being appointed to head our mission in Zimbabwe. Cracking under the pressure of his questions she confessed to being a security police lieutenant on an undercover mission to infiltrate our organisation and knowing we had the means to carefully monitor her actions. The Her return to South Africa was viewed with consternation by the authors of the infiltration plan for it spelt nothing but failure; her cover had been blown and the vast resources, time and energy, expended on her mission had proved valueless. The ANC by sending her back to South Africa had confounded their attempts to base her in the Front Line States. Consequently by June 1986, after many sleepless days and nights of scheming and plotting, Forsyth's

handlers sent her to Lusaka in a reckless attempt to inject new life into a plan that just was not getting off the ground. It was hoped that Forsyth would somehow get the ANC to send her for military training and thereafter obtain a strategic position at our headquarters in the Department of Information and Publicity. from the exercise. ,Instead of gbing for training she found herself promptly dispatched to our top security detention centre in Angola. .She spent the next 22 months in detention of one kind or another, always a prisoner and always under guard. She was never trusted and was lucky to escape with the assistance of the British government. It is quite clear that only the gullible and the-fervent supporters of the racist regime can believe anything other than that her mission failed miserably.

Since her return to gouth Africa the security police have sought to stage a spectacular press event in an effort to cover up their bungled operation. The& have invented a preppsterous rstory claiming that Forsyth's confession to the ANC was a brilliant ploy pre-planned by their top brains in oraer to penetrate our organisation to the highest levels. Stretching incredulity to the limits the astonishing claim is made that even her imprisonment was sought-after by her handlers. This is in the nature of the Hitler technique - "the bigger the lie, the more readily it will be believed". The terms the police are using to characterise Forsythls role such as "false defector" and "double and triple agent" are dubious words in the world of intelligence. Such individuals as everyone knows are always regarded with deep scepticism and are never trusted. The false version of how she became a prisoner trusted by the ANC and thus able to gather\_ sensitive ihformation is nothing more than a desperate attempt to turn a disastrous and embarrassing mission into a glorious triumph for the apartheid regime.

This bizarre story, made-up of the juicy ingredients of spy tales that are currently so popular, is meant to distract public and press attention from a stupendous degree of bungling and incompetence all the more unexpected from a state body with enormous financial resources and boasting a high level of professionalism. Apart from covering up a botched operation this version seeks to spread lies and disinformation about the ANC whilst attempting to undermine the value of the vast information provided to us by Pretorials Vlittle errand girl".

Forsyth's allegations that the ANC is divided by tribal and personal power struggles, that there is demoralisation within our ranks, that we are ambivalent about the release of Nelson Mandela etc. is nothing but the-stale stories that have been circulated by Pretoria's disinformation machine for many years. This old garbage is being paraded as proof of Forsyth's successful mission. Anyone but unmitigatea racists will reject this with the-ccntempt it ioserves.

Once'Forsyth had been thoroughly debriefed her only value to us was in a prisoner exchange. She was moved from our detention centre to a security house in Luanda not because she had passed a test of trustworthiness but because at that point the handful of women prisoners who were there were all being transferred.

Pretorials claims that she was able to obtain sensitive information are laughable; the figment of the imagination of her handlers.

Her value to her hmasters.\_whilst in ANC detention has been negligible. Her tasks according to her press statement included:

"investigating specific aspects SACP/ANC Alliance; the internal leadership conflict: the disillusionment of Cadres wishing to return to SA: ANC installations and facilities in the neighbouring states: making contact with other police agents in order to activate sleepers: to undergo political and military training: to investigate conditions ii) the camps: to recruit principal

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agents: to spread disinformation.....

Detention is hardly the

place for the accomplishment of such elaborate tasks. Yet the police persist in their fiction that Forsyth was successful in her mission, that she was able to successfully report on all the above tasks and many more besides, even to the extent of learning about ANC underground structures and units inside South Africa. Obviously the long list of her "achievements" has been invented for publication by her police masters. Forsyth was simply not free to do any of these things. She was being prepared for a possible prisoner exchange. This makes the claim that she was able to obtain sensitive information from senior ANC officials quite ludicrous. She was given some work to keep her occupied such as translating Afrikaans articles and making newspaper cuttings. This is what is now being theatrically described as "sensitive work for a senior security officer".

The only information a detainee is able to provide is about their own detention and in this regard Forsyth is spewing out a trail of lies about alleged ANC brutality. Her state of good health when she presented herself at the British Embassy in Luanda is proof of this. In fact at the time when the story was put out by some British newspapers and the BBC that she had 'been subject to harrowing torture she issued a statement through an official of the British embassy in Luanda denying this. Forsyth was satisfactorily treated by us. She was never beaten as she claims.

The extensive information Forsyth supplied to the ANC in her confessions has been a major setback to the Security police as well as a serious embarrassment. They have therefore gone to extraordinary lengths to distort the truth and pretend that the ANC has been provided with deliberate misinformation. Forsyth betrayed many of her close colleagues such as Joy Harnden, Billy van Zyl, Patricia and John Adams, who are based in Brussels, Gilbert Strauss, James Smith, Gawie Vorster, Andrew Hockley, John Handan, Janet Knight, Louise Vincent etc etc. Billy van Zyl, thanks to Forsyth, has been in ANC custody since 1986.

She has also given intimate details of the inner workings of the South African security apparatus with all its incompetence and rivalries. These rivalries include those between police and military and between government leaders and the security establishment. Lengthy profiles of scores of police officers from the lowest ranks to generals have been provided, listing their strengths and weaknesses, - their home laddresses, vehicle registration numbers, details about their families etc, giving us a valuable insight into the seams and cracks of the security system and its personnel. Such information was confirmation of data already in our hands from our other sources.

For example, of her chief handler, Major Oosthuizen, she writes:

"He is basically ambitious ... feels extremely guilty about neglecting his family. When I am in South Africa he-spends most of his free time with me. He has often told me that I am the only person he can speak to about his personal problems or to whom he can boast about successes which make him excited. He has also told me that he does not regard himself as working primarily for the Seuth African government or any noble patriotic notions; his motivation is 80 per cent professional: and only 20 pe; tin; ideological. He is very racist: He has a gensitive ego and is very conscious of his self-image; after I told him heyhas getting fat, he lost about 8 kg ..."

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Apart from providing the most intimate details concerning Craig Williamson, she reported that 'once he had resighed from the SAP senior officers began to question what he had done in GI (section of SB headed by Williams) in the years in which he controlled it". Forsyth continuede "There seemed to be a growing opinion that he had ridden on his credibility gained in the field, and that G1 had in fact squandered hundreds of thousands of rands on operations which had failed. There was also criticism of frivolous spending on items like a fancy red BMW which was supposed ito be nn operational car ... Personal gain appears to be his overriding

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motive, and this includes financially. While he was in the SAP, he was involved in property speculation and other business deals.

While in the Force, there were 21 number of occasions when he threatened to resign if he did not get promotion ..."

Forsyth has been even less kind concerning her relative Major Derek Brune who took over G1 when Williamson resigned: "Brune is fairly bright, quite sly and very ambitious. He is quick to claim a successful operation as-his, but will always blame failures on his subordinates. His major professional weakness appears to be a lack of field experience. He is regarded as a compulsive liar. He is married but has affairs ... Ego is definitely a factor which could be exploited in his case..... to the extent that he will not hesitate to slander colleagues who threaten to undermine him or "challenge" his expertise in any way".

Of Warrant Officer Palko alias Gina: "she is ambitious but not very bright; a plodder who is given more secretarial than operational responsibilities, a fact which she resents ... She has expensive clothing tastes which a police salary cannot easily cater for..."

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Forsyth provided us with the following insight into the rivalry surrounding her own mission, which is eloquent testimony to the shambles that it had been reduced to by the time the ANC had sent her back to South Africa in May/June 1986: "Operation Olivetti the code name of her mission has been run by a team consisting of people from John Vorster branch and G1. Prior to Olivetti, antagonism had been building up between them, more or less since Brigadier Erasmus and Major Oosthuizen had been in Johannesburg. The reasons for this included the fact that the successes of the John Vorster branch had begun to show up the inadequacies and lack of results on the part of G1. When John Vorster began to involve itself in operations like Olivetti, which reached over the borders of South Africa, and into G1's official terrain, G1 began to feel

threatened (Derek Brune in particular) ... G1 has consistently tried to wrest control of the operation and claim the successes for itself. Brune has used all sorts of tactics in these attempts, from manipulating Brigadier Stadler to slandering 'Oosthuizen at Security Branch headquarters, and Oosthuizen has countered these with tactics of his own ... Before my trip to Lusaka ....there was a showdown meeting at Security Branch 'headquarters which illustrated this incompetence. The meeting was forced by G1 and included Brigadiers Erasmus and Stadler, Majors Bruhe and Oosthuizen and other senior officers claiming expertise in external operations as well as asserting that external ops were their domain. G1 said "Olivetti" should fall under their control This showdown was followed by further attempts by G1 to shunt John Vorster out of the operation ... As an RS agent, I am part of G1, and Oosthuizen has pointed out that this conflict is due in large part to the fact that I am at present G1's "trump card" and ... with their credibility at stake, G1 desperately needs to claim a success 0 . 0

There are many other concrete gains from Forsyth's confessions to her. For instance she enabled the ANC to alert endangered activists inside the country before the security police could pounce. Her exposure has seriously hampered the regime's nefarious attempts at infiltrating anti-apartheid forces, and served to alert and teach people in the mass democratic movement about the devious nature and tactics of the enemy.

The role of the British government in the whole Forsyth affair leaves a lot to be desired. They bear a heavy responsibility concerning the return of "Pretoria's little errand girl" to South Africa. All along, they were informed of the fact that she was a South African police officer of the rank of lieutenant who had been spying on the ANC as well as the Front Line States including such Commonwealth countries as Botswana, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Nevertheless they continually insisted on treating her as a British subject disregarding her criminal activities. They put plP"

on the Angolan government to secure her release. The passport they issued to her, enabling her to leave Luanda, was the third British document they presented her with in a short space of time. Forsyth! was instructed by her controllers to apply for a British passport in Cape Town early in 1985 for the purpose of her mission, and a second in Harare in October the same year enabling her to travel throughout the region without the taint of the South African connection. She had received three British passports in as many years. This raises serious questions about the ease with which the notorious South African secret police have been able to use the British government for their sinister work. It is worthy of note that Britain lifted this known South African agent from Luanda and safely delivered her via London to her handlers who were waiting to receive her at Jan Smuts airport in December, 1988. From the beginning to the end the whole project hinged on a series of British passports.

There are a growing number of South African agents using British passports to carry out subversive missions in the Front Line States. Amongst them are Steve Burnett, arrested in Botswana for attempting to assassinate an anti-apartheid activist. Burnett has confessed to being an agent not only for South Africa but for Britain's MI6. Other unsavoury characters of this type are regularly being exposed in the region. By their assistance to Forsyth the British government has shown that it condones all these activities.

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Olivia Forsyth is incapable of distinguishing fact from fiction. The truth is alien to her; - In the 8 years as a police spy she has behaved in a totally immoral way. b Falsehood and betrayal have become second nature to her. Her behaviour during the period in our hands is best left unmentioned but clearly reinforces the way progressives in South Africa have characterised her. Forsyth has not simply been involved in some glamorous game beloved by the writers of spy thrillers. She has for years been engaged in despicable acts in the service of an evil regime which is condemned



by humanity.

Olivia Forsyth is not the first nor the last in a long line of apartheid spies. Her sordid career is a testament to the desperate efforts of a minority racist regime to cling to power in the face of inevitable defeat at the hands of a movement leading the people of South Africa to their liberation.

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