

# Cop aimed to 'fabricate' evidence

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Johannesburg - A former crime intelligence officer on Tuesday told the North Gauteng High Court in Pretoria that a superior had undertaken to fabricate evidence against Boeremag accused Adriaan van Wyk, when Van Wyk refused to become a police informer.

Retired Captain Deon Loots testified that Colonel Louis Pretorius had discussed his plan to recruit Van Wyk as a police informer, but later reported back that he could not talk Van Wyk into it.

"He said he would do everything in his power to fabricate any information against Van Wyk to put him in a bad light, in this case or in another case," Loots said.

Loots was the handler of one of State's star witnesses in the Boeremag treason trial, JC Smit.

Loots had refused to make a statement in the case and said Smit was "very unhappy" about the statement he had made and the information it contained.

He earlier testified that Crime Intelligence had encouraged rightwingers to become more militant, and that Smit had been provided with training and explosives so that he could in turn train people to make and plant bombs.

Loots said the police had also bugged the Boeremag accused's cells and consulting rooms.

**No grudge**

Loots' former wife Colonel Miranda Loots, his former brother-in-law Sam Theron and Loots's sister are all still members of the Crime Intelligence Unit, but Smit was put on medical pension in 2001 after being diagnosed with post traumatic stress disorder.

He said it had been triggered by the discovery of a stash of weapons that had been earmarked to kill the handlers of police informers.

When asked why he had waited 14 years before giving evidence, Loots said his superiors and his wife had laughed off his concerns about the police tactics used in the Boeremag case.

Prosecutor Dries van Rensburg said the State would argue that Loots' evidence was nothing more than an opportunistic attempt to discredit the police and particularly, Loots's former wife.

Loots said "everyone" knew that he wanted to tell the truth since he left the police, and he had often discussed his plan to write a book with his former brother-in-law.

He said he had been happily married until 2008 and he held no grudge against his former wife or the police.

According to Loots he abandoned his idea to tell the truth after his son's death in 2005, although he kept on telling his wife that he did not agree with the working methods of the investigation.

He finally decided to come forward after a visit to India and attended the trial for the first time in 2011, but only managed to get an advocate who was prepared to listen to him last year.

He said he had first contacted one of the accused, Dr Pretorius, and told the whole story to him.

Dr Pretorius in turn referred him to an attorney and the advocate who drew up his statement and took the matter further.

Loots said he had earlier also given his details to two of the defence advocates acting in the trial, but they never came back to him.

Loots denied leaking his statement to a Sunday newspaper.

He said he was very surprised when he read the article and also wanted to know who had given his statement to the newspaper.

The trial continues.