

SAHA IN THE CLASSROOM

COVERT REPRESSION IN THE 1980s

A set of classroom materials
produced by the South African History Archive
for Grade 12 learners

GUIDE BOOKLET FOR EDUCATORS



THE SAHA IN THE CLASSROOM SERIES

This series of booklets comprises an introductory booklet on how to use the SAHA in the Classroom series and 9 source booklets for learners, with corresponding guide booklets for educators, exploring the following aspects of South Africa's history from 1976 - 1994:

The 1983 Constitution

The United Democratic Front (UDF) and the National Forum

Formal repression in the 1980s

Covert repression in the 1980s

Resistance in the 1980s - civil society

Resistance in the 1980s - militancy

Resistance in the 1980s - international pressure

The move to democracy - negotiations

The move to democracy - the role of violence

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These notes on covert repression in the 1980s provide guidance on how to assess your learners' answers to the questions on each of the sources using Bloom's taxonomy. (See the Introduction on 'Levels of questioning'.) For curriculum purposes we have indicated the Learning Outcomes (LO) and their associated Assessment Standards (AS) for each source.

SOURCE A: Article – The Toothless Watchdog (1990)

A newspaper report on the Harms Commission from *The Sunday Star*, 11 June 1990.

(Archived as Historical Papers Collection AG2543_D37)

Learning Outcomes (LO) and Assessment Standards (AS)

LO 1: The learner acquires and applies historical enquiry skills

AS 3: Interprets and evaluates information and data from the sources

AS 4: Engages with sources of information, evaluating the usefulness of the sources, including stereotypes, subjectivity and gaps in the available evidence

LO 2: The learner is able to use historical concepts in order to analyse the past

AS 3: Compares and contrasts interpretations and perspectives of events, people's actions and changes in order to draw independent conclusions about the actions or events

A1.

Name two criticisms levelled at the Harms Commission. (4)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question, focusing on the skills of extracting information and comprehension. The learners can obtain the answers directly from the source.

Suggested answer

- The terms of reference were too narrow which meant that the Harms Commission could not investigate a lot of things such as CCB activities outside South Africa and the murder of Anton Lubowski.
- The agents interviewed did not make full and frank statements to the Commission and documents were hidden or destroyed.

A2.

**Explain the meaning of the headline 'The toothless watchdog'.
Evaluate how accurate this description is of the Harms Commission. (8)**

Type of question and approach

This is a level 5 question, focusing on the skill of analysis. Learners need to grasp the meaning of the headline. They need to demonstrate the ability to understand the document as well as to be able to extract the information required from it. The second part of the question is a level 7 question asking the learners to evaluate how accurate the headline is.

Suggested answer

A watchdog should have sharp teeth so that it can seize an intruder. The Harms Commission is described as 'toothless' because it was unable to get to the heart of the

matter and seize the documents and force the agents to tell the truth. The newspaper article describes how agents refused to answer questions on the grounds that to answer 'will incriminate them.' The Commission could not force them to answer by offering them indemnity or threatening them with jail. The CCB was able to get rid of their files and thus all the evidence of their activities. The Commission could not get General Malan to testify or order his people to co-operate fully. The Harms Commission had no power.

A3.

Why did the narrow terms of reference mean that the CCB could not be investigated properly? (6)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question, focusing on the skill of comprehension. Learners are able to extract this information from the text.

Suggested answer

The narrow terms of reference meant that:

- Many important questions could not be asked and answered which meant that a full understanding of all that the CCB had done could not be uncovered.
- The Commission could not ask any questions about activities beyond South Africa's borders. As much of what the CCB had done was outside the country much of their activities remained a mystery.
- The judge did not have the powers of a judge in a criminal trial so he could not force witnesses to testify if what they said would incriminate them.

A4.

Why was General Malan the key to a full investigation of the CCB? (4)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 7 question, focusing on the skill of evaluation. Learners need to make a judgement about the importance of General Malan giving evidence at the Harms Commission.

Suggested answer

General Malan was head of the Defence Force and therefore in charge of all its activities. He was the one person who could order his men to reveal everything and to produce the documents. As head of the Defence Force it was unlikely that he did not have full knowledge of the activities of the CCB. So, it is likely that he was crucial to such an investigation.

A5.

What questions did the Commission raise that were not answered?(4)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question, focusing on the skill of comprehension. Learners need to demonstrate their ability to understand the document and extract the information from the source. They can take the answer directly out of the source.

Suggested answer

Various missions were mentioned but no details were given. For example, the six people Petrus Botes ordered to be 'eliminated' are not known. The CCB spent R28 million but did not explain what it was used for because it was an external project.

A6.

Do you think there was a successful cover-up of the activities of the CCB?
Explain your answer. (6)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 4 question, focusing on the skill of application. Learners will be able to extract some of the information from the source but will have to demonstrate knowledge of events in the 1990s. The learner must refer to later evidence presented at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) hearings after 1994.

Suggested answer

The fact that the files were destroyed and that many of the key members of the CCB did not reveal much would indicate that a cover-up took place. Of the 71 political murders submitted to the commission on behalf of the Lawyers for Human Rights only three were acknowledged. Because of its limited terms of reference, the Harms Commission found very little evidence, and the CCB was disbanded before its second sitting. The later evidence of CCB agents Craig Williamson, Dirk Coetzee and Eugene de Kock at the TRC hearings revealed far more about the activities of the CCB, and confirmed suspicions that a cover-up had taken place.

SOURCE B: Cartoon – Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Hearings (1996)

A political cartoon by Zapiro.

(Archived at SAHA as Collection AL3129: B15, Zapiro TRC Cartoon Collection)

Learning Outcomes (LO) and Assessment Standards (AS)

LO 1: The learner acquires and applies historical enquiry skills

AS 3: Interprets and evaluates information and data from the sources

AS 4: Engages with sources of information, evaluating the usefulness of the sources, including stereotypes, subjectivity and gaps in the available evidence

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B1.

What organisations do these three 'crocodiles' represent? (3)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 2 question focusing on the skill of knowledge. The cartoon is a caricature of two generals in charge of the army and police and the CCB. The learner should recognise this from the symbols on the caps of the two generals. The medal on the third crocodile says 'CCB'.

Suggested answer

The head of the army; the head of the police; the head of the CCB

B2.

What is the significance of their appearance at the TRC Amnesty Application Hearings? (4)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question, focusing on the skill of comprehension. Learners must grasp the significance of these three people being at an amnesty hearing.

Suggested answer

The TRC offered amnesty for political crimes if there was full disclosure and remorse. Their appearance at the Amnesty Hearings implied that they were going to give full disclosure and show genuine remorse.

B3.

Why do you think the cartoonist drew the representatives of these organisations as crocodiles? (6)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 5 question, focusing on the skill of analysis. Learners need to interpret the symbolic significance of the images in the cartoon. They should first explain what a crocodile can represent, and then apply this knowledge to the cartoon.

Suggested answer

Crocodiles are dangerous reptiles. An old fable says that to lull a victim into trusting and believing them, crocodiles will shed fake tears. In other words they pretend to be harmless but will 'eat' you when you are not looking. The 'tears' here are supposed to be tears of remorse for their actions during the apartheid years. Learners may also indicate that there could be a subtle reference to their superior, PW Botha who was often characterised as a crocodile in cartoons as 'die ou krokodil' (the old crocodile).

B4.

What point is the cartoonist making? (4)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 5 question, focusing on the skill of analysis. Learners must be able to understand the hidden meaning behind the symbols.

Suggested answer

The cartoonist is making the point that the generals are shedding 'crocodile tears'. They are pretending to be remorseful and sorry for their actions but they are actually putting on an act.

B5.

Do you think this source is biased? Substantiate your answer. (8)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 7 question, focusing on the skill of evaluation. It asks learners to evaluate the reliability and bias of the source.

Suggested Answer

All cartoons are biased as the cartoonist states his own point of view. Nevertheless cartoons show us what many in a society are feeling at the time. In this case, Zapiro is reflecting the widely-held view in South Africa that the whole truth has not been told

about the activities of the police and the army, and especially the CCB. The heads of the security forces were not remorseful and are not disclosing what actually happened. Other evidence such as the failure of the TRC to subpoena PW Botha to testify at the Hearings, and the fact that General Malan never accepted responsibility for the CCB, help to substantiate the cartoonist's point of view.

B6.

What other sources back up or contradict this cartoon? (2)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 4 question, focusing on the skill of application, as well as a level 7 question, focusing on the skill of evaluation. The learner will have to evaluate other source material to answer the question and apply his or her wider knowledge of the events of the period.

Suggested answer

Source A tells us that many key documents and files were destroyed; this backs up this cartoon; also the failure of PW Botha, who was head of the State Security Council, to appear at the TRC.

SOURCE C: Extract from Eugene de Kock's testimony at the TRC Amnesty Hearings (1999)

Eugene de Kock, a former commander of Vlakplaas, appeared before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Amnesty Hearings on 25 May 1999.

(Archived at SAHA as Collection AL3121.A33.4, Julian Knight and Rudolph Jansen Collection)

Learning Outcomes (LO) and Assessment Standards (AS)

LO 1: The learner acquires and applies historical enquiry skills

AS 3: Interprets and evaluates information and data from the sources

AS 4: Engages with sources of information, evaluating the usefulness of the sources, including stereotypes, subjectivity and gaps in the available evidence

LO 2: The learner is able to use historical concepts in order to analyse the past

AS 2: Examines and explains the dynamics of changing power relations

AS 3: Compares and contrasts interpretations and perspectives of events, people's actions and changes in order to draw independent conclusions about the actions or events

C1.

What does this source tell us about CCB activities in 1990? (4)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question, focusing on the skill of comprehension. Learners can extract the answer from the source.

Suggested answer

Operations to murder people were carried out even while the Harms Commission was in session in 1990. The Harms Commission was irrelevant in stopping the activities of the CCB; but the Commission's existence may have resulted in the decision to disband the CCB.

C2.

From the source, identify two kinds of covert operations that the apartheid government was involved in. Give two examples.(6)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question, focusing on the skill of comprehension. The answer can be extracted directly from the source.

Suggested answer

The apartheid government did not hesitate to shoot people, and to attack suspected ANC activists and houses in neighbouring countries. In December 1985 activists were attacked in Lesotho. Before 1990 a house was attacked in Botswana.

C3.

Compare Sources A and C. Does Source C provide evidence in support of the contention that the Harms Commission was a 'toothless watchdog'? (6)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 7 question, focusing on the skill of evaluation. Learners must compare and evaluate the two sources.

Suggested answer

Yes, Source C corroborates the view of the newspaper article (Source A) that the Harms Commission was a 'toothless watchdog' because Source C reveals that illegal operations were still being carried out while the Harms Commission was sitting. Therefore the people appearing before the Commission had no intention of co-operating, because they knew they could not be punished in any way for their activities.

C4.

What does this source tell us about the chain of command for covert repression? (4)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question requiring the skill of comprehension. The information can be extracted from the source.

Suggested Answer

Eugene de Kock clearly states that his immediate superior, Brigadier Schoon, dealt with General van der Merwe (the head of the police) who was part of the State Security Council which was chaired by the then State President, P.W. Botha.

C5.

Who gave the order for the CCB to attack so-called activists in Lesotho?
Why is this statement significant? (6)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question, focusing on the skill of comprehension. Learners can extract the information directly from the source. However, the second question is a level 5 question requiring analysis and an understanding of the implication of the answer.

Suggested answer

According to Eugene de Kock the order came from PW Botha. This is significant in the light of PW Botha refusing to testify at the TRC. It raises the question as to whether only the men who carried out the orders appeared before the TRC, and not the people who actually gave the orders. This is an important point in trying to evaluate the success or failure of the TRC.

C6.

Is this a reliable source? Substantiate your answer. (6)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 7 question, focusing on the skill of evaluation. Learners need to decide, based on wider knowledge, whether this is a reliable source or not.

Suggested answer

Eugene de Kock may have been trying to implicate others higher in the command structure in order to lessen his own role and sentence. However, as the commander of Vlakplaas he was uniquely positioned to reveal exactly what kind of covert repression took place during the 1980s and early 1990s, and from where his orders originated. Given the hierarchical nature of the security forces it was unlikely that he was not following orders.

SOURCE D: Extract from the submission to the TRC by General JV van der Merwe (21 October 1996)

Van der Merwe was a member of the State Security Council.

(Archived at SAHA as Collection AL3060:1, volume 3, PW Botha vs. the State)

Learning Outcomes (LO) and Assessment Standards (AS)

LO 1: The learner acquires and applies historical enquiry skills

AS 3: Interprets and evaluates information and data from the sources

AS 4: Engages with sources of information, evaluating the usefulness of the sources, including stereotypes, subjectivity and gaps in the available evidence

LO 2: The learner is able to use historical concepts in order to analyse the past

AS 2: Examines and explains the dynamics of changing power relations

AS 3: Compares and contrasts interpretations and perspectives of events, people's actions and changes in order to draw independent conclusions about the actions or events

LO 3: The learner is able to construct and communicate historical knowledge and understanding

AS 3: Sustains and defends a coherent and balanced argument with evidence provided and independently assessed

D1.

Who was General van der Merwe? (2)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 2 question focusing on the skill of knowledge.

Suggested answer

General van der Merwe was the Commissioner of Police.

D2.

What does this source reveal about the 'chain of command' for these types of covert operations? (4)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question, focusing on the skill of comprehension. The answer to the question can be extracted directly from the source.

Suggested Answer

General van der Merwe reveals that the order to bomb Khotso House came via Mr Adriaan Vlok, the Minister of Law and Order who was ordered to bomb Khotso House by President P.W. Botha.

D3.

Why was so much emphasis placed on not putting lives at risk when it was clear that many political assassinations and murders had already taken place? (4)

Type of question

This is a level 7 question requiring the learner to evaluate motive and hidden meaning in the source.

Suggested answer

There are two possible explanations for this emphasis. One is that the government did not want to kill anyone in the building because that would have raised all kinds of media investigations and cast suspicion on the government. The second explanation is that by emphasising that no-one was to be killed the General is trying to downplay the incident and put the security forces in a better light.

D4.

Does van der Merwe produce any undeniable evidence that unlawful activities were taking place at Khotso House? (4)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question, focusing on the skill of comprehension.

Suggested answer

No. He claims that the police had 'a great deal of information regarding certain unlawful activities taking place' but he does not produce detailed evidence. He claims no informer or agent was prepared to give evidence which could mean that they did not have proof.

D5.

Is van der Merwe's evidence reliable? How would you substantiate it? (6)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question requiring comprehension of the source and also an ability to work at a level 7 in which the learners need to interpret, compare and contrast the source. It also requires a wider knowledge of the period.

Suggested answer

Van der Merwe's evidence indicates that the ultimate order for the bombing of Khotso House came from the State President, PW Botha. He was certainly in a position to make that claim but he could have been trying to save himself by implicating others. However, de Kock's evidence at the TRC substantiates that orders came from the top.

D6.

Was General van der Merwe simply following orders and as such not responsible for the bombing that took place? (6)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 7 question, focusing on the skill of evaluation. Learners need to make a judgement based on a reasoned argument. It is a controversial question but lies at the heart of all unlawful actions by governments that violate human rights.

Suggested answer

What you are looking for is a reasoned argument. Some may argue that van der Merwe and by extension de Kock and the CCB were doing their job and following orders and that the person at the top was responsible, and should have stood trial. For the Botha government and its operatives they were committed to fighting a war against those they perceived to be terrorists' and were defending their state. Others may argue that all people know what is right or wrong, and that each person has the responsibility to make an ethical and moral judgement regarding their behaviour; murdering people is always wrong.

SOURCE E: Cartoon by Zapiro (1996)

This cartoon appeared in *The Sowetan* on 23 October 1996.

(Archived at SAHA as Collection AL3129: B28)

Learning Outcomes (LO) and Assessment Standards (AS)

LO 1: The learner acquires and applies historical enquiry skills

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E1.

Who are the three figures hanging from the chain? (3)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 2 question focusing on the skill of knowledge and visual identification. Learners need to identify the figures, based on prior knowledge.

Suggested answer

The first figure is clearly the former Minister of Law and Order, Adriaan Vlok, the second figure is General van der Merwe, the head of the police and the third figure could represent Brigadier Schoon, head of the CCB or Eugene de Kock, who ultimately carried out whatever mission had been decided upon whilst he was commander of Vlakplaas.

E2.

**What is the 'chain of command' that Zapiro refers to?
How has Zapiro illustrated this? (6)**

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question requiring learners to demonstrate comprehension of the information and meaning in the cartoon. Learners must first define the meaning of the chain of command, and then show how the cartoonist has visually shown this.

Suggested answer

The 'chain of command' represents the hierarchical way that orders and decisions are made by the person or persons at the top and passed down eventually to the person who will have to execute them. This is often how businesses and governments work and especially organisations like the army and the police. Zapiro has taken this metaphor of a chain and drawn it as an actual chain that is securely fastened around the wrist of the person who gave the order, PW Botha.

E3.

What is the significance of the old South African flag? (2)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 4 question, focusing on the skill of application. Learners need to translate prior knowledge into a new context.

Suggested answer

The old South African flag symbolises the old order, the apartheid regime in South Africa. PW Botha was State President during the 1980s.

E4.

What is the viewpoint of the cartoonist? (6)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 5 question, focusing on the skill of analysis. Learners need to analyse the source in order to interpret its meaning and point of view.

Suggested answer

The cartoonist sees PW Botha firmly rooted in the old regime even though he is retired and living at the Wilderness. He shows Botha as a person who believed he was far from having to explain any actions or be exposed by those who executed his commands. However, the cartoonist believes that Botha is ultimately responsible by showing the iron chain of command that ultimately leads to him.

E5.

Do you think all those responsible for covert repression in South Africa are known? (8)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 6 question demanding synthesis of existing knowledge. Learners will not be able to get the answer from the cartoon alone.

Suggested answer

The cartoonist clearly shows PW Botha's role in the political murders that have been solved. PW Botha was head of the State Security Council, and as such would have made the final decisions, and would have known about operations although he may not personally have known all the details. In reference to Source A, we know that many files were destroyed or went missing from the CCB. So it would seem that there is a lot that we do not yet know about the covert operations, especially those undertaken outside the country. Incidents that people thought were accidents may have in fact been deliberate murders. We know that the CCB was under the command of General Magnus Malan, but we do not know for sure the extent of his knowledge of covert operations or how direct a role he played.

SOURCE F: Testimony of Eugene de Kock

Two extracts from Eugene de Kock's testimony at the TRC's Amnesty Hearings, pages 33 and 52. (Archived at SAHA as Collection AL3121: A33.4, The Julian Knight and Rudolph Jansen Collection)

Learning Outcomes (LO) and Assessment Standards (AS)

LO 1: The learner acquires and applies historical enquiry skills

AS 3: Interprets and evaluates information and data from the sources

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F1.

What role did the CCB and Vlakplaas play and where was their area of operation? (4)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question, focusing on comprehension. The answer can be obtained directly from the source. Two answers are needed.

Suggested answer

Vlakplaas was required to cover up and maintain the secrecy of security services, 'there was no limitation as to what would be done to protect that secrecy'. Vlakplaas worked 'right throughout the whole country'.

F2.

How did Vlakplaas cover up the attack on the wrong house in Botswana? (4)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question, focusing on comprehension. Learners can find the answer directly in the source.

Suggested answer

When it was discovered that the Defence Force had attacked the wrong house in Botswana and there were no weapons or ammunition in it, de Kock was asked to produce two Makarov pistols (weapons made in Russia). These pistols were then 'planted' as proof that the house was used by ANC activists (the ANC received weapons from Russia).

F3.

How does this source demonstrate that the South African security forces destabilised neighbouring countries such as Zambia, Mozambique, Botswana and Zimbabwe? (6)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question, focusing on the skill of comprehension.

Suggested answer

De Kock states that weapons were stockpiled (stored) in these countries for use by the South African Security Forces. In describing the attack on the wrong house in Botswana he is admitting that the South African Defence Force attacked property in a sovereign state that had nothing to do with the ANC. This meant that innocent people could become victims of raids from South Africa within their own country.

F4.

Explain how the apartheid government violated international law and what effect this would have had on neighbouring countries and the ANC. (4)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 6 question, focusing on the skill of synthesis of knowledge and interpretation. The answer to the question is not stated directly in the source.

Suggested answer

It is a violation of international law to secretly attack areas in a sovereign country without having declared war against that country. The South African government carried out attacks on neighbouring countries with impunity (without fear of punishment); even if the countries concerned complained to the United Nations. This was a deliberate attempt by the apartheid state to destabilise these countries, and discourage them from giving the ANC shelter, and in some cases allowing it to have bases there. Without the help of neighbouring states, it would have been very difficult for the ANC to send people into South Africa and enable Umkhonto we Sizwe to operate.

F5.

How does this source help explain the nature of the 'total onslaught' policy of PW Botha? (6)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 7 question, focusing on the skill of evaluation. Learners need to interpret the source in the light of the question.

Suggested answer

This source helps to explain the nature of the 'total onslaught' policy. It shows that the apartheid government was ruthless and would stop at nothing to achieve its aims. It did not matter what was required – cover-ups, lies, violations of international law, terrorising the citizens of another country and murder – were all in a day's work.

SOURCE G: Judgement – State vs. Botha

This is page 1557 of the judgement in the State vs. Botha, Extract 17.

(Archived at SAHA as Collection AL3060: volume 17, 1557)

Learning Outcomes (LO) and Assessment Standards (AS)

LO 1: The learner acquires and applies historical enquiry skills

AS 3: Interprets and evaluates information and data from the sources

AS 4: Engages with sources of information, evaluating the usefulness of the sources, including stereotypes, subjectivity and gaps in the available evidence

LO 2: The learner is able to use historical concepts in order to analyse the past

AS 2: Examines and explains the dynamics of changing power relations

AS 3: Compares and contrasts interpretations and perspectives of events, people's actions and changes in order to draw independent conclusions about the actions or events

LO 3: The learner is able to construct and communicate historical knowledge and understanding

AS 2: Synthesise information to construct an original argument, using evidence from sources provided in order to support the argument

G1.

Who incriminated PW Botha in the Khotso House bombings? (3)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question, focusing on the skill of comprehension. Learners can get the answer directly from the source.

Suggested answer

Johan van der Merwe, the former Commissioner of Police, Mr Adriaan Vlok, the former Minister of Law and Order both alleged that the order to blow up Khotso House came from PW Botha. Eugene de Kock claimed he was congratulated by Mr Vlok for the Khotso House bombing; and he also believed the order came from PW Botha.

G2.

**Which three words in the State Security Council minutes have ambiguous meaning?
Why is clarity important in this context? (6)**

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question, focusing on the skill of comprehension. The learner needs to demonstrate understanding of the importance of the meaning conveyed by those words.

Suggested answer

The ambiguous terms referred to are:

- Eliminate/elimineer
- Neutralise/neutraliseer
- Take out/uithaal.

None of these words mean unambiguously and clearly that the persons concerned should be murdered, as Eugene de Kock claimed. If this is what the words used meant, then the State Security Council was ordering gross human rights violations.

G3.

Why could only PW Botha explain exactly what was meant by these words? (4)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 2 question focusing on knowledge.

Suggested answer

PW Botha had been at various stages, Minister of Defence, Prime Minister, State President and Chairman of the State Security Council. He was in a position to understand exactly what was meant by those words.

G4.

What is the Act's definition of 'gross violation of human rights'? (4)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 2 question focusing on knowledge.

Suggested answer

The Act defined gross violation of human rights as 'any attempt, conspiracy, incitement, instigation, command or procurement to commit the killing, abduction, torture or severe ill-treatment of any person'. If it could be proved that PW Botha had allowed gross human rights violations to take place, he would have had to stand trial unless he applied for amnesty.

G5.

'The former government created an environment in which gross human rights violations could occur'. Do you agree with this statement? Using your own knowledge and the sources presented here, write a paragraph explaining your argument. (10)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 4 question which requires the learner to use the information that he or she has gathered (application). It is also a level 6 question requiring synthesis of knowledge from different areas in order to draw a conclusion from that knowledge.

Suggested answer

Most learners will agree that the former government did in fact create a climate in which gross human rights violations could occur. Main points to be mentioned include:

- the testimony of people like de Kock, Craig Williamson and other CCB agents about the people they murdered
- the admission of the bombing of Khotso House
- the statement by Eugene de Kock in Source F that 'there was no limitation as to what would be done to protect that secrecy'
- the cross-border raids where activists were killed (Lesotho 1985) and buildings bombed (Botswana)
- the list of 71 political murders that the Lawyers for Human Rights drew up and presented to the Harms Commission (Source A), of which only 3 were accounted for
- the controversial SSC minutes which contain the ambiguous words eliminate/ neutralise which most people interpret as suggesting that people be killed

SOURCE H: Article – Vigilantes Aim for Community Leaders

Anti-Apartheid News, April 1987.

(Archived at SAHA as Collection AL2457: W2.1, AAN, 1987)

Learning Outcomes (LO) and Assessment Standards (AS)

LO 1: The learner acquires and applies historical enquiry skills

AS 3: Interprets and evaluates information and data from the sources

AS 4: Engages with sources of information, evaluating the usefulness of the sources, including stereotypes, subjectivity and gaps in the available evidence

LO 2: The learner is able to use historical concepts in order to analyse the past

AS 2: Examines and explains the dynamics of changing power relations

AS 3: Compares and contrasts interpretations and perspectives of events, people's actions and changes in order to draw independent conclusions about the actions or events

H1.

Using the source, explain what vigilantes were? (4)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question, focusing on the skill of comprehension. Learners can get the answer directly from the source.

Suggested answer

According to the source, vigilantes were gangs of thugs, sometimes in uniform, sometimes not in uniform, who worked in collaboration with the state security forces to attack anti-apartheid activists.

H2.

Explain how vigilantes operated during the state of emergency. (6)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 3 question, focusing on the skill of comprehension. Learners can extract the answer directly from the source.

Suggested answer

The use of vigilantes was an attempt to use unconventional methods in targeting anti-apartheid activists. Vigilantes were usually drawn from outside of the communities that they attacked. They were usually very well-armed and operated in large numbers. They would attack a community, and capture residents, particularly those who were politically active in street committees. These activists would then be arrested shortly after by the police.

H3.

What was the South African government hoping to achieve by using vigilantes? (6)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 5 question, focusing on analysis. Learners need to read through the source carefully and determine what the South African government was trying to achieve through the use of vigilantes.

Suggested answer

The South African government hoped to use the vigilantes to get rid of the leadership in grassroots organizations. They hoped to present these violent attacks on communities as spontaneous acts carried out by older residents in order to create divisions within communities. And also to try to convey that these acts of violence had nothing to do with the state itself.

H4.

This article comes from the British Anti-Apartheid Movement's magazine *Anti-Apartheid News*. Do you think it is a reliable source about the activities of vigilantes in South Africa? (8)

Type of question and approach

This is a level 7 question, focusing on the skill of evaluation. In order to determine the reliability of the source, learners need to examine who wrote the article, where it was published, and what was the intention of the article. They should look for one-sidedness and the use of factual information as opposed to opinion in order to determine reliability.

Suggested answer

The article was written by the producers of the British anti-apartheid magazine, *Anti-Apartheid News*. The producers of this magazine were clearly anti-apartheid and wanted to educate people in Britain about what the SA government was doing. Their aim is to discredit the actions of the South African government but it is unlikely that they would produce false information in order to do this. The article is based on evidence produced in a memorandum by the UDF. It makes use of a great deal of factual information drawn from this memorandum. It is likely that the article is reliable.