

TRIAL TOLD OF TIMOL APPROACH

Pretoria Bureau

AHMED TIMOL asked a 26-year-old upholsterer to try to establish a contact for him at the Department of Bantu Affairs, the terrorism trial in Pretoria heard yesterday.

The evidence was given by Mr D. Naik of Roodepoort. He was testifying at the trial at which four Indians, Mr Mohamed Salim Essop (22), Mr Yousuf Hassan Essack (21), Mr Indhrasen Moodley (27) and Mrs Amina Desai (51) are appearing in the Old Synagogue, Pretoria, before Mr Justice Snyman.

All have pleaded not guilty to charges under the Terrorism Act and the Suppression of Communism Act.

Mr Naik said he met Mr Timol, the detainee who later died in custody, at a party in January 1971.

Some time in March Mr Timol approached him and asked if he could get a contact for him at the Department of Bantu Affairs. Mr Naik said he was well known to Africans as he supported an African football team.

TO HELP

Mr Timol said he wanted the contact so as to help certain Africans with "documentary problems." This request was later taken up by Mr Essop, whom Mr Naik also knew.

Mr Timol and Mr Essop also

asked him to introduce them to politically-inclined Africans so they could talk to them and Mr Timol said they would give them "political literature."

Another witness yesterday, Miss D. Jhetan, a 23-year-old medical student at the University of the Witwatersrand, told of her friendship for Mr Essop and the many discussions she had had with him.

Cross-examined by Mr J. Browde SC, for Mr Essop, she said she had also known Mr Timol. She had never given him any reason to believe that she was a potential recruit for the Communist Party.

Mr Browde told her that Mr Timol had written to the South African Communist Party in England and mentioned that she, among others, was a potential recruit.

She also said that Mr Essop had never advocated communism as an alternative for the situation in South Africa.

Apart from their medical discussions and occasional political discussions, they also spoke about art, music, literature and films.

CRITICAL

Cross-examined further, Miss Jhetan said Mr Essop was critical of communism as far as it concerned the individual.

She agreed that they had discussed many philosophies, and could not say if Mr Essop was in favour of communism or not.

Miss Jhetan said Mr Essop thought her horizons were too narrow and that she was just interested in medicine and science. He tried to interest her in photography.

She said in reply to further questions that she knew very little about socialism and communism.

Mr Essop had talked about the disadvantages of apartheid. He could have said that he was opposed to violence and that this was not the solution to the South African situation. The trial continues today.

Court is packed for the Timol inquest

Staff Reporter

A LARGE crowd of people of different races, including high-ranking police officers, an American consular observer and numerous newsmen filled one of the largest courtrooms in the Johannesburg Magistrate's Court yesterday for the Ahmed Timol inquest.

The inquiry into the death of Mr. Ahmed Essop Timol, 30, a Roodepoort teacher, who fell from the tenth floor of John Vorster Square while in the hands of the Security Police, was postponed pending the outcome of an application to the Supreme Court by counsel for the Timol family.

OBSERVER

No evidence was heard. The postponement came after Mr. I. A. Maiseis, QC, had been refused permission by the presiding Regional Magistrate, Mr. J. J. L. de Villiers, to study the inquest file. Mr. Maiseis said he wanted to test this ruling in the Supreme Court. Proceedings concerning the

application lasted almost an hour and a half.

The public gallery for Non-Whites was packed with Indians including Mr. Timol's parents, grey-haired and bearded Mr. Yussuf Timol, 65, and Mrs. Hawa Timol, 58, and relatives, including more than 20 from the Eastern Transvaal.

Newsmen of all the South African Press groups lined the benches on either side of the courtroom, and the overseas Press was represented, to report the proceedings.

An observer from the diplomatic corps was the political and labour officer at the American Consulate-General, Mr. E. J. McHale.

Johannesburg's Senior Public Prosecutor, Mr. D. W. Rothwell, represented the State, with Mr. A. Benkes, the prosecutor who usually handles inquests in Johannesburg. The State team was accompa-

nied by members of the Security Police, and Major-General C. A. Buys, Chief of the CID, who is the investigating officer in the matter, and Lieutenant-General D. A. Bester, Senior Deputy Executive of the South African Police.

FAMILY

Other officers present included Colonel A. B. Huismann of the commercial branch, John Vorster Square, Colonel Len van Rensburg, head of the special squad at Johannesburg police headquarters, and Major J. F. C. Fick, of the CID, who assisted with the investigation.

The date at which the inquiry is to proceed is still to be fixed. Mr. Maiseis said yesterday that the Supreme Court application would probably only be heard in January next year.

● Full report — Page 4.