



Lorry Sant talking to Joe Pace

THE TRUTH ACCORDING TO JOE PACE

Magic Kiosk owner links Piju Camilleri to Lino Cauchi

Until now the only basis for linking Piju Camilleri with murdered accountant Lino Cauchi was the testimony given by Joe Borg who, on various occasions reiterated that the murdered accountant had been present during one or two 'stormy' meetings prior to the 1981 election. Borg has constantly main-

tained that in these meetings Lino Cauchi was always identified as being Piju Camilleri's accountant. However, last week, this newspaper revealed that a second person who was also present in those meetings had confirmed that Lino Cauchi was present and represented Piju Camilleri. The second witness, Joseph Pace of Magic Kiosk, who had been indicted on corrup-

tion charges in the early 1990's, also described the row that took place between Piju Camilleri and Lino Cauchi over a document that the latter presented during the meeting. Joe Pace adds that when Cauchi left, Piju Camilleri passed the ominous comment, "Just wait until they get him." Pace's testimony was given in an affidavit sworn in 2001 in relation to a case

instituted against him by Joe Borg over the illicit transfer of property that took place in the eighties. The Magic Kiosk owner says that at the time he acted on behalf of Lorry Sant because he feared for his life. The following is a literal translation of the evidence given by JOSEPH PACE on behalf of Terry Limited in the case Joseph Borg vs Joseph Pace.



'With a heavy conscience, have to say that I was coerced into doing things'



I recall seeing Joe Borg leaving my house worried

Under oath he confirms:

1. That I am a director and shareholder in the defendant company Terry limited – and I have been so since its formation – and in 1981, I already knew both Piju Camilleri and Lawrence sive Lorry Sant, who at the time was a Labour minister.
2. That to describe my relationship with Lorry Sant and Piju Camilleri, one has to understand the political situation in the country at the time, they were difficult and unhappy times.
3. That when the contract concerning the lands known as Ta' Zilfa and Ta' Belinja in Fgura was done with Paola Developments Ltd, whose directors were Joe Borg and Victor Balzan, on 8 December 1981, the general election was on the doorstep. For that reason there was tension in the country. It was a stressful time because certain business deals were not done in a loyal manner but were predominantly done under a strong element of threat and fear.
4. That this fear was very real and I feared for my fam-

- ily and my security. It suffices to say that in my life I was subjected to two bomb attacks on my property where both me and my family could have died as a result.
5. That it is for this reason that when I used to be threatened, I used to take the threat seriously, because if not, I cannot say whether today I would be able to recount all this.
6. That I, unfortunately, and with a heavy conscience, have to say that I was coerced into doing things which I did not want to do and this because I was a victim of threats and forced to execute orders of people who threatened to harm me if I ignored them.
7. That it was useless for me to go to the police and ask for their protection because at the time I was scared that if I went to the police, I would come to a bad end and they would even kill me.
8. That I am saying all this today because times have changed and some people have died and they cannot harm me anymore.
9. That one time in the final

- months of the year 1981, Lorry Sant told me that a contract for a number of plots in Fgura was going to be done and he told me to transfer them to my company, Terry Limited. I told him that I wanted to avoid getting into more trouble, but he insisted that I did what he said and told me not to argue because it wasn't to my advantage. He threatened me and reminded me that Cafe Premier, Australia Cafe and Magic Kiosk were all on government land and I could very well wake up in the morning and discover that I had lost everything.
10. That in the argument that arose with Paola Developments Ltd, I was present only on the date when the contract was published by Notary Saydon at my former office in 157 Merchants Street, Valletta. Piju Camilleri and his brother Andrew, together with an accountant, whom I got to know was a certain Lino Cauchi, Victor Balzan, the same Joe Borg and myself were present for the transfer of property that belonged to the plaintiff company. At the time of the

- contract, I was there because Lorry Sant had sent me. The contract was written by the notary and the lands were going to be transferred to Piju Camilleri. An argument had erupted between Joe Borg and Piju Camilleri, and the latter had called on me so that the lands would be transferred to my company Terry Limited and the notary made a correction in this sense.
11. That it is true that the negotiations that were held on this transfer were not negotiations at all, instead one could call them the execution of Lorry Sant's will by Piju Camilleri on Joe Borg. Piju Camilleri had threatened Joe Borg's life if the latter did not do what he wanted him to do. Joe Borg was forced by Piju Camilleri to sign the contract. Borg was trying to avoid signing by raising arguments to delay the process; but it happened that Joe Borg finally had to bow his head and do what Piju Camilleri wanted him to do and I know that he (Joe Borg) was not paid for this transfer.
12. I recall that an argument

- had erupted over a number of plots that Piju Camilleri for Luqa Developments Co. Ltd had to pass back to Joe Borg and this according to an agreement that had been reached with Lino Cauchi. In fact Piju Camilleri had argued with Lino Cauchi about some document that had been presented on the day and I heard Piju Camilleri pass a comment after Lino Cauchi left, "Just wait until they get him" (*Issa jsi-buh lil dan*). After everything was concluded I recall seeing Joe Borg leaving my house worried (*rasu maqtugha*), silent and you could say under a tremendous shock because of the experience he had just had.
13. That year, after the same Joe Borg had filed a prohibitory injunction numbered 6/89 regarding the property in Fgura, I was arraigned in front of the Permanent Commission Against Corruption where I was – in my opinion erroneously – found to have participated actively in this contract. But until that time nobody knew that I was forced to do what I had done.



The bomb outside the Magic Kiosk

In January 1995 a bomb was placed outside the Magic Kiosk in Sliema belonging to Joe Pace. Police investigations led nowhere but Piju Camilleri was called in for questioning. When testifying in front of Magistrate Silvio Meli last year, Piju Camilleri confirmed that he was considered to be a prime suspect by the police in the case. At the time Joe Pace and Piju Camilleri were not on the best of terms. Camilleri told the magisterial inquiry that he could not understand how Joe Pace identified him as a prime suspect when on the very same morning they had been eating together. MaltaToday is producing a literal translation of the statement released by Piju Camilleri when interrogated by the police on 12 February 1995 in relation to the bomb that exploded outside the Magic Kiosk. Piju Camilleri denied any involvement.



Piju Camilleri interrogated by the police

Police (P): What is your work?

Piju Camilleri (PC): I am a director of a company called Filati Ltd

P: Do you know a certain Joe Pace who is the proprietor of the Magic Kiosk?

PC: Yes.

P: Am I correct in saying that the two of you have a company called Tor Ltd?

PC: Yes.

P: Am I correct in saying that you have another company together called Casa Italia?

PC: Yes.

P: Is this company operating at the moment?

PC: It is not operating. There is a debt of Lm105,000 with the banks for this company. Joe Pace and I had issued the capital for this company and we had hired the De Marco brothers from Syracuse to supply us with the furniture and they were also partners with us. The company was not doing too well and the work was not up to standard. I pointed this out to the De Marco brothers and Joe Pace and I took the drastic step of leaving it up to them to run the company, but still it

didn't do well until eventually it stopped its operations.

Everything is listed in the minutes and if required I can show them to you. In the meantime, the two banks, Bank of Valletta and Mid-Med Bank, were summoning us to honour the agreement we had reached with them. On a number of occasions I tried to arrange meetings with the respective bank managers but Joe Pace never appeared, that is, we never went to Bank of Valletta but we had gone to Mid-Med Bank and reached an agreement, which Joe Pace did not

honour. I wished to settle the matters but I couldn't do so alone and I talked to Joe Pace and his lawyer on a number of occasions about the matter in the presence of my lawyer, but we still have not arrived at an arrangement till this day.

P: Do you remember if Joe Pace bought some land in Fgura a couple of years ago?

PC: Yes I do remember because half of that land belonged to me. What happened was that when we were selling parts of this land we were issued with a warrant for a prohibitory injunction, the mandate for which is still in force today. We had asked the buyers whether they were ready to wait until the mandate was lifted, but after some time, they were asking us for their money back. We found somebody else who paid these people their money back and a convenium was signed with this person. Meanwhile another person became involved and a convenium was signed with him after an agreement was reached with the previous person. All I took was my share.

P: If I tell you that you threatened Joe Pace over this land what is your reaction?

PC: It is not true that I threatened him, on the contrary I helped him all I could despite pulling out from this business matter of my own

accord.

P: Am I correct in telling you that you and Joe Pace possess a villa in which ex-minister Lorry Sant used to live and another villa in which Lorry Sant's sister, Frances and her husband, Joe Schembri, live?

PC: True.

P: Is there any discord between you and Joe Pace over the sale of these two villas?

PC: There is no discord, on the contrary this morning we had a meeting with the lawyers of the concerned parties and Joe Pace agreed with a suggestion that I made.

P: Do you know what happened to Joe Pace toward the end of last month?

PC: Yes. I know that somebody placed a bomb outside the kiosk.

P: Were you involved in this incident or in the incident when a bomb was placed outside his (Joe Pace's) house?

PC: Of course not. I swear it on my children and my grandchildren.

P: You did not commission someone to place the bomb?

PC: No.

P: Do you have anything to add?

PC: No.

