

Curacao: Politics, Corruption, Murder - The case of Helmin Wiels

On May 5, 2013 Helmin Wiels political leader of the PS party in Curacao and at that time kingmaker in the fractious politics of Curacao under the new constitution of October 2010:10/10 was assassinated on a beach in Curacao. In the aftermath of the October 2010 general election Wiels and his PS party created the government of Gerrit Schotte, in 2012 when the Schotte government collapsed, a new election was held and Wiels again indicated his intention to make once again Schotte the prime minister then by October 2012 reneged casting Schotte and the MFK political party he led into the political wilderness. On May 5, 2013 Wiels was assassinated in public on the Marie Pampoen beach in Curacao and the new government excluding the MFK was installed on June 7, 2013. At the time of his assassination, Helmin Wiels was being closely guarded by a security detail as a plausible threat to his life existed. He deliberately slipped his detail and headed for Marie Pampoen beach where he was shot dead in public, broad daylight with a beer bottle in his hand in the presence of witnesses. A calculated murder to send a message to the politicians, the State of Curacao and the Netherlands. The Netherlands got the message and responded with a campaign to successfully prosecute the hit team and the intellectual authors of the hit.

By 2014 Elves Kuwas was in prison in Curacao serving a life sentence for the assassination of Wiels and going through the appeals process when he was moved to the maximum security prison at Vught, the Netherlands to ensure his safety. The architects of the murder of Wiels in Curacao were wielding the necessary power to have Kuwas silenced in the Curacao prison system and simply did not care that Kuwas will turn informer in response to this plausible threat. With his removal to the Netherlands Kuwas made the deal and would return to testify in the future. Kuwas was a known gang banger in Curacao and serial killer who cared little to adopt the methodology of a professional hit man, an Iceman, a mechanic. To hire Kuwas for the hit meant you hired an easy target for law enforcement, who when caught will do everything in his power to secure the best deal possible for himself, which he did. Then you alienate him by putting out the word on him whilst he is in prison in Curacao, simply incompetence on the part of politicians who having tasted power and lost it are blinded by their delusion that they are entitled to power. In July 2016 Kuwas lost his final appeal and his life sentence was confirmed placing on the table his personal revenge against those who hired him for the hit. The fact that the associate of Kuwas, Raul Martinez, was murdered following the hit on Wiels and Luigi Florentina who was the money mule between the client and the hitman supposedly hung himself in the holding cell of a police station in Curacao.

Kuwas' revenge from a Netherlands maximum security prison was the statement given to the State naming the clients of the hit on Wiels as George Jamaloodin former Minister of Finance in the Gerrit Schotte 2010-2012 government and Robbie Dos Santos his half-brother and reputedly king of the lottery/numbers game in Curacao and their broker for the hit Nini Fonseca.. Fonseca was arrested in Curacao and his trial commenced in April 2017 with Kuwas testifying against him in person having made the journey from the Netherlands to Curacao via the prison on Bonaire. Kuwas named Jamaloodin and Dos Santos as the clients who purchased the hit on Wiels with Fonseca as the broker as he hired Florentina to find and hire the hitman. Florentina approached Kuwas with the job offer with a contract sum of 250,000 guilders upon completion of the job. The day after the hit Kuwas goes to Florentina for his payment but they short pay him as he is handed 100,000 guilders and told he will get the rest later which he accepted. This is the operational methodology of a cheap, expendable gang banger, summed up by the fact that he accepted the bullshit Florentina dumped on him, took his cut in pay and simply walked away. When you renege on a deal with a professional Sicario you send a message that she/he is marked for death/silencing which means they must first kill the client and her/his underlings. At the point Florentina/Pretu shafted Kuwas his money he should have died graphically violent to send the expected message in the Game. Just wannabe gangstas breaking all the rules of the Game. The warrant issued for George Jamaloodin could not be served as he was found to be in

Venezuela but with the extradition request filed Jamaloodin was arrested and placed in a Venezuelan jail until such time deported from Venezuela to Curacao. The short time the Venezuelan state agencies took to locate and arrest Jamaloodin is yet another indication of the geo-politics at play in this case. Burney Nini Fonseca was found guilty as charged and sentenced to 25 years in prison and in his final appeal he was given a 26 year life sentence in the Curacao prison. Fonseca maintained his silence at his trial but did not plead guilty but will he flip as an informer?

It is now apparent that the hit on Wiels was not possible without surveillance of Wiels by agents of the State or those close to him to alert the operational structure of the hit squad that Wiels had ditched his security on the said day of his death, his movement on his own unprotected and the location for the hit to be effected. This was no simple unsecured run by Wiels where his paths crossed with the hit man at Marie Pampoen playa/beach, but the product of a surveillance operation involving agents of the State and/or those close to Wiels. The hit on Wiels is a most potent indicator of the endemic corruption that plagues the operations of the State of Curacao and the impunity enjoyed by these players. This state is in fact malformed, dysfunctional and operationally compromised.

George Jamaloodin was arrested in July 2014 but released for lack of evidence. The statement given by Kuwas resulted in another arrest warrant for Jamaloodin where it was discovered he was now in Venezuela. In September 2018 Jamaloodin was extradited from Venezuela to Curacao arrested and incarcerated on Bonaire and his trial in Curacao commenced in June 2019 where he pleaded guilty to stealing 450,000 guilders in tax payers' money in 2012 whilst holding office as Minister of Finance, which was funneled through Jamaloodin's firm Speed Security. Jamaloodin stated in court that he repaid the sum of money in 2017 via an investment account in Estonia and that December is an expensive month which necessitated his theft of state funds for personal use. The use of an offshore haven to repay the stolen funds must be noted. Jamaloodin also pleaded guilty to requesting as Minister that persons produce forged invoices and other documents for submission to the Government Accountant Bureau. Besides stealing he was an active agent of corrupting the State for his personal benefit. The resources of the State were then his to plunder. Jamaloodin was found guilty of depriving Wiels of his right to life by ordering the hit on Wiels, promised money to the broker, Fonseca, who organized the hit on Wiels and paid for the hit. Jamaloodin was not found by the court to be a co-perpetrator of the murder of Wiels, in other words he did not participate in the hit. Jamaloodin was sentenced to 28 years in prison and is presently undergoing the process of appeals. There was no testimony nor statement from Fonseca at Jamaloodin's trial. Jamaloodin's appeal to the Court of Appeal is carded to commence on January 9, 2020. In November 2019 Robbie dos Santos was arrested in connection with the murder of Helmin Wiels, whilst in early December 2019 on the application of the public prosecutor a magistrate ruled that Robbie dos Santos be held for a further 60 days. In late December 2019 Robbie dos Santos' appeal to the Court of Appeal was upheld and he was freed from police custody.

The hit on Wiels not only exacted revenge on him by ending his life but it also destroyed the political party Wiels led, PS, as the kingmaker in the fractious coalition politics of Curacao. By the general elections of 2016 and 2017 the PS was no longer an apex player in the politics of coalition formation in Curacao. From 4 seats in 2010, to 5 seats in 2012, to 2 seats in 2016 and 1 in 2017 out of a total of 21 seats in the unicameral parliament. It is now apparent that power applied by state agents influenced Wiels' decision to walk away from the deal he made with Gerrit Schotte of the MFK thereby creating the clear and present danger to his life. Wiels' refusal to accept the potency of this threat enabled the operation unleashed to kill him attain its goal cheaply as it acquired its target with little or no effort on their part save to surveil him and his movements. Wiels then made himself a soft target. But the abiding lesson from the Wiels assassination is the operational existence of organized crime groups within the state agencies of Curacao who offer their services for hire, a message not lost on transnational organized crime.