



Murder plot discussed over coffee

A PRIVATE moneylender accused of conspiring to have a Melbourne man murdered by international assassins in a revenge hit will stand trial.

Martin Charles White, of Surfers Paradise (foto), said "Your Honour, I'd like to say that I am not guilty" before he was told yesterday he would face a jury in the Southport District Court on a date to be set.

The 52-year-old stands accused of conspiring with business associate Ronald Williams to have Greek - Australian Stephen Amanatidis killed by hitmen in revenge for fraudulent loans and an outstanding debt to Mr White of almost \$800,000.

During the three-day hearing the court was told Mr White and Mr Williams met in Oxenford cafe Luv A Coffee on March 24 last year where Mr White outlined a plot to have Mr Amanatidis killed by two Vietnamese assassins for a \$60,000 fee.

Mr Williams told the court he agreed to the plot over a cup of coffee.

As part of his involvement, he said he promised to get photos of Mr Amanatidis for Mr White to give to the hitmen to ensure they got the right man.

But a day later, Mr Williams said he changed his mind after speaking with his friend and former lawyer Frank Butera who convinced him to go to the police.

In exchange for indemnity, Mr Williams agreed to allow police to wire him with a covert recording device during a conversation with Mr White.

The pair met on March 27 at the Amalfi Bar at the Watermark Hotel where Mr Williams tried to extract information about the alleged plot from his associate.

Hours later police arrested Mr White and charged him with conspiracy to murder.

Defence barrister Peter Davis SC argued a conspiracy charge required two people to have a criminal agreement to carry out an unlawful act.

He said the alleged conspiracy was void the moment Mr Williams flipped Mr White to the police and became a 'pretend conspirator'.

But police prosecutor Sergeant Greg Overton said the alleged conspiracy was considered live until it was either completed, stopped or abandoned.

"It is clear from the evidence that Mr Williams did enter the agreement and intended to play some part in the death of Mr Amanatidis," he said.

Sgt Overton said Mr Williams cemented his participation by agreeing to supply photographs of Mr Amanatidis to Mr White for the hitmen.

Magistrate Duroux accepted there was enough evidence to commit Mr White to trial before a jury.

Australian work visa holder salary rates on the up

Australian immigration minister Chris Evans has recently made a number of comments on the Australian subclass 457 work visa. The Australian Government in their news report provides details of increases in salary rates amongst Australian 457 visa holders.

However, they also said that employers should first try and find Australians to fill vacancies before using the temporary skilled migration program to recruit overseas employees. The Australian Government says that the priority should be to provide training and job opportunities for Australians.

The Immigration Minister in his announcement had the following to say:

90 per cent of temporary skilled immigrants in the period 2009 to 2010 on subclass 457 visas are managers and



professional workers.

The average total salary package for all new temporary skilled visa holders is almost \$100,000. This represents an increase of \$10 000 compared to the same period in the previous year.

The salary rates in Western Australia are higher still. The average salary package for new subclass 457 visa holders is \$114 800. In the mining industry the rate is higher still at \$165,500.

The Australian Government also

mentioned the "worker protection laws", which were introduced on 14 September 2009. This includes the requirement to pay overseas workers at the same salary rates as would normally be paid to Australians for similar work.

Overall the last year there has been a reduction in the number of Australian work visas issued. In January 2010 the number of 457 work visas issued was 45 per cent lower than January 2009 and 6 per cent lower than December 2009. The total number of Australian visa 457 holders at 71,290 went down 13 percent in the year to January 2010.

Australian immigration is currently in the process of changing their immigration system to focus on immigration based on skilled in demand. This means improved immigration opportunities for certain groups of skilled immigrants. It also means that now may be a good time to have an evaluation of your Australian immigration options. Do you apply now or wait?

Appeal to Chancellor Angela Merkel and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Germany, Guido Westerwelle addressed by the Federation of Greek Communities in Germany

IN RESPONSE TO THE PROVOCATIVE STATEMENTS MADE BY SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE CDU AND FDP

An appeal was made to Chancellor Angela Merkel and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Germany, Guido Westerwelle, to intervene in

light of the provocative statements of two senior officials of the Christian Democratic Union CDU and the Free Democratic Party FDP, a day before the visit

of the Prime Minister in Berlin.

The letter, which was signed by the President of the Federation of Greek Communities in Germany

(OEK), Mr. K. Dimitriou and the General Secretary, Mr. A. Manolis, is an expression of outrage on the statements which were made by Josef Schlarman, a member of the coalition government's Christian Democratic Union Party and Frank Schöffler from the government's Free Democratic Party, or FDP, coalition partner, who on the occasion of the forthcoming visit of the Prime Minister of Greece, gave the tabloids the opportunity to request that "Greece should fall under the hammer" and estimate the value of the Parthenon in 100 billion Euros.

A few days ago, the Federation of Greek Communities in Germany, had addressed another letter to Ms. Merkel and Mr. Westerwelle, kindly requesting them to appease the German public opinion, with appropriate statements and refrain from answering any acute reactions from Greece towards the uncalled for attacks coming from a portion of the German Press.

SAE Board of Directors invitation to take part in the Campaign for the "Solidarity Fund of Greece"

The Board of Directors of the World Council of Hellenes Abroad are addressing a call to all Greeks worldwide to support the campaign for the "Solidarity Account for Greece" which was established for the repayment of the nation's public debt.

Hellenes, in all four corners of the earth, always love and support their birthplace, Greece, in any way they can, especially during difficult times. In this critical time for the finances of our country, and thus we are calling Hellenes worldwide to take action.

We consider that it is our duty, that each and every one of us and all together as one, support and contribute actively to the Solidarity Fund Campaign, which is led by the President of the Hellenic Republic, Mr. Karolos Papoulias, a widely accepted prominent figure, who accepted the relevant invitation by the Speaker of the Hellenic Parliament, Mr. Philipos Petsalnikos. We are confident on the immediate and positive response of all, in this initiative, so that Hellenism world wide can stand once again by Greece's side, proving that when we stand united, we become stronger and more

proud of our Greek roots. "INFORMATION ON THE SOLIDARITY ACCOUNT FOR THE REPAYMENT OF PUBLIC DEBT"

Under Bank of Greece Governor's Act 271/4.3.2010, the account for the collection of funds from interested parties, on a voluntary basis, which will be exclusively allocated for the repayment of Greece's public debt has been established, N. 24/26132462 "SOLIDARITY ACCOUNT FOR THE REPAYMENT OF PUBLIC DEBT"

The account will be accepting deposits from the 5th of March 2010 onwards, in the head office and local branches at the counters and agencies of the Bank of Greece, as well as the entire network of commercial banks.

For those who are interested, the details of the account are as follows: IBAN GR 04 010 0024 000000026132462 and SWIFT/BIC BNGRGRAA

For further information you can contact the Department of Public Agencies by phone on 0030 210 320 2716 and 0030 210 320 3376.