



# UNITED NATIONS CENTRE AGAINST *APARTHEID*

## NOTES AND DOCUMENTS\*

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TORTURE OF DETAINEES IN SOUTH AFRICA

by

The Southern Africa Project of the  
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights  
Under Law

Note: This report is published at the request of the Special Committee against Apartheid. It sheds a new light on the abuse and torture of detainees in South Africa, particularly since the imposition of the state of emergency on 21 July 1985.

It contains four affidavits from former detainees. Their stories are typical of the suffering of thousands of men, women and children who have been or are still being detained under the security laws and emergency regulations.

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1. MEMORANDUM DATED 13 NOVEMBER 1985 FROM THE SOUTHERN AFRICA PROJECT  
OF THE LAWYERS' COMMITTEE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS UNDER LAW  
ON TORTURE OF DETAINEES IN SOUTH AFRICA  
ADDRESSED TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID

The Southern Africa Project has been receiving alarming reports concerning the systematic abuse and torture of detainees in South Africa. These reports are occurring in the context of the arrest and detention without charge or trial of South Africans on a scale unprecedented since the proclamation of the state of emergency in 1960.

Since January 1985, at least 7,509 people have been detained. Most of them have been held under the new state of emergency regulations, imposed on 21 July, for periods ranging from two weeks to three months. As of 1 November, some 1,150 were still being held, many of them in secret detention camps. At the end of October, 392 people were in detention under various sections of the 1982 Internal Security Act, including 166 held under section 29 which allows for indefinite, incommunicado detention for purposes of interrogation. These figures do not include those detained in the so-called "homelands" where hundreds have been detained without charge or trial. In the Transkei, for instance, 880 people were detained in September alone. Human rights groups in South Africa are finding it increasingly difficult to monitor accurately these detentions and to verify the names and whereabouts of people detained or rumoured to be detained.

These circumstances make the current reports of the torture of detainees a matter of particular urgency. Over the years, international human rights groups have documented dramatic evidence of a systematic pattern of physical and psychological abuses inflicted upon political detainees in South Africa during interrogation sessions. In September 1985, for example, the Institute of Criminology at the University of Cape Town issued a report based on interviews with 176 people whose detentions had occurred as far back as 1974 and as recently as 1984. The study revealed that 83 per cent of the detainees had experienced some sort of physical torture and all had suffered psychological abuse. Three quarters of those interviewed had been subjected to severe beatings, and some had suffered more extreme forms of torture, including the infliction of electric shocks. The authors of the study concluded that there was "clear and definitive evidence that physical torture occurs on a widespread basis and constitutes a systematic and common experience for those detained for interrogation purposes".

Currently, we at the Southern Africa Project are assisting in a case involving two political detainees who are being held in Durban under section 29 of the Internal Security Act. Mr. Goolam Soobader brought an urgent application in the Supreme Court on behalf of two of his sons, Yunis and Rieaz, who had been detained in July. The court ordered a magistrate and a district surgeon to visit the sons to determine the state of their physical and mental health. Mr. Soobader, who had himself been detained for a short period, recalled seeing his son Yunis:

"lying on his bed [in the cell] sweating profusely. He was disoriented and did not recognize me at first. I can best describe his expression as wild. He was largely incoherent, and was in obvious physical pain and it was clear to me that he was in a very disturbed mental condition...I spoke to my son and all he was able to tell me was that he had had a 'rough time', and he said 'I can't take it'."

Yunis had been interrogated and kept awake for 42 hours. He had been forced to undress, was tied and blindfolded, and a canvas bag was placed over his head. In this helpless state his interrogators made him kneel on a table, bending his forehead to its surface. While he was being plied with questions, one of the policemen forced a finger into Yunis' rectum and moved it in such a way and in combination with other pressure applied to his lower back as to cause him "excruciating pain".

Within a few weeks of the imposition of emergency rule on 21 July, international human rights groups began to receive alarming reports of detainees being hooded, beaten, given electric shocks and subjected to death threats. The massive scale of police brutality towards those detained recently came to light as a consequence of an urgent application brought in the Port Elizabeth Supreme Court by 44 individuals. One of the plaintiffs in the lawsuit was 25-year-old Dr. Wendy Orr, the District Surgeon whose duties included acting as medical officer in the Port Elizabeth district prisons. Dr. Orr testified that throughout August and September she had examined, within 24 hours of their arrest, hundreds of detainees with weals, bruises and blisters over their backs, arms and the palms of their hands, lacerated lips, split skin over their cheekbones and freshly perforated eardrums. Her evidence was supported by 270 pages of additional testimony from former detainees, relatives of those still detained, prominent trade unionists, clergymen and community leaders.

While the court action brought by Dr. Orr and her fellow applicants resulted in the judge issuing an order temporarily restraining the police from assaulting or torturing detainees in Port Elizabeth prisons, the police have continued to operate elsewhere in an unrestrained manner. In the past month further actions have been brought in the courts in Cape Town, East London and Durban on behalf of detainees held in prisons or in medical or psychiatric wards under police custody.

The present situation in South Africa regarding the physical safety and mental well-being of hundreds of detainees is one of great urgency. We have attached for your information several affidavits from detainees; their stories are typical of the experience of thousands of men, women and children who have been or are still being detained under the security laws or emergency regulations. We urge you to circulate widely this material and to join in calling on the American Congress and Executive Branch to condemn police brutality against detainees, to demand a full investigation into allegations of torture and to demand the unconditional release of all political prisoners.

2. AFFIDAVITS BY FORMER DETAINEES

A. Reverend Hamilton Mvumelvano Dandala

AFFIDAVIT

I, the undersigned,

REVEREND HAMILTON MVUMELUANO DANDALA

do hereby make oath and say:

1. I am an applicant in this matter and an adult male residing at the Methodist Manse, Aggrey Road, New Brighton.
2. I am an ordained Minister of the Methodist Church of South Africa and superintendent of the Port Elizabeth North Circuit of the Church. I have pastoral responsibilities for all Methodists in the black townships adjoining Port Elizabeth.
3. I have read the affidavit of Reverend Irvine l/ and confirm those allegations that affect me, particularly those set out in paragraphs 5 and 6 of his affidavit. I can also confirm that our church has a considerable following amongst blacks in these townships and accordingly that I and Reverend Irvine have a special interest in the welfare of our parishioners and that of the community in general.
4. I can also confirm that my parishioners have reported accounts of brutal assaults perpetrated by the police acting in terms of the emergency powers. I can confirm that many of the parishioners with relatives in detention, and those of my parishioners who have subsequently been released, are frightened of being victimized for speaking out and bringing these assaults to the attention of the general public and the authorities.
5. I confirm from my own experience while under detention and the extent of the assault that the police believe that the emergency regulations indemnify them from any civil or criminal action in our courts.
6. I have read the affidavit of Reverend Soga l/ and can confirm his rendition of the events in so far as they affect me. I can confirm that Reverend Soga was assaulted in my presence at the Algoa Park Police Station on the morning of our arrest.
7. I was arrested at 2.30 a.m. on 22 July at home and spent nine days in detention at St. Alban's Prison. During this time I was taken to Louis Le Grange Police Station for interrogation on a number of occasions, as were many other detainees.
8. Every day a warden would either enter the cell or meet detainees outside the cells with a list of names of detainees who could then be taken to Louis Le Grange for questioning . The daily appearance of the

warden was an event that everybody feared and lived in dread of. When a name was called out, there was usually a murmur of sympathy and apprehension, since it was soon established that those who were taken for interrogation usually returned shocked and in pain. I remember, for example, the injuries of Rensburg. Rensburg returned with signs of particularly vicious assault. His nose was severely injured and he said he had lost a lot of blood. I myself was threatened with being poisoned after my release and if I did not "change my ways" that I might well disappear.

9. I received daily reports concerning humiliating and degrading treatment at the hands of the police. A number of detainees referred to the incident which occurred when we were first brought into prison and made to stand naked for about 20 minutes while our clothes were searched. This was a particularly degrading experience and a number of detainees later expressed their deep feelings of outrage and shame when Reverend Soga, a highly respected man in his fifties, was forced to stand naked in front of them, some being far younger in age.

10. The regular, daily removal of detainees for interrogation and the inevitable assault which accompanied it created the same terror and feeling of impotence as the random and unpredictable use of violence by the police outside the prisons in the townships.

11. After my release on 30 July 1985 I was approached by the families of detainees for guidance. It became apparent from them and those who had been released that many people had been detained without any apparent reason and assaulted. Three youths who are active members of my congregation, for example, were detained without reasons being given and for no apparent purpose. One spoke of an assault by the police. I cannot reveal their identities for fear of police reprisals against them. It has therefore become abundantly clear that law-abiding members of my congregation, uninvolved in any form of political protests or activity, may at any time be indiscriminately assaulted or may disappear, presumed to be in the hands of the police. There is no access to information as to their whereabouts and there is no guarantee that permits will be granted to visit those who are located in an identifiable place of detention.

12. This application is therefore of the utmost necessity and urgency and I therefore pray for the relief as set out in the notice of motion to which this affidavit is attached.

(Signed) Hamilton Mvumelvano DANDALA

I certify that the deponent has acknowledged that he knows and understands the contents of this affidavit which was signed and sworn to before me at Port Elizabeth on this the 23rd day of September 1985 that the provision of the regulations contained in Government Notice R 1258 of 21 July 1972 (as amended) have been complied with.

(Certified) Vanessa Jacinta BRERETON  
Commissioner of Oaths

B. Mr. Ihron Rensburg

AFFIDAVIT

I, the undersigned

IHRON RENSBURG

do hereby make oath and say:

1. I am an adult male and a pharmacist residing at 19 Peddie Street, Korsten.

2. I was arrested on 23 July 1985 at 3 a.m. at home. Two policemen entered the house. One was Lieutenant Beaton. The other was a white security policeman whose name I can no longer recall. I was told to dress and advised that I was being held in terms of the emergency regulation.

3. I was taken to a Hi Ace and joined another detainee in the back. He was Ashwell Balfour. We were driven to Algoa Park Police Station where the two of us joined several other detainees in the charge office. There were six other detainees, including Michael Coetzee, Alan Zinn, June Udemans and Andre Zakay. We were told to wait while our particulars were being taken down. Eventually we were taken to St. Alban's Prison.

4. The seven men were dropped at St. Alban's Prison, and June Udemans went on to North End Prison. At St. Alban's our particulars were again taken. We were asked to undress and were physically examined by a prison official. He recorded details of his findings in a prison register. The next day we were all called to attend a sick parade. We were examined by a male doctor in a very cursory fashion. All we were required to do was to lift our shirts in order to place his stethoscope on the chest while we breathed out. Each examination probably lasted no longer than 30 seconds. We were asked to report any medical complaints.

5. When I was asked if I had any complaints I advised the doctor that I had a very sensitive stomach and that I had been on medication for a suspected ulcer. He prescribed treatment and I was taken back to the cells.

6. I was in a cell with approximately 30 other detainees. Every day we would be taken outside to a large courtyard for exercise. All the detainees from the different cells exercised at the same time. We would speak to each other on such occasions.

7. On Tuesday morning two detainees, Percy Smith and Michael Coetzee, were called for interrogation at Louis Le Grange Police Station. They were both healthy and with no visible injuries when they left. On their return that afternoon, I saw both of them. Michael complained that he had been hit with a fist and an open hand all over the face. I examined him since I was the only detainee with any medical training. His jaw was tender and his hearing appeared to be impaired in one ear. He said that he

had been hit during interrogation by policemen whose names he did not know. I could not examine Percy Smith but I spoke to him through one of the windows adjoining our two cells. He complained that he had been hit on the head and that parts of his face were swollen. I saw him the next day and one side of his face was swollen and tender. They did, so far as I can remember, request to be put on sick parade.

8. On Wednesday during exercise time my name, together with that of Ashwell Balfour, was called out for interrogation at Louis Le Grange Police Station. I was taken to the office of Constable Wessels where I was questioned on various personal details such as my address, who lives with me, details of my parents, their occupations, etc. I was then interrogated as to my political affiliations and told to write out a paragraph in order for them to obtain a specimen of my handwriting. This part of the interrogation lasted approximately two hours and I got the impression that Wessels had completed the interrogation when Sergeant Faku came to the office. Faku told me to sing one of the freedom songs in Xhosa. I did not do so. I was told to remove my jacket and told to do the toi-toi. The toi-toi is a dance done to freedom songs and the chanting of political slogans. It is really a form of jogging on the spot in time to the song or the chant. I again refused to do this and Faku became very aggressive. He left the office and brought in two other detainees, one of whom was Xanti Lamani. He ordered us to do the toi-toi. They were not recording it on the tape recorder. There was no purpose to this exercise other than to humiliate us. I accordingly declined.

9. Faku became increasingly aggressive and threatened to assault us. He called another two white policemen into the office. At that stage we decided to do the toi-toi for fear of being assaulted. We did this for a while. The other two detainees were then told to leave.

10. Faku then questioned me about meetings I had addressed in the township. Whenever I gave him an answer that he didn't like, he would hit me with a clenched fist. I was hit on both sides of the face and given an uppercut which caused my top lip to start bleeding. At one stage he grabbed me by the collar, which had the effect of choking me. He forced me up against the wall and then kicked me with his knee in my stomach. I fell to the ground. When the pain had subsided I got up and was again hit by Sergeant Faku in the face. He then hit me with a blow directly on the nose. My nose began to bleed profusely. There was a great deal of blood. There was blood on the floor, on my clothes and on the walls. When the bleeding had been arrested, Faku ordered me to clean up the floor. I refused. He then hit me on the side of my face. He threatened that if I did not clean up the floor I would have a bag put over my head and given the "helicopter". I have heard from other detainees what the "helicopter" means. The victim is locked into a permanent crouch around a stick and then suspended above the floor. The victim is then spun, making him disoriented and dizzy. I had no choice but to start cleaning the floor and the walls.

11. Faku then left the room and came back with some forms. He told me to sign them. I did so notwithstanding the fact that I do not know what their contents were. I signed because I feared for my life. I was in great pain and did not wish to be assaulted again. Throughout that assault Constable Wessels and other white security policemen did nothing to intervene to prevent the assault.

12. I was then taken back to St. Alban's. Ashwell Balfour journeyed back with me. He told me that he had been hit on his face and beaten to the ground. One policeman had held his foot on Balfour's neck while another had kicked him in the ribs. He too was forced to sign a document, the contents of which he did not see.

13. The next day I requested to be placed on sick parade. I was examined by a female doctor. She detailed my injuries. The bruises around my neck and cheeks and nose were still visible. She referred me to Livingstone Hospital because she suspected that my nose had been fractured.

14. I went to Livingstone and was examined by Dr. James and then sent to the X-ray department. The X-rays revealed that my nose had not been fractured. Dr. Daniels examined me after the X-rays and noted that my neck was restricted. This injury was in consequence of Faku grabbing me by the throat and pushing me up against the wall.

15. I remember seeing Dennis Neer during the first week at exercise time. It was, I think, a day or two after my interrogation. His arm was in a sling with bandages around the forearm. His face was swollen and there were abrasions and bruises on the face. He had difficulty in walking. He walked stiffly and slowly. He told me that he had been brutally assaulted by members of the security police who had put him through the "helicopter". He told me that he had been referred to the hospital. I had seen Dennis Neer prior to his interrogation and can confirm that he was healthy and in a good physical state then. He certainly did not have bruises or abrasions on his face or his arm in a sling at that stage.

16. I also remember seeing several detainees return from interrogation injured in one way or another. I can't recall all their names but all those in my cell who went to interrogation returned complaining of assault with injuries. I remember Jackson Mdongwe, who is still detained, and Xola Horo. They returned from interrogation with bruises and swellings on the face. They told me that they had been assaulted while being interrogated. I think they said that the perpetrators of the assault were two black policemen called Mene and Tungata. I am a friend of Jackson and fear for his physical well-being.

17. During the next week Michael Coetzee was again called to Louis Le Grange for further interrogation. When he returned to my cell later that day one side of his face was swollen. He complained that he had been again assaulted by the police. He again had difficulty with his hearing. He requested to be put on sick parade the next day and, as far as I know, saw the prison doctor. I laid a complaint of assault with the sister in charge of the prison hospital and the doctor who examined me. This charge was conveyed to the prison authorities because the next day I was asked to sign a form indemnifying the prison department. I did this.

18. Apart from being approached with the indemnity, no one approached me in prison for the purpose of investigating my charge of assault. Other detainees also laid charges of assault and they also complained that the charges were not being investigated. It appeared to me that the prison department and the police were deliberately turning a blind eye to the systematic assault on detainees by members of the South African Police.

19. I was released on 3 August 1985. No charges have been laid against me and I really do not know why I was detained. I have not contributed to the emergency.

(Signed) Ihron RENSBURG

I certify that the deponent has acknowledged that he knows and understands the contents of this affidavit which was signed and sworn to before me at Port Elizabeth on this the 21st day of September 1985 and that the provisions of the regulations contained in Government Notice R 1258 of 21 July 1972 (as amended) have been complied with.

(Certified) Vanessa Jacinta BRERETON  
Commissioner of Oaths

C. Mr. Vusumsi George

AFFIDAVIT

I, the undersigned,

VUSUMSI GEORGE

do hereby make oath and say that:

1. I am a major male, ordinarily resident at 35 Game Street, Motherwell, Port Elizabeth.
2. The facts contained in this affidavit are within my personal knowledge.
3. On 22 July 1985 at approximately 2.30 a.m. the police arrived at my house and awoke me by throwing stones on the roof and hammering on all the windows and doors. I did not respond since I believed that members of AZAPO were attacking us.
4. Eventually the police gained entry by breaking and climbing through a window.
5. Two plainclothes policemen entered my bedroom where my wife and I were sleeping. My wife was nine months pregnant but the police nevertheless beat her and me with quirts.
6. They then ordered me to open the door, which I did, and five other policemen entered the house.
7. The house was then ransacked and the police confiscated a counter book with the lists of people who had attended the Goniwe funeral in Cradock and various other documents relating to my union activities.
8. The police then arrested me but refused to tell me the reason for the arrest.
9. Shortly after the arrest but before I was placed in the back of a Land Rover in which Dennis Neer and Eric Mapuma and my brother were locked, I was assaulted by a policeman by being dragged violently across a wooden fence pole and having my foot heavily stamped upon.
10. The journey from my house to the Algoa Park Police Station took about three or four hours, during which time the police dropped my brother off far from his house and beat him with sjamboks. At a later stage they stopped a car with a couple in it and sprayed tear-gas through the window. This act seemed to be without justification because the policemen laughed and drove off, leaving the car behind.
11. At one stage they stopped at a house and wantonly broke all the outside lights. The people inside, including a woman in her nightclothes, ran out screaming.

12. During the entire journey the police drove fast and every time they turned a corner or braked we were thrown against the sides of the van. There was a steel trunk in the back of the van that moved around and injured our legs.

13. When we arrived at the Algoa Park Police Station there was a large crowd of detained people, including Reverend Soga, Reverend Dandala, Mrs. Goina (a Port Elizabeth women's organization leader), Alex Rala and Fazi (Vice President of the United Democratic Front (UDF), Eastern Cape).

14. We were then taken to the St. Alban's Prison in a large truck. On arrival, we were given a medical examination and placed in cells. I was placed with from 10 to 15 other detainees.

15. One week after I arrived at the prison, that is on 29 July, I was taken with Alex Rala, Mike Xego and K. Fibi to Louis Le Grange Square.

16. We knew that those whose names were called during exercise time were always taken to Louis Le Grange for interrogation. This is a daily routine.

17. Three black security policemen escorted us to Louis Le Grange and when there we were seated in a corridor.

18. While seated there a special branch policeman asked me my name and when I gave it to him he immediately struck me across my face.

19. I was called into a separate room for interrogation where two policemen by the name of Strydom and Niewoudt identified themselves to me. I believe, from talking to other people who have been interrogated, for example Eric Mapuma and Phindile Maneli, that Strydom and Niewoudt interrogate trade unionists.

20. Strydom and Niewoudt had a plastic bag containing the items that had been confiscated during the search at my house. While questioning me about these items they made me sit on the floor with my hands handcuffed behind my back and forced my legs open by beating the insides of my thighs with sjamboks. They attempted repeatedly to kick me in my private parts.

21. They asked me if I had seen Dennis Neer. I said that I had and that he had a bruised face. They said that if I did not tell the truth I would end up like Dennis.

22. They beat me on my back and chest with a sjambok and smashed my toes and head with a short wooden stick. They then took me back into another room and four black policemen forced me to do physical exercises until I was exhausted. They made me hold a chair up above the heads of other detainees, while I was forced to crouch in an uncomfortable position. During this time no questions were asked.

23. Then Tungata, another security policeman, came in and ordered me to stand as if I was embracing a metal filing cabinet. He began punching me in the kidneys from behind and hammering on my shoulders with two-fisted blows. He repeated this type of assault a number of times and then beat my ears with open hands. He then threw me onto the floor and, while kicking me, asked me questions.

24. Two other policemen entered the room and assisted with the general assault, which lasted about half an hour.

25. Tungata and the two policemen who had recently entered the room took me to the next room and beat me with their fists and open hands until I began screaming. Two or three white policemen came into the room and one of them had a wet towel which was placed tightly around my face and head. While the towel was suffocating me they beat me. They then removed the towel from my face, and throttled me.

26. After a severe beating they took me back to the room from which I had come. My shirt was in ribbons from the beating and pulling around.

27. They then took all of us back to St. Alban's. I did not witness or hear the other detainees being assaulted since I was, most of the time, alone in a room while undergoing a serious assault.

28. At St. Alban's Prison the next day, I reported to the medical orderly who passed by my cell in the morning that my ears were infected and that I would like to see a doctor. He said that I could see the doctor the next day. When he came around the next day I asked him if I could see the doctor and he once again told me that I could see the doctor the next day.

29. Eventually on the third day after the assault, I saw a female doctor who, after examining me, asked if I had hurt myself. I told her that I had been assaulted. She then gave me a card on which there was a prescription and instructed me to hand this to the medical orderly. I did this the next day and received medication.

30. On my release I visited my doctor who told me that I had swollen eardrums.

31. I was arrested again on 3 September 1985 under the emergency regulations. I spent 14 days in St. Alban's Prison and during this time, although I was not assaulted, I lived in continual fear that I would be

taken to Louis Le Grange and interrogated once again. During this period in prison the same practice of taking people to Louis Le Grange continued.

(Signed) Vusumsi George

I certify that the deponent has acknowledged that he knows and understands the contents of this affidavit which was signed and sworn to before me at Port Elizabeth on this the 23rd day of September 1985 and that the provisions of the regulations contained in Government Notice R 1258 of 21 July 1972 (as amended) have been complied with.

(Certified) Vanessa Jacinta BRERETON  
Commissioner of Oaths

D. Mr. Makaya Sam

AFFIDAVIT

I, the undersigned,

MAKAYA SAM

do hereby make oath and say:

1. I am an adult male ordinarily resident at 169 Bucwa Street, Kwanobuhle, Uitenhage, and am employed as an official of the National Automobile and Allied Workers' Union, Union Buildings, Caledon Street, Uitenhage.
2. The facts contained herein are within my own personal knowledge.
3. On Tuesday, 10 September 1985, at approximately 2.25 p.m. I was returning to work when I noticed a member of the union working for Goodyear Ltd. waiting for a bus. I stopped and offered him a lift to work.
4. As I was about to pull off the police drew up and arrested me on the grounds that I was operating a private taxi service. They took me away in their vehicle and one policeman drove off with my car.
5. At Church Street Police Station my details were taken and I expected to be charged and brought to court. I was taken to the cells at Church Street and the next day taken to St. Alban's Prison. On arrival there I received a blue card. I was stunned to learn that I was being detained under the emergency regulations. The date of the trial referred to on the card did not, I was told, refer to any trial but my date of discharge in terms of the regulations, i.e., 14 days after the arrest.
6. Since the inception of the state of emergency the police have tended to arrest anyone who picks up passengers from the street, especially if they are driving combi-like vehicles. The police behaviour seems to indicate a belief on their behalf that they have carte blanche to arrest anyone they choose. Therefore even if they have the vaguest and most unfounded suspicion that someone may be committing an offence, they are free to arrest him because they can incarcerate those arrested under the 14-day detention regulation with apparent impunity.
7. There were absolutely no grounds for my detention and this was evident from the fact that no questions were asked by the police at any stage of my arrest, processing or detention, besides the formal questions in the processing procedure.
8. The above facts and the continuous movement of people through the prison creates in me the impression that sudden arrest and incarceration

have become one of the unfortunate evaluations in the lives of law-abiding citizens, an eventuality which is ever more probable and impossible to guard against.

9. At St. Alban's I found myself in a cell with approximately 25 detainees. On Wednesday, 11 September, I did not know anyone in the cell with me. Every detainee without exception told me that he had been assaulted on arrest. Some reported assaults were very serious - for example a youth had been beaten on his back and shoulders with a sjambok so badly that the weals had lost individual identity and become what appeared to be a large angry burn stretching across his shoulders and down his back.

10. On inquiry it appeared that a number of youths had been arrested in Motherwell, where the police had moved from house to house arresting youths in their homes late at night.

11. On Thursday, 12 September, I was moved into a cell with about 34 others, who stated that they had been arrested the night before at St. Gabriel's Church. I personally knew 14 of them.

12. They told me that after their arrest they had been to the Swift Showgrounds. When they were ordered out of the vehicle a police gauntlet had formed from the door of the vehicle to the process tent. Every person was beaten, whipped, punched or kicked as he passed through the gauntlet. The assault continued throughout the processing procedure.

13. After being processed, each person was required to make his way to an awaiting vehicle, at the door of which stood a crowd of police armed with sjamboks and batons. Each person then had to open the top and bottom latch of the door to gain entry to the vehicle and thus escape the rain of blows which fell upon him. Once the top latch was undone and the bottom latch approached, the top latch would be closed again by the police. This "game" of the police was played at the expense of every person arrested except Ashraf Mahomed. As he leapt towards the vehicle's open door a policeman slammed the metal door onto the side of his face and dealt him a vicious blow which rendered him unconscious.

14. When they first arrived in the cell I noticed Joseph Mvakwendlu could hardly walk and had a swollen face. Ashraf Mahomed had a severe bruise on his forehead and moved about in pain. He complained of a headache and dizziness. Tyelinzima Tebeka and Patrick Popo Jonas also had visible injuries.

15. Only Ashraf and Joseph in my cell insisted on visiting the prison doctor while the rest treated themselves where necessary from the medicine trolley which came around daily.

16. Before I was released on 23 September 1985 a man from Port Elizabeth was brought into the cell. He had a two-inch gash on his head. It had stopped bleeding and his clothes were covered in blood. His face and cheekbones were swollen and he complained of assault at the hands of the police.

(Signed) Makaya SAM

I certify that the deponent has acknowledged that he knows and understands the contents of this affidavit which was signed and sworn to before me at Port Elizabeth on this the 23rd day of September 1985 and that the provisions of the regulations contained in Government Notice R 1258 of 21 July 1982 (as amended) have been complied with.

(Certified) Vanessa Jacinta BRERETON  
Commissioner of Oaths

Notes

1/ The text of the affidavit cited here is not published in this report but could be consulted at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.

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