

NOT FOR CITATION

How It Happened Here

Notes on a book being written and excerpts from the manuscript.

'When are you going to tell the truth?'
For there's no such book, so far as I know,
As How it Happened Here,
Though there may be. There may.

'Lunch with Pancho Villa', Paul Muldoon
Mules, Faber, 1977

In the course of writing a book on Okhela (*for there's no such book, so far as I know*), I came across many variations on this story, and what I have found particularly powerful is the way the assorted tellings and many truths have shaped the lives of both the storytellers and the subjects of the story. Okhela is an unsettling story that does not fit easily into the dominant narrative of the South African struggle for liberation. Amongst other things, Okhela highlights the incipient split in the movement between the nationalists and the communists. It highlights too, the work of Johnny Makhatini, close comrade of Tambo, and nationalist. Makhatini was close to Inkatha, and to the effort to bring Buthelezi back into the fold of the movement. Okhela was central to the role which Tambo and Makhatini wanted for

SACTU. Makhatini is one of the least-written about and yet utterly crucial ANC leaders. He operated more or less as a free agent, in Africa, Europe and the USA.

The struggle for ownership of the narrative of that liberation is, in 2013, stronger than ever.

Excerpt 1.

In April 2013, a fragile and disconnected Nelson Mandela was filmed with President Zuma, Baleka Mbete, and Deputy President of the ANC, Cyril Ramaphosa, at his home in Johannesburg. The President tittered, and covered Mandela's hand with his own – a dead give-away break with Mandela's usual style of covering the visitor's hand. He declared Mandela to be 'up and about', going on to say, "We had some conversation with him, shook hands, he was smiling," We are very happy, we think he is fine."

It seemed a heartbreaking but inevitable rejoinder to the Democratic Alliance's poster campaign which had been running for some weeks previously. One poster showed Helen Suzman in a warm, friendly embrace with Nelson Mandela after his release from gaol. Another mounted the ANC logo onto the flag of Apartheid South Africa. Small wonder then that a failing Mandela was needed to perform for his party. Ownership of Madiba the man, both miracle and myth, had been decidedly and tactically restored to the ANC.

"It's going to be a dirty election next year. A dirty election" repeats Essop Pahad, Mbeki loyalist, former Minister in the Presidency and currently editor of *The Thinker* magazine. He's made a clucking sound and tells me that he's got to go. I don't ask where, naturally enough, but he continues speaking as though I had. "To a wedding", he says and exhales.

My eyes move from the photo of Mandela and Zuma on the newspaper on the desk in front of us, to the headline "SANDF unaware of any permission for Gupta Air Force base use".

“Oh god” I say, “That one?”

He nods and calls Zain, his assistant to let me out. We’re all three of us clumped in the tiny tearoom slash entrance hall slash storeroom. Despite what I have read over the years, *The Thinker* does not look like a Gupta – funded venture to me. But who knows, and given the day that’s in it, I’m not about to ask. Certainly, it is a long way from what Pahad was used to during his years in power. It looks closer in style to the cramped offices and long corridors of the exile years of Prague and London. [...]

In the book, I try to both tell as much of the story of Okhela as I can assemble and to understand the story of one of the central players in the organisation, Berend Schuitema, who was, as a result of the storytelling, caught in a fermata; in a relentless historical pause.

Excerpt 2.

Berend and I meet at a steakhouse near the business school. It is easy for him to get to I reckon, from his sister Thea’s farm in Walkerville, 20 very odd miles south of Johannesburg on the Old Vereeninging Road. I have become fond of the area, but on a hot day such as this, I’m pleased not to be driving. In Walkerville I don’t see any of the familiar brown heritage road signs, but around every corner Berend tells me of an Anglo Boer War skirmish. There’s where General de la Rey cut off the supply lines to General French. And there, overlooking the plains that stretch towards Meyerton, Berend points out a small mountain called Perdberg, up which soldiers took exhausted or ill horses to rest. Whether it was the sweet, tasty sedges or simply the air up there, the hill had a healing effect on the horses.

I don't see his rusty car with the duct-taped doors when I arrive at the restaurant, and as he's not here yet, I look for a seat inside. If I don't, Berend will choose a seat in the sun and I'll sweat and pucker and turn pink. He is back in town after a Christmas break to see his wife Jean in East London, from whom he is temporarily on leave.

I see him arrive, and for a pleasurable moment, I watch as he stalks the outside tables looking for me. A French Solidarite comrade once tried to make him change his gait before an underground visit to South Africa, afraid that what she called his tiger-like walk would betray him. In his usual shorts, sandals and t-shirt, heads raise and dip as he passes the tables of suits, in a Johannesburg business lunchtime Mexican wave.

Before long Berend is back in 1974. Usually he time-travels to the 1970's before I even have my pen out or question asked. I consider what makes today's meeting with him unusual, but it is only as we say goodbye do I discover that he has been living for the past few weeks, on and off, in Zamdela township, the site of the current and persistent anti government protests.

Zamdela township is just outside the huge oil from coal refineries of Sasolburg in the Free State, built in the 1950's and 1960's as fears of diminishing oil stocks and supply grew under the threat of sanctions.

The proposal to merge the Matsimaholo municipality in which Zamdela and Sasolburg are situated, with the adjacent Ngwathe municipality, which is perceived to be corrupt, inflamed the township community. Rumours of gerrymandering and corruption follow Ace Magashule, the premier of Free State.

Driving around Zamdela one day with Berend, I saw the slogan painted on a bus stop: *"Fuck you Ace/We're not part of Parys"*.

These protests can be deadly, and indeed there have been deaths over the past weeks. Berend has been working with community leaders in trying to establish names, times, dates of death. After the massacre of 34 people at the Marikana platinum mine eight months ago, the police seem to have pulled their horns in. But the slightest thing could set them off again. Eventually it dawns on me that the 74 year old Berend is back at the barricades. He's happy. [...]

What was Okhela? It was a revolutionary group which existed from 1972 through to the mid 1980's. Involved in direct actions from inception until the late 1970's, it continued to exist as an information gathering and agit-prop group until the mid-1980's.

Okhela was a product of the Paris-based Breytenbach's late 1960's idea for Revolutionary Action Groups (RAGS) which grew into something called the Atlas Platform. This new group combined a belief in direct action with a muscular approach to discovering cultural identity as a means of mobilizing white and Afrikaner South Africans. Breytenbach wrote the original Okhela Manifesto, much of which comes from a manuscript entitled *Travesties* written in Paris in those years. Of course it is crucial to keep Paris 1968 in mind when thinking about the origins of Okhela, but it is important too, to

consider the effect that the Prague Spring of 1968 had on its limits. Okhela spoke of something that they called “White Consciousness”, which was not necessarily only Afrikaans-centred, but which reflected their inspiration by and affection for, Black Consciousness. Race was a key debate at the 1969 ANC Morogoro Conference. The conference agreement which opened the way for white membership of the ANC, deepened the rift between the nationalists and the communists.

From Okhela’s *Four Levels in Problem Solving*, December 1st 1978:

“[Okhela] is an ideology which grew essentially in isolation from the liberation movement, even though the original impulse to form Okhela came from within ANC. The ideas have been developed in terms of the needs of the white masses. This is a departure from the tradition of the anti-apartheid movement which rejects the “legitimacy” of anti-imperialist activity in the white masses, and who see the white role in the nationalist movement as a limited one determined by class. ... In the framework of the unsolved *nasionale vraagstuk*, the republican tradition must be worked out in the *volksfront* to work towards a *volksrepubliek* representing all the people and nationalities. In the Maluti tradition the language struggle and the republican movement have always been closely associated. The language struggle in the Maluti Samizdat fulfills a uniting and formative role in a process of cultural revolution as an essential dimension in working out the identity crisis....Steve Biko is a peoples’ hero and a key element in the ideological formation of the *volksfront*.”

There is little about Okhela in South African literature, but seminal amongst the material that does exist is Breytenbach's, *True Confessions of an Albino Terrorist*. In this 1984 publication, he explains the prelude to his 1975 underground mission to South Africa, his capture, trial and gaoling.

After being in South Africa in disguise for a few weeks, Breytenbach was arrested, then tried and sentenced to 9 years in gaol.

Breytenbach pleaded for leniency, even apologizing to Prime Minister BJ Vorster for his 1972 poem, 'Letter from Foreign Parts to Butcher', which is subtitled *For Balthazar*.

At the same time as denouncing himself by calling the poem "crass" and "insulting", Breytenbach made an offer directly to General Geldenhuys to spy for the police both on his former comrades in Okhela and on the ANC and SACP. This followed a period of 120 days in solitary confinement. The senior policeman Byleveld argued in mitigation of sentence. Yutar, the prosecutor, allowed that Breyten was a tool of Schuitema and the ANC. So when Justice Cilliers handed down a nine-year sentence, the prosecution was just as shocked as the defence. And it did not end there for Breytenbach. They had it in for him.

Excerpt 3.

Breyten Breytenbach was sentenced to 9 years in gaol in November 1975. Two years later he was back in court on charges of planning an escape and trying to recruit a warder, Gerhardus Gronewald, into Okhela. Groenewald, unknown to Breytenbach, was wearing a wire, and recorded their many conversations.

(Noise) (Someone whistling)

G How is it going still, Breytie?

B No, it's going on...

G Sorry?

B Going to heart's content still

G What's that?

B Heart's...

G Heart's

B Content...

G Content

It reads like Hamm and Clov, Vladimir and Estragon, Nagg and Nell. Watt and Knott.

G Here's the candle

B Thanks

G Oh, sorry

B Never mind, it's all right

G Is it all you need

B It's perfect..... Would you like to see how it works?

B See, you take a piece of paper

G Uh, an ordinary sheet of paper

B An ordinary sheet of paper, yes. Then you rub candle wax all over it on this side, then you write your letter on the other side of the sheet, you know... an ordinary letter that doesn't say anything, and then you turn that letter around and you put it on the other side of the sheet that

you have now rubbed with the candle. Then you write your words with a pen on the reverse side of the sheet that you have rubbed the candle wax onto and, but you just mark it, you know, so that it makes lines. That oiliness comes off on the reverse side of the other sheet of paper, see. Now the other guy gets that side and then he takes anything black, such as coal, if you know.....then he blows [the coal dust] off over that and that [dust] remains there where the oiliness is

G Aha

B That's how it works

G You analyse it then with coal dust, ash

B Any, you, you know or, or wood that's blackold, you strew it over... you know....

G Candle wax

B And just there where the candle wax where you pressed down through that sheet of paper, you know, there the black sticks

G No, I understand now

B Ash sticks there reasonably well, you know

G Right, I see

B That's why, it's an easy method

G Yes

B You know, you can use stuff that when you heat it, it becomes visible

G Yes

B You know, like for example any juice for example even orange when it dries if you write with it on paper it is invisible. But when you hold it over a hot stove plate or a flame then it becomes brown. So even if one sits in jail, you know, they can never prevent you from writing [...]

G Jaaa...

B The world is full of tricks, old chap

G Yes

B One simply has to.....in order to keep going

G Listen here, would you like something from the mess? Toasted something or so?

B You can't anymore..... I no longer have money.....

G No, no, that's okay

B That will be lovely.....

*G Is it. But right-o, I just quickly want to go and see what the mess's story is
[...]*

While Breyten was in gaol, Berend campaigned relentlessly for his release, culminating in a desperate surrender to the police at Beit Bridge, offering himself in exchange for Breyten. All that resulted from that was 100 days in solitary in Pretoria and a charge, later dropped, of setting off a bomb at the President's Council Chambers which killed one person.

Berend Schuitema's politicization began in the mid-1960's with Beyers Naude at the Christian Institute in Johannesburg. There, he made use of the library to expand his thinking, and it was where he had long discussions with Naude. His political growth continued when he went to Holland to study, and it was there that he began the Dutch anti apartheid movement.

From his attic office in the Anne Frank House on the Prinzengracht, Berend ran a dynamic anti apartheid organization. One of the first such organisations in Europe, by 1974 they had had an impressive run of putting sanctions on the political agenda. The Anne Frank Institute was run by Piet van Andel, and was a venue for political ventilation amongst Amsterdam students in the 1960's and 70's. Naude, Berend's mentor in those early years, was a friend of the

Institute and of van Andel.

After a run-in with an early-career Eschel Rhoodie, who was at the South African embassy in The Hague, and who threatened to confiscate his passport, Berend organized, and had set up the organisation within days of a meeting with Rhoodie.

In 1975, Schuitema, together with Breytenbach, embarked on an underground mission to South Africa. Former members of Solidarite are clear that Breyten was only meant to go as far as the forward area of Swaziland. On hearing the news of Breytenbach's arrest, Schuitema fled north and escaped via Zimbabwe. Many asked how it was possible that he had not been arrested too.

In *True Confessions*, Breytenbach says:

“Many of my friends are convinced that it was he, Schuitema, ‘Jan’ as we called him, who had shopped me. Even while I was still in prison I learned of an inquiry launched by people close to me, and envoy sent to Europe to investigate returned with the verdict that Schuitema was the man.”

Caught up in a deluge of disinformation, Breytenbach lists damning-sounding evidence against Berend:

“Spy? Tragic fool? Tool? What is true is that the man is a broken pawn in this sordid game. But dangerous – because he must end by either trying to destroy me (which could have been his mission all along) or, in a paroxysm of frustration and self-hate because of the tangle of contradictions, by

blowing himself up....I leave the judgment to you...."

The Okhela story is further complicated by Berend, the unreliable narrator/traitor and Breyten, the silent poet/hero.

But first I met Berend, the unreliable narrator.

Excerpt 4.

"Broerman, Ons skiet! Will give you a call this coming week, "call collect", asseblief, my baas." Berend Schuitema's handwritten note on a copy of his *London Notes*, 15 September 1978. *London Notes* is one of tens of thousands of pages of memos, notes, letters, manifestos, programmes and reports, most of them written by Berend during the years of the Okhela organization which were 1972 until 1980. If you count Breyten Breytenbach's earlier iteration of the organization, Atlas, and a slightly earlier one still, Revolutionary Action Groups (RAGS), the late 1960's is a more accurate beginning date. During that time fifteen, maybe twenty people, worked were with the organisation.

Okhela means 'spark' in Zulu, and is a nod towards Lenin's *Iskra* newspaper. By the end of 1975 and with Breytenbach sentenced to nine years in gaol, the organisation had had its day, and the broader liberation movement wanted nothing more to do with it. Schuitema however had other plans. Using the Boer War General Christiaan de Wet's *Three Years War* as his handbook, he planned a people's militia organized into commandos. The John Harris Commando, The Breytenbach Commando and the Henri Curiel Commando. *Three Years War* was one of the books from which Nelson Mandela took excerpts for a notebook that became evidence against him at the Rivonia Trial. Despite being a textbook in citizen organized resistance, the book is a ripping yarn, told to the sounds of horses' hooves, Krupp guns and the regular whimper of an English surrender.

"Will you give us your word of honour," he asked me when he caught sight of the gun, "not to stir from your position till we have got ten miles away? That is the only condition on which we will abandon our positions." I again allowed him to finish, although his demand filled me with the utmost astonishment. I

asked myself what sort of men this English officer imagined the Boer Generals to be. "I demand unconditional surrender," I then said. "I give you ten minutes from the moment you dismount on arriving at your camp; when those ten minutes have passed I fire." He slung round, and galloped back to his camp, the stones flying from his horse's hoofs.

When his friend, the pinned-down General Cronje crumbles, de Wet writes; *"The surrender of General Cronje only made me all the more determined to continue the struggle, notwithstanding the fact that many of the burghers appeared to have quite lost heart."* Not that Schuitema's comrade Breytenbach had surrendered of course, but his capture, sentence and repentance, was a blow which Berend, unlike de Wet, would barely survive. [...]

For Berend, being called a spy stuck, and despite living for years as a stateless person, having been on the run, continuing the Okhela work, campaigning for Breytenbach's release, gaol, fit-up, hunger strike and surrender, Berend Schuitema was a spy. Breytenbach said so, *The Sunday Times* said so, Breytenbach's friends said so, the liberation movement said so, the security police said so; at one point even Berend was quoted as having said so. I asked Craig Williamson, once a very successful spy for the apartheid regime, and someone who was close to Okhela before being unmasked, if he knew anything about Berend's alleged treachery. He was categorical. 'The whole thing was a stratcom/comop', spook-speak for stich up.

Williamson says that the police in fact used Okhela to distract the movement. "Misinformation/disinformation and sowing of suspicion

was part of the overall comop/stratcom tactic to encourage as much fracturing of the "liberation movement" in its broadest sense. The more the liberation movement was looking at itself and its own members the less effective they would be and also attention could be attracted away from actual agents."

Named and shamed during the apartheid years, Berend found liberation no kinder. His family here and in Holland were under tremendous strain.

Excerpt 5.

I'm back in Walkerville again. I get a shock when I first meet Berend's younger brother Etsko. It is as if I'm looking at photos of Berend from the 1970's. Etsko has the same straight Dutch hair, and the same blue, blue eyes. Both have the charged eyes of an unusual sheepdog. Berend's eyes are unmistakably electric even in the black and white clippings which I regularly pore over.

Etsko is a Sunni Muslim, and has been for over thirty years. He converted at a time when there were, he says, very few white Muslims in South Africa.

"Ja. There was me here in Joburg, and also a white guy who'd shot a Swapo guy, and was going through the dead guy's pockets and found a Koran. He became Muslim there and then. On the spot. And maybe a few others around the country."

We pass a small mosque with a green tin roof. It is one of a scattering of outbuildings on his plot. Indian mynah birds scuffle with one another. Berend, Etsko and I walk through an arcade of low trees and bush towards the study.

His wife and his sons all carry Muslim names. I ask if his sons are all making a living here in South Africa. Etsko's answer breaks the rhythm of our walk.

"It is difficult for them, and they battle to find work. But they'd rather be second class citizens of South Africa than first class citizens of another country."

In Etsko's study his father's medals are framed together with one from the Transvaal Scottish which belongs to him. It is difficult to know if it is meant ironically, since Etsko started out as a conscientious objector. So although it seems as though it should be in inverted commas, Etsko appears proud of their combined military history.

Berend and Etsko reminisce about their father telling them about sitting on a hill opposite Montecassino in the winter of 1944, watching the bombing light up the night sky. He says that Berend's influence on his life has been profound.

"He's an iconic figure. I remember running after him when he left home for overseas, calling him a fucken bastard and crying and pleading with him not to go. He had hero status to me as a child. My politics was of course influenced by the stature Berend had in my life."

Subsequently he became skeptical of what he calls 'the heavy handed socialism' that he felt Berend espoused and at Wits university became a member of the Mystical Anarchists Circle.

Etsko says that being 20 years younger than Berend, and so much younger than the other siblings, meant that he escaped much of the family dysfunction. So when much later on in the conversation I ask Etsko what he remembers of the farm Rhinefield in Klerksdorp, he looks over at Berend.

"I was born at 53 Elands Street in Klerksdorp, wasn't I?" and he nudges the question towards Berend.

"*Nou ja*, so the farm that a friend of my father rented to him was not the farm on which Etsko grew up." They frown together in the act of remembering. "Well I suppose we were lucky that it wasn't Paraguay." Both brothers giggle a sad giggle.

"Ja, after we left the Vredes minecamp, my father wanted us to go to Paraguay. He'd heard about farms on offer there. But instead this friend rented him the Rhinefield farm." Berend looks over at Etsko and they both share a relieved look, fifty years later. Berend then brings up the subject of Odile.

"Ja, you see, Etsko went to a dual medium school, so he was taught not just in Afrikaans as we were, but in English too. It was a completely different thing then. We, us, we were actually taught not to drink from a vessel from which a Black

person had drunk. That's the kind of people our teachers were. We had teachers like...what was his name?"

"You mean Phantom," says Etsko.

"Ja, Phantom."

I have heard about Phantom before. And I know that talking about Phantom leads to the story of Odile, their brother. I know the story of Odile. It is heartbreaking.

The mynahs have moved to the back of the house, and they've begun to sound like domestic parrots. My own assorted sadnesses have crept up on me, and they mix cheerfully with Berend and Etsko's combined grief. As ever, I'm working in the troubled future. I have a tense all of my own; Future Alarmed.

"Parrot?" I ask, but ever so slightly shouting, and nod towards a closed door.

Etsko tilts his head.

"No, it's just the mynahs," says Berend softly.

"Phantom laid into Odile. He really laid into him. And then my father sent him to the air force. He was what, Etsko, 15?"

Etsko nods. We are all quiet for a moment. I know that I can't bear to see, to hear the brothers discuss Odile.

I glance a bit too brightly at Etsko.

"They wanted to give me his name. Can you believe it? As it is, I got it as my second name. Etsko Odile."

The autumn air from the open study door warms us. I roll up all the sins of interviewing into one, and ask quickly about their other brother, Jerry.

"Jerry's a crackpot" says Etsko. "Did you know," and he looks over at Berend, "that Jerry told me that you wanted to kill me?"

"When?" asks Berend. "I never wanted to kill you. Was this when we lived in 267 Crown Ridge North?"

They both look at me and tell me of political disputes they had. Sometimes bordering on fisticuffs. At that time Etsko was learning Zulu stick fighting, and so sometimes he warned Berend with the stick. But no, they both agree. No-one's life was at risk.

"Ja. Jerry's a crackpot" says Etsko. [...]

The Anne Frank House was staffed by several women who were Holocaust survivors. They readily opted to work for the AABN (Dutch Anti Apartheid Movement). They had a particularly important job. Berend and his colleagues spent their nights going through the rubbish bins of multinational companies in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague. In the early years they targeted the tobacco companies who were breaking sanctions against Rhodesia. But not just tobacco companies, eventually oil companies, spare parts, and arms manufacturers all came under the spotlight. When the nighttime activists returned to the Anne Frank House in the morning, they brought bags and bags of torn up pieces of paper from the trash bins of these companies. Their elderly colleagues then spent months putting the documents back together again. With the information gleaned from the litter, it was not long before tobacco sales from Rhodesia were crippled.

At the time of Breytenbach's visit to South Africa for the Cape Town Summer School of December 1972 with his wife Yolande, who had previously been denied entry to South Africa, he was already planning to adapt his Atlas Platform to a model that would motivate South African activists at home and in Europe to use direct action against the state. From this thinking emerged the Okhela

organisation.

In Paris, Breytenbach had for some time been in contact with Henri Curiel, a Jewish Egyptian and founder of the Egyptian Communist Party. First gaoled, then forced from Egypt by Nasser, Curiel, in exile in Paris, became the major courier and financier for the Algerian liberation army, the FLN. After the FLN victory in 1962, Curiel was reluctant to disband the very effective network which comprised very many who had been in the *maquis*, the French Resistance.

Instead, Curiel expanded his network into an organization called Solidarite. Sometimes called The Curiel Apparatus, it operated primarily in Africa and South America. Okhela members were trained in the shadow arts; tailing, forgery, dead-letter drops, disguise and resisting interrogation. Often, Berend, Breyten and others, were taken, blindfolded, to a large country estate outside Paris where their training took place.

Curiel was murdered in 1978 in a still unsolved murder. One of Giscard d'Estaing's generals admitted to Curiel's niece, Sylvie Braibant, that d'Estaing wanted Curiel 'removed'.

Curiel was one of the most significant financiers of The Black Panthers, early Basque Separatists, Sandinistas, the Japanese Red Army, the Indonesian Moluccan Separatists, and practically every

communist party in South America.

And perhaps the best, most tricky, ineffable story of Solidarite's undercover missions to South Africa, was when Marie Jose Fanon, visited. The wife of the FLN's chief theorist Franz Fanon was close to Curiel, and agreed to a mission to test the network here.

The ANC has, in general, fudged their involvement in Okhela.

However, Luli Callinicos gives a clear introduction to the genesis of Okhela in her biography of Oliver Tambo. But the ANC denial of involvement after Breytenbach's arrest has persisted with many, and is at least one of the reasons why the Okhela story is uncomfortable and ill fitting in the complex narratives of liberation. In James Ngculu's, *The Honour to Serve*, a book on the author's time in MK, he tells this story;

At that time there was a group in Europe, led by Breyten Breytenbach and Barend Schuitema, that organized itself as 'Okhela' (Spark), and which emerged as one of the many attempts to undermine the ANC. The group was based mainly in France and the Netherlands. But when Duma tried to explain to the camp about this Okhela we did not understand a thing. Duma told us that this was a group made up largely of white Afrikaners whose stated intention was to create a white

resistance movement as a way of shifting ANC dependence on the support of communist countries and weakening the communist influence on the ANC. He explained the dangers of attempts to split the ANC from without as well as from within the movement. However, the way he explained this was very complicated for most of the new recruits, who were still not familiar with the workings of the ANC. According to Breytenbach, Okhela was intended to help 'Tambo and Makatini to break away from the Communist Party...

And that's one of the big perceptions that persist. Some say that because of the opposition that the initiative had from the SACP, Tambo did not give it the all clear, and that the operation with Breytenbach went ahead without Tambo's permission.

It was not as though the ANC was not pleased with some of the actions that had been undertaken. In France, a van carrying documents relating to the sales of Mirage fighters was hijacked and the papers taken and sent on to the ANC. In Bonn, a German activist broke into the SA Embassy and stole crucial information regarding nuclear matters in SA.

After Breytenbach's arrest however, the ANC was looking to clear up the debacle and solve other problems they had on the ground.

However, within these complex narratives, Okhela was a disruption and embarrassment that the ANC could not afford. It became a story to be belittled and buried.

Ends.

