



# AHMED TIMOL

A QUEST FOR JUSTICE





# DETAINEE DIES IN POLICE CUSTODY

**“He hung  
from a  
piece of  
soap while  
washing...”**

*In Detention, Chris van Wyk, 1979*

On 23 August 1968, Prime Minister Vorster opened a new police station in Johannesburg known as John Vorster Square.

Police described it as a state of the art facility, where incidents such as the 1964 “suicide” of political detainee, Suliman “Babla” Saloojee, could be avoided. On 9 September 1964 Saloojee fell or was thrown from the 7th floor of the old Gray’s Building, the Special Branch’s then-headquarters in Johannesburg.

Security police routinely tortured political detainees on the 9th and 10th floors of John Vorster Square. Between 1971 and 1990 a number of political detainees died there.

**Ahmed Timol was the first detainee to die at John Vorster Square.**

27 October 1971 – Ahmed Timol  
11 December 1976 – Mlungisi Tshazibane  
15 February 1977 – Matthews Marwale Mabelane  
5 February 1982 – Neil Aggett  
8 August 1982 – Ernest Moabi Dipale  
30 January 1990 – Clayton Sizwe Sithole

**DEATH OF DETAINEE:  
REACTION MOUNTS**





# A FAMILY ON THE MOVE

Haji Yusuf Ahmed Timol, Ahmed Timol's father, was born in Kholvad, India, and travelled to South Africa in 1918. In 1933 he married Hawa Ismail Dindar.

Ahmed Timol, one of six children, was born in Breyten in the then Transvaal, on 3 November 1941. He and his siblings were initially home-schooled because there was no school for Indian children in Breyten. When Ahmed was 8 years old, the family moved to Roodepoort, outside Johannesburg.

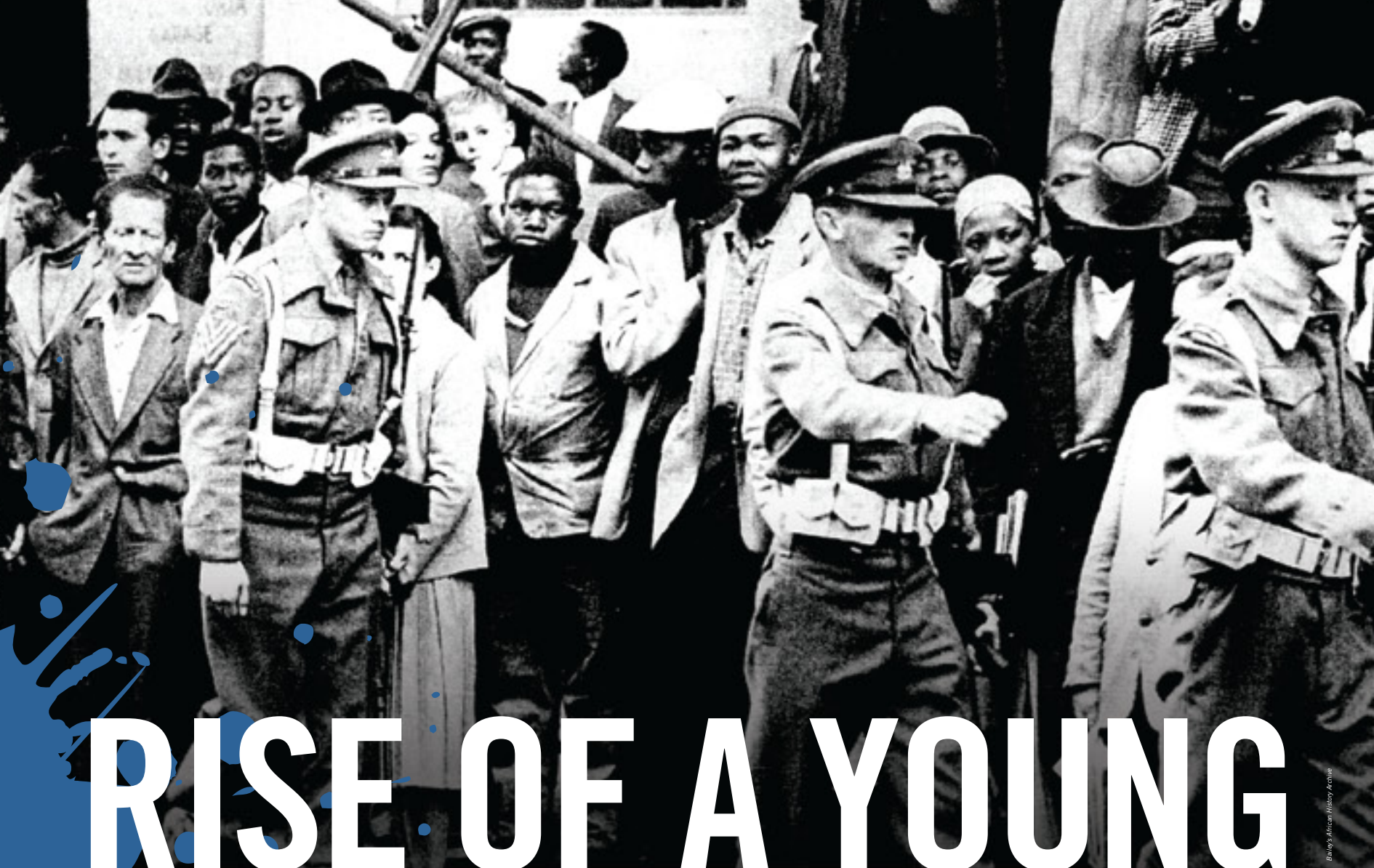
The young Ahmed suffered from bronchitis and became a patient of Dr Yusuf Dadoo, who was the chairman of the South African Indian Congress and the South African Communist Party.

Dr Dadoo's broad-mindedness and pursuit of non-racialism were to have a major influence on Ahmed's life.

*"It is indeed a tragic history of our family that my forefathers were once colonial subjects of the British Raj in India, and my father both a subject of British Imperialists in India and now a victim of South African colonialists and racialism."*

**Ahmed Timol, unpublished autobiography produced at the International Lenin School, Moscow**





Bailey's African History Archive

# RISE OF A YOUNG LEADER

During the mid-1950s, while a pupil at the Johannesburg Indian High School, Ahmed Timol was invited to join the Roodepoort Youth Study Group, loosely linked to the Transvaal Indian Youth Congress.

Banned activists such as Ahmed Kathrada (later sentenced to life imprisonment with Nelson Mandela at the Rivonia Trial) were invited to address the group. Timol's discussions with one of the guest speakers, the legendary South African writer Ezekiel Mphahlele, provided his first opportunity to interact with an African intellectual.

It was also at High School – completed in 1959 – that Timol drew close to the brothers Essop and Aziz Pahad (their fathers were old friends).

Timol regularly attended Transvaal Indian Congress meetings at the Gandhi Hall in Johannesburg. In 1960, he and members of the Roodepoort Youth Study Group formed a guard of honour to welcome ANC President Chief Albert Luthuli – in a brief moment of freedom between banning orders – to Gandhi Hall.

In 1961 Timol received a scholarship from the Kholvad Madressa to enroll at the Johannesburg Training Institute for Indian Teachers. After graduating in 1963, he took up a teaching post at the Roodepoort Indian School.

The school was slavishly pro-government. Entries in the school incident book reflect Timol's efforts to conscientise his colleagues and students.

*“Staff Meeting: Mr A Timol indicated that he would not be able to attend the Republic Day Festival to be held at the Union Stadium on 11/5/66 because of strong personal convictions”.*

***The Roodepoort Indian School Incident Book, 10 May 1966***

Timol was a talented cricketer but his primary involvement as a sports activist came through his involvement as an administrator of the Dynamos Soccer Club. Aziz Pahad was the team's goalkeeper, and Essop was a defender – and club chairman. Dynamos was a pathfinder in the non-racial sports movement.



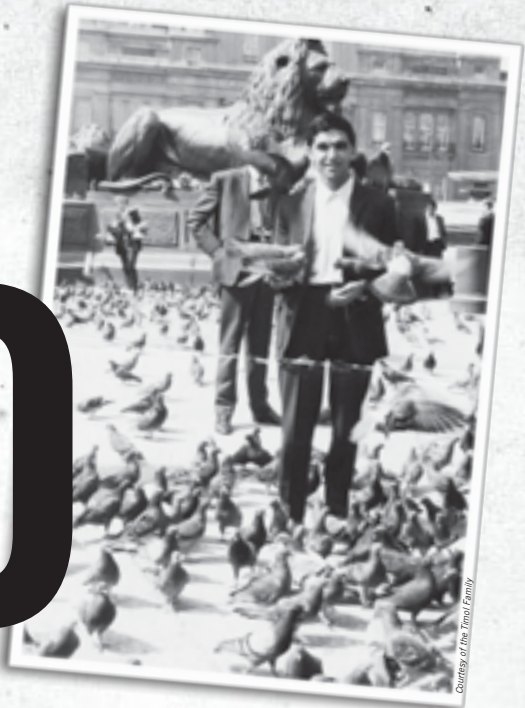
Courtesy of Essop and Aziz Pahad



Courtesy of the Timol Family



# SPENDING TIME ABROAD



In 1966 Timol informed his parents that he was going to perform Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca). There was no dichotomy between his spiritual and political beliefs. He was a good Muslim who was committed to communism as a means to effect justice and dignity for all.

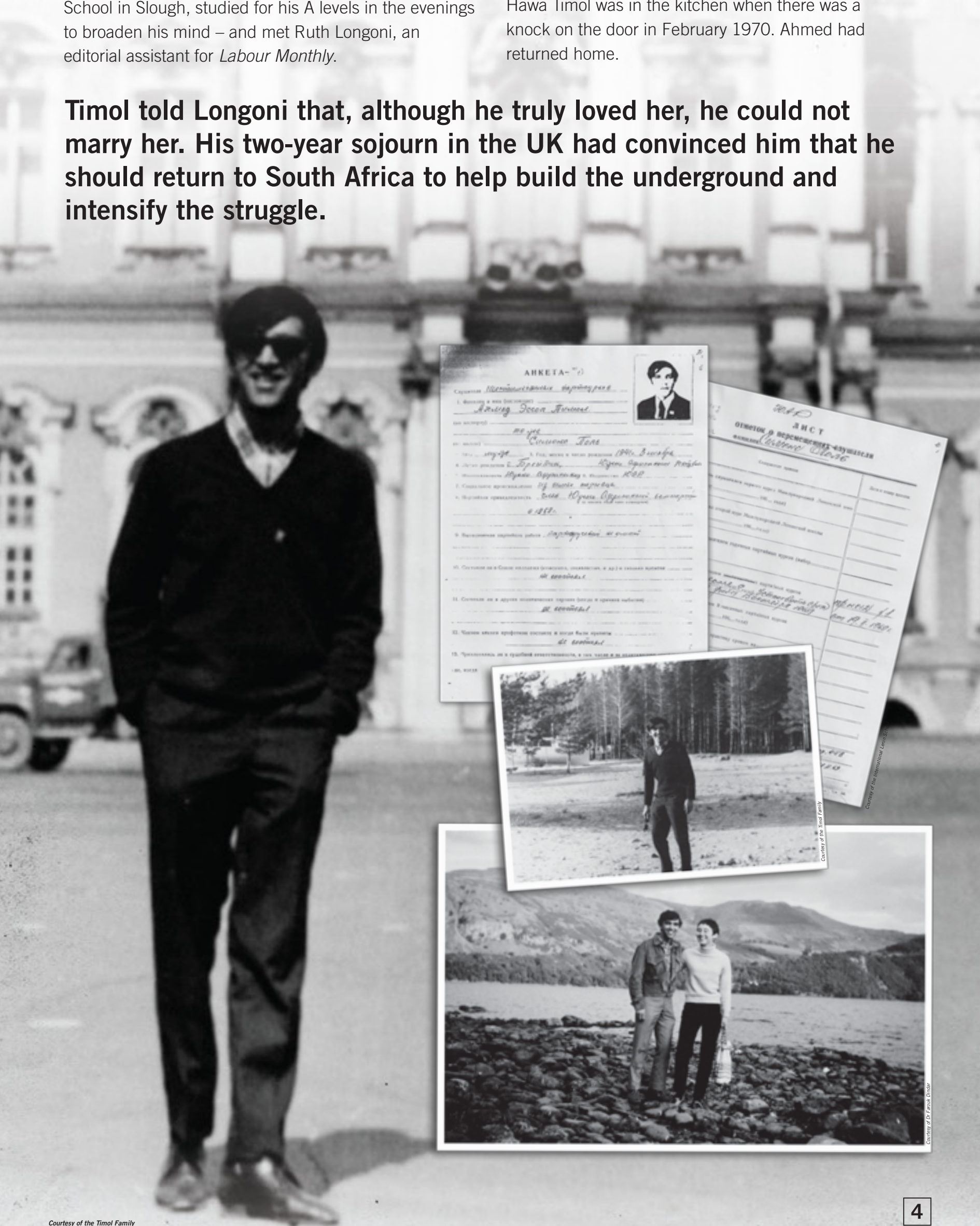
During the Hajj in Saudi Arabia Timol met up with Dr Dadoo, before proceeding to Cairo and London. In April 1967 he turned up unannounced at North End House, West Kensington, home of South African exiles including the Pahads. He took up teaching at the Immigration School in Slough, studied for his A levels in the evenings to broaden his mind – and met Ruth Longoni, an editorial assistant for *Labour Monthly*.

**Timol told Longoni that, although he truly loved her, he could not marry her. His two-year sojourn in the UK had convinced him that he should return to South Africa to help build the underground and intensify the struggle.**

It was decided that Timol should attend the International Lenin School, in the Soviet Union between February and October 1969 (with Thabo Mbeki and others).

After returning to London he received an additional four weeks of special training at Jack Hodgson’s flat. Hodgson was a communist and a military expert in the use of explosives. Timol had to convince Hodgson of his readiness to return to South Africa to set up an underground network.

Hawa Timol was in the kitchen when there was a knock on the door in February 1970. Ahmed had returned home.





# Explosions scatter pamphlets

STAFF REPORTER

TWO EXPLOSIONS in Johannesburg yesterday afternoon scattered hundreds of subversive pamphlets at Faraday Station and outside the “Rand Daily Mail”.

The blast at Faraday Station took place during the rush hour, but none of the hundreds of African commuters was hurt.

The explosive device went off near a nightwatchman’s shack under the M1 motorway.

Mr. Samuel Nkosi, a council nightwatchman guarding building equipment near the scene, said: “I was about seven paces from the explosion. Lots of papers shot into the sky and some were hurled as high as the overhead motorway.”

Mr. Nkosi said he had not seen any suspicious people.

“A lot of people picked up the papers and took them home,” he said.

## CARRIER

Soon afterwards, another explosive device with a second batch of subversive pamphlets — all apparently published by the banned African National Congress — was discovered on the paving outside the “Rand Daily Mail” building in Moss Street.

The innocuous-looking supermarket carrier was discovered by a messenger working for South African Associated Newspapers, Mr. Joseph Sibuya, 55.



Rand Daily Mail, 14 August 1970

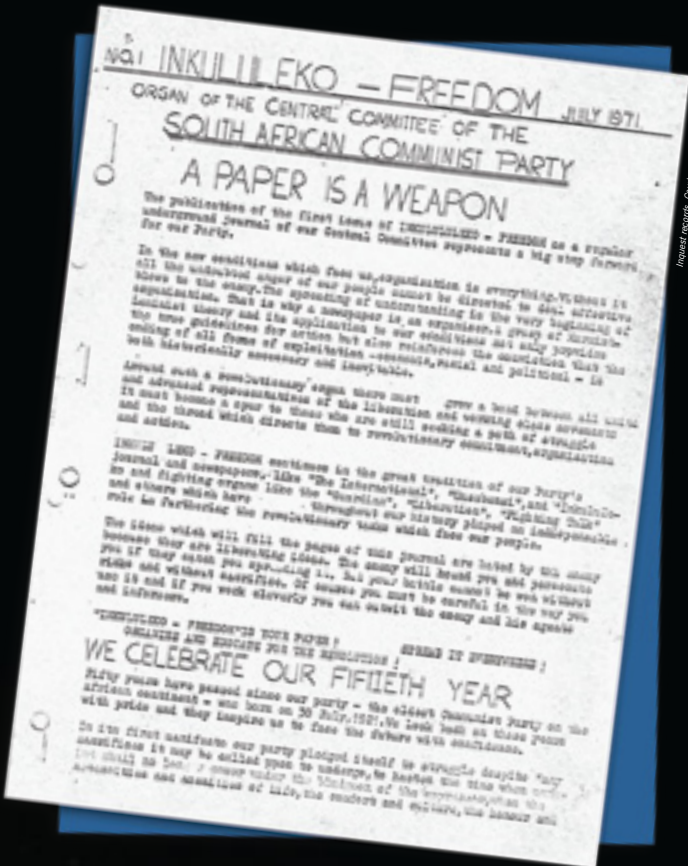
# BUILDING THE UNDERGROUND

Ahmed Timol resumed teaching at the Roodepoort Indian High School in April 1970. He lived with his family in their cramped two-bedroom family apartment, studying part-time for a Bachelor of Arts degree – and somehow finding time to carry out his pamphleteering and other clandestine work.

The apartment was in the same area of Roodepoort as the home of Salim Essop, a medical student at the University of the Witwatersrand whom Timol had taught at high school. The pair became close friends and co-workers.

According to police, in his first report-back to the South African Communist Party in London, on 24 April 1970, Timol noted that he had compiled a mailing list of 8000 persons and identified a need for political literature. On 23 July 1970, London approved the proposal of establishing an illegal newspaper.

Literature was disseminated through the postal service, and in bucket bombs detonated in public areas. On 14 August 1970 the Rand Daily Mail reported two letter bomb explosions that scattered subversive pamphlets at Faraday Station and outside the newspaper’s offices, in Johannesburg – and more pamphlet bombs in Durban, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town.



Unsett Records, Courtesy of Getha & Luvani



Wits Historical Papers

“Ahmed did a lot of work in 18 months. He set up processes and procedures for establishing underground structures. We were very successful in the production and distribution of leaflets, procurement of photographic and printing equipment, communication had been set up with London and we were laying the foundation for something huge ...”

Salim Essop, medical student



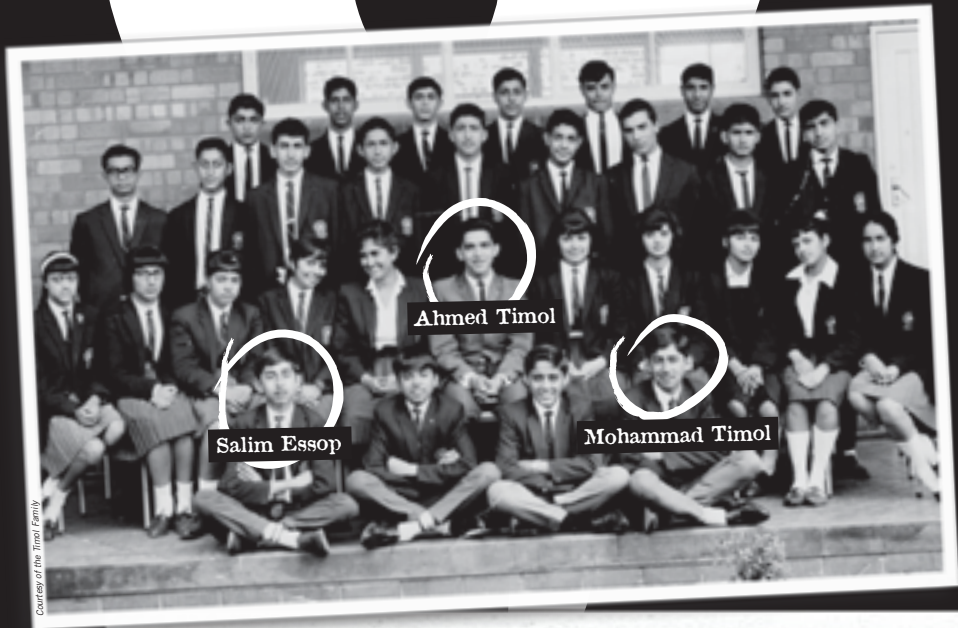


**Late on Friday evening of 22 October 1971, Ahmed Timol and his comrade and former student, Salim Essop, were stopped at a police roadblock in Coronationville.**

Police claimed to have found banned political literature in the boot of the car. Timol and Essop were taken to the Newlands police station west of Johannesburg, where they were separated.

Essop was handcuffed and driven to John Vorster Square in an unmarked car. According to police, Timol and the materials allegedly found in the boot of the car, arrived at John Vorster Square around 3am on Saturday 23 October 1971.

The Terrorism Act afforded the police powers to detain indefinitely without trial, and in solitary confinement, anyone suspected of terrorism or knowledge of terrorist activity. No court could intervene, and nobody besides the police or government officials could have access to the detainee.

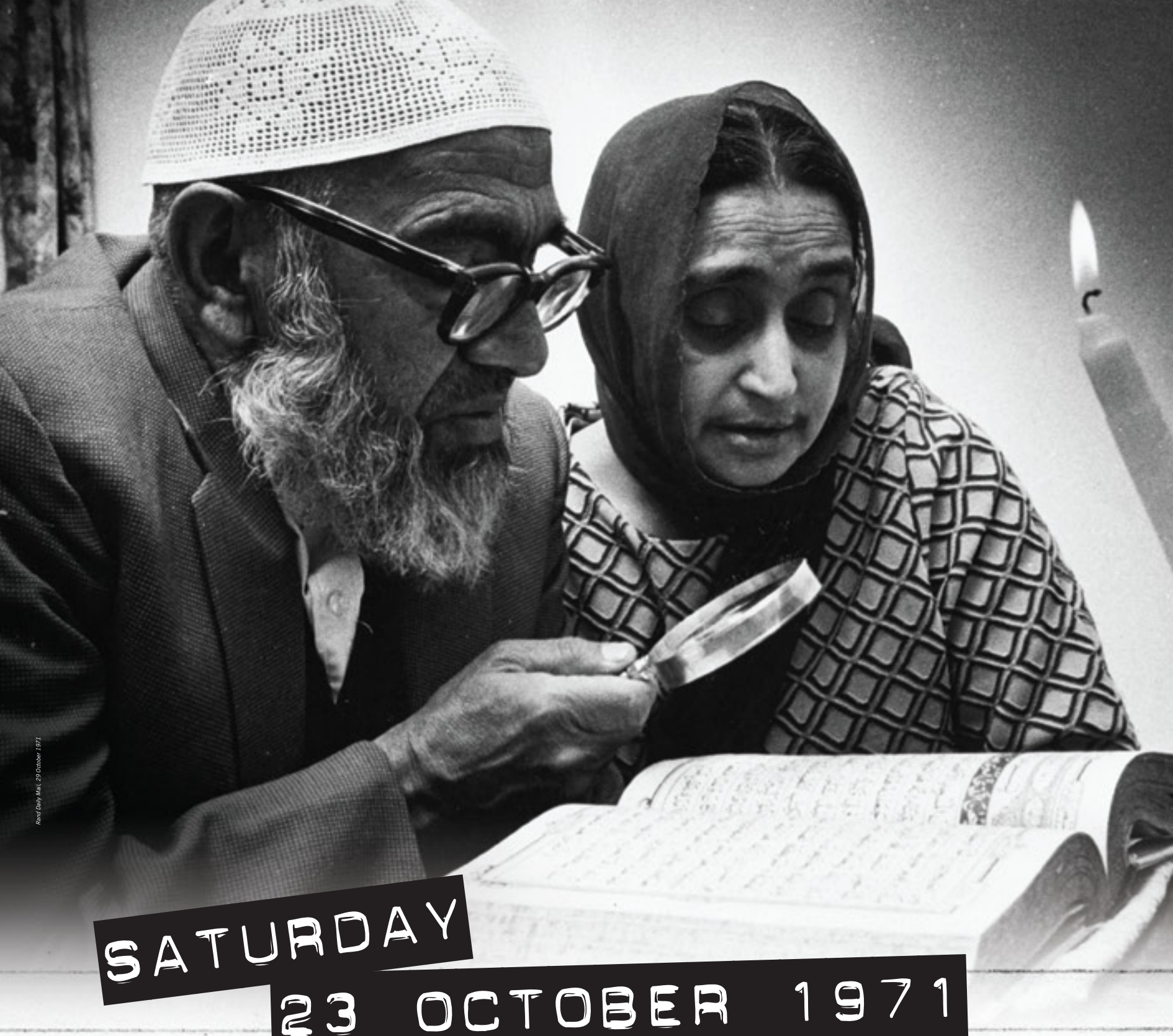


*“There is sufficient evidence to indicate that my uncle’s activities were monitored at the Teacher’s Training College and later during the years he spent teaching at Roodepoort Indian High School. There was an active network of informants in the community that would undoubtedly have contributed to his eventual demise.*

*Imtiaz Cajee, nephew of Ahmed Timol and author of TIMOL: A QUEST FOR JUSTICE*

# ARREST





Reel Daily Mail, 29 October 1971

SATURDAY

23 OCTOBER 1971

"I argued with them that I wanted to see my son and they said that your son is with us. I asked them that I wanted to see him and they said, "No you cannot see him". They then sat and they interrogated my late husband ... at quarter past one on Saturday they came back and they again interrogated us. They wanted to know with whom my son fraternised and who were his friends and where were they. They ransacked the home and found nothing. They then came back at night and again interrogated us."

*Testimony of Ahmed Timol's mother, Mrs Hawa Timol, to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, on 30 April 1996, in Johannesburg*



Courtesy of Dr Farouk Dindar

Courtesy of Sagar Sath



“On Sunday nobody came.”

*Testimony of Ahmed Timol's mother, Mrs Hawa Timol, to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, on 30 April 1996, in Johannesburg*

SUNDAY

24 OCTOBER 1971



## REPUBLIEK VAN SUID-AFRIKA SUID-AFRIKAANSE

Captain JH Gloy and Captain Johannes Zacharia van Niekerk interrogated Timol from 6am to 8pm. Detective Sergeant Bouwer and Sergeant Louw guard Timol from 8pm.

*Police version of events, Inquest records, courtesy of Cachalia & Loonat*



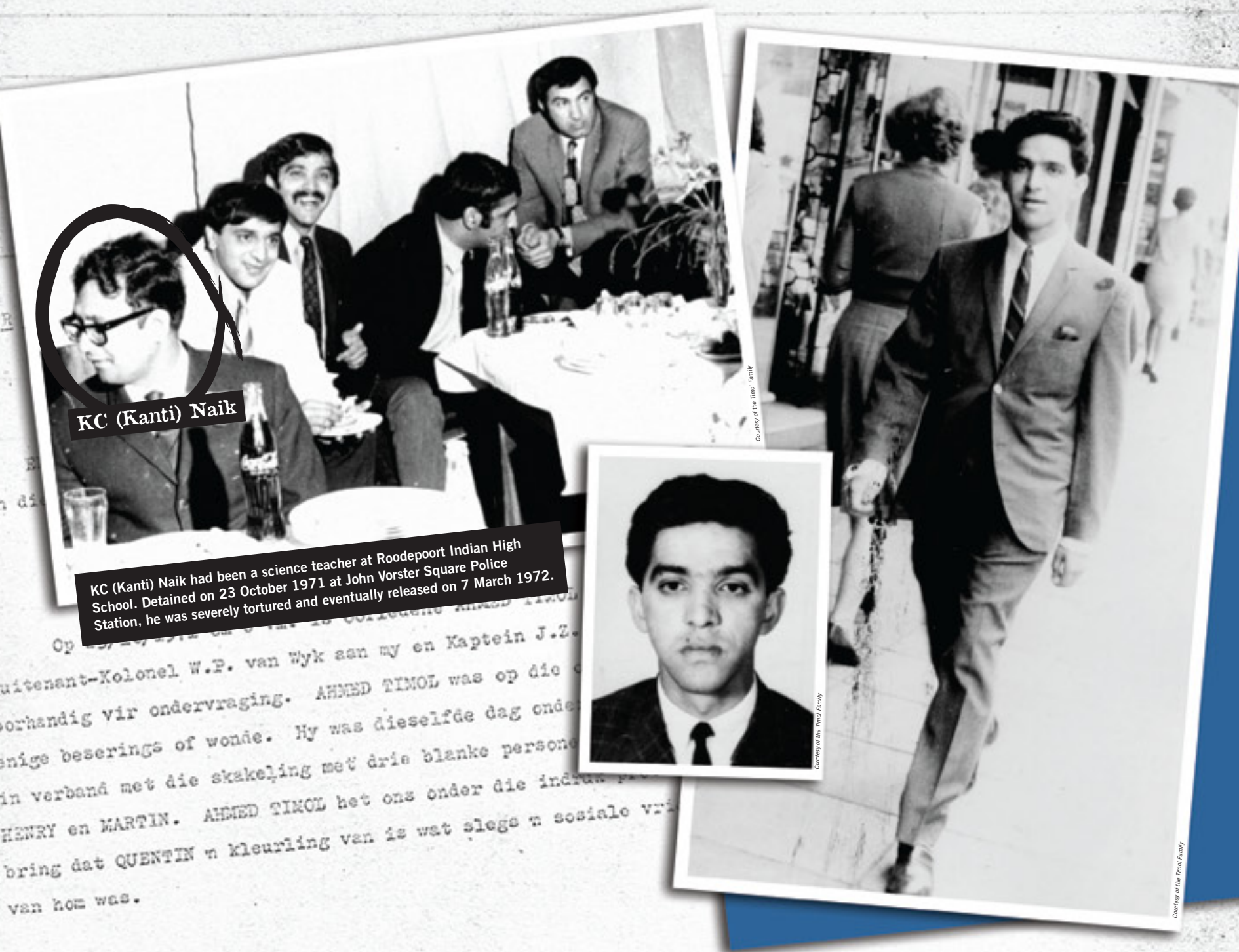


MONDAY

25 OCTOBER 1971

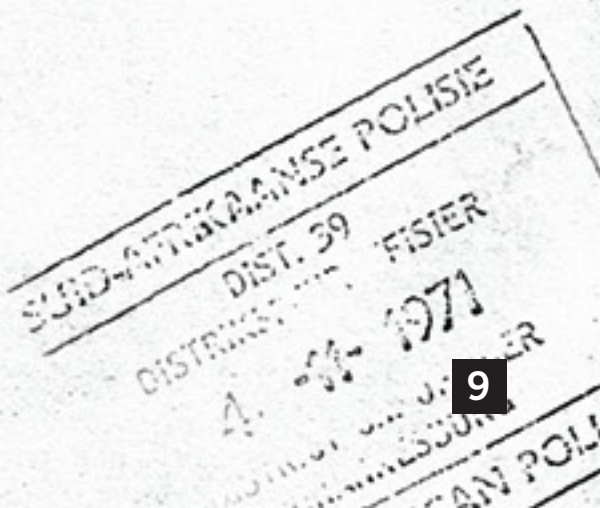
“On Monday morning our driver came and they interrogated him ... I sent him home in the event of the police coming back. In the afternoon on the same day they came back and again ransacked the place. I told them that I wanted to see my son.”

*Testimony of Ahmed Timol’s mother, Mrs Hawa Timol, to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, on 30 April 1996, in Johannesburg*

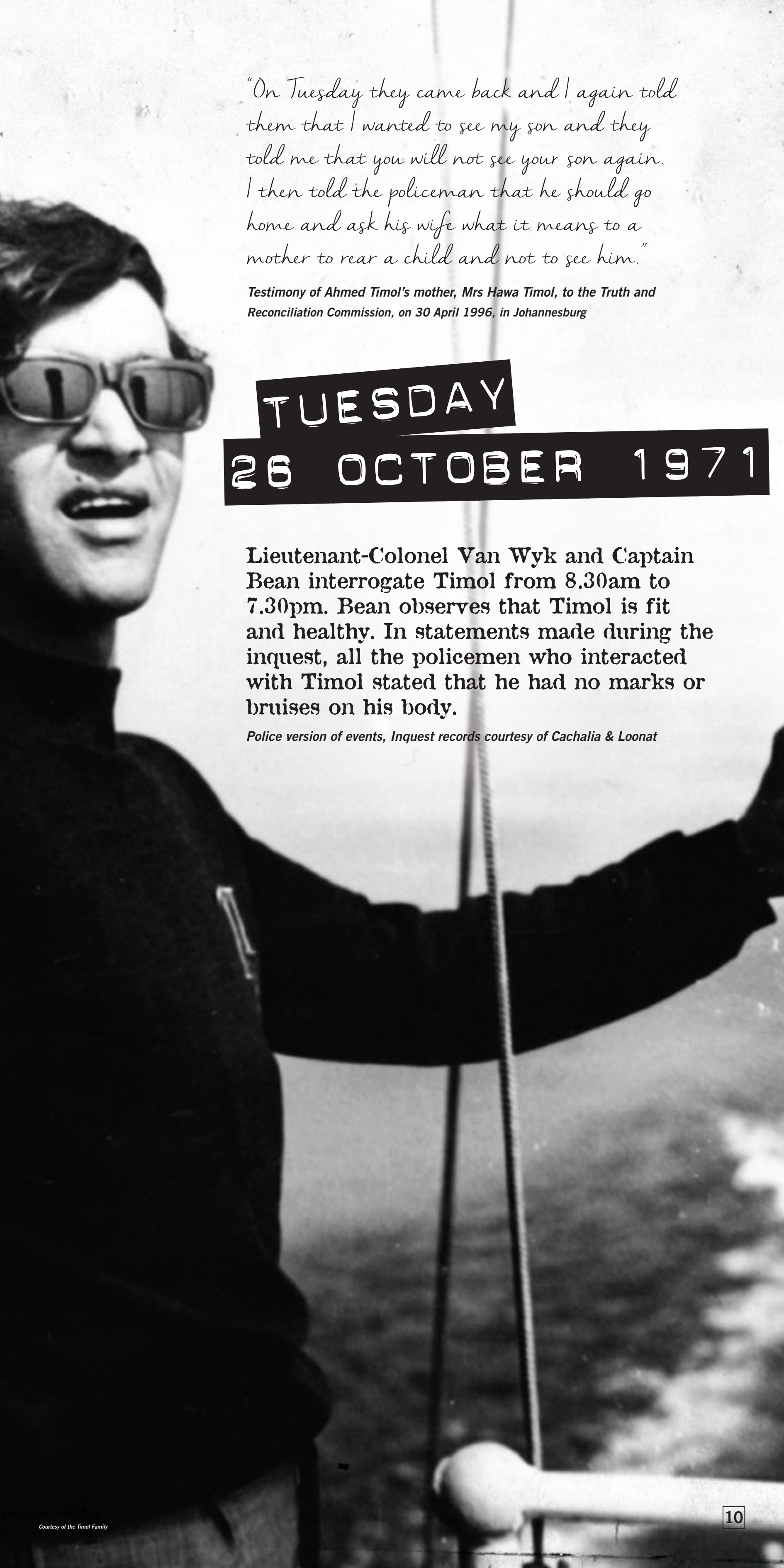


**Lieutenant-Colonel Petrus van Wyk and Captain Bean interrogate Timol, who is allowed to sit or stand as he wishes, and is regularly offered food, coffee and cooldrinks. According to Captain Bean, Timol appears fit and healthy.**

*Police version of events, Inquest records courtesy of Cachalia & Loonat*







*“On Tuesday they came back and I again told them that I wanted to see my son and they told me that you will not see your son again. I then told the policeman that he should go home and ask his wife what it means to a mother to rear a child and not to see him.”*

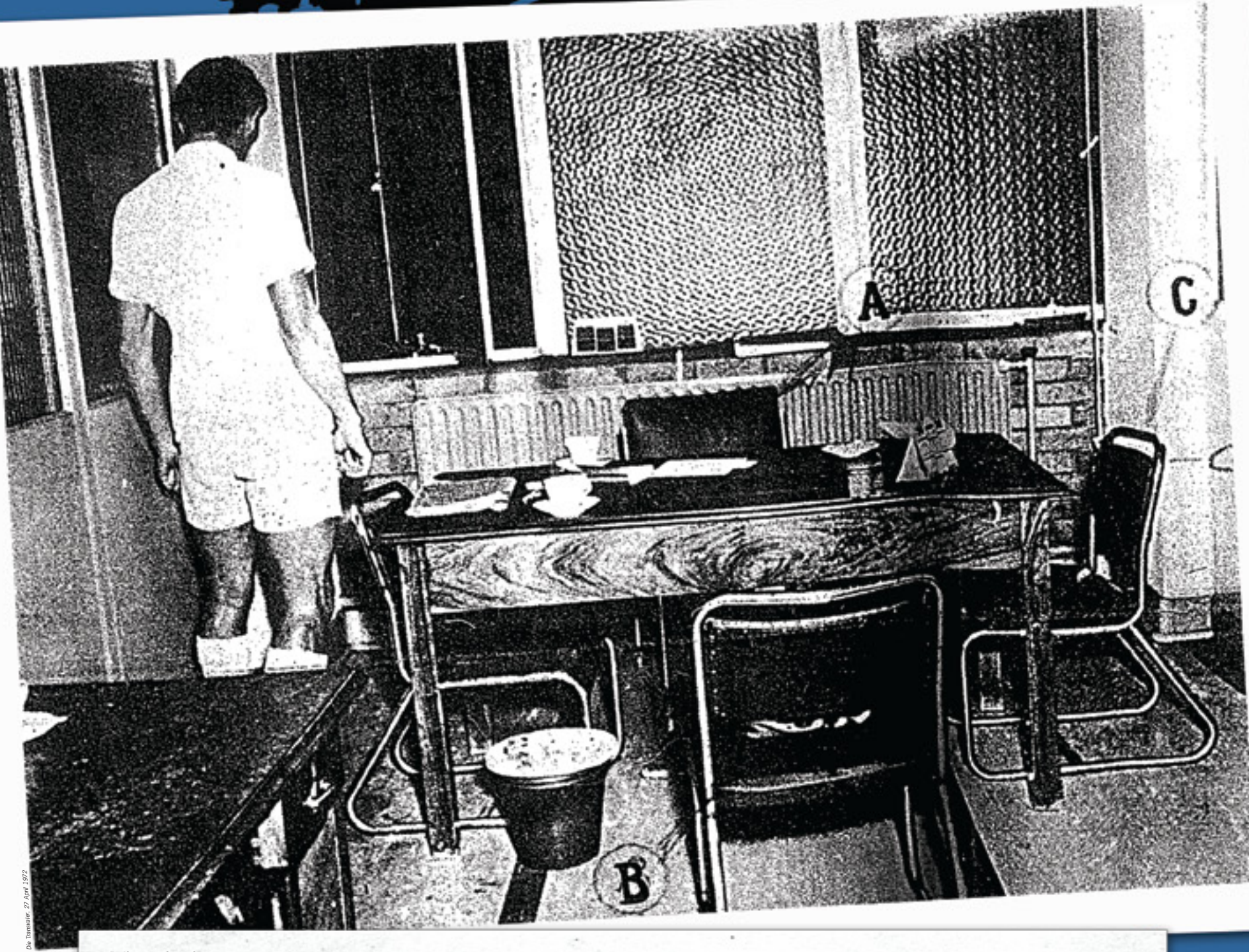
*Testimony of Ahmed Timol's mother, Mrs Hawa Timol, to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, on 30 April 1996, in Johannesburg*

**TUESDAY**  
**26 OCTOBER 1971**

**Lieutenant-Colonel Van Wyk and Captain Bean interrogate Timol from 8.30am to 7.30pm. Bean observes that Timol is fit and healthy. In statements made during the inquest, all the policemen who interacted with Timol stated that he had no marks or bruises on his body.**

*Police version of events, Inquest records courtesy of Cachalia & Loonat*





Police version of events

- A. At 3.48 pm Captain Gloy and Captain Van Niekerk left the room and Rodrigues and Timol remained behind. Rodrigues sat on chair marked A.
- B. Timol sat opposite Rodrigues on chair marked B. Timol asked to go to the toilet and stood up with Rodrigues at the same time.
- C. Rodrigues moved to his left and bumped into chair marked C. Timol rushed to the window, opened it and dived out.

***“I was forced to stand in the centre of the vault with my legs slightly apart. There were two security officers standing on either side of me.”***

*“They wore specific shoes and continuously kicked at my thighs. As they got tired their colleagues replaced them and continued with the kicking. My legs were now becoming stiffer and I was forced to stand in this position for hours on end. The mere touching of my legs would force me to literally scream with pain. They would then come and push you down. As I would fall down, they would ask me to rise. At this point your body cannot come up again and they pull you up again like a log.”*

***Salim Essop, arrested with Timol, describes being tortured by security police***

Salim Essop was taken on a stretcher to the Johannesburg General Hospital on Tuesday 26 October. According to medical staff, he had been severely assaulted and was suffering from clinical hysteria. Later that day he was moved under police guard to HF Verwoerd Hospital.

# IN THE BELLY OF THE BEAST



WEDNESDAY  
27 OCTOBER 1971

Timol is interrogated by Captains Gloy and Van Niekerk from 8am to 3.30pm. He is free of injuries, and friendly, though reluctant to disclose certain information, they say. At 3.30pm Sergeant J Rodrigues enters the room with coffee for the interrogators and Timol.

At 3.45pm, another security policeman enters the room and claims to have identified the “white” names that were part of their investigation. Timol looks shocked. At 3.48pm Gloy and Van Niekerk leave the room, telling Rodrigues to watch Timol while they do some research on the white people who had been mentioned.

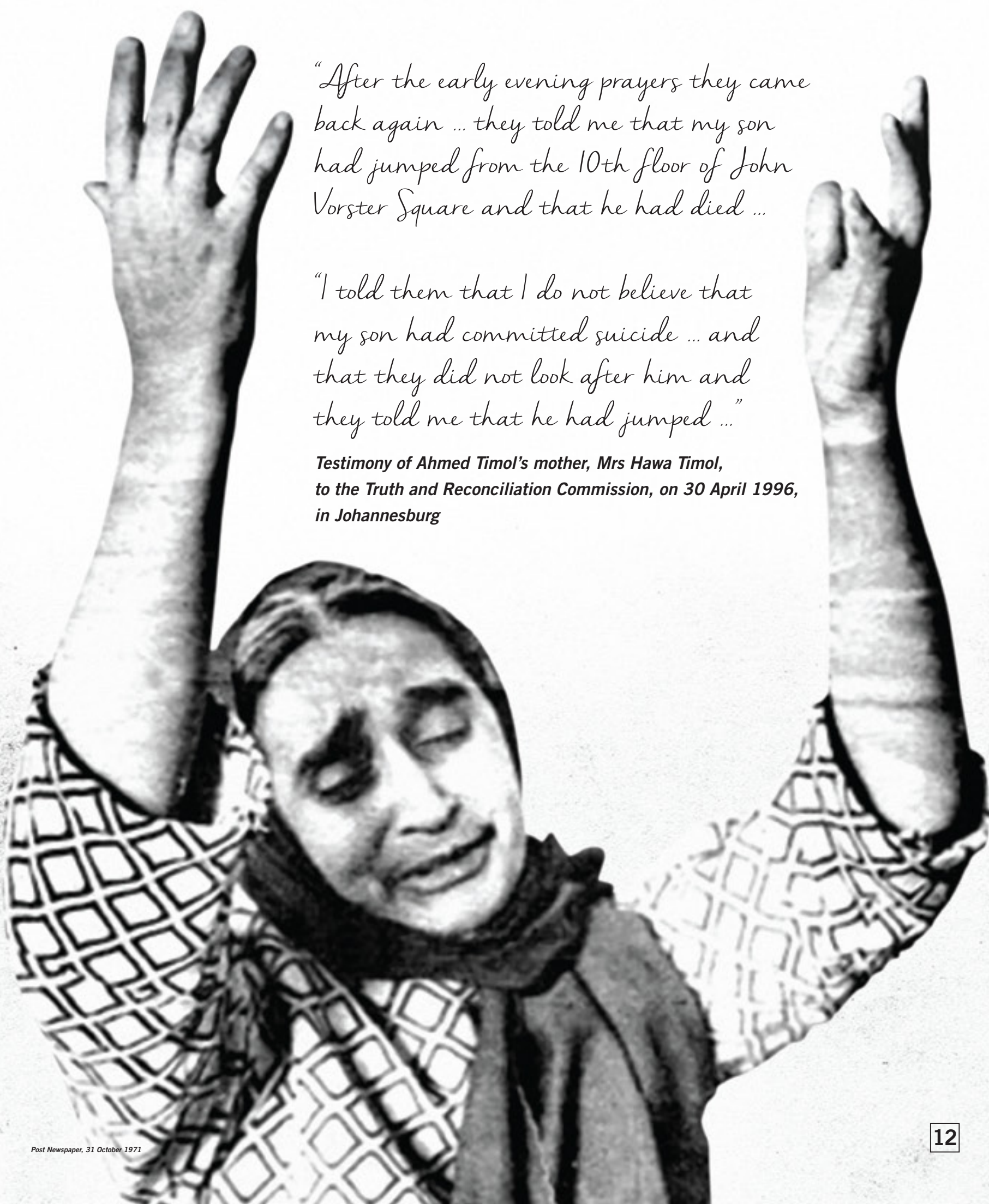
According to Rodrigues, Timol requested to go to the toilet, but as they stood up (on opposite sides of the table) Timol rushed to the window and dived out.

*Police version of events, Inquest records courtesy of Cachalia & Loonat*

*“After the early evening prayers they came back again ... they told me that my son had jumped from the 10th floor of John Vorster Square and that he had died ...*

*“I told them that I do not believe that my son had committed suicide ... and that they did not look after him and they told me that he had jumped ...”*

*Testimony of Ahmed Timol's mother, Mrs Hawa Timol, to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, on 30 April 1996, in Johannesburg*











FRIDAY

29 OCTOBER 1971

*“On Friday, as it is customary in Islamic tradition, Ahmed's body was brought back to the flat after it had been washed and bathed at the mosque. Friends and family members attempted to prevent me from seeing Ahmed's face, but I insisted that I needed to see my son's face for the last time.*

*Nothing could have prepared me for what I saw. Ahmed's face was disfigured and one of his eyes appeared to have come out of the socket. There were bruising and injury marks on his face. All the other people who saw the rest of his body also remarked on all the injuries that were visible on Ahmed's body.”*

***Testimony of Ahmed Timol's mother, Mrs Hawa Timol, to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, on 30 April 1996, in Johannesburg***





Haroon Timol, Ahmed's younger brother, who was 19 at the time, was taken into John Vorster Square for questioning for a few hours on 23 October 1971. He was subsequently released.

*"Ahmed was one of the most popular teachers. He was always the first to greet his students and treated them equally, irrespective of their family backgrounds. He did not believe in failing his students."*

**Haroon Timol**

# A COMMITTED FAMILY

On 25 October 1971, another of Timol's brothers, Mohammad, aged 23, was detained in Durban under Section 6 of the Terrorism Act. He spent 141 days in detention, mostly in solitary confinement and was subjected to brutal and intense interrogation. Prime Minister Vorster refused Mohammad permission to attend Ahmed's funeral. This caused immense distress to Mohammad and the rest of his family.

Mohammad was released unconditionally in March 1972, with the state unable to provide sufficient evidence. At the height of the Soweto uprisings in 1976, he was again detained for four months and after his release was placed under house arrest for five years. It became increasingly difficult for him to continue with underground operations and he was eventually permitted by the ANC to leave the country.

*"Remember that our future lies with the black people of this country. Everyday should be one of dedication to the struggle and the commemoration of all political prisoners, as well as those who died in custody."*

**Mohammad Timol, addressing the Timol Memorial Service at the graveside of Ahmed Timol, 29 November 1972**







"I can say that as a self-confessed communist he was involved in a plot to bring about revolution and mass murder in South Africa ... He gave the impression he was cooperating, but he was not prepared to tell the truth."

*Lieutenant Colonel Willem van Wyk, Security Police*

"The Indian asked me if he could go to the toilet. He was sitting on the chair opposite me. We both stood up and I moved to my left around the table. There was a chair in my way. When I looked up I saw the Indian rushing round the table in the direction of the window... The Indian already had the window open and was diving through it."

*Sergeant João Rodrigues*



"An abrasion on the right collarbone; multiple abrasions on the right thigh; a large bruise and rectangular abrasion on the right elbow and forearm; a few bruises on the right upper arm; an abrasion on the right shoulder blade; two large bruises on the right thigh; an abrasion on the left forearm; multiple bruises on the left side of the chest; and a small abrasion on the left side of the neck."

*Dr Jonathan Gluckman's list of injuries on Ahmed Timol's body inflicted before his death, compiled at the post mortem attended on behalf of the Timol family*



Some members of the team appearing for the police, including Major-General Stoffel Buys, head of the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) (centre) and Advocate S A Cilliers (second from the left).

# THE TIMOL INQUEST

COMMENCED ON 24 APRIL 1972

IN THE JOHANNESBURG MAGISTRATES COURT



“Often the body of a dead detainee on the mortuary slab was more compelling evidence on his behalf than the oral testimony he might have given had he survived the ordeal. His release would inevitably have taken place after his injuries had healed; he would have no witnesses to corroborate his story; and a team of security policemen would claim how well they had treated the detainee, even to the point that they had spent their own money to buy him meat pies and cold drinks.”

*George Bizos, in NO ONE TO BLAME? IN PURSUIT OF JUSTICE IN SOUTH AFRICA*



“He had been familiar with instructions given by the party to its members. These instructions included to commit suicide rather than betray the Communist Party... At this stage of his life the opportunity was there and he used it.”

*Magistrate JL de Villiers, presiding at the Inquest into the death of Ahmed Timol*

“Murder, in view of the testimony given, is excluded - and even considering it is ludicrous ... To accept anything other than that the deceased jumped out of the window and fell to the ground can only be seen as ludicrous ... Although he was questioned for long hours, he was treated in a civilised and humane manner.”

*Magistrate JL de Villiers*



The team representing the Timol family included (left to right) Advocate Issy Maisels, Advocate George Bizos, Ismail Ayob, Mia Loonat, pictured here with Mohammad Timol and Goolam Hussein Bhabha, a close friend of the family.

# THE TIMOL INQUEST

CONCLUDED ON 22 JUNE 1972  
AT THE JOHANNESBURG MAGISTRATES COURT



# UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

Ahmed's Timol's death was reported in South Africa and around the world. Many questions were raised; none have been ever answered.

After apartheid ended, South Africa established a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Timol's mother urged the commission to re-visit the case, but the TRC lacked investigative capacity. No amnesty applications relating to his interrogation and/or death were received. Nobody has ever been prosecuted for this, or the death of any other political detainee

*As we join in expressing tribute to a hero of the nation, these nagging questions remain:*

- *How, exactly, did he come to plunge 10 storeys to his death while in the exclusive care of the Security Police?*
- *What treatment was meted out to him by his interrogators in his last days?*
- *How can a system be so cruel as to ignore the reality of evidence and find, outrageously, that someone who would never commit suicide did just this?*
- *Overwhelmingly, we are driven to ask: what should be done with those who, if still living, participated in whatever way in this martyrdom in John Vorster Square police headquarters?*
- *Should the matter end there?*

***Essop Pahad, Minister in the Presidency quoted in TIMOL: A QUEST FOR JUSTICE by Imtiaz Cajee***

The inquest's finding of suicide, widely dismissed as an apartheid security system cover-up, remains the official last word on the matter.

## Is this the price Ahmed Timol paid for our democracy?





YEAR	NO	NAME	DATE DIED	AGE	PLACE	DAYS HELD	OFFICIAL / ALLEGED CAUSE
1963	1	NGUDLE, ‘Looksmart’ Solwandle	05/09/63	35	Compol, Pretoria	17	Suicide by hanging
1963	2	MAMPE, Bellington	??/09/63	?	Worcester	140	Undisclosed
1964	3	TYITA, James	24/01/64	?	Port Elizabeth	?	Suicide by hanging
1964	4	SALOOJEE, Suliman “Babla”	09/09/64	32	The Grays, Johannesburg	65	Suicide, jumped from 7th floor
1965	5	GAGA, Ngeni	09/05/65	19	Transkei	1	Natural causes
1965	6	HOYE, Pongoloshe	09/05/65	?	Transkei	1	Natural causes
1966	7	HAMAKWAYO, James	09/10/66	?	Pretoria Prison	14	Suicide by hanging
1966	8	SHONYEKA, Hlangula	09/10/66	?	Pretoria Prison	40	Suicide
1966	9	PIN, Leong	19/11/66	50	Leeukop Prison, Pretoria	1	Suicide by hanging
1967	10	YAN, Ah	05/01/67	63	Silverton Police Station	37	Suicide by hanging
1967	11	MADIBA, Alpheus	09/09/67	?	Namibia	1	Suicide by hanging
1968	12	TUBAKWA, Bolowa Jundea	11/09/68	?	Pretoria Prison	1	Suicide by hanging
1968	13	UNKNOWN PERSON	??/??/68	?	?	?	Reported by Minister of Police
1969	14	KGOATHE, Nicodemus	04/02/69	57	Held: Silverton Police Station Died: HF Verwoerd Hospital	85	Natural causes: Bronchial pneumonia after slipping in the shower
1969	15	MODIPANE, Solomon	28/02/69	50	Held: Silverton Police Station Died: HF Verwoerd Hospital	3	Natural causes: After slipping on piece of soap, fatal injuries
1969	16	LENKOE, James	10/03/69	35	Pretoria Prison	5	Suicide by hanging
1969	17	MAYEKISO, Caleb	01/06/69	56	Port Elizabeth police cells	18	Natural causes not specified
1969	18	SHIVUTE, Michael	17/06/69	?	Ondangwa police Cells, Namibia	1	Suicide
1969	19	MONNAKGOTLA, Jacob	10/09/69	?	Pretoria Prison	222	Natural causes: thrombosis
1969	20	HAROON, Abdullah Hadja (Imam)	27/09/69	44	Maitland Police Station, Cape Town	122	Natural causes: heart trouble caused by fall down stairs
1971	21	CUTSHELA, Myantheli (Mthayeli)	22/01/71	68	Held: Pondoland Died: Transkei hospital	31	Natural causes: Brain haemorrhage
1971	22	TIMOL, Ahmed	27/10/71	30	John Vorster Square, Johannesburg	5	Suicide, jumped from 10th floor
1974	23	GANGALA, Diliza Eric	06/12/1974	19	Mdatsane, East London	3	Hit with a baton during arrest, vomited blood in his cell
1976	24	MDLULI, Joseph	19/03/76	50	Security HQ Durban	1	Injury to neck after falling against chair
1976	25	TSHWANE, Nomodi William	25/07/76	?	Modderbee Prison East Rand	1	Shot while trying to escape, justifiable homicide
1976	26	MOHAPI, Mapetla	05/08/76	29	Kei Road Police Station, East London	22	Anoxia and suffocation as a result of hanging
1976	27	MAZWEMBE, Luke Storie	02/09/76	25	Caledon Square Police Station, Cape Town	1	Suicide by hanging
1976	28	MBATHA, Dumisani	25/09/76	16	Held: Modderbee Prison Died: Far East Rand Hospital	9	Natural causes, extreme sympathetic system activity with avuncular fibrillation of heart
1976	29	MOGATUSI, Fenuel	28/09/76	22	Johannesburg Fort	70	Natural causes, suffocating during an epileptic fit
1976	30	MASHABANE, Jacob	05/10/76	22	Johannesburg Fort	4	Suicide by hanging
1976	31	UNKNOWN MAN	05/10/76	?	Carltonville police cells	?	Undisclosed, allegation of assault before death
1976	32	MZOLO, Edward	09/10/76	40	Johannesburg Fort	8	Undisclosed
1976	33	MAMASHILA, Ernest (gangster?)	19/11/76	35	Balfour, Transvaal	13	Suicide by hanging
1976	34	MOSALA, Thabo	25/11/76	60	Butterworth, Transkei	95	Natural causes, internal bleeding from gastric ulcer
1976	35	TSHAZIBANE, Mlungisi	11/12/76	30	John Vorster Square, Johanesburg	2	Suicide by hanging
1976	36	BOTHA, George	15/12/76	30	Sanlam Building, Port Elizabeth	5	Suicide, jumped 6 floors down a stairwell
1977	37	NDZANGA, Lawrence	09/01/77	52	Johannesburg Fort	51	Natural causes: heart failure
1977	38	NTSHUNTSCHA, Naboth (Dr)	08/01/77	42	Leandra, Eastern Transvaal	26	Hanging, probably suicide
1977	39	MALELE, Elmon	20/01/77	61	Held: John Vorster Square Died: Princess Nursing Home	13	Natural causes: haemorrhage after hitting head against desk during interrogation
1977	40	MABELANE, Marwale Mathews	15/02/77	22	John Vorster Square	25	Accidental, fell from 10th floor
1977	41	JOYI, Twalimfene	15/02/77	?	Idutywa, Transkei	?	Post-mortem result not revealed
1977	42	MALINGA, Samuel	22/02/77	45	Held: Pietermaritzburg Died: Edendale Hospital	22	Natural causes: Heart disease & pneumonia
1977	43	KHOZA, Aaron	26/03/77	35	Pietermaritzburg Prison	106	Suicide by hanging
1977	44	MABIJA, Phakamile	07/07/77	27	Transvaal Road Police Station, Kimberley	10	Suicide, jumped from 6th floor
1977	45	SEGWALE, Rose	09/07/77	59	In prison, Soweto	?	Undisclosed
1977	46	LOZA, Nkwenkwe Elijah	01/08/77	59	Held: Victor Verster Prison, Paarl Died: Tygerburg Hospital, Cape Town	65	Natural causes: stroke
1977	47	HAFFEJEE, Dr Hoosen	03/08/77	26	Brighton Beach Police Station, Durban	1	Suicide by hanging
1977	48	MZIZI, Bayempini	14/08/77	54	Brighton Beach Police Station, Durban	35	Suicide by hanging
1977	49	BIKO, Bantu Steve	12/09/77	30	Held: Sanlam Building, Port Elizabeth Died: Pretoria	24	Brain injury during scuffle with police
1977	50	JAMES, Mbulelo Rocky	09/11/77	17	Lingelihle township office	1	Died after escaping from police custody
1977	51	MALAZA, Sipho Bonaventura	16/11/77	18	Krugersdorp police cells	138	Suicide by hanging

# DEATHS IN

1977	52	NOBHANDULA, Mzukisi	20/12/77	?	North End Cells, Port Elizabeth	6	Presumably owing to natural causes
1978	53	TABALAZA, Lungile	10/07/78	19	Sanlam Building, Port Elizabeth	1	Suicide, jumped from 5th floor
1978	54	MATSOBANE, Johannes Mputle	09/08/78	21	Robben Island Prison	96	Unnatural causes
1980	55	NDZUMO, Kolisile Saul	10/09/80	58	Mthatha, Transkei	9	Natural causes: Heart trouble, diabetes, blood pressure
1980	56	MATALASI, Sifundisile	23/12/80	27	Wellington Prison	90	Strangulation
1981	57	MGQWETO, Manana	17/09/81	60	Engcobo Prison, Transkei	?	Unknown
1981	58	MUOFHE, Tshifhiwa Isaac	12/11/81	28	Venda	2	Assault by police
1982	59	AGGETT, Neil (Dr)	05/02/82	28	John Vorster Square, Johannesburg	70	Suicide by hanging
1982	60	DIPALE, Moabi Ernest	08/08/82	21	John Vorster Square, Johannesburg	3	Suicide by hanging
1983	61	MNDAWE, Tembuyise Simon	08/03/83	23	Nelspruit Police Station	14	Suicide by hanging
1983	62	MALATJI, Paris Molefe	05/07/83	23	Protea Police Station, Soweto	1	Culpable homicide, shot in forehead at point-blank range



YEAR	NO	NAME	DATE DIED	AGE	PLACE	DAYS HELD	OFFICIAL / ALLEGED CAUSE
1984	63	TSHIKHUDO, Samuel	29/01/84	53	Held: Venda Died: Tshilidzini Hospital	77	Natural causes
1984	64	TETYANE, Asiya Adolphus	15/03/84	?	Held: Transkei Died: Butterworth Hospital	?	Culpable homicide
1984	65	SIPELE, Mxolisi	??/06/84	?	Sulenkama Hospital, Transkei	?	Unknown: police claim he died in hospital a month after release
1984	66	NGALO, Bonakele Johannes	18/07/84	26	Parys	13	Found dead in his cell
1984	67	MTHETHWA, Ephraim	25/08/84	22	Durban Central Prison	165	Suicide by hanging
1984	68	MOLELEKE, Jacob	29/09/84	16	East Rand Hospital	?	Shot by police
1984	69	MASUNYANE, Anthony	05-07/11/84	?	Kathlehong Police Station	?	Unknown, no post mortem, no inquest
1984	70	KOROTSOANE, Tatlheho	??/03/85	28	Held: Vereeniging Police Station Died: Leratong Hospital	?	Unknown, no post mortem, no inquest
1984	71	NGWENYA, Abel	29/11/84	31	Daveyton	1	Epileptic fit
1985	72	MVULANE, Bheki	29-30/02/85	18	Died: Natalspruit Hospital	12	Assault by police
1985	73	MUTSI, Siphso	05/05/85	19	Held: Odendaalsrus Police Station Died: Pelonomi Hospital	1	Epileptic fit
1985	74	RADITSELA, Andries	06/05/85	29	Baragwanath Hospital, Soweto	2	Fatal head injury, fell from Casspir
1985	75	MOGALE, Meshack	17/11/85	16	Mamelodi East	?	Unknown
1985	76	SPOGTER, Johannes Witbooi	04/07/85	13	Steytlerville Police Station, Eastern Cape	1	Head injuries
1985	77	MUGGELS, Mzwandile	04/07/85	20	Steytlerville Police Station, Eastern Cape	1	Shot by police
1985	78	THEMBALAKHE, George	16/08/85	15	Held: King William's Town Died: Grey Hospital	1	Internal injuries
1985	79	NDZANDZE, Loyiso	21/08/85	20	Held: King William's Town Died: Cecilia Makiwane Hospital	6	Internal injuries
1985	80	MBOTYA, Mbuyisela	21/09/85	35	Died: East London Hopital	1	Head injuries
1985	81	NDONDO, Batandwa	24/09/85	22	Cala, Transkei	1	Shot by police
1985	82	MASHEGO, Johannes	19/04/85	26	Parys	1	Unknown
1985	83	RAMALEPE, Ngoako	??/10/85	26	Kgapane Hospital, Duiwelskloof	1	Injured during a clash between students and the police, Lebowa
1985	84	NTUNGWANA, Mzwandile	??/10/85	18	St Albans Prison	360	Suicide by hanging
1986	85	PHOSHOKO, Joel	01/04/86	28	Pretoria Central	?	Unknown
1986	86	KUTUMELA, Makompo Lucky	05/04/86	25	Lebowa	1	Police assault
1986	87	NCHABELENG, Peter	11/04/86	59	Lebowa	1	Police assault
1986	88	NGOMANE, Eric	11/04/86	22	Hazyview, kaNgwane	21	Shot while trying to escape
1986	89	SILIKA, Ayanda	12/05/86	23	Crossroads	6	Shot while trying to escape
1986	90	MOGOTSE, Joseph	13/12/86	?	Pretoria Died: Garankuwa Hospital	1	Assault
1986	91	MAHLANGU, Jacob	11/09/86	?	Pretoria	1	Shot dead in a police vehicle
1986	92	SONGELWA, Mbuyisa	05/10/86	29	East London Prison	310	Untreated asthma attack
1986	93	JACOBS, Xoliso Johannes	22/10/86	20	Upington Prison cell	129	Suicide by hanging
1986	94	BAKO, Lungisile	??/11/86	18	Held: Louis le Grange Square - PE Died: Livingstone Hospital	?	Internal injuries
1986	95	MARULE, Matanzima Simon	23/12/86	20	Held: Modderbee Prison Died: Boksburg / Benoni Hospital	183	Kidney failure
1987	96	MASHOKE, Benedict	26/03/87	20	Burgersfort Police Station	215	Suicide by hanging
1987	97	KRIEL, Ashley	09/07/87	20	Bonteheuwel, Cape Town	0	Shot by police
1987	98	CELE, Edwin	09/07/87	22	Durban Police Station	?	Shot by police
1987	99	MNTONGA, Eric	24/07/87	35	Mdantsane Cells, Ciskei	1	Police assault
1987	100	BANI, Nobandla	29/07/87	56	North End Cells, Port Elizabeth	222	Stroke
1987	101	MARUME, Ndiko	04/11/87	?	Sasol	?	Died in a police van
1988	102	ZOKWE, Sithembele	12/01/88	36	Butterworth, Transkei	1	Police shooting
1988	103	DLOMO, Sicelo Godfrey?	24/01/88	18	Emdeni	?	Body found in open ground, Emdeni
1988	104	KOBE, Andile	20/03/88	22	George	?	Head injuries
1988	105	MAKALENG, Alfred	26/08/88	37	Held: Nylstroom Died: JHB Hospital	804	Natural causes, fluid on the brain
1988	106	KHOZA, Delekile Amos	01/12/88	18	Held: Klerksdorp Died: Hillbrow, Johannesburg	1	Jumped from the 7th floor while handcuffed and manacled
1989	107	DAKUSE, 'Decks' Patrick	23/01/89	36	Khayelitsha	6	Shot by police
1990	108	PHIRI, Mbuyiselo Nixon	18/01/90	16	Welverdiend Police Station	?	Police assault
1990	109	ZUNGU, Michael	29/01/90	20	Natal	1	Flung into the back of police van

# DETENTION

1990	110	SITHOLE, Clayton Sizwe	30/01/90	20	John Vorster Square, Johannesburg	4	Suicide by hanging
1990	111	TLHOTLHOMISANG, Lucas	26/03/90	39	Held: Klerksdorp Prison Died: Tshepong Hospital	7	Police report: meningitis
1990	112	MADISHA, Donald Thabela	01/06/90	30	Potgietersrus Police Station	130	Police report: suicide by hanging
1990	113	MBULWANA, Thokozani Eugene	13/07/90	15	Held: Welverdiend Police Station Died: Leratong Hospital	3	Haemorrhage caused by pressure of the skull
1990	114	TSOENE, Enoch	25/09/90	?	Transkei	?	Found dead in his cell
1990	115	TSHABALALA, Samuel	??/??/90	?	Kempton Park Police Station	?	Suicide by hanging
1982		DLODLO, Linda	22/09/82	18	Died after release from Protea Police Station, Soweto	15	Linda Dlodlo was a chronic asthma sufferer and was extremely ill after her detention
1985		MOSHOBANE, Segano Josephine	??/??/85	24	Under went an operation for blood clots on the brain after release	90	Before her death she could hardly speak or eat
?		BOLTINI, Mr	??/??/??	31	Died in custody of bantustan police in connection with theft of firearm	1	Civil servant in Ciskei



# 1994

South Africa's first democratic election.

# 1990

President FW De Klerk announces the unbanning of political organisations and the freeing of political prisoners.

# 1971

Timol is arrested at a police roadblock on Friday 22 October. Nearly five days later he is dead.

# 1970

Timol returns to South Africa in February and commences setting up underground structures for the then-banned South African Communist Party.

# 1969

Accompanied by Thabo Mbeki, Timol attends International Lenin School for political training from 17 February to 15 October.

# 1968

Launch of the South African Student Organisation as a vehicle for the Black Consciousness Movement, bringing Steve Biko to the fore.

# 1965

Aged 25, Timol completes his Hajj to Mecca. He travels to London, reunites with his old friends, the ANC activist brothers Aziz and Essop Pahad, and starts teaching children from the Indian sub-Continent at an immigration school in Slough. He becomes an active member of the National Union of Teachers.

# 1964

Timol teaches at Roodepoort Indian High School, and works as administrator at Dynamos Football Club, which helps provide cover for his political work.

Members and supporters of the broad anti-apartheid movement leave the country in droves for military and political training abroad.

# 1963

Ten ANC leaders including Nelson Mandela are charged (and eight convicted) for sabotage, conspiring to wage warfare against the South African military and furthering the aims of communism, at the Rivonia Trial.

# 1961

Kholvad Madressa Scholarship enables Timol to enroll at Johannesburg Training Institute for Indians. He becomes an active member of the Student Representative Council and graduates as teacher in 1963.

- ANC establishes military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe.
- South Africa breaks from Great Britain to form a Republic.

# 1960

The wages Timol earns at his first job, as a clerk at a Johannesburg bookkeeper's office, help provide for his siblings to go to school.

- Police kill at least 69 people at a peaceful anti-apartheid demonstration at Sharpeville.
- Nobel Peace Prize awarded to ANC President Chief Albert Luthuli.
- ANC and PAC banned.

# 1959

Ahmed Timol completes his secondary schooling at the Johannesburg Indian High School.

# 1956

156 charged with treason – Chief Albert Luthuli, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Joe Slovo, Yusuf Dadoo and Ahmed Kathrada, among them. The Treason Trial lasts for four years before collapsing

# 1955

Freedom Charter is adopted at Kliptown, establishing the principle of non-racialism, justice and equity.

# 1952

ANC launches the Defiance Campaign.

# 1949

Timol family moves to Roodepoort where Ahmed attends Roodepoort Primary School.

Apartheid legislation introduced prohibiting “mixed marriages”, forcing people to submit to racial classification, restricting where they could live and what amenities they could use, and establishing an inferior education system for black citizens.

# 1948

National Party elected to power by white South Africans on an apartheid ticket.

# 1941

Ahmed Timol born in Breyten



# AHMED TIMOL

## A QUEST FOR JUSTICE

*“We hope that what you learn today about Ahmed Timol will lead you to find out about others like him, like Looksmart Ngudle, Imam Haroon, Neil Aggett and many more who died because they dared to challenge the inhumanity of apartheid ... They would want you to know that our democracy is a product of all the peoples of South Africa who reached out to one another across the divisions of centuries.”*

***Speech by President Nelson Mandela at the re-naming of the Ahmed Timol Secondary School, on 29 March 1999, in Azaadville.***





## In Detention

He fell from the ninth floor

He hanged himself

He slipped on a piece of soap while washing

He hanged himself

He slipped on a piece of soap while washing

He fell from the ninth floor

He hanged himself while washing

He slipped from the ninth floor

He hung from the ninth floor

He slipped on the ninth floor while washing

He fell from a piece of soap while slipping

He hung from the ninth floor

He washed from the ninth floor while slipping

He hung from a piece of soap while washing















# AHMED TIMOL

## A QUEST FOR JUSTICE

### CREDITS

**TIMOL FAMILY ARCHIVES**

[www.ahmedtimol.co.za](http://www.ahmedtimol.co.za)

**ORYX**  
**MULTIMEDIA**

[www.oryxmedia.co.za](http://www.oryxmedia.co.za)

**APARTHEIDMUSEUM**

[www.apartheidmuseum.org](http://www.apartheidmuseum.org)

**dreamfuel**

[www.dreamfuel.co.za](http://www.dreamfuel.co.za)

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# AHMED TIMOL

A QUEST FOR JUSTICE

