

Selebi's nemesis

Paul O'Sullivan was one of the first to put the heat on the commissioner, writes **Sam Sole**

In 2001 Irish expatriate Paul O'Sullivan was appointed as group executive for aviation security at the Airports Company South Africa (Acsa). It was a move that was to have dramatic consequences for O'Sullivan and the man whose nemesis he has become, Jackie Selebi, who had been appointed national commissioner of police just a year earlier.

Not one to do things by half, O'Sullivan proceeded to shake things up at Acsa, in particular at Johannesburg International Airport (JIA).

O'Sullivan's concerns focused on a company called Khuselani Security, which was dubiously awarded the security contract for Acsa's airports, including the strategic JIA.

O'Sullivan, backed up by Acsa chairperson Mashudu Ramano, first placed the company on terms and then cancelled the R150-million contract.

The problem was that Khuselani had friends in high places. Khuselani director Noel Ngwenya claimed to be a personal friend of Selebi — something the commissioner recently confirmed — and Ngwenya allegedly promised that O'Sullivan would be dealt with.

Shortly afterwards O'Sullivan suffered two attempts on his life and Ramano found himself the subject of a dawn police raid.

Selebi attempted to stop the cancellation of the contract and met with Acsa chief executive Monhla Hlahla to discuss the matter. O'Sullivan found himself suspended and was then fired, with Hlahla citing a breakdown in the relationship.

O'Sullivan was determined to fight back and wielded his investigative skills to probe Selebi and find out why he had intervened, first to back Khuselani and then to place JIA security under police control.

The former British military intelligence operative zeroed in on some of the organised smuggling networks for which JIA was a crucial gateway.

After Brett Kebble's murder, O'Sullivan's obsession crossed paths with the probe being conducted by the Scorpions. Anthony Dormehl was identified as part of the contraband network that Kebble got himself caught up in. Dormehl operated a small-time transport business used on occasion by Agliotti, including for two shipments — one of cigarettes and one of Mandrax — which had been intercepted by law enforcement agencies.

Coincidentally, O'Sullivan was



Paul O'Sullivan and his bullet-riddled car. Photograph: Sunday Times

acquainted with Dormehl and set out to "turn" him, persuading him to become a state witness in the Scorpions investigation.

It was the tipping point in the whole case. Besides having operated on the fringes of the network for years, Dormehl knew of hashish that was still to be exported. His help led to the drug bust of July 2006 and the arrest of several of the smugglers, some of whom in turn pointed fingers at Stefanos Paparas, Agliotti and Clinton Nassif.

Dormehl provided the first domino to set off a chain reaction that has finally reached Selebi.

O'Sullivan is now out of harm's way in Europe. He spoke to the *Mail & Guardian*:

How do you feel about what has happened so far?

I feel completely vindicated. I am disturbed to see that he [Selebi] still gets paid while this matter goes on, which incentivises him to drag it out.

This is not a luxury that any other police officer gets, so it's favourable treatment for him.

You have been fighting this battle for years — since your removal from Acsa. What has been the personal and professional cost?

This has cost me my life savings. Having to uproot my family and move them to a foreign country for their own safety has also been a massive drain on my resources.

You have played a role in delivering pieces of the investigation

puzzle. What were the major breakthroughs you were involved in?

It became obvious to me back in 2004 that state organs, such as the Public Protector and the Independent Complaints Directorate, were not going to do anything, other than assist Selebi, by supplying him with details of my complaints. Accordingly, by mid-2005 I resolved to carry out my own investigations and commenced the business of penetrating Agliotti's, Paparas's and Nassif's organisation.

By the time Brett Kebble was murdered, I had people on the inside who were able to give me relevant data. I knew that we had to use what is commonly known as the "domino method" to bring them down, so I chipped away at the bottom and was able to secure the first major success — the massive drugs bust in 2006.

The Scorpions investigation has sometimes appeared slow to secure evidence and witnesses. What were your frustrations in trying to get this matter properly investigated?

I guess it did seem to be very drawn out. The sad part is that while we were waiting for Selebi's removal, the country was burning and good South Africans were robbed, raped and murdered.

The management of a key witness — Agliotti — has seemed very lax. Do you have any comment?

In hindsight, it is easy to say what could have been done better. How-

ever, I am aware of a present and real threat, right now, against Agliotti, and I sincerely hope that no stone is unturned in protecting him from any further late night meetings at hotels, or even worse.

There have been attempts to portray you as some kind of spy acting in the interests of foreign powers or business interests.

I'm not going to respond to these pathetic allegations. Those who know me know how I have served my country over the last 20 years. I am bringing a series of High Court cases which will clearly set the record straight.

What was the low point for you during the last couple of years?

There were far too many "low points" over the last seven years for me to start talking about them. I felt like throwing in the towel many times. I believe it was part of God's plan that I should emigrate to South Africa in the 1980s and that He was preparing me for the real reason I was put on this planet.

My actions will result in the saving of thousands of lives, and the police will now be able to avail of decent leadership of the likes of Tim Williams and others.

It seems Selebi may be the most senior suspect in this matter, but not necessarily the most important to the organised crime networks involved in this case. Who are the others who should be placed under scrutiny and why?

There are many that need to be "purged" from the SAPS. My starting point would be Andre Pruis. He was in the unique position of knowing quite a lot about the allegations and yet decided to assist Selebi by getting involved in clandestine activities aimed at putting a stop to my activities.

What should the investigation's next priority be?

To protect the evidence (and witnesses) they have and to complete the trial against Selebi as soon as possible.

They should then go after all the well-placed individuals who have assisted Selebi. I also hope they will bring John Stratton [Kebble's associate, wanted in connection with his murder] back from Australia, where he's busy scamming investors with his latest mining ventures in Africa.

Pinnochio as police chief

News analysis

Stefaans Brümmer

In last week's court application to block his prosecution, Jackie Selebi swore he was never "involved in any bribery and/or corruption". Why, then, did he lie to the *Mail & Guardian* about meeting Brett Kebble, who bankrolled bribes Glenn Agliotti allegedly paid him?

Before the *M&G*'s first exposé in May 2006, Selebi admitted in an interview that Agliotti was his "friend, finish and klaar".

But when we put it to him that, according to our sources, he had visited Kebble at his Johannesburg residence a number of times, he was emphatic: "I have never visited Brett Kebble."

Measured against his own later version, in a November 2006 interview with Scorpions head Leonard McCarthy, this was a straight lie.

In the interview, a transcript of which is included in his court application, Selebi describes visiting Kebble to get copies of a video, featuring Kebble, about the "media trial" of Jacob Zuma. He then confirms further visits.

McCarthy: "Let me just understand you, commissioner. You're saying you met Brett, and [Kebble associate John] Stratton, together with Glenn, on three or four occasions?"

Selebi: "Yeah."

McCarthy: "At his house?"

Selebi: "At his house, nowhere else."

Also measured against the McCarthy interview, there were two further instances when he was less than frank with the *M&G*:

● In July 2006 we asked Selebi whether he had received gifts from Agliotti. His reply: "I have not received any gift."

But Selebi qualified this by pointing out a framed T-shirt signed by Arnold Schwarzenegger, displayed in his suite at police headquarters. Agliotti presented the shirt to him at a 2001 Special Olympics event in South Africa, which was supported by the police. Agliotti had helped manage the event, and Schwarzenegger was the drawcard.

When McCarthy asked Selebi the same question, his response was different: "Yes he did, he gave me a knife, a Swiss knife."

According to the Scorpions' draft charge sheet against Selebi, Agliotti bought him clothing during Sandton shopping trips. The *M&G* has, in the past, reported allegations from a variety of sources that Selebi received gifts of exclusive clothing from Agliotti.

● In our May 2006 interview we asked Selebi: "A number of people, including forensic expert David Klatzow, have claimed that evidence at the [Kebble murder] crime scene was severely compromised by poor police work ... Can you comment also on Mr Klatzow's apparent belief that he was removed from the investigation following intervention by you?"

Selebi replied: "As far as I know, the police handled things properly. About private forensic investigators, I don't know."

In the McCarthy interview, Selebi said that after Brett Kebble's murder he asked Agliotti to arrange a meeting with Kebble's father, Roger. This was after he learnt that a number of "outside private investigators" had been contracted. He went there to deliver this ultimatum: "If he chooses to go with these people, we will pull back. If he says the police must do it, we will do it."

An arm and a leg for Jackie's softoccasins

Nosimilo Ndlovu and Fikile-Ntsikelelo Moya

Deferring to the wisdom of the native Americans, who counsel that before you criticise anyone, you had better walk a mile in his moccasins, the *Mail & Guardian* attempted to do just that with Jackie Selebi.

We went shopping for the soft leather shoes and other goodies convicted gangster and drug dealer Glenn Agliotti said he bought for the police national commissioner (and his wife and mistress).

First stop was the Surtee family store and its famous triumvirate: Grays, Hugo Boss and Ermegildo Zegna.

Surtees don't sell fashion items. They are style merchants and live Coco Chanel's immortal words: "Fashion fades, only style remains the same." At these stores — with their A-to-Z of style

(Aigner to Zegna) — one understands why, if Agliotti is to be believed, the national commissioner needed to augment his meagre government salary of just more than R1-million a year.

Style costs. Like the Canalli suit which, it being our lucky day, was on offer for a mere R26 000. No wonder the store was teeming with a throng of three people.

Ditto the shoes of soft leather and others of the not-so-soft variety, some of which had come down from R6 000 a pair to half the price.

Next stop Louis Vuitton. This is no place for window shoppers. The store teems with attractive guys (although some of them fasten all their

jacket buttons, suggesting that a lecture in style might be in order). They don't smile, and they fix their eyes on you, ensuring your clammy fingers don't devalue their R39 000 25cm handbags. These collector's items don't have price tags. The tall, pretty boy, more of an accessory than any of the bags, reveals the price on request.

Keeping a wife and a mistress on a government salary could prove to be quite costly. The cheapest bag measures a mere 9,5cm and costs R2 000.

While nobody is suggesting that the Rolex-type watch he wore at the ANC conference in Polokwane was part of the largesse given to the commissioner by his nice friends in the pharmaceutical trade, he would have had to save for a long time to afford the exam-

ples we saw in Sandton, averaging R60 000 a piece.

At another gentleman's store, a young man fixing his designer tie plays guide to the *M&G* team.

We are drawn to the pause area where glasses and two bottles of Chevas Regal beckon. "Is that real?" one of us enquires. "Yes it is, it's a 12-year-old bottle. We have a 25-year-old bottle in there," he says, pointing to a cellar, "but it's only for people who are buying."

One feels one understands Selebi even better after treading in his footsteps. If the rich are getting richer and the poor poorer, it's clear why anyone would want to align themselves with the ascendant class.

Now you know why good parents tell their children to choose their friends carefully ... you never know where they might go shopping.

