

School pupils listen to speeches during the renaming of their school in Azaadville, near Krugersdorp, yesterday. The school was renamed Ahmed Timol Secondary School after the anti-apartheid activist and ANC member who died in police custody in 1971.

PIC: CLEMENT LEKANYANE

# Ahmed Timol honoured

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela unveiled a plaque and spoke to school pupils in Azaadville, near Krugersdorp, after their school was officially renamed Ahmed Timol Secondary School yesterday morning.

Timol, a Roodepoort teacher and an African National Congress member, is believed to have died in 1971 after being beaten and dropped by security police from a 10th storey window of Johannesburg's John Vorster Square police station.

His mother, Hawa Timol, testified before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in April 1996 and asked that a school be named after him.

Mandela said as with most of the former Azaadville Secondary School pupils before him, he had not known Timol personally.

"What we can say with certainty is that Timol was a brave young man who

believed in freedom and justice, and who fought for non-racialism and democracy.

"He would have wanted the youth, all of you, to be firm in your knowledge of where you come from," Mandela said.

"Few of today's young people have experienced first-hand the cruelty of apartheid repression.

"We hope that renaming this school after Ahmed Timol will help you understand the courage of those who opened the way for all of us who are free today."

Mandela said he hoped that learning about Timol would encourage the pupils to find out about others like him.

Looksmart Ngudle, Imam Haroun, Neil Aggett and many others died because they had dared to challenge the inhumanity of apartheid.

"They would want you to know that our democracy is a product of all the

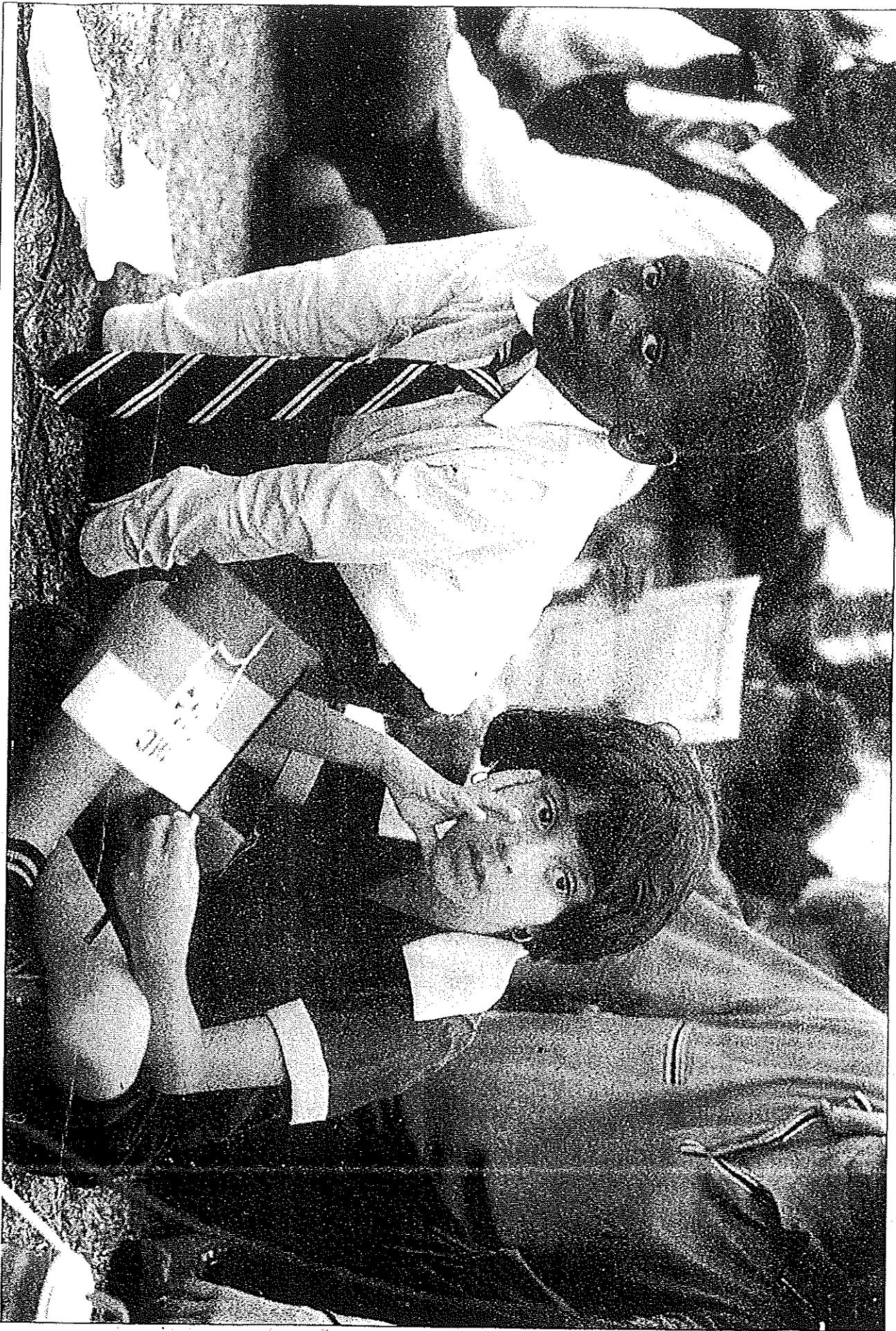
people of South Africa who reached out to one another across the divisions of centuries."

Timol would have been proud of South Africa's new Constitution and proud of Azaadville, "a thread in the rich tapestry of South Africa's diversity".

Mandela said Timol would also have been proud of the Azaadville community for its role in helping Swanieville residents in a time of distress – and now for having a school which had enrolled such a large number of students from underprivileged areas.

Timol's mother would perhaps have felt that her son did not die in vain, had she lived to see the bright faces he was seeing, Mandela said.

"I am sure that all the children at this school, knowing that, will strive to live up to the memory of Ahmed Timol." – *Sapa*.



Rapt attention: Pupils listen to the speeches as their Azaadville Secondary School becomes Ahmed Timol Secondary School