

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

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are in attendance, the other two are on their way I hope they haven't lost their way. The first one is Mr. D. Thebehali, he is the Chairman of the U.B.C. of Soweto. Then there is Mr. Francis Chuenyane, he is the Chairman of the Education and Health Committee. Third is Mr. Daniel Rasmeni, he is the Chairman of the Housing and General Purposes Committee. The fourth is Mr. Sipho Mutha, he is the chairman of the Amenities Committee. These four are in attendance, the other two, I can just get their names down. The fifth one is Mr. Richard Mponya, he is the Chairman of the Trade and Transport Committee and finally Mr. Tolita Makhaya, he is the Deputy Chairman. Now it has been arranged that Mr. David Thebehali the Chairman of the U.B.C. will act as the spokesman and I have indicated to the others that they can add or subtract if they want to, from anything that Mr. Thebehali will say. Over to you, Mr. Thebehali.

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MR. THEBEHALI: My Lord, we have come here as members of the Urban Bantu Council from Soweto, and most of us here have been members of the Urban Bantu Council since it was established in 1968. Our term of office is three years and we were.. we stood for elections in 1971, once again in 1974 and it was the tail end of our term of office. We started in 1974 and at all these times we have been re-elected by the people of Soweto, we represent them when it came to their civic needs. Although the whole process of establishing the Urban Bantu Councils has not been a very good one to us because the mode of election there has been on the basis of an ethnic platform, one of the things that the people of Soweto have been objecting to for quite a number of years, even prior to the establishment of the Urban Bantu Council was that we..we are refusing, and are not happy with the idea of being separated on ethnic grounds.

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What/..

What has happened is that when this new building programme was started after the R6 000 000 that was given to the people of Soweto for the building of houses, the township was then divided on ethnic grounds and this has been something which has been very very much unpopular with the people of Soweto. But because we thought that there is a service that we can offer to the people of Soweto we decided to stand for elections on an ethnic platform and we made it quite clear to the people who voted for us that whatever recommendations we are going to make, in our advisory capacities, those recommendations will (10 not be on the basis of our ethnic or tribal affiliations, but they will be on the basis of the needs of the people of Soweto. And we have continued that way. And may I say that because of our operating in a Government created platform, there have been certain individuals, certain organisations who have been hurling all sorts of abuse at us because we are operating from a Government created platform but I think our argument against allegations or against statements of that nature has always been that there is a service that we can offer our people in Soweto. Although the service that we can offer is advisory to a local (20 authority, that we thought that it was vitally important that at least there must be a voice that will always carry the needs and the aspirations, the civic aspirations of the people of Soweto. This is on the basis of why we have continued operating on this Government platform. And our recommendations have always been that the institution itself must be improved and over the last seven, eight years, well let me put it this way: In 1969 we drew up a memorandum and we submitted it at the Non-European Affairs Committee, to say that the time has now come that we must be given executive powers so as to be able to run Soweto (30 so that we must have complete control of Soweto, but I am happy

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to say that at least the Government has responded to the memorandum and the pleas that we have made over the years that the time has now come that they are going to hand over delegated responsibility to us. We as a Council have been operating through four committees, the committees are Education and Health Committee, Trade and Transport Committee, a Management Committee and Housing and General Purposes Committee and this was the basis upon which we tried to advise the local authorities the Johannesburg City Council then, and now since 1973, the West Rand Administration Board. And now we go through (10 some of the problems that we have had in Soweto which arose from the four committees that I have mentioned. We as a Council will increase the Housing Committee, the Housing and General Purposes Committee. Nearly every year we made recommendations for the building of more houses. There has been a serious and acute shortage of houses and every year the number of..(background noise)..on the waiting list has been increasing. And to date I think we have about 20 000 families who are on the waiting list, waiting for houses to be built. May I say that since the West Rand Administration Board came into existence (20 the pace at which the building programme..suddenly slowed down and this has really created quite a lot of serious problems as far as the people of Soweto are concerned. And again the type of houses that have been built over the years have not in my opinion, in our opinion been the right type of houses. The houses that are being built was one that is described as a 51/6 house..

CHAIRMAN: Described as? --- A 51/6 which is an ordinary 4-roomed house.

DR. YUTAR: That must be the Public Works Department reference number. --- Yes, that's right. And a 51/7 which was a two.. (30 four-roomed houses, attached together. And then prior to 1970 there/..

there was another type of house that was built and we thought that perhaps this was going to be the house that was going to be built for the people of Soweto. It is called a 51/9. Which was an ordinary four-roomed house with a bathroom and a toilet incorporated into it and we thought this was going to be the new pattern and the type of house that was going to be built. Most unfortunately this type of house was not the one that was made..to be a housing feature as far as the people of Soweto were concerned.

Do you perhaps know the cost of erecting these various types of houses? --- No. (10

You don't? --- No, we don't.

All right. Carry on then. --- But then the Board continued building the 51/6 houses and My Lord with..they are family units, the Black family units at the present moment stands at 6,7 and for people to stay in a one bedroomed house I don't think really this contributes and augurs well to our sociological problems that sort of arise from six and a half people being able to stay in a four-roomed house.

CHAIRMAN: Did you on the Advisory Council, ever discuss the type of house to be built? --- Oh, yes. This has been done. (20

And did you make recommendations about that? --- This has been coming nearly every year.

Have you made recommendations about it? --- Making our recommendations, but we need a new type of house to be...which was really sad. I believe the family needs of the people of Soweto, we have been making more and more recommendations, we actually even recommended the building of flats because we have a large number of young people now who are coming onto the scene who are becoming adults, who are getting married and who are increasing the number of people on the waiting lists and (30

we/..

we said these people, because of the economic situation in which they find themselves, they will be able to afford a higher rental of staying in a one-bedroomed or two-bedroomed type of flat, even if the rental there was plus or minus R25. These young couples were going to afford to pay that amount of money.

Would such a flat have more conveniences than a house?

--- Yes, we recommended that the type of flat that has to be built must have all the services, you know, hot and cold water, electricity and all the necessary services that it needs in a (10 house. They also say that although these houses have been built and in our opinion these houses one could not really move into them, even when you are allocated this type of house, you couldn't just sort of move into it because it was an incomplete house. You still have to cement the walls, and do the flooring and even put in a ceiling and at the cost of the person to whom the house has been allocated and the interesting thing that in the event of you leaving that house, you were not compensated for the improvements that you have made on this house and this has been another sore point or a point of frustration to the people (20 of Soweto. Now another thing also that we sort of made recommendations time and time again was the building of hostels. You know, in Soweto, and in the boundaries of Soweto. We have at the present moment about eight hostels, that cater for single men or women and I think the statistics that I have is about two years old, the statistics of 1974. These eight hostels housed something like 610 000 individuals. A man could sort of understand the sociological problems that arises from a hostel being built just across the street of a residential area. You know, the kind of sexual immorality that sort of arises from a situation of (30 having to put a group of single men in one sort of dormitory

or/..

or compound. This has really created a new type of sexual immorality which we did not know, prior to the 1960's, as far as the community of Soweto is concerned, and we..(intervenes).

CHAIRMAN: Your complaint, do I understand it correctly about the hostels, is first of all there are a number of men or women together on one dormitory or large room? --- No, Your Worship it is just a large number of..(intervenes).

No, no I come to that point. --- Yes.

I will come to that point but you say that they are..there are a number of men together in a dormitory or a large room? ----(10 Yes.

Then you say that it is..it works for immorality to have a large number of single men in a residential area? --- That's right, yes.

Are they mostly men that work there..stay there for a few months and then go again? --- Some of them are there for a few months, some of them are contract labourers who are there for a few months, who go away and others are just there permanently.

Permanently? --- Yes. And they go away when they are (20 on leave let us say for three weeks or for a month.

Yes. --- Then they go back to the Homelands and then come back again.

Yes, and those..they are there on a more permanent basis than the others? --- Yes.

Now where are these hostels then situated? You say in or close to ordinary residential areas? --- Right in Soweto, there is only..there are only two that are just at the boundaries that is the Diepkloof Hostel, which is on the boundary of Diepkloof and the Meadowlands Hostel or the Msimhlope Hostel, which is (30 just on the edge of a residential area, called Msimhlope and then the/..

the rest, there are five, six of them, are right in Soweto.

DR. YUTAR: We have had evidence Mr. Thebehali that according to what you are saying now that the young girls who are living with their parents in the residential area, fall prey to these single men, particularly those who are contract labourers and only come there for a short time. --- That is very true.

Incidentally that figure you gave of 600 000 I think that must be a mistake. --- 610 000.

610 000. --- Yes. These were the figures that I have (10 for 1974.

It is almost the population of the whole of Soweto. --- Quite.

It can't..usually that (intervenes).

CHAIRMAN: Well, perhaps we can investigate that fact.

DR. YUTAR: Yes. --- The 1974 number. Yes, now and again as far as housing is concerned you know, there is a big problem which is a real sore point as far as the people of Soweto are concerned and this is the question of the influx control regulations. (20

CHAIRMAN: Now, can I ask you this question: The influx control affects you in your everyday life in certain respects, for example that you have difficulties if you have a visitor or if you go visiting? And marrying is somewhat difficult if you marry somebody from outside the particular area in which you are. I think those are the important..things of the every day things that you find everyday. --- Yes.

Children who cannot be brought with their parents to the place where they live because the parents are entitled to come into Soweto but the child has perhaps been with the grandfather (30 or the grandmother in some other town, but the position is somewhat/..



somewhat relieved now that you can move on a greater part of the Witwatersrand than you used to be able to move before, is that correct? --- That is correct.

Now I have just mentioned a few, now let us see if you can go on mentioning the others. --- The others, yes. Your Lordship I am not talking about people who want to come to Soweto, to Johannesburg, I am not talking about those people because I am fully aware that if at all..we can sort of open up the whole of Soweto for everybody to come in, this is going to increase problems such as we will have to provide accommodation for these people, we have to provide jobs for these people and this again is going to bring about new socio-economic problems. I am talking about the people who are legally qualified to be in Soweto. (10

Well, that is why I spoke about the everyday things, a thing that worries you everyday. --- Yes. Now we have a situation where my daughter or my son is required by law when he or she reaches the age of 16 he has to apply for a reference book. Now what happens in this case, the procedure is that we must have a birth certificate, and again bring the residential permit and (20 then also bring a letter from the school where this child has been attending school. Then I have also to go and report to the municipal labour officer to do the influxing. When...I must go there, although the people are there, the residential document is there, the birth certificate is there, I have to be away from work to be able to assist this child. And we find ourselves going there for a day for two days, for three days and the people of Soweto are saying that why is it necessary, really necessary for me as an adult to be away from work when I have the necessary documents and there have been some (30 embarrassing situations where the municipal labour Officer will/..

will just say: Now, can you tell me where have you been from the age of 7 up to the age of 16. And then as a parent I will say: Look, my child has been attending school there and so on and so on and then the municipal Labour Officer will say: Look, I am not talking to you, I am talking to this child.

I am talking to..? --- To the child. And this has a psychological effect on the parent in that here is a situation where the parent is shown that there is somebody who is more powerful than the parent and here am I being humiliated in the presence of my own child and then, where does..where is (10 this child going to afford or to give me any form of respect, and this is one of the things that sort of contribute to the loss of control over children because the children now realise that there is somebody more powerful over my father and who is my father to give me instructions. And we are saying this My Lord, because we think it is vitally important that the people whom we are dealing with the White official that we are dealing with in Soweto, also at the Bantu Affairs Commissioner's offices, and the West Rand Board offices in town, it is vitally important that they must at least show some respect, tolerance and patience (20 as far as the Black individual is concerned. A type of human relationship that is wanted at the present moment, and this one can really say has also contributed to the riots that we had on the 16th of June. We are also called upon that we have, when a child gets about 21 or so, he decides to get married and then he goes to the Homeland to go and pick up a beautiful girl and then he has got to have all types of difficulties to get that particular..to get his wife influxed in Johannesburg and this really creates all sorts of problems because one then comes to the conclusion that in this case influx control really separates (30 husband and wife and we have had also instances where we send our/..

our children to the homelands to attend school and when they reach the age of 16 they apply for a reference book in the school where they are attending and when the child has to come back to Johannesburg or to Soweto, then he has influx control difficulties. Then you find that your child is really refused entry, then we then come to the conclusion that influx control is being used not only to separate father and mother but it is also used to separate parents from their children.

On that point just tell me: Do a lot of parents send their children out of Soweto to other places to get their schooling? --- Yes. Actually you know, the majority of the parents in Soweto are saying: Look, let me send my child away from the Soweto environment so that the child must be able to further his education quite easily. We do this particularly when the child passes Std. VI and has to get to secondary school to do his or her form I, then we send the child to a boarding school, a very good distance away from Johannesburg and most of the boarding schools for our children are located in the Homelands and that is where the problem comes, when the child has qualified or has completed his secondary education and has to come back and perhaps to start working, then they find to have this influx control difficulties. (10 (20

Usually the child turns 16 about the time when he is away?

--- That is correct.

At school there. --- That is correct. Because actually our children reach the age..reach Std. VI at the age of 13 and 14 so when they are 15 more often than not he is doing his Form I at secondary school, so when he leaves Form II he is 16, that is the time when he applies for a reference book and then problems arise when the child has to be influxed in Johannesburg. (30 Coming to another area of Transport.

Of..? --- Transport. in Soweto. I think it was Mr. Schoeman, the then Minister of Transport who in Parliament made a statement that he is aware that the South African Railways and also Putco, cannot meet the transport of the people of Soweto. If one has to talk about the South African Railways I think it is more than just a fact that we do not have a sufficient number of trains, particularly during peak hours, running between Johannesburg and Soweto. The trains are terribly overcrowded and some of us who more often than not decide not to board or perhaps to buy a 3rd class ticket, we - (1) some of us because we earn a little bit more, we decided to buy a second-class ticket hoping that perhaps we would be able to travel comfortably between Johannesburg and Soweto and vice versa, but these second-class coaches are also terribly crowded to the extent that one really does not find it necessary to buy a second-class ticket.

It doesn't help to buy a second-class ticket? --- It doesn't help at all because the comfort that you want, you know you really do not get because the trains are terribly overcrowded. What actually happens is that the second-class trains (2) running between Johannesburg and Soweto, you will find it only has two second-class coaches and nine third-class coaches and one of the recommendations that we have made from the Trade and Transport Committee was that these...the number of coaches must be increased from 11 to 13. We have seen that it.. at least our recommendation has been acceded to, because there are times when these trains are 13 instead of 11, particularly during peak hours and the other thing, that the platform has been extended to be able to..shall I say accommodate, 13 coaches instead of 11. Now again talking on the question of trains (3) we have found that there is not sufficient police protection

in/..

in these trains, particularly on Friday afternoon and evenings and also on Saturdays. We find that a large number of the tsotsi element of the juvenile delinquents take advantage of the people who have received their pay packets on Fridays or perhaps at the end of the month, and there is quite a lot pick-pocketing there and there is quite a lot of violence taking place in the trains. And so the passenger there, whether you are in the second-class coach or in the third-class coach we find ourselves being open to what one can describe as the terrorism from these youngsters, particularly on Fridays and (10 on Saturdays and our appeal has always been to the South African Railway Police that please have as many men as possible on the trains particularly on Friday afternoons and Saturdays. Now another sore point with the people of Soweto is that the South African Railways has not provided enough selling points for tickets. A large number of the people of Soweto buy weekly tickets and so they buy their tickets either on Friday afternoon that is for the following week or they buy their tickets on Sunday afternoons or on Monday mornings and the queues are so long that we find ourselves spending an hour, two hours just (20 to buy a first-class or a second-class weekly ticket and towards the end of the month it is even worse, where you have just everybody who were using a weekly ticket and a monthly ticket buying tickets and we have again and again appealed to the South African Railways that in places like Nancefield Station and places like Dube Station, it is vitally important that we must have more and more selling points so that at least you know I feel it is absolutely important that any agency must try by all means to provide this service to make it easier for people to get the things that they want, particularly if those people (30 have to pay for the service to be rendered, it is vitally important/..

important that it must go easier that these people must get.. what I am trying to say is that the South African Railways know very well that hundreds and thousands of people make use of the trains and so they must make it easier for these hundreds and thousands of people to be able to buy tickets, to be able to travel very easily on the trains.

Just as you have peak hours for the trains, you have peak hours for buying of tickets. --- Yes, but it..(intervenes).

Yes, it is only more so because everybody or large numbers come on the days when they buy their weekly tickets. --- Yes. (10) What I am trying to say that it is vitally important that they must increase staff. You know, you must not have one or two people for one selling point, you must have as many people as possible but people..if you know that at such and such a time a large number of people will be coming to buy their tickets. So it is vitally important that you must have a programme whereby you can be able to have a large number of people serving the large number of people who will be coming to buy there.

DR. YUPAR: Is there any complaint against those Railway officials who sell the tickets, are they courteous, helpful? --- The (20) complaints have been innumerable.

The complaints..(intervenes). --- Against the individuals the Black individuals who are selling tickets. Several complaints complaints such as change, complaints such as you find a person taking 5 minutes or 10 minutes to drink a cup of tea whilst a large number of people are waiting and the trains are coming in. So in other words you will find that you miss your train or let us suppose you have to get..you have to buy your ticket in the morning, it means then you must go there an hour or two hours earlier to be able to buy a ticket. I mean this causes (30) quite a lot of inconvenience to..inconvenience as far as this passenger/..

passenger is concerned.

MR. MOTHU: One of the complaints to help him I think in this matter: You can't buy two tickets, you can't buy a ticket for your wife and yourself, I have to buy a ticket for myself. If I want to buy a ticket for my wife I have to go back to the queue again, these are some of the complaints as far as this is concerned.

MR. THEBEHALI: And then, as I say if you are travelling together with your wife or with your children, all of you have to stand in one queue to be able to buy a ticket at a time. (10

CHAIRMAN: Well, that makes a queue longer.

MR. THEBEHALI: Absolutely.

DR. YUTAR: And are these now Black officials? Aren't there Europeans there too?

MR. THEBEHALI: No, these are Black officials. They have a situation where there is a European supervisor who time and again.. I think their headquarters is New Canada where you have a White ticket inspector or supervisor who moves around from one selling point to another. And sometimes the people lay their complaints to this European supervisor. (20

CHAIRMAN: Let me just get this clear: You buy your ticket and then immediately you go on to the platform, is that right?

MR. THEBEHALI: That's right.

CHAIRMAN: So that is probably where it is wrong. Then everybody must stand in the queue for the buying of tickets and as you have said then if you haven't got the ticket you have got to go right to the back again to get one for your wife. Yes. Now I understand that.

MR. THEBEHALI: Yes.

DR. YUTAR: This complaint which you have made about change: (30  
We have had evidence that this sort of thing happens also on the  
buses/..

buses and if you argue with them, then of course there is trouble.

MR. THEBEHALI: Yes. Now we have..and our means of transport which is lutco buses, which are operating in Soweto and the Putco people are..you know, we have two major transporting organisations and perhaps there is also a third one, that is the South African Railways and also Putco. And Putco is monopolizing you know, the bus service and I think it is..these figures are correct that particularly at peak hour, they carry up to about 147 000 people. Now, to Soweto and from town. (10 From town to Soweto and back there. And again you know, Putco cannot really cope with the transport needs of the people of Soweto. So now you have taxis which are another..a third component as far as our transportation system is concerned. The taxi people - at the present moment there are a thousand licensed Black taxi operators in Soweto.

CHAIRMAN: A thousand?

MR. THEBEHALI: A thousand Black taxi licensed operators but I can really say that about 70% or 75% of these taxi owners have certificates which allow them only to operate within Soweto. (20 Only to operate within Soweto and then you have another 30% or 25% you know, who have what is called a magisterial certificate which makes it possible for them to take passengers from Soweto into town and these taxi people have on several occasions approached the Transportation Board to have their zonal certificates, zonal in this sense that they have only to operate in Soweto improved to a magisterial certificate, so as to be able to transport a large number of people into town and the people who have always objected to the improvement of a zonal certificate to a magisterial certificate is the S.A. Railways and Putco (30 they have always objected to this, but there are also another element/..



element that has been included in these objections, the Johannesburg City Council has been trying to reduce the number of motor cars coming into Johannesburg and so this was also given as a reason why they have to object to the Transportation Board every now and then when there is an application to have a zonal certificate improved to a magisterial certificate. And just recently we as an Urban Bantu Council we made a recommendation to 50 applications, that these 50 applicants must have their zonal certificates improved to a magisterial certificate. The report that I got yesterday was that the (10) 50 applications were turned down, and they intend appealing to Pretoria to..against the decision of the local Transportation Board and one of the main objectors was the South African Railways. And the other thing that we recommended to the local Transportation Board was that in view of the fact that a taximan is required to use an ordinary motor car, you know, a four-door motor car and also in view of the fact that the Johannesburg City Council is against an increase in the motor cars coming into the centre of town, how would it be that these people who have got magisterial certificates, must make use of Combi's (20) because a Combi is able to carry more than the five passengers, a Combi will be able to carry nine passengers or perhaps they must make use of mini-buses because as I said earlier, the Railways and Putco cannot really provide the transportation needs of the people of Soweto. At about..from half-past four right up to about 6 o'clock, you see a large number of workers lining Commissioner Street, you know, because they know that if they go to the station, they will not be able to get the service, if they go to the Putco buses, they won't be able to get the service, if they go to the taxi-ranks they will not be able (30) to get home quickly and so what do they do, they just line

Commissioner/..

Commissioner Street and just get onto any type of transport that is going to Soweto. This has also created illegal transportation of people from Johannesburg and vice versa but if I have got a car then I am able to take on these people and I charge them, either to go into town or going back to Soweto and this has made that there must be a confrontation between motor car owners and taxi owners because rightly the taxi owners have a licence that they have to pay and I don't have a licence to pay but then I am making a lot of extra money for myself, I get these people who have to pay 50c and 65c per person<sup>(10)</sup> just so that with that money it will be possible for me to provide for my petrol needs and we as a Council have always spoken against this illegal transportation of people, the pirate.. (intervenes).

CHAIRMAN: You also have the other difficulty that if you are stopped, then that is the end of your journey then you have got to find another..if you are stopped by an official who wants to find out whether you are a pirate taxi or not, then you have to start the journey all over again.

MR. THEBEHALI: That is quite right, and I mean this<sup>(20)</sup> creates problems as far as the employers are concerned because I mean if you are a type of employer who has to operate you know, on a basis of time, and let us say you are a factory you know that starts at 8 o'clock and by 4 o'clock, half-past four five o'clock the production must be this far, then you find that a large number of people are coming late, not because they left home late but because of transport difficulties, so this has an effect, a positive effect on commerce and industry, you know of getting the employees or the workers late at their places of work and so we say that it is vitally important that we must<sup>(30)</sup> have more and more means of transport from Soweto into town and/..

and vice versa.

DR. YUTAR: There is another aspect too, not only is the productivity cut down by late arrival, but it is also cut down by people who have to get up very early, travel a number of hours and arrive at their place of work exhausted, by it.

MR. THEBEHALI: That's right. Now another area also which is creating problems as far as the people of Soweto are concerned is in the area of trading. You know, if one has sort of to look at it from a historical point of view, there was a time interestingly enough when Black people owned businesses (10 in the centre of Johannesburg and when this whole sort of separate residential programme was introduced, the development what is now called Soweto, these business people were then asked that they will have to go and start their businesses in places like Soweto and they were told that when they get there, the sky will be the ceiling, they would be able to improve their businesses, increase their business operations. But then when they got there, there were quite a lot of restrictions that were placed on them. What happened I think the new regulations that were instituted in 1968, they made it quite (20 clear that when it came to a trader, you were only allowed one door one business.

CHAIRMAN: One man one business, it was called.

MR. THEBEHALI: That's right, it is one man..actually it is more than one man one business, it is one man, one door, one licence.

CHAIRMAN: Oh, yes, yes.

DR. YUTAR: Yes..(LAUGHTER).

MR. THEBEHALI: You know, in other words, if you get a general dealer certificate, you can only perhaps have a butchery and (30 you cannot have a butchery and a grocery and a restaurant at the/..

the same time and this has created quite a lot of problems particularly to the new type of businessman who came onto the scene after 1968. It was these restrictions as far as he was concerned, that he was only restricted to one type of business. But not only that, then we had also prior to 1968 what is called a "control certificate", but even if you are given a general dealer's licence, there were certain items you were not supposed to sell. So you had this "control certificate" which sort of restricted your business operation..of the businessman in the sense that he was the type of person that (10 I would like to increase my business but because of the "control certificate" I am unable to do this. And I think the attitude has always been that a Black businessman in Soweto must only provide for the daily needs, the daily essentials and that is all, and that is why we do not have in our shops in Soweto that sell clothing, you know, you have to travel all the way into town to buy a suit and so on, you do not have you know, a departmental store in Soweto at all.

DR. YUTAR: The same applies to furniture, radio's.

MR. THEBEHALI: Radio's, yes, you can't..you don't have the (20 type of business operating in Soweto at all, you have to come to the centre of town. But I think there has been a sort of a slight change now to one man one business. And this says that on one site, one site you can have a butchery, a restaurant and a grocery shop, this is a new thing I think it came..the announcement was only made to us towards the end of last year by the Deputy Minister, Mr. Cruywagen, that you can have this type of business operation and secondly there was also another interesting feature that was added to it that we can now have a company we can establish companies, we can..(intervenes). (30

CHAIRMAN: Establish partnerships.

MR./..

MR. THEBEHALI: Establish partnerships, this was very interesting but then there is still a restriction in this sense that I can have this one man one business operation on one site but if let us say I would like to expand to another township from Dube to another area, I am unable to do this. And the business people are saying that look, they honestly and sincerely believe in a capitalistic type of economy, a business operation and there are some of the people who have got quite a lot of money and who really and truly believe in monopolies and majors and what have you and they would like to see you know, owning (10 as many businesses as possible but because of these restrictions it is not really possible.

DR. YUTAR: They would like to open up more branches?

MR. THEBEHALI: More branches.

DR. YUTAR: Of course it has this further advantage too, because the greater the scale on which you buy wholesale, the cheaper you pay, the less you pay and then you can pass it on even to the public.

MR. THEBEHALI: The public, the cheaper price. Well, this has always been a problem that the people of Soweto are now moving (20 into the supermarkets in town, in Checkers, Pick and Pay, O.K. Bazaars and so on..(both speak simultaneously)..the reason because of the price.

CHAIRMAN: You have no supermarkets in Soweto?

MR. THEBEHALI: No, we don't have any supermarkets. Because we find..we have really and truly a small business operation, the small business man you know, who is only able to buy in small quantities and he is not able to afford you know, the big discounts that come from the wholesalers and the manufacturers so that is why our prices, the prices of our commodities are higher compared to those in town and then you see this whole (30 sort of movement of the Black clientele, put it that way, coming into/..

into town and on Friday afternoons and Saturday mornings they go back to Soweto with their groceries and the control certificate has also this effect in that I am unable to buy everything that I need from one business operation. So now I decide to come into town because in a supermarket I will be able to buy just everything that I need, you know, at once.

CHAIRMAN: In a departmental store, as they say you can buy everything that you want under one roof.

MR. THEBEHALI: That is correct, correct. And then another thing also we see. You know, our buying style, put it that way is slightly different from the White people..that we find ourselves being in an employment situation from Monday until Saturday at 1 o'clock. Then we don't have time to buy what you really need for your home and there was a time until I think 1974/75, that the butchers, the people who sell meat in Soweto were not supposed to sell meat on Sundays at all, it was a provincial..an ordinance offence, put it that way to sell meat on Sundays so then we found ourselves completely at a loss now where to buy meat even if you been unable to buy meat on Saturday afternoon, where to buy it on Sunday and not only that, the restriction which is placed on the buying of non-foods on Sunday. So in other words, if you run out of washing-powder you will be unable to get it on Sunday from any of the shops that are open because they have only..they are only allowed on Sundays to sell you know, foods, and not non-foods at all and this really sort of creates problems because as I say now, our lifestyle is completely different from that of the White people and you have time to buy your groceries, and your domestic needs you know, from Monday to Friday, Monday to Saturday but in our case we have this real problem, that this restriction does not only affect the business man itself but/..

but it affects the community of Soweto. Another area also which creates problems is the question of labour. I don't know whether here it is because of the type of sophistication of the people in Soweto, who say: I am not prepared to work for a Black man in Soweto I would rather go and work in town. So now you will find that a man who is selling coal, a man who is running a grocery shop has problems as far as labour is concerned. So it means that he has to import his labour from the Homeland and the regulations as they stand at the present moment that if you would like to have labour from the Homelands (10 you have to do it through you know, the normal labour channels. Now we just go to the Municipal Labour Office you know, and make an application there. More often than not the Black business man is unable to register or to get a legal person to come and work for him in Soweto. There are all sorts of restrictions are placed on him: (1) Do you have accommodation? And: Where are you going to accommodate this individual, which is I think a reasonable requirement, that if you are getting people from outside, you must be able to provide accommodation for them. I think that is a reasonable demand but reasonable (20 as it is very very few business men in Soweto have had the opportunity of getting labour from outside, and this has created quite a lot of problems. The other things also that is affecting the business man is before I can start a business in Soweto I must have what is called a daily labour permit from the influx control office, the Municipal Labour Officer, but then what will happen is that every month I have to go back to the township manager, or the Municipal Labour Officer to get my pass signed, every month, like an ordinary person is employed in town who must have his reference book signed every month. (30 And then you know, this creates quite a lot of inconvenience

to/..

to a business man because he has to go there during the day time at the time when he is supposed to be looking after his business, at the time when he is supposed to be with the manufacturers and the wholesaler, you know to be buying his business and this has been a real problem because the business man says that whilst we appreciate the fact that we must have our reference books signed, how will it be if we can have our reference books signed once every six months or once a year, once a year and we have at the Council made one recommendation after another that we would like to see a situation where the business man in Soweto has his reference book signed once a year because this would make it easier for him to be able to continue with his business operations. (10

DR. YUTAR: They could establish a branch office in Soweto which is more readily accessible.

MR. THEBEHALI: Quite. Oh, the other thing that they have also been trying to do was to send somebody with the reference book to go and get it signed but the Municipal Labour Officer has always insisted that the business man, the owner of the reference book must be there to be able to sign it and this really causes quite a lot of inconvenience. I would like now to move in the area of education. I think one of the things that sort of sparked the disturbances that we had in Soweto started first from an educational point of view. The whole question of the medium of instruction has been an issue in Soweto since 1974, when the Department of Bantu Education through the Regional Director, Mr. Ackermann had made and been placing this requirement that far more..the subjects must be taught in the medium of Afrikaans and members of the school board the teachers and the principals have been making one representation after another to the Department, to show the inadequacy of this requirement/.. (20 (30



requirement in this sense that although the teacher when he signs the application form, he does state that he is bilingual but being bilingual and having the ability to teach are two different things. You know, I speak about seven, eight languages but I can..I will always have a difficulty of addressing a public meeting, in Zulu, in Venda, in Shangaan although I can converse with anybody in these languages and I think it is even more difficult for one to instruct you know, a group of children in the medium of instruction that is teaching a particular subject, this is really a problem because (10 the feedback that we got was that we do not have the teachers who are qualified to teach physical science or general science or history in Afrikaans. The right thing to do is..to ask, have the teachers trained first before we can impart this knowledge in the medium of Afrikaans and the attitude of the people, even the non-students and the parents have always been that we are fully aware that in this country, one must become conversant in English and Afrikaans and we are saying that we would like to see Afrikaans being taught as a subject so that a child must be able to conduct you know, whether it is an (20 interview, or be able to speak to anybody who is Non-Black in English or in Afrikaans, or particularly in Afrikaans but they insisted the Regional Director was that Afrikaans must be used as a medium of instruction so we here as a Council on the 9th of June last year went as a deputation to see the Regional Director, Mr. Ackermann and I must say My Lord, I was one of those who was in that deputation. It was a most frustrating interview that I have ever had with a Government official. I have been a member of the Council since 1968 and I have had innumerable interviews with Government representatives in (30 Johannesburg, in Pretoria and also at Ministerial level and these/..

these interviews have been very cordial and when we left there we always left satisfied that we have made a representation and the other side listened very sympathetically to our representation but the interview of the 9th of June, it was the most frustrating one that I have ever had because that was an interview, it was an interview that we had with the Regional Director, Mr. Ackermann on the Afrikaans issue.

CHAIRMAN: Firstly we pointed out that you know, we, our terms of reference does not cover the actual running of the school, we as a civic institution our responsibility is to build the school and then hand it over to the Department of Bantu Administration who actually want the school and we really did not have a mandate from the people of Soweto to make representations for them on the question of Afrikaans but because we realised that this thing had been going on since 1974, without it being resolved, we then decided now look, let us also as an institution make representations. Quite frankly, this was absolutely beyond our terms of reference and our basis of operations as a civic institution in Soweto, but we decided to do that and we did make this representation. It was very frustrating but that the outcome of the interview was that we said to Mr. Ackermann on the 22nd of July, we have a standing appointment with the Minister Mr. M.C. Botha, and we are going to raise this issue because we have realised that you have not sort of..listened to us sympathetically, and you firstly you told us that we have no right to discuss the Afrikaans issue because it was a completely professional matter and it is only people who are professional who can discuss you know, the actual running of the schools and Afrikaans being one of the issues and we said that we are going to raise this issue with the Minister, Mr. M.C. Botha, when we meet him on the 22nd of July. Most unfortunately the events overran/..

overran us and it happened on the 16th June. But I would like to point out that we have as an institution since 1968, tried to establish a loose working relationship you know, with the people who are administering the schools in Soweto. We even went as far in 1969, we..I was then chairman of the Education and Health Committee, my Committee instructed me to call a joint meeting of members of my committee and members of the various school boards in Soweto where we were going to say look, let us sort of establish a loose relationship, a loose alliance, because we were as a matter of fact we were both of us (inaudible)(16 institutions they were..the school boards and ourselves, we came into existence because of an act of Parliament and we said look, let us establish a working relationship because we would like to get a feedback from you as to whether the type of schools that we are recommending to be built are the type of schools that you as administrators would like to administer. But we had the unbelievable interference of the White inspectors who actually influenced the members of the school board and told them that we the U.B.C. we would like to take over their activities and communication completely broke down between ourselves and the school boards (20 so we found ourselves in the situation where we were just building schools and as to whether they were the right type of schools or not we just did not know but the type of interference from the inspectors was absolutely obvious and again when the Afrikaans issue came, the Afrikaans issue came, it was so obvious that it was the school inspectors who were moving from school to school actually instructing the school principals that if you do not have Afrikaans as a medium of instruction we are going to recommend that you must lose your allowance or recommend that you must be dismissed. So as far as education is con- (30 cerned, we saw this obvious interference from the White school inspectors/..

inspectors. May I also say that as it is known and as far as the Black people are concerned you know, the need and the urge for education is very strong. You know at the beginning of every year a large number of children are turned away from school because there is not enough school accommodation and then you find you know, a seven-year old child has to spend a year not attending school at all, or perhaps you find that a child who is about 15, 16 is unable to find accommodation in another school because perhaps he failed at a school, as he could not be accommodated he had to go elsewhere for accommodation(10 and we find that now the question of a large number of juveniles you know, walking the streets of Soweto you know, is increasing. I think prior to the 16th of June, we had something like 42 000 children who were roaming the streets of Soweto, not being employed and not attending school because of an insufficient number of schools in Soweto. We have to date about 280 schools in Soweto and perhaps I could sort of read out the breakdown. The breakdown is that there are 11 lower primary schools, 36 combined schools, combined in this sense it is a lower primary and a higher primary school combined together and we have 85 higher<sup>(20</sup> primary schools, 31 junior secondary schools, 9 high schools, this is from Form I up to Form V and then four industrial schools.

CHAIRMAN: Four industrial schools?

MR. THEBEHALI: Yes, four industrial schools and you have an official student population of 193 952 and this also includes the schools and the children attending school in Alexandra. Now as you know well, these schools are really not enough for the children of Soweto and one of the ways in which to keep a large number of children away from the streets of Soweto because Soweto most unfortunately has been correctly named "a township (30 of children from Mondays to Fridays" because you see a large

number/..

number of children roaming the streets of Soweto and the parents both parents more often than not are employed. And so we would at least like to see more and more schools being built and now it is very interesting to point out that ever since the Teach Fund came into existence we have not had a large number of schools built by the Department of Bantu Education and this is really a very serious thing because it looks as if the Department of Bantu Education has handed the responsibility to the Teach Fund because the Teach Fund has really and truly been moving ahead with a programme of providing and building more schools in Soweto and this is very impressive. And another area you know where we find you know there is quite a lot of friction is the conditions of employment of the teachers. It is just unfortunate that although we have teacher training schools throughout the country a large number of our children they.. immediately after he gets..immediately he qualifies as a teacher because he knows that the salary that he is going to earn as a new teacher in a school is not enough, immediately he moves into commerce and industry. Now and so we find that a large number of the children of Soweto who have qualified as teachers really do not come back to come and teach in the schools of Soweto so now we find ourselves in a situation where we have to import teachers from other areas and again we have serious accommodation problems that some of the teachers find themselves accommodated in the hostels, and for a teacher to be living with eight people in a bungalow of eight people with people who are not of the same educational standard as himself and some of the people there are barely literate, this is really.. it interferes with his work. And not only that because you find that a teacher/pupil ratio in Soweto is high because you find that a teacher has to attend on the average to about 58 children at a time and sometimes, particularly in the lower standards you find/..

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find that the teacher/pupil ratio is high it is perhaps... a teacher has to attend to about 100 children and this is very very difficult, it creates difficult working conditions for the teachers because you know I have always thought that it is... for a particular child to be able to benefit from his education there must be a proper teacher/pupil relationship established but under these high teacher/pupil ratio it is absolutely impossible for a teacher to establish a proper teacher/pupil relationship. Not only that, the teacher is then, because of the non-availability of accommodation, unable to do his proper (10 preparation for tomorrow and one of the things that we have recommended again and again to the Board is that priority when it comes to the allocation of houses, must be given to teachers, even if the teachers are unmarried, you can have one house, one four-roomed house being allocated to two or three teachers to live in there. The most important thing is that..has always been that school environment, you know, even if it is not in the actual school, but in the actual residential areas, actual house where the teacher sleeps, is vitally important that he must have proper accommodation. And we have made this appeal (20 again and again that priority must always be given to professional people like teachers when it comes to accommodation. Now I think that more or less brings me to the end of my testimony. Further there is just one last thing that I must mention that you know this question of ethnic grouping, really is a sore point as far as the people of Soweto are concerned. We are complaining as a Council, because our mode of election is based on ethnic grouping, that before I can be elected as a Councillor I have to campaign... on the people of my language group to be able to elect me and again you know, we have certain (30 townships that have been set aside for different racial groups...

tribal/..

tribal groups and the people of Soweto have - I don't know whether this is part of the process of urbanisation - outgrown any tribal affiliations. I can just sort of mention these examples. In an employment situation you find yourself brushing shoulders with a person of a different language group. When you travel from Soweto into town and going back, to Soweto from town, you travel in transport where you brush shoulders with.. the person standing next to you is of a different language group and this happens from Monday to Friday and then you go to a beerhall or to a shebeen and you find that the person you (10 are sharing your drink with, does not belong to the same language group as yourself and then on a Saturday afternoon you go and watch a football team or you go to Orlando stadium and you find yourself sitting with a person of a different language group or you find that the football team as it is constituted, has nothing to do with one's tribal affiliations. On Sunday morning when you go to church you find that the person who is leading the service is a person of a different language group than yourself and so on and we find that this ethnic restriction that is placed on us as far as housing is concerned and as (20 far as my being elected a member of the Council is concerned, this is really and truly creating unnecessary problems and our appeal is that in a Soweto situation as we see it today, let us place less emphasis on ethnic affiliations and this I think will augur well in sort of improving relations, not only amongst the people in Soweto..where the people in Soweto are concerned, but also as far as improving relations between Black and White. This My Lord concludes my testimony.

CHAIRMAN: Before I call on the others, hear whether they have anything to add to what you have to say, I feel that I (30 must congratulate you on your evidence, on the way that you have given/..

given evidence which was well thought out, which was well considered, which was well expressed and which covered all the issues that have certain parts which has caused dissatisfaction and which therefore might create a climate which is not a good climate and which can be made worse if you cannot talk to people. Congratulations on your evidence.

DR. YUTAR: My Lord, may I very respectfully associate myself with your Lordship's observations. Mr. Chenyane, do you agree with what your Chairman has said? I believe you have got some notes there which you would like to add. (1)

MR. CHENYANE: My Lord, I agree that the Chairman has put through almost everything that we discussed, but there is one point that he must have overlooked, I think he had it down, that is the attitude of Soweto people on Bantu Education system. But perhaps he would have got it on his notes. The fact is now today in Soweto in trains, in the buses, at school, big or small men and women all people talk about the Bantu Education system. They feel where they get the information from, or some of them do say that at one time when Dr. Verwoerd, the late Dr. Verwoerd spoke in Parliament, he said the Bantu Education system was to be prepared specifically to be inferior to that of the Europeans and from there almost everybody knows the facts. This I take it you know, people are so sore about this Bantu Education system that when we look at the whole thing, you find that there can never be peace unless the Bantu Education Act is scrapped. They are not only against the name now, they just feel that..I mean, people who look at the syllabuses, you may not agree, but because everybody is convinced that the education is of an inferior quality, there is anything..any child who attends school, even if he makes mistakes at home, it is..the mistakes are done because he is a product of the Bantu Education system. They are against/.. (20) (30)



against the name, not only are they against the name, they are against any book that is written "Bantu", they are against anything that they specifically use you know, specifically.. used by Africans only. They feel that a book which is good in history should not be written specifically for the Bantu children. Now while this is so, Your Worship, we move in Soweto daily, and we move around the schools. Incidentally Your Lordship I am a schoolmaster and I know what the children think. They are merely tolerating this system because they must go to school. The question of writing, they are merely writing because they (10 feel they must get to school but I think the time will come when the children will not write anything at all and if this Bantu Education..the way everybody is still feeling about it, they will...what the damage that has been done now, will not be sufficient and it is merely a lull your Lordship. That is what I wanted to add.

DR. YUTAR: Thank you very much. Mr. Rasmeni, is there anything you would like to say?

MR. RASMENI: Yes, just on the question of treatment.

CHAIRMAN: Just move the microphone please. (20

MR. RASMENI: Today we are supposed to get some assistance in places where we have got to report everyday to comply with the requirements of the Department, places like Pauli(?) Street, places like Albert Street where we register, places like Bantu Affairs Pass Offices. Places where we get our reference book. My feeling sir, that is another sort of trouble perhaps that we will get in the future because of the treatment meted out by perhaps young officials that are let loose on us.

DR. YUTAR: Black and White?

MR. RASMENI Black and White. The time when we get to this (30 point because we have got to comply with the law, so sufficient service/..

service must be done in places like that. You know, these are points of friction, everyday people are there. It becomes even worse now with the officials, local officials, administrative officials where instead of one person getting there, you have got influx of kids you have to go and parade your children to somebody Your Worship who has no family, the young men who have never been even trained to work with the people and then that person is made in charge of us, ridiculing us..our womenfolk. Another thing I wanted to add, particularly on the first problem because everybody, pregnant women, they must get there and stand (10 the whole day, those who are coming to register from the locations and in town, I think this treatment is not fair enough because we are given young people and some of them are men, interviewing women. Their attitude is not nice. My feeling it was...a pass office for women, more elderly women must be employed to look after other women. You get ladies pushed around by young policemen, be it Black or White but the treatment there is not nice. Those are places that I wish must be looked at. Thank you.

DR. YUTAR: Thank you. Mr. Motha. (20

MR. MOTHA: Thank you very much. I think...(intervenes).

DR. YUTAR: Speak into the microphone please.

MR. MOTHA: My Lord, but there are a few, one or two points which I would like to add, specially to the very same things that upset the young people for instance when he wants to take a new reference book and this we have raised several times where when a child is born in Soweto, but he must get a certificate in town and after getting this certificate in town, he must come back to Soweto to the Municipal Officers and register the birth of that particular child, that the child must be influxed. (30 Even if the child is being influxed, still when he or she has to get/..

get a reference book, still he has to go to another office and queue with the surprise that today when one wants to apply for a new reference book the earliest he must be at that particular joint must be 6 o'clock. Those who come at 8 o'clock are turned back because those who came at 6 o'clock and 7 o'clock are enough so now he must make means of arriving again the following day very early at 8 o'clock..at 6 o'clock. Another point I wanted to raise here is where in a situation in a place like Soweto where a female..there are regulations which say that a female cannot get a house, even if she has dependants, she can only get a house when she had dependants after her divorce or after the death of her husband of which an application must still be made to the Chief B.A.C. in town. You see they actually don't even know the position, what goes on with these women in Soweto, still even the township manager or so-called Superintendent doesn't know how people live in Soweto. It has been my feeling that a Superintendent should be a man who lives with those people who knows exactly the needs of those people who even knows them by name that these are my people because I am a Superintendent, I live with them. I can't see a Superintendent living in town who has been told by someone that yesterday this and this happened. Really, he wouldn't be in a position to know exactly what happened and another point we felt I think that my Chairman overlooked is the point of amenities. We really don't have places where one could rest on a Sunday afternoon - we don't in Soweto I think we have only three swimming pools and then many people..you will find people saying the only recreation we have is in the backroom, our children only have recreation in the yard and then the mother and the father only have recreation in the backroom because there are no recreation facilities in Soweto. So you can't expect a million people idling..not knowing/..

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knowing and an idle mind is a tool of the devil and definitely a million people idling, not knowing where to go because there are no cinemas, the few bioscopes which are there really they are a distance from other places. To go there is taking a risk. These are some of the things that we think the authorities must look into. So in coming to a close what I think in Soweto we have today more than 10 000 cars and having more than 10 000 cars all these cars have still to go and pay their licences in town. For instance I couldn't move my car over the weekend because I couldn't pay my licence on Friday because (10 the people to whom I am paying this have to deal with White and Black society and there was no difficulty whatsoever that the Black people in Soweto who are owning cars can't be given an office in Soweto where to pay their licences because if they pay their licences on the first day and have a municipality of their own, this money would help them even to fix up roads and other things in Soweto which they use with their cars. I think that is the few contributions I could make into this My Lord.

DR. YUTAR Yes, thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN: Well now I don't want to repeat what I have said (20 before but I wish to thank this delegation, representatives of the Advisory Board who came here to give evidence and I can tell them that their evidence has been most useful and they have been most informative. I have heard, and you have all heard I suppose that there is a possibility that..in fact apparently it is quite certain that more responsibility will be entrusted to the Advisory Boards. Now all I can say from what I have seen and heard today is that I am sure that such responsibilities will not be misplaced in your hands. Thank you very much.

COMMISSION ADJOURNS UNTIL MONDAY, 7/3/1977.

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