

MERCURY

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10/05/01

Ethics panel lets Yengeni off for now



TONY YENGENI
'No bad faith'

ANGELA QUINTAL

CAPE TOWN - African National Congress chief whip Tony Yengeni escaped having to appear before parliament's ethics committee yesterday to answer allegations of non-disclosure of key assets, after a vote was forced along party lines.

It was the first time in the committee's short history that it had failed to reach a unanimous decision.

The multiparty committee agreed with a recommendation by the registrar of members' interests, Ms Fazela Mohamed, that Mr Yengeni had failed to disclose his residential property in Tlizerhof as required by the code of ethics. But it disagreed on what action to take against him.

The ANC, Afrikaner Eenhedsbeweging, the Inkatha Freedom Party, Minority Front and the United Christian Democratic Party supported the registrar's recommendation that Mr Yengeni's action was merely an omission and, since there was no bad faith on his part, he should merely be expected to correct it.

The Democratic Alliance and the

Pan Africanist Congress disagreed, saying that before the committee could make a decision, Mr Yengeni should be called before it to explain fully.

When it came to the vote, the PAC and DA lost by 24 votes to five.

However, all the parties supported the registrar's recommendation that there should be an investigation into whether Mr Yengeni had failed to disclose his luxury 4X4 vehicle as a gift or a benefit, in the light of claims that he might have acquired it as a kickback in the arms deal.

Disagreed

They disagreed on whether the committee itself should investigate the facts surrounding Mr Yengeni's acquisition of the vehicle.

Mr Jeremy Cronin (ANC) said his party supported Ms Mohamed's view that the Sunday Times report about Mr Yengeni's vehicle could not be dismissed as unfounded, as on the face of it, it appeared there might be some substance to the allegations of impropriety. Since

the allegations were already part of a multi-agency investigation into the arms deal as approved by parliament, the committee should first await the investigators' report, which was due in July.

"If it shows any wrongdoing then parliament will be in a position to take appropriate action."

Mr Cronin was supported by the IFP's Koos van der Merwe.

Mr Cronin and his ANC colleague, Mr Jannie Mornberg, went out of their way to explain they were not trying to "delay or obfuscate" and that they were in no way advocating that parliament should abrogate its duty to oversee the code of ethics.

All the other parties insisted that Mr Yengeni should first be called and that the committee should start its own investigation into whether he had failed to disclose the vehicle as a gift or benefit.

The ANC majority, backed by the IFP, won the day and the committee will only meet to discuss the matter once the arms investigators have tabled their report in parliament.

SOLSETAM
10/05/01

ANC upset by leadership tiff rumours

**By Justice Mohale and
Khangale Makhado**

THE African National Congress in Gauteng has expressed concern at media reports speculating about leadership wrangles in the organisation.

ANC spokesman Mr Mike Ramagoma said the organisation did not know the origin of the rumours.

He said the party had been involved in the process of relaunching its branches and could in any way have, discussed possible provincial candidates.

"A series of procedures has to be followed before discussing the composition of the provincial leadership,"

Ramagoma said. "Surely the speculation does not originate from ANC structures."

The process of relaunching the ANC branches in Gauteng, he said, would be completed by the end of May.

The ANC in the province would then set aside two weekends next month to relaunch its regions and elect regional leaders.

He said the regions would be relaunched in accordance with the new metropolitan and district councils' demarcation in Gauteng - meaning that the ANC will have six regions in the province.

"It's normal practice that certain sections of the media and some mem-

bers of the public start speculating about the composition of the provincial leadership of the ANC solely because it is the ruling party," Ramagoma said.

The provincial leadership, he said, would be determined by the process of nomination and discussion within the ANC branches.

Ramagoma said the ANC in Gauteng had two tasks: to rebuild the provincial structures and consolidate the capacity of the new municipalities so that they would be able to provide efficient service delivery to poor people.

He said all the procedures would be followed until the ANC provincial congress in July, when delegates would elect the 18-member leadership.

The ANC has had leadership problems in other provinces and these have led to intervention by the national leadership.

The ANC leadership in Free State was dissolved last year. Last week the ANC national leadership dissolved the Northern Province leadership.

Meanwhile, it's all systems go in Northern Province for the newly appointed interim leadership core (ILC), which replaced the disbanded provincial executive committee led by Premier Ngoako Ramathodi at the weekend.

Convener Mr Pitsi Moloto said the takeover process would start with the administrative handover to him and his

coordinator, who is to be named by the ANC head office in Johannesburg.

"This will be followed by a meeting on Saturday in Pietersburg at which the entire 25-person core will be officially inducted. Members of the sub-committee and a delegation from headquarters will be present at the meeting."

According to Moloto, apart from the directive from the ANC national executive committee, they were hoping to come out of the meeting with a project plan outlining their duties.

"You will note that the dissolution means that all sub-committees of the PEC are also dissolved and therefore we are going to utilise all 25 core members to the full."

Southern
10/05/01

Death bus driver 'fell asleep'

The driver of a Greenboy Transport bus that plunged down an embankment at Kokstad in April, killing 29 people, allegedly fell asleep behind the wheel.

KwaZulu-Natal road traffic inspectorate spokesman Mr Viji Murugan said yesterday that passengers who survived the accident told investigators that the driver "dozed off several times" during the eight-hour trip and finally "fell asleep behind the wheel".

He will be charged with 29 counts of

culpable homicide and is to appear in the Kokstad Magistrate's Court soon.

The bus was travelling from Rustenburg in North West to Lusikisiki in Eastern Cape when it overturned and plunged 70m down an embankment on the R56 between Kokstad and Franklin.

Murugan said the driver, who was seriously injured in the accident, had been discharged from hospital.

"Investigations are at an advanced stage. The bus has already been examined for roadworthiness," he said.

Immediately after the accident KwaZulu-Natal transport MEC Mr S'bu Ndebele imposed administrative sanctions against Greenboy operations in the province. He called on his Eastern Cape counterpart to do the same. The result is that Greenboy buses are not allowed to operate in KwaZulu-Natal.

Ndebele also ordered the company's bus fleet, registered in KwaZulu-Natal, to be presented for roadworthiness testing.

Since the Easter long weekend in April traffic authorities have stopped more than 7 000 passenger buses throughout the province.

"A total of 487 drivers were charged driving defective buses, 62 were charged with overloading and 50 buses were immediately suspended for being completely unroadworthy."

Murugan said this was part of an ongoing clampdown. In the same blitz more than 1 700 minibus taxi drivers were stopped. Almost half were

charged for vehicle defects.

A further 72 were prosecuted for overloading and 105 vehicles were suspended because they were unroadworthy.

Murugan said members of the public who spotted transgressing taxi or bus drivers could phone the emergency hotline on 0800339911. After 10pm complaints can be phoned through to 10177 or the cellphone emergency number for each service provider. — Sapa

SECRET
18/05/01

De Lille embroiled in huge jaw war

By Khangale Makhado
Political Reporter

BITTER verbal exchanges occurred between the Pan Africanist Congress and the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) yesterday over a multi-billion rand arms deal.

Accusations and counter-accusations ensued over whether the PAC was willing to disclose information of whether the directorate was pursuing a political agenda or not.

PAC MP Patricia de Lille yesterday called on the DPP to explain why out of more than 18 people subpoenaed they decide to make public only her name and that of the organisation's secretary general Thami ka Platjje.

She wanted to know why those investigating the arms deal's alleged corruption were reluc-

tant to make public names of ANC MPs who have also been subpoenaed.

In his response, Mr Siphso Ngwema, spokesman for the DPP, said the reason why the PAC's names were made public was of their own making.

"The PAC has been making public statements about the information that they had and this they did at their conference in Bloemfontein and went further to call a press conference in this regard. We would like to keep the names of other people secret for their own protection because the matter is being investigated," said Ngwema.

He saw nothing sinister in reporting De Lille to the Speaker of Parliament: "these structures (like DPP) are created by Parliament of which De Lille is a part".

De Lille said she failed to understand why those probing the arms deal continued to say she failed to make information available.

Labelling that a lie, De Lille said as far back as 1999 she made it public that she was handing over the information to the Heath Special Investigation Unit – a move supported by 15 non-governmental organisations.

"On January 19 this year, the President announced that the SIU would not be included in the investigations and thereafter on February 6 the Scorpions took possession of all that information.

"After being subpoenaed I went and raised certain queries and will again appear on May 15 before the public hearing. My problem is that these people want to decide what it is that the public must hear," De Lille said.

SECRET**10/05/01**

Aids 'a serious threat' in the Newcastle area

By Nompumelelo Khumalo

SCORES of people from Newcastle and the surrounding areas attended an HIV-Aids conference organised by the district council yesterday.

District mayor Mrs Makhosazana Dlamini invited all sectors of the community to join in the struggle against the pandemic.

She said HIV-Aids had serious economic, social and political implications that required that every individual should join hands in dealing with it.

"For this reason we thought it was important to initiate a forum to come up with suggestions of how to consolidate our efforts in the fight against the HIV-Aids pandemic," Dlamini said.

She said the council had set aside R100 000 for the fight against Aids.

'Aids is starting to destroy our nation like wildfire'

It is estimated that about 127 000 people have died of Aids or are infected with it in the district.

"The district council intends to assist by coordinating the efforts of those organisations and individuals that are already campaigning against the pandemic and to learn from the best practices elsewhere in the country the question of behavioural changes," she said.

Dr Sandile Buthelezi of the provincial health department's HIV-Aids

action unit said KwaZulu-Natal was bedevilled by many misfortunes such as political violence, cholera, foot and mouth disease and a high rate of Aids infection.

He said it was disturbing that young people, who were supposed to be the leaders of the future, were the section of society most affected by Aids.

"I believe in our province, We fought all the previous wars and we proved that we can unite and conquer. Let us do so on Aids," Buthelezi said.

He urged the *amakhosi* and local councils to play their rôle in fighting the pandemic in their areas.

"The implications of Aids are very serious and are destroying the nation like wildfire. Let us unite as a rainbow nation to build a strong and healthy nation," he said.

Business Day

10/05/01

ANC hits at Woods on arms deal statement

Watchdog committee chairman's statement 'not mandated'

Wyndham Hartley

CAPE TOWN — Gavin Woods, the Inkatha Freedom Party chairman of Parliament's watchdog public accounts committee, came under fire from the African National Congress (ANC) yesterday when he was accused of unmandated statements about the R43bn arms deal investigation.

After more than three hours of hearings on the financial situation in the justice department and the Legal Aid Board, the ANC in the committee launched an attack on Woods. They accused him of telling the media that the committee was being kept in the dark by investigators when it was the committee that inflated the investigation in the first place.

ANC MP Vincent Smith said he gave the impression that his statement was based on a formal decision of the committee.

Woods has been under pressure in the committee since ANC MP Andrew Feinstein was sidelined as chief ANC spokesman in the committee and the ANC changed its position on the investigation and the inclusion of Judge Willem Heath's special investigating unit.

Yesterday he challenged the ANC to "do something about it" if they did not agree with him expressing his view "as I am fully entitled to". He told Smith and his ANC colleagues to read the media reports again. At no stage had he said the committee decided it was being kept in the dark. It was simply his observation of what was happening. "I will continue to express my views."

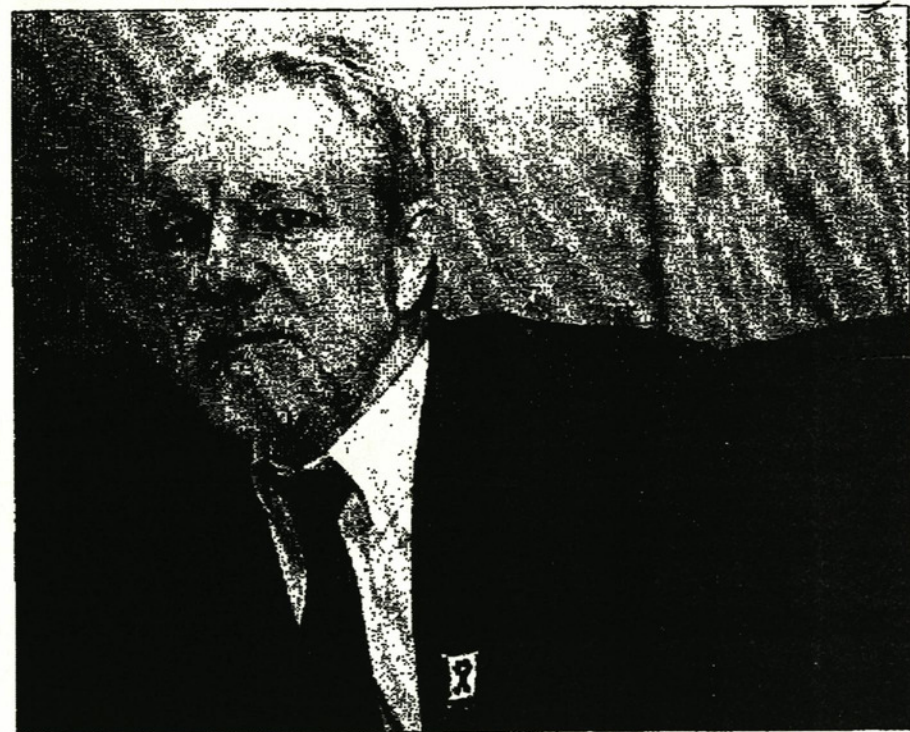
ANC MP Billy Nair said Woods was clearly speaking for the committee, and in a heated exchange accused him of talking "bullshit". This seemed to embarrass some

of his colleagues, particularly Feinstein, who left the meeting.

Democratic Party MP Raenette Tlajaard warned members to be careful about trying to limit each other's freedom of speech. She agreed that the committee was being kept in the dark.

The ANC was filibustering and wasting time. "The attempt to rebuke the chairperson of the committee for his interaction with the media is ominous both for what it signifies for the media and for what it might say about the future of the chairperson of the committee," she said.

Earlier, deputy Justice Minister Cheryl Gillwald said that progress was being made in turning around the troubled finances of the justice department. She said that by March next year the department would have a zero-based budget — a first for any department in government.



The African National Congress lashed out yesterday at the chairman of Parliament's public accounts committee, Gavin Woods, accusing him of telling the media that the committee was being kept in the dark by investigators probing alleged corruption in the R43bn arms deal.

Business Day 10/05/01

Mountain project praised

JILLIAN GREEN

PROVINCIAL education minister Faith Gasa praised the Mission to the Mountains Project yesterday, saying it had contributed substantially to the culture of teaching and learning in the province's rural schools.

Mrs Gasa was speaking at the relaunch of the project held at Newspaper House in Greyville last night. Last year, The Mercury, the KZN department of education, HJL and Associates, the South African Air Force's 15 Squadron, Pick 'n Pay, Window Web Design, NWJ and Preston Whyte



FAITH GASA.

'Success story others can follow'

and Associates joined forces in an effort to supply rural schools in the southern Drakensberg with much-needed reading material and stationery.

Mrs Gasa said: "This project is an ideal example of a success story that other regions can follow."

She said that the government alone could not deliver effectively and hence welcomed projects like Mission to the Mountains.

The department was responsible for the formal education of more than 2,8 million pupils in 6 000 schools and had a teaching force of 73 000.

"A budget of over R9 billion for education and culture in the 2000/2001 financial year may sound a lot, but it is not adequate to meet the needs of education," she said.

Last year the project supplied 5 000 pupils in 17 schools with learning materials, including stationery, used typewriters and books.



Business Day

10/05/01

Morkel dismisses ANC claims of DP 'rifts'

WESTERN Cape premier Gerald Morkel has dismissed African National Congress (ANC) allegations of deep-seated rifts within the Democratic Alliance (DA), both locally and provincially.

ANC provincial leader Ebrahim Rasool claimed the DP was holding a separate caucus in Constantia last night, and said this undermined the alliance caucus.

Morkel said he and Cape Town unicity mayor Peter Marais knew about the caucus. "So what? If you are looking for rifts go and knock on the door of the ANC. In the DA we focus on delivery, not on fictitious plots." — Linda Ensor.



Gerald Morkel

Business Day
10/05/01

IFP calls on Mbeki to tackle bill controversy

INKATHA Freedom Party home affairs spokesman Nhlanhla Zulu has called on President Thabo Mbeki to act decisively to end the Immigration Bill controversy. He was reacting to a report in Business Day that the Cabinet rejected a new version of the bill that Home Affairs Minister Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the leader of the party, tabled in an attempt to meet the objections of his African National Congress colleagues. — Farouk Chothia.

Business Day
10/05/01

Leon presents DA's new face to France

Drew Forrest

THE African National Congress government had managed SA's finances "with prudence and discipline", so that debt was under control and inflation low, Democratic Alliance leader Tony Leon told a French audience this week.

Addressing the French Institute of International Relations in Paris, Leon said government could point to solid achievements in some economic areas, despite failures in others.

Leon said in the past seven years, SA had seen the emergence of a full democracy which

"we have no doubt will endure".

The speech bears out DA moves to modify its public persona. Black critics have accused it of knee-jerk attacks on government and rubbishing SA abroad.

Leon said President Thabo Mbeki had made some mistakes, notably on HIV/AIDS and Zimbabwe. However, the outraged response in SA was cause for encouragement. The media had roundly attacked Mbeki, and even the ANC's allies had publicly contested his views.

SA had a stable democracy, and the mistakes of government would be corrected either by a

change of heart or a change of fortune determined by the electorate, Leon said.

"Our newspapers are free and becoming more critical and independent. Our Parliament is robust, despite efforts by the executive to sideline it."

This was one reason why SA would not follow certain other African countries "into chaos and economic collapse". Pointing to SA's mineral resources, infrastructure and "industrious and gifted people", Leon urged France to invest in SA and strengthen trade relations.

However, he criticised Eu-

rope's reliance on agricultural subsidies, and the role of developed countries in promoting corruption in the Third World.

"If there is one who takes a bribe, there must be one who gives a bribe. We regard them as equally culpable."

Leon also took issue with the "polite, uncritical" reception France had recently given Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe. "The first thing we expect from our president, and hope to hear from your president, is a simple, dignified statement of condemnation of Mugabe's crime and terror."

MERCURY
10/05/01

WOMEN'S LEAGUE PLEDGES LOYALTY

Winnie backs Mbeki

Cape Town

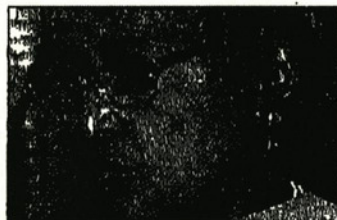
THE African National Congress Women's League yesterday joined the party's youth league in pledging loyalty to President Mbeki and supporting him for a second term as ANC and South African president.

The women's league president, Mrs Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, her deputy, Ms Thandi Modise, and senior members of the league, including Health Minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang and the chairman of parliament's intelligence committee, Ms Nosiviwe Mapisa-Nqakula, called a special press conference in parliament to announce their support.

Mrs Madikizela-Mandela declined to comment on whether Deputy President Zuma had successfully mediated between herself and Mr Mbeki after the president accused her of gossiping about his personal life.

She asked for the intervention in a letter that was later leaked to the media. Women's league secretary-general Bathabile Dlamini told reporters the matter was still in Mr Zuma's hands.

Ms Mapisa-Nqakula said personal



WINNIE MADIKIZELA-MANDELA
Unwavering support

problems or divisions between Mrs Madikizela-Mandela and Mr Mbeki "doesn't make them enemies".

"They are comrades - very loyal to one another, very loyal to the movement.

"They are not only comrades, but leaders of the African National Congress."

Both had the responsibility of leading the party and the women's league respectively.

"How the matter is going to be handled for now is not an issue."

"The issue for us now is that Winnie Mandela, as president of the African National Congress Women's League, is here to give her support, which is unwavering, to Comrade Thabo Mbeki and the African National Congress," said

Ms Mapisa-Nqakula. On media reports that there were internal moves to replace Mr Zuma as ANC deputy president, she said the league also supported him.

On whether the league believed there was a plot to oust Mr Mbeki, she said: "The ANC has come out very clearly - those allegations are connected to the whole strategy of undermining not only the president but the government as a whole.

"It doesn't matter from which corner they come from, they are all nonsense."

In her reaction, Ms Mapisa-Nqakula said there was no question about the integrity of the three men named as plotting against Mr Mbeki - Mr Mathews Phosa, Dr Cyril Ramaphosa and Mr Tokyo Sexwale.

Dr Tshabalala-Msimang defended the decision by Safety and Security Minister Steve Tshwete to name the three in public and to launch the investigation.

She said yesterday that Mr Tshwete had done the right thing.

If he had decided to ignore the allegations, he would have been accused by the media of protecting Mr Mbeki. - Sapa

MERCURY

10/05/01

Mtshali's clean govt plan

PATRICK LEEMAN

KWAZULU-NATAL will become the first province in the country to commit itself formally to clean administration, with the signing of "property covenants" at a ceremony in Ulundi on May 23.

Giving details of the covenants for the first time, Premier Lionel Mtshali said all cabinet members would sign the undertaking, as would the directors-general of all departments and the CEOs of all parastatals as accounting officers in their own right.

Mr Mtshali said that the signing of the covenants would be voluntary in terms of the Public Finance Management Act.

"We expect the action, however, to strengthen the legal provisions expected of us and to make known our public commitment to clean government."

He hoped this signing procedure, which was his brainchild, might also be adopted by the Durban unity council.

Mr Mtshali, accompanied by his wife, Daphne, and his spokesman, Mr Mahlathi Tembe, will leave for the province of Shanghai in China on Sunday. They will return to KZN on May 21.

The premier said this would be his first overseas visit since taking over as head of the province two years ago.

The invitation to visit Shanghai province had been extended to him by the Chinese consul-general in Durban, Mr Zhu Zanchao, on behalf of the People's Republic of China.

Mr Mtshali said that during the visit he would conclude a co-operation agreement between KwaZulu-Natal and the Chinese province.

WITNESS

10/05/01

ONCE again I see my views on the goings-on in this country have elicited strong responses from Witness readers, judging by the letters from Graham McIntosh and M. Woodcock (Witness, May 3). McIntosh is a member of parliament, to boot. I was most impressed — I'm a sucker for titles.

In sharp contrast to his title, his comments did not impress me at all. Anybody in this country who still cannot grasp the full effect of what white racism did to this country and its people, is just plain dumb. It is worse when such a person is an MP. If anybody ever harboured any illusions about former apartheid politicians ever accepting and supporting the transformation that this country has undergone, McIntosh's letter clearly exposes such illusions. In fact, his comments more than confirm what my article said, and I quote: "White people, in every respect, appear unwilling to change their prejudice about black people and knowing how unjust their acquisition of their privileges was, they are not persuaded by talks of reconciliation and democracy."

Both McIntosh and Woodcock, by their comments, have given credence to this observation. And for Woodcock to say, "It is easy to point a racist finger at us — after all, our replies are never published fully even if they are valid", one is tempted to say, "Ag, shame." But instead the question to be asked is: who is he trying to fool? Most people know who dominates the media in this country, and therefore whose views mostly get published.

But most importantly, it is simply inexcusable for an MP, a person who one day hopes to be a cabinet minister or even the president of the country for all the people, to show such crude racial prejudice.

But as someone once said, better the devil you know.

BHUNGANI KA MZOLO
Pretoria

WITNESS

10/05/01

AMBULANCE DEATH: ARRESTS IMMINENT

ACORNHOEK (Northern Province) — Arrests are imminent in connection with the death of a pregnant woman who fell from a moving ambulance in Northern Province, police said yesterday.

"The investigation is going very well," Lowveld police spokesman Inspector Moatshe Ngoepe told Sapa. Charges of culpable homicide are being investigated.

Refiloe Masia (28) of Green Valley in Acornhoek was being rushed to Tintsoale Hospital at 2 am on Monday. When the ambulance arrived at the hospital the ambulance doors were open and Masia had disappeared. The driver retraced his journey and found Masia dead on the side of the road. Her unborn baby was also dead.

The nurse was allegedly sitting in the front of the ambulance during the journey.

Northern Province Health MEC Sello Moloto has instructed that the two officials should go on special leave, pending the outcome of a departmental investigation against them.

His spokesman, Charlie Nkadmeng, said the departmental investigation has almost been completed and a report is expected today, when Moloto will "be in a position to make concrete pronouncements on the disciplinary measures".

The National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union yesterday expressed its condolences with Masia's family.