



Press Release

3rd Degree
Tuesday 27 March at 8pm

The South African government has just expropriated its first farm for land restitution purposes. But beneath the glittering press statements celebrating the transfer of this diamond rich land, lies a host of thorny issues.

Pniel Estate is a 25 000 hectare game and cattle farm next to the Vaal River, with enormous tourism and hunting potential and a reputed fortune in mineral wealth hidden beneath its soil.

Some see its expropriation as a commendable development to speed up the sluggish pace of land reform. A necessary step by government to reach its target of placing 30% of all agricultural land in black hands by 2014.

But there are also those who accuse government of sending out dangerous signals to the international community. And even for misusing the expropriation process as a smokescreen to get control over this valuable land.

The previous owners, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, says the expropriation was completely uncalled for, and raises fears of Zimbabwe-style land grabs to potential investors.

Then there are the beneficiaries, who claim that government is using the expropriation process to “hijack” their land. Those government

officials are bypassing and humiliating the elected community leaders.

That they're being dragged to court to be placed under administration in an attempt to overrule the community's plans with the land. Simply because government officials want to bring investors of their own choice on board to share in the enormous wealth locked up in this land.

Diamonds & *Dorings* on 3rd Degree Tuesday at 8pm.

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