

Location, location, location

The settling of organised crime in Bedfordview

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Why do ‘crime bosses’ settle in one place and not another? It is an intriguing and under-researched question, and not much has been written about it. In South Africa a cluster of individuals associated with organised crime moved into, or were associated with, a particular suburb: Bedfordview, south-east of Johannesburg. The most notorious was Radovan Krejcir, but he plugged into an established network of individuals with links to the underworld. This article, based on interviews with people close to high-level crime figures or in political or civic leadership roles in Bedfordview, explores why this neighbourhood in particular was chosen. Our analysis suggests that a range of factors coalesced to make Bedfordview, an upper-class, predominantly white neighbourhood, attractive to organised crime figures. These include pull factors linked to geography, lifestyle, ethnicity and infrastructure that combined in a way that was unique in Johannesburg. Significantly, these were associated with a set of push factors that reflect changes in wider urban development and the upward (and geographic) mobility of a set of ‘businessmen’ linked to grey or illegal markets in the city.

What happened in Bedfordview?

In 2010, the suburb of Bedfordview in the east of Johannesburg entered the crime headlines.¹ Strip club boss Lolly Jackson had

been murdered and a controversy raged over which of his Bedfordview neighbours – local conman and criminal middleman George Louca or Czech crime boss Radovan Krejcir – had pulled the trigger, and whether they had been helped by a high-ranking police official. Within a few years Bedfordview became known as the stomping ground of some of the city’s most notorious underworld figures and, above all, as Krejcir’s home base. Of the many crimes – including several murders and a bomb attack – that were linked to Krejcir and his associates, a large number took place in Bedfordview itself (See Box 1). Yet Bedfordview is no red-light

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district or hollowed out inner-city area. Rather, it is an affluent suburb with large houses and high walls, a robust network of neighbourhood watches and an active community police forum: the very model of upper-class South African gentility.

In this article we set out to interrogate why Krejcir chose Bedfordview as his home and his operational base, and why this worked so well for him for several years. Curiously, understanding why organised crime figures settle in one place or another is an issue not widely considered in the literature. Klaus von Lampe in his otherwise landmark and comprehensive study of criminal markets points only to 'inner city slums' as the breeding ground for organised crime.² There is not much literature, for example, that examines, beyond passing references, the clustering of British organised crime figures in the south of Spain. One partial exception is Varese, who examined the conditions for the successful criminal transplantation of mafia figures at the global level by exploring the local conditions that allowed some criminal figures to integrate into local societies.³ Criminology's focus is, as has been pointed out before, often on the margins of society (the metaphorical slums) and not enough on places where deviance is apparently unexpected.⁴ That the slum is a spatial and geographic concept associated with criminal activity should not blind us to the fact that organised criminality can also cluster in upmarket areas.

Our study is a highly localised and very South African attempt to understand a single upmarket suburb and the overlapping conditions that made it inviting to organised crime. We explore why, during the height of Krejcir's career, Bedfordview had become, or had been exposed as, a node of externally implanted organised criminal activity. While this topic has been covered in the media, we sought

to bring greater depth to it through 10 in-depth interviews with criminal associates, journalists, private investigators and prominent figures in Bedfordview in November 2016.⁵

Box 1: Serious crimes connected to Krejcir occurring in Bedfordview⁶ (see Figure 1)

- The murder of private investigator Kevin Trytsman, allegedly by his lawyer George Michealides.
- The luring of German car dealer Uwe Gemballa to the country by Jerome Safi, whose family are long-term residents of Bedfordview, on instruction from Krejcir; Gemballa was murdered in Edenvale, which is close to Bedfordview.
- The bombing of Krejcir's Money Point store; Krejcir associates Jan Chavron and Ronny Vuma died in the explosion.
- The Money Point store, ostensibly a pawn shop, was reportedly used as a base for laundering goods, paying bribes to police, and administering criminal deals.
- The assault and torture of Bheki Lukhele in Krejcir's Money Point store.
- The attack against Krejcir by an unknown rival who used guns that fired out of the boot of a car, triggered remotely.
- The murder of Serbian assassin Vaselin Laganin, allegedly by Krejcir's henchmen.
- The murder of the drug dealer Sam Issa, allegedly by Krejcir's henchmen.

This analysis produces an understanding of how place, history and social networks can work together at particular moments in time to produce a 'space' for heightened criminal opportunities; and, in the case of Bedfordview, in ways that subvert typical understandings of 'bad neighbourhoods' and their suitability for

organised crime. In this theory, 'space' goes beyond an understanding of a geographic place where a crime was committed, to encompass the analysis of a space containing a clustering of criminal networking and organisation that had countrywide consequences. (The joking reference to 'Deadfordview' is a reminder that the suburb was a location for actual violence as a result of its criminal fraternity.)

It is also worth saying that the 'criminal space' that we identify in the article fits a particular white subculture. As such, it does not by any means convey the evolution of the wider criminal networks that span Johannesburg; for example, township-based armed robbery gangs, or the hierarchical and often criminalised violence that dominates the taxi industry, although there is on occasion some intersection between these networks. It does, however, have important linkages to the changing nature of policing in the country. Thus, a portal into Bedfordview represents one important segment of the criminal market and the changing nature of criminal actors as they continue to shape life (and death) in the city of gold.

The history of a white picket-fence criminal subculture

Our informants were consistent about what made Bedfordview an attractive node for underworld players. Bedfordview was repeatedly characterised as an excellent 'meeting place' with a distinct and attractive 'Mediterranean' feel, and a 'new money place'. Understanding Bedfordview's urban history illuminates why it so suddenly became a (wealthy) gangster's paradise – and why that should not have been surprising.

Bedfordview began to take shape in the early 1900s when farmland was subdivided into smallholdings, many settled by retired miners from the Rand. By the 1930s a small village had

developed. It retained a peri-urban, village-like character late into the 20th century.

The construction of the major Witwatersrand freeways in the 1960s and 70s was an important turning point in Bedfordview's fortune (see Figure 1). These highways linked Johannesburg's south and its East Rand towns, and the international airport in Kempton Park. Bedfordview sits at the confluence of the highways coming from these directions. For this reason it was chosen as the site for Eastgate shopping centre, Johannesburg's first mega-mall outside the central business district (CBD). Constructed in 1979 with stores from all the major high-end retailers, it drew shoppers away from the CBD. The Bedford Centre, built in 1969, was revamped in the 2000s into a mixed residential, shopping and office development marketed at the wealthy. From the 1960s an exodus of white businesses and residents from the CBD spurred rapid development in hitherto peripheral neighbourhoods. Bedfordview began to densify in earnest, as its undeveloped smallholdings provided spacious plots for large houses, from which residents could easily commute by car.⁷ Although Johannesburg's northern suburbs have traditionally been the preferred location for wealthy whites, by the 1990s Bedfordview too had become a place of walled mansions.⁸

In addition to a commercial centre, Bedfordview became a place shaped by several waves of migration from Europe, the Levant and former colonies to Johannesburg. Bedfordview is divided into six suburbs, some characterised by the settlement of a distinct migrant community. In Senderwood, for instance, Greek migrants and their naturalised descendants have clustered close to SAHETI School. In a Greek restaurant in Senderwood's commercial centre, old men, chatting in Greek, can be found playing backgammon all day. Italian, Portuguese and Lebanese South Africans also have distinct networks in the suburb, built around restaurants,

churches and other sites of sociability.⁹ Bedfordview's 'European' communities take pride in their heritage, and the suburb nurtures a somewhat 'outsider' identity.¹⁰

At the same time as Bedfordview's star was rising, many of the areas nearby went into decline. Areas such as Bezuidenhout (Bez) Valley, suburbs in the south of Johannesburg and East Rand towns were predominantly white working class up until the 1990s.¹¹ These neighbourhoods have particular histories of military conscription, hyper-masculinised identities and social conditions that shaped the outlooks and prospects of the men who gravitated towards opportunities on the border of the licit and illicit in Johannesburg's economy.¹² Many men from the south, Bez Valley, and inner city neighbourhoods such as Hillbrow were key recruits for the bouncer mafias of the 1990s and early 2000s.¹³

Likewise, suburbs close to the CBD that had themselves hosted criminal subcultures, such as Cyrildene and Hillbrow, fell prey to slum-lording, redlining and urban decay, a result of the complex story of Johannesburg's CBD class transformation over the latter decades of the 20th century.¹⁴ This process reached its peak after 1994 and has not been reversed.¹⁵

A 'new money' place

For many people who grew up in the south and east of Johannesburg over the last several decades, Bedfordview is the object of their ambitions for social mobility. Several of our informants – who had themselves lived in the south and the east – highlighted the fact that Bedfordview was an island of wealth in the midst of a large swathe of white working-class Johannesburg for most of the late 20th century.¹⁶ The men and women who grew up in Bez Valley, Malvern and Alberton aspired to live in Bedfordview. This applied both to those who had graduated from the lower and

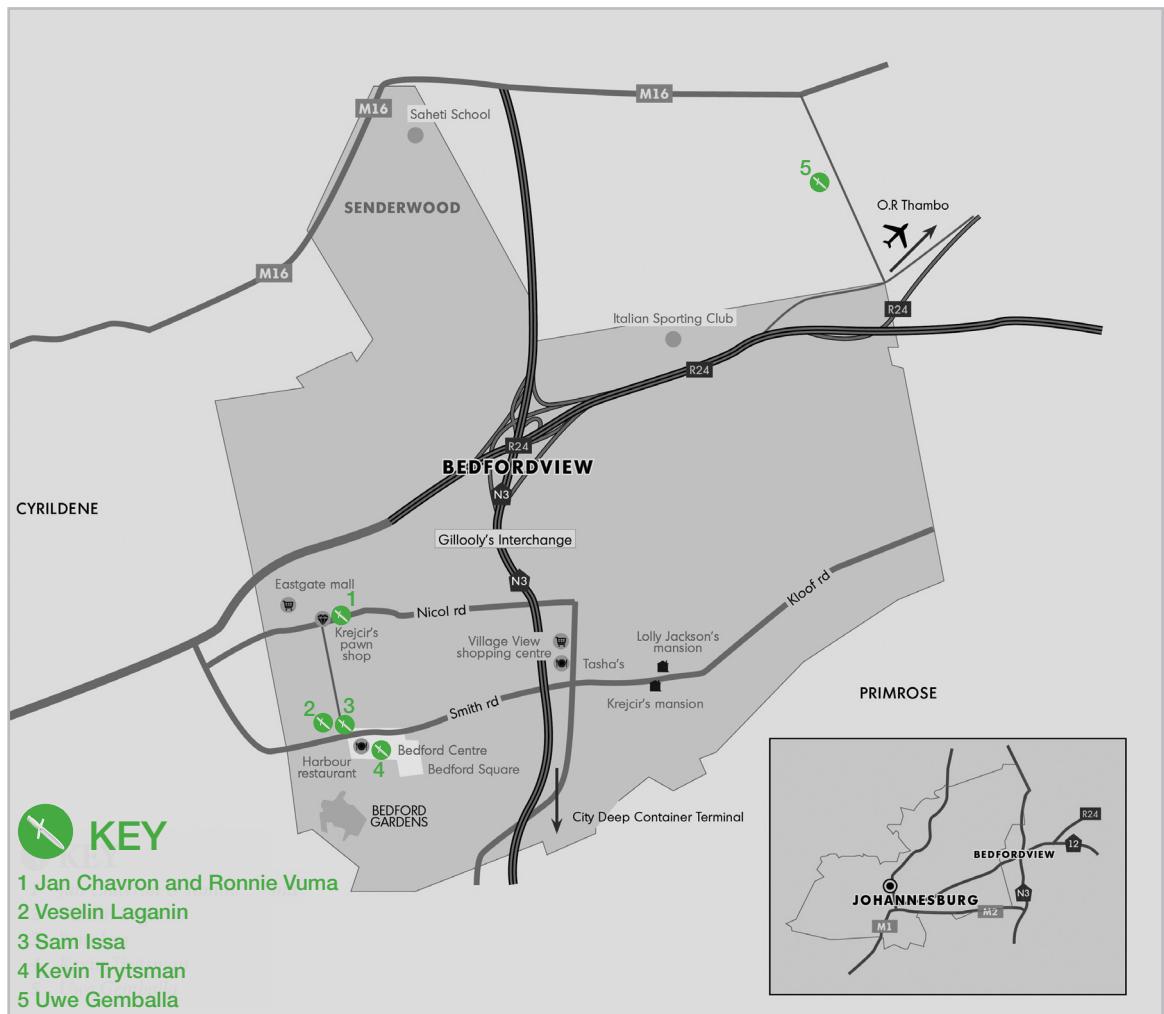
middle class to its upper echelons, and to a group of aspiring underworld figures. For example, Jackson, who was for a time before Krejcir's arrival the underworld lynchpin of the neighbourhood, had grown up in the adjacent suburb of Primrose Heights. As one informant explained:

Primrose is a lower socioeconomic bracket area. I know a few people who came from Danville [High School, in Primrose Heights] and who were like Lolly. They looked down on Bedfordview and thought 'One day I'll be there, one day I'll be there!' And they made their money in clean ways or dirty ways and they got there.¹⁷

Other notorious characters from Johannesburg's white underworld also gravitated to Bedfordview, if not to live, then to socialise. Mikey Schultz, a founder of bouncing mafia 'Elite' and assassin of mining magnate Brett Kebble, was a regular presence at the Bedfordview News Café, as was James Murray, the 'businessman' who had provided the loan for the assassination.¹⁸

Bedfordview was always a popular recreation space for a dwindling number of ex-bouncers, debt collectors, thugs and fixers, who provided muscle and criminal 'piecework' for men higher up in the criminal hierarchy. In their youth they had sold intimidation or exploited transitory criminal markets, such as the selling of drugs in nightclubs.¹⁹ By 2007 many had successfully escaped the poverty of Bertrams, Bez Valley and La Rochelle, and some continued to operate in the grey areas of Johannesburg's economy, often as 'glorified debt collectors' who would 'sort out business disputes, where people didn't have recourse to law, but in an informal way,' and were constantly on the lookout for opportunities, licit and illicit.²⁰ Then there were men who sold information or influence, who often came from similar backgrounds, though some had bypassed the more physical roles of bouncer or VIP protection and had focused their careers

Figure 1: Map of Bedfordview including locations of crimes (see Box 1)



on scams and 'knocks', and facilitating dodgy deals.²¹

The reason these men were attracted to Bedfordview, according to our sources, was its 'new money' character, which provided a comfortable environment for whites from working-class neighbourhoods to flaunt their new affluence. One informant sketched the way that these men were drawn to certain environments by cultural fit, more than spending power:

[P]eople in Sandton, Saxonwold, Houghton, Inanda – those people are aloof ... Their youngsters are doctors and

accountants. They are old money. These guys in Bedfordview, they are new money. They enjoy jolling. They enjoy having a chat. They look like your gangsters from the Baltic region. They wear tracksuit pants. They wear big gold chains. They sit around and say, 'howzit my china, howzit my bru'. They've got the money for Ferraris and Porches but they all belong to boxing clubs, they all do MMA fighting. Because they are still blue collar.²²

Another informant emphasised that proximity to the haunts of their childhoods and the communities they were nested within continued to be important:

They live in Bedfordview because they've got 'fuck you money' and 'I'm not going to stay in Sandton – because I've got enough money to stay where I grew up.'²³

Schultz, reportedly, likes to hang out in Bedfordview because it is close both to his family in Alberton and to his boxing gym in Edenvale.²⁴

The hold that neighbourhoods of origin or the wealthy suburbs adjacent to them have on criminals is not unique to Bedfordview, though the east and south of Johannesburg have played an outsized role in generating men who have moved in its underworld. For example, a similar situation occurred in the West Rand during the height of Ralph Heyns's gangster career. Heyns, one-time member of a late 1980s and early 1990s criminal gang that included apartheid assassin Ferdi Barnard, was notorious in his own right as a fraudster, blackmailer, smuggler and con-man, and came to be known as the 'Godfather of the West Rand' until his disappearance in 2011. Heyns bought a mansion with his proceeds, not in Sandton or Parktown, where he would have been out of his element, but in Krugersdorp Upper, the wealthiest part of the weary mining town where he had grown up.

A very Mediterranean meeting place

What was unusual about Krejcir's decision to move to Bedfordview was that he was not an East Rand heavy but an international newcomer. Krejcir had no existing connection to Bedfordview, or to Johannesburg for that matter, and there was no sizeable Czech community for him to ingratiate himself with. Yet despite his foreign origins and the lack of a straightforward ethnic milieu, Krejcir quickly became socially embedded in Bedfordview, which was already home to a criminal subculture. Here, the 'Mediterranean' character that residents and observers of Bedfordview attribute to the suburb, a term that was largely interchangeable with 'European', might have helped.

Interviewees pointed not just to the communities of Greek, Italian and Portuguese South Africans who retain an attachment to the cultures of their original homelands, but also to the way of life in the suburb. Its 'European' culture was said to reside in communities with a strong attachment to extended family bonds and the suburb's comparatively high number of outdoor cafés. One informant, who had moved to Bedfordview from the city's northern suburbs, described his neighbourhood in terms of what he perceived as its southern European character:

You go to the fun day and it's 'mama', it's 'papa'. Everyone's here ... it's very family oriented, almost a village. And because there's so many from Europe here, I think it's that safety net, like this is our little space in this world.²⁵

Several informants named Tasha's – a restaurant in the Village View strip mall in Bedfordview – as a meeting place that epitomises the area's community feel. They describe Tasha's in ways that highlight both how malleable the 'European' identity of Bedfordview is and how it relates to its criminal subculture. One informant explained:

It feels a little more like your European suburb because ... it's got the open ended cafés and when you go look at Tasha's, Tasha's is busy every single day here. The problem with Tasha's is you've got the residents, you've got your gangsters and you've got your police. They all go and meet there, you know?²⁶

Another said, 'If you go sit in Tasha's I guarantee you there will be someone there being hit up for a diamond deal.'²⁷

Notably, Tasha's does not face on to a town square or a pedestrianised street (as in the paintings of Greek and Italian villages for sale in the Bedford Square Shopping Centre), but on to a parking lot where all the patrons can observe which type of car you have arrived in, providing

a very South Africanised ‘Europeanness’. Our informants often remarked on the fact that Krejcir had used Bedfordview’s restaurants in a way reminiscent of a European Mafioso – arranging meetings and introductions at outdoor cafes and restaurants where a personal and proprietorial relationship could develop between regular customers and the management. Perhaps for locals, ‘Europeanness’ provided a familiar – and malleable – cultural reference point from which to receive him.

Tangibly, the recent European ancestry of Bedfordview residents has facilitated a criminal interface between South Africa and Europe. The Greek community has, allegedly, long been engaged in the evasion of monetary controls to get their assets out of South Africa and into European bank accounts.²⁸ It was this existing system that Krejcir exploited with Alekos Panayi, a banker with an offshore company and a bank account in Cyprus, through which he laundered money for many people, including Jackson and Krejcir.²⁹ Many Bedfordview residents, like Louca, maintained dual citizenship with European countries, which also facilitated the opening of European bank accounts and the ability to send locals on errands to Europe. According to an affidavit taken from Anastasio Vlouchakis, a Greek national who had grown up in Johannesburg, he was introduced to Krejcir at the News Café in Bedfordview in 2008 because ‘he has a lot of Greek friends, so he made enquiries about me’. Vlouchakis claimed that Krejcir sent him and Louca on several trips to Europe to do reconnaissance on his enemies and assassinate them.³⁰

Krejcir’s suburban crime spree

Krejcir’s entry into Bedfordview in 2007 is a well-worn part of his notoriety.³¹ He was introduced to the neighbourhood, and to many of the people he would later have criminal dealings with, by Louca, whom he had met, allegedly, in a jail cell when he was

first arrested on arrival in South Africa. (Krejcir claimed asylum, arguing he was being politically persecuted in the Czech Republic, triggering a legal dispute with the state that continued for years and bought him, for a period, the freedom to settle in South Africa.) Louca was himself already a Bedfordview resident. One of Krejcir’s connections was to Jackson, who owned a mansion on one of the suburb’s most prestigious streets, Kloof Road, where Krejcir had also bought a mansion.

There are some fairly pragmatic justifications for why Bedfordview is a particularly good location for ambitious criminals. With Johannesburg’s suburban sprawl has come a congestion problem, which puts a premium on mobility and proximity. Bedfordview is close both to OR Tambo Airport, for international getaways, and to the City Deep container hub, for smuggling business. An informant who was associated with the illegal cigarette trade described how Bedfordview’s proximity to City Deep made it attractive to cigarette smugglers who were falsely declaring their goods as biscuits or as empty containers, and getting a ‘heads up’ from Kaserne Depot staff about planned customs raids.³² It provides easy access to most of the city’s major highways and a quick route to the old CBD, which is a hub of the city’s drug distribution and, to an extent, manufacturing.³³ According to our informants, there is both practical advantage and peace of mind in being in such a location:

Bedfordview is central, close to the airport ... You can leave and be missing in any compass direction. Within two or three kilometres of a chase you can be on any exit route.³⁴

Another informant drew on knowledge of Krejcir’s business operations to argue that these features were appreciated by the neighbourhood’s underworld residents, to

whom it provided easy escape routes and short commutes to smuggling and drug networks:

Radovan's point of entry at Money Point was on [a well located] corner. All he had to do was literally drive one road, do a loop and he was on the highway, probably 300m. So at any given point there's a good flow out of the area from there.³⁵

For new entrants like Krejcir, the 'new money' character of Bedfordview was useful not just because it attracted a pool of recruits but also because money was his calling card. He had to live somewhere he could spend a lot of it, and attract exactly the right kind of attention. As one local government official put it, 'It is a wealthy area, and criminals, successful criminals are wealthy – and they want to be seen to be wealthy.'³⁶

Krejcir's shortcut to influence and leadership within the Johannesburg underworld rested on his ability to immediately demonstrate huge wealth and ambition. Once he had bought an ostentatious mansion in Kloof Road, and identified the Harbour Café as a location for meeting and greasing the local heavies, fixers and opportunists, he built a network in Johannesburg in a remarkably short period of time. He made sure he was known as the 'Czech billionaire' and that people came to him, not the other way around:

When Radovan got here, word got out fast: there's a Czech billionaire here. And he had the things that go with it – the house, the cars. That got a lot of people's attention. They came from near and they came from far. For one reason, for the one reason that anyone does anything in this city: the money ... people came to him. They came with all their plans, and scams, they came with legitimate ideas, and they came with illicit schemes. He set up in Harbour Café so everyone would know where to find him. And they did. Like moths to a flame.³⁷

At his favourite restaurant, Harbour Café, Krejcir set up an impromptu social space from which to hold court:

Here you've got this guy that comes in and starts flashing cash and every guy who does his own thing or who has a connection or who can solve a problem or that sort of thing is going to want a piece of that cash ... These guys start hearing it, they've also got kids, they've also got lives, this makes it a little bit easier. The next hustle or the next debt collection doesn't have to happen. It doesn't need to be as difficult because here it's relatively simple: introduce this one to this one, solve this little problem. And there's this huge stack of cash on the table.³⁸

Also, the degree to which Bedfordview was a good 'meeting place' for Krejcir goes deeper than its geographical location. Krejcir did not run a consistent criminal business but moved around from enterprise to enterprise, and many of his schemes were predatory crimes involving financial illegalities, not ones where specific products were physically sold to middlemen or customers. In Johannesburg there was no one major criminal market to corner, but rather a number of different markets, from illegal tobacco to gold and diamonds to drugs, and many of them conducive only to small groups of operators. He therefore sought to set up many temporary alliances with bit or major players to enact particular crimes, from bank fraud to meth smuggling. These players often comprised a constellation of police, 'muscle' and fellow 'businessmen' who operated in distinctly differently spheres in the city. This was in keeping with the character of Johannesburg's underworld, which is fragmented and concentrates power only temporarily and partially, with a large degree of ethnic division.³⁹

The ability to deal with both what we call the 'underworld' and the 'upper world' in

Bedfordview was, for Krejcir, an important feature of its value as a meeting place. Many of the people whom Krejcir wanted to do business with had respectable, legitimate careers or operated in a twilight zone between legality and illegality. They were doctors, lawyers and accountants, who facilitated setting up companies or moving money, or who were party to fraud schemes, and they were also men who might trade in substances such as gold that easily shift between licit and illicit, depending on the nature of their production and transit to market. Lawyer Ian Small Smith introduced Krejcir to senior policeman Joey Mabasa; gold trader Juan Meyer would meet Krejcir at the Harbour Café, and lawyer Manny Witz introduced Krejcir to Jackson.⁴⁰ This gave them a clear interest in presenting an image acceptable to the ‘upper world’, which Bedfordview, with its upmarket shopping centres, or the acknowledged everybody-meets-here nature of Tasha’s, provided.

Into the glitter, not into the grim

There were other key aspects to Krejcir’s career – state corruption and prolific violence – in which Bedfordview held no specific value. One of these was the breadth of his corrupt relationships with the police. As we noted at the outset, in the popular imagination, and even in academic literature, organised crime is attracted to run-down and neglected inner city neighbourhoods in part because these are places where criminality is less subject to scrutiny and detection, while in wealthy suburbs the converse applies. Yet Krejcir did not appear to have struggled at all to maintain numerous corrupt relationships with policemen and women at both low and high levels of the South African Police Service.⁴¹ It appears Krejcir rightly judged the weakness of the criminal justice system, and was expert in finding the right individuals to target for corrupt overtures. Within a short period of time he had

set up a network of bribery and established corrupt relationships within the police from the lowest ranks right up to the most senior, such as through his highly controversial relationship with the Gauteng Head of Crime Intelligence, Joey Mabasa. According to an associate of Krejcir’s, quoted in a *Mail and Guardian* article, the Bedfordview police station itself was substantially implicated in Krejcir’s bribery:

There were many Bedfordview policemen that I paid on instruction from Krejcir ... One day I saw Krejcir pay Colonel Sambo who is a police officer at the Bedfordview Station. Krejcir paid Sambo for ‘little jobs’. He just wanted Sambo to notify him if anything was going to happen that involved Krejcir in the area.⁴²

Yet, our informants, including those closely involved with crime and security issues in Bedfordview, did not regard it to be a particularly corrupt station. Rather, they see the police service to have such weak accountability and low morale that even a relatively functional station, like the one in Bedfordview, is open to corrupt advances.

But Bedfordview was in other ways not ‘rough’ enough for Krejcir’s style of operating, and, in this sense, while the suburb provided Krejcir with a supply of men available for ‘knocks’ and intimidation, he had to go further afield to hire hitmen. He seemed to draw on assassins in the taxi industry and policemen and women, as demonstrated by the range of Hawks officers and taxi drivers who have stood trial alongside him. The older generation of ex-bouncers and debt collectors came from a diminishing pool, and the younger generation – many of them Bedfordview locals – were unprepared for his style of operating. According to one informant, the men he first met in Bedfordview got involved with him because they underestimated how easily he would turn to violence:

I don't actually think anyone thought he was dangerous, I think everyone thought he was just a man with a lot of money, up until Lolly died. I think even to a degree after the Lolly thing it wasn't taken that seriously because you know his crimes that he was convicted for in absentia weren't that scary. It was tax evasion, bank fraud and things like that. It's not the kind of stuff that makes you quiver in your boots.⁴³

At a certain point, Krejcir's quick recourse to violent retribution began to undermine his ability to recruit from the neighbourhood, and from the networks connected to it. According to our respondent:

The people who were attracted to Krejcir wanted the money. They weren't into murder. They didn't realise if he turned on you he would kill you. When Uwe Gemballa's body was found, he lost a lot of people. A lot of his guys left him. They were into the glitter, they weren't into the grim.⁴⁴

Krejcir's volatility and penchant for retribution eventually made him a dangerous partner for men whose criminality had largely rested in scams and cons.⁴⁵

It is also arguable whether Krejcir would have been as much of a media sensation were his crimes taking place in less salubrious parts of the city. The contrast between his crimes and their setting made them more sensational, and Bedfordview was a safe and pleasant location from which to cover them.

Conclusion

A range of factors coalesced to make Bedfordview attractive to organised crime figures, and to encourage Krejcir to establish his flamboyant if short-lived criminal empire there. These include a combination of pull factors linked to geography, lifestyle, ethnicity and infrastructure that combined in a way that

was unique in Johannesburg. Significantly, these were linked to a set of push factors that reflect changes in wider urban development and the upward (and geographic) mobility of a set of 'businessmen' linked to grey or illegal markets in the city. Krejcir's career demonstrates that organised criminals do not need to be embedded in down-and-out areas of a city, because, under the right conditions, they can tap into those worlds directly from an affluent and comfortable suburb. Likewise, upwardly mobile men operating in a criminal milieu do not necessarily want to move far from home.

We do not argue that Krejcir could not have functioned in another neighbourhood, or that the factors listed above are the only ones attractive to organised crime figures. Johannesburg is a city in which it is easy to display huge wealth and have few questions asked, a city of constant migration and assimilation, and a city whose underworld is fed by many histories. However, we should pay attention to the case of Bedfordview and the Czech mafioso: it provides insight into how international and national criminal transplants can embed themselves socially into one part of a city as opposed to others, determined by established networks, lifestyle opportunities, and an alignment between the aspirations of ordinary citizens and an emergent criminal class.



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Notes

- 1 As part of the transformation of local government structures after 1994, Bedfordview, along with Germiston and other East Rand towns, formally became part of the Ekurhuleni Metro. It is, however, colloquially considered a suburb of Johannesburg, and functionally relates to the wider city, both practically and in symbolic identity.
- 2 K von Lampe, *Organized crime: analyzing illegal activities, criminal structures and extra-legal governance*, New York: Sage, 2016, 227–230.

3 F Varese, *Mafias on the move: how organized crime conquers new territories*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011.

4 Tim Newburn points out that criminology has been 'regularly, roundly rightly criticized' for this preoccupation. See T Newburn, *Criminology* (2nd ed), London: Routledge, 2013, 382.

5 See P de Wet, Where gangsters shop and shoot, *Mail & Guardian*, 18 October 2013, <http://mg.co.za/article/2013-10-17-where-gangsters-shop-and-shoot>; S Naik and K Ajam, Bedfordview 'living in fear' of Krejcir, *iolnews*, 16 November 2013, <http://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/gauteng/bedfordview-living-in-fear-of-krejcir-1608112>; *Bedfordview and Edenvale News*, Krejcir: organised crime rumours abound in Bedfordview, 13 November 2013, <http://bedfordviewedenvalenews.co.za/221156/organised-crime-rumours-abound-in-bedfordview-2/>. Informants were identified through previous research into bouncer mafia networks in the South and East Rand, and on the career of Radovan Krejcir. The term 'criminal associates' is used as informants (mostly) did not identify themselves as criminals, but as people who moved within a social milieu populated by people who committed crimes. Some informants referred us to other people within Bedfordview. 'Prominent figures' were people who held leadership positions in formal civic structures. The researcher conducted interviews at social nodes within Bedfordview, including the Village View Shopping Centre, Bedford Centre, the Senderwood cafes, and a CPF meeting held in a church. Informants were asked to address the central question of this article, 'Why do organised crime figures broadly like to live or visit this neighbourhood? Why did Radovan Krejcir settle here?' Some data were also extracted from affidavits from men who had worked for Krejcir, and from an interview with Krejcir himself conducted by a journalist in 2012. Interviews were conducted with: middleman in the underworld, Krejcir associate and Bedfordview resident, Johannesburg, November 2016; TM, private investigator with good knowledge of the underworld, Johannesburg, December 2016; GP, private investigator with good knowledge of Krejcir, Johannesburg, December 2016; lawyer involved in a legal matter related to Krejcir, Johannesburg, November 2016; figure in Bedfordview local government, Johannesburg, November 2016; businessman with underworld links, Johannesburg, November 2016; HI, member of security-centred civic association in Bedfordview, Johannesburg, December 2016; JZ, member of security-centred civic association in Bedfordview, Johannesburg, December 2016; journalist who follows organised crime beat and Krejcir, November 2016; businessmen involved in illegal tobacco, Johannesburg, February 2017. Evidence was also drawn from a transcript of an interview with Krejcir with Julian Rademeyer, Johannesburg, 2012.

6 Thabiso Mpye was found guilty of murdering Uwe Gemballa after turning state witness. Krejcir was not charged in the matter, but several press reports trace a number of connections between him and the murder, and Mpye's version of events – before he recanted his testimony – corroborated this story. See S Sole, Gemballa: focus falls on Krejcir and Co., *AmaBhungane*, 8 October 2010, <http://amabhungane.co.za/article/2010-10-08-gemballa-focus-falls-on-krejcir-and-co>. In November 2015 Krejcir and his co-accused were found guilty of kidnapping, torturing and assaulting Bheki Lukhela. The trial in which Krejcir stands accused of murdering Sam Issa has recently begun its hearing. A number of affidavits released by private investigator Paul O'Sullivan record the use of Money Point for criminal business dealings. Johan van Loggerenberg's affidavit for SARS also alleged that Money Point was a front company (See J van Loggerenberg, Affidavit, 1 November 2013; Milosh Potiska, Affidavit, 27 February 2015). Laganin was co-accused with Krejcir on a charge of armed robbery in 2011. Laganin was killed in his home in Bedfordview in 2013. It is not clear if anyone has been arrested, but accusations were made in the press that Laganin was killed because he had talked about Krejcir's crimes (See S Naik, Serbian slain because he had a loose mouth, *iolnews*, 9 November 2013). Krejcir himself is now serving his sentence for Lukhela's kidnapping and assault, and facing the Issa murder charge. While he has seemingly made several attempts to escape, he remains under tight control in prison, and is unlikely to legally leave prison and resume a criminal career in the near future.

7 K Beavon, Nearer my mall to thee: the decline of the Johannesburg central business district and the emergence of the neo-apartheid city, Institute for Advanced Social Research, Seminar 442, Wits University, 1998, <http://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10539/8421/ISS-23.pdf?sequence=1>.

8 J Beall, O Crankshaw and S Parnell, *Uniting a divided city: governance and social exclusion in Johannesburg*, London: Earthscan, 2002.

9 Interview, figure in Bedfordview local government.

10 Ibid.; interview, businessman; interview, journalist.

11 P Harrison and T Zack, Between the ordinary and the extraordinary: socio-spatial transformations in the 'old south' of Johannesburg, *South African Geographical Journal*, 96:2, 2014.

12 See M Shaw and S Haysom, Organised crime in late apartheid and the transition to a new criminal order: the rise and fall of the Johannesburg 'bouncer mafia', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 42:4, 2016; S Haysom, Lance's last stand, *adda stories*, November 2016, <http://www.addastories.org/lances-last-stand/>.

13 Shaw and Haysom, Organised crime in late apartheid and the transition to a new criminal order.

14 Redlining, in this case, entailed bank collision to deny credit or mortgages to all residents within a certain boundary. The term more broadly may refer to the denial of any public or commercial service to a certain geographic area. See A Morris, Tenant-landlord relations, the anti-apartheid struggle and physical de-cline in Hillbrow, an inner-city neighbourhood in Johannesburg', *Urban Studies*, 36:3, 1999.

15 T Winkler, Why won't downtown Johannesburg 'regenerate'? Reassessing Hillbrow as a case example, *Urban Forum*, 24:309, 2013.

16 Interview, businessman; interview, journalist; interview, GP, private investigator; interview, TM, private investigator.

17 Interview, HI, member of security-centred civic association.

18 Interview, TM, private investigator.

19 M Weiner, *Killing Kebble: an underworld exposed*, Johannesburg: Pan Macmillan, 2011.

20 Interview, GP, private investigator.

21 Weiner, *Killing Kebble*.

22 Interview, GP, private investigator.

23 Interview, TM, private investigator.

24 Interview, journalist.

25 Interview, businessman.

26 Ibid.

27 Interview, GP, private investigator.

28 Interview, businessman.

29 Alekos Panayi, Affidavit, 1 December 2009

30 Anastasio Vlouchakis, Affidavit, 30 May 2011.

31 V Vena, Krejcir: a dummy's guide, *Mail & Guardian*, 14 April 2011, <http://mg.co.za/article/2011-04-14-krejcir-a-dummys-guide>.

32 Interview, businessmen involved in illegal tobacco.

33 P McNally, *The street: exposing a world of cops, bribes and drug dealers*, Johannesburg: Pan Macmillan, 2016.

34 Interview, JZ, member of security-centred civic association.

35 Interview, businessman.

36 Interview, figure in Bedfordview local government.

37 Interview, middleman.

38 Interview, businessman.

39 M Shaw and S Haysom, *A 'mobile mafioso' in Africa: the strange case of Radovan Krejcir*, forthcoming.

40 Sole, Gembella; E Thelwel, What are Radovan Krejcir's links to the criminal underworld?, *news24*, 8 April 2015, <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/WAIT-FOR-PUBLICATION-Who-are-Radovan-Krejcir-s-links-in-the-criminal-underworld-20150408>; transcript of an interview of Krejcir with Julian Rademeyer, Johannesburg, 2012.

41 M Shaw and S Haysom, *A mobile mafioso: the case of Radovan Krejcir*, book chapter, forthcoming.

42 S Evans and S Sole, Krejcir's 'dirty' police network, *Mail & Guardian*, 28 November 2013, <http://mg.co.za/article/2013-11-28-krejcirs-dirty-police-network>.

43 Interview, businessman.

44 Interview, middleman.

45 Interview, businessman.