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SACBC

report on

POLICE CONDUCT TOWNSHIP PROTECTION

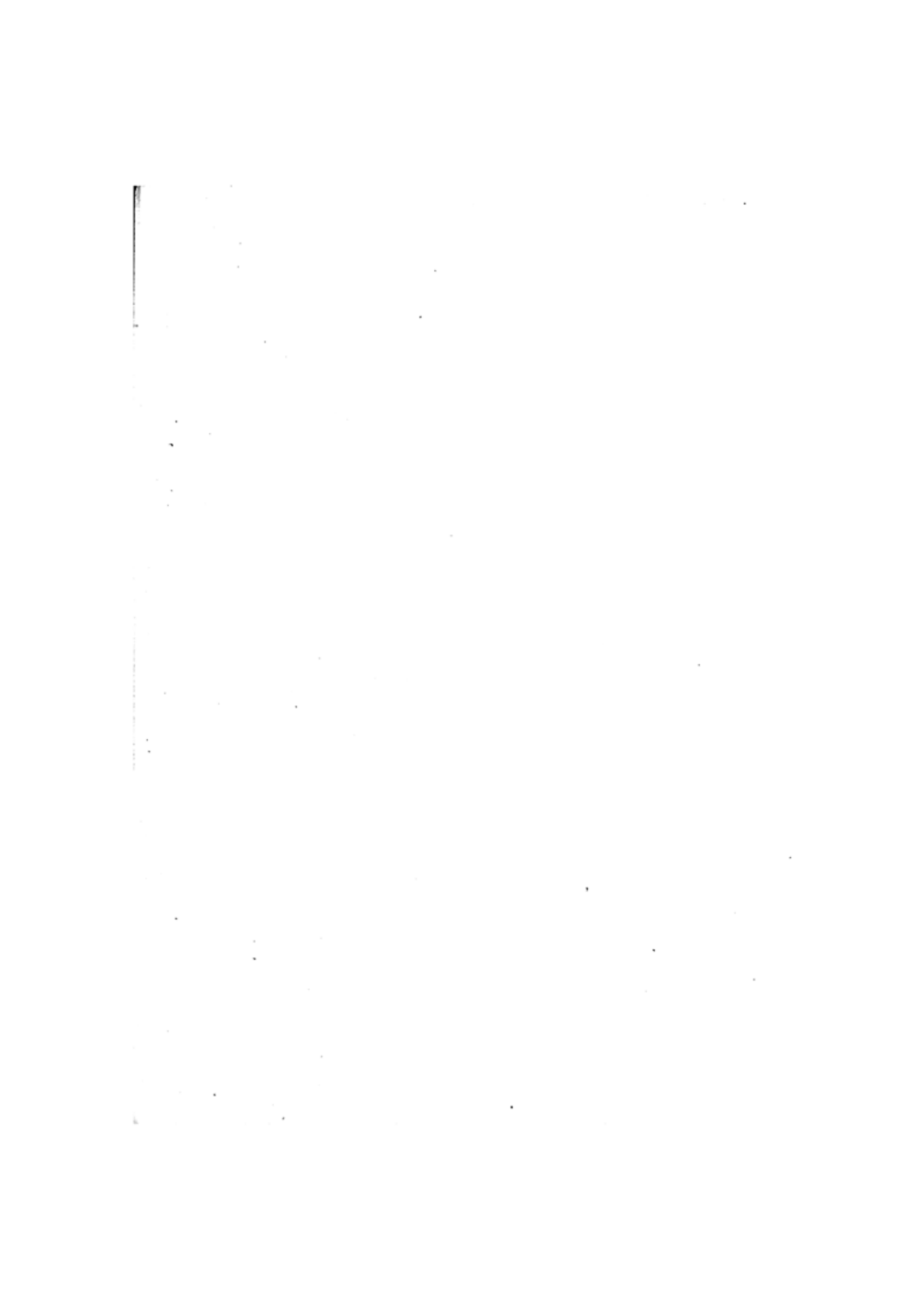
AUGUST - NOVEMBER 1984

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**Report on
POLICE CONDUCT during
TOWNSHIP PROTESTS**

August-November 1984

**Compiled and published by
Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference
S.A.C.B.C.**



INTRODUCTION

It is with sadness that we draw this report together from information that has come into our hands. We are shocked by the violent attacks on so many people during the last three months of turmoil. In sorrow we offer our sympathy to those whose relatives have been killed, and to those who have been maimed and injured, and to everyone whose life has been violently disrupted during this time. A further cause of our distress are the many instances of brutal inhumanity, where people have unconcernedly and casually attacked, injured and sometimes killed, others. The legacy of bitterness and resentment that all this wanton violence engenders, serves only to postpone a just and lasting settlement of the issues dividing our country.

This report, which draws special attention to irregular police activity, focuses on one disturbing aspect of the prevailing turmoil and violence in South Africa. We intend to produce a pastoral letter assessing the present situation in the near future. But we consider it urgent to make this report public, in the hope that this publication will contribute to halting the police activities the report describes.

In presenting this report, we are well aware that others besides the police, are engaged in illegal and violent activities. We also recognise what the police have done in protecting the innocent from criminals and hooligans. Among the estimated 150 (as of 26 11 84) deaths, at least eight persons are known to have been killed by persons other than the police. Furthermore, we acknowledge that some persons and groups may exploit this situation for their own criminal ends. We concede, too, there may have been times when the police were provoked or needed to protect themselves. But that cannot justify unwarranted or unlawful conduct on the part of the police. More is expected of the police, who are specially selected, trained, equipped, organised and paid to uphold the law and to protect all in society. For the sake of the whole of South Africa it is important that the police actions described in this report are seen neither as legal nor as a contribution to the good order of the country. Therefore, notwithstanding the circumstances prevailing in the townships, we cannot allow this travesty of justice to pass unnoticed.

We see no hope of reaching a reasonable settlement embracing everyone in South Africa and an end to the continually smouldering unrest, unless all its causes and aggravations are honestly faced. For instance, one of the reasons for organising the two-day stayaway, (November 5/6) was the massive presence of the police in the townships. It is noteworthy too, that the stayaway had greater support in areas where there had been more police activity. In a number of cases the very

presence, and especially the attitude of the police, has itself provoked public violence. We regret to say that, instead of being accepted as protectors of the people, the police are now regarded by many people in the black townships as disturbers of the peace and perpetrators of violent crime.

What we find particularly disturbing is that many of the people whose affidavits provided the basis of this report do not appear to have provoked police action. Many victims of violence claim that at the time they were mere passersby, or in their own homes, in their yards or on school premises.

Last year parliament, to whom the police are ultimately accountable, passed the Republic of South Africa Constitution Act. It is worth noting that its Preamble includes the following as national goals:

- To secure the maintenance of law and order
- To respect and to protect the human dignity, life, liberty and property of all in our midst.

In view of the police's prosecutive role in the recent protests, it is most important that South Africa's citizens take responsibility for what they do, especially since they act in the name of our entire society. Unless the public, the Minister and officials entrusted with directing police affairs, all realise what is happening and take steps to stop irregular police activity, no progress towards a solution is possible. Our hope is that this report will facilitate that progress.

Furthermore, our reason for focussing attention on police activities is that the media have generally not made them public. On many occasions press people have been arrested, shot at, or had their film confiscated. At times they have not been allowed into areas of unrest, or have been too afraid to venture there. In view of the resulting lack of information, especially in the white community, we intend that this report will make it easier to understand why black people have responded so indignantly during this tragic period.

All the statements contained in the body of this report are drawn from sworn affidavits collected in various townships. Each affidavit was taken on oath before a commissioner of oaths. To test their veracity further, many of the deponents were later cross-examined by a lawyer.

In collecting affidavits, no special method of selection was used. Many people would not make statements in fear of further arrest or harassment. It is necessary to point out that we have only recorded allegations from those who responded directly to church workers. Hence, we consider that the allegations presented in this report indicate only the variety of irregularities perpetrated by the police, but not their

folk extent. We wish to thank those people who came forward and made affidavits, especially after having suffered so much already.

Finally, we appeal to all to work together for peace based on justice and fostered by love.

Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC)

Khanya House, Pretoria

November, 1984

Produced by Typesetting Services, Fersdale



One of the first major confrontations between the people and the police in the Vaal triangle, south of Johannesburg (September 5). The crowd was marching in protest against rent increases in Sharpsville (Verreuging).

REPORT ON POLICE CONDUCT IN THE REEF TOWNSHIPS AUGUST TO NOVEMBER 1984

The allegations in the affidavits and statements in our possession describe an alarming carelessness or disregard for the people, property, belongings and even lives of the inhabitants of South Africa's black townships. The overwhelming impression created by the affidavits as a whole is that the police behaviour in the townships resembled that of an occupying foreign army controlling enemy territory by force without regard for the civilian population and, it appears, without regard for the

In order to more fully substantiate this serious charge, the allegations have been grouped and dealt with under the following major headings:

Allegations of reckless or wanton violence, including:

- 1.1 Indiscriminate use of firearms
- 1.2 Assaults and beatings.
- 1.3 Assaults on mineworkers
2. Allegations of damage to property
3. Provocative, callous or insensitive conduct
4. Indiscriminate or reckless use of teargas
5. Police conduct at funerals
6. Other allegations

The affidavits describe events which have taken place from late August to the present moment. Although allegations have been included which concern events which occurred outside the Southern Transvaal geographical area, in the main the allegations deal with the events which took place and are taking place in this area. The race of the policemen involved in irregular behaviour has been omitted, as in most cases both black and white policemen have been involved. However, in most cases there seems to have been a preponderance of young white policemen.

To protect the deponents from possible victimisation they have been referred to by their initials.

1. Reckless, indiscriminate, or wanton violence

1.1 Indiscriminate use of firearms including the use of rubber bullets, birdshot and conventional bullets.

The estimated number of people killed in the townships as a result of the disturbances is 150. Our statements indicate that the police used their firearms without provocation on occasion and frequently indiscriminately. Many of the victims of this indiscriminate shooting will bear the injuries for life.

The following summaries of statements are dealt with in chronological order:

A 20-year-old male resident of Sharpeville reports that at about 7pm on the evening of September 3, he was sitting in his front garden chatting with members of his family and three neighbours. At about this time two police vehicles with policemen in camouflage uniforms drove slowly past the house. As the one vehicle passed the house a shot rang out. Immediately the youth's head jerked back and hit the wall. He fell grabbing his head. He was brought inside where he realised he had been shot. A local priest took him to the Sebokeng Hospital where he was told that the hospital was full and that they would transport him to Baragwanath Hospital in Soweto. At Baragwanath Hospital his left eye was removed - he now has an artificial eye. When he returned to work on his release from hospital he found that he had been dismissed by his employers.

A young woman from Sebokeng was walking through Sharpeville on her way to work on the morning of September 3 1984. While she was walking she noticed a policeman pointing a gun at her. She believed he was trying to frighten her. She heard a noise and felt something hit her. She jumped into the air and then fell. She then noticed blood coming from her leg. She was subsequently treated at the Sebokeng Hospital for a fracture which she was told had been caused by a rubber bullet.

On the same morning in Sebokeng, a 29-year-old man was walking past the shops in Zone 14. He turned into a street and saw a hippo approaching him. He was the only person in the street. The occupants of the hippo then began firing at him. He was hit by several objects. He did not know how many were rubber bullets or pellets. A policeman approached him and told him to stand up. He was pushed into a large police truck behind the hippo. Inside he found six to eight more policemen. He was asked what he, a worker, was doing among the children. They began to beat him with sticks. Subsequently the police put him in an ambulance which took him to hospital. He has been operated

on twice and has been hospitalised for two months. He has been told by his doctor that he has between eight and 11 wounds in his body.

Mr PM, a worker from Sebokeng, states that on the evening of September 3 he and his brother-in-law were waiting at a bus stop. He said he saw some people throwing stones at the buses and decided to leave for home. On his way home, police travelling in a mustard-coloured vehicle fired shots at him. A bullet hit him on the right knee and he lost consciousness. When he regained consciousness, he found himself inside a police vehicle. There were about six policemen in the vehicle and he witnessed them shooting from the vehicle. He saw two persons in the street being shot and he also saw one person shot in his own yard. He was off loaded by the police and physically thrown into an ambulance. "Like a bag of coal". Thereafter he was taken to the Sebokeng Hospital where a fractured right patella was diagnosed and he had his knee-cap removed (patellectomy). On his release from hospital he was brought to the Sebokeng Police Station where he was put into the cells. He was later transferred to a prison and released on bail a few weeks later.

Mr DM, a student from Sebokeng, reports that on September 4 he was standing on a street corner in Zone 13 with two friends. A fawn Toyota Corolla drove up with two policemen inside. The driver ordered them not to go to Zone 14 and the policeman in the back of the car took out his rifle and shot a rubber bullet at one of the deponent's friends. While the deponent was running away he was also shot in the back by a rubber bullet. His mother treated his wound and told him not to go to the hospital because people were being arrested there. Two days later the same student and his friend were walking to his girlfriend's home. A few houses away from his girlfriend's home he was told by some passersby that policemen were approaching and beating pedestrians. Because he believed he had done nothing wrong he remained talking to his girlfriend. A policeman approached him and asked him what he was doing. Before he could answer, the policeman whipped his girlfriend with a sjambok. When the student went to help her, the policeman kicked him in the stomach. The policeman approached to beat him again, but he ran away to the Dutch Reformed church grounds. His girlfriend ran to her home.

Samson Mgudlwa, the father of Nicholas Mgudlwa, recounts the senseless death of his 10-year-old son as follows:

On the night of September 24 at about 8pm, Nicholas' family (four siblings and his father and mother) were watching television. Nicholas' father saw a white police kombi driving slowly along the street on which they live. Nicholas had gone into the back yard to chop wood. The family heard a shot being fired from the street. Mr Mgudlwa closed the front

door and called his son, Nicholas to come inside. From the kitchen door he could see Nicholas lying on the ground. He rushed up to him and heard the kombi speed off. "I carried Nicholas into the house. He was limp and bleeding badly on the left side of the head. I could see his skull. I took the child to a hospital. I found a rubber bullet on the ground where (he) had been shot." The following day he reported the incident to the Sebokeng Police Station. The police denied any knowledge of the incident. He explained that he was able to recognise the kombi as a police vehicle and he produced the rubber bullet he had found next to where Nicholas had fallen. He and his wife later went to Baragwanath Hospital, but Nicholas had been taken back to Sebokeng Hospital. He was unconscious. When they saw him on Thursday they were told that Nicholas had died that morning.

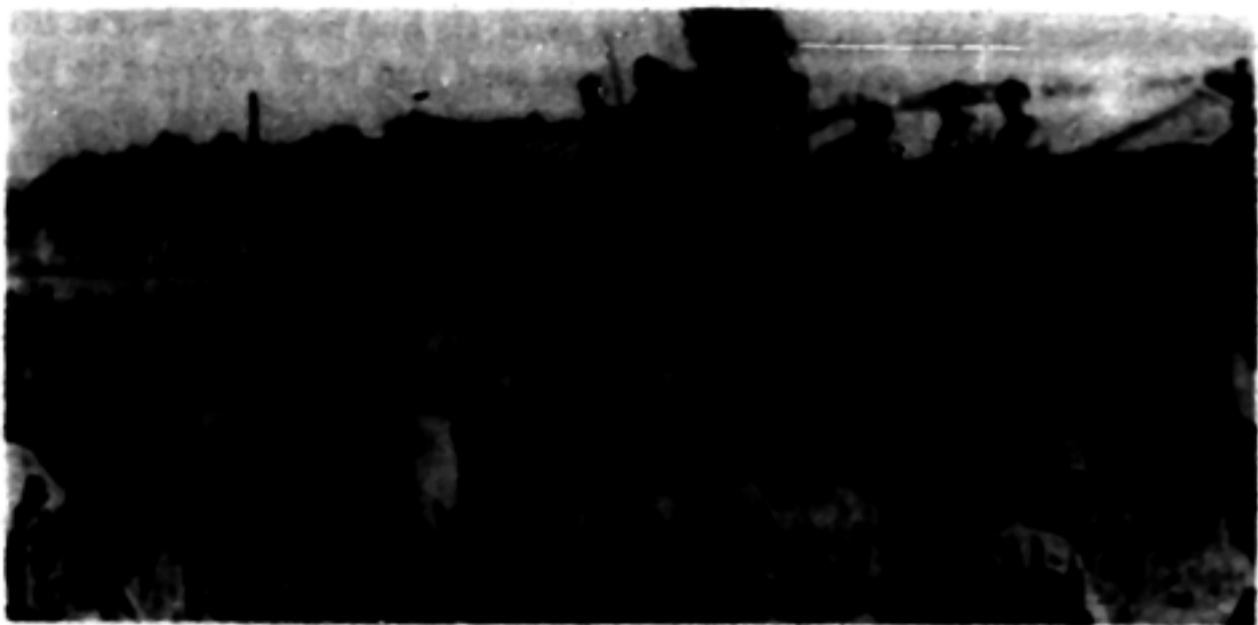
Four youths have made sworn statements regarding the callous killing of one Jacob Moleleki. The youths had been arrested on Sunday September 23 at a funeral at Evaton. They had been imprisoned at the Stoffberg Prison from Wednesday September 26 and on Friday 28 the police had taken 34 of them back to Sebokeng. At around midnight there were still ten youths waiting to be taken home. Five of them were in a van near the charge office at the Sebokeng Police Station. A policeman of about 30 years of age wearing a camouflage uniform approached the van and angrily demanded his jacket. The youths told him they didn't have his jacket. He then pulled out his gun and threatened the youths. The policeman pointed his gun at Jacob Moleleki and shot him in the forehead at point blank range. The youths were then ordered out of the van and the police said they were taking Jacob to hospital. After about five minutes they brought the truck back and after taking photographs told the youths to wash the blood from inside and outside the truck. The youths made statements to the police, but did not read the statements they had made.

After the unrest had spread to other townships on the West and East Rand, similar incidents to those described above are alleged to have occurred.

Mrs LS, a 31-year-old woman from KwaThema reports that at about 11.30am she went outside to get three of her children off the street. As she was taking her children into the house she heard two shots being fired from down the road. Looking down the road she saw a yellow car driving along the road. As she was about to enter the house the car drove past and she heard and felt shots. There were two men in the car wearing uniforms of the local police force. Inside the house she saw that her body was covered with blood. There was a wound just a few centimetres from her eye, and there was a lot of blood seeping from her



Youths carry a friend overcome by teargas after police fired teargas canisters at mourners during a funeral in the Vaal (November).



A police hippo vehicle passes through protesting crowds.

chest. There were about 15 marks on her body from the shots. The following night two policemen in SAP uniform called at her house and told her they had heard she had been badly hurt. They told her to go to hospital because the pellets were poisonous. Mrs LS was afraid to go to hospital because she believed that people who reported to hospital with firearm injuries were arrested. This had happened to her neighbour. She did, however, report to hospital.

DN, a 17-year-old student of a Pretoria township high school, reports that on Thursday October 18 at about 9am police arrived at his school. There were a number of policemen, black and white, some were in camouflage and some were in SAP uniform, and some were in private clothes. After teargas was thrown students fled in every direction. Many fled into the school. Policemen entered the yard and without warning started shooting birdshot, rubber bullets and teargas and started beating students. The deponent saw four students fall down in front of him and bent down to help them up. He was hit himself, stumbled from the pain but carried on running. His white shirt was covered in blood. He was taken to a hospital where, *inter alia*, he was given six stitches for a wound in his head.

It appears that the injuries caused by the random shooting of the residents of the townships were exacerbated by their fear of reporting for treatment to local hospitals. There was a pervasive belief that the police would and did arrest people who had suffered injuries during the disturbances. A Black Sash advice worker reports that on September 11 a young man approached the Black Sash for advice as to how he could receive medical attention. He had been shot in Sebokeng and still had a bullet in his head. The advice worker could see clearly a bullet shaped object under the skin on the top of his skull. He had been X rayed at the medical unit at his place of employment and had been referred to the Sebokeng Hospital to have the bullet removed. He stated that when he reported to the hospital he saw policemen whom he believed were arresting people after treatment at the casualty section.

1.2 Indiscriminate and excessive beating

The description of random shooting of township residents is paralleled by the allegations concerning widespread assaults perpetrated on residents by the police.

The most savage example of this conduct is the incident involving Miss MN, a standard three pupil from Soweto. While she was walking home, a hippo truck passed her and a policeman told her to board the truck and he would buy her sweets. When she refused to enter, another policeman

pointed a small gun (revolver) at her and ordered her on to the hippo. When inside the hippo, she was told that the children in uniform were the ones who caused trouble. They sjambokked her and she screamed. One policeman then put his hand over her mouth and two other policemen continued to sjambok her for some time. Thereafter they told her to get out and go home. A medical practitioner at the Orlando Clinic examined her the following day and found the following injuries: 8 weals on her left thigh, 3 weals on her left buttock, 14 weals on her left forearm, 5 weals on her left chest, 12 weals on her right forearm and 7 weals on her right thigh. The beating was also found to have caused internal bleeding.

Other examples of the physical thrashing of innocent bystanders or excessive use of physical force without reason are provided by the following statements:

A seventeen-year-old scholar from Sebokeng reports that on September 4 at about 1pm he was walking down a road in Zone 14, Sebokeng. A police truck came down the road and stopped. Although there were many people on the streets, four policemen ran up to him and started beating him with a sjambok. The four policemen were about 22 years-old and were wearing camouflage uniform. They beat the student, he fell and they continued to beat him until he managed to get up and run away. He saw other people in the street being beaten including old women and little children. When some of them ran away, rubber bullets were fired at them. On Wednesday September 5, also at Sebokeng, a young man (28-years-old) who had gone to a house to fetch a bag of potatoes and a box of tomatoes was commandeered with two of his companions by three policemen and ordered to join the group of people clearing the streets. They were abused and threatened and beaten with sjamboks and rubber batons. The weals on his back took seven days to heal.

On Sunday September 23 at about 10.30am, a 51-year-old man from Sebokeng was on his way home from visiting a friend. As he passed the Baptist Church where a service was in progress a police van drove up to him. Two young white policemen of about 19-years-old approached him and said "Madala (old man), gaan huistoe". One policeman began beating the man with a sjambok. He beat him about four times on his back.

At an incident which occurred at a Pretoria township high school on October 18, a number of deponents alleged they were severely beaten while attempting to escape from the school premises. The deponents alleged that when two policemen first arrived at the school the students called out "Peace!" and made peace signs. The police threw teargas

canisters into the school yard without provocation. Some students fled, others threw stones at the police vehicles. Reinforcements arrived, and the police then entered the school and using sjamboks, rubber bullets and other weapons assaulted the students. One of the students was beaten on the head with a rifle, lashed repeatedly on the back until he collapsed and later beaten on the stomach with a sjambok. He was taken by an ambulance to Garankuwa Hospital where he was given three stitches in his head. He has evidence of more than 30 weals on his body.

A young female student alleges she was beaten with a baton and a sjambok by a policeman. She was bleeding profusely from the mouth and the policeman told her to sit in a dirty puddle and wash herself. He was laughing during the incident. He beat her again. She was later given medical attention at Garankuwa Hospital.

Another 19-year-old student alleges that the following day, while he was walking home, a white kombi containing about five policemen stopped alongside him. They ordered him into the kombi and asked for his name and details. Later he was ordered out of the kombi and beaten for about ten minutes. His assailants were laughing while they were assaulting him. He was told that because he was a large boy he would get extra punishment. At the end of the assault he was in pain and bleeding.

On Thursday October 25, a 20-year-old youth was standing outside his house with a group of about five friends. It was a quiet day in the township. A busload of policemen drove up and stopped at the house. Several policemen got out of the bus carrying sjamboks and approached them. The youth ran to his house. The police pursued him, knocked at the door and entered the house. Inside the house they assaulted the youth with sjamboks. He was taken out to the bus where he saw two of his friends being beaten. He witnessed one of his friends being kicked on the head by a policeman and the other being kicked in the mouth. The latter lost two teeth. Shortly afterwards he was allowed to alight from the bus.

Some Soweto youths stated that on September 19 at about 3.15pm, police arrived in hippo vehicles at the yard of one of the schools in Orlando. A group of boys were in the kitchen adjoining the hall practising for the installation of the Bishop of Johannesburg at Ellis Park the following Sunday. One of the boys saw the police and decided to run for safety. The rest of the boys followed when they saw the police were brandishing sjamboks. Some of the boys who hid in the toilet were threatened with firearms. When they ran out of the toilets they were shot at with rubber bullets. Other boys were sjambokked and punched as were those who hid in the basement of the hall. One of the boys was

Two young
policemen
talk to some
local
children
during
police
patrols of
the Vaal
townships
(November).



A familiar scene during the protests in the Reef townships.

left unconscious on the lawn. Their injuries have been detailed by the District Surgeon.

JM, a 19-year-old youth from Sebokeng, states that he boarded a taxi on Sunday September 23. On his way to Zone 13, the taxi passed a gathering of people who had attended the funeral of Joseph Sithole. Some of the people asked the taxi driver to take them on to the Evaton cemetery where another burial was taking place. The youth decided to attend that funeral, and afterwards returned to the same taxi. The taxi was unable to leave the cemetery because there was a road block composed of police hippos. Two policemen approached the taxi. They ordered the driver and the occupants out of the taxi. When no one alighted, one policeman fired a rubber bullet into the vehicle. The bullet hit the youth on the chin and clavicle. He was bleeding profusely from both wounds. Thereafter a teargas canister was detonated inside the taxi and the only open window of the taxi was wound closed by two policemen. The youth could not open the door because he could not see. He managed, however, to get out through the back emergency door. He was ordered to join a group of people and then taken to the Sebokeng Police Station. On alighting from the police van he had to pass through two lines of policemen on either side. There were about 15 policemen in either line. The policemen hit the people as they moved through the line. The youth was eventually taken to a cell and left to sleep on a cement floor. He did not receive any medical attention for five days. He was eventually released on bail a couple of weeks later.

Excessive or unprovoked assaults

1.3 The attack on Welkom mineworkers

After a deadlock in negotiations between the National Union of Mineworkers and the Chamber of Mines, the National Union of Mineworkers called a legal strike. Having followed the lengthy and complex procedures required for such a strike to be legal the Union had taken a ballot among its members who had come out in support of a strike action. At about the same time as the legal strike was due to commence the National Union of Mineworkers and the Chamber of Mines resolved the deadlock. However, some of the miners on eight mines had already commenced the strike. Despite the fact that the strike was legal and that labour experts have strongly censured police intervention even in illegal strikes, the mineworkers at Welkom's President Brand Mine, Western Holdings Mine and other mines were subjected to a vicious assault by policemen armed with pick-handles.

We quote verbatim from the statement of one Mr ST, a 27-year-old

miner from the President Brand Mine. "On Monday September 17 at around 9pm I was fast asleep in my bed at the hostel in President Brand Mine. I was woken up because I was being beaten by a white policeman in camouflage uniform who was using a sjambok to beat my body. The first thing that I felt when I was woken was that somebody had pulled the blanket off me and that was when the policeman started beating me. I tried to run out of my room away from that policeman, but as I came out of the room I was hit on the back of the neck with a pick-handle. When I was in the room, I was hit about ten times by the sjambok all over my body. The policemen looked very angry and they were shouting at us. I didn't fall when I was hit by that pick-handle. I was trying to be strong and I ran down the passage and into the courtyard. There were many policemen in the passage and in the courtyard. They were both black and white policemen and they were all wearing camouflage uniforms. There seemed to be about 50 policemen waiting outside in the courtyard, but I ran away. While I was running I was hit by a rubber bullet on the back of my leg. I realised that I was in danger and I tried to run into another block of rooms, but one of the mine police saw me and took me to a hospital in an ambulance. I was in a lot of pain. In hospital I had an operation on my leg and now I go to the hospital every day and I have to have my wound dressed twice a day. That night at the hostel I saw the police doing terrible things to the workers. The people were jumping through windows to try and escape the police who let their dogs loose on the people. The people were badly beaten by the police and then just given to the police dogs."

Mr MJ, 45-year-old, also at President Brand Mine, was awoken at about 9pm by a policeman beating him over the head with a wooden stick about one metre long and about five centimeters wide. By the time he had run through a gauntlet of policemen beating workers in the corridor outside his room he noticed he was bleeding all over his body and especially from his head. He believes there were about 800 workers who were medically treated that night, most of them were badly injured.

Mr SM, aged 46, also of President Brand, was a witness and experienced the same assault by the police. Just as he was turning the corner of one of the passages he was hit on his right eye with a rubber bullet. He was subsequently beaten again with a pick-handle and ordered to the medical station. The following day he was sent to Bloemfontein where his damaged eye was removed.

Mr MT, 36-year-old, describes the assault which he experienced in his room the same night as follows: "Someone opened the door, thereafter about four policemen in camouflage uniforms entered the house. One policeman came towards me and hit me with a pick-handle on my back.

The other one, hit me on my right thigh with the pick-handle he was carrying. I did not know why they were hitting me, but they kept saying we should get to work. I am not doing night shift. I am working day shift. I had not gone to work on that day, because it was a day when all the miners were on an official legal strike. We were then waiting only for a word from our union shopstewards to tell us when to go to work. I never expected an order from the police to tell us to go back to work. I did get out of the house as I was ordered to, plus I tried to explain that I had never been on night duty. My explanation was all in vain. On my way out of the room I met up with another policeman who was standing just outside the door. He was also clad in camouflage uniform and carrying a sjambok. He hit me on my right eye badly damaging it. I tried to run very hard to save my life, but I was shot by a rubber bullet in my stomach. I then realised there were many policemen and that they meant to kill us. When the rubber bullet hit me I fell down. Another policeman then hit me all over my body with a pick-handle whilst I was lying down. I stood up and then ran down the stairs. Another policeman was standing in my way to the medical station. He was holding a dog and ordered me to raise my hands. I did raise my hands as I was ordered to. I reached the medical station where I was given tablets and bandaged. I was then taken to the Ernest Oppenheimer Hospital. At the hospital my right eye was removed."

There are numerous other statements which confirm the details of this unprovoked and vicious attack on sleeping workers. One of the statements which captures the panic and fear experienced by the workers on being assaulted in their beds is that of Mr WN, a 33-year-old miner. He reports that two persons whom he thought were soldiers on account of their camouflage uniforms, attacked him in his bed while swearing at him. He pleaded with them not to hit him, but they disregarded his pleas. As he attempted to leave the room he was assaulted by three other soldiers, two of whom hit him with pick-handles and the third hit him with a sjambok. "At this stage I was on the first floor of the hostel block, when I realised that there was police or soldiers all over. I knew that the only alternative which was left me was to jump from the first floor to the ground floor. I then jumped from the first floor to the ground floor. I fell down badly, I broke my leg and my knee was dislocated in the process. I had not realised that I was throwing myself right onto the hands of other soldiers who were on the ground floor. At this stage I am not able to say for sure how many soldiers or police hit me with pick-handles whilst I lay down. They were insulting me whilst they assaulted me. They were talking Afrikaans. I understand a bit of Afrikaans. They were saying, "Kaffir bok. Jy dink jy is

slim.' (You think you're clever.) Sometimes they would say, "Hond jy dink jy is slim." (You dog, you think you're clever.) One supervisor of C block then arrived in an ambulance. It was then that they stopped assaulting me. As a result of this assault on me by the police I sustained a broken leg, numerous welts on my body and sprained right arm. The police had no right to assault me as I had not provoked them. They had no rights to order mineworkers to go to work during a legal strike."

Mr NT, a 24-year-old miner from the Western Holdings No 7 Shaft, reports a similar assault the following day at that mine. He states, "We were on a legal strike on that day, whilst we were still seated there was an order from the loud speaker that we should go to work and that we would get protection. The time was 7.30am. We did not go to work, and most people, including myself, condemned that fact that the previous day some people had been assaulted by the police on the other shafts and at our shaft. We all wanted the management's explanation for the calling of the police the previous night. Some of the people who had been injured the previous night had actually been people who had gone to work. They had been doing day shift, but when the police hit them they ordered these people to go to work irrespective of whether they were doing day or night shift.

"We all then went to the gate. We had heard that management wanted



Example of an injury from a rubber bullet (a plug can be seen in the wound). The photograph was taken a month after this Welkom mineworker had been shot by police.

7 000
soldiers are
called in to
assist police
in what was
described as
a military
invasion of
the Vaal
townships
(October
23)



to talk to us there. When we were at the main gate the police appeared at the other side of the gate. I thought these police were protectors of those who wanted to go to work. One of the police ordered us through the loud speakers to go to work and said he was giving us five minutes within which to go to work. We remained where we were standing. After some time he fired a shot into the air, and the police moved towards us. They were carrying pick handles, sjamboks and guns. I and others started running for we realised they meant to kill us. We ran towards Free State Geduld Mines and as we ran the police set dogs at us. One dog bit me and I fell down. One policeman arrived whilst I was lying down and he hit me on the head and all over my body and said in Afrikaans, 'Gaan werk toe, kaffir' (Go to work, kaffir). I pretended to be unconscious and he left me. I sustained multiple injuries on the head and a bite on the leg. I then went to the medical station where I was bandaged and made to work outside."

2. Damage to property

The allegations in our possession describe events which left the unfortunate impression among witnesses that certain police may have participated in looting and damaging of shops in Sebokeng on 3 and 4 September, 1984.

An adult woman from Sebokeng states that on the morning of



September 3, a police kombi stopped at the shops at Sebokeng, some of which were on fire. Three or four policemen entered a shop not yet on fire and took a large cardboard box from the shop. To the cries from bystanders 'le lona lea utswa' (you also are stealing), the policemen put the cardboard box in their kombi and drove off.

Two other deponents independently allege that at about noon on September 3, 1984 about four police hippo trucks drove up to the Kentucky Fried Chicken in Zone 14, Sebokeng. About ten policemen in camouflage uniform got out of the hippos and walked around the Kentucky Fried Chicken outlet. One of the deponents alleges that one of the policemen then appeared to pour petrol through a broken window. After about three or four minutes the policemen then drove off and the Kentucky Fried Chicken outlet started to burn fiercely. The other deponent did not see any policemen actively set fire to the outlet, but alleges that the outlet began to burn immediately after the policemen left and before any other person had approached the outlet.

One of the same deponents alleges that at about 6pm on the following day two SAP landrovers drove up to the Visionhire shop at Sebokeng. About seven policemen dressed in camouflage uniforms climbed out of these vehicles and began to chase about 20 people standing near the shop. The shop had already been looted. Two policemen then entered the shop and came out a few minutes later carrying two apparently heavy boxes and extension cords. The boxes were loaded into the

landrovers and after about three minutes the policemen drove off. Shortly afterwards the Visionhire shop started to burn. The deponent alleges that nobody else had approached the Visionhire shop between the time the police had arrived and the time the shop began to burn. A 20-year-old male from Sebokeng alleges that at about 10pm on September 3 he saw a group of policemen enter the Mahlatsi Butchery which had already been burnt. The deponent alleges that the policemen came out of the damaged butchery carrying carcasses of meat and loaded them into a hippo and drove off.

At about 6.30pm on the same day the same deponent alleges that he saw five or six hippos drive up to a bottle store in Zone 14, Sebokeng. At the time that the police arrived a number of people were looting the bottle store. After shooting teargas into the bottle store the police then entered. The police found five people inside the bottle store, four men and one woman, whom they ordered to lie on the tar road. After threatening to shoot them the police beat them and then chased them away. Thereafter four policemen entered the bottle store and called to some people nearby to help them remove the liquor. At this stage there were only two hippos at the bottle store. The police called out saying, "Kom, kom, julle ons sal nie skiet nie," (Come, come we're not going to shoot). Certain bystanders then assisted the police in loading the hippo with about ten sealed boxes of liquor. Shortly afterwards the policemen were seen drinking while shooting at crowds of people in the township. Real bullet shells were seen at that spot by the deponent the following morning.

An alleged practice, which was not confined to Sebokeng, concerns the indiscriminate firing of bullets and or teargas at private houses. A young woman from Boipatong tells this story. Her brother Solomon had gone down to the Administration Board offices on the morning of September 3, in order to advise his mother, who was a cleaner there, to return home because he had heard there was a lot of trouble in the district. On his way there he found himself in the line of fire of an approaching police patrol. He was shot dead. Neighbours carried the body home about an hour later. He was laid down on the floor of the back bedroom. Because of the danger of entering the streets the household decided that it was too dangerous to report the death to the police.

Later that night Solomon's brother, Edward, who had returned from work went out to bolt the front gate. As he was returning to the house a police hippo drove by, stopped, and then a shot rang out. Edward felt the thud of a rubber bullet on his lower back. Two more shots rang out, one teargas canister crashed through the front window and a rubber bullet through another window. As the teargas canister had blocked the

exit from the house via the kitchen there was a stampede for the back window. Since the panic was so great we trampled over the body of Solomon in order to reach the window, and I opened the window with my hands, broke the burglar guards and glass and finally the five adults and three babies suffering from teargas escaped in this fashion. We rushed to the garden water tap to splash water on our faces. I ran to the front of the house and saw the stationary hippo and saw and heard the figures on board laughing. After about five minutes they left. We didn't sleep in the house again for about a week. A window was damaged by the rubber bullet, but the teargas severely damaged the table, curtain and tiles." The death was reported the following day. The neighbours believed that the police fired at the house because the lights were on. "But our lights were on because we had a body in the house", says the young woman.

A priest from Sharpeville suffered a similar experience. At about 9.30pm in his house at Sharpeville, he, a fellow priest, his wife and his cousin were kneeling in the sitting room saying their evening prayers. A further eight children, three of whom were his own, were asleep in the main bedroom and two other bedrooms. Without warning two teargas canisters were fired into the two bedrooms. The adults rushed to the rooms from which tearsmoke was billowing. The priest's eldest son of 11 fainted because a teargas canister had exploded next to him. He saw a police vehicle driving away from his house on the street side of the house from which the teargas was fired. After evacuating the children to a neighbour's house, the priest had to return because his second son was missing. When he was about to leave the house, a police vehicle approached the house from another direction. Again teargas was fired at his house, which struck the house below the study window. The priest felt that he could not leave the house because of the police outside. He inhaled a considerable amount of tearsmoke, and had to receive medical treatment and was confined to bed. The house was uninhabitable for a month after the incident. The following day eight rubber bullets were fired into the house. Eight window panes were broken. Curtains, blankets and carpets were damaged.

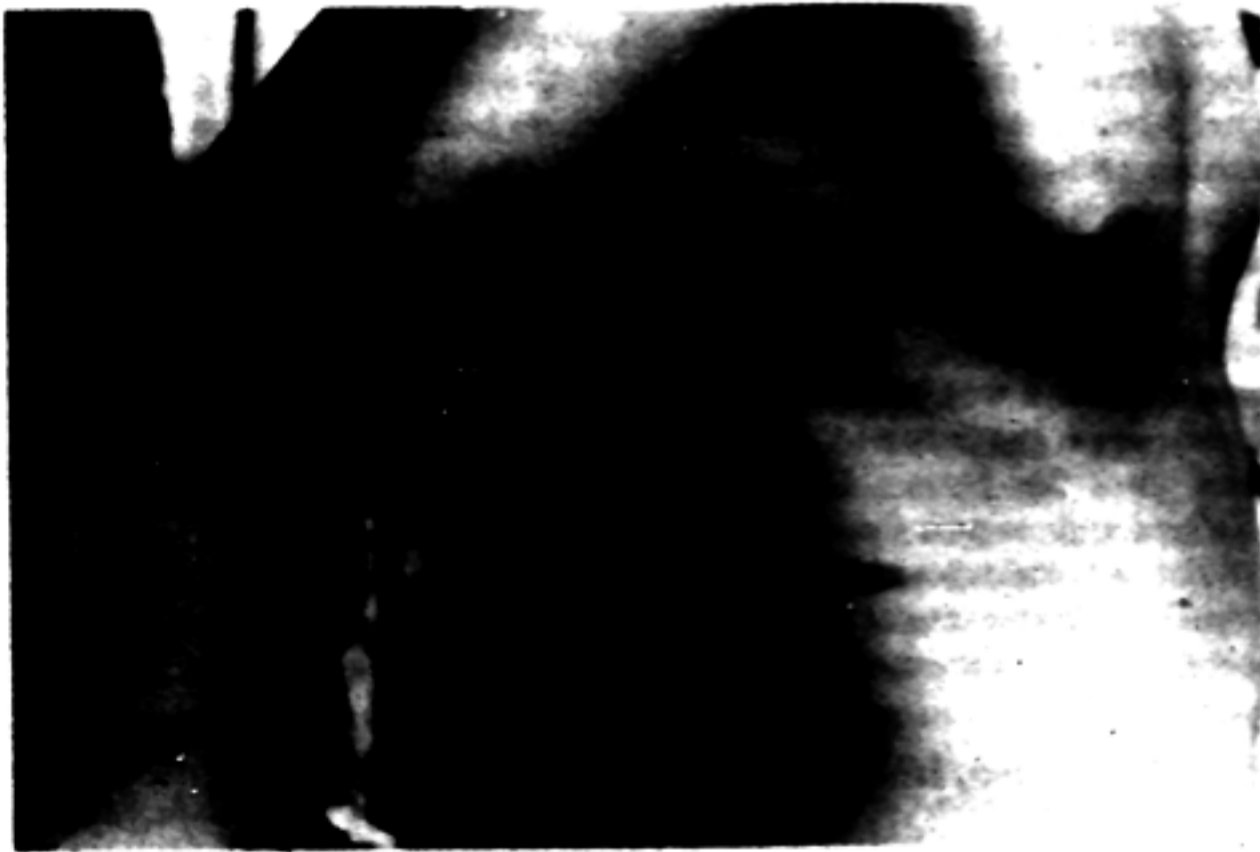
Further examples of indiscriminate damage to the property of township inhabitants or of a general reckless disregard for such persons' property emerge from other detailed incidents discussed below.

3. Provocative, humiliating or insensitive conduct

Much of the conduct described in the sections dealing with actions by the police can be labelled provocative. Furthermore, many of the



Left. Scars from rubber bullet and sjambok wounds. Photograph taken a month after the injury. Right. Evidence from sjambok and baton beatings. Photograph taken nearly two weeks after the injury.



Wounds from a sjambok beating.

deponents who make allegations concerning the shooting or beating of the inhabitants of the Rand townships make reference in passing to such conduct as gratuitous abuse of blacks, or laughter while the involved policemen were beating people or humiliating bystanders. On at least two occasions police were seen drinking alcohol while patrolling the townships and in one case while physically assaulting a man inside a hippo. A particularly common allegation is that police laughed while perpetrating assaults.

Among the variety of abusive terms used by police at various stages included the following: "kaffir", "hond" (dog), "koelie", "you bloody fucking black men", "jou ma se gat", "jou ma se poes" (referring to his mother's private parts). It is incidents such as the following however, that create a suggestion that some of the police regarded their duties as a kind of sport.

A young woman describes how, on Sunday September 23 at the Evaton Cemetery near Sebokeng, police surrounded the mourners. Both black and white policemen wearing camouflage uniforms and armed with sjamboks and firearms, approached the gathering. After the mourners attempted to board their transport, they were dragged out and ordered to sit on the ground. The young woman describes how two policemen, laughing at the time, beat her with sjamboks as she was trying to board the bus. Once everybody was sitting on the ground the police began to humiliate the mourners. In particular, she saw them begin to cut people's hair with knives.

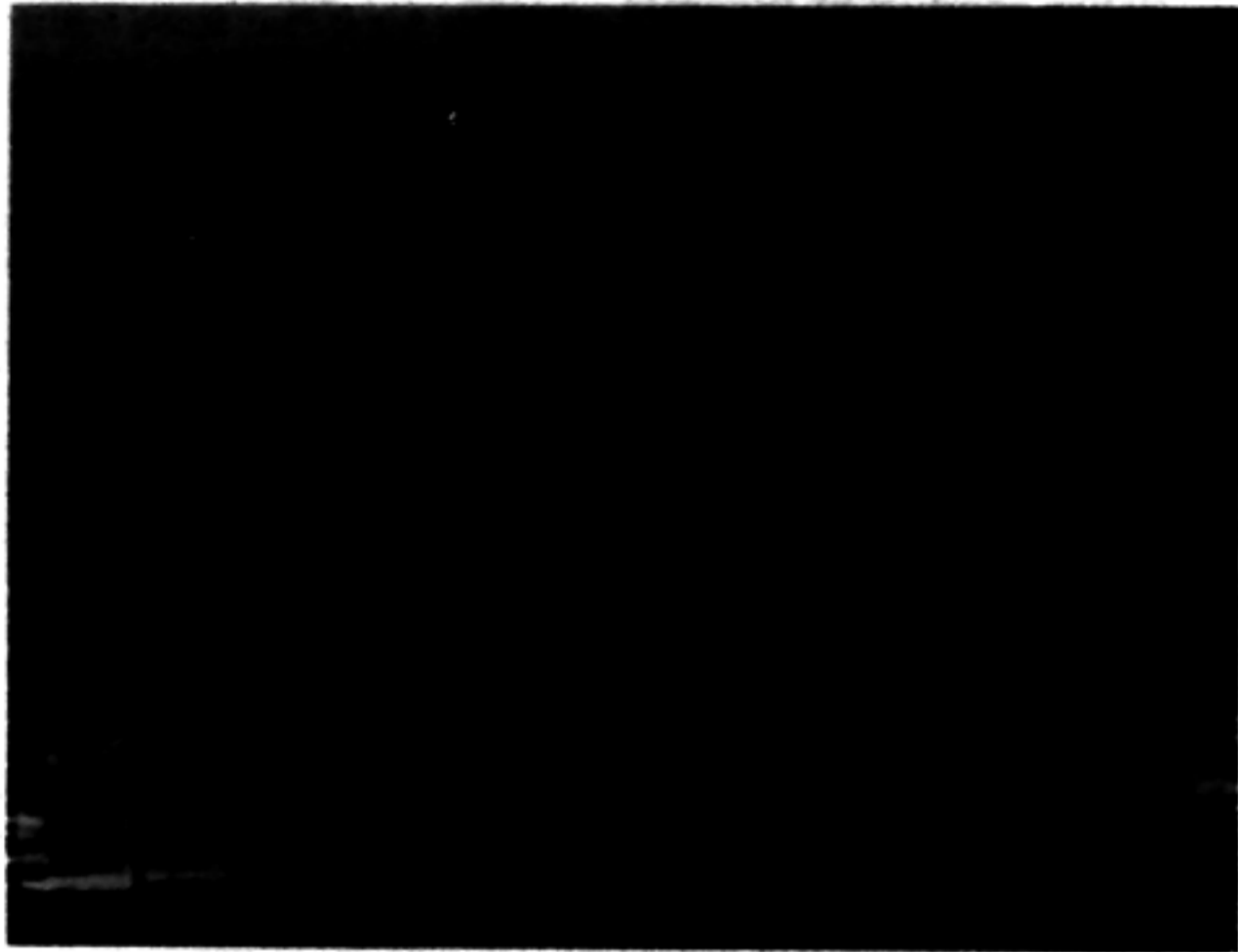
The statement of the 33-year-old married man, assaulted and humiliated in Sharpeville on September 15, illustrates many of the comments made above. At around 4.30pm on September 15, a hippo pulled up outside the house of his brother-in-law, containing about eight policemen in camouflage uniforms and one in SAP blue. They ordered the occupants of the house outside and then grabbed Mr AT by the belt and dragged him to the hippo. They asked him why he attended the funeral which had been held at the Methodist Church in the cemetery at Sharpeville. Although he had been at the funeral he denied it. They asked him why he had carried a flag or banner. Again he denied it. They then kicked him in the face and beat him about his chest. He thought he was going to die, because he had suffered from a heart complaint, pericarditis, since 1982. He saw six bottles of beer inside the hippo to which three more were added from a shebeen. The hippo drove off and turned into Mphahlele Street. The hippo stopped outside another house from which a young man was brought out. This man was whipped by the police using standard issue PVC whips. The police continued whipping the young man until they reached the northern area of Sharpeville.

During this time, some of the policemen in the hippo were drinking brandy and coke. They continued to drive around the township abusing the deponent Mr AT, calling him *inter alia* "jou ma se poes" and telling him that he was going to die as his mother had. At one stage a policeman wearing an SAP blue uniform, "called me over near him. He started to pull my moustache and told others to do the same. Then he told me to take off my shirt. It was covered with blood . . . Later, they told me to lie down. One stood on my neck and another on my lower spine. Every time I moved they kicked me." The hippo then drove to the water dam outside the township. Although Mr AT could not swim, and told the police this, he was ordered to go into the water and wash the blood from his face. He was told to submerge five times while the police shot rubber bullets into the water next to him. He was then ordered to sit under a tree for an hour. While he was running to the tree he was shot at and a rubber bullet hit his hand. During the trip through Sharpeville he had been forced to stand on top of the hippo and raising his arms shout in Sotho, "everything is right". After the incident he went to a relative in a state of shock and shivering. He still (November 26) has four PVC whip marks on his right arm, and marks on his side and received medical attention.

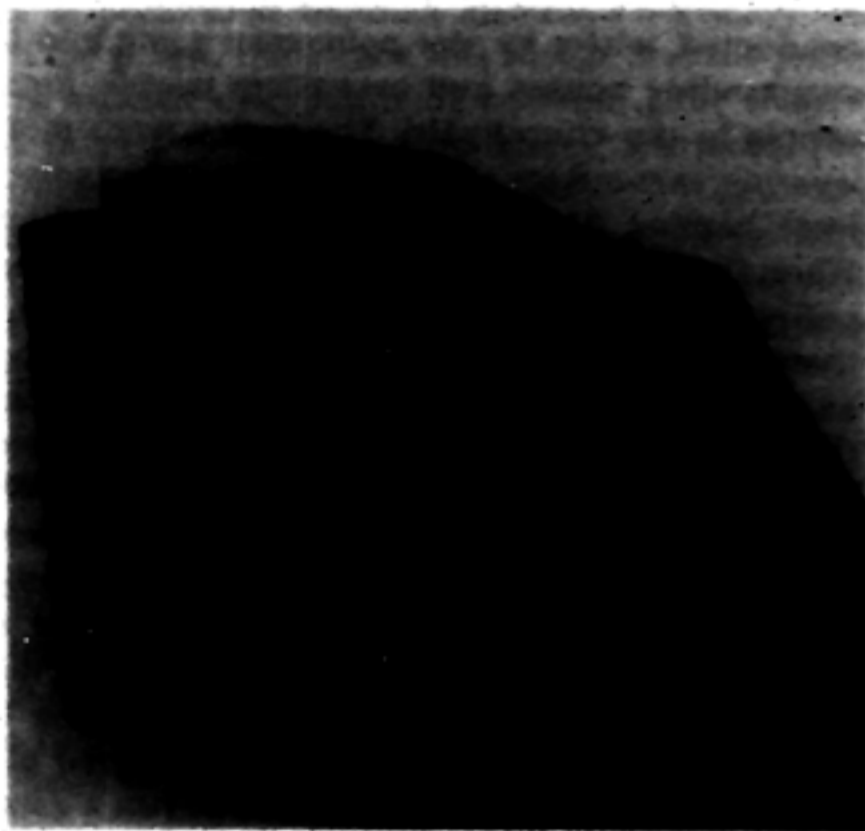
A school pupil at a Pretoria township high school alleges that he was apprehended by policemen after running away from his school when police arrived. He was ordered to remove his shirt and trousers and then four policemen wearing SAP uniforms beat him with sjamboks and batons. His colleague was also beaten while stripped. They were ordered to dress and taken to another policeman who again ordered them to lie on the ground and beat them with sjamboks. At the college these two male students were ordered to lie on the ground and kiss each other on the lips. They did so as they were afraid. The police were laughing during the incident. After this they were told to go home.

4. The indiscriminate use of teargas

Many of the statements encountered above reveal that teargas was used without due consideration, or recklessly, or punitively. While it is well known that teargas is an extremely unpleasant, even painful, substance to be exposed to, the deleterious effects on the health of the victims is often ignored. Comments on the use of teargas are contained in the appendix at the end of this report. In particular, the use of teargas in confined spaces such as houses, vehicles and classrooms has more of a punitive character to it. In some of the cases detailed above, very young children or even infants suffered after exposure to teargas.



Police on patrol at a scene of unrest in the Vaal (September).



A rubber bullet.
90 millimetres in
length 35
millimetres in
diameter and
weighs 100
grams

5. Police conduct at funerals

Many of the allegations concerning police conduct at funerals of people who had been killed by police during the disturbances is consistent with the conduct described above. However, the police conduct at the funerals in all circumstances can be described as particularly provocative. Although in some cases funerals took place without the necessary permission that was required for any gathering of more than two people, if the police had maintained a lower profile during these sensitive occasions, the bitterness they created would have been avoided.

On Saturday September 8, at about 3.30pm, a young woman was in a bus travelling from a funeral. The bus was stopped and about 20 young policemen boarded it. The policemen who entered were laughing and abusing the passengers. They began to beat the passengers. People inside the bus were screaming and crying. Outside the bus they were forced to sit on the ground where police beat them with sjamboks and quirts. There were about 200 people who were treated like this. Many had been beaten and some were bleeding. The passengers, including the young woman, were taken to the Sebokeng Police Station where they were held in custody.

A 20-year-old youth, Mr NM, of Sebokeng, describes the funerals in Sebokeng on Sunday September 23. He was standing in the churchyard at the Baptist Church in Sebokeng while a funeral service was being conducted, where he saw policemen going into the private yards of the surrounding houses and assaulting people, forcing them to join those people in the churchyard. The police were mostly white and were all wearing camouflage uniforms. They were indiscriminate in those they were beating. Those inside the church continued with their service. When the service ended, members of the congregation were told by the police to drive to the Evaton cemetery. Before the end of the service there, the police surrounded the members of the gathering. Mr NM ran and attempted to board a taxi but a teargas canister was thrown into the taxi. He was later cornered by six policemen who beat him on his face and on his eye. They continued to beat him after he had fallen down. He was then taken to a Landrover in which were four other young men who had also been beaten. One was bleeding severely. They were then forced to assemble near the graveyard and to sit down. This deponent also witnessed a policeman cut one man's hair with his knife. Together with about 60 others he was taken to the Sebokeng Police Station on a police truck. When they arrived at the police station, the inhabitants of the track were made to run a gauntlet between two rows

of policemen who beat them as they emerged from the truck. They were driven into a cage. Some were beaten inside the cage by a policeman. Mr NM was kept in that cage for about eight hours without food or water. He made a statement concerning his reasons for attending the funeral and he was thereafter taken to the cells.

A Ms PM, also of Sebokeng, recounts much the same story. She was placed in the cage but removed after about an hour because she had been badly injured and there was much blood on her body. She was informed that there was no transport to take her to hospital. She states that there were more than 60 people, men, women and children, in the cell which was about 15 metres square. Ms PM witnessed a group of policemen assault a woman all over her body. She saw the same woman afterwards in the cell and stated that her body had turned green. Ms PM herself had been shot in the face with a rubber bullet. Another woman of 49 years old, also of Sebokeng, suffered the same treatment. She was kept in the iron cage for about four hours. She states that the cage was about 15 to 20 metres square and completely packed with people who were bleeding and some of whom were crying. Despite a gash on her head she did not receive medical attention.

A white priest from Sharpeville reports that on October 25, a burial service was held at the local graveyard for a 16-year-old youth shot the previous week by police. After the burial service had been completed and as the last of the mourners had begun to enter the township, police Landrovers drew up behind the mourners. The doors were suddenly opened and a number of policemen wielding sjamboks set upon the mourners. According to the priest, the attack was savage and the police assaulted the mourners without discriminating between girls, women, children and men. The mourners "screamed for mercy, scattered over fences and private property, hotly pursued by police". Within five minutes the area was deserted again. The police returned to their vehicles and drove off. A small group of mourners grouped themselves around the priest and another church minister and were in that way spared from the beating. This took place at approximately 12.30pm.

6. Other allegations

Rape

On November 21, 2 girls of 15 and 16 were allegedly raped by two white policemen in a police hippo. While returning from the shops, they were ordered into a hippo in Sharpeville at about 4pm and kept inside until approximately 6.30am the next morning. During this time they were allegedly raped three times by two of the occupants of the hippo. They

have been examined by a district surgeon and have identified their assailants to the police who are investigating.

Incarcerations

Mention has already been made of the iron cages used to hold the arrested mourners after the burials which took place on September 23, at the Evaton cemetery. Besides the use of this degrading form of incarceration, some of those held in custody allegedly were not given medical treatment when they needed such treatment.

Ambush

A disturbing incident was reported by Mr PM of Sebokeng on Tuesday September 18. He reports that he noticed a Vaal Transport Corporation bus parked outside the Bantu Affairs Commissioner's Office at about 6.45pm. In this area people were walking casually and no stone-throwing was taking place. He noticed that the lights of the bus were on but there was no-one inside the bus. Suddenly the lights of the bus were extinguished and shots rang out. He saw sparks emanating from the windows of the bus. The few people in the area, less than ten, ran away. About five minutes later he saw the same bus in a nearby street and once again gunfire emanated from it. It is difficult to infer what the purpose of this stratagem was. At the least it appears as a ruse to lure township residents into an ambush.

Concluding remarks

It was frequently asserted in the affidavits taken from township residents that the police appeared to believe they were at war. This attitude is reflected in the substance of the allegations contained in this report. The alleged refusal to discriminate between the innocent and the guilty, the callous disregard for the property and the lives of the "enemy", the ease with which the trigger is pulled or the baton wielded reveal an inability to recognise the humanity of other persons. The only remedy to assuage the legacy of bitterness these incidents have left behind and the responses that they have produced is an immediate enquiry into police conduct in the townships and the appropriate disciplinary action.

APPENDIX A

Statement by Dr Yusuf Veriava

I have treated people from Sebokeng and Lenasia who have suffered from injuries during the unrest in these areas. Two of these collapsed as a result of the teargas; one was a reporter from the *Beeld* newspaper. One child whom I saw after inhalation required mouth to mouth resuscitation as a result of the teargas. Teargas has been used indiscriminately and innocent bystanders and passersby as well as protesters have been affected by it. Teargas was used in the vicinity of two surgeries in Lenasia on 28 August. A teargas canister was flung into doctors Asvat and Timol's surgery on 28 August through the door.

Teargas can be lethal especially to people suffering from chronic chest or heart complaints. This makes the indiscriminate use by the SAP on the population at large, most irresponsible.

I have witnessed the police using quirts: a quirt is a flexible weapon approximately one metre long, fairly thick at one end and tapering at the other. I have seen the quirts being used on persons repetitively. Repetitive striking in this way causes severe bruising and multiple injuries. The injuries have largely been on the back and chest but I have also seen and treated injuries to the face, head, arms, hands and legs from quirts. I have seen one person, Mrs Rago, very soon after her assault when she sustained a serious eye injury as a result of being beaten with a quirt. I have also treated two people for fractured nasal bones and one for fractured bones of the hand.

I have witnessed policemen, from one to four in number, cornering a single person on several occasions and all of them hitting the person simultaneously. I do not believe that the behaviour of the police is preventative at all. It is punitive in the extreme.

Rubber bullets have caused deaths. Their size and weight result in their being lethal especially when they are fired at close range. The impact of the rubber causes serious visceral damage especially when it strikes the head, chest or abdomen. When the rubber bullet strikes the head it can cause intra-cranial bleeding outside or inside the brain. I know of one child whose skull was fractured by a rubber bullet and who died of meningitis as a result. I treated a child who was shot on the right side of the head by a rubber bullet. He is suffering weakness of the left arm and is confused. His brain has been damaged and he has become forgetful. He could possibly suffer permanent damage and be liable to focal fits.

Rubber bullets, when they hit the chest area can fracture ribs and cause bleeding into the lungs. If the area near the heart is struck, permanent damage can be caused. Shots which strike the abdomen can damage the liver, spleen, kidneys and bowels. I am sure there will be evidence of deaths caused in this way in post mortem records.

I have treated someone in Lenasia whose leg was fractured by a rubber bullet. I have also treated persons who suffered extensive bruising and major lacerations from rubber bullets.

I have treated many people who have suffered bad injuries from birdshot. One woman had 42 pellets lodged in her body. Birdshot can cause serious injuries which can be lethal.

The police have also used real bullets (live bullets). I have treated two patients who were shot from the back. One of these, a 15-year-old boy, was shot in the back of the skull in September and the bullet is still lodged in his brain. He has suffered brain damage and is now mentally abnormal. He is being treated by a neurosurgeon. He is suffering from paralysis and is likely to have fits in the future. After he had been shot he fell and fractured his right clavicle.

Another (one) of my patients was shot in the back through the buttocks and the bullet is still lodged in the pelvis. He was very lucky that his bladder and bowels were not damaged.

It is obvious from these patients' wounds that the police could not have been in danger as the victims were walking or running away at the time.

Another (one) of my patients was shot above the kidneys and yet another was shot through the throat. The bullet left through his right shoulder. His larynx was damaged and he is now suffering from subcutaneous emphysema.

One little girl was returning home after Koran classes at the Madressa in Lenasia when she was assaulted by policemen carrying quirts. Another eight-year-old child fell during a police charge, and injured her knee in Sebokeng. She had an enormous gash which was not properly treated for three or four days. When I treated it, it was septic. She could contract septic arthritis as a result and become a permanent cripple.

Many people fear going to the hospitals for treatment as they see the hospitals as an extension of the police presence in the townships. Others feel that the treatment they get at the hospitals is poor and prefer to go to their GPs or to private clinics or else to doctors themselves.

This can be very dangerous. One of my patients had doctored himself after being struck on the foot by a rubber bullet. He had cut open the huge haematoma (bruise) with a blade. This had turned septic. Many people are harbouring serious injuries and lacerations which could turn septic and lead to septicaemia and even death.

Having treated people from African, Indian and Coloured townships, I am convinced the attacks by the police in the African areas were far more sustained and vicious than they were in other areas.

APPENDIX B

Report by Dr Abu' Baker Asvat

"I have treated injuries which were alleged to be the result of police action. I have seen injuries from live bullets:

1. One man of about 25 to 30 years old was in severe pain and could not walk. I referred him to Baragwanath Hospital where they found a live bullet lodged in the simphis pupis (just above the penis). They decided against removing the bullet. The man alleged that he had been shot in Sebokeng.
2. I saw and treated another young man, also from Sebokeng, who had been allegedly shot by the police. The point of entry of the bullet was on the upper thigh. There was also a point of exit.
3. In another case a young man had been shot at from the side. His scar was just below the knee. The bullet had penetrated the muscle causing damage to tissue and skin.

I have also seen many cases of injuries from birdshot — mainly in the back area. The worrying feature in these cases is that the foreign body remains in the body. This could be serious. I treated a case in 1976, where birdshot had lodged in the spine causing malformation in the young patient's legs and difficulty in walking. The impact of the birdshot could cause haemorrhaging in the brain; the loss of the eye or the case of the birdshot, damaging the facial nerve and paralysis of the facial muscles.

I have treated injuries received from rubber bullets. If the bullet is shot from close quarters and hits the chest area, it could cause cardiac arrest. It is fully in the realms of medical knowledge that death can occur from rubber bullets.

Altogether I have examined 60 to 70 patients in Soweto and about 150 in the Vaal all over a period of six weeks and all were treated for injuries from live bullets, birdshot, rubber bullets and sjambok beatings. Some of the sjambok beatings had opened the skin and given rise to septic wounds. Some of the cases I have dealt with appear to be the result of a vicious assault. One of the problems I had in treating the patients was that few of them went to hospital. The Sebokeng Hospital in particular was considered an extension of the police station. The same problem was experienced in Baragwanath Hospital in Soweto."

APPENDIX C

Report on the effect of teargas and rubber bullets by Dr Clifford Goldsmith

Teargas

Teargas has been used in warfare for many centuries. Teargas or CS gas (chloro-benzilidene malononitrile) is a potentially dangerous gas. It has been known to cause cyanide poisoning where there has been repeated exposure. South Africa is said to have begun producing its own teargas. The exact mixture used by the South African Police is not known. And it is not known whether more serious compounds or combinations of compounds are contained in the teargas used by the South African Police.

It is claimed that teargas is a safe and humane way of dispersing a crowd. The fact is that teargas is not safe under all conditions. Teargas has only been shown to be safe at low concentrations, released in the outdoors, and sunny dry weather and on healthy, adult males. Where the chemical is thrown into a closed space such as churches, schools, houses and even hospitals and clinics, the concentrations reached in these places, especially if large amounts of gas are released, is very rapidly toxic. If a person remains in a room or is unable to escape, the chemical can kill them. Infants and the aged may not be able to escape and this explains why more infants have died from teargas. There have been two recent cases (November) of young children being admitted to hospital in a state of coma. It took three days for the children to become lucid. Both had been exposed to teargas less than 24 hours before being admitted to hospital. It is not known for certain whether the effects of teargas are different on infants or aged in relation to normal adult males, but it is possible that even lower doses will have a more serious effect on such groups.

The effects of teargas are as follows:

1. Eyes are affected immediately and begin to itch and become painful, sting and run at the same time. In extreme cases, permanent damage to the outer surface of the eye may occur.
2. The nose will usually run, it may also sting and perceive a peppery smell.
3. There is also irritation of the mouth and the feeling of stinging and burning of the mouth and throat.
4. With continued exposure, a sharp bright and burning pain in the chest can be felt. Coughing often occurs and one may experience difficulty in breathing.
5. Nausea, vomiting and belching frequently occur. This may lead to pain in the stomach.
6. Skin irritation is experienced by almost everyone exposed to teargas. In its mildest form there is a stinging of the skin, especially the skin of the face and wetter areas such as the lips. In a more severe reaction blisters and the opening of the skin can occur. Infection can develop after a time.
7. Headaches may develop, especially if the sinuses get blocked.
8. Symptoms usually disappear about 30 minutes after reaching clean air.
9. However, if one receives an excessive and prolonged dose of teargas in ways

mentioned above, for example in a closed room or a heavily built-up area, then more devastating effects can occur. Babies have developed severe chest infections, skin infections and even deaths have been reported due to overdoses of teargas. Animal experiments have shown severe internal organ damage, especially to the lungs, kidneys and liver, due to very high concentrations of the gas. Where death has occurred it has usually been about a day after exposure to the chemical and is most often due to lung damage and suffocation with bloody frothing at the mouth (pulmonary oedema).

The attitude that teargas is harmless in all circumstances is both incorrect and dangerous.

Rubber bullets

The effect of the rubber bullet will depend on the distance from which it is fired, and the area of the body which it strikes. The rubber bullet used by the South African police is 90 millimetres in length and 35 millimetres in diameter and has a mass of approximately 100 grams. Fired at close quarters a rubber bullet can kill, particularly if it strikes the head. It is incorrect to believe that the rubber bullet is incapable of opening the flesh. I treated one case where the chest muscles of the patient (a woman) had been ripped open by a rubber bullet. Muscles had been ripped down to the bone. In another case a man experienced haemorrhosis as a result of being struck in the knee by a rubber bullet. I have treated about 30 victims of the recent unrest and many had severe muscular injury. The use of rubber bullets may have had the effect that the users feel they have an open license to shoot at any opportunity. This is premised on the belief that rubber bullets are incapable of causing serious harm. This belief may have led to the reckless and indiscriminate firing of rubber bullets.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

Drawing mainly upon press reports, we have managed to piece together the following sequence of events, which give a perspective in which to view the distressing allegations we present.

August

A nationwide campaign against the new Constitution in terms of which Indian and coloured communities will elect representatives to ethnically discrete assemblies. The opposition is primarily on the grounds that it excludes any African participation from the central government.

August 21

Ten leaders of the UDF and affiliated organisations, which had taken the most public profile in opposing the new Constitution, are detained under Section 28 of the Internal Security Act. In the following weeks more people are detained under Section 28 bringing the number to 18. A few are released after a month but most remain in detention.

August 22

Elections for the Coloured House of Representatives. As a climax to the campaign to reject the new Constitution, 700 000 students join in a nationwide boycott of classes in protest against its implementation. In protests around the country 712 people are arrested of whom 163 are charged, mostly with minor offences, including wearing an illegal poster. Thirty percent of the registered voters and 20% of eligible voters vote.

August 28

Elections for Indian House of Delegates. Widespread and at times rowdy protests take place especially in Lenasia where police use rubber bullets, teargas and sjamboks to disperse a 1 000-strong crowd. An estimated 300 people are injured. Police report 44 'incidents' in the Transvaal. The polls are lower than those for the coloured elections: 21% of registered and 16% of eligible voters vote.

August 29

School boycotts spread from Pretoria to East Rand schools in protest against sexual abuses, inadequate conditions, the age limit on attendance at schools, and the refusal to allow Student Representative Councils.

September 2

Large anti-rent meetings are held in Vaal townships. A stayaway is recommended if rent increases are not dropped. Rent increases are authorised by local authorities (community councils), who had been elected on very low polls. Blacks are said to identify this local authority structure with the new constitutional dispensation. Residents or civic associations state that residents are unable to afford the increases in the light of the increase in general sales tax and the cost of living.

September 3

It is reported that thousands of residents adhere to a call by the local Civic

Association and other Vaal organisations to stayaway for one day in protest against the rent increases. A protest march to the administration board offices is broken up by councillors and police. Violence breaks out. By the end of the day 14 are dead and many others injured. Some residents attack the houses of councillors. Police enter school premises in Mamelodi and one person is seriously injured.

September 5

A large crowd — up to 5 000 people wait outside the Vaal administration board offices while a delegation negotiates with the police, councillors and administration board officials over the rent increases. Residents' demands are not met, but the councillors agree to call an urgent meeting to discuss the rent issue. Vosloorus (East Rand) students boycott classes. Five hundred pupils march on police station demanding the release of pupils arrested the previous week. When a warning by police to disperse is ignored, police fire teargas at the crowd. Pupils flee, throwing stones at police and buildings. Twenty-nine schools involving 5 700 pupils boycott in Katlehong (Germiston), 4 700 pupils in Daveyton (Benoni), 1 800 in Thokoza (Alberton), 10 000 in Soshanguve (Pretoria) and some 4 800 in Tembisa (Kempton Park) where classes are suspended. Classes are also suspended at Minerva High School in Alexandra (Johannesburg). Police are called in and many incidents of police, using birdshot, rubber bullets and teargas against boycotting students, are reported.

September 7

Official death toll in the Vaal rises to 29, although the real number is suspected to be much higher. Unrest in Thabong (Welkom) flares up again when police use rubber bullets and tearsmoke to disperse youths at a hall after a joint meeting between students and parents to discuss the school boycott.

September 8

An estimated 3 000 attend the funeral of unrest victims in Katlehong and 8 000 in Daveyton, ignoring a chief magistrate's order and a ban on weekend gatherings. Police fire teargas at mourners. One person is killed and one is seriously injured by police after a group attempts to set alight the Katlehong mayor's home.

September 10

Students in Warmbaths boycott, demanding the resignation of their principal. They smash windows and burn two cars belonging to the principal and another teacher.

September 11

All meetings of more than two which discuss or criticise government policy are banned until the end of the month.

September 12

Week schools are closed early in attempt to curb the growing unrest.

September 15

Bongani Khumalo, Coosa branch secretary in Soweto, is shot dead by police outside his house.

September 16

More funerals for unrest victims in Katlehong, Thokoza and Evaton — all characterised by a high police presence. One hundred and ninety-five people are arrested after a funeral in Evaton.

September 17

A one-day stayaway is called in Soweto. Many incidents of clashes between police and residents are reported throughout the week.

A legal strike involving 80 000 workers on eight mines takes place after deadlock in negotiations between the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and the Chamber of Mines. Police are called in and in the days that follow at least 16 miners are killed and about 700 injured — many seriously.

September 20

Walter Makgatho (14) is killed during clashes with police in Soweto. Sixteen of those killed so far are under the age of 15.

September 22

Thirty-three people are arrested at a funeral in Sharpeville and 132 in Bophelong for allegedly attending an illegal gathering. Funerals are also held in Thokoza and Thabong. A gathering of about 2 000 attend a funeral of Noto Moseweng allegedly shot dead by a security policeman.

September 23

Five hundred and ninety-eight are arrested at a funeral in Sebokeng. They appear in court three days later and bail is refused. A number of persons are also detained in terms of Section 29 of the Internal Security Act.

September 25

An estimated 3 000 people — most students — attend the funeral of Bongani Khumalo. Mourners defy restrictions placed on the funeral by the chief magistrate and police act firing teargas and rubber bullets. A youth escaping from teargas is run over by a bus.

October 2

School boycotts spread to KwaThema, Springs. A delivery van driver loses control of his vehicle during a stoning incident, ploughs into a crowd, killing three and injuring six. School boycotts affect 24 schools.

October 3

Unrest spreads to Duduza in Nigel and Tsakane in the East Rand. A post office and beerhalls are looted and burnt.

October 6

The Minister of Law and Order announces that the army would also be used to quell township unrest.

October 10

Funerals of unrest victims in KwaThema and Tsakane in the East Rand.

October 11

Soweto branch executives of Cosas and Azasm are detained under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act. Students and teachers are the group most hit by detentions: 170 out of the 368 people detained this year fall into this category (SAIRR).

October 12

The funeral of Nicholas Siphwe Mgudlwa, who was shot in his yard by police - takes place with heavy police presence. The crowd's reaction is volatile and a white baby, Blair Gordon, is killed when crowds stone his mother's car.

October 15

Atteridgeville schools, closed during school boycotts earlier this year, are re-opened but most students fail to return.

October 22

One-day stayaway in KwaThema in support of students' demands. Many workers adhere to the stayaway call.

October 23

Seven thousand troops and police enter and cordon off Sebokeng in the middle of the night. 350 people are arrested by 8.30 in the morning, but the figure rises. Those arrested include 'illegal residents' pass law offenders (found without identity documents) as well as people who are subsequently detained under security legislation. The operation, labelled 'Operation Palmiet' moves to other Vaal townships. The Army performs a similar operation in Tembisa, in the East Rand.

October 29

Official figures of the numbers dead by this date is 131, according to the SAIRR.

November 2

Murphy Morobe, UDF official and Reverend Lord McCamel, chairperson of the Vaal Civic Association are detained. All members of the civic leadership are now either dead or in detention or in hiding.

November 5-6

Two-day stayaway called by numerous trade unions, civic and student groups in support of students' demands and protesting against high rents, high prices and police action in the townships. Success varied from 50% in Soweto to 90% in the Vaal and 100% in Ratanda (East Rand). Twenty-three people are killed in clashes with police. Six thousand five hundred workers are dismissed at Sasol oil refinery for adhering to the stayaway call.

November 8-14

Police detain stayaway leaders and others including Thami Mali, Release Mandela Campaign (RMC), Oupa Monareng, Soweto Youth Congress (Soyco) and Moses Mayekiso, Metal and Allied Workers' Union (Mawu). On the 9th, police

detain union leader Chris Dhanraj, president 14th police
detain unionists: Piroshaw Coney and Bongelao Solo; Kate Phillips, Nunn
national president and others.

It is estimated that the number of people killed since September exceeds 150.
The number of injured may run into thousands. Over 700 were injured in the
course of the police intervention in the miners' legal strike. Over 300 were
injured on polling day in Lenasia.