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Imtiaz Cajee - Biography:

I was born in August 1966 at my maternal grand-parents' residence. As per Indian tradition, a first time mother is expected to return to her parents' home for maternity, thus I was born in Roodepoort on the West Rand. However, forty days after my birth my mother returned to her matrimonial home in Standerton, the Eastern Transvaal (now Mpumalanga), where my father and his brothers ran family businesses. This is the environment in which I grew up and spent my early days of my life. I remember coming to Roodepoort for visiting my grandparents during my pre-school days.

Standerton is known for its icy winters with temperatures that at times plummet to minus 6 degrees Celsius. The winter mornings were freezing with the water pipes frozen and the windscreens of motor vehicles that were parked out during the long winter evenings, iced. Luke warm water had to be poured onto the frozen wind screen in order for visibility for the driver.

At this time, the majority of Indian Schools in rural towns did not cater for any high schools education. As a result, many of the Indian students in the region and places afar flocked into Standerton to attend the only available boarding school in town. I always had empathy for these students who had to leave the comforts of their homes and forced to reside in hostels or lodge at a stranger's house in order for them to receive an education. I was privileged to have a school on our door step and to continue living in the comfort of my parents' home, a home where there was no shortage of luxuries. My parents were always grateful for the blessings bestowed upon the family. As a youngster, my wishes and desires were always fulfilled by my parents. Our home was one of simplicity and humility. It is these values that I treasure and strive to adhere to in my life.

I obediently worked in the family business over week-ends and school holidays, upon insistence of my father. It is here where I learnt discipline and punctuality. I hated to be the cashier and preferred working with the employees, packing the shelves and cold drink fridges. The thought of been a businessmen never appealed to me and I always had empathy for the workers and the poor.

I enjoyed Primary School and my reports were above average. However, my interest in school faded as I was entering high school. I repeated Standard Five and failed to understand the need to continue going to school when the country was burning. The overnight disappearance in 1978 of my uncle, mother's brother, Mohammad Timol, also had a devastating impact on me. I had learnt that he had gone into exile and this provoked me to commence questioning his departure, as well as the death of his brother, Ahmed Timol, who died in police detention in October 1971.

A teacher in high school was victimising a student that was from the "poor" sector of the community in front of the entire school assembly. I questioned him on his action

that resulted in him physically lashing out at me. I had a natural instinct of always standing up for the poor and oppressed.

All indications were that I was moving towards been a school drop-out. The only reason I continued with my high schooling was in order for me to participate in sporting activities. The Cajee family was passionate about sports. During the strenuous training that I would undergo for preparation of the soccer and cricket matches, I visualised that I was an Umkontho we Sizwe (ANC MK) soldier that was involved in a skirmish with the apartheid police. This inspired me to quicken my pace when running and I vowed that I would never be taken alive. I was going to kill as many soldiers as possible avenging the death of my uncle. I wanted to become a MK soldier.

The Rand Daily Mail and Capital Radio 604 broadcasting from the Transkei were my main sources for political updates within the country. I would listen to BBC Radio for sporting updates, specifically following the progress of football giants, Manchester United. There was no satellite television accessible at the time and radio was the only means of following sporting activities.

After completing matric in 1985, my attempts to enlist at a teachers training college was not successful. My average results were not adequate. I commenced working in Standerton in the motor industry in 1986 for almost a year where I witnessed the oppression of workers. Thereafter, I was recruited by a family friend, Madan Dayal (known as Charlie) in the finance section of a major factory plant in Standerton. It was here where Charlie instilled some work discipline and work ethics in me. These were values that I never appreciated at the time. Charlie was a mentor; this is something that I only understood much later in life. It is those precious work ethic skills that have empowered me to where I am today.

My relocation to Johannesburg in 1989 was long overdue. My employment at a major retail store allowed me access to the workers. The political situation in the country was changing and dangerous at times. Overzealous work colleagues alleged that I was storing a cache of weapons at my home. This resulted in Security Branch Officers visiting my work place enquiring about me from my supervisor. This was far from the truth.....

I had witnessed the unbanning of political organisations, release of political prisoners and the return of exiles, including that of my uncle, Mohammad Timol in 1990. I accompanied my uncle with the leadership of the political organisations to a rally that was held at the FNB Stadium outside Soweto after the Groote Schuur talks were held in Cape Town. These were exciting times in the country and freedom was in the air for the oppressed majority.

Through my association with the local ANC Mayfair West Branch, David Robb recruited me to the Alexandra Health Centre, an NGO in Alexandra Township in 1992. It was here where I witnessed unprecedented levels of violence. The war between the ANC and IFP resulted in tragic loss of life. I drove the clinic kombi in the middle of the Alexandra Township and collected injured victims and rushed them to the clinic for treatment. Pushing maimed victims on trolleys to the casualty section of the clinic exposed me to mutilated bodies as seen only in the movies. I assisted David in the compilation of statistics of injured victims from the Casualty register and faxing these important details to the media. This was my contribution in keeping the South African public informed on the levels of violence taking place in the Alexandra Township. Professor David Power, a paediatrician at the Alexandra Clinic, accompanied by David Robb, empowered me with work ethics and skills during my stay at the NGO. I was blessed again to have been mentored and for having these precious work skills instilled in me that I value and treasure for life.

It is against this background that when I commenced to be a civil servant in the democratically elected government of the day in 1997, this was one of the proudest moments of my life. Thousands of dedicated fighters had been martyred in order for us to obtain freedom. My intention was to make my beloved uncle proud that I would serve my country with pride and ensure that his death and all other deaths were not in vain.

I enjoyed History in high school as I could relate it to the political events in the country at the time. It was compulsory to read the English set-works and I had no interest in Shakespeare's English. However, I would read with great passion newspaper reports on the unrest in the country and the death of my beloved uncle, Ahmed Timol.

The newspaper cuttings kept by my family on my uncle's death was a major source of information for me. This provoked me to enquire from my grandmother details surrounding the death of my uncle. Her testimony at the TRC Hearings in 1996 inspired me to constructively do something in Timol's memory. My initial ambition was to compile a brochure for my personal records. This is the goal that I had set myself.

After completing research for almost four years on a part-time basis, I made contact with Essop Pahad, Minister in the Presidency at the time. Pahad was a friend of my late uncle, but I only established much later the true extent of their friendship. When I went to see him for the first time in the Presidency in January 2001, I presented my brochure and the work that was done by me. Pahad was impressed with the work that I had done, but inquired if I could write English. There was much more work that had to be done and Pahad wanted to know if I was prepared for this? My response was spontaneous and hence my journey commenced where I now worked with professional writers and researchers.

I have been privileged to work with author, Ronald Suresh Roberts; former newspaper editor and author Tony Heard; researcher Sifiso Ndlovu and Essop and Meg Pahad who nurtured me by spending many hours of their hectic schedules in order for us to complete the manuscript. It was this relationship that gave me the opportunity to obtain on the job training for conducting research and in becoming an author.

Whenever I would go to a bookstore in the past, I would scan the index of all political books written and my eyes would light up when any reference was made to Ahmed Timol. A line or two on my uncle would set me pondering as to when a book was going to be written on him. Now, I don't have to scan the index, but can stare at the book depicting the life of my uncle. Despite a few sceptics, after almost eight years of research on a part-time basis, my initial brochure had been converted to a book that will ultimately preserve the legacy of Timol. In undertaking this task, I believe I have contributed a little to the reconstruction of our history, and the cause of truth in South Africa.

Remembering: A Quest for Justice

Imtiaz Cajee

(Nephew of Ahmed Timol who died in police detention in
October 1971)

Abstract (Executive Summary)

The death of black consciousness leader Steve Biko in 1978 in police detention is well documented. Biko's death epitomizes over 69 known deaths recorded of anti-apartheid activists who died in police custody from 1960 to 1990¹. The term coined by the Security Branch Policemen, "Indian's Can't Fly" during interrogation is well known amongst detainees held in police detention. This quotation originated with the death of Communist Party and African National Congress member, Ahmed Timol, who police claimed committed suicide by jumping to his death from the notorious John Vorster Square Police Station (now named Johannesburg Central Police Station) in October 1971.

Almost 41 years have passed since the death of Ahmed Timol. His dreams of a free and liberated South Africa have come true. The banned organization that he belonged to is now the ruling party of the day in a free and democratic South Africa. However, despite the publication of TIMOL – A QUEST FOR JUSTICE² in 2005, mystery shrouds the true events of what really happened to Timol. The quest for justice and truth still beckons. This is my calling – keeping his legacy alive. This paper shares my experiences on my journey in pursuit of knowing my uncle, Ahmed Timol, and the path that it is leading to.

Introduction:

Despite been only five (5) years old at the time, the death of my uncle, Ahmed Timol, had a tremendous impact on my life, Spending time with my late grand-mother, I always enquired on the details relating to the death of her beloved son. When I visited my grand-parents during the school holidays, I would diligently read the newspaper cuttings related to the case. Her testimony at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in 1996³ inspired me to constructively do something in Timol's memory. My initial ambition was to compile a brochure for my personal records. This is the goal that I had set myself. As I proceeded, my brochure

¹ Timol – 22nd person to have died police detention

² ISBN Number 1-919855-40-8

³ 30 April 1996. (Case Number GO/0173)

had been converted to a book that will ultimately preserve the legacy of Timol. This is how I commenced my journey for the writing of my book.

Body:

Ahmed Timol was born on the 3rd of November 1941 in Breyten, Mpumalanga Province. The Timol family moved to Roodepoort in 1949. He obtained a senior certificate with exemption in 1959 at the Johannesburg Indian High School. Timol worked as a bookkeeper in 1960 before enrolling at the Transvaal Indian College (also referred to as 'the Training Institute for Indian Teachers'; 'Teacher's Training College' and 'Johannesburg Training Institute for Indian Teachers) from 1961 – 1963. He taught at the Roodepoort Indian High School from 1964 – 1966 and then went to perform the Hajj in December 1966.

During his stay in London, Timol stayed with former friends and activists who had left the country due to bannings and were in exile. The Communist Party chose Timol to undergo political training in Russia at the Lenin University in 1969. He was accompanied by Thabo Mbeki, former President of the South Africa.

Upon his return to London from training, Timol was tasked to return to South Africa to build underground structures for the banned Communist Party. Upon his return to South Africa in February 1970, Timol commenced this mammoth task.

Almost 18 months after his return to South Africa, Timol was detained at a "routine" police roadblock with accomplice, Salim Essop. Police claimed that they were in possession of banned literature and were taken to the Newlands Police Station, thereafter to the John Vorster Square Police Station. Five (5) days later, police claimed that Timol committed suicide by jumping to his death from the 10th floor.

Nation- wide and international protests forced the apartheid regime to conduct an inquest into Timol's death. After a lengthy inquest, Magistrate de Villiers found that the deceased died because of serious brain damage and loss of blood sustained when he jumped out of a window of Room 1026 at John Vorster Square and fell to the ground on the southern side of the building. He committed suicide. No living person is responsible for his death.

Family Background:

My forefathers were descendants from the village of Kholvad, village in India. They arrived in South Africa in the early 1800's. I was a Kholvadian and this is all that I knew about my family history.

Conducting my research, I had learnt about the rich history of the Kholvadian community. It was the first village in India to have established electricity without the

aid and assistance of a government body.⁴ This is also where fellow activists such as the leader of the South African Communist Party, Dr. Yusuf Dadoo and Timol's close friends, Essop and Aziz Pahad came from. Upon arriving in South Africa in 1883, the close knit Kholvad community setup schools and Madressah's⁵ for their community. I interviewed Gora Mota Khota, a successful bookkeeper who provided training to young and upcoming bookkeepers with no financial compensation. This was his contribution towards empowering the youth of Kholvad resulting in many becoming professional accountants years later. In my journey pursuing the history of my uncle, Timol, individuals like Gora Mota Khota reminded me of the role played by ordinary South Africans who displayed compassion and care for others with no financial rewards.

The Kholvad Madressa Anjuman Islam Annual General Reports provided a wealth of information into the history of the Kholvadians arriving in South Africa. Minutes of the Annual General Meetings provided content on the progress made by the Kholvadian community as they settled down in South Africa. Family descendants continue belonging to the structures of the Kholvad Madressa resulting in the legacy and history of the Kholvadian Community remaining alive in the country. The institution continues providing bursaries to thousands of students nationally encouraging the Kholvadian youth to further their studies. I had established that it was the Kholvad Madressa that provided bursaries to Ahmed Timol for his studies in becoming a teacher and also to his sister, my mother, Ayesha for her to complete dress making and pattern-designing course. The Kholvad Madressa celebrates its centenary in 2014.

Sports:

Sports continue to serve as a unifier of nations. South Africa's successful hosting of the FIFA Soccer World Cup held in 2010 and the Olympic Games in London 2012 is a shining example of this.

My own sporting experiences allowed me to relate easily to the sporting era during the 1960s. The harsh oppressive apartheid laws resulted in restricted social activities available to the Indian youth at the time. Sports provided an ideal alternative to the youth and this was in turn used as a weapon to mobilize youth against the apartheid regime.

The Dynamos Soccer Club (named after Moscow Dynamos) was one such avenue where sports was used to break the racial divide resulting in soccer being played amongst Indians, Africans and Coloureds. Dynamos also served as a "cover" to recruit activists and conduct political work undetected by the state authorities at the time.

⁴The Madressa Anjuman Islamia of Kholvad 80th Anniversary Brochure

⁵ Islamic Education

The Dynamos Soccer Festival Brochure in 1965 has an article written by Ahmed Timol. This article articulates the relationship between sports and politics in apartheid South Africa.

Research had shown that there were numerous sportsmen that were denied an opportunity to display their sporting skills and flair internationally. This was due to the international sporting boycott against the apartheid regime.

Former sportsmen narrated details of local derbies and rivalries that existed at the time. In many instances, this resulted in running battles and skirmishes and there were “casualties” on either side. I found that this was relevant to my personal sporting experiences where specific matches with neighbouring towns generated huge interest with emotions running high. In many instances, family members were involved and this did not deter the passion and hunger in winning the sporting battles. It must be noted that rivalries were totally defused when the “warring parties” assembled for funerals and weddings.

Education:

I had witnessed the school boycott campaign against the apartheid educational system in the turbulent early 1980s. The failure on the part of teachers at my school to support this campaign and also condoning the racist apartheid system enhanced my respect for Timol.

Almost two decades earlier, fellow teachers and students provided insight for Timol’s passion for teaching and the political awareness that he instilled in his students. It was this political awakening that resulted in his students been aware of the plight of the poor and the oppression of the masses, not only in South Africa, but internationally. It was this defiant stance that he had taken of deviating from standard teaching curriculum that made him an extraordinary teacher.

The Roodepoort Indian High School Incident Book captured entries of subversive activities that were prevalent at the time. Timol’s refusal to participate in Republic Day Celebrations is captured as well as distribution of banned literature that was found on the school premises. The nature and content of entries in the Incident Book outlined the context under which the school functioned and also its acceptance of the apartheid educational policies at the time.

Attempts to access Timol’s files from the Education Department provided futile. These files would hopefully have provided information on how the authorities perceived Timol.

London:

Friends of Timol who lived with him during his stay in London provided valuable information on his character and personality. Timol taught children from the Indian Sub-Continent with total dedication and commitment. He also taught at an Immigration Centre in Slough and also an active member of the National Union of Teachers. Despite been abroad, he regularly sent money to his family in South Africa.

Yasmin Dadabhay, a teenager who lived with her family and Timol in London narrated the nature of her relationship with Timol. She recollected how he had spoken to her when he had found her smoking a cigarette. In a cool and calm manner, without raising his voice, Timol explained to the young Yasmin the dangers of smoking that resulted in her never touching another cigarette in her life. These narrations reaffirmed to me the gentleness of Timol and his gift of convincing and swaying the mind of the youth. It was this ability of his to influence and recruit for his underground cell that resulted in his untimely death.

Ruth Longoni, Timol's girlfriend, provided intimate details of their relationship. It took time and patience for me to locate her in Coventry, United Kingdom. We communicated via email and her willingness to contribute to the writing of the book must have been a very difficult decision. Ruth had remarried after Timol's death and I was embarking on a journey reliving her tragic loss of a loved one. During the book launch that was held in London in 2008, Ruth did not view the 3rd Degree Documentary that was aired due to her been inability to view gruesome images of Timol lying in the state mortuary. It was as this moment that I realised the emotional scarring that Timol's death had created and that I was responsible for her to relive those tragic days.

Underground Structures, Arrest, Detention and Death:

Interviews with cell members provided details of their engagements with Timol. Some were not aware that they were on Timol's underground structures. The fundamental of underground structures is for members not to know all the members of the cell. In the event of a cell member arrested or detained, they would be unable to provide details of other cell members, compromising their security.

With the aid of The South African History Online, I succeeded in managing to get Salim Essop to return from London to return to the notorious John Vorster Square Police Station (now named Johannesburg Central Police Station) to re-visit the scene of horrific torture that he had endured. Essop was detained with Timol at a "routine" police roadblock and was the last person to him alive. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) had invited Essop to testify at the TRC Hearings. They had not succeeded. Witnessing and recording Salim's recollection of his arrest,

detention and torture was extremely difficult. A 2nd year medical student at the University of Witwatersrand, Salim's arrest and detention ordeal landed him at the Johannesburg General Hospital and later in Pretoria's HF Verwoerd Hospital under police guard. If Salim, a junior member of Timol's cell had undergone such gruesome torture, what happened to Timol? The pictures of Timol's body lying in the morgue reveal all. Almost three decades after the ordeal, visible scarring and emotional trauma in Salim was visible. This was extremely painful for me to have witnessed and to get him to have re-lived an ordeal that brought him to the brink of death.

The quality time that I spent with Amina Desai had a profound impact on me. Apart from conducting interviews with her, I was afforded to spend quality time with her. Amina's involvement in the Timol case resulted in her to be sentenced to five years imprisonment, mainly served in Barberton and Kroonstad Prisons, making her South Africa's longest-serving Indian woman political prisoner. I fondly referred to Amina as "Granny" and "Mummy". Amina constantly reminded me not to forget the plight of the poor and government's responsibility towards them. She loathed government's wasteful expenditure on lavish events and urged better usage of State coffers.

Embarking on the journey allowed me to build new relationships and engage with families who lost loved ones in police detention. Rookaya Saloojee, wife of Suliman "Babla" Saloojee who died in police detention in 1964, is one such person. Immediately after their engagement, Babla was held in police detention. Babla's re-detention, after only two years of marriage, resulted in his death and to be the fourth detainee to have died in police detention. Even during their short time of been together, Babla spent most of the time conducting underground work and limited time at home. It was my engagement with Rookaya that reminded me of the hardship and pain endured by other families who lost loved ones in police detention. This inspired me to dedicate my book to all those who died in police detention.

Neighbours of my grand-mother provided moral support to the family after the tragic loss of Timol. Choti Choonara regularly visited and supported my grand-mother. This was during an era where the community were terrified of any association with the Timol family. The notorious Security Branch was monitoring movements in Roodepoort and any contact with the Timol family would result in "unfriendly" visits. The support of Choti to the Timol family undermined the resolute response of a human being in rendering support to a family in mourning, irrespective of the dire consequences that could be faced.

Despite the willingness of those associated to Timol to contribute to the writing of the book, there were others that were not forthcoming. This was difficult and painful for me to grasp and comprehend. However, as I continued with the research and details unravelled, it became evident that I was returning to a certain stage of history that many yearned to be forgotten.

A close associate of Timol who was implicated of alleged involvement with the Security Branch, compromising Timol's operation, reluctantly agreed to see me. However, he refused to be interviewed and only commented on the Timol case. This was an opportunity for him to have set the record straight and clear his name of the allegations.

A number of years after the publication of my book, I was contacted by individuals who claimed to have information that would shed light on the Timol case. Their family member was detained in relation to the Timol case. However, upon further investigations it emerged that there was a family dispute and the expectation was for me to expose the detained member, due to early release from detention. There were also other allegations that were made against the detainee that could not be proven.

The events leading to the arrest of Timol at the "routine" police roadblock formed a critical part in the story. Contradicting version of events from various individuals exposed me to the difficulties in detailing the true nature of events. I began to understand that individuals had selective amnesia; others were in denial whilst others simply distorted the events. It is this behaviour that resulted in the Timol case not been resolved and unanswered questions remain.

Access to Material:

The family lawyers representing the Timol family in the inquest managed to retain a partial set of files. Due to them moving offices, other files could no longer be located and were deemed "missing". Upon my initial visit to the lawyers, I found that the files were located on a table in a board room, not safely secured. It was these partial set of files that shed light on the State's case in the subsequent inquest after his death. This included Timol's secret correspondence material to his handlers in London, banned literature that was distributed, his statement made under duress during his interrogation and statements from Security Branch Officers stationed at John Vorster Square Police Station.

Obtaining access to Timol's biography upon entering the Lenin University was one of my major achievements in conducting the research for my book. The biography provided a clear insight in the mind of Timol and his commitment to the struggle for the freedom of the oppressed masses.

The newspapers kept by the family were the initial source of information. Other sources included the National Library of South Africa, Mayibuye Archives, South African Historical Archives (SAHA) and the National Archives of South Africa.

It is interesting to note that no reports were available from the Communist Party in London on Timol's activities.

The TRC investigator had provided copies of his file on the Timol investigation. Newspaper cuttings and testimonies were accessible here. The investigation could not be completed due to his resignation from the TRC. Upon further investigation, I liaised with the National Prosecution Authority (NPA) requesting them to follow up on the case based on new information that had emerged. This proved unsuccessful and the Timol case was closed. My experience with the NPA had exposed a lack of political willingness on the part of Government in prioritizing unresolved TRC cases.

Role of the Media:

The death of Timol in police detention made national and international headlines. Newspapers provided daily updates on the Timol case and also subsequent Inquest.⁶ I believe that the press coverage of his death coerced the apartheid regime to conduct an inquest to his death. It was this sustained coverage that gave prominence to the Timol death resulting in ordinary South Africans from all sectors of the racial divide pouring out support to the family and questioned the conduct of the security apparatus. The power of newspapers cannot be underestimated. The reporting of Afrikaner State Newspapers, such as Beeld at the time, provided coverage to the Afrikaner sectors of the country of this gruesome death.

I had been issuing press releases since early 2000 to commemorate the anniversary into the death of Ahmed Timol in October 1971. Sympathetic journalists publishing the releases continue contributing in keeping the Timol legacy alive. This gives me hope and encouragement that interest remains in the story and Timol's contribution was not in vain.

The 3rd Degree Documentary titled "Indian's Cant'f Fly" in 2005 aired on E-TV attracted public interest as it displayed the refusal on the part of former Security Branch Officers defiant in their involvement in Timol's interrogation.

Other Experiences:

I nominated my Uncle, Ahmed Timol for a number of years to receive the National Order of Luthuli, but my attempts were unsuccessful. Then I began working closely with the Ahmed Timol Secondary School and School Governing Body to nominate Ahmed Timol for the prestigious Luthuli Award. Finally, in December 2009, my uncle, Mohammad Timol, collected the Order of Luthuli (Posthumous) on behalf of Ahmed Timol.

I have now nominated the late Amina Desai for the Order of Luthuli and will be informed in January 2012 if the nomination is successful.

⁶ Inquest 2361/71, Presiding Judge J J L de Villiers

Due to generous contributions by various individuals, a large volume of books were procured before the book launch and donated to schools. I had made a public commitment at the book launches that royalties accrued from the book sales will be used in the name of Ahmed Timol and not be taken by me.

An initiative was taken to establish an Ahmed Timol Education Trust in partnership with the Ahmed Timol Secondary School in 2010. Despite numerous attempts to setup this Trust, it was not successful and I now have plans for project based operations to utilize the royalties accrued.

After almost nine (9) years of research, engagement with publishers provided an insight into the world of publishing. Choosing the correct publisher is difficult. The finalization of the manuscript, selection of pictures, choosing a book cover, book launches (venues, speakers, refreshments, etc.) all adds to the complexities of a new writer entering the field of book writing.

With no experience in public speaking, sharing the platform with Ministers, Premiers and distinguished activists in front of large audiences was a new experience. The first book launch hosted at the notorious John Vorster Square Police Station in 2005 was emotional. I have grown in confidence with public speaking due to speaking other book launches, radio and television interviews. The emotive response from members in the audience during my speeches is a constant reminder that reference to the Timol case in the democratic South Africa is a painful reminder of a horrific death of a young anti-apartheid activist.

I had erred in certain respects during this journey and hope to rectify this in the publication of the 2nd edition of the book. My failure to recognise the contribution of certain individuals and organisations in acknowledging their role haunts me. There were certain choices and decisions that I made that I now view as questionable. This has been a valuable learning curve for me and one that has provided me with valuable experience in the art of conducting research.

Conclusion:

My journey embarking on finding out about my beloved uncle has been of mixed emotions. It has granted me the opportunity to research the death of an uncle, a political detainee. This was a turning point in the history of the Liberation Struggle. The country had witnessed the Rivonia Trial, banning of Liberation Movements and exodus of activists in exile. The apartheid regime was consolidating their intelligence structures leading to the formation of the Bureau for State Security (BOSS).

Timol's death sparked activists to continue the struggle against apartheid, many who are now prominent politicians in a democratic South Africa. Nearly thirty five years had passed after Timol's death and I had succeeded in publishing a book in his

memory. Despite no formal academic qualification, my desire to research and preserve my uncle's legacy was successful. I had managed to locate individuals associated to Timol and portray a sequence of events that led to his brutal death. This was never done!

The Freedom Charter that was adopted at the Congress of the People, Kliptown, on 26 June 1955 was a unique document where the oppressed masses formulated their own vision. The opening demand on the Freedom Charter was "The People Shall Govern". The ANC aided by other Liberation Movements have successfully ensured that the people of South Africa are governing and have broken the shackles of apartheid and voting in a new democratic South Africa in 1994. The Government of the day is however faced with enormous challenges in fulfilling the other demands outlined in the Freedom Charter.

As we celebrate the 100years anniversary of the ANC, there remain many unresolved questions related to the murder of comrade Ahmed Timol and many other heroes and heroines of the struggle. Despite the publication of the book, my research had provided sufficient intriguing information leading me to pursue the Timol case. The pursuit of the obedient nephew has now turned to a journey of investigating the death of his uncle and his Quest for the Truth. It is this persistence on pursuing the unresolved matters related to the death of my Uncle that leave many of his former comrades and other activists nervous. The matter of comrades been betrayed and sold out to apartheid agents cannot be discarded and lost in the annals of our history. The ANC Government of the day cannot only celebrate selective milestones of its glorious liberation and have amnesia on matters related to the murder of its own comrades! There has to be a conscious effort to deal with these unresolved matters so that closure of our past is found.

The Human Rights Commission is the custodian of the PAIA No 2 of 2000 (PAIA), a bill designed to provide access to Government records to South African citizens. I have submitted PAIA requests over the years to government departments in the security cluster asking for apartheid police records related to my uncle, Ahmed Timol. It is unfortunate that government bureaucrats who have very little understanding of the political history of the country are assigned the responsibility of releasing the relevant PAIA information required. There has to be a political will for the successful implementation of the PAIA legislation. This has to be prioritized and apartheid records be released by providing the many unanswered questions that remain regarding the death of many loved ones. It is in the apartheid archives within the security clusters where a wealth of information resides related to the death of apartheid victims.

Norwegian politicians from the Labour and Socialist Left, both of which are members of Norway's left-center government coalition parties are pushing for access to the archives where information dealing with the activities of Norwegians who handed

information to the former East Germany's secret police unit, the Stasi. Access, however, would be restricted to researchers only.

In Germany, The Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Archives is an upper-level federal agency of Germany that preserves and protects the archives and investigates the past crimes of the former Stasi, the secret police and intelligence organization of the communist German Democratic Republic (East Germany).⁷ As of 2010, it had 1 687 employees assigned to carry out the task of preserving its archives.

The Norwegian and German governments of the day have a political will in ensuring that their past is known and that this portion of their history is closed. Providing access to security archive material will not threaten national security in these countries. Why is it that the South African Government of the day does not prioritize opening the apartheid archives?

The launch of the Ahmed Timol Website that will store all material related to him on a single website will allow international access to the Timol story. Pictures, inquest related material, newspaper cuttings, etc. will be accessible here. Social networks such as Facebook and Twitter will entice the youth to access this site to discuss and remember Timol.

The Roodepoort ANC Branch 127 has been renamed to the Ahmed Timol Branch paying tribute of comrade Timol for his contribution to the struggle. As part of the 41st anniversary celebrations to commemorate Timol's death, a celebratory function is planned to be held in October 2012.

This journey continues to serve as an inspiration for to me to serve my country. The sacrifices made by Timol and other fallen martyrs cannot be in vain. The onus is on ordinary South Africans to preserve its history for future generations to know where this freedom in the new South Africa originates from. It is only the truth surrounding the death of my Uncle, Ahmed Timol that will ring closure.....

⁷ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Commissioner_for_the_Stasi_Archives