

INTERVIEWEES

All of the interviews conducted for the DVD took place between March and April 2007, most of them at the Johannesburg Central Police Station. The stories of the following people have been used in the resource book:

- **George Bizos** is a human rights lawyer. He was admitted as an advocate in 1954 and within weeks after that did his first political case. He continued to take on political cases for the next 50 years.
- **Imtiaz Cajee** is the nephew of Ahmed Timol who died in detention at John Vorster Square. He has written a book about his uncle.
- **Max and Audrey Coleman's son Keith** was detained at John Vorster Square. As a response to his arrest and detention, Max and Audrey formed the Detainees' Parents Support Committee (DPSC) to support the parents of those detained as well as the detainees.
- **Joyce Dipale, Tiego Masinga (husband), Tsankie Modiakgotla (brother)** were interviewed together. All three were detained in the 1970s. Joyce Dipale was involved in Youth Alive, based in Dube, in the South African Student Movement (SASM) and in the ANC underground.
- **Paul Erasmus** was a former Security Branch policeman who joined the police force in 1977.
- **Dr Elizabeth Floyd** was the partner of Dr Neil Aggett who died in detention in 1981. She was interviewed about Neil Aggett and about the effect of detention and torture on detainees. She was detained at John Vorster Square for 5 months in 1981 - 1982.
- **Hennie Heymans** was a member of the security police. In the 1980s he was part of the secretariat of the State Security Council, run by P.W. Botha and the army. It was part of, and funded by, national intelligence.
- **Barbara Hogan** worked in the political wing of the underground ANC, involved in organisation and mobilisation. She was betrayed by a double agent and was detained for the first time in September 1981. She was tried and sentenced to ten year in prison for treason.
- **Catherine Hunter** was detained in 1983 for three months in connection with the trial of Carl Niehaus and Jansie Niehaus. She was involved in Catholic left-wing politics and worked for a Catholic youth organization called Young Christian Students.
- **Cedric Mayson** was a minister of religion and worked for the Christian Institute under the leadership of the Rev. Beyers Naude. He used to fly light aircraft and was involved in taking young people out of the country.
- **Commissioner Simon Mpmembe** was a member of the police force during apartheid. At the time of the interview he was the Station Commander at the Johannesburg Central Police Station.
- **Tom Montata** was a member of the University Christian Movement and was arrested for being at a multiracial send off for Reverend Basil Moore.
- **Dr Kantilal Naik** was a teacher who taught with Ahmed Timol at the Roodepoort Asiatic School. He was detained at John Vorster Square in 1971.
- **Jabu Ngwenya** was born in Botswana but brought up in South Africa by his grandparents in Alexandra township. He went to a Catholic primary school, and it was through the Legion of Mary, a Catholic organisation that worked with the poor, that he became politicised. He was influenced by Black Theology and Liberation Theology. He worked with the underground ANC and was detained in 1977.
- **Molefe Pheto** was detained in the 1970s. He studied music at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in the United Kingdom. When he returned to South Africa the country was in political turmoil and many political organisations had been banned. He joined a number of young people who decided to use arts for political purposes.
- **James Sanders** is a journalist who has written on the South African security services.
- **Jaki Seroke** is now a businessman. At the time of the interview he was the chairman of the ex-political-prisoners committee in Gauteng. He was a member of APLA and detained in John Vorster Square in 1987.
- **Zwelinzima Sizane** was working for the ANC in Gauteng as a secretary for political education and trade unions at the time of the interview. He was detained in July 1976 at the age of 19 years. At that time he was national organising secretary for SASM.
- **Penelope 'Baby' Twaya** was arrested in June 1977 just before the first anniversary of June 16. At the time she was just 17 and a student at Morris Isaacson school which had placed an important role in organising the Soweto uprising.
- **Chris Wilken** was a security policeman under apartheid. He was still a member of the police force at the time of the interview in 2007.



Spy cars tail rights activist

THE MAX Coleman of the Parents Support Committee believes he was spied on while his organisation had been targeted in 1980s and 1990s.



lowed to later," De Groot said. A check with licensing authorities on the ownership of the four cars revealed:

• LYTT754 T, a Toyota Corolla which was occupied by two or three whites, and M4L367 T, a Nissan Sentra, occupied by two whites, were registered in the name of National Car Hire, P.O. Box 21194

JOHN VORSTER SQUARE – NOTES ON THE INTERVIEWS

NAME NOTES - THEME

MAX AND AUDREY COLEMAN

- They talk about:
- the conditions of detention under Section 29 and the setting up of the Detainees' Parents Support Committee (DPSC)
 - feeling that the security police didn't really care about them – lack of warmth
 - the strategies of the DPSC and getting international support
 - the impact of Neil Aggett's death on access to other detainees
 - the way in which the doctors were complicit – particularly the district surgeons
 - the support given to released detainees
 - friends no longer associating with them because of their work with the DPSC
 - the changed nature of the work during the states of emergency

JOYCE DIPALE TIEGO MASINGA TSANKIE MODIAKGOTLA

Joyce Dipale was the target for one of the bungled cross-border raids into Botswana led by Dirk Coetzee. She had lost most of her ability to speak and had suffered a stroke as a result of the attack. Joyce Dipale went to the Truth Commission because she needed to know what happened to her younger brother, Moabi Dipale. In his testimony Almond Nofemela said he and Joe Mamasela abducted Moabi Dipale and that the two of them and Koos Vermeulen assaulted him.

Joyce's interview is somewhat incoherent because she has aphasia as a result of her stroke.

THEME: Torture in prison; 1976; interrogations; Tsankie uses the phrase "between death and life"; Tiego talks of the effects of torture on some people; cross-border raids as Tiego talks of the Botswana raid; Tiego talks of Moabi Dipale who was probably killed by Mamasela and the rejection by Moabi's parents who didn't want to pick up his body from John Vorster Square.

PAUL ERASMUS

Increase of security police from 1977-1987; Soweto Security Branch Division; safe houses in Soweto; recruitment of intelligence staff/informers; committed anti-Communist ideologue; talks of influences on him; felt good about his work; makes the distinction between committed ideologues and career police; pecking order – the security police felt superior; relationship between the security police and John Vorster Square; tells how he became aware of the tortures at John Vorster Square; black security police carrying out torture; frustrations of his job; secret funds; justification: 'for the cause'; post-traumatic stress; Vlakplaas people went berserk – murdering; no 'deprogramming'; talks of the mass resistance of the 1980s – realising they weren't going to win this; he was falling apart in 1988 – difficulty in trying to leave the police; starting off the morning with prayers; Security Branch turned on him; talked of deaths in detention including Neil Aggett; distrust within the security police; discusses 'permanent removal from society' and that they had laissez-faire to kill; impact of sanctions on IT equipment in Security Branch; relationship with the traders around John Vorster Square; Marion Sparg

PORTRAIT OF A GIRL I NEVER MET



NAME NOTES - THEME

DR ELIZABETH (LIZ) FLOYD

- She talks about:
- the 1980s and the increased repression
 - the psychological effects of detention
 - the effects of the hunger strikes
 - house arrest
 - the threat of assassination and people disappearing
 - the 1990s third force
 - the role of the health professionals such as district surgeons who supported the system
 - Wendy Orr
 - torture in the homelands - the fact that they didn't try to cover up what they were doing in the homelands
 - the culpability of those who did the torturing and about those traumatised on the border
 - the TRC
 - the problem of denial among white South Africans
 - the shortcomings of the TRC process
 - the apartheid museum
 - the legacy of trauma
 - the difference between the security police and the ordinary police
 - the complex interactions between victims and perpetrators (e.g. Paul Erasmus)
 - post-apartheid – survivors – victim mentality
 - post-traumatic stress syndrome



NAME **NOTES - THEME**

HENNIE HEYMANS

He speaks about:

- the naming of John Vorster Square
- Timol falling out of the window and that it reflected badly on the Security policy - not being proud of that
- joining the police in Durban and a Major-General Frans Steenkamp being a role-model
- being pressurised in Johannesburg
- how they regarded themselves as fighting a revolutionary war
- the difficulties of fighting this kind of war
- internal security and information gathering and black policemen being asked to infiltrate the liberation movements

BARBARA HOGAN

She speaks about:

- the process of deciding to and joining an illegal organisation and understanding the consequences
- interrogation, including an interesting piece on what you hear in the cells. She describes her cell and solitary confinement
- position of women in detention
- Detainees' Parents Support Committee
- contact with family and using hair to sew notes into seams of clothes
- her Afrikaner stepmother's support
- seeing Neil Aggett in prison
- her interrogation and security police fabricating evidence
- the relationship between her and the police
- railway policewomen and resignation of one after seeing how Barbara had been assaulted
- the tension between the different branches of police force – also vicious women
- her main interrogators
- attempting to commit suicide
- David Webster
- The physical and emotional side effects of detention – state institutions make monsters out of ordinary people
- The security police and institutionalised evil – the construction of evil

CEDRIC MAYSON

He speaks about:

- continuous interrogation for 3 days/nights
- interrogation as a game of wits
- interrogation and the John Vorster Square staff being made to watch through windows
- being bullied but not badly tortured in the way young black detainees were
- his first detention where he communicated with two others in cells and his second detention where he saw Barbara Hogan and Frank Chikane
- the psychological spiritual impact of the detention
- contact with outside including the Detainees' Parents Support Committee
- the change in attitudes of interrogators from "when we win" to "when you guys take over"
- the sympathy of the black police in Benoni and the Amandla message from a black woman detainee brought by a black policeman to him
- the railway police being brought in when they ran out of police – mostly white guys
- the real challenges of liberation – discussion with Kgalema Motlanthe
- apartheid as Christianity gone wrong
- importance of understanding history and what is going on in the world today



NAME **NOTES - THEME**

PHAKISANA JAMES MOGANEDI

Started in 1970 at John Vorster Square as a trainee. He checked body receipts, formerly a white person's job. He was in charge of prisoners amenities and catering.

He speaks about:

- the separation of security branch floors and others at John Vorster Square
- the relationship between police and security branch
- a prisoner thrown from a window on the 10th floor and another who hanged himself
- communication between political prisoners
- different treatment of black and white policemen.

TOM MONTATA

He talks about:

- being a founding member of SASIM which led to Soweto Student Representative Council
- solitary
- interrogation
- district surgeons
- the brutal Mozambican and Angolan Security Branch brought in to assist in the interrogation
- a cell in which a detainee died
- midnight interrogations
- daily life and communication

COMMISSIONER SIMON MPEMBE

He compares policing under apartheid with policing today – repressive; parliament paramount versus the current checks and balances; today the constitution is paramount. TRC lesson: police not above the law.

DR KANTILAL NAIK

He talks about:

- interrogation at John Vorster Square
- torture – the helicopter treatment
- district surgeons
- solitary confinement
- assault and verbal abuse
- how he laid charges against the security police and was pressurised to withdraw the charges
- inter-cell communication





JOHN VORSTER SQUARE – NOTES ON THE INTERVIEWS CONT.

NAME	NOTES - THEME
JABU NGWENYA	<p>He speaks about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how he came involved in politics • Black Consciousness organisations – AZAPO and COSAS • why they targeted high school and technikon students for COSAS • politicisation of trade unions • whites and Indians being detained and tortured • teaching fellow detainees how to communicate with one another in prison - Frank Chikane conducting a memorial service through toilet communication for Neil Aggett • secret communication: discussions and debates • the death of Neil Aggett • torture • the relationship with black policemen who took messages out • Barbara Hogan and the significance of whites in detention • district surgeons • the emotional and physical experiences • the need for the police to have gone for counselling post-apartheid
HELENE PASSTOORS	<p>She tells of joining the ANC, being trained by MK, her observation work in South Africa and her arrest in June 1985, after which she was kept for eight months in solitary confinement in John Vorster Square</p>
MOLEFE PHETO	<p>He speaks about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interrogation; black policemen; George Bizos / Raymond Tucker were his attorneys • policemen Visser and Fourie as “animals as interrogators” • a district surgeon as part of the system • how security police made phone calls to wives / girlfriends during interrogations and used crude sexual language • the attitude to black police during interrogations • how the experience changed him – loss of normality
WALTER PON	<p>He talks about the Chinese experience in South Africa. He owned a shop in the John Vorster Square vicinity</p>
JAMES SANDERS	<p>Interviewed about resistance and repression in apartheid South Africa</p>
JAKI SEROKE	<p>He speaks about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the psychological impact of solitary confinement • his torture • the role of Amnesty International • black security policemen during his first detention • his perceptions of John Vorster Square before being detained there • hearing the singing of prisoners • meaning of John Vorster Square today • the effects of detention

NAME	NOTES - THEME
ZWELINZIMA SIZANE	<p>Detained in 1976, Zwelinzima talks about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how they communicated with other students detained at the same time • Mozambican interrogators • torture during interrogations • the psychological impact of torture • a district surgeon examination in the company of the Security Branch and false information being written down after the examination • underground youth cells in late 1970s, mainly ANC • the debates between the ANC and PAC • Black Consciousness as a lost force after 1976 • his role in the underground movement after his arrest • the knowledge that working for the ANC would bring arrest and torture or death or exile • those who didn't make it and those whose burial places remain unknown like Stanza Bopape • what John Vorster Square represent today.
HELEN SUZMAN	<p>She talks about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Vorster versus Verwoerd • the various laws allowing detention without trial • interaction with Vorster • getting an exit permit for Ruth First • Vorster's belief in white domination • her work in raising torture during detention in parliament • increased detentions with increased resistance • changes during Botha's presidency • opposition of the English in 1960s, 1970s and 1980s
PENELOPE 'BABY' TWAYA	<p>She talks about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fear at JVS • communicating with other prisoners • life in the cell • three months Interrogation by Adjutant Jordan • torture • international awareness and protests and the impact • interrogators showed no humanity – Cronwright using vulgar seSotho words • what John Vorster Square means to her today - how it should be commemorated.