

Special Hearings

TYPE Children's Hearings

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DAY 1

NAMES DR COLEMAN

DR RANDERA: As the people are settling down, may I make a few announcements. I have the permission of the Chairperson by the way.

The first announcement that I want to make is that if there are people in the hall today who want to make statements, there are statement takers in the foyer who are waiting for you and who will take your statement today.

Secondly, I want to acknowledge witnesses who have made statements and who are sitting in the hall here today. I am sorry that some of you have come along thinking that you will be making a statement today, but we are not able to do that.

Thirdly, I just want to explain again to those people who have made statements and feel that just because they are not coming to a public hearing, that their statement is not being considered. The Truth Commission have accepted, the Human Rights Violations Committee have accepted 10 500 statements up till now. Only 17% of those people have come to a public hearing.

That does not mean that we are not looking at all the other statements. Every statement is given the same weight within the Commission and given the same amount of investigative work.

We are going through all those statements at the present time, and we will be contacting those individuals soon as possible.

What I would like to emphasise though, is that you should have received a letter, those people who have made statements, should have received a letter with a reference number so that if you want to phone the Commission yourselves and enquire as to what is happening, all you need to do is to quote that number if you haven't received that letter, please contact us at our office here in Johannesburg, thank you very much.

MS MKHIZE: Thank you Fazel. I will ask Mr and Mrs Coleman to come forward please. Dr Coleman, in welcoming you, I would just like to say the Commission is grateful to have your submission.

We have looked at your submission, we will really ask you to try to summarise it if possible, within 10 minutes, so that Commissioners can engage with you and ask you critical questions around your submissions. But we have read all that you are going to say, so we are just asking for a brief presentation.

DR COLEMAN: Thank you Chairperson. I will do my best to shorten it - as you will appreciate it is a great deal of information contained in this submission. It is very concentrated as it is and I will try to reduce it.

The submission comes basically from the monitoring ...

MS MKHIZE: Excuse me, I will ask Joyce Seroke to assist you to take an oath. We think this is important so we will prefer that you take an oath. Joyce Seroke?

DR COLEMAN: (sworn states)

MS MKHIZE: Please go ahead.

DR COLEMAN: Chairperson, the submission arises out of the monitoring that has been done by the detainees' parents support committee and subsequently by the Human Rights Committee since 1981 and is an overview for the purposes of this hearing of the role of children and youth during this period.

We refer to the children and youth as the glue of township resistance in the role that they played and we describe them as the footsoldiers of the struggle, acting as a network for distributing pamphlets and announcing meetings, providing early warning systems, and their schools became centres of community organisation against repression.

Very early on the apartheid State became aware of the pivotal role of children and youth and identified them as a serious target and treated them accordingly.

One can say that an undeclared war against children was waged and that children and youth became the primary recipients of detention and torture, bannings, assassination and harassment of every description. And this document sets out to summarise that full spectrum of war against the young.

We divided it into two parts. The area of total strategy from 1960 to 1989 and the area of destabilisation from 1990 to 1994, and we defined children for the purposes of this document as people under the age of 18 and youth as 25 or younger.

To begin with, we try to get an assessment, we tried to get an assessment of the casualties of children and youth in this period of 1960 to 1989. We defined two periods within that, the Soweto uprising of 1976 and then subsequently what we term the national uprising from 1984 to 1989 which triggered off states of emergency and our estimates are on the basis of cross-checking and compiling of various sources, numerous sources including certain official statistics and we determine that the death toll from 1960 to 1989 was as follows: All ages, 7 000; if we go down to youth only, that works out about 4 200, about 60%; and children within that, would be 25% of the total, about 1 750 is our estimate out of that 7 000.

Also of course there was injury as a result of the action of Security Forces using teargas, birdshot, rubber bullets, live ammunition and sjamboks and our estimate of the injury is about 12 000 youth, amongst them 5 000 children. It is also important to mention that a number of babies died during this period from the effects of teargas.

During this period in the early parts of the period, these casualties were as a result almost completely of security force action, but then from about 1987 onwards, vigilantism began to take over the role of the predominant cause of political casualties.

And we also defined the kinds of incidents in which deaths would have occurred. Security force actions against protest marchers, and so on, including funerals, deaths in police custody which we will come to, major massacres, there were 40 major massacres that we can define within this period, we define a major massacre as a period in which 10 or more people died.

And also deaths in detention to which we will come and assassinations by hitsquads.

We also define the category of severe ill-treatment which I think is important to your Commission and we see four categories during this period. First of all assault and injury by Security Forces in their endeavours to suppress civil protest, assault during arrest. Assault and torture whilst in detention and assault by vigilante groups to which we will come in a moment, too.

And we believe that victims of such treatment must run into the tens of thousands. Just a brief word about repressive legislation under which the actions of the Security Forces were supposed to have been carried out. It was first of all the Internal Security Act which was permanent legislation and that made provision for all of the human rights violations of which we are aware, detention, banning, imprisonment and execution and the banning of organisations, gatherings and publications.

Then the Public Safety Act which enabled the State, the declaration of the state of emergency and also the declaration of various regulations which also ... (tape ends) and under the Public Safety Act, there was the declaration or the promulgation of special educational institutions' emergency regulations which were in force from 1985 right up until the end of 1989 and longer, which controlled the movement of school children during school hours and what could be taught and so on and those are listed in the document.

Another piece of legislation which is pertinent to is the Affected Organisations Act whereby if your organisation was declared an affected organisation, it couldn't receive funding from overseas sources at all and NUSAS, the National Union of South African Students was one such organisation.

We come now to detention without trial and we regard this as the apartheid State's major weapon of repression. It was used on a massive scale. You know we have heard of how in the Argentine and so on disappearances were massive, 30 000. Here the major weapon was detention without trial and we estimate that at least 80 000 detentions have occurred from 1960 right up until 1990.

And most of them actually occurred from 1985 onwards during the states of emergency. And children and youth featured very prominently. Again we had tried to make an assessment because we are into huge numbers here. We tried to make an assessment of just how many people were detained and how many amongst them were children and youth and here for this purpose of this assessment, we have drawn from monitoring of our own organisation, monitoring by other organisations and also official information which was obligatory under the Public Safety Act, and certain police affidavits in court revealed a lot of information.

From that we are able to arrive at what we regard as a conservative analysis that there were as already said, a total of 80 000 detentions amongst whom there were about 48 000 youth, in other words 60% of those detentions, this is during this period to 1989.

And within that about 20 000 children, 25%. And as far as age is concerned, this went down to as young as seven. Sometimes entire schools, preparatory schools were detained. As far as the sex, the gender of detainees were concerned, we found that something like one in eight, about 12% of all detainees, were women and girls.

So that we would estimate that 10 000 women and girls were detained in this period of whom 6 000 would have been youth, 25 and younger, and 2 500 would have been children under the age of 18.

Torture and assault in detention. Here again we estimate that one in four detainees, would have been abused by torture or assault before they were finally released. This estimate we make from countless numbers of interviews with detainees after their release and we regard that one in four as a very conservative figure.

And of course assault begins at the arrest stage. Interrogation follows and that could take place either in army camps, under the control of the South African Defence Force or in prison cells by the members of the SAP particularly the Security Police.

And torture during interrogation can only be described as routine and that included electric shocks, suffocation, beatings as we've heard this morning, suspension, sleep deprivation and so on.

It is important to note what the purposes of torture were. They were basically to extract names of colleagues for additional detentions, to extract confessions and information and to intimidate and to try to pressure people into becoming informers.

And of course a by product of torture and assault in detention, is death in detention. It is inevitable. And deaths have occurred. We assessed that, or we have records of 73 deaths which have occurred in security detention during this period.

And with them, there were of course deaths of young people. So of the 73 deaths that we have recorded, we know the ages of only 53 of them and within that 53, a third of them, were young people, 25 years of age and younger.

And there was even one young man under the age of 18 who died in detention. And it is actually interesting to examine the official causes of deaths in detention.

Such is the familiar ones like suicide by jumping, accidental fall from the 10th floor and so on, slipping on the soap. What happens frequently is a verdict given within Magistrate's court or inquest courts, of suicide by hanging. This comes up at a rate of about 50% of all deaths in detention, suicide by hanging.

One has to ask the question, how many of these suicides by hanging were genuine and how many were simulated. And whether they were simulated or induced by the conditions of detention, it is a tragedy either way. One needs to note that detention or the fear of detention brought about what we call a large body of internal refugees, people on the run being scared of being picked up for detention and incarcerated for one, two even three years.

So lots of young people lived away from their homes on the run, living a twilight existence. Hostage taking was another rather disturbing event. When the Security Police arrived at a particular home and they could

not find the particular person that they were looking for, the particular child, they would take a brother or they would take a mother or the father and say when your relative is found, then we will release you.

This became an issue which Minister Vlok at the time, in June 1987 challenged us about and we submitted evidence to him and that was the end of the story, everything went quiet. Another point I would like to mention was the vendetta against COSAS. COSAS, the Congress of South African Students, had a membership of over a million students and became absolutely a focal point in the struggle.

And inevitably they became a target of a bitter vendetta by the apartheid State. And Security Police made a determined bid to detain its leadership and within one month of the declaration of the state of emergency, on the 21st of July, over 500 of its members were already detained.

And of course those who were detained, were being tortured to reveal the names and whereabouts of their colleagues. This was a frequent pattern.

And then very shortly thereafter, on the 26th of August, COSAS was declared an illegal organisation and membership of it was an offence.

Then something which has been alluded to earlier today, mass detentions of schools. The special regulations that we heard about earlier during the state of emergency which would allow the Security Forces to go into schools, was extraordinary and as we've said here, some of the actions in detaining entire schools, must have convinced the outside world that here was a government gone mad.

There were a couple of instances on the 22nd and 23rd of August, over 800 school children were piled into trucks and taken away and kept overnight and then 360 of them were charged the following day, including an eight year old, if you can imagine that.

Another report was a school in September, all 786 pupils and 33 teachers as well of a Soweto Secondary School, were loaded into trucks by heavily armed police (indistinct) and detained in terms of emergency regulations for boycotting classes.

There was the issue of mothers and babies in detention. There were young pregnant, and we have given examples here, and there were young pregnant women in detention. Young women giving birth in detention, young women nursing babies in detention and young mothers separated from babies whom they were nursing at the time.

Hunger strikes, there were numerous hunger strikes and in the Detainees' Support Committee almost on a monthly basis we would receive letters from detainees, smuggled out of prisons, saying we are on hunger strike, please explain our plight to the world and we have one example of that in this document.

The national hunger strike of 1989 was a very important event in that all practically all, detainees who could, went on hunger strike and this was about 1 000 of them and this actually pressured the authorities into releasing them and this had the effect of throwing open the gates of the jails. This was after people had been in detention for over two and a half years.

We also discovered the existence of rehabilitation camps where young detainees were, some of them, were advised look, we will take you to a rehabilitation camp and this is your way out of detention and there we will - you will live in comfortable conditions. Obviously there was a sting in the tail, that these people were pressured to become informers and to engage in counter mobilisation organisations.

And we list the camps that were discovered, there were about six of them in various parts of the country. As far as the impact of detention on children is concerned, I am sure that this is going to be a subject of much debate and much investigation.

And we make our offering in that direction with a few documents which we included in this one. Just briefly, the banning and restriction of children and youth. Many people when they were released from detention, were banned. In other words they had to be in their homes at certain hours, they couldn't go to meetings, gatherings, they couldn't associate themselves with various organisations. In other words what was happening was that their detention was being extended into their homes. And this was at no expense to the government and some of these detention orders were quite extraordinary in that a person would be obliged to report twice to a police station on a daily basis and what - all that they were doing was going backwards and forwards between their homes and police stations and doing nothing else.

And of course, they could not engage in any formal employment. Political imprisonment, of course in the unrest, very large numbers of people were arrested for all kinds of reasons and brought to court and charged and to a certain extent convicted and again we have tried to assess the numbers.

And it is assessed by us that during this period around 100 000 youths, aged 25 or less, have been arrested and tried in court with about 60 000 convicted and sentenced for politically related offences.

And about half that number would be under 18. And of course it is important to note that not all sentences resulted in imprisonment. One aspect of political sentencing were political executions.

We have recorded, we have on record names of 49 prisoners who were executed by hanging. And amongst them were 16 who fall into the age group of 25 or younger.

And their names are listed in the appendix. Organisations - a large number of youth and student organisations were banned either under the Internal Security Act or under the state of emergency regulations.

The first wave of bannings occurred in October 1977 after Soweto. Nine such organisations were banned. The second great wave occurred in 1988, when 13 youth and student organisations were banned and of course, we have already spoken about COSAS.

Gatherings - for 15 years there was a blanket ban which was renewed every year for prohibiting any outdoor gathering of a political nature.

Then in 1986, there was an additional blanket ban which was introduced, which forbade any indoor gatherings which related to advocating a number of things, including educational boycotts. And then apart from these blanket bannings, countless thousands of individual gatherings were banned and of course the consequence of disregarding such orders, amongst the consequences were getting yourself killed or being assaulted or arrested in the course of gatherings which now became illegal.

Banning of publications - obviously the student press became a target and our assessment from all publications is that something like 10 000 publications were banned by the, or regarded by the publications control board, as undesirable and that possession or distribution of these was an offence.

There was one particular student newspaper, called SASCO National, which had a circulation of 60 000 copies. The apartheid State set out to smash SASCO National and amongst the things they did was, they banned certain editions for possession and made two attempts to ban all future editions. Then they detained and banned the two co-editors and finally the premises and equipment of SASCO National were destroyed in attacks by persons unknown.

And then briefly about informal repression and within informal repression which is the repression outside of the law if you like, extra legal or covert repression. We have three headings. One is the National Security Management System, one is Vigilante Groups and one is Hitsquads.

A great deal has already been said about the National Security Management Systems with the State Security Council at its head. It was a structure without any (indistinct) foundation, but it was responsible for the formulation of State strategy and actually for directing the conduct of all security operations, whether they were overt or covert and as such, we believe that it has ultimate responsibility for exercising all the forms of repression which we already covered and also for the covert ones which we will allude to briefly.

MS MKHIZE: Excuse me Dr Coleman. As I had indicated earlier on, I had asked you to try and really give a very, very brief summary because as I've said that the Commissioners have gone through your document and they were planning to engage with you on what you are saying in the form of questioning.

So I don't know whether it will be fair to ask you to stop, so as to ...

DR COLEMAN: Well, Chairperson, I can stop and stop here but I mean so far I have actually condensed this down to about a quarter of what I would normally have said, so I am in your hands.

DR RANDERA: Max, I wonder if we can for the rest of your submission, take you by interacting with you, just take you through the rest of the submission, rather than you actually, so we will actually cover the rest of your submission, if that is okay with you. Can you hear me?

DR COLEMAN: I can't really, no.

DR RANDERA: I was suggesting that we take you through the rest of the questioning by asking you questions, if that is agreeable to you.

DR COLEMAN: I am in your hands.

DR RANDERA: Thank you very much, Max. Dr Coleman, I wonder if I can start by perhaps trying to personalise your submission. Throughout the life of the Commission, we have heard countless stories of people being harassed because of particular positions that they took in the period that we are looking at.

Perhaps you can tell us about your own experiences and the experiences of your family.

DR COLEMAN: Yes. I can do that although you know, I didn't come here to do that. My own involvement in monitoring of human rights violations over the last 15 years or so or for a 15 year period, was triggered off by the detention of one of my sons.

And he was subsequently banned, he was detained for five and a half months and then subsequently banned. I have another son who was detained during the state of emergency of 1985 for a similar period and also received a banning order subsequently.

I have been associated with an association which has probably had in excess of 1 000 of its members detained without trial, and that is the Detainees' Support Committee. It had its premises firebombed, we occupied a floor or a number of rooms in Gotso House and that was bombed and we were together with the rest of the occupants bombed out of Gotso House.

We've had a number of our members assassinated. I can mention in that connection Skilla Longo and David Webster. Personally, at a personal level, my wife Audrey who is going to give testimony later, has had her passport removed from her by the authorities, because they said that she was running around the world telling untruths about children and the like being detained.

I, myself have been trailed by the Security Police by innumeral occasions. One could go on for quite a long time about this, but as I said, I didn't really come up here to personalise the matter.

DR RANDERA: Thank you Dr Coleman. My next question is related to interventions. I am sure that during this period of existence of both the DOSC and the HRC, you must have approached the then government on a number of occasions, highlighting these issues that you have raised within your report. Can you give us an insight into the responses that you got from the then government?

DR COLEMAN: Well, that is correct, yes. At a very early stage in 1981 we approached the authorities at John Vorster Square here, demanding certain arrangements in terms of getting food, parcels, a change of clothing to detainees and demanding visit rights which were refused for a while and then there was the death in detention of one of those people, called Dr Neil Aggart and that was in February 1982 and that in effect was a trigger for the Security Police to change their stance and allow visits to take place for a while, limited visits.

We then approached the National Head of Security Police, who was at that time General Coetzee, to try and establish the same pattern for visits to detainees throughout the country and at great difficulty in getting any kind of agreement there, we then took the matter to the Minister of Police and the Minister of Justice, that was Minister La Grange and Minister Coetzee, early in 1982 and at which we said as a delegation that first of all, we reject the whole notion of detention without trial as beyond the civilised (indistinct) and secondly to point out that within detention, torture was going on at a routine level and that this should stop.

They thereupon challenged us to produce evidence on that score and we did just that. Over the coming months, we presented 75 statements of people who had been tortured and we released this to the press and of course from then on, we were persona non grata, with those authorities.

During the state of emergency when they published regulations on the conditions under which detainees should be held, we requested a meeting with Minister of Justice, Minister Coetzee, who was responsible for

those regulations and requested a meeting with him to discuss those conditions of detention, to try and do something about improving them and we were refused a hearing totally.

There have been subsequent conflictual contacts with the authorities such as when later on we maintained that there were still a number of children being kept in detention, this was as late as 1988 and this was contested by Minister Vlok at the time and he invited me to go into the prisons and point out the young people under the age of 18 who were still there, which is precisely what I did. And sure enough, they were there.

So this was a whole history of let's say in the beginning, trying to meet with the authorities to first of all argue with them on philosophical grounds about the issue of detention without trial and then at a later stage to try and improve the lot of detainees and to counter the misinformation which was being put out about the detention of children.

DR RANDERA: Max, you've highlighted the effects of destabilisation on countries surrounding South Africa. Is it your opinion and that of the Human Rights Committee that when we - in looking at reparations and rehabilitation that we need to actually look at the effect that South Africa had on the surrounding countries and consider some form of reparation to these countries as well?

DR COLEMAN: Yes, I would say undoubtedly, undoubtedly. I think we owe in particular Mozambique and Angola a huge debt.

South Africa in the form of the apartheid government has been responsible for massive dislocation of communities in both of those countries. I leave out the other countries for the moment, but those in particular there was massive dislocation as we've heard this morning from - most eloquently - from Graca Machel, the devastation was complete and utter, that children in particular bore the brunt and then the reports I read say something like half a million children were removed from school or from their homes or without schooling, without health care and so on.

Angola has the largest limbless population in the world per capita, 40 000 are limbless in Angola or were in 1989, it is probably well beyond that now.

And a large percentage of that is children and we have this bizarre situation where the mines which were used in Angola, were manufactured in South African factories and now South Africans are getting a second benefit out of getting the contract for the removal of the mines which they actually manufactured, I think that is a disgrace.

DR RANDERA: Max, my last question. In the 18 months that we have been taking statements and listening to stories, of course we've had a number of people coming forward who were victims of either people's courts or what is commonly come to be known as necklacing in South Africa, as Chairperson of the Human Rights Committee at the time, can you tell us whether the Committee actually took a position on this issue, was there a debate around this issue, if you can highlight that please for us?

DR COLEMAN: Well, certainly, I mean this was a practice which no right thinking person can do anything but condemn and one may attempt to understand it, one may attempt to understand how extraordinary atrocities which have occurred around the world and that these would occur in conditions of extreme conflict, but as a practice it is totally unacceptable and we said so all the way through.

But it is one of the by-products of the struggle which I think is extremely unfortunate.

DR RANDERA: Thank you Chairperson, I have no other questions.

MS MKHIZE: Thank you very much. I will ask other fellow Commissioners to ask you a few questions. Wynand Malan?

MR MALAN: Thank you Chairperson. Dr Coleman, I really have two questions, but they are in a sense big questions which I hope you can answer in a small way or in a big way, in a brief period.

DR COLEMAN: I will try.

MR MALAN: The first really relates to, or let me just preface the question with saying that personally I have the highest respect for you, I think you have that experience in our relationship, you did make an earlier submission at our offices, there were some questioning, which I think you dealt with brilliantly and clearly, honestly, I have very much appreciation for that.

Secondly, I do sense that in terms of your call it charter or your res non deberet, that the focus was on the State whereas we are looking at a broader conflict so to speak and on that I have one question really. In describing the activity of the youth, on the first page already of your submission, you talk about the footsoldiers, I think those were more or less your opening remarks and what they were doing, but you don't refer to any active role of aggression on the side of the youth, whereas in all our hearings around the country, we have fast evidence of youth or youths or groups also acting against what you indeed refer to later, the undesirable structures or support structures of the apartheid State, councillors, homeland governments and so on.

I really would want to ask you whether you wouldn't maybe not now, but maybe give us something, let your experience roll with you and give us something in writing as to your understanding of the nature of that conflict and not only in terms of the human rights violations which indeed I think you have covered well here.

That is the first, it is a request, you can respond to both. The second is relating to the distinction between the periods one leading up to 1989 and the second then 1990 to 1994, in your opening remarks I think it starts more or less on page 13, you make it clear that there was now a switch, a change in the nature. You refer to it as the mother of all covert operations, I enjoy some of your language, it is very descriptive, but you do say there was a broadening, a kind of added dimension, if not then also a change in approach with the addition of vigilante groups and elements within the Security Forces, in addition to what you call the State itself.

Again then, would you not also just reflect on the reasons as to why specifically the vigilante groups joined into this. The difficulty in a presentation or in receiving a presentation as you have it focusing on the violations against the youngsters only, could be read as that all of them were totally not guilty or not culpable in terms of the broader conflict and struggle.

Those are really my questions. The same question but relating to two different periods.

DR COLEMAN: Yes. Thank you. Yes, they are very broad questions and would really to do them justice, would take a long time, but just very briefly, one must agree that our work has been definitely focused on the human rights violations of the apartheid State.

And in that sense you might say is one-sided, unbalanced, yes, that is true. But within our mandate, as a human rights body to observe human rights violations, we have tried to record these violations as faithfully as possible.

And that really leads on to the second part, that obviously in a liberation struggle, there is always going to be a reaction to a particular action. And it is the reaction to actions that we are still living with today unfortunately in KwaZulu Natal in particular.

Certainly you can't have the scenario of on one side a bunch of saints and on the other side a bunch of sinners, it is not like that at all.

And there are sinners within the saints ranks and there are even saints within the sinners ranks, let's put it that way. And that distinction can become blurred over the time, but certainly our mandate was to observe and record the actions of the apartheid State and that is what our previous submission is exactly.

If it is reflected in this particular submission, you know, it is not surprising really. On the second part in terms of the switch from what we call total strategy to destabilisation strategy, that too really is a whole debate and you know, I really would welcome some kind of specific let's say hearing on the part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on that whole aspect, because we did believe from all our recording and all our information, that it is a clear case for saying that the destabilisation strategy was cold-blooded, calculated, deliberate, it is not something that just happened, it wasn't haphazard and that from that critical month of August 1990 when the Pretoria Minute was signed and when the ANC suspended the arms struggle, from that moment there was just this huge explosion.

In that month alone 700 people died. That is just too big a coincidence, what was it all about. What we say it was about was a collusion between various elements who had an interest in maintaining the status quo or at least retaining the power which they had from the apartheid system or had inherited.

All the actors within that destabilisation, the aggressive actors within that destabilisation all had some kind of stake in the continuation of apartheid and you might say that is what the third force was all about, and yes, perhaps the third force was a collection of the beneficiaries of apartheid.

MR MALAN: May I indulge on the Chair and just ask another question, really flowing from your response which was this action precipitating reaction, cause and effect thing, that to me specifically, but I think generally within the Commission, there is a major concern also when we look at the future, spiralling, the negative spiralling of violence generally speaking.

Do you have any ideas of how it could be possible to cut into such a spiral and get it sort of down spiralling? If we should see similar things in the future, it won't be on apartheid, but it could be some other kind of mobilisation, cause and effect type thing, is there anything one can really do? How does one see it, how does the society move in against such a development?

DR COLEMAN: Chairperson, I think we've done it in producing the constitution that we have and in producing the Bill of Rights that we have.

The Bill of Rights within our constitution, is a document that we can be hugely proud of in my opinion. I think it is a document that will stand comparison with anything in the world today, in terms of human rights and let's say cheques and balances, we are what the Germans call a "Recht Staat", a right State.

Our allegiance is not to a person or to a parliament, it is to a constitution and it is a magnificent document, but having said that, you know, okay, it is a fine piece of paper, but it has got to walk off the paper into people's daily lives and we still are in a country with 40, 50% unemployment.

The benefits of democracy, whilst we have formal democracy, the benefits of democracy have not arrived and once - I mean they have to be delivered to people on the ground and we have to get rid of the legacy of apartheid, the most important one of which is homelessness and joblessness.

And once we've done that, I think everything else will follow. All the criminal violence will either disappear or it will abate considerably. I think therein lies the clue, in my opinion.

MR MALAN: Thank you once again, Dr Coleman.

MS MKHIZE: Joyce Seroke?

MS SEROKE: Mr Coleman, according to the Act that governs the life of the Commission, we have to go through findings before we make our deponents victims and that process is quite long as you can imagine through corroboration and that sort of thing.

Because of in terms of the short life span of the Commission, we are going through lots of pressures, limited resources to such an extent that there are discussions now within the Commission as to how we could use information and resources from well-known organisations like yours to help us in this process of findings. How do you see that process working if the Commission would decide to approach your organisation in terms of corroborating some of the statements that we have received?

DR COLEMAN: Thank you. Well, we would be extremely happy to cooperate in whatever way we can. We have got really a massive data base at our disposal and I believe a lot of it has been passed over to you, it is on your data base and of course the submissions that we are making now, are perhaps an indication of how much we want to cooperate with you and ensure that the whole truth is known at the end of the day and to help ensuring that the report that comes out which will be the final product, or one of the final products of your Commission, will be an accurate reflection of the past and we pledge our full cooperation to do that.

Additionally I would actually like to make a proposal Chair, with your permission. May I do that? I would like to propose that the TRC resumes the responsibility for actually compiling and disseminating what I would call a roll of honour.

You know we have come through a war and every war has a roll of honour, every just war in any way. I think that we need such a roll and that roll would consist first of all and primarily of the names of those people who have died in the struggle. When I say names, I am talking about names of all people, from

whatever political persuasion, who have died in the context of the conflicts of the past, that their names should be inscribed on this roll of honour.

Because we have so many unsung heroes, that we never hear about and I think it is important that their names should be paid tribute to. One could additionally also list all those who have been detained. Now that might be a huge job, we would never find all 80 000 but we probably will find half of those and perhaps they should be inscribed on a role of honour as well.

And all those who have been banned, all those assassinated of course and all those restricted. It will be a huge job, I believe it would be, let's say within the mandate and the capabilities of either the Truth Commission itself or let's say a sub-body which could be established.

You know, I think that will be a lasting tribute and perhaps a unifying thing. I can remember a few years ago when we managed to persuade the Editor of the Star to publish a list of 5 000 people who were in detention and he courageously did so in the face of a threat from the Security Police that he would be closed down if he did.

Those 5 000 names were published in the Star one day and there it was and thereafter an enormous number of people came up to us and said that was fantastic to see my name on the list. ... (tape ends) ... it was worth while in some kind of a way, now I believe that same kind of feeling could be passed on to people.

MS SEROKE: Thank you Mr Coleman.

MS MKHIZE: Tom Manthata?

MR MANTHATA: I am inclined to waive my right, but Max when I go through this document, I realise there is a period or there is an event in the late 1980's that does not feature, namely the (indistinct) struggles between the UDF youths and the AZAPO youths.

And we are here to talk about reconciliation without that face being reflected here, are we going to assume that it never happened and it never had the kind of gross human rights violations amongst or within those groups that may not impact on the process of reconciliation?

DR COLEMAN: Yes, indeed. That is something which I must apologise for, in the sense again, that our focus has been on the State, on the human rights violations of the State and certainly within the various groups within the liberation struggle, there was some cross-violence which was very regrettable. I think the same might be said of actions against, gratuitous actions against innocent members of the White public, which in the end achieved no good purpose at all, quite apart from the fact that they were horrific acts, but in terms of promoting the liberation struggle, were counter-productive.

So, also the (indistinct) struggle between the different liberation movements, was counter-productive and I suppose yes, something should be recorded about that.

MR MANTHATA: Perhaps let me rest my question, thanks Max.

MS MKHIZE: Thank you very much Dr Coleman. We really appreciate your submission.

Clearly it is very difficult to look at the question of human rights violations having gone through a difficult faze yourself and remain impartial, but in your case we can see that you have been thinking very, very seriously about these things as you are proposing even endeavours to come up with symbolical reparations which will be a spring board for reconciliation activities.

We really appreciate that from you. We hope you will continue to cooperate with us as we finalise our reparations policy and also thinking about what should be put in place in future to make sure that in this country, children in particular are not part of what you are describing, detentions and all other experiences which are harsh and inhuman. Thank you very much.

DR COLEMAN: Thank you.

MS MKHIZE: To young people I just want to say, I mean what Dr Coleman has taken us through, it is really a difficult text in terms of our history, especially as he has given this perspective saying young people of your age went through those kinds of experiences.

The language as presented by Dr Coleman might be complexed, but issues that he has raised, I should think as you go back to your school, you will be able to initiate debates and talks about how in this country we should come up with policies or debates which will protect young people of your age in future.

Thank you very much Dr Coleman. I would like to propose a few changes to our programme. According to our programme, we are supposed to have Miss Audrey Coleman, but we will ask her to be the first person after lunch. So what we are going to do now, we are going to ask students from Usab Technical Secondary School to give us a short play.

I understand the play will take 10 to 15 minutes. It says it deals with June 16, 1976 and what happened on that day, so I will ask those students to come forward. Since we will now be going to sit down as Commissioners, again I have a long list of people who are guests, I am not going to go through them, except that I will really just talk in terms of organisational structures that we have a Mayor amongst us, quite a number of schools and at the end of the day, we will really give names and properly acknowledge people and members of Parliament and some national NGO's.

We thank you very much for supporting this work, but at the end of the day your names will be called out properly. What we are going to try to do, we are asking that we come back - after the play we will go out for lunch and we will come back here at ten to two, so as to try and make up in terms of our programme. So I will ask the students to come on the stage please.

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