

EPISCOPAL CHURCHMEN for SOUTH AFRICA

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— For A Free Southern Africa —

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SOUTH AFRICAN ESPIONAGE IN LONDON

Revelations of Pretoria-directed attacks and espionage aimed at the offices of Namibian and South African liberation movements in the British capital moved a step closer to disclosure yesterday. Two men - Peter Caselton, a British citizen, and a Swedish national, Bertil Wedin - appeared for the third time in a magistrate's court on Horseferry Road in London. Bail for the latter was continued while Caselton remained in custody. A third man, Edward Aspinall, did not appear in court on 23 September and a warrant for his arrest has been issued. He has disappeared in a manner which indicates he had assistance. The skeptical believe he has skipped the country; the very skeptical do not bar from consideration that he may be at the bottom of the Thames.

At least another appearance in the lower court will occur and then the two men will most likely be indicted for a trial that will take place some months from now at the Old Bailey in the heart of the City of London. The charge will be conspiracy to burgle. The lawyer representing the Director of Public Prosecutions indicated the case has an international character, involves a foreign power and that there will be diplomatic repercussions. As the story below from South Africa's SUNDAY TIMES says and the report in the London/Manchester OBSERVER sustains, the first secretary of the South African Embassy in London hurriedly left the United Kingdom. The Johannesburg paper - close to the Pretoria regime - states quite openly that Ben van der Klashorst was formerly a security policeman. His posting as first secretary should not obscure the fact that he hadn't changed overnight into a diplomat. Attorneys for the defendants say they will contest the case. Should it come to fruition this trial ought to be a stunner.

SUNDAY TIMES, October 3 1982

Ex-cop envoy flies home from London

By NEIL HOOPER
in Johannesburg
and DAVID JACKSON
in London

THE First Secretary at the South African Embassy in London - security policeman turned diplomat Mr Ben van der Klashorst - has returned to South Africa.

His return coincided with the second appearance in court of two men - Peter Caselton and Bertil Wedin - accused of conspiring to break into the Swapo and ANC offices in London.

An embassy spokesman yesterday confirmed that Mr van der Klashorst had left Britain for South Africa on Thursday, but he said that it was purely coincidental that this was the day of the court case.

The spokesman, Mr Casper Venter, said that Mr van der Klashorst had made arrangements for his return several months ago and that his replacement had been in London for some time learning his duties.

Mr van der Klashorst, who is in his mid-fifties, joined the staff of the London embassy about two years ago.

He was formerly a member of the Security Branch of the South African Police and, as far as could be ascertained, this was his first diplomatic posting.

Protests

By August, 1980, there had already been protests about his presence at the embassy in London.

On August 14, the leftwing British journal New Statesman claimed that Mr van der Klashorst had connections with intelligence services.

The allegations were denied at the time by the South African Embassy.

"Mr van der Klashorst is employed by the Department of Foreign Affairs. He is a First Secretary at the embassy. Beyond that we are not prepared to comment," a spokesman said then.

Last week, the Sunday Times quoted authoritative sources, who said that there was a link between the sudden flight from South Africa of President's Councillor, Dr Anthony de Crespigny, and the Watergate-style burglary at the London offices of the banned ANC and Swapo.

One of documents taken was allegedly a membership list containing the name "De Crespigny".

Accused fled

Three men were held for the break-in.

Caselton and Wedin, who have already appeared twice in court, and a third man, Edward Aspinall, who was later released and subsequently fled.

When Caselton and Wedin appeared in court for the second time on Thursday, the charges against them was that they had conspired to burgle.

During their first appearance, a South African advocate - Mr Hennie Goosen - was present as an "observer".

He is the son of Brigadier Piet Goosen, a Deputy Commissioner of Police at Security Branch headquarters in Pretoria.

He was head of the Security Branch in Port Elizabeth at the time of the death in detention of black consciousness leader, Steve Biko.

Mr van der Klashorst is close to retirement age ... the reason given for his return to South Africa.