

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

Dr. Matlhare

38 yrs old medical
2nd class

MORNING SESSION:

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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

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