

IN THE HIGH COURT OF SOUTH AFRICA
(EASTERN CAPE DIVISION, GQEBERHA)

INQUEST NUMBER: 19/2024

In the matter of:

THE RE-OPENED INQUEST INTO THE DEATHS OF MATTHEW GONIWE, FORT
CALATA, SPARROW MKHONTO AND SICELO MHLAULI (THE "CRADOCK
FOUR")

AFFIDAVIT

I, the undersigned,

ADAMUS PAULUS STEMMET

do hereby make oath and say:

1. PERSONAL PARTICULARS AND CAPACITY

1.1 I am an 89-year-old male pensioner, currently residing in Durbanville, Western Cape.

My identity number is **370226 508 3087**.

1.2 Although my general health is good, I have physical limitations regarding my mobility and my sight is severely limited. I am unable to read without specific assistance. Consequently, I deliver this testimony primarily from memory, which remains consistent with the voluntary testimony I provided during the 1993 inquest (the Zietsman Inquiry).

1.3 I am a career civil servant with a professional history spanning over 35 years. I began my service on 15 December 1954 in the Department of Justice, serving as a State

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Prosecutor and Magistrate in various jurisdictions, including Lydenburg, Pretoria, Johannesburg, and Port Elizabeth.

1.4 I was transferred to the Head Office of the Department of Justice (Legal Planning) in 1964 and was promoted to the Department of the Prime Minister as Deputy Head of the Branch: National Security, which later became the Secretariat of the State Security Council (SSRC / SSVR) in 1980. Following the commencement of the Executive Presidency in 1984 I served in the Office of the State President until my retirement on 30 November 1990.

1.5 Parallel to my civilian career, I served in the Citizen Force, eventually attaining the rank of major and retired was appointed Honorary Colonel. I saw service in Angola and a year later acted as Commander of Armour for a division in Namibia.

2.THE ROLE OF THE SSC and SSSC ("SSVR")

2.1 The functions of the SSC and SSSC are summarised and enclosed as Annexures "AS1" and "AS2" respectively .

2.2 It is presumed that the court is informed of the non-executive nature of the SSC , Working Committee, SSSC and organs of the Security Management System, right down through the Joint Management System, Sub-Joint Management System and Mini Joint Management System.

2.3.I wish to emphasize the strict distinction between the **administrative/coordinating** functions of the SSRC and the **operational/executive** functions of the Security Police (SAP) and military line functions.

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2.4. The SSRC functioned as a "clearing house" for inter-departmental conflicts. It lacked the machinery, mandate and equipment to carry out physical operations, such as arrests or eliminations. My duties were at all times performed *bona fide* and in the furtherance of the State's administrative governance.

2.5. Executive functions were always the sole responsibility of the Government Departments. The Security Management System could only co-ordinate between Departments.

2.6. During June 1985, I was the Head of the Strategic Communication branch ("Stratkom") and also in co-operation with the Commission for Administration responsible for training in state security matters of government employees.

2.7. During 1985, we and the Department of Education and Training were housed in neighbouring buildings. We therefore came to know one another's officials. Among others, we often saw and spoke with Mr Jaap Strydom (Deputy Secretary) and his colleague Mr Vermaak.

3. EVENTS IN THE EASTERN CAPE

3.1. At the time (during 1985), the Eastern Cape was in turmoil, with uprisings and protests. The news regularly reported on these events. Mr Strydom told us that, due to a shortage of teachers, he was keen to reappoint certain teachers from Cradock, but that the Security Police objected. His problem did not fall within my area of responsibility.

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3.2. Communication between regional Joint Management Centres (JMCs), such as the Eastern Province JMC (OP-GBS), and the SSRC in Pretoria followed rigid administrative protocols.

3.2 "Top Secret" signals were transmitted via military channels to Army Headquarters and couriered to our offices. Upon receipt, every classified document was required to be processed by the Registry Division, logged, and assigned a sequential reference number.

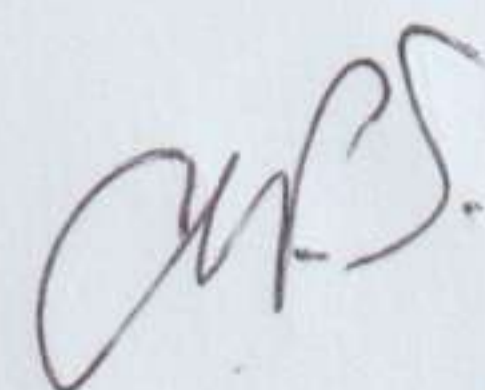
4. THE JOINT SECURITY COUNCIL

4.1. During 1985/86, the country was in crisis, and the Joint Security Council (JSC), under instruction from the President, met early every morning to review the events of the previous day and night and to make recommendations regarding action to be taken.

4.2. At one such meeting, which I attended together with General Van Rensburg of the "SSVR", Mr Jaap Strydom presented his problem. He wished to permanently reappoint some of the teachers who had previously been dismissed due to activist activities. I recall the names Goniwe and Calata. However, the Security Police objected. Strydom was of the opinion that the Security Police would never agree to their reappointment in Cradock. They would therefore have to be removed from the Cradock community and appointed elsewhere, particularly in small towns in the Karoo. Towns such as Willowmore and Carnarvon were mentioned. The Security Police reportedly also objected to this. Strydom requested the assistance of the JSC.

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- 4.3. After a brief debate, the JSC requested that the "SSVR" act as facilitator between the two departments, as we had previously had success with this approach. General Van Rensburg and I decided that Lieutenant General Kiewiet Geldenhuys of the "SSVR" would lead the facilitation committee.
- 4.4 The "SSVR" was occasionally used, apparently due to its inter departmental composition, to facilitate in disputes between Government Departments
- 4.5. The file containing the signal regarding their permanent removal from society was also marked out to me. (The signal is discussed herein below.) The reason for this being that the Training Division fell under my authority. Officials of the South African Defence Force were notorious for their forceful and sometimes crude language. Words such as "remove", "eliminate", "destroy", etc., were frequently used. I instructed that this be addressed in all training courses. This signal was formulated by a military officer, Colonel Lourens du Plessis, in the usual dramatic and exaggerated language.
- 4.6. I firmly reject the assertion that an official (such as General van Rensburg) was entitled to personally destroy a "Top Secret" record in a private shredder. Under National Intelligence Service (NIS) protocols, such documents belonged to the system. Unauthorized destruction was a punishable offence.
- 4.8. I was of the opinion that it was illegal to destroy any classified document and when I was opposed I had discussions with the Chief Archivist and his senior staff who confirmed my views. They advised me to put an embargo of 30 years on top secret



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documents but to store it in locked trunks at the archives. I Wrote a letter to this effect to National Intelligence.

4.9. Years later I was accused, before a committee of the TRC, of destroying all the documents regarding the Eastern Cape JMC. I still had a copy of my letter to National Intelligence. I could also prove that the "Missing" documents were actually handed in at the Zietsman inquest.

5. THE GONIWE MATTER AND THE GELDENHUYS TASK GROUP

5.1 In June 1985, my involvement with the Matthew Goniwe matter was limited to administrative efforts regarding his potential re-appointment as a teacher to stabilize local schools.

5.2 On 13 June 1985, I signed "Stratkom Guidelines" intended to manage public perception. These were formal administrative directives and were entirely disconnected from operational security acts.

5.3. An administrative task group was formally constituted under Lieutenant General "Kiewiet" Geldenhuys. These proceedings were specifically focused on evaluating the strategic feasibility of re-appointing Goniwe to end school boycotts. This was the formal, recognized structure for resolving the matter.

5.4. The committee met in a small conference room adjacent to my office. On one occasion, during a short adjournment, General Geldenhuys looked in at my office

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and said that his committee was 95% of the way towards a final solution. Shortly thereafter, I was informed of the murders of the four. We were deeply disappointed.

6. THE JUNE 7 SIGNAL ("DEATH SIGNAL")

6.1 I am aware of the signal dated 7 June 1985 from the OP-GBS to the SSRC proposing that Goniwe and others be "permanently removed from society." This signal reached the SSRC in Pretoria on **8 June 1985**.

6.2 I wish to state categorically that this signal was **not** integrated into the formal Geldenhuys task group proceedings. It was never tabled for formal consideration or discussion in any official SSRC structure or committee meeting of which I was aware.

6.3 General van Rensburg brought the signal to my attention shortly after its receipt, but explicitly as an example of "undesirable terminology" for training purposes. We did not view this as a valid policy recommendation, but as a linguistic failure. The reason little attention was given to the signal is that it emanated from a sub office whilst we were dealing with officials of the head office of the relevant departments.

6.4 The existence of this signal outside the formal Geldenhuys task group suggests that if it led to the assassinations, it did so through a parallel, informal "line function" involving the Security Police, bypassing SSRC administrative oversight entirely.

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7. THE GALVIN AFFIDAVIT

- 7.1. I have noted the affidavit of James Galvin, who served as the Regional Head of the National Intelligence Service (NIS) in Port Elizabeth and was a permanent member of the Eastern Cape JMC (GBS). His testimony provides direct evidence of the administrative origins of the signal in question and is annexed hereto marked "AS3". He has since, deposing to the affidavit, passed away.
- 7.2. I did not know Galvin when he was stationed at Port Elizabeth. When something appeared in the newspapers and he heard that Mr Barend du Plessis was involved, he made the affidavit for possible use by Mr Du Plessis.
- 7.3. He afterwards gave me a copy when he was already very ill. Galvin confirms that the signal was drafted and sent by the Secretary of the GBS, **Colonel Lourens du Plessis**, following a formal recommendation initiated by the Regional Head of Education and Training.
- 7.4. With specific reference to the content of that signal, Galvin provides crucial context regarding its administrative interpretation. He testifies that he was personally present when the Chairperson, Brig. Joffel van der Westhuizen, sought clarification on the term 'permanently removed from society'. The response provided in Galvin's presence was that the individuals should be removed and relocated in the same manner as Winnie Mandela was removed from Soweto and relocated to Brandfort.
- 7.5. I was not present at the date, time, or place where the "Cradock Four" were killed, nor did I participate in that offense.

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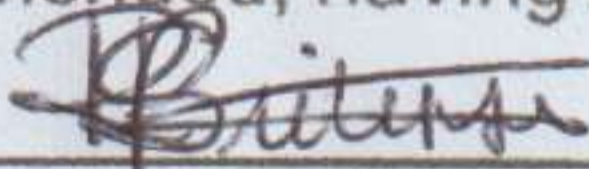
7.6.I explicitly distance myself from the former Security Police members. As a former Public Prosecutor, I feel that criminal acts should be prosecuted. My defence relies on the fact that my actions were limited to lawful administrative coordination.

8.CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The SSSC was administratively seized with the Goniwe matter for the purpose of resolving an educational matter. Any operational deviation occurred outside of my knowledge and authority.
- 8.2 The "loss" or unauthorized destruction of the June 7 signal constitutes a breach of the administrative protocols that governed our Secretariat.

ADAMUS PAULUS STEMMET

I certify that the deponent has acknowledged that he knows and understands the contents of this affidavit which was sworn to and signed before me at Durbanville on this 22 day of March 2026, the regulations contained in Government Gazette Notice No. R1258 of 21 July 1972, as amended, and Government Gazette Notice No. R1648 of 19 August 1977, as amended, having been complied with.

 CST
RS PIETERSE
7235921-8

COMMISSIONER OF OATHS

Full Names: Designation: Address:

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