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POINTS FROM THE PRESS

24 JULY 1991

inkathagate Scandal - Who is telling lies?

JOHANNESBURG-i 24 July 1991

A hastily convened press conference called by the Inkatha Freedom Party to clear its name over the secret state funding to the party. yesterday left journalists with more questions than _answers._

Topmost among the unanswered questions asked by both local and foreign journalists who attended the conference in a plush Pretoria hotel was: who. between Inkatha and the Government, is lying about the state funds channelled to inkatha through the security police.

- The press conference. addressed by IFP officials, Susan Vos. Walter Feldgate and Musa Myeni. was presented with a "confession" by a Mr Zakhele Khumalo claiming to have been the only person in Inkatha. who .. knew about. and handled the R250 000 tax payers' money channelled to Inkatha.

The secret funding was exposed by the Weekly Mail newspaper, which also. published a top secret memorandum by a major in the security police to his superiors. who said, among other things, that IFP president Mangosuthu Buthelezi had expressed gratitude for the funding. Chief Buthelezi categorically and angrily denied any knowledge of the money. ,

;In a television interview which followed Chief Buthelezi's denial of any ..knowledge about the funds, Law and Order Minister. Adriaan Vlok conceded that senior officials of Inkatha had accounted for each and every cent of the money. Mr Khumalo was described as Chief Buthelezi's personal secretary. '

1 Susan Vos reacted to Major Botha's allegations by accusing him of "fabricating and trying to curry f'avours with his superiors."

When challenged to explain why they had not brought Khumalo to the press conference so that he could be questioned by the journalists.

Feldgate angrily retorted: "we don't want him here."

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After Mr Myeni had whispered something into his ear. he calmed down and said: "the man is no longer with Inkatha. He has resigned and we have no powers over him." '

The IFP team failed to explain how only one person could have single handedly handled such a huge amount of money. "Do you want us to believe that Khumalo was the only signatory to this Inkatha account?" asked a journalist. "We don't know, unless 'you are trying to Suggest something else," Myeni said.

On the R1,5 million which Minister Vlok admitted had been channelled to the Inkatha trade union Uwusa, Myeni rejected suggestions by journalists that Uwusa was a government front using Inkatha colours. There is neither structural nor functional relationship between Uwusa and Inkatha," Feldgate chipped in.

Myeni said. like several organisations and political parties demanding a commission of inquiry into the scandal. "We are absolutely appalled by this and would be happy to see a commission of inquiry being appointed . to look into this matter."

He reiterated Susan Vos's earlier statement that Inkatha would refund the Government money and that Khumalo had resigned with immediate effect. following his "apology" to IFP president Buthelezi.

Democratic Party leader, Zac de Beer said ,Khumalo's "confession" sounded like "an attempt by someone to take the blame for the scandal."

Mr Vlok told his interviewers that as far as he knew the police - officer, a Major Botha, was an honourable man" and he believed he was telling the truth when he said Chief Buthelezi was grateful for the money.

The truth is still to come.

Inkathagate - Police Investigate Leak

The person suspected of stolen the top secret police documents which were leaked to the Weekly Mail and the Guardian newspaper in London is a policeman from Durban where the documents are missing from police files "

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The theft of the documents is being investigated by the police in Durban and a docket will be handed to the Attorney-General.

Theft of secret documents, according to the police, would constitute a serious offence and might include charges of breaching the Protection of Information Act.

The policeman suspected of leaking the information to the press has since disappeared.

Contradictory Statement "Irrelevant" says Pik

The Foreign Minister Mr. Pik Botha has dismissed as irrelevant a statement that he made on June 13 at a press conference that the government had never given money to Inkatha.

On this day Mr Botha expressed objection to visiting Australia about Australia's "one-sided and partisan funding of the ANC" saying this would lead to violence if other groups felt left out.

In his statement yesterday Mr Botha said that the implication that the government's funding of Inkatha amounted to favoured treatment of a particular party to the exclusion of other parties displayed a "lack of perspective".

"We made no contribution to a political organisation. Inkatha at the time was a cultural organisation. Even if Inkatha could be considered a political organisation at that stage the payment was not intended to further its political objectives". Mr Botha said.

- Mr Botha also said the payment was made exclusively to defray costs of equipment and certain items at the rallies which would have an anti-sanctions theme.

Mr Botha was responding to press accusations that he had contradicted himself over the Inkathagate scandal on "June 13" in the press conference that the government funded Inkatha. This contrasted with his admission on Saturday that he personally authorised the payment of R250 000 for two Inkatha rallies in 1989 and 1990.

FW To Speak on Inkathagate

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The State President yesterday indicated that the government would by next Tuesday state fully its position on its secret funds to Inkatha. Speaking to the press during a photo session for the first time since the scandal broke out Mr De Klerk said in the first instance the Foreign Minister Mr Pik Botha was to give a full interview on television this week.

The interview was scheduled for the SABC-TV Agenda programme on Thursday night. This would be followed by a statement by himself after an important meeting on Monday which would be the "normal State Security meeting."

Mr De Klerk refused to be drawn into questions of whether or not he intended to sack any government ministers.

The fact that Mr Pik Botha will appear on TV tomorrow night as the minister who was in control of the secret funds and Mr De Klerk is delaying any statement until next week is seen by some quarters in the press that the government intends to ride out the storm.

.- It was seen as significant that Adriaan Vlok attended the meeting with Lucas Mangope last night.

Secretary's Resignation is a Cover Up

The ANC PWV Region has dismissed the resignation of Buthelezi's personal secretary over the secret funding scandal as a cover up by the authorities.

In a statement released yesterday the ANC said that it saw the -V.-resignation as 'yet' another attempt on the part of the government and its proxies to cover up the active involvement of senior IFP and SA government officials.

"Our people will not accept this. We refuse to be duped. We reiterate our demand for the government to resign". the statement said.

ANC, PAC and Azapo Join Forces

The main liberation movements will announce a specific programme of action on Monday following the disclosures of the secret funds from the SAP to Inkatha. '

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In a joint statement the ANC, PAC and Azapo said they had begun consulting with their various mass formations and democratic structures.

The said that the exposure of state - funded anti-liberation operations designed to destabilise the liberation movement, has dispelled the myth of the existence of the third force.

Third force actions were the activities of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Law and Order and the Constitutional Department.

De Klerk and Mangope Meet on Political Prisoners

The State President FW de Klerk and the president of Bophuthatswana Lucas Mangope met in Pretoria last night to discuss the issue of Political Prisoners in Bophuthatswana. This meeting took place after the Bush administration in the US had recently expressed concern about political prisoners in Bophuthatswana and asked De Klerk to intervene.

Mr De Klerk described the issue of political prisoners as a general problem and a matter of debate which he and Mangope would be discussing.

His telephonic communication with US president George Bush would be discussed at the meeting.

In a recent satellite interview the US Secretary of State for African Affairs Mr Herman Cohen said the US government was very unhappy about political prisoners in Bophuthatswana and expressed the hope that the SA government would use its influence to force the release of these prisoners.