

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO THE RIOTS AT  
SOWETO AND OTHER PLACES IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Dr. Matlhare

38 yrs old medical  
2nd class

MORNING SESSION:

7th FEBRUARY, 1977.

VOLUME 99

(Pages 4 717 - 4 765)

THE COMMISSION RESUMES ON THE 7th FEBRUARY, 1977, AT PRETORIA.

DR YUTAR: M'Lord, this week we propose to - the first 4 days of this week we propose to lead the evidence of certain witnesses who have - certain persons who have been detained in terms of Section 6 of the Terrorism Act, but their detention under that Section has been suspended for the duration of the period that they are testifying. In other words, they are therefore free to testify and because of the terms of the Act, no copy of their statement will be placed before Your Lordship. Before I (10) call the first witness and name him, I would like to make this request to the Commission, this application to the Commission to request the press not to publish his name.

CHAIRMAN: Is that for the next witness?

DR YUTAR: For the next witness and we will be renewing that application in respect of each of these witnesses, not to publish his name or his address or any details in the course of his evidence which might lead to his identification.

CHAIRMAN: The order is in that form.

DR YUTAR: As Your Lordship pleases. I now call Dr Aaron (20) Montoedi Matlhare.

AARON MONTOEDI MATLHARE: sworn states:

DR YUTAR: You have heard His Lordship direct the press not to publish your name or any detail which will in any way lead to your identification. -- That is correct.

And you are about to give evidence in terms of a statement which you drew up and signed, but before doing that you would like to hand to His Lordship a two-page request. -- That is correct.

Which you would like His Lordship to read before you (30) give your evidence. -- That is correct.

CHAIRMAN: You mention here the question of giving your evidence/...

evidence in camera. Are you satisfied with giving your evidence without the disclosure of your name or any identification? -- Yes.

You are satisfied. -- I am.

Well then, naturally what you ask for is not in my power to give you, but all the necessary arrangements will be made in this regard. Does that satisfy you? -- Yes, to a certain extent.

You see, I cannot make an order. -- Yes.

The Act says specifically I cannot make an order, but all the necessary arrangements will be attended to. -- That is correct. (10)

DR YUTAR: And, M'Lord, I have also indicated to the witness that I have taken steps already to accede to his wish. Now, you are aged 38 years, you are a medical practitioner residing and conducting your profession at Soweto. -- That is correct.

And you also conduct your profession at Baragwanath Hospital, apart from the surgery which you have in Soweto. Now would you be so kind as to read from paragraph 2 onwards please? -- I started my schooling at Orlando Mookie Memorial School in 1944. I eventually went to Orlando High School from 1950 to 1955. From 1957 to 1959 I studied at Fort Hare for my B.Sc. (20) degree. From 1960 to 1964 I studied at the Natal University for my MB. Ch.B. I trained at Baragwanath from January, 1965 to December, 1965, and worked there for another year as a casualty officer. During 1974/75 I was studying at the Wits University for a Senior Degree, after I had been in March, 1973, to Edinburgh University. I started my medical practice during 1968 in Soweto.

Did you get any degree at Edinburgh University? -- Well, I was preparing to write my primary for the F.R.C.S., Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons. (30)

And you are hoping to complete that some time this year? --

Yes/...

Yes, in fact I was supposed to have completed it in October last year.

And on account of these unfortunate incidents you have ....  
-- ... (intervenes - speaking simultaneously) ... do it some time later.

And you speak about studying at Wits University for a Senior Degree. What degree is that? -- Well, that is the same degree, a Fellowship Degree.

Of the Royal College of Surgeons. -- Royal - South African College of Surgeons. (10)

Did you get that? -- which was also the first part. Unfortunately I could not get through one subject, so I had to re-write it some time in September this year.

As a matter of interest, what subject was that? -- It was supposed to be the easiest one, Anatomy.

Well, you are not the only one who finds difficulty with Anatomy. Now we go to paragraph 4 please. -- Since childhood and during my school and university career I have never been interested in any politics whatsoever. As proof of this I can just mention that during my high school days and after the (20) death of King George, our Afrikaans master instructed us to write an essay, stating among other things, that we were happy that the king of the White oppressors had died. After the inspectors had inspected our books, five of our teachers had been asked to resign. In spite of this I was not influenced or developed any further interest in politics.

Now this Afrikaans master of yours, was he a White man, a Black man? -- He was a Black man.

And the 5 teachers who were asked to resign, were they also Black? -- Yes, they were also Black. (30)

Paragraph 6. -- My first contact with Winnie Mandela was

in/...

in 1969 when she came to me as a patient. I at that stage learned from newspaper reports that she was a banned person and also a member of the ANC. I also learned that her husband, Nelson Mandela, was serving a sentence at Robben Island. By this time she complained of heart trouble. I never got payment for the treatment I was giving her and eventually decided that in fact nothing was wrong with her. She at no stage discussed politics with me or my staff whilst calling for treatment. She only on a few occasions complained of financial problems. I treated her as yet an ordinary patient. I have a record (10) at my surgery which is proof of this.

A record card. -- A record card. To this I must mention that unfortunately my surgery got burnt down and I lost all my statements and I hope we will still be able to find record as proof, but according to the reports from my wife everything has been strewn around and papers were just lying outside.

Have you any idea who is responsible for the burning down of your surgery? -- That is my problem because it has been burnt twice. It was burned before I was detained and during my detention and I have no idea who could have been (20) responsible for the burning of my surgery.

Paragraph 8 please. -- It surprised me that she called on me for treatment as it was common cause that she was in love with Dr Motlana and was going around with him. It was even more surprising when she suggested to me to make love to her meaning to have sex with her. I was not impressed with her and did not feel attracted to her. It became clear to me that Winnie Mandela was trying very hard to befriend me. She even bought presents and sent Christmas cards during 1969 to us (that is me and my wife). I was called out to her house very often (30) and at all hours of the night to attend to her so-called illness as/...

as a doctor. This in time harassed me and I decided to stop going to her at night-time. I had no interest in this woman's doings nor in her private life. I have on occasions when visiting her for treatment found a man called Peter Magubane whom I know was occupying a back room in her house. From newspaper reports it became known to me that this Peter Magubane was also a banned person and it appeared that there was a love affair between him and Winnie Mandela.

Now who is this Peter Magubane? Do you know what he does?  
-- Yes, he is a newspaper photographer for the Rand Daily (10) Mail.

He is a photographer for the Rand Daily Mail. Right, paragraph 11. -- During 1973/74, I am not sure of the date, I know that she (that is Winnie Mandela) was arrested with Peter Magubane and a certain Joyce Sikhakane and some other people I did not know. After their release she still tried to win my friendship although she never discussed politics with me. To me this woman was yet another patient. I further viewed her as a mischievous woman because of her influence on innocent people such as Joyce Sikhakane who was known to me to be a good (20) person, although I never queried her on this.

Now this Joyce Sikhakane (spelt S-i-k-h-a-k-a-n-e) who is she? -- She was known to me as she was attending school at Fort Hare with us.

And you found her to be an innocent person, as you put it?  
-- Well, as I put it, she was just, you know, some ordinary person.

And in what way did Winnie Mandela try to influence her mischievously, as you put it? -- I say that because as they were arrested with Joyce, Winnie Mandela and Joyce Sikhakane (30) were arrested and charged under I do not know what Act, I

cannot/...

MATLHARE.

cannot remember, and knowing Joyce to be such a person I was quite shocked that she could be involved in such politics.

I see. Paragraph 13. -- Since 1974 -- again I am not sure of the date when her banning was uplifted, she stopped seeing me. There were then no more illnesses or need to call on me. It only then became clear to me that there was something more behind her trying to befriend me and her visits to my surgery and her calling me out to her house at all hours of the night. It then dawned on me that the reason behind this was that other people could see me in her presence or at her house and (10) would therefore identify me with her. This woman, Joyce Sikhakane, mentioned in paragraph 11, has since skipped the country and is at present a refugee in Denmark.

That information that she had gone to Denmark you obtained from newspapers? -- From newspaper reports.

Paragraph 15. -- I was again called upon by Winnie Mandela during April, 1976, when she wanted me to treat a certain man who became known to me as Lebenya.

L-e-b-e-n-y-a. -- That is right.

You have got that name in inverted commas. Why? -- (20) Well, I do not why it is printed in inverted commas, I just wrote Lebenya.

That is in fact his name? -- That is his name.

Right. -- She (Winnie Mandela) took me to a house where I found this man. She told me that this man was assaulted by Peter Magubane. This appeared to me was Winnie Mandela's new friend and also that he was an ex-prisoner from Robben Island.

Just carry on please. -- During July, 1974, the Naledi High School of which my only daughter, Ellen Matlhare, age 13 years, was a student, took an educational trip to Lourenco (30) Marques. They had an accident in which 9 children died and

a/...

a school teacher died. My daughter was one of the deceased persons. The burial of the deceased took place on the 18th August, 1974, as a mass burial. Soon after the accident occurred, a committee was formed, called the L.M. Disaster Fund. The aim of the Fund was to assist in the burial expenses and the erection of tombstones. I did not serve on this committee. The committee consisted of: Chairman - Josiah Khumalo; Secretary - Mr Mataboge; Other members - Mr Mathabathe from Morris Isaacson School.

He is in fact the principal of the Morris Isaacson (10) School. -- That is correct. And Mr Morapedi who is a school inspector and others whose names I cannot remember. Soon after the burial a story went around that the people in charge of the money were squandering the money. There were no political views expressed in this Fund nor did it have any political form. As a result of this story the bereaved parents decided to form another committee called The Bereaved Parents' Action Committee to investigate these rumours. The Committee consisted of: Chairman: A.M. Matlhare; Vice Chairman - Mr S. Magongoa; Secretary - Mr T. Maeta; Assistant Secretary - Mr (20) A Maeta; Treasurer - Mrs Motha. The aims of this committee was to investigate the L.M. Disaster Fund. This committee had no political views whatsoever. Soon afterwards it became a public affair. I decided to change the name to the Soweto Parents' Association with the action committee members as elected in paragraph 19. Due to difficulties arising from investigation into the L.M. Disaster Fund, it was felt that legal advice should be obtained. As we had been to various instances where no help could be obtained, a suggestion came from the treasurer, Mrs Motha, that Winnie Mandela should be called (30) upon as she knows a lot of attorneys and could be of help. Here

I/...



I must stress that I was, as the chairman, I was not ....

In favour? -- No, not that I was not in favour, I was not a hard man on my members. I mean I gave them their latitude, I mean any latitude and whatever they requested, if I thought it was reasonable and it would satisfy them, I always agreed. I was not a very tough ..

CHAIRMAN: You were not very strict. -- I was not a very strict chairman.

DR YUTAR: And this suggestion was accepted by the committee?

-- They accepted the suggestion and I was delegated to (10) see her. This was early in May, 1976. I then approached Winnie Mandela and put our difficulty to her. She agreed to be of assistance and she said she would do the further arrangements. She told me that it would take about two weeks for arrangements to be made, which I agreed upon. About two weeks later I received a message from her that arrangements had been made and that she would like to meet the committee to explain to them. I agreed to this and told her that she could come the next Wednesday. I agreed with her to see my committee as she was a person who had knowledge of legal proceedings and who was (20) suggested by one of my committee members, which was adopted by the whole committee. As a result of this Winnie Mandela became aware that my committee met every Wednesday night. She attended the meeting on the Wednesday night at my surgery and explained the arrangements to my committee. This meeting was held on 7.4.76. It was further arranged that she would make an appointment with the attorney for us to see him. When we eventually saw this attorney, a Mr Ayob, we decided against him and did not give him any instructions on this matter. With this our dealings with Winnie Mandela came to an end and further need for (30) her was not needed as far as we were concerned. During May,

1976/...

1976, there were a lot of press reports and general conversation amongst people about children not attending classes at higher primary schools and junior secondary schools because of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. As the atmosphere was getting tense, it was decided by my committee that we should consult with school boards and school committees. We decided first to see the Tswana School Committee of the D.A.B. Watson School of which my wife is secretary. A meeting of these committee members were individually approached on this subject where it was decided that a general meeting should be held. The general (10) feeling among school committees were that there were insufficient qualified teachers to teach in Afrikaans as a medium. It was decided to call a meeting which would be held on the 6th June, 1976, at Naledi Hall. The next Soweto Parents Association Committee meeting was held on 26.5.76 at my surgery before the public meeting that was to be held on 6.6.76. The following people were present: all my committee members and I chaired the meeting. The agenda was the resolutions to be taken regarding the Afrikaans medium of instruction. I as chairman suggested that we approach the Regional Director of Bantu Education (20) to appeal to him to drop the Afrikaans medium of instruction as there were not enough qualified teachers to teach Afrikaans as a medium. It was, however, accepted that we should approach the relevant authorities. The next item we discussed was which people to invite as speakers to the public meeting of 6.6.76. We agreed on the following speakers: Mr Mokoape - principal of the D.A.B. Watson School; Mr Leonard Mosala - a U.B.C. member; Winnie Mandela. Here I must try and put the Court in the picture that we were trying here to get as much a broad spectrum of people as possible from different - with (30) different ideas so that we should know what to say when we

approached/...

SPA  
meetings

approached the relevant authorities.

Just before you go on, there is a reference there to paragraph 92. Don't worry about turning over, I will read it out. It refers to paragraph 26 and it reads as follows: It was suggested by one of my committee members, namely Mr A. Maeta to invite Winnie Mandela to the public meeting as a speaker. Winnie Mandela was suggested as a speaker as some of my committee members were very much influenced by the impression she created and the assistance she gave in finding us an attorney regarding the L.M. Disaster Fund. I can only say (10) that I think it was for this reason that she was suggested as a speaker as Mr A. Maeta was very impressed by her. Is that correct? -- That is correct.

Proceed now with paragraph 27. -- During the course of this meeting I received a phone call from Winnie Mandela, saying that she was coming to my surgery to deliver a message. Soon afterwards she arrived and I took the opportunity to inform her that she was chosen as a speaker to the public meeting to which she agreed, saying that she was also to attend a meeting that same weekend in Newcastle, but would be back in time to (20) attend ours. A further discussion on publishing the meeting was held whereupon Winnie Mandela volunteered and here in fact it was suggested to get Aubrey Mokoena to print the handbills for us. It was only now that I came to know that Winnie Mandela knows and is associated with Aubrey Mokoena.

He will be our next witness, M'Lord. Right. -- I did not query her on this, but accepted her offer as we had no one else to assist us. As the printing was free of charge I took it for granted that Aubrey Mokoena was a close friend of Winnie Mandela and that they must have known one another for a long time. (30) The problem of distribution was also solved by Winnie Mandela

as/...

as she offered that Aubrey Mokoena would get boys to distribute the bills for us. She also said that she would try to attend our usual Wednesday meetings from the following Wednesday. I did not think anything about her inviting herself and offering hers and Aubrey Mokoena's services, but only now see that she was infiltrating into my committee. Nothing further was discussed and we dispersed. I, together with my secretary, drafted a pro forma of the handbills and left a message for Aubrey Mokoena to collect same at my house. Aubrey Mokoena, before this had been known to me through church affairs, although (10) I knew nothing of his affairs with Winnie Mandela. A pro forma was collected and printed by Aubrey Mokoena and later was also distributed by him. Some were left with me in person, of which I gave all my committee members to distribute. I had no discussion with Aubrey Mokoena about Winnie Mandela, except that it was on her suggestion that he had to do the handbills. Our public meeting was held on 6.6.76 at Naledi Hall. I chaired the meeting and opened the meeting with my speech on Afrikaans as the medium of instruction. This was not a political meeting, but a meeting to find resolutions on Afrikaans as a medium (20) of instruction and to report back what progress had been made. The next speaker was Mr Leonard Mosala, who spoke on the same lines as me, without any political tinge to his speech. The next speaker was Winnie Mandela, who gave a political speech, attacking the government on lack of education, no land, the homeland government and general exploitation of Blacks by Whites. This speech by Winnie Mandela was completely out of proportion and context with the agenda and aims of the meeting. As proof of this I now wish to hand in her typed speech which she afterwards handed to my wife saying that she would collect (30) it later. This speech was seized by the police when they searched/...

searched my house. Speech marked 10.

Paragraph 32. -- After she had given her speech, there was raising of Black Power salute and shouting of Amandla Ngawethu, which means 'Power to the people'. It became clear to me that I was misled by Winnie Mandela, as well as some members of my committee and that she had sought an opportunity where she could have an audience to deliver a political speech. There was, however, little response from the audience on her shouting and fist raising as the audience was not politically orientated or motivated. I could see some of my committee members (10) shaken by her speech and Black Power salute.

Now before I ask you further questions on that, you have got a note 'See paragraph 94' and that you will find on page 19 and that reads as follows: After her speech she herself gave the fist raising Black Power salute and shouted Amandla Ngawethu. There was very little response from the audience. I did not see who responded to this although I could think that it was only her followers. None of my committee members responded to this. This I did notice as we were all sitting together at one side and apart from the main audience. (20) Now this meeting was held in the hall of the Naledi High School. -- No, in the Naledi Township, the hall in Naledi Township.

Where was it held, in what building? -- It is a municipal building.

And how many people were present? -- Approximately I would say about between 100 and 150 people were present.

And did this speech by Winnie Mandela in any way incite the audience, apart from the members of your committee? -- As I said it incited people whom I thought were people she had brought along, her people, because there was very little (30) fist raising and my people were quite surprised and shaken by

this/...

this.

And you yourself and members of your committee were completely taken by surprise at the tone of her speech which, as you put it, was out of context with the purpose of the meeting. -- That is correct.

Paragraph 33. -- It was also decided at this meeting that the next public meeting should be held on 4.7.76 at Naledi Hall for which I personally catered. There were no further discussions and we dispersed. After Winnie Mandela returned from Newcastle and before the public meeting of 6.6.76 (10) she forwarded me the chairman's speech as the Newcastle meeting which I read. This speech was of a political nature on general exploitation of Blacks by Whites, something on Black consciousness, lack of schools, lack of education and housing. I cannot remember in detail as I had no real interest in this and returned same to her with my comment as "No comment on this". This speech was more or less on the same lines as the speech she had given at our public meeting. I cannot remember the name of the chairman at the Newcastle meeting, although I remember that he was an Indian. (20)

If you are tired, let me know; I will read for you. -- On or about 9.6.76 on my way from Zola to Naledi, I noticed a road block manned by police. On arriving at my surgery I found students with dog bites and some choked with teargas. These I treated and received further reports from them about other students being injured, some of them I sent to hospital for treatment where I was assisted by the police with their conveyance.

Now this took place a week before the riots broke out at Soweto. -- A week before the riots.

Do you know what the trouble was about there? Why (30) road blocks were put there? -- Well, police were called to the school/...

school. Apparently there was some problem between the students and the Security Police. This I think is contained further down in my statement.

Right. -- As a result of the report received from one of the injured children, I went to Naledi High School to see if I could be of any assistance. On this I got permission from the police. On my arrival at Naledi High School, I found a burning Volkswagen behind the library or principal's office. The majority of the children were scattered outside and the injured were in classrooms. I also saw a group of youths (10) at the principal's office arguing with a white policeman in civilian clothes. I then went to the classroom to attend to the injured children. On my way out I requested the children to tell the prefects that I would like to see them all at my surgery the next morning. My aim was to find out from them what the real trouble was. I then returned to my surgery. \*

Now this Volkswagen, do you know who it belonged to? -- I later learned that it belonged to the police.

Paragraph 37. -- The next morning on 10.6.76 on my arrival at my surgery, a group of about 10 to 12 prefect males (20) were waiting for me. I spoke to them outside and enquired from them what the cause of the trouble was and whether I could be of any assistance. Their leader whom I know as <sup>Tebello</sup> Motapanyane, told me that the real problem was that the Security Police picked up students at school and that the principal allowed them to do so. They were preventing the police from arresting the students when the policeman said: "Ek praat nie met kaffertjies nie." The students reacted to this remark and went and burnt his car.

That is the Volkswagen that you saw at the Naledi High School. -- That is correct. (30)

By this you understood? -- I cannot remember where I am now.

The/...

The last line. -- By this I understood that Motapanyane was the leader of the group that burned the car. The main complaint was that their principal - I do not know his name, he was a new man at the school - had phoned the police as soon as he had seen the car burning. That he is unlike Mr Mathabathe of Morris Isaacson School, who does not allow police at his school. As a result of this I gave them a paper to write their grievances which I said I would discuss with their principal, which they refused and said that I might give it to the police. I could be of no help or assistance to them and I dismissed (10) them.

CHAIRMAN: Just give me the name again, the name of the one that you thought was the leader of the group. -- Motapanyane.

DR YUTAR: Spelt M-o-t-a-p-a-n-y-a-n-e. Is that his correct name? -- Yes.

That is his correct name. -- That is right.

Was he a student himself? -- Yes, he was a student.

What age would you say he was? -- I would estimate roughly that he was about 18 years of age.

Do you know in what class he was? -- He must have been (20) doing matric.

Right, we carry on, paragraph 39. -- As a result of the ~~the~~ previous occurrences, my attention was drawn to Winnie Mandela's house where I noticed certain groups of students, namely Tsitsi Mashinini, Motapanyane, Zweli and others I do not know, often hanging around Winnie Mandela's house even very early in the morning until very late at night. This made me think that these students got the know-how and influence from Winnie Mandela as to their doings.

Now you mention here for the first time the name of (30) Tsitsi Mashinini. -- That is right.

How/...



