

McBride gets bombing amnesty

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Cape Town - The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's amnesty committee on Thursday granted amnesty to former Umkhonto we Sizwe commander and current foreign affairs official Robert McBride.

Amnesty was also granted to ANC special operations senior commander Aboobaker Ismail.

Ismail and McBride were granted amnesty for, amongst others, all offences arising from the explosion at the Why Not Restaurant and Magoo's Bar on June 14, 1986.

The TRC said Ernest Pule, Lester Dumakude, Johannes Molefe, Zahrah Narkedian, Edward Pierce, Marcell Andrews and Matthew Lecordier were also granted amnesty.

"The committee found that the applicants met the requirements of the Act in that they made full disclosure of the relevant facts and their actions were motivated by political considerations," it said in a statement.

Three young women died in the 1986 bombing of the Why Not and Magoo's bar on the Durban beachfront.

McBride and Ismael had applied for amnesty for planting a car bomb in front of the two bars, which were apparently frequented by apartheid security force personnel.

The bomb killed civilians Julie van der Linde, Marchelle Gerrard and Angelique Pattenden. Seventy-three civilians were injured.

McBride was a unit commander of the African National Congress's special operations unit at the time.

The TRC said the unit, under Ismail's command, set off explosions at a substation at Huntly Hill in Durban, launched a rocket attack on the Mobil Oil Refinery, and an attack on the Umlazi Police Station. They were also granted amnesty for all offences arising from the escape of Gordan Webster from Edenvale Hospital in Pietermaritzburg on May 4, 1986.

Seventy-one victims of the attacks were referred to the Reparation and Rehabilitation Committee for consideration, it said. - Sapa