

# Media Statement



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**TO: ALL MEDIA**

**DATE: 22 AUGUST 2016**

**RE: "BONNIE AND CLYDE" SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT**

Craig Smeddle and his wife, Bridget Smeddle, were sentenced to life imprisonment at the Western Cape High Court on Monday. The couple dubbed "Bonnie and Clyde" by local media were convicted on charges of robbery with aggravating circumstances, murder, two counts of fraud, forgery, uttering and defeating or obstructing the administration of justice.

They were sentenced to fifteen years each for robbery with aggravating circumstances, life imprisonment for the murder which was premeditated and on counts of fraud, forgery and uttering, the counts being taken together for purposes of sentence each was sentenced to seven years. They were also sentenced to two years each for defeating or obstructing the administration of justice and Craig was also sentenced to five years for the other fraud count. The court ordered that all of these sentences automatically run concurrently in terms of Section 39(2) (a) (i) of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998.

Craig, 34, and his wife, Bridget, 33, are no strangers to the law. They have been serving fifteen year sentences each for a murder they committed before the crimes they were sentenced for on Monday. Craig has been in conflict with the law for the past 17 years. He has been convicted in South Africa on three occasions for crimes of dishonesty and sentenced to 12 and 18 months imprisonment respectively which were suspended on condition that he be placed under supervision and on the second occasion on condition that he attend rehabilitation at Noupoot. He was sentenced once for possession of dangerous dependence producing substance in 2012.

In addition he was sentenced to 4 years hard labour for possessing of controlled drugs. He has two further convictions for the Fraudulent Evasion of Duty and for Exporting Restricted Goods under the Customs and Excise and Management Act of Trinidad and Tobago (Arima). He was sentenced in both instances to 12 months hard labour. Bridget has been convicted and sentenced for malicious damage to property, for which she was sentenced to R1000 or 3 months imprisonment, suspended for 3 years.

In this case, the couple murdered Robert Symons, 71, by stabbing him with a sharp object, using blunt force to his head and strangling him with one of his shoelaces. They stole various items from his house which included Ryobi Weed Eater, a bench grinder, a computer, a cell phone, a set of jumper leads as well as his Hyundai Getz motor vehicle.

They also forged his signature on various documents for the purpose of selling the vehicle to a state witness and later attempted to persuade the state witness to lie about their identity after their arrest. The separate count of fraud faced by Craig pertains to the presentation of one of the deceased's cheques bearing his forged signature to Standard Bank.

During arguments in aggravation of sentence, prosecutors, Advocate Bronwen Hendry-Sidaki and Advocate Tillette Berry told the court that throughout the protracted trial proceedings the accused have expressed no remorse for their actions and maintained their innocence.

The NPA welcomes the sentence.

Kind Regards,

**Eric Ntabazalila**

**Regional Spokesperson: DPP Western Cape**

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