



**14 May 2021**

### **Zondo commission – Zondo hears of rampant looting by spies**

Millions in cash for the politician in charge, theft of the state's guns, and cash withdrawn at the drop of a hat for the ANC. These are some of the details the state capture commission heard from a secret witness known to the public only as "Dorothy."

Dorothy appeared in-camera on Friday, in response to a notice of implication from previous witnesses who named her among State Security Agency (SSA) operatives who allegedly participated in irregular activities, often outside the mandate of the agency.

She told the commission that on three occasions in 2016 she was instructed by her senior, whose identity is also hidden and is only known as "Darryl", to withdraw a sum of R4.5-million from the SSA's finance unit. Dorothy explained the protocols involved, and said on Darryl's instruction, she took it to the official residence of then state security minister David Mahlobo. Once there, his protectors let her in and ushered her into his study, bag of cash in hand. After exchanging greetings, she emptied the bag and with Mahlobo, counted the notes it had contained. Once the minister was satisfied that the full amount presumably agreed on was there, Dorothy left.

Darryl would repeat the instruction on two other occasions, but instead of going alone Dorothy took another operative, named "Lilly" in the public record. Asked by evidence leader Advocate Paul Pretorius why Dorothy was picked for the task, and who had done it before her, if at all, she said she understood that Darryl's recent promotion to the post of deputy director-general (DDG) meant that he could not carry out the task any more, but he appeared to have been the regular cash transporter.

"When Darryl asked me to assist in taking the money as he was acting DDG, he said to me he was the one that was taking the money before. So since I'm acting in his position I should be the one taking it. But I don't know how many times he took it," Dorothy said.

"I bare no knowledge what the money was intended for, only who the money was given to."

The commission has been hearing evidence this year relating to an alleged rogue structure created within the SSA by its former director of special operations Thulani Dlomo and former director-general (DG) Arthur Fraser, without following due process. Under the two, said former acting DG Loyiso Jafta in January, the agency lost millions of rands that have to date not been accounted for, used for activities that fall outside its mandate.

Dorothy testified that on Dlomo's instruction in January 2016, she withdrew cash to the tune of R1-million that was used to fund a cohort of the ANC's Mkhonto weSizwe (MK) vets who would act as a surveillance for its annual 8 January rally, held in Rustenburg, North West, that year. The money covered their transportation, meals and accommodation. The same modus operandi would be used in reaction to the impending #occupyLuthuliHouse protest months later, in September, when ANC supporters had vowed to stage a sit-in at its head office in protest against its then president Jacob Zuma.

“On instruction of Mr Dlomo, this was in relation to a rally held in January 2016 in Rustenburg. We used MK veterans who were deployed to the Royal Bafokeng to assist with identifying and reporting on potential disruptive behaviour of attendees at the events,” Dorothy recalled, describing the events around the January incident.

Asked by Pretorius why the services of the vets were needed when the ANC could have simply asked the police, Dorothy replied that Dlomo would be best placed to answer the question.

Another concerning instruction from Dlomo to Dorothy was made where she was to take a number of firearms from the SSA’s headquarters at Musanda, without a clear brief on what they were for. She recalled the drive from Musanda to her home as “the longest drive ever” as she was anxious over the level of danger and responsibility bestowed upon her. Arriving home, Dorothy parked her car in her garage, and later a protector of Dlomo’s arrived to place the arms in his own car. To date, not all of the weapons have been returned to Musanda, prompting Dorothy to open a case with the SAPS on the matter. Her biggest worry is that there are weapons unaccounted for, belonging to the state, for which she signed at Musanda.

She related a common practice among SSA operatives, which involved circumventing its cash requisition protocols. The rule is that if an operative has not returned receipts corresponding with an operation for which they would have requested cash under the temporary advance (TA) system, they cannot take more cash, but many just asked their colleagues to make requisitions on their behalf.

In Dorothy’s case, she often signed for requisition of cash – on one occasion R4.5-million and another R7-million – in respect of operations to be carried out by colleagues who could not ask for it themselves because they had outstanding claims to reconcile.

Commission chairperson Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo questioned the wisdom of the system, asking why the compromised operatives could not just stand down until they could settle their TAs. He was responding to an occasion when Dorothy had withdrawn money for an operation by a colleague known as “Frank.”

“I understand your concern, chair. Mr Dlomo signed this green form, the TA, knowing well that I do not deal with projects and this money was not for my work that I was doing ... for me the fact that Mr Dlomo signed the green form for me says he was aware that I was taking the money.”

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