

EVERY SCANDAL. EVERY RAND. ADDED UP.

THE RECEIPT

WHAT 30 YEARS OF ANC RULE COST YOU

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Open since 27/04/1994

"A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL"

CUSTOMER: THE PEOPLE TILL: 30 YRS

ARMS DEAL	R70 000 000 000
AIDS DENIAL	330 000 LIVES
NKANDLA	R246 000 000
STATE CAPTURE	R57 000 000 000
SAA BAILOUTS	R50 700 000 000
VBS BANK	R2 000 000 000
MARIKANA	34 LIVES
LOAD SHEDDING	15 YEARS
TEMBISA HOSPITAL	R2 000 000 000
JULY 2021	354 LIVES
SOFA (PHALA PHALA)	\$580 000

PETROL 1994	R1.76
PETROL 2026	R30.25
UNEMPLOYED 1994	2.5 MILLION
UNEMPLOYED 2026	8.5 MILLION

TOTAL DUE:

YOU

PAID BY YOU

*** NO REFUNDS ***

PROMISES NOT HONOURED

THANK YOU FOR YOUR VOTE



0 1994 2024 0000



B.R. VAAL

FREE SAMPLE

This free sample contains the Prologue and Chapter 1 of **THE RECEIPT: What 30 Years of ANC Rule Cost You** by B.R. Vaal.

Please share it. Forward it to your family group, your work group, your neighbours. Every South African has paid this bill.

PROLOGUE

DOLLARS IN THE SOFA

The bushveld outside Bela-Bela goes very dark at night.

There are no streetlights on a game farm. No traffic. Just the thornveld, the dirt roads, and somewhere out there in the camps, the buffalo.

On the night of 9 February 2020, somewhere around ten o'clock, someone got into the house.

Not just any house. This one stood on Phala Phala, a wildlife farm in Limpopo. It belonged to Cyril Ramaphosa, who had become President of South Africa two years earlier. The man who had promised the country a "New Dawn". The man who said the looting was over.

Inside that house, in a bedroom, was a sofa. And under the cushions of that sofa was a pile of American dollars.

Not rands. Dollars. Cash.

The thieves found it. And they took it.



Think about that for a second.

Bela-Bela is in Limpopo, the same province I grew up in. A few hours' drive up the road is Hoedspruit, where I spent my childhood at my father's fuel depot, and where a man called Baba Mkhize once put on his best suit to go and vote for a better life. You'll meet him in Chapter 1. Keep him in mind while you read about the sofa.

In February 2020, millions of South Africans were sitting in the dark because of load shedding. Unemployment was heading towards 30%. People were choosing between taxi fare and bread.

And the President of the Republic had foreign currency stuffed into a couch on his farm.

The first question everyone asked was simple. *How much?*

The answer depends on who you believe.

The President's side would later say it was **\$580,000**, roughly R8 to R9 million at the time. A former head of the State Security Agency would say it was **\$4 million**, more than R60 million. One account leaked from inside the ANC put it at \$480,000.

Nobody has ever proved which number is true. That is the first thing you need to know about Phala Phala. Almost nothing about it has ever been cleared up.



The story they told

Here is the President's version, the one his side gave the investigators.

In December 2019, a Sudanese businessman named Hazim Mustafa visited Phala Phala. He picked out twenty buffalo in Camp 6. He paid **\$580,000 in cash**, handed to the acting lodge manager, Dumisani Sylvester Ndlovu.

The President was not there. He was told the next day. He said to keep the money on the farm until his next visit.

Ndlovu first put the cash in the farm safe. But many workers had access to that safe. So around 30 December, worried it might be stolen while he was on leave, he moved it. Into the President's house. Into a bedroom. Under the cushions of a sofa.

Six weeks later, it was gone.

That is the official story. Now look at the holes in it.

The buffalo were never collected. No veterinary tests. No transport permits. Two years later, the panel investigating the matter noted that the animals were *still on the farm*. A man had supposedly handed over more than half a million US dollars in cash and simply never come back for what he bought.

Hazim Mustafa did come forward in December 2022. He told the Guardian and Sky News that he had paid the money. But the questions did not go away. Where did the dollars come from? How did that much foreign cash come into the country? Was it declared? Why was it in a sofa and not in a bank?



The silence

Here is what makes it worse.

When most South Africans are robbed, they go to the police station. They stand in the queue. They get a case number.

The President of South Africa did not open a case.

The National Police Commissioner, Fannie Masemola, later confirmed it in an affidavit: no theft case was ever opened. The theft was reported, instead, to Major-General Wally Rhoode, head of the Presidential Protection Unit. The President's own bodyguards.

What happened next is still being argued about.

We know that a Namibian man named Imanuwela David crossed into Namibia illegally in June 2020. He was arrested there on 12 June. Namibian and South African police allegedly met at the border town of Noordoewer to discuss the arrest and the money. In November 2020 David pleaded guilty in a Namibian court to illegal entry and failing to declare goods. He served about 48 hours and was deported.

Forty-eight hours.

And for more than two years, the country knew nothing about any of it.



The man who walked into Rosebank

On 1 June 2022, Arthur Fraser walked into the Rosebank police station in Johannesburg.

Fraser was no ordinary complainant. He was the former Director-General of the State Security Agency, the country's spy boss, and a man with his own long list of controversies. He laid criminal charges against the sitting President: money laundering, defeating the ends of justice, and kidnapping.

He claimed \$4 million had been stolen. He claimed the President had hidden the crime. He claimed it was all on CCTV.

The next day, the Presidency confirmed that a theft had taken place. The President denied any crime. A few days later, he said the money came from selling game, and that it was far less than reported.

The country was stunned. Not because a politician was in trouble. South Africans are used to that. They were stunned because this was *the clean one*. The businessman. The negotiator of the Constitution. The man who was supposed to fix what Zuma broke.



"May have committed"

Parliament had to respond. In September 2022 the Speaker appointed an independent panel of three: former Chief Justice Sandile Ngcobo, retired judge Thokozile Masipa, and advocate Mahlape Sello.

On 30 November 2022 they handed over their report. It was 82 pages long, and it landed like a bomb.

The panel found that the information before it showed, on the face of it, that the President **may have committed** a serious violation of the Constitution, serious misconduct, and a breach of the anti-corruption law that requires people to report crimes like this.

The panel said the truth lay in the *unanswered questions*.

It was reported that the President came close to resigning that week. Senior ANC leaders talked him out of it.



The vote

Under the Constitution, the next step was simple. Parliament had to decide whether to send the report to an impeachment committee, which would hold hearings and test the evidence in public.

On 13 December 2022, the National Assembly voted.

214 against. 148 in favour. 2 abstentions.

The ANC used its majority to shut it down. No hearings. No witnesses. No public answers.

The matter was closed. Or so they thought.



"Cleared"

Over the next two years, the President's office could point to one finding after another in his favour.

In June 2023, the Public Protector found he had not breached the Executive Ethics Code. Her investigation was narrow: it looked only at whether his private business clashed with his official duties.

The South African Reserve Bank cleared him of breaking exchange control rules.

In October 2024, the National Prosecuting Authority announced it would prosecute **no one** over the dollar transaction. Not the President. Not anyone.

Three people were charged with stealing the money. Nobody was charged over where it came from.

Opposition parties were outraged. The DA challenged the Reserve Bank's finding. The MK Party talked about a private prosecution. But the ANC moved on.



The court strikes back

Then, on 8 May 2026, the Constitutional Court spoke.

The highest court in the land ruled that Parliament's December 2022 vote was **unconstitutional**. The rule MPs had used let them "gatekeep" the process after an independent panel had already found a case to answer. The court set the vote aside. The report had to go to an impeachment committee after all.

Three and a half years after the ANC buried it, Phala Phala was back.

The President's office said he respected the ruling, and that "no person is above the law".

Then he went back to court.

On 24 July 2026, the Western Cape High Court granted him an interdict, in a split 2-1 decision. The impeachment hearings were frozen until his challenge to the panel report was decided. His lawyers argued the report was irrational and legally flawed. The case was argued from 2 to 4 September 2026.

Judgment was reserved.

As this book goes to print, South Africa is still waiting.



STILL NOT ANSWERED

- How much money was really in the sofa?
- Where did the dollars come from, and how did they enter the country?
- Why was no police case opened?
- What did the President's protection unit do to track the thieves, and on whose orders?
- Why was a Namibian suspect out of jail after about 48 hours?
- Why were twenty buffalo, paid for in cash, never collected?



Phala Phala is not the biggest scandal in this book. Not even close.

Compared to the Arms Deal, state capture or the looting of Eskom, a sofa full of dollars is small change. But it tells you everything about how the ANC learned to operate. Something goes wrong. Nobody tells the public. Somebody leaks it. The party closes ranks. The institutions take years. And ordinary South Africans are left with more questions than answers.

It was never supposed to be like this.

To understand how a liberation movement ended up here, with the President in court fighting his own impeachment, we have to go back. Back to a morning in April 1994, when millions of South Africans stood in queues that stretched for kilometres. Old women who had waited their whole lives. Young men in their first good shirts.

They were voting for a better life.

This is the story of what they got instead.

PART ONE

THE PROMISE

CHAPTER 1

A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL

*Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu.
A person is a person through other people.*

One of Baba Mkhize's sayings

The suit

I was six, so I only remember pieces.

I remember the heat, because in Hoedspruit there is always heat. I remember the smell of diesel and dust, which to this day smells to me like being a child. And I remember Baba Mkhize in a suit.

I had never seen him in anything but his blue Shell overalls. That morning he arrived at the depot in a dark jacket that was slightly too big in the shoulders, a white shirt buttoned all the way to the top, and shoes so polished that I could see the sun in them. He had a small green book in his top pocket and kept touching it, the way you touch your wallet when you're scared of losing it.

The other men teased him. He laughed with them, but he didn't take the jacket off, not even when the day got hot.

I asked my father why Baba Mkhize was dressed for church on a work day.

"He's going to vote, my boy," my father said. "Today is a very big day for him."

I didn't know what voting was. I thought it was something like a wedding.

A few weeks later the whole depot crowded into my father's little office to watch a small television on top of the filing cabi-

net. Men in overalls, drivers who had stopped for a delivery, the tea lady. On the screen, jets flew over a big building in Pretoria trailing coloured smoke, and an old man with grey hair raised his hand and promised something.

I looked up at Baba Mkhize, because he had gone very quiet.

He was crying. Not loudly. Just standing there with tears running down his face, smiling.

I had never seen a grown man cry before. I didn't understand it for many years.

What he told me later

It was 1999, my father's last year at the depot. I was eleven, and I finally asked him about it.

We were sitting on upturned crates behind the storeroom, out of the sun, eating vetkoek from the shop across the road. I asked him why he had cried that day in the office.

He took his time, the way he always did.

"Mfana," he said, "before that day, I was not a person in this country. I was a pass book. A worker. If a policeman stopped me in town without my book, I went to jail. I could not live where I wanted. My children could not go to your school. When I was a young man, I could not even sleep in this town after dark without a permit."

He turned his hands over and looked at them.

"That day, I stood in the line from four o'clock in the morning. Old women, young boys, everybody. Nobody pushed. Nobody complained. When I put my paper in the box, I was a person. For the first time in my life, they counted me."

Then he said something I have never forgotten.

"Madiba promised us a better life. Houses. Work. Light. Schools for the children. He said by the time my grandchildren are big, nobody will know what it means to be poor like we were poor."

He laughed and pointed his vetkoek at me.

"You will see, mfana. *Kuzolunga*. It will be fine."

This book is about what happened to that promise.

Where were you on 27 April 1994?

If you're old enough, you remember. If you were a child like me, you remember pieces. If you weren't born yet, ask someone who was, and watch their face change.

All over the country, the queues started before sunrise. In townships, in villages, outside schools and church halls and tents pitched in open veld, South Africans lined up to do something most of them had never been allowed to do.

Vote.

They came in their church clothes, like Baba Mkhize. They came on crutches and in wheelbarrows. Grandmothers who had been born under a government that counted them as less than human stood for hours in the sun, holding their ID books like treasure. In rural areas the lines were so long that voting was stretched over four days, from 26 to 29 April, so that nobody would be turned away.

Nelson Mandela voted at Ohlange High School in Inanda, outside Durban, close to the grave of John Dube, the first president of the ANC. He chose the spot on purpose. The message was simple: the job is done.

Nearly 19.7 million people voted. The ANC won 62.65% and 252 of the 400 seats in Parliament.

On 10 May 1994, at the Union Buildings, Mandela was sworn in as President. That was the day we watched on the little TV in the depot office: the jets drawing the colours of the new flag across the sky, former enemies saluting him, and Mandela telling the world that never again would this beautiful land experience the oppression of one by another.

It's hard to explain to a young South African today what that felt like. The closest word is hope. The kind you only feel once in a lifetime.

The promises, in writing

Here's what most people forget. The ANC didn't just ask for votes. It made promises. Clear ones, with numbers attached. The kind you can check.

The slogan was four words long: **A better life for all.**

In its 1994 election manifesto, the ANC set itself five-year targets. It would:

- Build **one million houses**.
- Bring running water and flush toilets to **more than one million families**.
- Connect **2.5 million homes** to electricity.

Those promises sat inside a bigger plan, the Reconstruction and Development Programme. You know it as the RDP, the name that ended up attached to every small grey house in the country. It was meant to undo apartheid: houses for people in shacks, land for people who had been pushed off it, clinics, schools, roads, jobs.

For Baba Mkhize, the RDP wasn't a policy document. It was a picture. A brick house with a tap inside. A light that switched on. A grandson who would finish school and walk straight into a proper job.

Remember those promises. We're going to come back to every single one of them, and hand the ANC THE RECEIPT.

The man who wrote the rules, then walked away

While Mandela was the face of the new South Africa, one of the men who built it stood a little to the side.

His name was Cyril Ramaphosa.

In the 1980s he built the National Union of Mineworkers into one of the most powerful unions in the country. He knew how to stare down mining bosses across a table, and how to wait them out. By 1991 he was Secretary-General of the ANC. When the long, dangerous talks with the National Party government

began, he was the ANC's chief negotiator. As chairman of the Constitutional Assembly, he helped steer the writing of the Constitution, the same document South Africans would later have to hold up against their own leaders, again and again.

Many people believed he was Mandela's natural successor. Young, sharp, respected on all sides.

He didn't get the job. The ANC's inner circle chose Thabo Mbeki.

On 13 April 1996, Ramaphosa announced he was leaving Parliament for business. He stayed an ANC member, but for the next twenty years he would be building something else: a fortune.

Keep him in mind. He walks out of the story here. He'll walk back in at the very top, and when he does, it will be with dollars in a sofa.

The house with the cracks

It would be dishonest to pretend nothing was achieved. Something was, and it matters, because it proves what was possible.

By early 2001, more than 1.1 million subsidised houses had gone up. Homes with electricity climbed from under 40% in 1994 to about 63%, more than two million new connections. Around three million people got clean water for the first time.

Baba Mkhize got his RDP house in 1998. I remember the day he told us, because he brought a cake to the depot. Two rooms, a tap in the yard, a light in the kitchen. He was prouder of that house than any man I have ever seen with a mansion.

By the time my father left the depot in 1999, there was already a crack running from the corner of the kitchen window to the roof. You could fit a finger in it. When it rained, his wife put a bucket under it.

He wasn't unlucky. He was normal.

The million houses in five years? **Missed.** The 2.5 million electricity connections? **Missed.** A study in 2000 found that only 30% of the new houses met building regulations. Walls

cracked. Roofs leaked. Across the country, families who had waited years for their house watched it start falling apart within a few years.

Land reform was worse. The plan was to transfer 30% of farmland. By 1999, they had reached about 1% of that target.

And jobs, the one thing people wanted most, never came. In 1994 about 2.5 million people were officially unemployed. Instead of falling, that number climbed.

Then, in 1996, the RDP itself quietly disappeared. Its office was closed, and it was replaced by a new economic policy called GEAR. Whatever you thought of GEAR, the big promise of 1994 had been folded up and put in a drawer.

Most people didn't notice. Baba Mkhize didn't. He still had hope. He still had Madiba.

THE RECEIPT: Where it started, and where we are now
Every RECEIPT in this book comes back to these numbers.

	1994	Today
Rand per US dollar	R3.58	R16.22 (Sept 2026)
Petrol, per litre	R1.76	R30.25 (95 inland, Oct 2026)
White bread, 700 g	R2.14 (1995)	R19.99 (late 2024)
Official unemployment rate	about 22%	33.6% (mid-2026)
People officially unemployed	about 2.5 million	8.5 million (mid-2026)

What it means for you: When I was six, petrol at my father's depot cost about R1.76 a litre. A R100 note filled a farmer's bakkie with about **57 litres**. Today the same R100 buys about **3 litres**. In 1995, R100 bought **46 loaves of bread**. Today it buys **5**. Prices rise everywhere over thirty years; that part is normal. What's not normal is a currency that loses more than three-quarters of its value, and a country where the number of people without work more than triples. That didn't happen by accident. It happened because of choices. This book is about who made them.

The first warning

Every story has a moment where, looking back, you can see the trouble coming.

For the ANC, it came early.

In the same years that Baba Mkhize was putting a bucket under the crack in his kitchen, the new government went shopping. Not for schools. Not for clinics. Not for better houses.

For weapons.

Warships. Submarines. Fighter jets. Helicopters. For a country with no enemy at its borders.

The bill ran into tens of billions of rands. And around it, quietly, a network of middlemen, consultants, "commissions" and favours was already taking shape.

It became known simply as the Arms Deal.

It would end careers, haunt a future president, and teach a whole generation of politicians one very dangerous lesson.

That you could get away with it.

THAT WAS ONLY THE START.

23 more chapters. The Arms Deal. Nkandla. The Guptas. The weekend that broke the rand. VBS. Load shedding. Marikana. Covid looting. July 2021. And the full story of the sofa.

THE RECEIPT is available now on Amazon Kindle.

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SHARE THIS SAMPLE. EVERY SOUTH AFRICAN PAID THIS BILL.