

SETTLED IN SECRET

A GAIN. A CASE involving serious allegations of ill-treatment by the police has been settled out of court without any public investigation or explanation. The police have made a payment to a Port Elizabeth African, Mr. Temba Mkize, who claimed he had been subjected to electric-shock and other torture.

There have been altogether too many secret settlements of this kind — at least six that we know of in recent years, including R5 000 paid to the Imam Haron's widow. In each serious allegations of assault or torture were made, but their truth was never fully tested. They were left hanging in the air before an increasingly disconcerted public, whose suspicions are being aroused by this apparent eagerness of the authorities to avoid an airing of the facts in open court.

Now 12 men facing charges under the Terrorism Act are likewise claiming damages for alleged assault. Surely the authorities cannot allow these to be settled out of court as well!