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Zondo Commission – determined efforts to get rid of McBride, Dramat

Robert McBride, former head of the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (Ipid), and two of his executives were exonerated in 2015 following what he calls a politically charged campaign to get rid of him. This, he said, was for the corruption he exposed in the South African Police Service (Saps) over the five-year period during which he headed up Ipid. National head of investigations Matthews Sesoko was also in the firing line along with McBride, but the two won against their detractors and were later reinstated in their positions. MacBride's suspension by then police minister Nathi Nhleko went as far as the Constitutional Court, where it was set aside. The third man, former Limpopo head of investigations Innocent Khuba, was not so lucky.

Khuba is the author of a January 2014 investigation report that was used to charge former Hawks national head Anwa Dramat and former Gauteng Hawks head Shadrack Sibiya. He compiled the report hurriedly, under duress from the National Prosecuting Authority's Advocate Anthony Mosing and officials from the Saps crime intelligence unit. The report, submitted soon before the arrival of McBride in March, was taken under review by McBride, who says that he was unaware that it was considered a report. As far as McBride is concerned, what was given to the NPA were status updates on the investigation, and should never have been considered final, as Khuba had planned to conduct further investigation after he had submitted.

The three would later be charged with trying to defeat the ends of justice by reviewing the evidence and signing off on a second, final report. Dramat was suspended by Nhleko on the basis of what was found in the initial report, and Sibiya was later suspended by Dramat's successor, Berning Ntlemeza.

Similarly, Nhleko suspended McBride in April 2015, five months after Dramat, and the other two were suspended by McBride's successor Israel Kgamanyane the following month. Disciplinary processes for the three, coupled with a criminal process run parallel to these, amounted to nothing, despite the finding of a Werksmans investigation, commissioned by Nhleko, that the three had falsified information in an official report.

Dramat and Sibiya were accused of allegedly ordering the illegal rendition of two Zimbabwean men who were sought by law enforcement authorities in that country, and were later killed once deported from South Africa.

Khuba entered into a plea bargain after his suspension, in which he conceded wrongdoing in the compilation of the report, but refused to implicate McBride and Sesoko in a later affidavit meant to support the bargain process. As a consequence, he was dismissed by Kgamanyane.

This was not the end of the story for him, however, as Khuba would receive repeated visits from Hawks officials, who relentlessly sought to get him to nail McBride and Sesoko. On one occasion, he received a call from an official referred to by McBride as Mahlangu, which Khuba recorded. In the conversation in the recording, mostly held in Sesotho, the man said to be Mahlangu urges Khuba to act in his best

interest, and not in that of his enemies, purportedly McBride and Sesoko. This, Mahlangu says, will secure him the protection of Ntlemeza, whom he says never forgets his friends.

McBride continues to testify on Tuesday.

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