

8770-8781



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/8770
26 September 1972

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Twenty-seventh session
Agenda item 38

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THE POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA

Maltreatment and torture of prisoners in South Africa

Report of the Special Committee on Apartheid

Rapporteur: Mr. Barakat AHMAD (India)

Mr. Ahmed Timol

579. Mr. Timol, 30, a school teacher, was detained under the Terrorism Act on 22 October 1971. He died on 27 October, after a fall from the tenth floor of the Security Police headquarters in Johannesburg. The Security Police claimed that he had committed suicide.

580. An inquest was held after a delay of several weeks: the magistrate refused the application of the family's counsel for information in the possession of the prosecutor, and the inquest was delayed until an appeal of the ruling was decided by the Supreme Court.

581. It was disclosed at the inquest that Mr. Timol had been interrogated by Lieutenant-Colonel W. P. van Wyk, Captain Dirker, Captain Bean, Captain J. Z. van Niekerk and Captain Johannes Gloy. On the day of the death, he had been interrogated by Captain Gloy and Captain van Niekerk from 8 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. 181/

582. Results of the post mortem examination had shown several injuries sustained between three and 10 days before death. Medical specialists testified that these injuries could have been caused by blows and kicks with a boot. 182/

583. The magistrate, Mr. J. J. L. de Villiers, found on 22 June 1972 that Mr. Timol had committed suicide and that no one was to blame for his death.

Mr. Mohamed Salim Essop

584. Mr. Essop, 21, a medical student, was detained under the Terrorism Act on 23 October 1971.

585. On 26 October, the Chief District Surgeon of Johannesburg examined him at the Security Police headquarters at John Vorster Square, Johannesburg. Mr. Essop was in a semi-conscious state and appeared to be in a state of severe hysteria. Mr. Essop had a bruise below the right eye, on the lobe of the right ear, on the right lower lip, on both arms and below both knees, and stretch marks on his chest. He was then sent on a stretcher to the Johannesburg General Hospital to be examined by a neurosurgeon.

586. On the advice of the neurosurgeon, the patient, who was then semi-conscious, was sent to the H. F. Verwoerd Hospital in Pretoria for examination for hysteria.

587. Mr. Essop's father learned that his son was at the hospital and rushed to see him. On instructions from the police, the hospital staff denied that his son was there, but he managed to go to the ward and saw his son through a fanlight. He noticed that his son was seriously ill.

588. While the father was making an application to court, the detainee was transferred to the Prison Hospital and the hospital records were removed by the police.

181/ The Star, Johannesburg, 26 April 1972.

182/ Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg, 5 and 24 May 1972.

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