

**TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION****SECTION 29 HEARING**

**NAME:** JOE VERSTER

**DATE:** 2ND MARCH 1998

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**CHAIRPERSON:** Good morning ladies and gentlemen, I must apologise for being late. I was held up by completely unexpected commitments and I would hope that you have not been inconvenienced further than what you have been.

This is a recall of witness Mr Joe Verster whom I believe has been given notice to appear today in a further examination of evidence which is solicited from him by the Commission in terms of Section 29 of the Act. I don't know whether counsel and attorney are still as before and if it is so, I would therefore request you to place yourselves on record.

**MR WESSELS:** Yes, Mr Chairman, we are as before. Mr Bosman is my attorney, my surname is Wessels.

**CHAIRPERSON:** Thank you Mr Wessels. Mr Khoisan?

I don't know Mr Wessels, whether you want to make any opening remarks?

**MR WESSELS:** Thank you, no, Mr Chairman.

**CHAIRPERSON:** Very well then.

Mr Khoisan?

MR KHOISAN: Thank you Mr Chairman. We are proceeding from where we left off at the last hearing which was held in August of last year I believe.

And just for clarification, one second, I would like to remind you Mr Verster, that you are still under oath.

JOE VERSTER: (s.u.o.)

MR KHOISAN: Okay, thank you very much Mr Chairman.

Mr Verster, as you know we have called you back to just wind up the work which we began the last time. And in order to expedite matters and to proceed with speed, I just want to go over a couple of points and ask if you can confirm them just so that we - on the same page with regard to what we want to here.

The last time you spoke you confirmed for the record, that you were - and you've been called in respect of the Civil Co-operation Bureau as it existed in the then dispensation. Just to recap, your position in the Civil Co-operation Bureau was one of the Managing Director, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: And in respect of the Civil Co-operation Bureau, it was organised along the lines of - and sub-divided into regions, 10 regions if I'm not mistaken, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: And of these regions, 8 constituted physical, geographical regions and two other regions, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: Would you please repeat that?

MR KHOISAN: Okay. And the last time that we were here and we spoke about the regions of the Civil Co-operation Bureau we discussed the fact that the regions were sub-divided. For example, region 6 would have been internal inside the country, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: That's correct.

MR KHOISAN: The region 7 would have been Zimbabwe.

MR VERSTER: Correct.

MR KHOISAN: And then region 5 would have been the world or broadly anything outside of these regions?

MR VERSTER: The international region, yes.

MR KHOISAN: Region 2, if I'm not mistaken, would have been what, Mozambique?

MR VERSTER: Yes, and Swaziland.

MR KHOISAN: And Swaziland and region 8 would have been Namibia.

MR VERSTER: Correct.

MR KHOISAN: And then region 9 and 10 would have been administrative regions, for instance region 9 would have been the intelligence gathering arm of the Civil Co-operation Bureau or administrative in that respect, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: Yes, it was not a geographical region.

MR KHOISAN: And then region 10 would be the financial or economic support for the structure known as the Civil Co-operation Bureau.

MR VERSTER: Correct, yes.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. And in terms of looking at your role, your role would have been that of the Managing Director of the Civil Co-operation Bureau?

MR VERSTER: Correct.

MR KHOISAN: In terms of this particular structure which was essentially a structure which operated outside - operated under the auspices of the military but had distance from it. Would I be correct to say that?

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: And when we were here we talked about the number of regions and we discussed - excuse my paging around, we discussed issues relating to co-ordinating. Now the man who had the alias of, I believe, Marius Reineke, would be the person now known in the public arena as Wouter Jacobus Basson, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: I can't recall the name specifically, he had quite a few names but according to the system, it could have been like that.



MR KHOISAN: Wouter Jacobus Basson was essentially, or Christo Britz as he was known within the CCB, was the co-ordinator of all these regions.

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: And just to go through a list of people here. The last time we spoke here, we spoke about - and you confirmed for us that the person known as Jaco was the Financial Director the Civil Co-operation Bureau, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: Yes.

MR KHOISAN: And is Jaco also the person known as Michael Jacob Swart? Is there a problem?

MR WESSELS: Mr Chairman, may I just advise my client? He's asked me in what manner he should answer certain questions.

MR VERSTER: Chairperson, I don't really want to give the names of sub-ordinates. As you put the question, it's clear to me that in this case you already know who the person was so that is correct.

MR KHOISAN: Thank you very much Mr Verster. What was the role of - just to recap, what was the role Generals Joubert and Eddie Webb within the Civil Co-operation Bureau?

MR VERSTER: They were the Chairpersons, first Joubert and then later General Webb. They were the Chairpersons of the

CCB. In other words, in military terms they were the commanding generals of the forces.

MR KHOISAN: Thank you. Mr Verster, when we talk about - when we refer to, in terms of the Civil Co-operation Bureau to what was known as and what has become popular in the lexicon of reviewing this period, the "Binnekring", would I be correct if I put it to you that the Officer Commanding Special Forces would essentially be an important part or play a critical function within "Die Binnekring"?

MR VERSTER: Yes. In previous documentation I stated that there were two important aspects, namely that operational activities or financial activities were delegated to me in the final instance. In other words it had to be authorised by the Chairperson, any activity.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. And essentially the officer commanding, Special Forces would - and I want to be clear about this, the Officer Commanding, Special Forces would have the final say-so on the military side of matters with reference to the South African Defence Force with regard to the building up, the putting together of and essentially at the end game, the disbanding of the Civil Co-operation Bureau. Is that correct?

MR VERSTER: No. I would say that he played an important role but he had a certain hierarchy in terms of which he had to work in the Defence Force and that meant that he could make

certain decisions on his own within his written mandate from the Chief of the Defence Force but he had to clear it in terms of the hierarchy above him. In other words he had to liaise with the Chief of the Defence Force before making final decisions. He had no mandate to do as he pleased.

MR KHOISAN: And in terms of this particular hierarchy procedure in terms of important decisions with reference to the Civil Co-operation Bureau, would I be correct to assume - and I put it to you, that there was consultation with or liaison in respect of what was known as the general staff?

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: I remember the last time you were here Mr Verster, you raised an important issue, one which I've had a lot of time to think about and in consultation with other people, obtaining the counsel of other people who are senior in the Defence Force, there is a sense that the Civil Co-operation Bureau as such was being cut loose, left on its own to fend for itself, in the society and that persons with structures whom this structure which you were the Managing Director of served, were essentially taking no responsibility for. Can I put it to you and hopefully you respond just so that I can get your advice on this matter or your thoughts on this matter, that the political arm of the then existing dispensation was critical with regard to the

establishment of and the functioning of the Civil Co-operation Bureau. Is that correct?

MR VERSTER: Yes.

MR KHOISAN: And in terms of your comments the last time when you were here and when we discussed this matter and also after obtaining the advice and counsel thoughts of other senior people, there was a sense that the Civil Co-operation Bureau as it existed and as it functioned and as it carried out operations, could not have carried out those operations without the sanction of higher arms or the political instrument that was running the country at that time, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: Yes, that's clear from all the documentation which you also have in your possession. It has been put so in writing.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. So in effect, when it came to dealing with this document that we have in front of us, and I ask you to refer to it, it is Annexure 1 and it is something that we discussed before. It is called "CCB Annual Planning 1987, that was drawn up in November 1986.

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: When it came to the drawing up of "CCB Annual Planning" for 1987, when you drew up this document, as you informed us, with the officer commanding Special Forces, I guess General Joop Joubert ...[intervention]

MR VERSTER: If I remember correctly, I gave the guideline that notes should be taken at the meetings and we swapped notes on what we said but somebody else, I think it was a Mr Heroltz, who actually physically compiled the document.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. Now, in terms of this particular document, this document sets out a series of problems. It gives the definition of problems statement and under .3.A: "CCB Mandate or Instructions for '87":

"The CCB must, by means of covert operations, disrupt any enemy whether internally or abroad"

Just a moment please.

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: And according to the culture and the guidelines and the procedures of the South African Defence Force as it existed in 1987, in November 1987, in order for the CCB as a covert organisation to deal with the order for 1987, you couldn't really carry out that order without the authorisation from the top structure or shall I say, from the highest level in the military or the State at that time, is that correct Mr Verster?

MR VERSTER: No, I want to supplement that by saying that was in the Special Forces. As far as the rest of the Defence Force was concerned the planning went to the Chief of the Defence Force and whether the covert section of it accompanied

that or whether that was dealt with separately, that was the Special Forces prerogative, the commanding officer there.

But I know that it was dealt with as being of a sensitive nature. I was present at sessions where the annual planning was done, where the Special Forces activities for the next year was outlined.

MR KHOISAN: I want to put it to you Mr Verster, that the South African Defence Force has made, and you're well aware of the fact that they have made several presentations before this Commission and we have been informed by them, through their submission, about procedures and guidelines for operations. And as a long serving soldier, a senior man in the South African Defence Force who held the responsibility of command in one of it's arms, that is the Civil Co-operation Bureau, did you know that for instance the authority to conduct operations outside the borders of the RSA was contained in a directive approved by the State Security Council in 1979 and that these guidelines were compiled to provide for operations in Southern Angola but later to include all other areas outside the borders of the country. Did you know that, and I'm putting it to you, did you know that to conduct operations outside the borders of South Africa, that in some way or another there must have been authority given or liaison with the State Security Council. Would I be correct to make that assumption?

MR VERSTER: At the stage when I was managing director I had no other dealings with it than via the commanding general of the Special Forces but the National Management Planning System, Management System I knew, as a result of certain courses which I'd done in the South African Defence Force, and I had a good understanding of that.

MR KHOISAN: So therefore I'm correct to assume that you would have had knowledge about the fact or would have been to some degree informed? I'm not trying to stretch your knowledge at that time, I'm not trying to put it to you that you knew things that - everything that was happening at that time in the country but from your knowledge as you put it to us. When you came here you said that before you went to the Civil Co-operation Bureau, before you assumed the position of Managing Director of the Civil Co-operation Bureau, that you were in charge of sensitive operations at Special Forces, so you would have had some understand of what was necessary to conduct an operations outside the country. Is that correct Mr Verster?

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. The reason I'm putting it to you is because, besides the two administrative regions, the one which would have been the financial support for and the other would have been intelligence support for the CCB, eight of the regions were physical and geographical. And out of that only one of

those regions existed inside the country, therefore seven of the regions, physical and geographical of the Civil Co-operation Bureau would have been outside the country. Am I correct?

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: Therefore the majority part of your function as the Civil Co-operation Bureau would have been outside the country, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: Correct.

MR KHOISAN: And just to be clear on that particular thing, are you saying to me, are you putting it to me that you were briefed about or had knowledge about the fact that you couldn't really, given your position as the head of the CCB, you couldn't just launch a project outside the country without approval on high, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: And the approval concerned both the military authority of the time, which the highest level would have been the Chief of the Defence Force and the civilian component of the command of the country, which would have been the State Security Council, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: I was aware of the fact that political authorisation had to be obtained for certain operations.

MR KHOISAN: Now Mr Verster, I don't want us to get caught up in how this thing came about or - really don't want to - I



would like you know, things that are common knowledge, that are outside that have already been put out in the public arena, I'd like you just to confirm if you want to on the record. Would I be correct to assume that Mr Pieter Botes was the CCB co-ordinator in region two?

MR VERSTER: That's correct.

MR KHOISAN: And that Commandant Meerholtz was also a co-ordinator of the CCB?

MR VERSTER: That is correct. I said at a previous occasion that I don't know whether his family was aware of that and that is why, in the case of Meerholtz, I dealt with it in a sensitive manner.

MR KHOISAN: And as we also informed you at that time Mr Verster, you know you can bear us out, nothing of what you told us in that hearing, even though you at that point said that the TRC was a porous organisation, nothing of what you told us - I just want to put it on the record, nothing of what you told us in an earlier Section 29 inquiry has ever gone to the press. And I just wanted to say that as a way of informing you that we have maintained the confidence of this inquiry and the integrity of this inquiry. Would I be correct to assume that the person of Eben Barlow was also a CCB co-ordinator or ranking official within the Civil Co-operation Bureau?

MR VERSTER: Yes, at the information level. He functioned within an intelligence project.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. And essentially Mr Eben Barlow functioned within what was known as Region 9 of the CCB, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: Yes.

MR KHOISAN: And in terms of Region 9 he had specific responsibility for dealing with intelligence gathering or intelligence operations in respect of the physical geographical region of the CCB known as Region 5, am I correct?

MR VERSTER: Yes.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. Now Mr Verster, when we look at certain issues that have come up and have now been in the public arena, let me refer you to point 6(a), point 6 of the document that you already have in front of you:

“Covert intelligence system must be improved by means of divisional military information, South African Security Police and National Intelligence”

MR VERSTER: Correct.

MR KHOISAN: Now in terms of those three those three particular structures. In terms of: Militere Inligting, that's Military Intelligence, you would have had people that would have liaised with the CCB, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: No. The channel went via our own headquarters, it was a Special Forces headquarters. I want to point out that the document's objective was simply what was planned or hoped for for the next year, it wasn't necessarily so that it was done. So if we developed better channels, it was largely due to our own information centre at Special Forces headquarters.

MR KHOISAN: No, I'm aware of that. I'm just trying to establish the fact that you might be aware Mr Verster, that every branch of the service admits readily, not every branch of the then existing security establishment in the country would readily admit to the fact, that they interacted with or liaised with or operated side by side or in concert with the Civil Co-operation Bureau. Very much along the lines of what you said the last time, that you were on your own, that you were cut out in the cold, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: Yes, that is so.

MR KHOISAN: ...[inaudible] branches of the then existing security establishment that seems want distance from this structure known as the Civil Co-operation Bureau, what was then known as the National Intelligence Service. Is that correct?

MR VERSTER: Are you saying they didn't want to have contact with us?

MR KHOISAN: No, I'm talking about the fact that - I'm raising it, I'm putting it to you, that in discussion with other people and people on high and senior levels and middle levels, there's a feeling, that there's characterisation of the organisation of which you were a senior and commanding member, of a rogue organisation of people who operated out there, in left field as I were, doing your own thing and what you put o us the last time and what we're looking at and interrogating in a serious way, is that you were not operating out there in the cold by yourself but you were operating as part of a broad structure.

MR VERSTER: That is so, but as the international practice, it was always between these organisations, the normal preferences, people, some people who liked to have contact with each other and some people who didn't speak to each other.

In the case of National Intelligence they like to actually keep a watch on us, it was a known tactic. If they were too scared to do the job themselves, it was actually easier to get the information from us. So there were many incidents at which National Intelligence actually tried to find out what our people were busy doing.

And National Intelligence upon occasion objected to the fact that the liaison wasn't quite up to scratch and there wasn't an attempt made to prove it but we didn't actually trust each

other too much so it actually came to nothing. We actually rented a flat jointly and eventually when we inspected the flat the National Intelligence had actually tried to but the flat by putting in all kinds of monitoring devices.

There were also cases where they were quite cautious of us. They were functioning on a political level and they were quite scared that something would be done without proper liaison and communication. So the fact that they didn't want to have contact with us openly, that was the way - National Intelligence was directly responsible for the political intelligence channel to the Government of the day and that is the structure which has not appeared in front of the Commission very much.

I think I mentioned at a previous occasion that when a soldier is waging war his job is actually to shoot. Security police, their job was to police, do policing functions. Now National Intelligence's task was to convey political intelligence to the Government of the day.

If we look at what actually happened, they are the chief structure that should take responsibility for information conveyed to the Government of the day, in my opinion.

MR KHOISAN: No, the reason I'm asking and I'm putting it to you in this way Mr Verster, is that based on our research, based on our interrogation of the structures as they were supposed to

have operated in the time, is that the majority of the work for instance, of the then existing National Intelligence Service, would have been intelligence gathering, correction processing, and certain functional intelligence operations outside the country, isn't that correct?

MR VERSTER: There was some official documentation about that. Africa fell under the Defence Force and the rest of the world resorted under National Intelligence in terms of regions of responsibility.

MR KHOISAN: And in terms of that particular point that I'm referring to, point 6 of this document:

“Shortened comprehensive conclusions”

I'm still on point A. The objective was to build ...[indistinct] the channels of communication but the channels of communication were not to be built merely as an exercise in absentia of projects. They were all geared towards actions, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: No, that is not so. It was a familiar structure in the Defence Force and in this case, if we wanted intelligence we had one channel which referred to the Special Forces headquarters and from there were channels which referred to the Covert Intelligence Collection Committee and there was never - it was never discussed generally or in front of staff.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. I'm not trying to suggest that you would have operated outside of the then structure. What I'm trying to get and what I'm trying to put to you directly Colonel Verster, is that you - that number one, that intelligence is not neutral.

The purpose of having an intelligence gathering of any military organisation is to make sure that you are better equipped to deal with (1): the enemy or the perceived enemy and number (2): to better carry out operations and number (3): to defend what you have as your broad project. The purpose of having this arm is to make sure that projects that are on the way or are about to be launched are launched in such a way that they are geared to success, is that true?

MR VERSTER: Yes, you are partially correct but it is not only about projects, there are other reasons such as the strategic collection of intelligence which are not directly aimed at projects which one would have been busy with, we were interested in combat information to protect the sovereignty of the State.

MR KHOISAN: And in order to carry the function to protecting the sovereignty of the State, for instance in a place like Region 7 which was then known as Zimbabwe, right, which is Zimbabwe, Region 7, and in order to carry out something - and let's use Zimbabwe as an example, am I correct when I put it to you that besides the CCB and: "Afdeling Militere Inligting", the

Military Intelligence, that the National Intelligence was also operating inside Zimbabwe?

MR VERSTER: Yes, that's beyond reasonable doubt, it can be accepted.

MR KHOISAN: And that one of the things, one of the regions which are relevant to the discussion that we are now having where there was some kind of a problem or a push by Military Intelligence to gain more access and more information about your operations was Zimbabwe. Am I not correct?

MR VERSTER: I don't know, I couldn't say if it was like that.

MR KHOISAN: Do you know of any instance when the National Intelligence Service tried to get more of a footing in Zimbabwe to try to either gain a handle on your operations which were moving or try to redirect your operations?

MR VERSTER: No, I know nothing about such things Mr Chairman.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. And we can get to it later, but can you tell us the name of your co-ordinator in Zimbabwe? Who was your co-ordinator in Zimbabwe Mr Verster?

MR VERSTER: If I remember correctly there were several co-ordinators. It was more about available staff, and I think the last one that I recall is Christo Britz at one stage.

MR KHOISAN: Okay now when we look at this document here, because the last time we were here we talked about the fact that



here you looked at drawing up a “binnelandse teikenlys” - if I’m not mistaken there was an issue of the drawing up of a “binnelandse teikenlys”, and I think that - and that’s point 4 on the same document we are on and I want to deal with point 4 and sub-point 2, small 2 there:

“Staff Facilities and Activities: First (1): SAP, (2): ANC, UDF, PAC etc”

...[inaudible] the ANC, you have:

“diegene op die lys”

Now I think you are well aware of the fact that senior members of the Civil Co-operation Bureau have applied for amnesty in respect of certain people and instances.

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: In fact your commanding officer - and it is already in the public arena, it has been a subject of public discussion and debate all over the media and it’s also been heard in the public arena, the issue of the involvement of your commanding officer in the Ribeiro matter. Is there anything that you can discuss with us in respect of this matter that can help us to understand better how that took place and whether the Ribeiro emanated from this particular thing:

“diegene of die lys”?

MR VERSTER: We had no ability to compile or prepare certain lists. We were an operational structure and we functioned

within the greater Defence Force and our information was collected from the official information channels. On nature of the facts, target studies were undertaken of the enemy, who the enemy would be, where he would be situated, what the routes of the enemy were. I've told you on a previous occasion that this is why we were established because the enemy determined what he wanted to accomplish on South Africa and that is why we prepared ourselves to resist.

So therefore the lists which could be referred to would be the lists of names of people and structures and organisations such as it had been ascertained from the intelligence community and this was intelligence which was requested so that we could understand the enemy better.

MR KHOISAN: ...[inaudible] in terms of - you see that's what I'm trying to get to, that's why I raised the issue of - the issue earlier, of liaison with the intelligence structures because from everything you've told us before and from what we've gathered in the process, that your majority function was operational, to deal with matters to protect the State as you understood, to deal with the enemies of the State and physically to secure the existence of the State to deal with threats against the State.

It was an operational, that was the majority part of your mandate, it was operational. It wasn't sitting around drawing up documents and intelligence. The majority part of your

mandate was dealing with the problem at hand and making sure that that problem was dealt with. But the reason why we're asking this question is, we're trying to interrogate where this list could have come from because now you've given us an indication that the list comes out of the intelligence community.

Now you were the commander, you were the managing director of the Civil Co-operation Bureau. The military in effect, because martial law was not in existence at the time in South Africa, did not have the responsibility for internal operations.

That was not it's major theatre, it's major theatre was outside the country. And I might be wrong but the way I understood the system is that the military could only have gained superiority or had the major part of it's mandate inside the country if martial law was existing but martial law was not existing, so the majority of the task inside the country fell therefore to the South African police and to the intelligence services.

So, are you suggesting that the list that was drawn up in respect of potential targets inside the country is purely the mandate or the province the security police? In other words that we're back to blaming the whole thing on C section and other sections of the police that had to deal with identification and rolling out plans in respect of targets inside.

Is that your suggestion, that that is the responsibility of the police, the security police? And specifically where the major - from what we understand the system, where the major lists came from would have been C section, Brigadier Schoon and his people? Is that your suggestion to this Committee?

MR VERSTER: To answer your question I would like to propose my answer like this, that we should look at it strategically. If one looks at the organisation of the defence force, it was the only structure that I knew, one had an operational wing.

There was the Chief of Defence Force under which there were many divisions, logistical staff, financial intelligence and so forth. If one looked at it like I looked at it, I fell under the operation wing. If you look at planning, one wouldn't be able to undertake planning if one didn't have the information to do so.

And if one had to scale it down to Special Forces it would mean that there would be an intelligence division and on the level of Special Forces there would also be one on the level of the infantry and also one on the level of the head of the defence force.

Then one has liaison and if one reads that along with what we have read earlier, it would mean that one could assume that in order to exchange intelligence there would be liaison between

the various elements within the defence force and then there would be liaison between the South African Defence Force and other elements of the State, such as the police, national intelligence but everyone was a part of it, I ...[indistinct] part of it.

I think I attended a meeting once on the covert collection of intelligence and that was representative of all. How it functioned I'm not sure, I never again saw it. I don't know if it was cancelled subsequent to that. That is how I view it.

MR KHOISAN: You see, what it's bringing me to is a structure known as TREVITS.

MR VERSTER: I had nothing to do with that structure, I know of it but I did not work with it.

MR KHOISAN: No, I'm more you see, you were a commander of an operational arm of the then existing security forces, the military essentially but I'm trying to get to something more concrete here. You referred to the fact that there was liaison in respect of potential threats or threats to the State and this is essentially threats of personnel.

And we have here a document that was drawn up by the Civil Co-operation Bureau in November 1986, that was essentially it's forward planning for 1987. What we're trying to do is we are trying to find out how you as the Civil Co-operation Bureau might have got locked into or liaised with or

been directed by other structures. And that's why I asked you about the intelligence's particular arm or the intelligence structures because if we look at how TREVITS functioned, I mean, the structure that you describe essentially - and we've heard from people who've been part of that senior level, is that TREVITS was essentially a clearing house an information clearing house in respect of countering the revolutionary threat.

And essentially TREVITS ended up with a mandate or shall I say, part of it's function was to deal with targeting of people. And we you talked of - when we discussed earlier the issue of the Ribeiro matter you talked about target studies you see.

Now we know that TREVITS dealt with target studies and it's from the target studies that forward planning was done, that's what we know as the Commission, it's not something that we have to suck out of our thumbs.

It's something that has already been discussed in forum, something that has already been outside in the public arena and that's what I'm trying to get from you.

Your commanding officer at the time is now applying for amnesty in respect of the murder of Doctor Ribeiro and you know that and we're trying to find out if the Ribeiro scenario is something that just happened like that or whether it was part of

well organised, well structured, planned operation that ended up with the unfortunate result of the demise of Doctor Ribeiro.

And we're trying to solicit your co-operation, your help and your knowledge about how that particular situation could have come about. Because now you must help us because you see, the thing is that General Joop Joubert was not an operational man, he's the commander of this structure and as such I mean it would be, on my part, it would be silly of me to assume that he wouldn't have delegated a matter to somebody else. Is there at any time or did you ever have occasion to discuss the Ribeiro matter with General Joubert?

MR VERSTER: I would like to answer you firstly by referring to TREVITS. TREVITS was a structure which we had nothing to do with. I could in an indirect fashion have relayed information how we determined the enemy.

When we spoke of a target it was divided into categories, it wasn't only about individuals but also about a threat to the State. It was a far bigger picture than which you have illustrated to me. What I do not agree with in the first place is that you know as well as I do where the ANC was.

Let's take an interesting base like the Vianna base of the ANC, what the routes were that they followed from Vianna, what their actions or activities were at the Vianna base. For example 9 people in front of the firing squad, men such as Edward

Molepe who were shot dead by the ANC. Was that authorised? And under what legislation? How did the structure operate?

In this fashion we observed that the Vianna base was a target to us and that intelligence I received only through one channel and that was by means of the Chairperson who - if you look at the structures of the Defence Force, every commanding general had a sub-section of staff officers.

He would issue an order to the sub-section that he was looking for certain information. To return the section on Ribeiro, the general did discuss Ribeiro with me and he at one stage told me that I should ask those who are applying for amnesty, what they would be doing regarding the Ribeiro issue but to the best of my knowledge that intelligence came from the security branch of the police.

There are other documents which you have provided me with in which it says that better co-operation was to be achieved with the police, I think it's under one of those points 6(a) which you mentioned to me that liaison with the security police did exist. So in this case, if the source of the knowledge lay with the security police it would have been provided to General Joubert from the police.

If he had an order within another structure or in a formal structure, I do not know because at stage we were busy



dissolving or breaking the link from the South African Defence Force and the Special Forces.

MR KHOISAN: Now, the issue of the Ribeiro matter Mr Verster, is essentially a matter which takes place in respect of Region 6, is that correct, of the CCB?

MR VERSTER: That's correct.

MR KHOISAN: Therefore in terms of the discussion that you had with General Joubert, it would have been natural, or let me put it this way, it would have been procedural for you to transport that information through to the next available channel as per structures that you had already drawn up in terms of operationalising a project in respect of Doctor Ribeiro. Is that correct?

MR VERSTER: Do you mean upwards, downwards?

MR KHOISAN: Now I'm talking about the fact that you've received - you've put it to us that you discussed the Ribeiro matter with General Joubert ...[intervention]

MR VERSTER: No, it's not a case - as I recall I was requested to put the message through to the structure which was dealing with that at that stage. It was before the formal areas existed as they exist now. It was the initial stages of the establishment of the CCB, it was a project which was put into motion before the establishment of the CCB.

And as I recall, enquiries were made by General Joubert, let us assume the relevance operational individuals would have to see him and discuss things with him. It was not a conversation regarding operational activities.

MR KHOISAN: No, you know as well as I do Mr Verster, that in respect of the Civil Co-operation Bureau, assigning it its name and what you call: "die ontkoppeling", the giving it its physical or shall I say structural distance from the ordinary command structure of the army, was merely an act of formalisation.

But the CCB as it existed, shall I say, you yourself by the time that you and General Joubert were discussing matters in terms of the formation of the CCB, you yourself was somebody that was deeply involved with sensitive projects of Special Forces.

Now I'm saying, specific to the Ribeiro matter, I understand from what you've told us that information in respect of the prospective target, in this case Doctor Ribeiro, essentially came through a process and it landed up as a problem to be resolved on the desk of General Joubert who discussed this matter with you.

And I'm putting it to you, how did it move from there? What was the process from the identification of the problem to

the end result, which is the demise of Doctor Ribeiro? Can you help us with respect to that?

MR VERSTER: I will say again that at that point there was a state of emergency in the country and at one stage we were called in, I think it is in the documents, I was assigned to the Johannesburg division of the activities to attempt to combat the internal unrest.

At that stage I had been newly appointed as the managing director, however the projects themselves were not allocated to me. I did not formulate the plans. I did not physically formulate the operation of the structure as it was formally laid out and submitted to the Chairperson. I had nothing to do with that because it was a transitional phase from a former era to my era. And in that respect, I was in a position where I transferred it to ...[no sound] who I was working with.

MR KHOISAN: And obviously you can see that I understand that that period of overlap where the Special Forces people had to now - literally I mean, you are to civilianise, let me put it that way, maybe that's the word to use, you had to civilianise, you had to say that you officially do not exist as part of the military, you will exist as a separate structure.

And in that overlap period we're talking about, this particular matter but still the project comes to you and you know that you discussed this matter with General Joubert and

I'm trying to find out, that if you didn't have a Staal Burger as the co-ordinator of Region 6, you didn't have a Crystal Britz as an overall co-ordinator, you didn't have a "Slang" van Zyl or Carl ...[indistinct] or Ferdie Barnard but you did have an operational component and I'm trying to interrogate where it went from there. Do you understand Mr Verster?

MR VERSTER: Chairperson, it emanates from the Harmse

Commission that there was a structure which was of general knowledge. I was the staff officer of General Joubert and General Liebenberg in the era before the establishment of the CCB and from the chiefs of my appointment I was aware of the elements of the Special Forces which functioned in civilian clothes.

These individuals later with the cross-over, many of them remained and that brought about the establishment of the first Region, that was the Botswana Region. And there were many practical problems in terms of too direct liaison with the police and that led to the establishment of the structure as you know it today. To return to the CCB, I would like to reiterate that the vision that you hold of our cross-over to a separate structure is something like the 1st of December 1988 and during 1966 or rather '86 General Joubert was appointed and we functioned as the CCB from the Special Forces.

We were still Special Forces operators and the name CCB was merely a name which existed only within the South African Defence Force and not externally to the Defence Force as it is proposed in the propaganda and the media. And at that point in time regarding Ribeiro specifically, we were purchasing property external to the Special Forces and then the state of emergency broke out and the further liaison was with General Joubert and I was a messenger. This is what I'm applying for amnesty for.

People were allocated to the police in terms of Act 44 of 1947 or '57, all members of the Special Forces interpreted this in 1986. I was allocated to the Wits Command and others were sent to Pretoria although they were individuals who had worked for me before.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. Just one second Mr Verster.

CHAIRPERSON: I forgot to indicate that there will be a tea break at half past eleven and it would be a convenient time to take the tea break just for 15 minutes. We will be back at a quarter to twelve or as soon thereafter as possible.

COMMITTEE ADJOURNS

ON RESUMPTION

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Verster, I must remind you that you are still under oath.

JOE VERSTER: (s.u.o.)

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Khoisan?

MR KHOISAN: I need to come in one second.

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Khoisan?

MR KHOISAN: Thank you Mr Chairman.

Mr Verster, we're still on the issue of the Ribeiro matter and you've given us your position on that. Now, I'm still on the issue of the fact that, you know, the Civil Co-operation Bureau as such had not, as you put it, fully decoupled from the SADF as it then existed but it was operating in another shape and form.

I'm interested to find out from you, once this thing was moving where did it get handed down? You informed us that you were operating out of Wits Kommandament, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: So essentially, in respect of the Ribeiro matter the operational support from the side of the Defence Force people in civilian clothes would have been connected to a part of this particular operation. Would I be correct to assume that it would have come out of Wits Kommandament?

MR VERSTER: No, that is not accurate. Chairperson, perhaps I should try and put it differently. The situation was as follows, and I want to emphasise that it was only in 1988 that we formally disconnected ourselves from Special Forces.

In 1986, at the time of the Ribeiro incident we were in essence part of the Special Forces head office or headquarters and in my view there's a difference between being the commanding officer and being a staff officer.

The difference being that there's a responsibility directly linked to myself as commander or commanding officer but when I'm a staff officer of General Joubert then the responsibility is vested in General Joubert. That was where the big difference lay during this incident.

We were called in at that time when we were busy establishing the CCB and because I had the responsibility of a staff officer towards General Joubert on the one hand but on the

other hand I was also newly appointed as a commander or the managing director.

Because there was a state of emergency, those structures which you've now become familiar with from documentation were different. And I was called in and told that Commandant Naudè would function and co-operate with the police in Pretoria and that I would co-operate with the police in Johannesburg.

Would it not function in any regional context or in any other way, other than in support of the person who was in command, which was General Joubert at the time.

MR KHOISAN: So, essentially what I'm trying to get to, and we don't have to spend a lot of time on this. I'm trying to find out, after you discussed this with General Joubert, the Ribeiro problem before it was resolved in that unfortunate way, whether you had anything to do with sending anything through the line in respect of that or were connected to that operation? And if so, can you give us particulars?

MR VERSTER: I applied for amnesty because I was responsible, I was appointed and I was therefore responsible for the people below me and I've said so quite often, that I would assume responsibility on my level.

You've put the situation a little bit stronger, mainly that I discussed it with him. What I'm saying is that we were called in, myself and Commandant Naudè were called in to General Joubert and certain areas were allocated to us during the state of



emergency and then they continued and there was a certain cross-over activity which took place before the establishment of the CCB. I see it as part of Special Forces.

And Commandant Naudè was allocated to the security branch ...[indistinct] was responsible or involved at the time. I was not involved in the initial planning. And the reason why I'm applying for amnesty is because there were other occasions where there were discussions, as you call it. As far as I'm concerned these were messages.

I was then functioning above Commandant Naudè and the hierarchy, as far as these covert structure - this covert structure was concerned, and therefore I received the message and I conveyed it. At some point there was an enquiry as to what was going on.

I was still fulfilling my staff officer function, namely doing what the General demanded of me but I didn't actually take part in the planning of the Ribeiro activities. I simply was aware of what was going on in a broad sense.

CHAIRPERSON: Let me just ask a question in relation to that Mr Verster. Now, I think what I personally want to know, when you say you had a broad understanding of what the issues were, within my own sense, would be to get to understand what exactly it is that you knew and how you came to know about it, about the Ribeiro matter. And maybe we need to have a common understanding of what the Ribeiro matter is.

I think for the purposes of the Commission we would like to know (a): you were involved in the planning of the killing of the Ribeiro family: whether you were aware that there was a plan to kill the Ribeiro family and if you were, whether you understood that he was going to be killed or he was going to be arrested or whether he was going to - or anything was going to be done.

And whether you were aware of the plans, you know, that were put in place. Who was going to be involved, whether these Special Forces were going to be people from inside the country or as it turned out, somebody else from somewhere else.

And when you became aware that in fact what had come to be known as: "The Ribeiro Matter" was the assassination of these two people. I would like us to dissect it and to just get to the bone and see whether you were involved and to what extent you were involved.

MR VERSTER: At the beginning of 1986, I can't recall the exact date, I don't know whether it was in May or somewhere thereabouts, myself and Commandant Naudè were called in to General Joubert's office as a result of the state of emergency existing at the time. I was assigned to Johannesburg for co-operation with the South African Police and Commandant Naudè was assigned to Pretoria.

In our terms they had been seconded in terms of Section 44 of 1957, for plans which they were to devise jointly with the

police. My broad knowledge concerns plans which were made surrounding the Ribeiro incident. After General Joubert told me at some point that I would have to speak to Commandant Naudè to find out what exactly was going on, were they busy planning some action or not. But as far as the direct plans were concerned, those were made by a group of people around General Joubert and the security branch and I as the newly appointed commanding officer was not part and parcel, or party to the planning, the detailed planning as to whether he would be killed or arrested or whatever. That was not part of my function.

So my knowledge was actually based on the support of the commanding officer, the general in charge and what happened between him and Commandant Naudè in his office, that I don't know, I can't recall that today. But I will accept responsibility and that's why I applied for amnesty because I did have a broad understanding of this team of people from Special Forces who had been placed under my command and were now co-operating with the police and that they were about to launch an action which did not only include Ribeiro but apparently other activists as well or other activities.

As far as I'm concerned, on that basis they were seconded from under my command and at some point afterwards, that's what I referred to just now, I'd heard General Joubert telling me to ask the other person what was going on, that was Naudè.

Naudè and some of his men could have drawn certain supplies and vehicles and as a result of the nature of the co-operation in our structure, I was aware of it and I felt that I should convey these details to the General and what the General told me I should convey back to my sub-ordinates.

That was my involvement. I did not sit down and devise the plan of what was to happen with Ribeiro, that was in any event something which was in the hands of the police. I was aware of the fact that the police made as if they were doing what we told them to do. If you look at Act 44 of 1957, you will see that the Defence Force can only act in support of the police and it was on that basis that our people were seconded or assigned to the police.

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Magadla? - for the record.

MR MAGADLA: According to your knowledge of this, seeing that you were invited into the Ribeiro and supplied with knowledge as to what was going to happen and in fact your members had to be incorporated into it to work together with the security police, security branch members, was it that your members were only called in, Special Forces members, to be involved in the Ribeiro matter only or is it that thereafter they also were involved in other matters together with the security branch after the Ribeiro matter?

And if it is so, would you not have been informed as had been the case with the Ribeiro matter, that okay, here are your

members, this is what they are going to be doing and whether thereafter whatever they did, you would have had knowledge thereof?

Is it the case that therefore, after the Ribeiro matter there were other matters or other targets or other killings that took place where your members were involved?

MR VERSTER: The way I saw it was as follows. We had been assigned to own areas of responsibility and my position was that there was a senior person appointed and he co-operated with the police and that was an activity which was directly between that person and the commanding general.

As far as other activities were concerned we didn't make the plans. And I learnt of certain actions which took place afterwards and I was not aware of those beforehand because that was not done on the normal planning structure, it was as a result of the state of emergency where certain teams were joined up.

I did not know exactly what happened. I wasn't present during those activities.

MR MAGADLA: Were you not entitled to a feedback on the activities of your men who were working together with the police?

MR VERSTER: I worked in a different area at that time. As far as we were concerned, that was a time when we did a lot of running around. I was entitled to feedback and afterwards I did hear about certain incidents such as for instance, the incident of

the bus, the minibus in which certain people had been killed for which other people have asked for amnesty but that's not something which was under my command.

That's is how it works in any structure. I didn't devise the plans, I wasn't aware of the plans, I only learnt about it afterwards.

MR MAGADLA: But you are saying you are applying for amnesty for having had knowledge of the Ribeiro matter because people under your command were involved. Now you also have knowledge of the fact that other operations were undertaken by those people as well.

Now how do you reconcile that one, where you don't apply for amnesty for the other activities of your members where they were working with the police?

MR WESSELS: With respect Mr Chairman, Mr Verster did apply for amnesty in regard to that as well. All the matters that he had knowledge of, he applied for.

MR VERSTER: I can now recall, yes, that's correct. By virtue of the fact that I was the commanding officer, I applied for amnesty but I wasn't actually involved in the planning.

Certain other incidents also took place later in the Cape. I didn't want to apply for this incident - the advocate is correct, it was my mistake. I was against it because I felt I had nothing to do with it, it was a police matter but just for safety's sake I did so.

There's a similar incident regarding a bomb explosion. One of my sub-ordinates told me, just before the cut of date last year, that I was the person responsible for making the plans, I later found out that it was General Joubert. But just because it was my people and my vehicles or the vehicles under my command, I applied for amnesty. In fact I wasn't even in the country when one of these incidents took place.

MR MAGADLA: But we have details of operations in Region 6, which is then local region in the country, by your people. There are several operations by your people outside the country of which operations you are reluctant to get involved but you had your structure, you had your unit at Region 6 and they would have been operational as well.

So, could we be saying here that no such operations in Region 6, or if they were, what were these operations?

MR VERSTER: I applied for amnesty in respect of all the things that actually happened but I'm getting the impression that you are very sorry about the fact that I didn't kill a lot of people within the country. But I've argued in the past and I've also handed in certain documentation in which I told you in the first place that I regard what is happening here, in terms of the hit squads, as propaganda.

I tried to protect the sovereignty of the State and the enemies of the State at that stage, the chief enemy or the chief enemies, were the ANC and the SACP. They made use routes

such as the Vianna Base. They actually infiltrated through Angola and Zimbabwe into South Africa.

We established Region 6 to actually get hold of those people, those people who were actually infiltrating along those channels to get into South Africa. Region 6 was not established to run around and kill people left right and centre.

That is a perception which arose from the days of Dirk Coetzee and Eugene de Kock's days and the CCB is now held responsible for that. I suppose now the next thing is we will be held responsible for the death of Mother Theresa, then we've covered everything.

The situation is that our operations, the things for which I'm asking for amnesty, is where it appeared to us there was contact with other elements in the police where operations took place that developed in an ad hoc way but which was not the primary function of the structure.

What we would have liked to have seen or to have is to get hold of an MK member, somebody that was picked up inside the country, so that this person could explain all the various routes of infiltration to us. And we also wanted to ask him questions about their training and the Vianna Base etc. How many people were at the base, where exactly it was located etc.

The previous questioner said on a couple of occasions that 9/10th's of our activities were directed against the threat from



outside and not against what was happening inside the country, that was the police's function.

MR MAGADLA: Thank you very much for that but the point I would like to make is that as a matter of fact, where there have been all these perceptions about the CCB, about yourself, about all the other people around that situation, I think it is also our objective that where there are all these things we have this kind of forum where you explain these things to us.

You remove all the other perceptions that are about. Where in fact it has been said all the time that there had been these operations abroad and somebody, a lay person like myself who has not been involved in the armies and things like that, would be thinking: well, let's come closer home and find out what happened there with respect to, there was Region 6 here at home, can we then find out, not with the aim of an accusation to say that: "okay, you've been ...[indistinct] all over the country, what did you do in Region 6"?

We just want to have an explanation about what happened in Region 6. What was Region 6 for, you've explained. I mean, that is the thing and I think once we get to that we can get along. If we left it unexplored then it would have been a problem.

CHAIRPERSON: Just before you leave that.

Now Mr Verster, you say this whole propaganda and myth about your involvement or about portraying the CCB as these

cloak and dagger gun toting majors who are chasing people all over the country and finding the first opportunity to kill them, not exactly your words but that's the picture you painted, you see it all originated with Dirk Coetzee and then with Eugene de Kock. Now, those people belonged to a structure other than the army, whether in the form of Special Forces or the army or the CCB, which was a creation of the army.

Now, what interest would they have to want to portray you in a manner in which you actually were not? Can you think of any reason why they should seek to say you did things which they knew you did not after all? As Joubert testified during the armed forces hearing and as you have also testified here, all that you did as the army, whether in the form of CCB or Special Forces, was to help the very Dirk Coetzee's in their operations and at their invitation.

Now why should they seek to portray you in the manner in which you actually were not? Can you give us an indication as to what their motives and/or perspectives were in doing so?

MR VERSTER: Chairperson, if you'd given me the opportunity, but I suppose what it will come down to is money, then from the documentation here I can summarise everything that has been said already. Namely, there was an incident which started with the death of Doctor Webster where the new President, President de Klerk was appointed and where pressure was brought to bear to actually apprehend Webster's killer.

During that time there were problems which arose with Dirk Coetzee. Dirk Coetzee because, if I recall correctly didn't receive the correct pension, he said that he was going to spill the beans as to what happened in the security branch of the police.

He then left the country etc., then in the beginning of August 1989 there were incidents where, in the weekend papers this battle took place regarding Dirk Coetzee and that conflict then also spilled over to Eugene de Kock.

Simply by looking at the newspapers we could see that along with the Webster incident, that these things were actually coming closer and closer to the CCB and the problems were beginning to emerge.

And then all of a sudden our activities came to the fore and were revealed. How this happened I don't know. Certain people told me that certain politicians from the previous government were involved in this.

All kinds of Generals had been appointed to launch enquiries. There were incidents, for instance such as where we were brought to the intelligence head and there were about 13 folios containing information about incidents, incidents which were supposedly the responsibility of the CCB.

In the media it was said for instance that we were also responsible for the Master Bond incident, for the Goniwe

incident, for hand grenades in Johannesburg, for vehicles burnt out in Johannesburg.

And the moment when I laid eyes on the document I realised that what was busy happening here was that the CCB was represented as the people of whom a clinical excision would be made, they would be cut out from all these activities.

Go and look for instance at the Harmse Commission, the Harmse Commission concerns activities of hit squads. Then go and look at the inquiry into the CCB and the mountain of police activities. That was the broad plan. Although there were mistakes, although there were incidents on the side of the CCB, the CCB was then pushed into the limelight as being the structure responsible for all those things inside the country.

I told you last time that it would seem to me as if you're co-operating with the previous government because what you're busy doing is to, in respect of the plan of the previous government, you are simply continuing with that plan today.

And the CCB - I simply can't manage to convey this. My advocate keeps on telling me that I'll die with the perception that we were such terrible people. I was a trained Special Forces operative as you found in the British SAS and the special operations branch of the ANC.

I sat within a military structure namely, Special Forces and the name CCB was never ever used outside the walls of Special Forces. But later in the media it was held up to be this

structure. We were a covert organisation that operated in civilian dress and we carried out special operations.

If we were told to work with the police, we did so. If we were told to help people we did that. If we were told to reconnoitre a particular area for other sections of Special Forces, we did so. In the Gulf War the Special Forces of the Americans and the British would go in, they would reconnoitre, they would mark a target, that was our job.

Therefore we had an internal region as well, to be able to get that information. And in my book there were certain incidents which in retrospect I realised I should never have co-operated with the police because you can't trust the police.

I in respect of my own structure and my own people, I actually prosecuted certain people because they refused to work with the police. I had to carry out my orders. You can go and look at one of these annual plans or the minutes of one of the meetings where the Chief of the Defence Force, General Geldenhuys wrote that we will have to really entrench ourselves in the long term and work with the police. So that is how the structure functioned.

There were two court cases of which you're aware where General Malan denied and the politicians denied certain allegations but I can do nothing else but show how our structure operated. It wasn't possible for me to act on my own or for us to act on our own.

I couldn't simply just get hold of money. It might take us the rest of the day to get to Webster, so in anticipation I could perhaps say: if I had shot Webster, where are the projects? Where are the budgets and the channels? How did it happen, how did it happen?

There's a structure and I was afraid that this day would happen and that's why these things were actually written beforehand, people warned me and told me not to actually document these structures because I was told I would still have to explain sometime in the future but it also protected us to some extent.

The CCB therefore did not have the right before the election, the right of an ordinary ANC cadre who entered the country. We were the polecats who were evicted from the dispensation. I have a lot of sympathy for P.W. Botha's problem which he's experiencing at the moment but as a member of the CCB, if I go to Mr Botha he will say: "Look I don't want to know you".

General Viljoen is a good man. Senior people in the ANC, when I spoke to them on the quiet, asked me what kind of a person General Viljoen was, I think I mentioned this last time, and I told them that he was not a politician. I think he's very honest and very straightforward.

I can't go to General Viljoen, I don't want to by the way, I don't belong to any political party but I can't go to Viljoen and

say to him: "Look, you were my general at the time and we worked together and now I'd like to join your party".

I as a member of the CCB can't show my face there. He doesn't want to know me. so we were effectively excluded by the previous government. And the current government is continuing with the same plan so effectively that it seems, it would seem as if the plan was devised beforehand.

CHAIRPERSON: But isn't that the very reason that cause this whole mystery about you. I mean, why should they, everybody, as you say General Viljoen and everybody else, why must you be this problem child that they don't want to associate with? Was it something to do with the way in which you were set up?

MR VERSTER: I was under the impression that I told you, and my attorney has once again stated this, the incidents which took place are contained in the Harmse Commission. That was the investigation into the hit squads and there was a lot of pressure which would come to the police.

That was in the run-up to the elections and with the construction of this new co-operation which emanated therefrom. And when this happened, when the incidents started coming forward, Dirk Coetzee who was making disclosures, the person who sat on death row Nofumela, when these incidents began to come forward plans were devised and all sorts of incidents were ascribed to a secret structure in the media and it was swung to the CCB.

CHAIRPERSON: Do I understand that - If I understand you, are you saying when the Harmse Commission was investigating the existence or otherwise of hit squads in South Africa and the evidence that came from Dirk Coetzee and from Nofumela was pointing to these death squads actually being police persons in the form of Vlakplaas operatives and all that, are you saying at that time the investigation that were conducted by ...[indistinct] and everybody else were aimed at disputing the evidence that would come from Coetzee and Nofumela that the police were involved? And that the CCB was made the fall guy and that is how this image of the CCB came about? That if they were, if the police were not the killers of the Goniwe's and everybody else, some organ was in fact involved and that organ was the CCB.

I'm stating it very simplistic, is that what you're saying?

MR VERSTER: I've stated that under oath. I tried to discuss this with senior politicians and four times I was shown away by the former president, I assume that he was in Greece at that stage. And on that basis they never talked to us and we were effectively cut off, we were intimidated.

My problem is I do not wish to be the mouthpiece to place the former government at a complete disadvantage. I am not a great fan of the current government and I find myself in the middle and we are all maintaining our silence.



And that is why I told you the last time that no kind of peace had been established. Your time is almost at an end with the TRC. There are a great number of former soldiers who did my work and no-one negotiated on their behalf. There is no confidence in what Roelf Meyer and Mr de Klerk did.

We did not belong to the AWB, we are not interested in the AWB and we feel that we have been placed at a disadvantage and that it continues as such in the current structure. And everyone is arguing whether or not we should prepare for a civil war. Should we not be protecting ourselves, what should be do in order to merely survive because the politicians are nowhere to be found.

And there's a great perception that there was some kind of an agreement between the current and former government that the CCB and a couple of other individuals should be overpowered and that is why I sit here along with 37 other individuals. We will never be achieving amnesty or granted amnesty.

And there are those who say to me: "Well if you're not going to be getting amnesty, why would you expose yourself, you might as well go back to the bush as it was said previously.

This is the situation that we are experiencing at the moment. There is no peace which was supposed to have been made with the fighting elements whose job it was in the former government to protect the sovereignty of the State.

MR KHOISAN: Okay Mr Verster. Please, we can really do without you going to the bush right now you know, just try to stay with us here.

But look, when I'm looking at this particular thing you see. In respect of your own answers when you were being questioned during the - in respect of the Harmse Commission, and I refer to Annexure 19, could you please find it? Are we there, are we on that particular page?

MR VERSTER: I have it Mr Chairman.

MR KHOISAN: Okay now, there are a couple of things in respect of this that I want to ask you about. We can begin by talking about this, seeing that we are dealing with this matter, can we go to - and I'll be with you in just a second, question 26. Can you turn to question 26? I believe it is page 11 of Annexure 19.

MR VERSTER: I have it Mr Chairperson.

MR KHOISAN: Now, while we're on that, just let me ask you - we can hold that for a second, were you aware that the coordinator of the CCB was holding a diary at the time? This is Mr Wouter Jacobus Basson, also known as Christo Britz.

MR VERSTER: I was aware that he kept a diary.

MR KHOISAN: And were you aware that that diary has formed part of official documentation, the original diary in his own handwriting, is currently not in his hands but in the hands of a

competent authority? So you are aware of the existence of this diary?

MR VERSTER: Yes, I am aware of it.

MR KHOISAN: Do you know that there were issues that were raised in respect of this diary, particularly when it deals with the Webster matter?

MR VERSTER: No, I cannot recall that at the moment.

MR KHOISAN: Now, when you were asked about this particular issue:

"What is your commentary regarding allegations that the murder of Doctor D.J. Webster was a project of the CCB"?

and your answer there was:

"I categorically deny this allegation"

Now I want to put it to you, why would you issue a categorical denial in respect of the question put to you, why wouldn't you just outright deny?

MR VERSTER: I don't know if I can answer that Chairperson, but it might be the manner of written expression of the person who wrote it with me I don't know, there is no reason for that.

MR KHOISAN: I mean you did - I'm given to understand that you did sign this document and given ...[intervention]

MR VERSTER: Yes, I accept that but one's legal counsel assists one, it's not the same legal counsel I have here today.

MR KHOISAN: ...[inaudible] the suggestion is that your legal team wasn't as competent as our learned colleagues over here. But I mean, the issue is - and I'm putting it to you that you are an intelligent person Mr Verster and we know that you're not only intelligent but you're sharp and witty and you've got a good grasp of the world around you.

And you know that anything you say and do, and particularly at that time in respect of the serious allegations that were being put in respect of an organisation in which you were in control, that the allegation was that the CCB was responsible for the murder of David Webster.

That was the allegation in these newspapers that you've referred to in the press and even among some of your former colleagues in the security forces ...[indistinct]. Why wouldn't you just outright deny that: "That was never part of our project".

Why would you issue a categorical denial? Is it that you were probably concerned that maybe one or two of the fellows under your command might have been freelancing, pulling something by themselves?

MR VERSTER: I don't know, that is a question of perception and that is exactly what I did by categorically denying it. I don't know if there's really a degree of difference between a categorical denial and a denial.

MR KHOISAN: Mr Verster, in terms of this particular aspect of Doctor David Webster, you are aware that there is in fact a legal proceeding which is taking place in respect of the murder of David Webster, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: That's correct.

MR KHOISAN: And that one, Ferdinand Barnard has been put there as the person, and it's been discussed and the allegation is that Ferdinand Barnard is the man who was directly connected to this operation and that he did so in ...[indistinct] with other people who were also former members of the CCB, are you aware of this?

MR VERSTER: I'm not aware of everything but I am aware of the fact that he is under suspicion, as I've already said in the Harmse Commission.

MR KHOISAN: Now in respect of the Webster murder, you stated there that you had no file on Webster and Webster was never ever discussed, I mean, do you think people are just sucking it out of their thumbs that Webster was a project which was carried out by CCB people?

MR VERSTER: I don't know what they are making up but I know that I testified for approximately six days at the Webster investigation and I repeatedly said or asked why the police wasn't being investigated. I was eventually silenced by the Judge. Why is it only us? And that is part of what I have been telling you here regarding Webster.

MR KHOISAN: Do you agree that Ferdinand Barnard worked for the CCB?

MR VERSTER: It depends what you mean by that. If he did work for us at a certain point as a person during a probation period, I would agree. If the inference is that he worked for me during the death or at the time of the death of Doctor Webster, I do not agree with you.

MR KHOISAN: Mr Verster, the last that we were here - besides this whole thing of the probation period, we discussed a matter, a matter that had been brought to us, to the attention of this Commission by a long serving member of Directorate Counter Intelligence. Do you recall that discussion that we had in respect of that matter?

MR VERSTER: I cannot recall that precisely.

MR KHOISAN: Okay, and I'll just make it as quick as possible. The issue was that Directorate Counter Intelligence was pursuing an investigation in respect of the recruitment of Ferdinand Barnard to go to London to recruit the criminal element to carry out operations against the African National Congress.

And that for some reason or another your commanding officer, General Joop Joubert got wind of the fact that this person or persons, that that particular branch of the military was investigating Ferdinand Barnard and that people were summoned in and that you - I mean we can go, we can read back the record,

that's not what I want to do right now, you agreed that you had knowledge about the fact that there was such an incident in which General Joubert called somebody and tried to stop this thing.

But do you agree that Ferdinand Barnard had been recruited by the CCB and given the job of trying to go to London to recruit the criminal element to forward the projects of the CCB?

MR VERSTER: Ferdinand Barnard was introduced to me, I can't recall the source, as a person who had worked for the police, who had been locked up and had contact with the underworld and drug networks and that level in which we thought that the MK members were moving about underground.

What had happened then was that he had been appointed for a probational and during that probational period certain activities were assigned to him, such as reporting faithfully, acquiring a vehicle, developing and contacts with people, reporting back to his commanding officer.

And the incident which I assume you are speaking of. I was approached by the Director of Special Forces Activities and there was a meeting which members of Military Intelligence attended as well as members of our headquarters.

During the incidents I recall that plans had been sketched with regard to who might have talked to who and from all of this

I deduced that Barnard had been linked to a person by the name of McQuillen.

And before the meeting had been completed I asked to be excused because I did not want to listen any further to the games that they were playing regarding who spoke to who and who heard what. I felt that it was a waste of time and shortly after that I said that he should be dismissed.

He was not - I would like to place this on record, that he was not placed on ice. There were a number of statements, especially from policemen, which were made under pressure and made as a part of the approach to present the CCB as some kind of fall guy.

When it was suggested that we should monitor someone it was said: "No, let's kill him". Certain individuals were influenced and sometimes statements were issued. I'm thinking of Section 29 statements of which it was said that they were made under pressure.

I would just like to mention again, that certain things were said such as the fact that Barnard had been placed on ice. If you look at this statement you will understand that Barnard knew other members of area 6 and when they spoke of other members being placed on ice, he also used the same tone.

What there connections were and how they knew each other in terms of police activities because their source was - whether their source was in the security police or in uniform



police I don't know but Barnard was not placed on ice. Before the Webster incident he had been dismissed officially and anyone who wishes to state it otherwise should know that this is a fact.

MR KHOISAN: No, what I'm trying to put to you Mr Verster, is that that information, first of all in respect of that particular meeting, without revealing the source, that information was not information gleamed through any Article 29 - Section 29 detention of anybody.

That information comes about as a part of a deeper investigation into various branches of the service. And it so happens that Ferdinand Barnard not only featured in that particular investigation but in other investigations.

And the person that he recruited - just to put it on the record, is Dermot McQuillen, which gave rise to the investigation by Counter Intelligence because Dermot McQuillen at that time was a ZCIO agent.

And in the words or in the lexicon of Directorate Counter Intelligence people at the time, they considered Dermot McQuillen - quote: "Inlightings smous" and a danger to the security of the country or any operation because they thought that he was a guy who chatted too much, he was quick on the mouth.

And that's how that particular thing ended up there. But with respect, the fact is that while Ferdinand Barnard, when one

of his first, one of his premier assignments - as you say he messed up the assignment, but one of the assignments that he was - one of the reasons which resulted in that meeting with the commanding officer of Special Forces, the commanding officer of the CCB at that time, General Joubert, was because of the fact that Ferdinand Barnard had been given an assignment and he had botched the assignment.

And the assignment as you clearly pointed out, was an assignment to infiltrate the criminal underworld in London so that they could proceed with projects against ANC people in London, that was the assignment. And that's what I'm trying to find out from you.

I mean, you were aware of most of the projects. That would have been a very sensitive project because the way I understand it and maybe I'm wrong and maybe you can counter me, but the end product of that assignment would have resulted in the targeting of certain senior ANC people in London. So I'm putting it to you, you knew about the recruitment of Ferdinand Barnard, that's correct yes?

MR VERSTER: I recruited him after I had been introduced to him but you are making inferences that he would be acting in London, that is nonsense. He, Barnard, was appointed on a probational period and it was as a result of that incident that he was dismissed.

There was nothing strange. You are saying it to me as if the ANC was not supposed to be shot. If he was ...[intervention]

MR KHOISAN: No, I understand, and that's your position Mr Verster. We understand you very well and we've understood you from the start, in terms of how you've presented the argument. And in respect of the African National Congress, you can see that this Commission is serious.

We are proceeding, even though you might not think so, to investigate several military structures including military structures of the African National Congress, the Pan Africanist Congress and other structures.

But in respect of this particular thing, that meeting with General Joubert was not in respect of Ferdinand Barnard botching any little project, it was because of the fact that he had recruited Dermot McQuillen and the recruitment of Dermot McQuillen was to help him with something specific.

And I'm putting it to you that the - project on the table, because we can, because the thing is that the Counter Intelligence, Directorate Counter Intelligence has their own files in respect of that meeting. And everybody who was in that meeting, as you pointed out it wasn't just one - you and the commanding officer, other people were in that meeting and the Directorate Counter Intelligence had their own reasons why they went to General Joubert about the Ferdinand Barnard problem.

The reason they went there is because Dermot McQuillen, a ZCIO agent who was also an: "Inligtings smous" had been recruited to participate in a sensitive project. You yourself were the person who recruited Ferdinand Barnard and I'm putting it to you that one of the projects that he had been recruited for was to go and recruit the criminal element in London with the end product of killing the ANC people.

I'm not putting a value judgement or moral judgement on whether or not ANC should or shouldn't have been killed at that time, that's something that another body has to deal with.

But the fact is that the targets in London were ANC people. The person who would effectuate this was Ferdinand Barnard and his accomplice who he recruited was Dermot McQuillen. And the methodology, the transport that he would have got to this project would have been the criminal underworld in London. And I'm just trying to get you to confirm to me that that's one of the projects that he was busy with.

MR VERSTER: I think that you are blowing something out of proportion which to me is not an amusing situation. Firstly, it is about freedom of movements, nothing was said London. If he knew something in London, how would he be able to prove that this was a plan which had to be executed in London.

Something else which you should understand is that I was an operational soldier. My orders were to shoot where I was

instructed to shoot. The decay - the DCI's object was to discuss who the targets would be. I said to them halfway through the meeting, that I was not interested in what their stories were because they warrant achieving anything.

What I know is that Ferdinand Barnard had been placed on a probational period to see how his progress would develop. In my opinion he disqualified himself because he had already linked himself to the former government. He did not do it in a covert fashion, what he did was in the open.

I dismissed him directly after that. But that he was involved in some great project is nonsense. If someone wants to propose that that is how it was, it is also nonsense. He had to be able to move network, make contacts and friends with whom he could move about freely so that he could infiltrate the then enemies of the State.

The fact that you have explained it so well, just indicates why he was dismissed so swiftly.

MR KHOISAN: [No English translation - Transcriber's own translation] What I want to know is, was he a conscious member of the formers CCB or was he an unconscious member? When you recruit him, was he - tell me.

MR VERSTER: He was a conscious member initially until we realised that he was talking to other people. He was introduced to someone else who had contact with Special Forces and we reasoned that in the future we would have to accept him as

someone who did know what was going on. And it emerged in later testimony that he was aware of the connections with the Defence Force.

The more you say the more I think so, that in certain documentation which we have here, he had cards in his possession, police cards and Military Intelligence cards. And the more you say the more I think that it could have been that that awful incident which is so terrible for you, could be that there was a problem in which they discovered that Barnard was working for Special Forces instead of the DCI or for me.

Or that he was trading in information and in that situation I feel that I correctly dismissed him but never in our system did anyone have access to cards or was he authorised to consult with another structure of the State.

I've pointed this out to you, that there were incidents where the police at that time told their people a story, that he was part of Special Forces. We never did this. Barnard was in possession of Military Intelligence documents and police documents and our policy was that he should not be linked to the State.

MR KHOISAN: You recruited Mr Barnard to the CCB, not one of your way down the line operators. You were directly involved in the recruitment of Ferdinand Barnard to the CCB, correct?

MR VERSTER: I recruited him. I am the responsible person but that has been cleared with the Chairperson, with the ...[indistinct] of Special Forces and the information which I had I submitted.

I never appointed anyone without the Chairperson having knowledge thereof. He was appointed on a probational period and I have said that if someone, after one year, had medically - if someone fails his first year of medical studies he wouldn't be a doctor. And in the same way Barnard was dismissed.

MR KHOISAN: I personally don't want to equate the person of Ferdinand Barnard with that of an esteemed medical doctor but I want to put it to you that you recruited him because he had certain skills and because he had certain access. You recruited him because of his ability to move around on high and low circles within the criminal underworld. And that's correct, isn't it?

MR VERSTER: Yes, we discussed this earlier, that Barnard moved around on territory which was determined by the enemy. That is the same reason why we wore civilian clothes.

So Barnard had access to those methods and channels and systems which was used by the underground of the ANC and that is why he was recruited. That is the singular reason, because he had freedom of movement there, because you wouldn't find a Sunday School teacher who would be willing to do this.

MR KHOISAN: And is it was because of his ability to move in and about the drug and criminal underworld that he was also very useful within the Western Cape, isn't it? And you as the Managing Director of the CCB of course knew about some of the stuff in respect of the Western Cape?

MR VERSTER: Why are you putting words in my mouth? You're saying that I was aware, how can you say that? Give me the facts which will indicate that I was aware thereof.

MR KHOISAN: Okay, I will just go back to your - to Annexure 19 Mr Verster. And let us deal with Annexure 19 and certain questions in respect of - let's go to question 36, I believe it's page 15 of Annexure 19 and that has to do with your question and answer session in respect of the Harmse Commission. Okay, question number 36 and the question is:

MR VERSTER: Correct, I have it.

MR KHOISAN: And the question is:

"Did the CCB monitor the following persons: Frank Chikane, Bruce White, Gavin Evans, Dullah Omar, J Naidoo, Boetie van der Merwe, Daniel ...[indistinct] and Major General Basie Smit"?

and then you answered:

"My answer is, the following persons: 2, 3, 4, and 7 were monitored"

...[indistinct] in respect that.



Now, I put it to you that the people that were directly concerned with persons 3 and 4 are people who had been assigned to a member of the Cape Town gang world by the name of Peaches Edward James Gordon. Is that correct? Are you with me?

MR VERSTER: I understand that but you are making an assumption. Could I in the same line tell you that the ANC, with regard to the robberies on the freeways, the ANC is aware of this. I have no knowledge of this.

You are incorrectly placing it in the wrong time context. I you could put yourself in my position, people come to me and say that they are talking to people in the underworld - I have it in writing, it may have been police sources or their sources.

And you are trying to create some kind of link between Barnard and that it might have something to do with me and it doesn't have anything to do with me.

MR KHOISAN: No, let's just go to person 4, the person of Mr Dullah Omar, Advocate Dullah Omar. That was a project of the CCB, it was a project of Region 6. It was a project directly under the control of "Slang" van Zyl, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: That's correct.

MR KHOISAN: And Staal Burger, what was his role?

MR VERSTER: He was the Regional Manager.

MR KHOISAN: And Staal Burger discussed various projects of Region 6 with you, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: He had to confer with me directly.

MR KHOISAN: And you knew about the project on Dullah Omar.

MR VERSTER: That is correct. I applied for amnesty for that.

MR KHOISAN: And the project on Dullah Omar involved what? What did this involve?

MR VERSTER: Regarding myself, there was monitoring activity of Dullah Omar. While on regional level, there was the perception that it would lead to the possible death of Dullah Omar and that is why I applied for amnesty.

MR KHOISAN: Now the issue with respect to Advocate Dullah Omar, is that, didn't this involve monitoring? Were you aware for instance, and maybe we can go through some literature but I'm trying not go through it, I'm trying just to get as much of your co-operation as possible without going through this documentation, were you aware of the levels to which the project had gone after the initial monitoring? Were you aware that Peaches Gordon had been, for instance, selected as the primary person involved in that?

MR VERSTER: There was certain information, I can't remember everything, that is why I assume responsibility. What I remember from that stage I can't really say right now and the way I saw it was that I had to be consulted. They had to report to me whatever happened on ground level.

It wasn't just a mere question of running around trying to shoot someone.

MR KHOISAN: Now in order to pull together a plan or shall I say a red plan or operational plan in respect of the person of Advocate Dullah Omar. You had to get directly involved in that, is that not correct?

MR VERSTER: In the final analysis the recommendation had to come to me and I would then approve of it and then it would be conveyed further to the Chairperson.

MR KHOISAN: I mean I'm correct to assume that "Slang" van Zyl who was the immediate handler of one and recruiter of this person Peaches Gordon, a member of the Dixie Boys gang, could not have - he was too junior, to effectuate a red operation or plan in respect of Dullah Omar, it couldn't have been done. That was not the way the system was set up, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: One could give a long explanation for that but it wouldn't actually change the situation in any way. I repeat, sub-ordinates presented certain plans and then later on the whole thing would be exaggerated and blown up to make it look bigger and more serious than it was.

They made certain suggestions on the ground level. They were policemen trying to show the soldiers that they actually do their job. And there were all kinds of factors which we can't quite understand now but the proposal would come to me, I would then authorise it or recommend it and then it would go

further from me along the normal channels. So it could be initiated at that level.

MR KHOISAN: No, what I'm trying to get to here is here, is that there is a paper trail which was existing within the CCB at that time. There's a paper trail in respect of the diary of one Christo Britz who was the co-ordinator of the Civil Co-operation Bureau.

And there is also the financial records in respect of the cash book of Region 6. And there is also documentation which you also have in your possession, in terms of the signing of financial documents in respect of projects Choice and Goldie, which are projects directly tied to the Dullah Omar incident.

So, I mean, let us just be very clear that this Dullah Omar incident was not something that was conceived on one day and carried out the next day, it was a project that was carried out over time.

And I'm trying to find out from you, is that correct? It was not something that happened over one - over a weekend, it was something that was planned?

MR VERSTER: That's why I said I applied for amnesty for that incident, I don't deny it. All I'm saying is that there are certain factors which aren't worthwhile discussing now. I said that I assume the responsibility even in respect of the incorrect or bona fide actions of my sub-ordinates. I will accept the

responsibility for that but I will not accept responsibility for the actions of people who warrant my sub-ordinates or for actions which I didn't personally authorise.

MR KHOISAN: Now, just before the - the fact is in respect of the Dullah Omar incident, and maybe I'll put it to you and you can contradict me if I'm wrong, that he was monitored, that there was a gun brought in with a silencer handed to Peaches Gordon, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: If I remember correctly he was given a weapon, I hear some people say that he was told to shoot somebody, but if I recall he was given a weapon so that the weapon could be stored and put away.

MR KHOISAN: No, Mr Verster, that weapon was supposed to be used for the killing of Dullah Omar.

MR VERSTER: That is as may be, I can't dispute that.

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Khoisan, I don't want to curtail you, you can continue with this thing after the lunch hour adjournment.

MR KHOISAN: Okay Mr Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON: Shall we break up for lunch and return at ten to two?

COMMITTEE ADJOURNS

ON RESUMPTION

JOE VERSTER: (s.u.o.)

CHAIRPERSON: ...[inaudible]and your lawyers argued your viewpoint and I went against that. There can be a very thin

dividing line and I have to - I don't want to say I'm like this, there can be a very thin dividing line between a person having to ...[indistinct] their eyes which I have every respect for you to do and a condemned of this type you know.

I don't have to say it again. You can protest strongly but I must never get the impression that you are contemptuous of either me or these proceedings because I will have to - Mr Verster, I'm speaking and I will ask you please not to switch that thing on whilst I am speaking.

I have again to say, I don't have to say these things again Mr Verster. You are quite entitled to address me through your lawyer but I am not going to put up with this situation where I understand or I conceive you to be expressing your contempt for me.

You may despise me all you like, certainly you can despise me but please have respect for the office that I hold.

I don't mind if you despise me for who I am as a person. I am here doing a function and a job which, if I had a choice, I wouldn't be doing.

But the office that I occupy is one that calls for you to please restrain yourself from giving the impression that you treat me and the proceedings and the Commission with utter contempt, I will not put up with it.

MR VERSTER: Mr Chairman but you, in my opinion, despise me. I ...[intervention]

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Verster, I am not going to - and if your lawyers are wanting to make an application for you not to be photographed in spite of my ruling, then they must make that application. Otherwise I am not putting up with a situation where you show contempt for a ruling which has not been challenged.

We had a full blown argument on this thing, views were put. I indicated that there are competing rights here and in the light of a very considered position I said there is reason for a photo opportunity, limited, to take place. I said so, having taken into account everything that you said, everything that the Harmse Commission said and everything that the Constitution said. I made that ruling. If that ruling is to be challenged it must be challenged through the proper channels. But I am repeating myself, I wouldn't like to get the impression that you have now reached a stage where you think you can do as you like in these proceedings. Outside there you can name me and call me all the things and you can tell me into my face: "I don't respect you" but I've made a ruling, it stands.

Mr Wessels?

MR WESSELS: Yes Mr Chairman? I have nothing to say Mr Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Wessels, I will take some adjournment at this stage and I would like you to confer with your client. I don't want to deal with proceedings in this fashion. I don't want

to be upset over things that are meaningless. I'll take a five minute adjournment.

COMMITTEE ADJOURNS

ON RESUMPTION

JOE VERSTER: (s.u.o.)

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Khoisan?

MR KHOISAN: Thank you Mr Chairman.

Mr Verster, to proceed as we've been moving here. The issue of Ferdinand Barnard, to recap, you stated that you personally recruited this person because of his access to and knowledge about and capability within the criminal and drug, narcotic underworld and because you felt that that might be or provide necessary access to the intended targets of the enemies of the State as it was defined by the CCB and the structures which brought it into being.

No, when I put it to you earlier, that Dullah Omar was a project of the CCB and I'll put it to you more clearly and ask you, were you aware that the CCB at any time had a plot or it conspired or was part of a plot to kill Advocate Dullah Omar who was then a leader of the United Democratic Front?

MR VERSTER: Yes.

MR KHOISAN: And Mr Verster, you've already stated here under oath that you were aware and had knowledge of the fact that one, Peaches Gordon a leader of the Dixie Boys gang had



been the conduit for conducting this operation, is that not correct?

MR VERSTER: That is what I later learnt from the statements of the other members.

MR KHOISAN: And that this Peaches Gordon was provided with not only financial remuneration for the earlier surveillance he had done on the intended target but also as a deposit for the job to be done which was first to shoot Dullah Omar, is that not correct?

MR VERSTER: I didn't have anything to do with the exact procedure, it would have been dealt with by "Slang" van Zyl. What you say are things that I became aware of from later statements.

MR KHOISAN: ...[intervention] van Zyl that we're talking about here, we're talking about the person of Christo Britz, which is - that was his alias at the time, that is Wouter Jacobus Basson.

We're also talking about Staal Burger and we're talking about affidavits that have been got from several other people who were connected to this operation. And I'm putting it to you that when Peaches Gordon was incapable of conducting the operation with speed, of bringing the project of Dullah Omar to a speedy closure, in other words assassinating him, that there was a decision taken by the leadership of Region 6 in

consultation with you in respect of - that this project had to be expedited, is that not correct?

MR VERSTER: I can't recall that.

MR KHOISAN: Is it not correct that either you or Joop Joubert or both of you at one or other time had put it to Region 6 that this project was behind time, the Dullah Omar project?

MR VERSTER: It may be.

MR KHOISAN: And in respect of the Dullah Omar project, when the issue of Peaches Gordon not moving with speed on this project, had been brought to the attention of the leadership of the CCB and specifically the Region 6 leadership, there was a decision taken to send one Ferdinand Barnard to Cape Town to sort out the mess, is that not correct?

MR VERSTER: By whom? By whom was that decided?

MR KHOISAN: By the CCB, the Civil Co-operation Bureau, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: No, that is not true.

MR KHOISAN: Who was Staal Burger?

MR VERSTER: He was the Regional Manager.

MR KHOISAN: And Staal Burger would only operationalise a project based on the procedures that you yourself had admitted to after consultation with the Managing Director of the Civil Co-operation Bureau, is that not correct?

MR VERSTER: It ought to be the way it should happen.

MR KHOISAN: And operationalising the Dullah Omar project and bringing down Ferdinand Barnard to Cape Town put this project forward but this project failed. And I'm putting it to you that the plot to kill Advocate Dullah Omar and involve Ferdinand Barnard within this project is that something that you had knowledge of, is that not correct?

MR VERSTER: No, that is not true.

MR KHOISAN: No, you don't have knowledge about it or no, it isn't so?

MR VERSTER: It is not so, that I at any stage was aware of Barnard or that after I dismissed him I re-employed him again or tacitly allowed it or had any knowledge of it.

MR KHOISAN: Now explain to us the manner in which Mr Barnard was relieved of his duties by the Civil Co-operation Bureau?

MR VERSTER: I can't recall that, I wasn't personally involved in that but he was dismissed by me. The person who handled him, Louis Yssel told him that he was dismissed and that was that. For some while afterwards he was given some money just to stay alive and after that we had no further dealings with him.

And what I've also said repeatedly is that Barnard was never in my terms part of Region 6, never. There was never such an instruction from my side. His handler never told him anything like that and the people with whom I worked such as Christo Britz, they also weren't aware of that as far as I know.

MR KHOISAN: What was Barnard's alias within the Civil Co-operation Bureau, given the fact that you recruited him and that you said in your statement during the Harmse Commission that everybody worked:

"They made us of alias's"

MR VERSTER: His alias was, if I remember correctly, RW was one of the names, that was his administrative name. Subsequently I don't know whether he perhaps assumed certain names. I wasn't aware of any of those, I had nothing to do with that.

MR KHOISAN: So, if the leadership of Region 6 had continued to use - and by the way, you are telling us that Ferdinand Barnard remained on the payroll for a period of time so that he could be sort of farmed out of the organisation? You put it on the record that he ...[intervention]

MR VERSTER: That's not the way I put it. What I said was that we gave him a sum of money for a period thereafter, in other words at one point he received money for one or two months and then we told him we were finished with ...[intervention]

MR KHOISAN: So you didn't personally dismiss him?

MR VERSTER: I personally orally told him: "You are dismissed" but I didn't do the work, there were people who were responsible for that. I was the commanding officer.

MR KHOISAN: After you had, as you put it, verbally told him that his services were no longer required, did you consult with Mr Yssel his handler, at a further time in respect of the Ferdinand Barnard problem?

MR VERSTER: I didn't have any direct dealings with Barnard, I only spoke to his handler, Louis Yssel and Louis Yssel conveyed it to him.

MR KHOISAN: That's not what I'm asking Mr Verster. Was there at any time after you had verbally relieved him or through a verbal process relieved him of his duties, any discussion with his handler Mr Louis Yssel in respect of Ferdinand Barnard? Was there a concern that there might be a loose cannon floating around somewhere that might be a problem to you at a later stage?

MR VERSTER: I think after Doctor Webster was killed I made some enquiries and spoke to Louis Yssel.

MR KHOISAN: And why did you go and speak with Mr Yssel after Mr Webster was murdered?

MR VERSTER: I think it happened the other way around, I think he came to me and it's possible that Barnard told him something to that effect and I spoke to him in that sense.

MR KHOISAN: It is possible that Ferdinand Barnard was involved in the Webster murder, is that what you're saying?

MR VERSTER: Yssel came to me and told me that he learnt or heard that Barnard had committed the murder. If I recall

correctly, I also testified to that during the Webster trial and Yssel also testified to that effect.

MR KHOISAN: So you're saying there's a possibility that one Ferdinand Barnard might have been involved in the Webster murder, there's a possibility. Not on orders from the CCB but he might have been involved.

MR VERSTER: Correct.

MR KHOISAN: And if the leadership of Region 6 had continued to have liaison with or used the services of Ferdinand Barnard, for instance in the Dullah Omar incident, flown into Cape Town at CCB expense and used to conduct surveillance in the Cape Town area, consult with known and nefarious gangsters in the Cape Town area, would that have been in violation of CCB procedures?

MR VERSTER: Definitely, yes.

MR KHOISAN: Was there at any time that Mr Staal Burger indicated that one person, person by the name of Ferdinand Barnard might still be active and that this was a problem?

MR VERSTER: Never.

MR KHOISAN: Thank you. Okay, now Mr Verster, to understand clearly in respect of Region 6 and its operations, you're saying that Ferdinand Barnard was on probation. How come "Slang" van Zyl was not on probation? Was it normal for somebody to be on probation?

MR VERSTER: I didn't say that Barnard was on probation, I said that he was dismissed.

MR KHOISAN: No, but you told us that - when we began here when we talked about the incident in which you were called in to General Joop Joubert's office and discussed Barnard recruiting the ZCIO agent to conduct the operation in London and that mess, you informed us that Barnard was on probation, so why would you change your story?

MR VERSTER: I beg your pardon Chairperson, he was employed initially to see whether he was suitable for working with us and there was a period of probation. I misunderstood the English for a moment.

MR KHOISAN: Okay, now as a person who recruited him , what were the two or three things that you put up, because you don't have distance from the Ferdinand Barnard issue. You were the recruiter, you were the one, you were the Managing Director of the CCB, you bring him into the organisation. That means you are putting yourself directly there in respect of this person you know.

The recruiter - in any structure the person who recruits somebody who is a potential threat, who is a potential security problem must bear some responsibility. And when you recruited Ferdinand Barnard based on his skills in the criminal underworld, you must have had two or three or five things in mind as a way of taking him through the ropes to see if he can

truly do the job which the CCB was about. And what were the things that were involved with his probation?

MR VERSTER: I feel that I have answered the questions already. I had no other ulterior motives.

MR KHOISAN: No, but you told us - you gave us the story that Barnard had to - you wanted to test Barnard's mobility etc., etc., which is one of the things you say resulted in that meeting in General Joop Joubert's office. But Barnard is not any kind of fellow, Barnard is somebody that has a history. You know his history and you were aware of history.

What were the things that you thought might be a good test for this thing? And can you remember any projects, any specific projects that Barnard was involved with? I'm sure you can recall ...[intervention]

MR VERSTER: There were no other projects other than the initial project, that he should be given freedom of movement. And what I had in mind is that the fact that he had access to people where the enemies of the State, mainly the MK and underground structures, where they moved because they were a banned organisation.

So they acted in an underground or covert way and I thought that he had connections with the police and contact with these other people and he had already done some work, so he would have access to these people.



MR KHOISAN: And in respect of this particular matter. Now when you were - what was the period that we are talking about, from the moment that you personally recruited one Ferdinand Barnard to the CBB, to the time that you issued the verbal release of Ferdinand Barnard, if I can put it that way? What time period are we talking about?

MR VERSTER: I would say it was about six to seven months.

MR KHOISAN: And in seven months this particular fellow who, it is known now, that he had contacts not only in the criminal world but he was also associated with people like Eugene de Kock and some chaps in Military Intelligence.

But in that whole seven months there's nothing that you can remember as a specific project that this fellow was involved with.

MR VERSTER: I've told you what the facts were. He had to entrench himself over a long period of time. He had to orientate himself, he had to establish himself over a long period of time.

Those were written orders give to us by the Chief of the Defence Force, it was a long-term project. We weren't supposed to run around shooting people, that is contained in one of the documents which you gave to me.

MR KHOISAN: Did he have a front company?

MR VERSTER: I don't know whether he established it then or subsequently.

MR KHOISAN: You see because we know that "Slang" van Zyl and others were involved, for instance in the Matthyssen Bus Company and that's to establish their cover as such. And as somebody who recruited Ferdinand Barnard, I mean are you saying that you've drawn a complete blank of anything that he may have been involved with?

Because that seven months - to leave seven - I understand that you're giving somebody time to build a legion, I mean that's the acceptable practice in any kind of organisation which is the one that you were involved in, which is a covert organisation, a covert structure.

But nevertheless, this covert structure was not operating outside of the theatre, the volatile theatre of what was happening inside South Africa at the time or outside. It was a very volatile mobile time when things were going on all the time and when the CCB itself was on the move, as you quite correctly pointed out. And I'm saying, is there anything else that you can share with us? I mean, I don't want to harp on the Ferdinand Barnard thing. Ferdinand Barnard can speak for himself when he speaks but the issue is, was there anything as his recruiter that you can remember, besides building a cover in civil society and establishing his mobility, that he was involved with? Any one or two or three or one project?

MR VERSTER: I've answered that and I want to add that virtually all the people who were recruited, I recruited. Here

and there I identified somebody and sent them to somebody else but it was my way to make sure beforehand, and I would give them certain guidelines after which they had to function.

I've already put it in writing that we did not establish front companies, people actually had to practise a real profession. In his case it was exactly the same and he needed time to build that up.

CHAIRPERSON: Could I just get some understanding of this. Now Mr Verster, do I understand your evidence to be saying, after the period of seven months that you indicated you came to the firm and considered view that Mr Barnard was not the sort of person that you wanted to use in your organisation, did I get you correctly?

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

CHAIRPERSON: And would you then say anything after that date, in other words after the seven month period during which you were observing him ...[indistinct] loosely, very loosely and afterwards you then felt and determined and told him verbally that he relieved. Would you say anything that he did thereafter, assuming there could be evidence which shows that he did things in the name of the CCB, that anything that he did thereafter would what some people call: a frolic of his own?

MR VERSTER: I don't think so. All that I can say is that I never used him again at all. He was dismissed, he had nothing to do with the CCB. If I look at the statements I read that he

was walking around with certain cards which related to other structures and implied that he was working for those structures. He may have doing so but it had absolutely nothing to do with me, I was not the person who was handling him.

CHAIRPERSON: Yes. In other words what you are saying is, insofar as you were the leader of that organisation and insofar as any authorisation might have been required, at your level, for any operations to be undertaken, none such operations were undertaken by Barnard with your involvement at that level.

MR VERSTER: That is correct. And I am more than certain that in all my enquiries I'm also under the impression that no co-ordinators or Regional Managers were aware thereof but I cannot say that for certain.

MR KHOISAN: Okay now, just to proceed, we don't want to beat to death the Barnard issue but were you aware that other members of the Region 6, Kalla Botha and other fellows, were continuing - maybe not official liaison but the social liaison with this fellow?

MR VERSTER: I was not aware of any such connections.

MR KHOISAN: Now, in terms of the Civil Co-operation Bureau, the way I understand it, the project was to build space and distance from the military. Was this so that you could establish plausible deniability for the political leadership and the military leadership at the time?

MR VERSTER: It was so that the people could survive. I've said so in a previous statement. One cannot infiltrate the enemy with your uniform and your medals.

MR KHOISAN: That's not what I'm referring to Mr Verster. What I'm talking about is when there was a decision to decouple, to literally remove the CCB as such or its operations directly from underneath the auspices directly of say, Special Forces which is where it operated from. Was that because the organisation was envisaged as something which would be very potent and as such there had to be plausible deniability, there had to be an ability to remove responsibility for your operations from your command or from the political leadership at the time?

MR VERSTER: I feel that I've answered the question. It was about the safety of people. One couldn't drive in at the front gate of the Special Forces on day and the next day be sitting in Lusaka claiming to be a businessman, that is why it was removed for the sake of safety.

It had nothing to do with politics and the former government. The reason why we functioned as such was to create a real distance, that we would not be allowed into any military base so that people wouldn't be able to see you.

And by people I mean the enemies of the State because some of these individuals became friends with the enemy, drove around with them, had connections with them.

MR KHOISAN: Then why was a member of your “binnekring”, Michael Jacob Swart continued to be registered at 2 Reconnaissance Regiment up till 1990?

MR VERSTER: Because he was in the civil core. I’ve told you before that we did not establish fronts, we did not place a sign on a door and say that it was an attorney’s office. We really did get an attorney, we really did do things.

In his case, he was an officer of the civil force, we didn’t want to attract attention by doing anything suspicious. It was a civil force activity.

MR KHOISAN: Would I be correct when I say that quite a few of the members of the CCB who were members of the military, went through a process where they were: “waar hulle afgedank was van die Weermag” and then they proceeded, like yourself?

MR VERSTER: That is so.

MR KHOISAN: And why would that procedure be followed then? Wouldn’t it be because the military didn’t officially want to take responsibility for this?

MR VERSTER: I think I’ve answered that question.

MR KHOISAN: In your case Mr Verster, did you resign or go through a process where you got paid out by the military as a process of sort of - or where your services officially within the military terminated so that you could proceed toward this civilianised military aspect?

MR VERSTER: Yes, I resigned.

MR KHOISAN: This Michael Jacob Swart, what was his position within 2 Rekkie at the time that you worked with him and he was - he became a central figure in the Civil Co-operation Bureau?

MR VERSTER: I do not know what his exact position was, he was either administratively or financially involved.

MR KHOISAN: And he was the financial manager of the Civil Co-operation Bureau?

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: And you worked with him in respect of many, many, project, yes?

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: And would I be correct to assume that you as, as you were known then which was Jack van Staden, would have had many meetings with one Jaco throughout the period of '89 that the record stands in respect of Mr Basson's diary?

MR VERSTER: Yes, that could be so.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. Would I be correct to assume that Jaco or Michael Jacob Swarts was very much connected to the Zimbabwe operations, the operations in Region 7?

MR VERSTER: That could be so.

MR KHOISAN: And would I be correct to assume that the person of Jaco was connected to an operation called: "Operation Crawler"?

MR VERSTER: Yes, that is so.

MR KHOISAN: Now for the record Mr Verster, tell us what is “Operation Crawler”?

MR VERSTER: Excuse me?

MR KHOISAN: Just explain “Operation Crawler” to us, what was it?

MR VERSTER: It was a foreign or external project.

MR KHOISAN: And in terms of the country of Zimbabwe, did you have occasion during 1989 to travel to Zimbabwe on certain occasions Mr Verster?

MR VERSTER: Not at all.

MR KHOISAN: What do you know about the: “Gang of Five” who are currently in prison in Zimbabwe Mr Verster? They’ve become known as the “Gang of Five”, I don’t personally want to characterise them but the “Group of Five”, former operatives of the South African Military who are currently in prison in Zimbabwe. Did you know of them and are you knowledgeable about the circumstances which brought them to be in a Zimbabwean prison?

MR VERSTER: That was a foreign project.

MR KHOISAN: They were members of the CCB, is that not correct?

MR VERSTER: I think that is part of a foreign projects.

MR KHOISAN: They are all members of the CCB, all worked for the CCB, is that not correct?

MR VERSTER: It’s part of a foreign project.



MR KHOISAN: The Chairman has ruled already Mr Verster, we don't have to go through the arguments. This is a continuation of an earlier hearing in which the Chairman of this proceeding has made a ruling in respect of the fact that you have to answer all question put to you but if you want - because - and let me just remind you of the terms of the subpoena, the subpoena is in respect of structures of the CCB and personnel of the CCB with specific reference to Region 6 and Region 7 and Region 7 is Zimbabwe if I'm correct. That is the terms under which you've been subpoenaed before this hearing, is that not correct?

MR WESSELS: Mr Chariman, we've made our position clear on the previous occassion, nothing has changed in that regard and it won't serve any purpose by going into those details again at this stage. CHAIRPERSON: We need to be certain that this is so. I've taken a re-look at this matter and it seems to me that we are as far away from each other as day is to night, and it would appear that eventually this is a matter that will be determined by another tribunal.

I think in the circumstances we need to place it on record that your client on legal advice, is refusing to answer the questions.

MR WESSELS: With respect Mr Chairman, my client is no refusing to answer questions on leagal advice. I just want to correct that. My client has made - he is aware of the provisions of the Act, my client has elected not to answer certain

questions. CHAIRPERSON: I see, thank you Mr Wessels. I think the emphasis then must be on his refusal to answer questions put to him. I think it is important that the record should show this. That he has elected, fully aware of the provisions of the Act and regardless thereof, and that we should therefore know that questions that are put to him which he considers to be questions that have a bearing on regions other than Region 6, will be questions in relation to which he will elect to refuse to answer.

I think the question should be put and the record should show that he has elected not to reply to questions just so that if it becomes crucial that this becomes a matter that must be - for which a definite ruling by a court should be obtained, then it should be so. There should be a basis laid at these proceedings for such an authoritative statement of what the legal position is.

I therefore would suggest that Mr Khoisan should put the questions that he feels competent to put. Obviously Mr Verster will take the position that he is unwilling or he cannot reply to those questions and we'll just note on the record that he has elected to refuse to answer the questions put.

In relation to the questions that have just been with regard to Zimbabwe, the record should therefore show that Mr Verster is refusing to answer the questions on the basis that has been indicated.

Mr Khoisan?

MR KHOISAN: Thank you Mr Chairman.

Just following on the Chairman here, I just want to put on the record that Mr Verster has been called to answer the following questions, he has to provide:

“A detailed description of the structures and key personnel of the structure known as the CCB, with special focus on Region 6 and 7”.

There is another matter which is related to Region 7 which is point 5, which is:

“All information relevant to the command and control of CCB Region 7 and the bombing of Father Michael Lapsley”.

So in respect of that, in order to closer to the truth and the answers in respect of what happened in Zimbabwe, which is Region 7 of the CCB, I’m going to ask you again Mr Verster and if you could answer for the record.

That there are five gentlemen currently imprisoned in Zimbabwe who were members of the CCB, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: Just one moment please. I’ve made my position clear.

MR KHOISAN: For the record Mr Verster, can you just give us a clear yes or no. Are you prepared to answer the question in respect of what we’ve just asked in respect of Zimbabwe, CCB Region 7? Yes or no?

MR VERSTER: No Chairperson, not at this stage and not in this form.

MR KHOISAN: So that constitutes your first refusal to answer a question in respect of CCB Region 7.

Let me ask you another question Mr Verster. Did you ever work with or know a person who was known as Merwin Greenland?

MR VERSTER: I don't know him at all.

MR KHOISAN: And did you ever work with ...[inaudible] and you are under oath, a person by the name of Daniel Geneux?

MR VERSTER: No, Chairperson.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. Or Richard Geneux?

MR VERSTER: I beg your pardon Chairperson, could you repeat?

MR KHOISAN: Richard Geneux, that G-E-N-E-U-X.

MR VERSTER: No, I don't know him at all.

MR KHOISAN: And did you work with or have any opportunity or liaise with at any time or know one, Walker Randall?

MR VERSTER: No.

MR KHOISAN: And did you ever know of any companies by the name of Bray Mercantile or Puchline Compato?

MR VERSTER: Not at all.

MR KHOISAN: Mr Verster, with regard to project "Crawler", what was your involvement with this project?

MR VERSTER: I beg your pardon, could you repeat the question?

MR KHOISAN: In terms of project "Crawler", what was your involvement with the project Mr Verster?

MR VERSTER: I was the Managing Director of the foreign project.

MR KHOISAN: Are you saying that you were the Manager of project "Crawler". So you had knowledge, you had full knowledge of all that project "Crawler" involved?

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: Mr Verster, let me just get your indulgence for one second here. Did you have any opportunity to know about a court case that took place in Transvaal, where various members of the CCB appearing under first names had to come and appear?

MR VERSTER: That's correct.

MR KHOISAN: Can you share with us what the purpose of Frank, William etc., etc., appearing in respect of Case 10425 of '93 had - what was their business before the Transvaal High Court, what was that? ...[inaudible]

MR VERSTER: I don't know, you would have to refresh my memory.

MR KHOISAN: Do you remember a case of several CCB people, members, appearing before the High Court in Transvaal in respect of CCB operations? It was in '93.

MR VERSTER: No, I don't remember anything about that.

MR KHOISAN: Okay, but you said opened up by saying that you do know something about it.

MR VERSTER: I do know about court cases, but there was never a court case regarding operations.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. And what was the case that you do know about, what was that about?

MR VERSTER: That was about the remuneration of CCB members.

MR KHOISAN: Because you are mentioned in that particular case Mr Verster because several of these people wanted their money from the government, from the military. Is that correct?

MR VERSTER: That is correct but it wasn't about projects.

MR KHOISAN: And were you also part of that particular proceeding?

MR VERSTER: Yes.

MR KHOISAN: And what was that proceeding about, getting remuneration from the government?

MR VERSTER: Our contracts had to be honoured ...[intervention]

MR KHOISAN: And your contracts had to be honoured from 1986, is that not true? Because that was what was put in the official record, is that not true Mr Verster?

MR VERSTER: It might be 1988, from the time that we left. There might be another reason. That would have been the approximate date that the CCB came into existence.

MR KHOISAN: And didn't you say then - wasn't it your position during that case Mr Verster, that in June 1986 already you had been or assumed the position of Managing Director of the Civil Co-operation Bureau, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: And what happened after that? Did your members get remunerated for that?

MR VERSTER: Yes, they were paid.

MR KHOISAN: And how many got remunerated Mr Verster?

MR VERSTER: I don't know, I didn't have access to all of them. There was a group who initiated the case and there were some who had their own activities. I was not allowed in the premises of our structure so I don't know exactly what happened.

MR KHOISAN: And when you left the CSB - the CCB, after it was disbanded Mr Verster, isn't it true that you joined up with a structure called: "Directorate Covert Collection"?

MR VERSTER: No.

MR KHOISAN: Weren't you ever at any stage ...[inaudible] by the name of Jan Anton Niewoudt?

MR VERSTER: Not ever.

MR KHOISAN: None of your - not at any time, you cannot recall at any time having worked in "Directorate Covert Collection"?

MR VERSTER: How I could I not remember? This is my career that we're talking about. I was never involved with the, I didn't once have anything to do with them.

MR KHOISAN: Okay now in terms of the Zimbabwe matter, and that is Region 7, do you remember at any time a CCB project which involved destabilising Zimbabwe?

MR VERSTER: We never had any projects to destabilise Zimbabwe.

MR KHOISAN: You don't know of any connection to a structure known as: "Super Zapo"? And you're under oath.

MR VERSTER: I don't know anything about that. I would just like to say at this point that I told my legal counsel a number of days ago that the documents that you provided regarding Niewoudt - everything in the covert camp in the Defence Force has been ascribed to the CCB, that's why you gave me the documents pertaining to Niewoudt because you assumed that he was involved with us.

And that the other documentation, someone is attempting to link this to the CCB. I have nothing to do with it, I don't know anything about it.

MR KHOISAN: No, I'm not trying to make a specific point but the Directorate Covert Collection was a structure like the CCB,



very much like it. It operates on a covert level, it operates from a field office, not unlike the CCB.

Has specific targets, military targets in respect of the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress and was engaging in activities inside the country as the military, irrespective of what the laws of today were. The law of the day is very clear, the order that existed at that time is very clear.

But I want to ask you about your knowledge about - the reason why I ask you about Zimbabwe is because it's a view and there's an issue that has been presented that certain key officials of the African National Congress who were in Zimbabwe became targets of the CCB. To your knowledge, did the CCB ever target anybody in Zimbabwe, that you know about?

MR VERSTER: That is a foreign activity.

MR KHOISAN: Are you saying that they targeted or didn't target people? Are you refusing to answer that Mr Verster?

MR VERSTER: All enemies of the State at that time were enemies of the CCB on the instructions that we received.

MR KHOISAN: No I'll come to people in other places but I'm saying, in your position as Managing Director of the CCB, did you have occasion to approve any project involving the targeting of leaders of the African National Congress or Pan Africanist Congress in Zimbabwe in Region 7 of the CCB?

MR VERSTER: I never had authority to approve of any projects. I've already explained it to you but no, those were foreign activities and I can't answer on that.

MR KHOISAN: ...[inaudible] have any knowledge of any project in respect of the targeting of people in Region 7? You can say if you answer or not.

MR VERSTER: No, for the reasons that you're already aware of I can't answer that.

MR KHOISAN: So to be very clear, you're refusing to answer that question?

MR VERSTER: Correct.

MR KHOISAN: In terms of the person of Eben Barlow, how did he work? How did it come to be that he was recruited into the Civil Co-operation Bureau and what was your role in his recruitment?

MR VERSTER: I can't say offhand. If I remember correctly, he was proposed by some or other person in the intelligence community who worked with us and he was recruited to obtain freedom of movement abroad.

MR KHOISAN: And in terms of freedom of movement, he was specifically involved with freedom of movement or getting projects operationalised in Europe, is that not true? Mr Eben Barlow I'm talking about now.

MR VERSTER: Yes, he was in transit in Europe. He had to establish himself over a long period of time and he was not

involved in any strange projects as far as I am concerned or aware of.

MR KHOISAN: But to you - I just want to be very clear, you don't consider the assassination or attempted assassination of a target a strange thing? Because you know, because when you say: "He wasn't involved in funny things or strange things", it's clear because you've put it to us that you had a job to do which was to deal with the enemies of the State so he would be involved in that project. Is that right?

MR VERSTER: Who would be involved?

MR KHOISAN: Mr Eben Barlow.

MR VERSTER: I can't recall any projects in which he was involved. He had to establish himself in the private sector. I am not aware of any of his projects offhand.

MR KHOISAN: Now, would I be correct Mr Verster, if I say that on quite a few occasions you travelled in Region 5 in 1989? Can you verify the entries in respect of - can you verify for us that you were in Region 5, particularly in Europe during 1989, on CCB work?

MR VERSTER: I'm not going to discuss my movements with anybody.

MR KHOISAN: No, but in 1989, I put it to you and you can answer yes or no, were you in Europe in 1989 on CCB work?

MR VERSTER: That is foreign matter.

MR KHOISAN: No, I'm putting it to you directly, you can answer yes or no because each refusal to answer constitutes a different problem that will have to be dealt with separately.

And I'm saying that we cannot proceed with you saying: "Dis buitelands", you can either say you accept the question, you want to answer it or you can refuse to answer the question.

I'm asking you, during 1989, were there occasions when you travelled as the Director of the CCB to conduct work for the CCB in Europe?

MR VERSTER: I regard that as foreign activities and you can't grant me amnesty in respect of that. I've handed in a document at the previous occasion after discussions between the heads of the Defence Force and the Truth Commission.

MR KHOISAN: With due respect Mr Verster, the Chairman of these proceedings has made a ruling and his ruling stands you see. The discussions that were held with various members of the Defence Force, with other branches of the Truth Commission are another topic but just hold on for one second. Okay, so you are saying Mr Verster, for the record, that you refuse to answer the question of whether or not you were in Europe in 1989 on CCB business.

CHAIRPERSON: Do you want to consult Mr Wessels with your client? Shouldn't you take about five minutes? Just take about five minutes, you can stretch your legs. We'll adjourn for about

five minutes to give Mr Verster an opportunity to consult on these issues with his legal advisors.

COMMITTEE ADJOURNS

ON RESUMPTION

JOE VERSTER: (s.u.o.)

CHAIRPERSON: Advocate Wessels?

MR WESSELS: Thank you Mr Chairman. Mr Chairman, I've discussed the position with my client. My client has indicated that his position is no different from the number of other former Defence Force members who have testified before the Commission, who have indicated that they are unable for various reasons, to disclose information regarding activities outside the borders of South Africa.

On the previous occasion we made our position clear that Mr Verster believes that he is unable to answer such question. The same position prevails at present and there is a perception that the questions that have been put to Mr Verster over and over again is merely directed to induce Mr Verster to commit an offence in terms of the Act by not answering questions.

Unfortunately notwithstanding that effort, Mr Verster still believes that he is unable to answer any questions relating to activities outside the borders of South Africa and he persists with his attitude.

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you Mr Wessels. Let me just say - is there anything else? Thank you Mr Wessels. I can't speak for

Mr Khoisan who puts the questions but I just want to place it on the record that I have the greatest amount of respect for, and in fact sympathy for the position in which Mr Verster takes.

Any person who is prepared to suffer the consequences of the provision of the law as he sees them is a ...[inaudible] principle person. And this is one of the sections in any of these proceedings that I always feel completely despondent in having to preside over.

And the reason is simply that on the one hand I have to take into account Mr Verster's concerns and the concerns that have been expressed to me by Jannie Geldenhuys, by even General Viljoen, General Liebenberg and many people who serve in the SADF, especially in relation to cross-border incidents.

I am aware that there are ongoing discussions at various levels to try and resolve this issue but unfortunately until it has been resolved on way or the other, it seems to me that a person in my position must be guided by what he considers to be the legal position.

You see, we have for instance families, and you are aware especially in the recent past, of the noise that has been made by the Lubowski family and it is something that has been thrown at the doors of the Investigative Unit. The parents, the daughter, who is a sister of Anton, have berated the TRC for being part of a big cover-up in not doing what they have to do.

And it's one of the questions that I would personally would have liked to ask from Mr Verster and I think I will just put the question. It's out of now desire to cause him to fall foul of the law, it's simply because on the one hand we have these families who say: "But why are you not doing that which has to be done"? "Why are you refusing to ask the relevant, or get the relevant information from people who are linked to issues of this nature"? In relation to Zimbabwe for instance, we - I'm sure Mr Khoisan will raise this, if he doesn't I will raise it, the Michael Lapsley case, again the Commission is asked: "If there is a suspicion that the CCB were involved rightly or wrongly, what have you as the Investigative Unit done and what answers to you have from those people whom you have called"? And it goes on, the list is endless.

But on the one hand we have the Amnesty Provisions which are the concern of your client to the extent that they don't cover foreign based operations. I'm saying these things because I would not like Mr Verster or any witness who finds themselves in the invidious position which he finds himself today, to get the impression that there is an attempt by certainly this panel, certainly by myself, I have my own weaknesses a witch hunt is not one of the things that usually indulge in, I have every sympathy but I find myself in a position where I think my hands are tied.

If it assists Mr Verster to know it, I've no personal vendetta against him, I have a duty which I think I'm duty bound to have to do and it's not one of the nicest jobs but I have to do it. I would therefore like to simply say we have no personal vendetta against him as a person.

We ask the questions because on the one hand there's a demand from those who consider themselves to have been wronged by who they perceived were the CCB, on the one hand we have Mr Verster who has also competing rights with those rights. I felt that I should place that on record.

MR WESSELS: Mr Chairman, may I just say something in that regard? We understand the difficulty that the Commission has in this particular regard and it is unfortunate that the legislature has not considered this aspect prior to putting all these clauses on the legislation that it has.

The problem that my client faces, and it is very unfortunate because it may operate against my client and other members of the Defence Force and the CCB in particular, is that they are unable to defend themselves against false allegations and it is now easy for anyone to come and say: "Whatever has happened outside South Africa was done by the CCB" as in fact has happened in particular in South Africa and in particular in regard to the Webster matter where you will know that from the beginning there was denial, a categoric denial of any involvement in Webster.



The evidence was given during the Webster Commission that the CCB was not involved, that Barnard had already been dismissed at that stage. And in fact the evidence was given, was tendered before the Court that there was an admission made by Barnard to Yssel who was his handler, that Barnard had in fact shot Webster. Then Mr Verster told Lafras Luyting or Yssel, as his name was, to go and tell that to Krappies Engelbrecht, General Engelbrecht and General Badenhorst and he wasn't present at that but he gave evidence that Luyting then went in and he later came out and told him, Verster, that he had told the Generals about Barnard's confession. That was denied by the Generals at that time. Unfortunately Mr Verster wasn't believed by the court in this particular regard and the other members who testified to that effect weren't believed.

Now he then, subsequent to that inquestion has not proven that Mr Verster and the other members of the CCB in fact seem to have told the truth in that regard and it is unfortunate that what appears is that Generals Badenhorst and Engelbrecht misled the Court in their evidence in the Webster Commission.

In the same manner many allegations have been levied against the CCB as to what happened outside South Africa, and the unfortunate position is that if Mr Verster goes into the details as to the - in the matters they were not involved in, it means that the others, where there may be allegations against them that he doesn't deny, those can therefore ...[in sound]

It is however my instructions that in regard to two matters that is of concern to you and to the Commission in particular, Mr Verster and the CCB as such deny responsibility for. These two matters are the Lubowski murder and the bombing that apparently took place in regard to Father Lapsley.

My instructions are that Mr Verster denies being involved in that or giving any instructions that such acts take place as have allegedly been committed there or have been committed.

The further problem that Mr Verster has in regard to this Commission, and Mr Chairman let me put it directly and clearly that it's not against any individual in the Commission itself or it is not intended that it be taken personally by anybody, but Mr Verster has the perception rightly or wrongly, that certain people, in particular himself, are singled out for special treatment by the Commission.

And that the same attitude is not adopted towards other people, not only in the South African Defence Force and the South African Police, who seem to have been able to evade the investigations and appearances before the Commission although they seem to have a lot to tell this Commission but also on the other hand that the ANC and PAC and the former enemies of the State, as he perceived it, are being treated differently and that they are not being investigated in the same way that he is being investigated.

In particular the - apparently certain executions had taken place in the Vianna Bases North of Luanda, that nothing has been done about that. Those are also actions that have taken place outside the borders of this country which is then no different from actions taken by him outside of South Africa. That is the perception that he has.

And then he also has a perception that certain people are being treated differently, that the Act is ignored insofar as certain members of the ANC has been treated and whereas the Act seems to be applied strictly as far as he is concerned. In particular he feels that the way that amnesty has been granted to 37 members of the ANC who are in government, apparently in government and who have obviously not complied with the provisions of the Act in the amnesty applications leaves that perception in his mind, that there is discrimination against him.

And when he is then for good reasons, not able to answer questions with regard to the actions of the Defence Force outside of South Africa, the provisions of the Act are being adhered to insofar as he is concerned. And those are the difficulties that Mr Verster has, and I just wish to place that on record. Thank you Mr Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you Advocate Wessels. I'll be quick because we have to do what to do. Firstly, I appreciate what seemed to be Mr Verster's perceptions and unfortunately perceptions are facts to those who believe in them.

But may I just say on the question of even-handedness, because I think that's what he is alleging to be absent from the operations of the Commission, the Commission has right from the beginning, for instance in relation to the involvement of some people who testified in that very same Harmse Commission, we have heard here all the Generals who were involved.

Krappies Engelbrecht has been here, Basie Smit has been here, General le Roux has been here, Brigadier Schoon has been here. All of them went through the mill, they were all Police Commissioners, former Police Commissioners, Coetzee was here. So all these issues that we are canvassing with him were canvassed with them as well.

You are aware that in respect of General Malan who was Minister of Defence, he has not only been once here. He came here and he has been in a public hearing where he was interrogated at great length about the operations of the CCB in particular. He is the one who testified and quite clearly made the point that the CCB was formed by the SADF and gave an extensive amount of evidence as to what happened.

He is the one in a public hearing who confirmed the involvement of the SADF in the bombing of countries outside of South Africa, gave his justification for it in the so-called Eminent Persons Groups Visit to this country for instance.

You will be hearing quite soon about a very intensive, very, very, penetrating interrogation literally of cross-border, not cross-border but of overseas or abroad operations of the liberation movements. There is a very detailed inquiry that is going to be gone to, what was happening at Quatro and all related places.

It's all on the - it's scheduled for the 27th of March and it is a follow-up on a great deal of evidence and information that has been made available to us by the ANC in both their entree hearings, the first submission, the second submission and the Armed Forces Hearings.

As for executions, we have got a whole dossier, names, places, occasions. In the second hearings Maharaj went so far as to say: "The ANC cannot justify executing people without even as much as a hearing let alone legal representation". They came and admitted those things but we still want to go forward and we are going to ask very penetrating questions around those issue.

Joe Seramane for instance is one of the people who gave evidence at Prisons Hearings and brought about the whole question about how his brother was tortured in Quatro, murdered and executed. That is going to be one of the subject matters of a Section 29 hearing on the 27th of March. The most spectacular hearing of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela was as much

about the ANC as it was about that person and the so-called United Football Club.

So I just want to say we may not be perfect in the manner in which we do deal with these things but we certainly - certainly this unit whilst I am in it, has endeavoured to say: "We are not going to concentrate only on one side in this divide which constituted the period of conflict. We are going to look in all directions because torture is torture by whoever it is committed by".

I think the biggest problem with what we have here is that Mr Verster and those members of the CCB who find themselves in the position in which they consider they are not being believed, is because even in a forum like this they still find themselves unable to see their way clear to say: maybe there is a forum at which we can come out openly.

I am one person, maybe not one, I am legally trained and my own sense of fairness is that until and unless I've heard all relevant facts I can't prejudge an issue. And having been involved in the Investigative Unit and the evidence for instance only in the so-called: "Cradock 4", is interesting because for a long time that was one operation which was attributed to the army and it now stands revealed as having been a completely police operation.

And we can't ignore those facts. We can't ignore also the fact that previously those sort of operations were sought to be

associated with army formations whether in the form of Special Forces or even CCB. But the value of this process is that we are now able to know the truth.

And I would like to think that this Commission should, or will go down in history as being a Commission not without its faults but one which will have the authoritative statement on most of the issues so that if this Commission is able to say: "The involvement of the SADF internally for instance, was only to the extent that it was acting in a supportive role on police operations.

If we are able, and we can only do so when we have evidence given under oath which satisfies us that those who are giving it to us are speaking the truth. We shall not shrink from saying things even if they are unpopular. If we are of the considered opinion that that is what the evidence tells us then we will come and record that in our investigations, we are satisfied that the much ...[indistinct] involvement of the SADF in gross violations of human rights was limited and limited to this extent.

If the evidence would be able to show for instance that CCB operations both inside and outside were limited because the facts tell us that this is what happened, then you can be sure that there will be no attempt, certainly on my part and all the panels that I sit in, to hide those facts because they will not be

consonant with popular believe and popular acceptance of certain versions.

If the version is that which favours the position as stated by your client and I'm satisfied on the evidence that is before me, then that is the version and the verdict that I'll give. I'll buy no faces, I'll give my views without fear or favour. My problem is that if I am unable to evaluate facts because there are areas which have become grey because a witness is unsure as to whether he or she will get fairness or a fair hearing, then unfortunately I will not be able also to say: "The truth lies here". I will say: "All we have is the untested allegation of a de Kock and a Krappies Engelbrecht and this and the Harmse Commission's findings.

But we are not able to go further than that because we haven't got a version that seems to contradict that and it would be a sorry day because this is not a Court of Law, this is a Commission which was founded on the basis that if now know, all of us, where we come from, where we are getting to, what do we intend to do, then we shall have laid a proper foundation for our society to move forward in circumstances where coexistence will lead to reconciliation that will make it possible for us to proceed with our ordinary lives.

I'm saying all of these things, not because I want to influence one way or the other Mr Verster's decision, I simply say those are my problems, those are the problems of the



Committee which is a sub-Committee of the Commission and unfortunately we will have to see what happens in the immediate future.

But I just wanted to give him facts and figures and dates and times on which certain things have happened and are going to happen which show that the Investigative Unit is very much even-handed in the way in which they approach their investigations. We certainly are not singling Mr Verster or CCB members for particular attention.

Mr Khoisan?

MR KHOISAN: Thank you Mr Chairman, that's a mouthful but sitting here in these proceedings with Mr Verster has been quite an education but we have to proceed anyway. And essentially one of the issues that we have to clarify and maybe if Mr Verster could do it himself as he has pointed out through his attorney, that will satisfy us on one question too.

I'll put the question to you directly. Did you personally or the CCB of which you were the Managing Director, have anything to do with the bombing of Father Michael Lapsley which led to his maiming?

MR VERSTER: No, Chairperson, we did not.

MR KHOISAN: Thank you Mr Verster. Now in respect of an incident which you only made reference to earlier, in the very beginning, is the "Nietverdiend" incident in which I believe 10 activists were killed near the Boputhatswana border, seeing that

we're back inside the country. What's your knowledge about this incident Mr Verster? You just discussed it very briefly but I don't know if you can just flash it out for us.

MR VERSTER: As I have stated, it was something which was ascribed to Commandant Naude, I myself was not in that environment. And subsequent to the incident some of my people came to me and told me that they would not work with police again because they have perform such tasks with the police.

And I then with my application for amnesty, included it because I found that this had to with my people although I had nothing to do with the planning or what actually transpired.

MR KHOISAN: In that particular incident and just to be very clear, that involved an infiltration in which a member of C Section from the side of security police was involved, would that be an example of how the networking in respect of operations would have been carried out?

MR VERSTER: I have no idea how the police were involved in it. My people were deployed during the state of emergency and the co-operated with the police.

MR KHOISAN: Okay now in terms of that incident, that's one, and then to put it on the record also the "Intule" incident, are you aware of that?

MR VERSTER: Yes, I am aware of it.

MR KHOISAN: In that particular incident an explosive device was given to the SAP, right?

MR VERSTER: If you will consult my application I was the staff officer and I had to obtain equipment for the entire threat with regard to Special Forces and the equipment related to this. My involvement regarding this was that I at that stage did not know for who or for what it was. And I received an order to co-ordinate equipment. I cannot recall the exact circumstances, I only recall seeing it the media. Brigadier Jack Cronje said that I had given them a bomb which is absolute nonsense but I worked with all sorts of equipment and arms and gave those over under orders from the Commanding General.

MR KHOISAN: In that particular incident you did hand over a explosive device which ended up in the killing of somebody in somebody's ...[intervention]

MR VERSTER: No, that is not true. That was not done by me.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. Now what about this other matter which came up in front of the Harmse Commission, and I will refer you to Annexure 4:

“K.E. Mlaba”

and then I will refer you - if you can see that, Annexure 4, just have that in front of you and read that together with Annexure 20 page 18. I believe it's at page 18, page 17 actually - Annexure 20, page 17. Here Annexure 4, for the record, is a hand-written what would essentially be a rough sketch plan for a project that would be carried out in respect of the target and as

part of the Heads of Argument on behalf of the deceased. It's in the Court of Namibia.

The matter comes out here: "The Harmse Commission Finding" and the Harmse Commission found there that the CCB had proposed assassination of a Durban attorney, K.E. Mlaba by poison. Is there anything that you can tell us - do you have that in front of you Mr Verster? Is there anything that you can give us, anything that you can tell us or share with us in respect of, number 1, this hand-written plan? Have you seen it anywhere before? Has it been brought before you? Is there anything that you recognise in respect of this? And have you heard about what is discussed here on page 17 which is that the Harmse Commission found that the CCB proposed the assassination of a Durban attorney, Mr Mlaba, by poison.

MR VERSTER: I have repeatedly denied this and I'm aware that the Harmse Commission has at various occasions placed this before me but I do not know anything about it and as I said then it appeared that someone was trying to set something up with which I had nothing to do.

MR KHOISAN: But there's nothing that you can tell us about - because the way this is set up it definitely looks like a specific target study. It looks like a target study here and it fits the profile of a CCB target or military target as described in the "Jaar beplanning" document that we just discussed earlier.

This is the person who according to the study has contact with and deals with couriers between Durban, Swaziland, Maputo and is basically involved as a conduit for ANC military activities. There's also one mention of a person by the name of Shane. Now, I know that you are not the author of Wouter Basson's, the diary of Christo Britz but I put it to you that this person Shane crops up time and again when we deal with looking into CCB activities in 1989.

Is there any time when you heard of this person who was then intended target? Is there anything at any time that you discussed which is relevant to this proposed plan to eliminate this Durban attorney?

MR VERSTER: No, Chairperson.

MR KHOISAN: Okay Mr Verster. In respect of the Civil Co-operation Bureau in 1989, what were your personal feeling when, what were your feelings as the Managing Director or the CCB when one of your operators, Peaches, Edward Peaches Gordon decided to confess to his intended target? The person who was set up to kill Dullah Omar, when he went up to Dullah Omar and confessed to him that he had been selected to kill the advocate. What was the discussion within the CCB? There must have been some discussion about it.

MR VERSTER: I didn't work on that level, I have no idea what his feelings were.

MR KHOISAN: Obviously Mr Gordon had gone quite a step further than a lot of different people because before anything else he had gone to his target, he'd gone to his intended target and confessed and then apparently there were some newspaper reports in respect of that and there must have been some discussion about what was going on the Region 6.

MR VERSTER: I cannot remember, it could have been in Region 6. There were so many documents emanating from that period that I can't actually remember any reaction that I had except that generally in 1989, we were concerned with the exposure of our activities.

MR KHOISAN: Okay the reason I'm making a connection between this particular document and the attempt to eliminate Mr K.E., Attorney K.E. Mlaba and Advocate Dullah Omar is that they were both leaders of the UDF and in both cases the method was supposed to be poison. With Dullah Omar he was either supposed to be shot and when that project wasn't going on line there was a decision to tamper with his medication.

People knew that he was using heart medication, medication for a cardiac condition and that there was poison that was then brought down specifically by CCB operatives to Cape Town to use there in this case. And I'm asking it to you, what was the - where did the CCB go to obtain medications or poisons or chemicals that could be used as part of your work, which was basically to eliminate enemies of the State?

MR VERSTER: I had nothing to do with that. Anything which could be obtained in terms of those projects could have been obtained from a medical place or somewhere in public. I did not operate on that level.

MR KHOISAN: The reason I'm asking you this Mr Verster is that there was the 7th Medical Battalion that also was operational at this time and although his name is now synonymous, similar to one of your operatives who no longer operates under his old name.

A lot of information has come to the fore in respect of one Doctor Wouter Basson. And I'm asking you, did you in your capacity as Managing Director of the CCB know or at any time engage in any projects which dovetailed with the activities of Doctor Wouter Basson?

MR VERSTER: No, I was the staff officer at Special Forces and we served on the same staff of the General but I never engaged in any other activities apart from normal medical activities with him.

CHAIRPERSON: I just want to find out whether you knew Doctor Wouter Basson at the time that he was part of the 7th Medical Battalion?

MR KHOISAN: I knew him but only because he was on the staff of the Special Forces headquarters.

CHAIRPERSON: Were you aware that he was actually involved in a chemical biological warfare programme.

MR VERSTER: I was aware of that. I was aware that they were developing equipment but I knew him as a doctor and as someone who provided doctors and saw to the medical activities of the special forces.

MR MAGADLA: We have been told that in TREVITS there were the Military Intelligence, Security Branch and National Intelligence. That was a platform whereby they would discuss on intelligence collected by their respective sections or units or agencies.

And at these meetings, after hit had been decided that these organisations, the Liberation Movements Organisations or the activists, some of whom it was felt that ...[indistinct] and other institutions were no longer effective in terms of dealing with their situation and that later then from these meetings there would be names of these troublesome people handed over to Special Forces to see how they would deal with these people.

And I'm trying to find out now whether if CCB also was part of or dealt with Special Forces, their own monitoring of people was as a result of those people having been handed over to them as targets in respect of which these people therefore would monitor and act in the way they would feel it's necessary at that time.

MR VERSTER: Chairperson, in the first place I've already said that we had no connection with TREVITS. We have documentation which proves that there were various categories



of targets and we saw the targets as enemies of the State. It was about enemy bases, infiltration routes, arms caches.

And the management of the channels by which some information could have been relayed to us from TREVITS is unknown to me because we only had one channel and that was through the Chairperson of the Special Forces who'd be able to answer the question much better than I could.

And he had a number of officers who would provide him with information or details regarding the enemy. But when it came to the protection of the sovereignty of the State they provided us with details and we acted accordingly. We had no direct contact or access to any of those activities.

MR MAGADLA: ...[inaudible] at TREVITS and just say there were these agencies, Military Intelligence, National Intelligence and Security Branch, monitoring activists, collecting information and having these meetings whereby they would decide whether to let the President or whoever, that this is the state of security of the State at this particular time.

What I would like to know is, these monitorings that were conducted by your people, now where did they sort of, where - how, were they incorporated into other information that was collected by other agencies or whether your people really were not out there to collect any information but were to deal with targets that were given by people who had collected information already about those people.

MR VERSTER: I do not know where the information came from. I was aware of TREVITS but ourselves engaged in reconnaissance activities and freedom of movement activities, how one could move around, how one could liaise with people, where they would be living, what their telephone numbers would be and in that manner we mobilised or organised ourselves. Without my knowledge individuals might have liaised with institutions such as TREVITS, that was unauthorised and I had no knowledge thereof.

MR MAGADLA: But were you aware of the fact that all these three agencies were doing the same thing as you were doing, monitoring telephones and monitoring - watching people, just exactly the same thing.

MR VERSTER: No, I was not aware of that. I knew of TREVITS but I had absolutely nothing to do with them.

MR MAGADLA: Now I see here on page 15 of Annexure 19, that there's a list of people starting from Frank Chikane to Basie Smit but I also see too that the answer to the question as to whether these people were monitored, the answer excludes the name of Basie Smit as having been one of the people monitored.

Did you endeavour to find out as to how the questioner had to have - came about putting Basie Smit's name amongst these people that they felt were being monitored or they wanted to know if they were monitored or not?

MR VERSTER: I made the inference that it was just a way to place their names there so that it would appear as if the police were standing more to the one side. I think it was also part of a plan to create a certain perception about the CCB because we did not have much to do with these people.

MR MAGADLA: I think you said as well that you also wanted to keep the National Intelligence out of the knowledge of your plans and operations that are of special forces.

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR MAGADLA: How would that have happened? My understanding of the National Intelligence was said to be the - sort of the most, the leader of the agencies that were there in terms of taking the final product to the State President as it were.

Were you working against them? If so, whose purpose were you serving?

MR VERSTER: What I mean is that we no liaison on our level. If we had direct liaison on our level then it would mean that there was an unnecessary intervention with the activities of the State. There was a specific channel.

I've explained earlier that there was liaison with police and National Intelligence and Military Intelligence on other levels such as TREVITS and the Covert Collections Committee where they would convene together but it had nothing to do with

us.

On our level we collected information or intelligence which we would react upon.

MR MAGADLA: What can you say then on the fact that one of the people that you monitored, for instance Frank Chikane, there was an attempt at poisoning him.

MR VERSTER: I saw it in the media and to me it was one of the first activities that made me suspect that the police might be involved with this because I had nothing to do with it.

MR MAGADLA: So it would happen that all of you - all of the agencies that monitored people, monitored the same person and perhaps whilst that goes on one of the them takes a shot at that person either by killing or poisoning the person in some way.

MR VERSTER: There were various organisations who tried to upset the enemies of the State and we made a contribution, it wasn't singularly our agency.

MR MAGADLA: In the matter of Doctor Ribeiro you said the Security Branch were involved and your Special Forces were roped in, what about National Intelligence to your knowledge, as far as you knew for playing a role in that thing?

MR VERSTER: I wouldn't know that, that could have come from other Committees, I'm not aware of it.

MR MAGADLA: But you would try by all means to keep it away from them, to keep information away from them that this is what you were embarking on.

MR VERSTER: No, that is not correct. Information might have come from them but our operations, unless we were unofficially instructed to liaise with people and by that I mean instructions coming from the Chairperson, we precisely told people what we were doing. We only liaised through the official channel and that was only if we received instructions from the upper hierarchy.

MR MAGADLA: Have you heard of the name Joe Garbie? He was an ANC representative in Zimbabwe and died in a, I think, a bomb explosion situation. I'm aware you don't want to talk about things that happened there but I'm just asking whether you knew him or you heard of his assassination in Zimbabwe.

MR VERSTER: I don't recall the name.

MR MAGADLA: You don't remember the name? I think I did try to ask a question about this during our last hearing but I think I'll do it again because of other things that have come up. Did you ever have to use former Selu Scouts with your special forces?

MR VERSTER: There was an overarching plan that people belonging to the Selu Scouts moved to South Africa after the independence of Zimbabwe, that they be absorbed into the Defence Force hierarchy as operators in the Special Forces and in that context there were people, I can't give you their names, they continued with special training here. Such as there were

police men and SAS members and other International Special Forces who trained operators.

MR MAGADLA: Did you ever involve members of the Lesotho Liberation Army in your forces?

MR VERSTER: No, I had nothing to do with that.

MR MAGADLA: Did you ever involve members of Renamo in your Special Forces or the CCB situation? I'm not talking about now in operations outside the country but I mean them having been in one of your camps inside the country and working together with your people.

MR VERSTER: No. That was never part of our structure and in any event that was not something which we had any dealings with.

MR MAGADLA: But you did have ...[intervention]

MR VERSTER: I beg your pardon. I am aware that I mentioned to you earlier that many of these activities were held out to be BSB or CCB activities. I'm talking about where there was possible training of resistance movements but we didn't have anything to do with that.

MR MAGADLA: I'm not talking about particularly training them but I'm talking about particularly making use of them inside the country. You know what did happen at some point was that these people were being used for instance in the trains, in the train violence.

MR VERSTER: I think that I read some documents in that regard. It had nothing to do with us though. As I understood it those were uniformed soldiers and that happened after the CCB had been disbanded, we exist at that stage.

MR MAGADLA: What about members of the Koevoet people, members of - those members that you got from Namibia and from Angola, I think they later called Battalion 32 or something?

MR VERSTER: We had nothing to do with them. Koevoet in particular were people who had gone to the police.

MR MAGADLA: Didn't you have those people eventually joining the Rekkies?

MR VERSTER: Yes. Some of those people later on became South African Citizens but that took place over a period of 10 years, from '76 to '86 that took place. But we did not recruit any black members whom we used inside the borders of the country for any activities and who came from those structures.

Apart from people who had been trained in Special Forces as operators or operatives, some of them resigned and were recruited by my sub-ordinates for our structure but never Koevoet. I'm now referring to former members who came from Angola and Namibia, South West.

MR MAGADLA: Did you ever use the Phalaborwa Army Base for your activities?

MR VERSTER: Never. We were not allowed to, it fell outside of our mandate. We were not allowed to operate at any military base or we were not allowed to use military equipment.

MR MAGADLA: You didn't use military equipment you say?

MR VERSTER: We did not use military equipment on a formal basis. We used equipment which could not be traced back to us, we bought it abroad or obtained it in other ways. We did not use South African Army bases.

MR MAGADLA: You didn't have some of your people setting out from Phalaborwa to wherever they wanted to go, that is now outside the country?

MR VERSTER: No, we never did that.

MR MAGADLA: So in actual fact the fact of the matter is that if we talk about CCB members, for instance the Kalla Botha's, the Staal Burger and the lot, those who are alleged to have operated at one point in Namibia where Lubowski was killed, what you are then saying is that the involvement of those people as under your command or under your authority is a matter which you are not saying that it did not happen the way it is projected as having happened.

But what we are saying of now is just that because of the fact that there is no provision for amnesty for those things that happened there, therefore you are going to be non-committal insofar as that is concerned, in terms of saying yes or no?



You are not saying those things did not happen, you are saying: whatever it is, you reserve your right to give a categorical answer to that question.

MR VERSTER: As for as Lubowski is concerned we gave the answer pertinently, there might be other activities. What is of great concern to me is the general Defence Force, it's generally known that there were actions which went as far as the Security Council where the President and the media made media policy statements in the international forum but I don't feel that at my level it is justified for me to talk about activities which I can't deal with, it has nothing to do with me.

MR MAGADLA: Well I was under the impression that people who were in your position are also taking the position that the people who were under their command have the assurance of their support, the leadership's support in the sense that those in the leadership of those people would also be saying: "I can accept a situation where we are doing a - we are going for a situation where we - as a leader I accept responsibility for all that my men did".

I mean, that is not the case now in the case that we are dealing with right now insofar as you are concerned. You are saying: if those people were involved in that, it's got nothing to do with me therefore I cannot comment.

MR VERSTER: That's not what I said. I've said repeatedly that at my level I will accept responsibility for all activities in

the same way as I expect the hierarchy above me to accept responsibility in the same way that I will expect the ANC to accept responsibility for their activities.

I did not say that I did not want to accept responsibility but I won't however assume responsibility for things that I had nothing to do with.

MR MAGADLA: Well we have also said that we sit here with a situation where we have all these people, the next of kin, the relatives and those people looking up to the TRC to find answers for what happened to their people.

Is there any suggestion that you actually would come up with - in terms perhaps saying: well people, if we really - we would like to meet people half way but if this could be done maybe we could actually go out there and help where we could and tell people what happened where we knew what happened?

MR VERSTER: I don't if I understand you correctly but I would like to say that I'm not talking about the families of the victims. What I do feel is that the receiving end, on the South African side it's exactly the same.

If I think of a war which spanned 15 to 20 years or perhaps longer, then the matter most definitely has two sides and my feeling is that it is not being dealt with in a fair way. So to now develop a sense of guilt or whatever, I don't agree with that.

I am a member of the Dutch Reformed Church. My own church is busy saying and making statements about how sorry they are but I can recall how they would have church services for us just before we have mass, just before going out on active service. So we are all victims of the same problem and I don't think we can place on in a more important position than the other.

MR MAGADLA: Well I'm not actually saying that but I'm putting - I'm making this statement because the feeling that I, I mean the impression that I seem to gain is that where these people feel that the Truth Commission has also a thing that is authorised by law to be there, there are these people who are generally known to have been involved in that situation of, say for instance Lubowski.

Now, you come across a person like yourself who - the fact that we seem to be centring this whole thing around yourself is also because you were a leader, you were a commander there. I mean, people will take that responsibility if they were leaders as you were.

But it sort of becomes awkward when all the time you seem to take the attitude that: look, as far as I'm concerned my people are still out in the bush and they are waiting for me to at some point say: bugger everything, they are there because I've not exposed them, they're just there intact.

I mean, that does not ...[indistinct] well for the country as it were. I mean, people have been involved in wars, they've been involved in blood ...[indistinct]. People think at some point there should be the end of that and reconciliation should be let to take it's own place.

MR VERSTER: You are correct, but then it must be done in a moderate and balanced way, you keep hammering on Lubowski. Lubowski represented in South West exactly what you today say I represent. I can tell you that I personally went and fetched South African conscripts, where they'd had contact with a landmine and where the white conscript actually ran away and was shot dead behind a tree, that was what was represented by Lubowski.

And I can give you other instances, cases for instance in Angola where it was our job not only to wage war but also to go and evacuate people. So to constantly say that we, the previous government were the only scapegoats, that's incorrect. The problem now is that there was no real negotiations, and I've put that in writing.

The Chairperson invited me to come and talk when the Generals were here at some point. They wanted to know what our perceptions of the war were and there was a second enquiry and then I was told that I was not allowed to be present. So, I am positive about it. I feel that I at least tried, within the confines of the Act, applied for amnesty.

Do you know how I and other people feel, people who have asked for amnesty down to the letter of the law but on the ANC's side 37 people are granted amnesty. I'm very honest with you, I tried to do what they did. Let me put it to you straight, I also said I was a commanding officer, I said everything was my fault and I will accept responsibility and ask for amnesty for that and let's just get it over and done with but my legal team then advised me that that is not what the law required.

So, there's a lack of balance as to the current process taking place, it has to come from both sides. I would like to see my counterpart on the other side of the table. It's like when the All Blacks and the Springboks play rugby, they fight on the battlefield or on the rugby field but afterwards they drink beer and they're friends and that in my book is a form of reconciliation.

But now a small group is being singled out for special treatment and we feel that we are victims of a process over which nobody has no control any longer.

MR MAGADLA: I really understand your concern very, very clearly but the one little problem, maybe this is maybe finally from my side, the one other thing is that long before these 37 ANC people were given amnesty the attitude of the army and the CCB and the other people, say on the right, has always been that there is no fairness in the - they expect no fairness in the Truth

Commission, long before this release of the amnesty given to the 37 people.

In other words one would - while one sees that discrepancy one sees that that might be something that might not be right maybe, I don't know, as a matter for which you can base some of your misgivings and some of your doubts about the TRC. But again it sort of falls in within where people are looking for things that they can actually sort of attach to as a reason for their misgivings, their doubts to the TRC whereas this thing is just recent, this thing about the 37 people but already people had made up their minds to say that: well, we don't feel we are going to be fairly treated within the TRC.

But I mean, you are here. Accept that somewhere here and there there's got to be heated words, depending on how we carry on but the fact remains that it's a legally constituted situation that we are here in and besides that there is nothing that stands out as a kind of witch hunt or hatred or whatever as far as you can see too.

But it's only that at times there will be disagreement and there will be agreement but I think we feel, maybe because we are in the TRC, but we feel these accusations and allegations and things sometimes they are just being taken too far in terms of they being the basis of other people's reluctance to come forward and to be open in terms of what they know and what they would like us to know about. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Khoisan?

MR KHOISAN: Thank you Mr Chairman.

Just back to the issue of the allegations in respect of or the document involving the intended target K.E. Mlaba in Durban and Advocate Dullah Omar, the incident for which you've applied for amnesty. I'd like to draw your attention to page 32, to pages 31 and 32 of Annexure 18 and that is the affidavit of one Abraham van Zyl.

CHAIRPERSON: Can the record just show in the meantime that the spelling should be M-L-A-B-A, the attorney's Mlaba.

MR KHOISAN: Mlaba?

CHAIRPERSON: Yes, except that I think Annexure 20 on page 17 thereof shows it's M-H-L-A-B-A as if it is Mhlaba. It's actually Mlaba, Koinza Mlaba.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. Are you with me there Mr Verster?

MR VERSTER: Yes.

MR KHOISAN: If you go down 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 to about the 10th line of that particular page of that annexure, and I'll read it out:

“The matter of the pills I discussed with the Regional Manager in the presence of the co-ordinator, Nick, Botha, and Chappie Marais. There was another person present whose name I can't remember but he had previously served the Medical Regiment of the SADF”

then on page 32, and that's the - you go to the 3rd line there:

"I was told that the pills were those that Omar took for his heart condition. I then during a cell meeting, I took some of these pills and gave to this person who was attached to the Medical Regiment. This took place in an hotel room"

and then, the long and short of the story is that the pills end up in Cape Town, reworked as poison that are supposed to be administered to the intended target, which at that time was Advocate Dullah Omar. This is after the attempt to just outright shoot him failed.

There's reference here to, quote:

"A person who had previously served in the Medical Regiment of the Defence Force"

Now I'm asking you again Mr Verster, the person of Wouter Basson, Doctor Wouter Basson and there is another allegation - there are a couple of newspaper reports that have just surfaced, in fact that were released in the press on the 25th about Wouter Basson working with the CCB at a police station near Botswana where there was some kind of testing on people and some kind of experimentation of people, but I'm asking you if ever to your knowledge, the CCB either liaised with or required the services of Doctor Wouter Basson or anybody from 7 Medical Battalion or any of the affiliates of that particular regiment, battalion?



MR VERSTER: The structure knew Doctor Basson, he wore uniform and he was at headquarters of the Special Forces. We did not have contact with him. The person to whom reference is made here, well I don't know who this person was but it means as I see it that he had previously been in a Medical Regiment and like any member, pilots or anybody in the Defence Force or in the private sector, could become involved in our activities.

Whether they had talked to Special Forces head office by means of special channels or of their own accord, I don't know.

MR KHOISAN: No, the question is, we know that Doctor Wouter Basson right now has been in the news a lot and I think that you are somebody that keeps up with day to day happenings in the media and also with proceedings before this Commission, to some degree.

Doctor Wouter Basson has been associated with several projects which involve chemical and biological projects. Now I'm asking you, the CCB had a straightforward role, you had targets which had to be dealt with either militarily, physically or otherwise and I'm saying that - and as you pointed out in the case of Ferdinand Barnard, the reason why Ferdinand Barnard was recruited was because he was acquainted with the criminal underworld and could dwell around in the "gatjies and draaitjies" as you called it. He was a person who could exist in that sub-terrainian environment and do so quite well.

Now the person of Doctor Wouter Basson is one who has emerged as quite a genius in the other department in the use of chemical etc., and I'm asking you if at any time you, either as the Managing Director of the CCB or whether the CCB as a structure to your knowledge, ever had to call upon him for the use of his specialised services?

MR VERSTER: I've already told you and I'm repeating it, I don't know whether you are of the impression that this person is Wouter Basson, this person to whom reference is made here. I never had such an association with him, I knew him as a medical doctor who had medical obligations towards the Commanding General.

Like I dealt with sensitive operations, in the same way Doctor Basson was responsible for medical services and I knew him in that context and attended meetings with him and so forth and I regarded him as a very intelligent man and a good doctor. I had no other association with him and I don't know what channels were used, if any were used.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. Now in terms of the issue with regard to Dullah Omar, are you saying that the person of Abraham "Slang" van Zyl might have mis-spoke or is unclear or is maybe engaging in a gross exaggeration when he says that they got the tablets and they were going to re-work them to poison the intended target? Could that have been true?

MR VERSTER: No, I don't know whether it is true or not. Upon occasion I told you that I don't necessarily accept everything that "Slang" van Zyl said in Section 29 statement, he said things under pressure. And I said earlier on that certain activities were exaggerated far out of proportion to the way I see it but I don't know exactly what he did and how he did it and what he was involved with. I had no direct dealings with any of that.

MR KHOISAN: But now he says further that the project involving Omar, that you had something to do with that, that it was brought to you for approval. He says ...[intervention]

MR VERSTER: I applied for amnesty for that but I told you earlier that those activities may have been planned by themselves. And from a medical approach I have no knowledge of whether they managed to obtain something or which channels they worked through. I only saw in later statements that they never did this and it was merely a perception.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. There's quite a few other things that I wanted to deal with, but I did that we were going to end at - I did inform your counsel that we would try to keep it close to the 16H30 mark and I want to try to honour that Mr Chair.

CHAIRPERSON: Do you consider therefore that it be a convenient stage to adjourn till 9 o'clock tomorrow morning?

MR KHOISAN: Yes, that's fine with me Mr Chairman, I don't know about Mr Magadla.

CHAIRPERSON: Advocate Wessels?

The proceedings will then be adjourned till 9 o'clock tomorrow morning. I believe it's 09H30.

HEARING ADJOURNS



ON RESUMPTION 3RD MARCH 1998 - DAY 2

JOE VERSTER: (s.u.o.)

MR VERSTER: Thank you Chairperson. Yesterday and this morning early I have calculated that my financial expenditure regarding my visit to this Commission. I am aware that there are specific financial arrangements, as I have been notified by my attorney and regarding this, it may be handled in that way. I will see to my own security. I prefer not to fly to this destination because I do not make use of the witness protection programme.

If you look at the court cases of the Harmse Commission, Webster, up until your previous investigations, there was documentation which I did not wish to transfer on an aeroplane and that is why I used by own transport to arrive here. Unfortunately my vehicle broke down in the Karoo, which I could not say is the problem of the Truth Commission but if we look at accommodation, costs and food without regarding accommodation and food on the route back to Johannesburg, we are now at the amount of R 5013.

If we subtract R 2016 from that which - these costs such as the aeroplane ticket and other expenditures, I am still R 2413 in the red. And something which is bothering me is that the costs for me are approximately R200 per hour, my loss will be in the vicinity of more than R 4400 which I incur personally and

I would like to request that if I submit the evidence to the attorneys, if it could not be handled by the person on your side.

For reasons that you know I would not like to disclose the registration number of my vehicle but I will give the details to my attorney and if he could submit an affidavit regarding my expenditures and if we could reach an agreement that I would carry half of my own loss with regard to the vehicle and the towing in of the vehicle and other details, I would be appreciative of this, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Khoisan, do you have any input to make?

MR KHOISAN: Well I think Mr Chairman I have heard Mr Verster and the arrangement I believe will be handled through finance and I've indicated that Mrs Davids would handle that matter. In terms of Mr Verster using his own transport and living on his own, making his own arrangements, I think that that was the arrangement before so on that side I don't think we can have any objections. I'm sure we can try to find a way to make it - at least meet him halfway on the problem that he raises.

And I think that this arrangement of before worked out quite well if I am not mistaken. But with the issue of the, the unfortunate issue of his car getting stuck in the Karoo, I think that would have to be handled by somebody who has got the power to make that decision but if there is anything that can be

done it should be done because I believe he has come here to discuss serious matters with us.

MR VERSTER: Thank you Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much Mr Verster. For what it is worth I will also add my own voice to see to it that you are assisted to the extent of your request. I have noted this and I am going to follow it up with the appropriate persons, Financial Director as well as the Chief Executive Office. I shouldn't consider that we should have a problem.

In the event that there are further details that we require I am sure we will deal with that through Mr Bosman.

MR VERSTER: Thank you Chairperson. The second point, if you would indulge me. In terms of the day which we spent here yesterday I would like to voice a viewpoint if you would grant me the opportunity.

I will also try and talk directly to you in English, my second language, the language of the anti-Christ but - and that was just a joke, it's not serious. I feel Mr Chairman that what we've started yesterday is the beginning of a new era. The reason why I'm saying this is, in my previous life to plan activities and to do strategic planning was part of my job and I can see or at least I've got a good estimated guess where things are going.

I think I understand the South African politics quite well and I also understand the place of South Africa in the



international community. After yesterday I'm of the opinion that there is not really a position of trust between us and I don't think it is necessary for me to discuss that.

I feel that I represent at this stage, the minority in South Africa. I understand what you as a Committee, Sub-Committee of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, what you are trying to do but I must at least have the self respect to say to you exactly how I see things and how I feel. I feel that as part of my minority group that what is being done within the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is to break down family - from the smallest family units, my cultural and my language background.

I see, because I had the experience and the international accords - courses regarding what is happening here, I see this as a different form of a people's court. And the people's court placed in international communism is something that will achieve what I've just said, namely to break down family ties, to break down cultures, to prohibit the independence and the minority rights and development of people like me.

I feel that there is double standards. We can also forget about further discussing this point, we know what's in the media, you know what I said yesterday what's troubling me. The other point is that I know that the future of South Africa is not in terms of politics but economics. At the moment the way at least I see it, is the more there's potholes on the highways

and the more problems are coming out. The present government, the image of the present government is going down in terms of - at least of the next general election and I'm of the opinion that with the next general election there is a definite effort to prolong the proceedings of this Commission so that it could still be in this day and age, be used as a method to gain votes in the next election.

I further feel that the people that I represent, that is, let's call it agents consisting of people who did my type of work in the previous system, even now it's still the nerve system of a country. We know what is going on in the country and the international image of South Africa is not good, it used to be good because we said that there's a democratic development in Southern Africa and that was acceptable to the international community.

At the moment with, what we all know in terms of crime, corruption, double standards, there's the international opinion of chaos in South Africa. Finance is in the hands of the international community and they feel they cannot invest in the country as it is going now.

As far as the CCB is concerned in this whole situation or opinion that I gave to you now, I've said it last time and I would like to repeat it today, that the CCB had a promise with senior personnel of the ANC before the elections that the CCB must relax, we must forget about any future problems in South Africa,

that the ANC has got a lot of other things on their minds to develop the new system and I must go and talk to the people that I've got contact with and explain that to them and that we must go into the elections on a basis of good faith. I've done that and I feel that that promise has been broken.

On the previous government side I've got - through my legal team there is documentation that can prove that the Nationalist Party, signed by Minister Kobie Coetzee, said that if there's going to be a general amnesty in South Africa the will be part of that. I specifically, when they closed down the CCB, asked for that document because I felt that I cannot trust the previous government and at that stage they did what I feel, and especially since yesterday, feel that's happening now and that is to isolate the CCB, to get the CCB to be the international culprit for apartheid and cross-border operations and everything.

I feel that there is no proper protection for people like me and I've explained it yesterday, that I feel that we in the CCB and mainly all the soldiers of the previous system, that there's never been real negotiations. And I've presented that into my documentation in the application of my amnesty application. I feel that nothing has been done to get soldiers to reconcile.

I also feel that people like myself, and also in the discussions with senior individuals in the ANC government, I said to them and I feel today still that I am a good citizen of

this country. I think that I've arranged investments into South Africa more than the average South African. I've said that I'm not interested in any military type of work with the past but I can use my management skills to be able to contribute to the economic development of the country because I don't trust politicians and I'm not interested in it.

If we talk about the cross-border activities, one of my main problems is that I am not prepared to be the individual to become, let's call it the spearhead of a government's, previous government's activities in fighting or protecting the sovereignty of the old South Africa as we knew it. We all know that cross-border operations ended up in the Security Council and now we're trying to initiate small operations on the other side of the border and through that I'm not sure but I get the feeling that the CCB and myself would be the first whereas there's no other contribution from the people from the previous government.

I'm prepared to take this as far as possible in the future whatever. And I said already that I've accepted that there is not a feeling of trust and I accepted that we're into a new era and if it's necessary that we've got to go to international tribunals, then that is how it will have to be.

I also feel that I understand the politics and the problems of South Africa, and especially the problems of what happened in the fight between the different parties in the past. I understand this a little bit better than the average man on the

street. This is why, if we can come to a balanced opinion of what happened across the borders and we take what we did on the South African side and we have a look what the ANC and the MK also did on the other side, I've said in the past that I know of violence, robberies, car thefts and the rest outside also what happened, as we've mentioned yesterday, in the Vianna Base of the ANC and I feel that for the economic future of South Africa and the world opinion of South Africa, and although there's a new Government in position, these are things are better said here **in camera** than when it's said out in the open.

I know for instance that since 1977 in Vianna Base there was at least 20 suicides, in 1984 in one year there was at least three. An average of 2 suicides per year. I feel from a commander's point of view it was the responsibility of the ANC to look after their sub-ordinates in a base like Vianna. There was at least nine firing squad activities in the Vianna Base.

Of all the people killed between 1977 and 1989 the percentage of ANC or MK cadres killed by UNITA was in the vicinity of 45% which is totally unacceptable if you think that this is something or this is a training base, people who should be fighting the old South Africa and fighting for independence and fighting for or against apartheid.

Of the 45% killed by "UNITA", 35% were shot in the head. I trained - many years ago we trained a lot of black soldiers and I know that it is impossible in any operational

circumstances for people to shoot people in the head, with luck you will get 3 to 4%, never 35%. Of the same amount of people killed 53% was shot in the chest in other words target shooting at them but killed by "UNITA".

A person by the name of Edward Molepe, I said it yesterday, was executed in Vianna Base. Another person by the name of Makneija Landoo was shot in the back of the head and killed in Vianna Base. Now of the plus minus 190 people killed over that period of 11 to 12 years, and if I must come back to the point that I feel things must be balanced, then I am sure and I will take the risk that the families of those people do not know what really happened there.

It is unacceptable, if I think of the firing squad activities in Vianna Base, it's unacceptable to me that this was done with some authority. Did Angola - is the Angolan government by lay, do they accept responsibility? Is it the ANC? Where is their disciplinary code like the CCB, like we've got our own financial plans, security plans, personnel management plans, how to handle discipline?

So, I said it the last time I saw you and I tried to say it yesterday, my personal feeling is, and whatever I've said here must be accepted that this, if I know it, this is common knowledge internationally and I feel that if the old system and I am a representative for some reason I am one of main culprits of the previous system and I've tried to explain the reason for that

yesterday, then it is better for the new South Africa, looking at the present state of South Africa, that there should be negotiations to stop the further, as we say it in Afrikaans: "Die uitreig van derms" because the image of South Africa is not good internationally, it is purely a matter of establishing a climate or propaganda to say how well accepted we are.

I travel a lot internationally and I know that people are not interested to invest money into South Africa at the moment unless there is big strange deals and I know that there is - I'm not saying that there's not investment into South Africa but the potential of South Africa is much better from what we see today. So my - I know it is not your job but I know that you've got access to the right people and I've tried this before. That is some way there must be negotiations to establish some sort of general amnesty because the group of 37 was given a general amnesty in any case already.

I am entitled, even entitled in terms of the previous Military Discipline Code - Act Number 44 of 1957, I'm entitled to amnesty. I know there was a change but then this should have been carried onto the new system.

Lastly, I've said it the last time, that there has been no negotiations on behalf of our soldiers. In terms of the media, in Kempton Park there was a negotiated settlement, if it's true that we had a negotiated settlement then we can also say that the ANC never won the war and the old South African system never

won the politics and because of that there was a negotiated settlement. And in terms of that negotiated settlement it means that there is some sort of an agreement to be able to take the new South Africa and develop it.

And I'm asking you to please see if it's possible, if you want more negotiations **in camera** or whatever we can of course do that, but to see if it's not possible that the position of the CCB, that we would be accepted as part of Special Forces. That if we look at the documentation that you supplied to me, it is obvious that it is impossible to make plans, get finance, authorise wars and to keep on stating that the CCB was some organisation who worked on their own. So if it's at all possible, please try and accept us as part of the old system and if we accept that the President of the previous government F.W. de Klerk, there were Generals appointed and as I've said yesterday, down to my level I will accept my responsibility at my level but I'm not going to accept responsibilities of people above me.

I don't accept what happened from a political point of view, the way F.W. de Klerk handled the negotiations. I was a believer myself in negotiations but you've got to negotiate from a position of strength. And if the present government is of the opinion that the average South African and the average soldier has got the mentality and the way of seeing things of Mr F.W.



de Klerk, then it is wrong because it is not the opinion of the average South African.

Mr Chairman, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to just give my opinion.

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you Mr Verster.

I don't know if you have anything to say Mr Khoisan in response?

MR KHOISAN: I'd just like to say Mr Chairman, that Mr Verster has been with us before and as I pointed out to him the last time it is a wrong perception on his part. It is because it is not in the public or it doesn't hit the headlines as much that we are not following up cases involving the ANC or the PAC and their military wings as thoroughly as we are dealing with particular matter.

I know it because like yourself and the level at which you are I am on the operational level in the Investigation Unit. On a day to day basis I deal with cases involving victims from all sides and as the Chairman of these proceedings can bear me out, there's a doggedness about which those investigations go, nobody is spared in the process.

And also issues relating to violations outside the country to which you have referred, it is incorrect on your part to assume that those allegations of excesses and abuses are not being pursued vigorously. Just because it has not been in the public or hasn't hit headlines all over the world it doesn't mean

that it is not happening. I know because I work in the Investigation Unit on a daily basis and I've been here from the inception of this unit.

And I deal with people on all levels of this society in respect of cases. I cannot speak for your perceptions of the politics of the Commission. I have my own differences with the Commission but here in this forum we have a professional duty, we have a mandate to discharge and we would be remiss or we would not be following that mandate to the letter if we didn't discharge it with dispatch.

In terms of the documentation that you've received Mr Verster, you can see number 1, that there's a thoroughness about the job we're doing. We haven't just picked up a couple of allegations from people and thrown it at you. There's an attempt to look at the problem, to understand the problem as one of the investigators directly involved in CCB matters, I know that we have.

And in terms of the documentation that has been given to you and if you can get from the line of questions that we're putting, you can definitely see that. And I think that it is incorrect of you to assume because a finding has not been made in respect of the CCB and it's incorrect to assume that the Investigation Unit under whose auspices this particular hearing is being conducted has singled out CCB as a scapegoat, as sort

of the one that is the loose cannon on the deck. Speaking for myself I don't believe that that is my perception.

The nature of this particular hearing is interrogative, we are searching for information. The ideal would be for us to solicit your co-operation and the ideal would be for us to meet each other halfway. In many respects you have begun to come closer and we've begun to get closer to you. Some of the unprofessionalism that obtained, for instance in the last hearing on my part, speaking from my part I think has been dealt with.

And I think before this hearing began I spoke to you personally to discuss this matter with you. And I think that you can see that we're also looking at other agencies. You can see that the general thrust of the discussion is to understand how the problem existed, what were it's component parts. It's like putting a puzzle together, the CCB is not a puzzle on it's own. It is a puzzle but it's not a puzzle on it's own, it's part of a broader puzzle obtained in a very volatile theatre and sub-theatre here in Southern Africa and South Africa.

I'd like to say that we are not here to pursue you, you're not the subject of a hot pursuit mission by the Investigation Unit, neither have you been singled out for special treatment. Other people were are at your same level, militarily speaking, will also be also be discussed with. There are cases that we are following up. The assumptions that you put on the table, in my view, are erroneous and I hope you would just take some

time, sit back and watch the work of the Commission because the report has not yet been tabled. The Investigative Unit and our head has not tabled the report yet. Just because the unit doesn't talk about it's work in public, just because our work is behind the scenes doesn't mean that the work of the Investigative Unit has stopped or is one-sided or the assumption can be drawn that it is one-sided.

I would like to say that Mr Verster, you are not in any way being singled out here but we have a duty to this Commission and to the country to try to get to the bottom of what happened. And ideally, for instance even the difficult matters like the cross-border matters, I know that you cannot launch an action in another country risking an international incident without getting approval from the highest level. It's been discussed in forum here. That is not something that I am sucking out of my thumb.

I know that you couldn't authorise something that could result in endangering the very mission that you were sworn to uphold, which is protecting the sovereignty and security of the State. The State had it's own superstructure which existed at a very different level than at the one at which you operated. But you were part of the theatre of conflict that existed in South Africa and integral part of that. And as such we are coming to you and soliciting what is in your heart and in your mind and trying to understand what you have to say to us.

And we are hoping, you know I'm very optimistic, I think by the way things are going I don't feel that your comments are negative or even border on sedition, no, for me I believe your comments are honest, they're straightforward. They come from a person who is very much like me, who says exactly what he means. And I hope that we can find a way, a mechanism to be able to discuss the things that we need to get to and I hope that it can be found.

I have a desire for this Commission and yourself and in consultation with your counsel, to find a way that we can talk even on neutral ground because the objective here is to get the information, it's not to get to Joe Verster. So that's my comment Mr Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you Mr Khoisan.

Did you want to say something? Mr Magadla for the record.

MR MAGADLA: Mr Verster, I just wanted to say that the fact that the whole thing is dragging maybe up to the times of the beginning of the elections, as you have said, that you think it's all a ploy for other people to capitalise on the fact that there are people like yourselves and that during the times of the elections or towards the elections this will be sort of a campaigning point to the advantage of the other people.

The fact of the matter there is that from the inception of the Commission a call had been sent out many a time for people

to come forward, for the forces that were involved in what used to happen, to come forward. Now it is the reluctance of those forces that has delayed the process. And even perhaps as we sit now we sat for the first time, we were bogged down because there was this problem of a reluctance or a refusal to talk about things that happened abroad.

So we are coming here again to deal with that same situation and all the time people flood the Commission with requests on the deadline, on the date of the closure of acceptance of applications. Now we have applications here and these applications are meant for the TRC to discuss the granting or otherwise of amnesty to people who, people like yourselves, people who were involved in these things, they are not meant for anything else.

Where in fact during the course of the discussions of the things that did happen, there are a little bit of problems but in any discussions, in any deliberations there are problems at some point but when we go through this we are able to submit our report to say: "This is what we see of the CCB, this is what we have made up of the CCB".

The quicker that process is enabled to complete it's function the earlier we are able to complete the TRC work as it were. Nothing near deliberately dragging feet so that we get to campaigning for elections. The whole matter rests on the shoulders of the people that we have invited to come to help the

Commission, not only help the Commission, help themselves whereby they facilitate an easy access to amnesty.

Secondly, you have these statistics of 40%, 35% shot through the head and 53 through the chest and things like that but from the people, the inmates of Vianna, the inmates Quatro and those people we have had people, I'm talking about inmates, people who were there, people who's brothers died there, people who were tortured themselves and people who are able to articulate their position insofar as what happened there.

Now they have not been silent about that, they have come to the Commission and they have given statistics and details of what happened there but they haven't given what you are giving us today. So I don't know, well, you may have your sources but again the people who should have had concern and gave those statistics in order to help us in our own investigation and people who were elected or who were nominated by us because of the knowledge of those who nominated them, that these were the people who could articulate this thing better than anybody else, have not articulated, they have not given us these that you have given us today.

So it's neither here nor there which one is right. We are enchained to think, taking it from the horses mouth, the people who were involved, people who were tortured, people were done these things, we are enchained to think who's versions perhaps could be more acceptable. I'm not saying yours is not right

because you had your own sources but I'm just saying to me it just strikes as something new that comes from somewhere, from some quarter which compared to the ...[indistinct] from where we got the other stuff, it's something that's not here nor here as I can say.

Thank you. I just wanted to stress that whatever is seem to be the delay or the dragging or whatever, is not of the making of the TRC.

CHAIRPERSON: I suppose we could debate the issues until tomorrow or the next day or the year after. I just need again to state that this is an investigative enquiry. It seeks to establish certain facts on the basis of which we should be able to separate facts from fantasy, information from disinformation and therefore arrive at a balanced view of what the issues were.

I won't repeat what we as a unit and I can only speak for the unit even though I'm a Commissioner, I could also speak for the Commission, that I've endeavoured in my time as the head of this Investigative Unit to make sure that we contribute to the unearthing of the truth that will lead to our society being able to come to terms with their past. And our society is not the white community, it's not the black community, it is all of those people.

I can reveal to you now and you can go and check it, that I am one of those people who are engaged with Generals in the army, retired Generals who are keen to get a solution to the sort



of things that you are also worried about. I met them on a without prejudice basis. Mugadla was there. We met and we spent over two hours trying to find in what way we can deal with the whole question of where are we going to be, after the Commission, as a nation.

I live in this country so do you also. I've fathered children who very fortunately didn't grow up the way I grew, who do not even know, when I talk about racism, what it was all about, who go to schools with other children, who look at other children first as children and only when it occasionally arises that they do they look at them as white children or Indian children or coloured children. And I have to thank the new dispensation, even in it's initial stages, for the fact that I can send my children to school with your children and that they can grow up with mutual respect for each other's languages and for each other's cultures, I teach them that, I don't hide from them that there are cultural different differences in this country. But I don't see the cultural differences as a cause for division, I see them as a celebration of the richness of the South African cultures such as it is. It's a combination of all the cultures.

The one thing that has characterised this unity has been to bring to the attention of the Commission facts and figures about all the aspects that have come within our ...[indistinct]. Of course the Commission was given a short shelf life, we are

supposed to investigate 34 years of South African history in 18 months, 24 months, it's impossible.

We have never even pretended that we would be able to investigate everything and the Commission doesn't expect us to do us. We don't the capacity, we don't have the time, we do not even have the finances.

But what we have said is that we will try and do an investigation that will be aimed at providing a window of the sort of conflicts that took place on all sides. If Vlakplaas, CCB, are institutions that will be capable of giving us a window on human rights violation from the State side, we're going to investigate that. If Quatro, Uganda, assassinations of Make, Mbendan and everybody else who was in the PAC are issues that are indicative of what was taking place abroad in the name of the struggle, then we'll look at that.

But we can never and we will never promise anyone that we will look into each and every case. But if there is a case that gives an idea, a window, if this government after we have submitted our investigative report, still thinks that there is a need to investigate each and every case that is known then that's their prerogative. Then they can go on and investigate, they can establish institutions or they can just decide that we have enough, even from the limited investigation that was conducted by the TRC flawed as it is, we have a general picture

of what it was all about, we have a sense also of what the solutions are.

Now, I don't think you have given credit to the TRC but I cannot expect you to do so, you have a standpoint that you have and I respect that but it's important to know that it is the TRC as a Commission, no less, that was the first to say: "There's something wrong about the decision by the Amnesty Committee in granting that sort of amnesty to those 37 people".

The Archbishop came with a statement, even without consulting the Chairperson of the Amnesty Committee, and said: "That's wrong, we are as a Commission going to go ahead and have those amnesty applications set aside". It was not the NP, they only chorused what he had said, it was not the DP, they only chorused what he had said. So we were under no pressure from anyone, it was just out of our own sense of feeling that something was wrong here.

I took a different view, but not because I thought that the law was correct as applied by those Judges in the Amnesty Committee. It was on a different basis that I didn't think that it was our prerogative as a Commission to take our own Committee to Court. But as democrat that I think I am, when the decision came that the Commission has now decided we should take our own Committee to Court to set aside those applications, I fell in line.

So it's not as though we are insensitive, we actually were so sensitive as to take an unprecedented step of taking that particular decision of the Committee, precisely because we knew it would raise the sort of concerns that it has raised which you and your constituency but also it was precisely because we thought it was not right and we thought that it was ...[indistinct] well for what the processes is all about.

Lastly, the road to reconciliation is not going to be done in the Commission during it's life. The Commission can only assist other processes and programmes of nation building, reconstruction of society, development, social upliftment of the downtrodden. All those processes will have to take place simultaneously before we can talk of a reconciliation.

We are talking about generations of division and strife and conflict and anyone who expects that this is going to be achieved in three and a half years of a fledging democracy must need their heads read. If the international community do not want to invest here, in the language of the former Nationalist Party leaders, they can stay away. We will find solutions for this country in our way and I think we should assist each other to arrive at a proper formula which will make sure that what has happened by anyone should not happen again.

I'm one of those ...[indistinct] precisely because I hold the position that I do, that gets phoned, that gets written to.

Right now when I came to my office I got piles of letters hand-

written by black people, black parents of children who cannot be accounted for, went into exile and still have not been accounted for. I don't sleep at night because those things weigh heavily on my own conscience. What have you done about our children who left for Angola, Zimbabwe, Uganda, who have not returned. I can't simply say: "There's nothing I can do about it".

And therefore, let me indicate to you, on the 26th and 27th of March this year we are going to do a very penetrative probe into what was happening outside, precisely because we have this concerns coming from parents and relatives and friends of people.

Now, if you have any information, you have your lawyers, they have our addresses, it would assist us in the preparation of those probing investigative inquiries. If we could use - even if it is as notes, because when have a perspective you obviously had your own sources, so if you could tell us: "This is the detail of what" - I'm not interested in your sources, though if you could tell us your sources it would assist us in checking what they said to you but even as notes when we prepare for that case, it would assist us greatly if you could ...[indistinct] or make information available to us because we would compare that with what we have and we would compare that with some of the people who were tortured in those camps who have testified before the TRC.

Now, I'm not talking - I'm not clutching at straws, I'm telling you about dates, I'm talking about certainties, I'm telling you about what is going to happen. So if you can't give us information about your own activities outside Region 6, you can at least tell us about what others were doing and maybe that will cause us to use what the others were doing, from what you have told us, in our endeavours to inquire about our turbulent and troublesome past.

And hopefully through that mechanism we'll be able to find a way in which your concerns can be addressed. For us in the TRC, we can't talk general amnesty when there is a provision made for how amnesty can be obtained. But I've said at the beginning of these proceedings I live in this country, I have an interest that it should be peaceful country and beyond the TRC there should be a life.

And if there is a way in which I can contribute as a person, especially as a person who has been part of the process even post the TRC, then I should be placed in a position where I would have the necessary power to do so. Which I think Mr Khoisan was referring to when he says there are bigger issues here than just the issue of what the TRC is about, there are bigger issues about whether there isn't a mechanism for us to be informed sufficiently for us to even consider interceding on behalf of that community of soldiers that you talk about who

continue to have a distrust of the Commission but who also realise that they have nowhere else to go.

I don't wish to see people leaving this country and I know that most of the Afrikaners don't want to leave. Billy Colbert maybe has an option to go but I know that most people do not want to go, they want to stay here because this is where they consider their homes to be. I have nowhere else to go even if I wanted to. My children wouldn't like to go anywhere else so also I think do your children.

So back to what we have been doing. Let's see to what extent we can take this process but I think it was necessary for us to spend the time which we have spent which is almost more than an hour. But I think I understand where you come from, I hope you do understand where we also come from as an Investigative Unit and I only hope you will be able to think, even if we don't get that far at these proceedings, that there is a possibility, even if it is a very remote possibility that we are a fair tribunal.

But I cannot convince you more than that, I can only tell you that actions and the results of our actions will speak louder than anything that we have said here.

Mr Khoisan, I think we should go ahead now.

MR KHOISAN: Thank you Mr Chairman.

Mr Verster, when we ended yesterday we were discussing, if my recollection serves me correct, at the end of the day we

were having some discussions about Region 6 which is where we were concentrating. Now I just wanted to draw your attention back to a document that is in front of you and that you are familiar with, it's part of Annexure 1, it's the "BSB Jaarbeplanning vir 1987".

And in that document I would like you to page with me to the section that says: Annexure A but before we get there Mr Verster, when we spoke the last time and you can correct me if I'm wrong, but this document was drawn up as part of a teambuilding exercise which involved among others, General Joop Joubert and others, correct?

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: And the document was drawn up after various activities and experiences of the CCB and a sort of an evaluation of activities to date and a forward planning for the next year, am I correct?

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. Now when the state of emergency was put into effect on the 12th of December - the 12th of June 1986, what was the position with regard to the CCB as a structure with the announcement of the state of emergency?

MR VERSTER: We had offices at the Special Forces head office and certain facilities external to Special Forces but we functioned from the bases of Special Forces.



MR KHOISAN: Now during the state of emergency there was, what is referred to in the lexicon of the police and the military at the time of a: "Hoof Opdrag", are you familiar with it?

MR VERSTER: No, I have no opinion regarding that.

MR KHOISAN: Maybe let me just put you in the picture. On the 5th of June 1986 - and I'm just putting into the record, it's not a document you have before you so I'll just summarise and you can check it, I can show it to you at some other point. Essentially the joint security staff: "Die Gesaamentlike Veiligheids Staf" drew up a document on the advice of the State Security Council about how the state of emergency was supposed to be handled, it was on the 5th of June.

And it was the basis, shall I say, for how the state of emergency was going to be handled by various branches of the Security Forces which included National Intelligence Service, the South African Defence Force and the South African police and all it's sub-branches. Now I'm assuming that Special Forces would have been an integral part of that. But one of the things that is very important about this document: "In hierdie Hoof Opdrag", the Executive document that was sent down, is that the document is very clear that there is not just a support of the military for the police but in a sense a dove tailing co-operation, "n samewerking" and as one of the - I believe you were a staff officer at that time, as one of the officers at that level in 1986, how would you have responded and how did you

respond as a senior man, to the state of emergency and what were the two or three or five things that you remember that had to be done in respect of effectuating the state of emergency from the side of Special Forces and particularly the CCB where you were?

MR VERSTER: Chairperson, at that stage, as we have said yesterday, I had already began to function with the CCB. We were called in by the Chairperson and some of my officers had to be deployed to the police and they co-operated with the police and it was these aspects which led to my application for amnesty.

That was our involvement regarding the documentation. We did receive certain instructions and orders. Perhaps these documents existed in the headquarters but I'd never laid eyes upon the documents myself. The General, in reference to the documents, instructed us to co-operate with the police and that was our involvement.

MR KHOISAN: So, would I be correct to assume that the state of emergency of June 12th 1986 marked a different period in terms of the manner of operation between the military and the police, particularly the offensive element within the military like Special Forces, your grouping the CCB and for instance the Security Police which essentially had the mainline function of dealing with the political upheaval of the time?

MR VERSTER: There was always a co-operative function between the different powers. It was also contained in the law of that time but at that point in time, as a result of the state of emergency there were specific structures which were combined such as those who were deployed, after which they co-operated and in terms of the general climate in the country it led to greater budget for our development.

And if you look at the documentation you will see that because the onslaught became greater the state of emergency was announced and that led to greater development of the security aspect.

I wouldn't say that it was a new era simply because of the announcement of the state of emergency, it was just an intensification of the security aspect of the State which led to more people co-operating with each other.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. Colonel Verster, you told us yesterday that in your position as staff officer you also supplied equipment to individuals.

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. Now can you refer to Annexure A, "Aanhangsel A" of this document. This aspect of lessons learnt ...[inaudible] and maybe you can actually just put it into the record for us there. You can give us that point 1, just A - D so that we can just get - okay.

"Networks should be developed on a limited basis. No black operators from the 5th Reconnaissance Regiment function better than the average level. Four men, 2 x 2 Espionage Team per region to be grouped together"

Now I'm going to ask you Mr Verster, this "Jaar Beplanning" comes after the sharpening of the offensive against what was termed the enemies of the State because the first page of that "Hoof Opdrag" that I referred to earlier, and I will give it to you before the end of the day, refers to the same definitions of the enemy as you have here in this document "BSB Jaar Beplanning vir 1987".

In terms of this particular thing it marks the sharpening of the actions against the enemy. Now two things. One, on your side you were responsible I guess for Wits Kommandament, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: It was deployed to the Security Police but I was not responsible for it.

MR KHOISAN: But that would be your area, your theatre of operation as such. Now, would Wits - would your theatre of operation include Soweto?

MR VERSTER: I'm not certain whether it was included. I definitely had discussions with the police, not much came from that because we felt that the police hadn't planned properly. I basically ignored the suggestions or the comments that they had.

MR KHOISAN: In terms of - and just to be clear, Commandant Naudè at that point went to Pretoria, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: At that stage it was so.

MR KHOISAN: We will come back to him in a second. But now you had the responsibility for what I would term the greater Johannesburg or Witwatersrand area which may or may not have included Soweto. But did you at any occasion have liaison with any intelligence, police intelligence satellite instrument that was based in Soweto at that time?

MR VERSTER: It may have been during the meetings that I attended but not on any personal level.

MR KHOISAN: And in the ambit of the Wits Kommandament or the Wits operational area, the Witwatersrand operational area, there was an existing Joint Management Committee because one of the important parts of the executive order, and after 1986 it became functional, is that the Joint Operational Centres, the Joint Intelligence Centres and the Joint Intelligence Committee, they became a functional part of how things were conducted on a day to day basis.

MR VERSTER: I'm aware of that but we functioned externally to those structures. We were part of the National Security Management System. Our attempt was to not have any contact with the broader general aspects of the South African Defence Force on the uniform side and also with regard to their structures and their offices.

At times, because it was a state of emergency - and if I look through this document, this was already at the end or during the latter part of 1986, so what this means is that it was merely productive planning to prepare for the following year to correct certain errors and that was the normal procedure. So we were not actually part of the broader security system.

MR KHOISAN: I was never suggesting that. We already squared that point yesterday, that the whole job, the whole function of the CCB was not to be official as such. Not to liaise with or be up front, you didn't walk around in uniforms with your medals and lapels, you were dealing with a certain type of problem and that was your job.

But what I'm talking about here is I'm trying to establish whether the channels of liaison - because you see one of the things that is very clear and that emerges time and time again is that - and even from the trend of your discussion and from amnesty applications even from your Commanding General how things went, is that there was a very clear methodology or position with regard to liaison.

Now you worked in the Witwatersrand area and so essentially you would have dealt with targets in that particular area or resolving problems in respect of targets or potential threats in the Witwatersrand area. And I'm trying to establish from you now whether you set those networks up yourself. Now

you had general responsibility for an area, how many people worked with you in that area of operation from your side?

MR VERSTER: I think you are misunderstanding the situation. During the build-up to the state of emergency in 1986 there was a short period of time when there was a lot of unrest and we had to co-operate and support the police and that led to a number of meetings between the Generals and certain members of the police.

They formulated the plans and from this the General instructed me to liaise with the police. I engaged in a formal liaison with the police. I know of one particular day at John Vorster Square, I can't remember who was there, but we went to discuss certain unrest issues.

They couldn't give us clear instructions so what they did was to attempt to include us without any kind of instruction so that we would be ready for any kind of future developments. But because the situation went over into a state of emergency a number of weeks later, there was no further liaison again between me and them and after that the normal activities of the Special Forces structures continued.

So I'm not certain, I'm bringing this document into relation in terms of what you're saying but at that stage I was responsible for the structures that you mention in the documents. There was a normal kind of liaison when there was an intensification in the country and after that we returned to

normal procedures and we were involved with annual planning, planning of activities for the following year.

And my function, clearly from the documentation, was not to involve myself too deeply in internal matters because that was the police's ambit. And later on there was a development of a Region 6. These are the development which ensued and I think that that is general knowledge.

MR KHOISAN: But for all intents and purposes the person of yourself and Commandant Naudè and others constituted what would essentially be an internal operational grouping or the functional grouping that could be regarded as the progenitor of what later developed into Region 6 ...[inaudible]

MR VERSTER: That was normal legal management regarding co-operation between the Defence Force and the police. That was the procedure at that point when there was trouble and it did not have anything further to do with the structure. In fact I do not even think that - I think that this was actually during the time that Commandant Naudè resigned and he was not involved with us any longer.

MR KHOISAN: You see now, when I go and deal with what you told us some time ago - and maybe I just want to refresh my memory, I think it's on page 236 or something like that, where you talk about Ribeiro matter. You see the Ribeiro matter is instructive for me and it's an important issue because the people



functionally connected with the Ribeiro matter are people who were Special Forces people.

MR VERSTER: These are the people who were deployed to General Jack Cronjè, who were supposed to work with him and that was in the follow-up during all the unrest. During that time some people were deployed to the Security Branch and they had to co-operate with the Security Branch.

What you are misunderstanding here is that this was from the beginning until approximately middle of 1986. On the one hand it was during the establishment of the CCB and on the other hand there was a state of emergency and there might be others who had been assigned but I don't know of them.

The documents regarding this matter indicate that at the end of 1986 there was a review of the year, what had been learnt, what lessons had been learnt and from that review the annual planning for 1987 emanated.

MR KHOISAN: You see that is what I'm talking about, that this planning cycle is not a planning cycle that occurs in absentia of - as you yourself have told us many times, you're not the kind of organisation as, I think you referred to Directorate Covert Collection and the way plan, plan, plan in circles and without their plan to prevent themselves from taking action.

I think that's the way you - if I'm correct in reading you back to yourself. But you see, the matter that I'm getting to is

that here you have the state of emergency, you no longer just have a support function, the state of emergency marks a new development, a real dovetailing as it were "samewerking", a real co-operation but the co-operation is still uneven in terms of the fact that the SAP has responsibility based on the law for the internal theatre for South Africa.

The military didn't have the responsibility inside but you were an offensive element of the military and you were planning, in respect of the internal theatre, on an offensive basis and that offensive basis - that planning doesn't come in absentia of - it doesn't come disconnected from actual examples, you're pulling from examples from your work.

Or let me put it to you this way, how would you have evaluated your work with your fellow - with the other branches of the Security Forces by the time you drew up this document? What was your evaluation of how things were going?

MR VERSTER: The co-operation with the police always involved the fact that the Defence Force had to provide personnel, equipment, vehicles, roadblocks and such. It was contained in the law that in a state of emergency there would be a certain method of co-operation from civilian assistance to emergency procedures.

The fact that the "...[indistinct] sewe" element was used does not mean that it was actually established. People were deployed to co-operate with the police and by order of the police

certain things were carried out which went wrong and which led to these amnesty applications but there was never some kind of carte blanche authorisation which would bring about a new element in the police which would be responsible for everything that happened in the country, inside the country.

In terms of the state of emergency, it was like any other state of emergency where there would be emergency actions where individuals might have carried out certain actions for which they had not received training.

I can see what you are trying to determine but you are incorrect in your assumption.

MR KHOISAN: Now Mr Verster, you on the one hand agree to this Ribeiro scenario and it is something that - would the Ribeiro scenario or the process which led to the end product of the demise of the Ribeiro couple, have figured in your assessment when you came to putting together the "BSB Jaar Beplanning" document?

MR VERSTER: I don't know what you are saying. All I can say is that from a soldier's viewpoint Ribeiro was a terrorist no matter what else he was. He had been quietly trained and the police informed my people, the police who were responsible for internal affairs.

I'm not sure what exactly their actions were but there were isolated incidents which led to the application for amnesty.

MR KHOISAN: Now I'm not trying to place a judgement on it, I'm not trying to say that they were the wrong targets. I'm just trying to find out whether the act itself, the process of identifying a potential target or targets and the elimination of that target, as you were set out to do in your mandate, whether the Ribeiro matter would have been one of the matters which would have figured in your planning cycle because it's a concrete example of receiving information and getting a job to do and then the job gets done and I'm sure that you as the senior officer must have had some kind of evaluation of that.

And I'm asking you, did that figure in your evaluation when you put together this document "Die Jaar Beplanning" because this is a forward plan based on the activities of 1986?

MR VERSTER: I'm not sure if I understand you correctly but I would like to say is that there were a great number of problems in the co-operation between the Defence Force and the police. The police had a technique where when Special Forces officers were deployed to them they were given the dirty work to do, as my men told me, and they did this so that they wouldn't have to stand there themselves. This led to a number of problems such as people refusing to work with the police.

And to summarise, the Ribeiro incident can be seen as an isolated incident which led to broader problems and so forth in the co-operation with the police.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. Now what about the "Nietverdiend" incident? This is a situation that involved the 10 young people driven in a minibus to the border and then they faced their demise there.

MR VERSTER: I would once again like to reiterate that it was 10 youths who had been trained to plant mines and in the terms of the Security Forces, they had to be eliminated. And that is - it is that group of people who worked with the Security Branch in Pretoria and it was one of the incidents which I came to know of subsequently and there were certain individuals who refused to work with the Security Branch because they had been used to do the dirty work of others.

The planning thereof was absolutely nothing like the structures which I have explained to you, at that stage did not exist. Policemen became policemen in civilian clothes, they had to support the police and do what the police told them to do and because it was a state of emergency things happened and things were taken too far.

MR KHOISAN: But now in that particular incident, if I remember correctly, it involved the infiltration of a group of youths and if my memory serves correctly, in Mamelodi and they were infiltrated by somebody who came to them and presented himself as a commander, as an ANC person who won their confidence, who impressed them, who gave them in a sense, a

direction and eventually leading them to the border was the end product.

But the identification of these people as military targets is only really once that other infiltration operation gets under way. So what I want to ask you is, C Section then is - like in many other instances that we know about, C Section, particularly Vlakplaas at that time, was known - is now known for having infiltrated it's operators among people, winning the confidence of youths, guiding them along the road and the end product would be the demise of these people.

To begin with, they're not military targets as such but once they get going and the idea, this is seeded with them that they could get military training outside etc., etc. And in that incident there was also a question of these people being somehow duped, that they weren't, shall I say doped, that they drank beer which was spiked with some kind of chemicals or stuff like that.

Now, what was the role of Special Forces and what was the role of Commandant Naudè and his people in respect of an incident like that? Would they physically do the job of killing these people straight up?

MR VERSTER: In this case, firstly I don't think it was the job of a Special Forces operative. I repeat, the infiltration was done by the police. The information, that was a police activity.

I'm aware of the fact that Brigadier Jack Cronjè said - no, I won't say that he actually said it, but there was the perception which he left behind, which he created and which I saw in the media, that he Jack Cronjè was confessing and crying on television, which I think was quite bad and he pretended or gave out that he did what the Defence Force told him to do, that's nonsense.

The Act provides for co-operation between the police and the Defence Force and that is - on that basis Commandant Naudè co-operated with him and ultimately that incident led to people, as I saw from the documentation, that people or a certain vehicle had to be blown up and the vehicle set alight while the people were asleep maybe as a result of some drug given them which was obtained from a medical doctor's bag.

And they did that and it corresponded with Special Forces - what Special Forces did on the ground and the Security Branch on the ground.

MR KHOISAN: Mr Verster, I think we can probably ...[indistinct] later.

CHAIRPERSON: I've been told that tea is ready and I think we must take it now before it gets cold. Let's resume at half past eleven.

COMMITTEE ADJOURNS

ON RESUMPTION

JOE VERSTER: (s.u.o.)

MR KHOISAN: Mr Verster, back to the document. Now you were on the point of discussing with us certain positions as expressed by, I believe he was a Brigadier at that time, Jack Cronjè in respect of this "Nietverdiend" incident.

I wasn't trying to suggest to you that the Special Forces personnel were responsible for the infiltration or seeding the idea in the minds of this youth that they could go for military training but I am putting it to you and you have confirmed that your people were involved, the end product of how that occurred and how it was interpreted and presented at the end of the day, is that is now appears that your people had to carry the bag for that incident and that is what is causing you some distress.

You see those types of incidents - what I'm trying to get through is your forward planning cycle was not based in absence of concrete examples and I'm putting it to you that your forward planning was based on the assessment of the performance of the structure to date and what had to be done to make this structure effective and operational. Am I correct in my assumption?

MR VERSTER: I would say that lessons had been learnt in terms of how we dealt with certain things, but perhaps that led to actions where we didn't co-operate so closely with the police. So I repeat, previous experience had led to further planning but it did not lead to any great deal of offensive co-operation internally.



MR KHOISAN: Now, the people who were essentially handling the C Section desk at Security Police headquarters and who were only responsible for the activities of structures like Vlakplaas where essentially the police component, if I can put it that way, of what the CCB was, they were walking around in civilian clothes and conducting operations where their role nevertheless until maybe the Harmse Commission, was not really fully exposed, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: Yes.

MR KHOISAN: Now, did you ever have contact at this point with somebody who was at your level in the police side, one Colonel Eugene de Kock? Did you ever have any liaison with him?

MR VERSTER: I knew him. I think he went to Special Forces headquarters once or twice and I think from time to time they drew equipment such as guns from us, and then it was on the instructions of the Commanding General but we didn't cooperate to any great deal.

I knew him from the time when he was in South West and I also knew him after there were a couple of attempts for plannings, for certain actions, cross-border actions but our cooperation was difficult because we didn't work in the same way.

I think the era or period in which Eugene de Kock cooperated with us was actually the period before 1986 when some of the old structures such as "Barnacle" and "D-40", they co-

operated more directly with the Security Police but I did know him.

MR KHOISAN: Yes, in fact Mr de Kock told me personally that there was, at the time they went and pulled the operation in Lesotho, there was even a small Special Force contingent over there in 1985.

MR VERSTER: In all co-operation actions in which we took part there would be information or staff from the police whether it was himself or some of his other staff, it doesn't matter.

Any region in which we operated we would have some contact and communication with the police in the region.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. Now you see, the reason I raised this, and you of course pre-empted me and put the position on the table, is that he did come and pull some guns from you even though they had their own stores at Security Police headquarters.

In fact there was a gentleman there that was so sharp with paper work, he informs me that even if you took a pin out of his stores you had to sign down for it three or four times and he considered that to be one of the things that showed that Security Police headquarters, at least at the stores side of things, was on top it.

But you indicated to us that you, because of your position as a staff officer, from time to time had to facilitate the handing over of logistics to people. Now some of the operations that

were launched by Vlakplaas were operations that involved explosives and de Kock informed me that it was only later that the Security Police developed the capacity to spike their own explosives.

I know there's operation: "00" and other operations that are now known for which people have applied for amnesty etc., where explosives and weapons were used which were essentially tampered with. Did he, Eugene de Kock or anybody at Security Police headquarters, that would be in the form of Jack Cronjè and others, come to you at any time during this period and obtain or place an order with you for spiked explosives or weapons that had been tampered with?

MR VERSTER: No. I was an operational staff officer, my role in such a thing would have been the following: there would be direct contact between Brigadier Schoon for instance and General Joubert and they would then ask us whether we would give them equipment and the decision would then be made. Because Special Forces was a big operation we would go to the stores on a following date which had nothing to do with me, there were other people responsible for that.

My role would be that I would be informed that there was a request or that I had to send people to the stores. I remember on one occasion ammunition had to be delivered, R1 type guns, rifles had to be delivered but I was never involved in any

equipment which I had to procure to deliver to him. I had nothing to do with that.

MR KHOISAN: The CCB essentially never used South African trade mark weapons. That's one of the things you told us earlier. Your weapons and ammunition and explosives essentially were of a foreign type and calibre for obvious purposes, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: Yes, that is so. Our weapons could not be traced back to us but for cost efficiency, training took place using the normal equipment.

MR KHOISAN: Now, what would have been your role at the level of liaison or contact with EMLC?

MR VERSTER: As I've said, if we wanted to manufacture equipment then a request would be directed to the General and to headquarters and once there was a need enunciated for that our planning would proceed along those lines, we would say what we needed.

Thereafter the people who were directly responsible for that would then have direct contact with one MLC and on that basis they would then receive what they wanted.

MR KHOISAN: Now in terms of EMLC, they essentially were what is the Electronic Magnetic Component of the Special Forces, am I correct now?

MR VERSTER: That is correct.

MR KHOISAN: And they would also be dealing with specialised projects like dealing with the issue of the booby trapping of weapons of ammunition?

MR VERSTER: I don't know whether they did it, I had nothing to do with that directly but I know that they developed weapons and electronic equipment such as monitoring, bugging equipment, equipment whereby they could do long distance photography and aerial photography and that sort of thing.

MR KHOISAN: No, but am I not correct to say that - because I believe that - de Kock told me that security police didn't have it within it's capacity in the early period to develop, they didn't have the technology yet in their hands to do their own spiking or tampering with weapons and explosives, so it had to come from another branch and the deduction is that it came from a branch of special forces and the people who were dealing with the offensive side inside and outside the country would essentially have been your people.

MR VERSTER: As I said, it had nothing to do with me, that was special forces head office. We perhaps referred people to the head office. In the period that I'm referring to say '86, I don't know perhaps as far as the beginning of '87, then we moved away from head office, so I didn't even go to head office special forces.

Within those head office there was that specific division dealing with these things and as far as I know it wasn't only

Eugene de Kock, there were also all kinds of other bodies and agencies that for instance requested equipment and stores and so forth. And there was a special section dealing with that, that was the section that you've mentioned.

The presentation would be made by the person who needed these things and then they would talk to the General and he would then channel it to the relevant people.

MR KHOISAN: No but you had a special place didn't you? It was called I think, "Die Skuur" which was near the Pienaars River. I believe that's the place that was pointed out to me, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: That was a training camp.

MR KHOISAN: But it was also a place where weapons and ammunition was store, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: No, that's not true, perhaps equipment was kept there for training purposes.

MR KHOISAN: Isn't that where the limpet mine that was used to bomb the Athlone, the Early Learning Centre in Athlone, isn't that where that limpet mine came from?

MR VERSTER: No, I think it could have come from the police but normally it would have come from the stores of special forces headquarters. "Die Skuur" place was a training base and anything kept there would be for training purpose only.

MR KHOISAN: Now I mean, other people have - the reason I'm trying to get to that is I'm trying to deal with another part and that is the part on 1(b) which:

"Caches to be established on a regional basis"

and we know that the CCB had established caches, this is correct isn't it?

MR VERSTER: That's correct.

MR KHOISAN: And each region, for instance Region 6 now, would be sub-divided and the caches would be placed in terms of various areas which were needed for operations. For instance, Natal would have to have to have it's own, Kwa Zulu Natal would have to have it's own access to it's own weapons because you couldn't go to special forces every time and say: "I need 10 guns, I need five of this, I need three of this", you needed to - and you were looking forward. And what we do know is that the caches were there.

Now from your position and from where you sit and to the best of your recollection, how many arms caches were established by the Civil Co-operation Bureau inside Region 6?

MR VERSTER: I don't know of a single one. My interpretation of caches were regions, let's look at Region 1: Botswana, so somewhere in the Eastern Transvaal there could have been a cache for Region 1 and that related to it's conduct and operation should there be an infiltration from the Botswana side but that had nothing to do with Region 6.

And the type of cache, I'm not exactly sure what you're referring to, but the type of cache simply was directed at the fact that it facilitated quick speedy action and meant that the equipment had already been hidden and ready for use.

I beg your pardon, I don't see it as you've put it as a cache for Region 6, it was on South African territory but it was in respect of the region which it represented.

MR KHOISAN: No I mean, I was more looking at trying to establish - Region 6 would be Region 6 as such and it would have had it's own caches but as you quite correctly pointed out that for instance a forward - a cache for an operation for instance in Region 8 could have been established up in the Northern Cape or some place. A cache for Region 7 could be established near Beit Bridge or something like that.

But I'm asking you a very specific question, I'm asking you, from where you sit and to the best of your knowledge and given the fact that you were the Managing Director of the Civil Co-operation Bureau, and this is a very important point because it goes directly to the concerns that people have in respect of the organisation of which you were the commander, to the best of your knowledge how many caches were physically placed inside the physical borders of the Republic of South Africa?

MR VERSTER: I have no idea. I know that there were more in Region 2. What has been reduced to writing here was not actually carried out in respect of all the regions. And if you are



insinuating that there were caches in the way that the police established caches, established for purposes of enticing the ANC to come and remove it and then they would booby trapped, I know nothing about that.

MR KHOISAN: No I mean, we'll get to that particular question, that's another question that I have but that's further down the line. Because incidentally the same people who discussed the - the same structure which discussed the Ferdinand Barnard fiasco with us, are the same people that also discussed that particular issue with us but the issue of the placing and lifting and tampering of caches.

But I'm talking about the CCB itself. You see the CCB was a forward offensive organisation and a necessary deduction of everything that I've read here about the organisation, is that you cannot have an offensive capacity if you don't have the logistics to make that possible.

You cannot sit here as a soldier claiming to have an offensive capacity and have a pen in your hand, you're not a poet, you're a soldier. Poets have pens, soldiers have guns.

And I'm asking you if you can assist us with this because you see the issue of these weapons is an important part of understanding how this thing was structured, put together and what potential problems could exist in respect of what remains of the structure. Because there are - the document that we've put in front of you there are indications here, and I know that

this document was put together by the Chief Director of Counter Intelligence, Doctor Scholtz, but there are certain points, there are certain things inside the document BSB: "Burgerlike Saamewerking Bureau", that indicate that there are problems that obtain.

You as the Managing Director of this organisation and particular your capacity as a staff officer, former staff officer, somebody that has a very acute knowledge of logistics and how logistics under your control has to be handled, you have to have an idea of caches that are there. You can help us with that, can you?

MR VERSTER: May I give you my opinion. I've seen since yesterday and felt since yesterday that you've asked me several questions and you're not quite sure what question you're asking. And it's clear that these are questions which emanate from National Intelligence and which were conveyed to you to ask me, that's how I see it.

The issue of arms caches, let us take firstly a staff officer. National Intelligence sits behind a desk and they fabricate stories about things that they would liked to have done but never actually did, that is by the way.

Let us take firstly the issue of a staff officer. As staff officer, I had the whole Defence Force at my disposal from a C30 plane to a Cessna in which I could parachutes to be dropped or to drop freight or a cargo anywhere in the world. And you

had electronic parachutes which you could drop 25 000 feet above the earth and you could send your cargo or whatever to whoever you wanted to.

So there was no need to establish caches under bushes like terrorists, if you did so it was in answer to a very specific need. An example of a cache, for instance it need not contain weapons, it could contain water. If you drop somebody in the Sahara desert he couldn't carry water with him and therefore you would airdrop water, you would - from a plane.

So my point of view as a staff officer, all those things could be caches. The military unit would make certain demands as to what they needed and I would then say: "Look I'll give you a bucket for the water and then you go and place that in a cache".

As the commanding officer of this structure it was exactly the same. If somebody said that they were going to drive around in their church suit but at some point he needed a gun or a radio or equipment, he would then just wrap it in an oil cloth and put it somewhere behind or underneath a bush and afterwards upon reflection he would be asked: "Did you hand back your equipment"? and he would say: "No, I actually forgot the radio underneath the bush". He would then go and take it out, hand it in and there would no longer be a cache.

So your story about the threat of the CCB and they've got 25 000 caches all over the county, those are just pure dreams, it simply doesn't exist.

MR KHOISAN: I just want to put your mind at rest. I didn't consult with - I've had very little contact, except in my investigative capacity of questioning people from National Intelligence. We don't take advice from them. There're not the ones who draw up our questions, they are not the ones - I'm sitting here as a layman, as somebody who is reading documentation in front of me and trying to understand a broad picture of what happened in the country and I'm interrogating it.

I look at a document and I see that you're saying here in point (b):

"Caches to be established on a regional basis"

I'm asking you what that was about, I'm not asking you to - I'm not suggesting that you have 500 caches. In fact we are looking into the period of our mandate, the period of our mandate ends in 1994. We're not interrogating you about what you're doing now. We're now saying: "What is Eben Barlow up to"? or "What is "Slang" van Zyl up to"? We're not out there trying to find out whether TRC (Tactical Risk Control) is a threat to the State. That's not our function, that's not why we're here.

But we are here to interrogate the evidence that we have collected and to be able to place on the record your response to

issues that are here. And so just, you know - on another occasion you also tried to associate us with some kind of a rudimentary judicial instrument like a people's court and on another occasion as a sort of sophisticated MK front organisation that are trying to - we're not doing that.

We're not here to act on behalf - we act independently. ...[inaudible] we're not anybody's fifth column. I wouldn't associate myself with being somebody's fifth column but I'm trying to find out from you that. And I'm also trying to find out from you exactly - you see, we have what has come before the Harmse Commission, we have the stuff that we've collected from people, talking to people and we know that there were CCB people around here.

We know that a whole bunch of people got a payout from the CCB, we also know that others didn't get a payout. We know from what you've told us a little bit more but you must help us to understand your structure otherwise the structure will be interpreted as these little stories that are going around because the only thing that we'll have available to us are these bits and pieces of information.

You are the one who is a rich vein of information, you are a primary repository of information in respect of the Civil Co-operation Bureau. In fact I would go so far as to say that you yourself and the person of General Joop Joubert contain most of the strategic and primary information, most of the primary

information in respect of the structure. The rest of the people are scratching around in the dark.

Now if the person who has the information is being interrogated - and if I'm somebody who is engaging as the village idiot to ask you a question that is, according to my meaning logical when I see something about caches, then you must forgive me. I've only been on this earth for a short time.

MR VERSTER: I understand that. I just want to clarify something and perhaps we can expedite things. We referred to it yesterday as well. This document, this Annual Planning was an objective and that means it's your dream for next year, it's not actually a fact.

So if we said that caches were to be established then it's written in a way which is directed at the future. I'm not afraid to say that we established caches but what I'm saying is that it didn't necessarily happen.

A big one for establishing caches was Pieter Botes who in my terms defected and tried to spread all kinds of rumours whilst he had no real experience, he had a lot of dealings with caches here and there. He bought weapons at some stage. I think that is contained in statements.

But caches, that was not a particularly significant issue, it was simply one of the objectives for the next year.

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Magadla?

MR MAGADLA: During the course of the life of the CCB, did you have occasion to receive medals and honours for whatever performances that were regarded as of an exemplary nature? Not you yourself but I mean your group the CCB Special Forces that you know of?

MR VERSTER: Yes, there were cases where we were paid financial bonuses or where the Chairperson would purchase a watch for someone, so financial bonuses were paid although - because we could not bestow honours upon individuals.

Regarding groups, there were cases where individuals were brought together when projects were positively executed and that was not the perception or it was not the case when someone was shot dead, it was more when work was carried out effectively. That would be when the Chairperson would thank me and others for work that we had carried out.

Because it was sensitive by nature it wasn't something which was bestowed along the political channels or for which we would formally receive a medal.

MR MAGADLA: You say that according to your recollection, there wouldn't have been medals or things like that for killing of any person or getting rid of any non-sensical type of activist.

MR VERSTER: No, the rolling function of our structure was the maximal disruption of the resistance and the protection of the sovereignty of the State. It is a propaganda tale to perceive

the CCB as an organisation which is primarily concerned with shooting people.

Shooting, I regard shooting a person as minimum violence in terms or as opposed to shooting 500 people with a canon but these are stories which has flowed over from the Harmse Commission.

MR MAGADLA: Have you personally received any such awards?

MR VERSTER: No, I only received verbal expressions of gratitude. The Chairperson, I'm referring to a specific instance, did thank me personally. I never received any physical payment. The medals which I have received were during the era before I joined the CCB.

Before then I had received a medal for loyal services for approximately 25 to 30 years. I never received medals during a parade. It was given to me very informally, left in my car or given to me while having a beer with someone and so forth.

MR MAGADLA: The group of people who have been mentioned as having been operative in Namibia, the Kalla Botha's, the Marais', the Staal Burger's and those people - now please do not understand me to be saying that: "Have they received awards for murdering Lubowski"?, I'm just asking a question that says have they, according to your knowledge, received any awards for any of their performances within the CCB? - Maybe let's put aside Lubowski.



MR VERSTER: Who is the Marais that you are speaking of?

MR KHOISAN: Choppie Marais.

MR VERSTER: No, Chairperson, I can't recall anything like that. And they were working in that area on a geographically temporary basis. In my answer I would also not like to say that I agree with you because there might be people who are pretending to have been there but were not there, so I'd rather not implicate myself with any of the activities in Region 8 but there weren't any such honours.

MR MAGADLA: During the state of emergency in 1986, did you have anything to do with helping the police in whatever capacity, did you have anything to do in Qwandabele?

MR VERSTER: All that I can remember from a staff officer's view was the Peter Ntule case. That might be what you're referring to. Or with regard to that place I cannot place the activity except that I applied for amnesty because it is possible that I might have received a document on my desk regarding equipment at the Special Forces store which the police were applying for.

The police did make a statement in the media at some point, claiming that I had given the bomb which killed Peter Ntule, to a police officer but that is not true, I did not do that. But as a staff officer I did provide the police with equipment and I only heard subsequent to the fact that it was actually intended for Peter Ntule.

MR MAGADLA: When you say you provided the police with equipment during that occasion, would you also be referring to the bomb, the limpet mine?

MR VERSTER: What I mean is that I provided the documentation, I provided the staff work but I never directly handled it.

CHAIRPERSON: I think Mr Magadla wants to know whether you directly handled it or not. Whether equipment would also include the gun, I mean the bomb that was used, whether it was a limpet mine I'm not so sure, that killed Peter Ntule. Would you have provided that or would your structure have provided that?

MR VERSTER: That bomb came from the Special Forces headquarters. That is what I applied for and what I said just a moment ago was that there was a special division within Special Forces. There was a technical equipment storage place and a document might have emerged or come to my desk regarding this matter.

But the physical handling was directly through the police who came to headquarters.

MR MAGADLA: Would you have had a letter or whatever, a note, motivating for your supplying that weapon? I mean ...[inaudible] the reason for requisitioning for that.

MR VERSTER: No, it was official equipment, it was official documentation. According to the Defence Force policy one was

not permitted to take a document. The only person whom I saw doing such things afterwards was Pieter Botha because he was not connected with the military for very long.

But there were regulations which prevented one from keeping files and documentation. Later when I had formally shifted to the CCB I was turned away. As I understood you, you wanted to know whether I had or have in my possession a document which proves the request.

MR MAGADLA: Yes, partly that is what I'm saying and partly I'm saying that whoever requisitioned for that kind of weapon, would they have explained to you as for it's intended use?

MR VERSTER: That wasn't requested from me, well not in that manner. I've said that in terms of inter-departmental liaison it was discussed with the Chairperson. At this stage we were still incorporated with Special Forces, so any individual would go to the General, discuss it with him and he would then improve however many staff officers and explain to them what the project was about.

And at that stage I cannot remember correctly, but it might have been said to me - I might have been told to see to it that the correct documentation would be in the correct place or that certain individuals might be coming to fetch equipment on a certain day but I cannot tell you precisely exactly what happened but I applied for amnesty in the acceptance of the fact that it may be true.

MR MAGADLA: Had your people conducted - had your people monitored Piet Ntule's movements, activities prior to his death?

MR VERSTER: Not at all. I'm just reminded of it in terms of the previous question, that I must have known about it after the fact because what happened was at one stage a discussion was held by the General in which no member of Special Forces would have been involved in any police action. We didn't even know Peter Ntule.

The equipment was given to the security branch and we were not going to get involved with any of the police activities at that stage. It could also be that we didn't even know that the person was actually Peter Ntule but I am not certain about that.

MR MAGADLA: Subsequent to his death there was a lot of violence in Qwandabele and then one person who is cited to have been at the head of that is Brigadier Lerm, did you have any of your people working together with Brigadier Lerm?

MR VERSTER: I do not know him at all and I don't know if anybody else worked with him.

MR MAGADLA: Now when you had your people in a particular area where perhaps there was violence and things like that, did you have occasion, where there had been incidents of shooting by your people at some person during that time or during the violent period in the townships? Did you have occasion to report to maybe the nearest police station or the police station

where this thing would have happened, that your people have fired a shot or have killed a person or have injured a person?

MR VERSTER: Not at all, I don't know of any such case.

MR MAGADLA: Are you then saying that according to your knowledge whilst things happened in the townships, even sometimes by mistake or whatever, that the police themselves had to shoot and kill certain people even maybe in self defence and the army or maybe your people were there in support, that from their side nothing of that nature would have happened where some shooting would have taken place and they would have to report to the police or to yourself that there has been that kind of shooting at a particular place?

MR VERSTER: No, we had no public liaison during those periods of unrest, we had nothing to do with it.

MR MAGADLA: There is a person by the name Dalu Xlolo Letule, he's from Kwa Zulu Natal and he was an IFP leader, training IFP - what do they call them, SDU's but he had been an ANC MK person but eventually joined the IFP and he was involved in the trainings in the Caprivi and other places. Did you or did your people have dealings with that man?

MR VERSTER: Sorry, is his name Letule, Ntule?

MR MAGADLA: No, it's Letule.

MR VERSTER: I don't know him at all. We had nothing to do with the IFP. That was military intelligence activity and we had nothing to do with them.

MR MAGADLA: You had no focus on the conflict in Kwa Zulu Natal between the IFP and the ANC at all?

MR VERSTER: I know of it but we had nothing to do with it. I am making the inference that any training that was undertaken in the Caprivi was generally known. It could have been said that it was CCB activities but that has to do with military intelligence, it had nothing to do with us.

MR MAGADLA: If this person, the person I've mentioned, were to be saying that he had links with the Special Forces and that in fact he had been supplied with weapons by Special Forces to carry out their own offensive against the UDF and other activists in the area. ...[inaudible]

MR VERSTER: No, I wouldn't say that. He might have been working with another part of the special forces but it wasn't with us, not at all. If anyone could offer proof as to who might have been responsible it would have been illegal.

MR MAGADLA: Did you have any presence or played any role in the Ciskei, former Transkei, former Boputhatswana in those conflicts that took place there?

MR VERSTER: No, never.

MR MAGADLA: Would there be a reason for not focusing on that seeing that it was one of the things that I think would have fallen under your course of duty?

MR VERSTER: No, there were others who had been assigned to those areas. I am not certain of which period you are talking, if

you could refresh my memory? There were never any activities of ours in the Eastern Cape as we knew it.

There was one specific operation which is generally known, I think it was "Operation Cuthson", the release of Mr Sebe. Apart from that, that is one specific activity undertaken or partially undertaken by the special forces and that is all.

MR MAGADLA: The people who you monitored, the people of the liberation movements, did you have any occasion to hold those people in some kind detention for your own questioning of those people about whatever you wanted to know from them? I'm not saying detaining them like the police did but just have them with you and question them or interrogate them.

MR VERSTER: No, we never had such facilities at our disposal.

MR MAGADLA: But you had some of those people whom you actually used as sources.

MR VERSTER: No, we never used MK members as sources. There were those whom we had recruited and if it was someone that we didn't know we trained them on the quiet in a facility but we never had any ANC members who were used as sources of information.

MR MAGADLA: Didn't you have people within these liberation movements in exile, the people who infiltrated there on your behalf?

MR VERSTER: No, we didn't operate that way.

MR MAGADLA: Anyway, I am thinking now of the earlier answer that you gave in connection with, in fact in your statement about your knowledge of - statistical knowledge of numbers of people, percentages 35, 43, 45 53, my understanding of that would be, how would you have that knowledge accept you had people that worked for you there?

MR VERSTER: It may have come from other sources. No, did not have any such people working for me as sources.

MR MAGADLA: Neither did you help any people to leave the country with a view of having them infiltrate the camps and the other places.

MR VERSTER: No, we didn't operate that way, we used other methods.

MR MAGADLA: Finally, the Executive Outcomes, did you have anything to do with those people?

MR VERSTER: A number of them working for me but it is a company which is in existence now.

MR MAGADLA: Some of the people who worked with you or under yourself have left to join the Executive Outcomes you say?

MR VERSTER: Yes, but what has that got to do with the questioning now because this is an official company functioning in Africa at the moment. In the past some of their members did work for me but I don't know what it has to do with today.



MR MAGADLA: It may not necessarily have to do with the company itself but it may necessarily have to do with the personnel, some of whom you say worked under yourself and we do have an interest in all CCB personnel or on all those who had been members of the CCB, members of the Special Forces.

And my understanding is that our purpose here is actually to help the process of the TRC as well and if we did not know where other people are and if you know - we have an idea they may be with the Executive Outcomes. Maybe if you were kind enough to maybe say to us that: "Look some of the people worked with me who are in the Executive Outcomes. We put the Executive Outcomes as a unit or as an institution outside this but the people that you are talking about are so and so and so and so, they are there".

MR VERSTER: You know what my viewpoint is regarding that. Someone like Eben Barlow and others did work for me at that time but with respect, I feel that this is beyond your mandate to investigate a company in general, a company which is functioning currently.

MR MAGADLA: Thank you.

MR KHOISAN: Just to be clear Mr Verster, on the issue of Executive Outcomes, the person of Lafras Luyting he's also - was or is currently also connected with this Executive Outcomes, just to put that on the table, I don't want to pursue this any further. Is that correct? ...[inaudible] I'm just - seeing

that we're just clearing that issue out, both Eben Barlow and Lafras Luyting were both, in one way or another, they are both connected to Executive Outcomes. Is that correct?

MR VERSTER: They used to be, yes. And from what I understand they are not working with them anymore.

MR KHOISAN: Now, you see you said that it was not your method of operation when Mr Magadla asked you whether or not you infiltrated people "de Kock style", I'll put it that way, whether you used the method of the farm Vlakplaas but you didn't use that method and that's very clear.

But the issue is that your mandate was: "Maksimaal ontwrigting van die vyand" and in order to achieve this, as I see in your: "Personeel Plan" - I'm going back to your: "Jaar Beplanning" but in your "Jaar Beplanning" document you mention, and let me get it here correctly, you mention there that you had black operators inside the CCB.

MR VERSTER: That's correct.

MR KHOISAN: And I'm putting it to you that these black operators - you had operations inside the country, that is Region 6, and you also had operations outside the country and you drew this very elaborate plan for us which show us, educates us about the knowledge of how to conduct, strategically and tactically how to conduct the war that you were fighting at the behest and in defence of the sovereignty of the State at the time under the

orders of senior people and at the behest of the politicians up to and including the State President.

And just by the way, the State President and all of them, they knew about your work, right? Mr de Klerk knew full well that the CCB existed. I mean from your - are you on the record with us or are you not? Did de Klerk know about you?

MR VERSTER: I don't know if he knew about this, I don't think he knew anything as far as I'm concerned, at all. He shouldn't have been paid.

MR KHOISAN: Because during the Harmse Commission you wrote there was a furious flurry of correspondence, some quite embarrassing to the South African Defence Force at the time, in which you stated your position very clearly. Am I correct?

MR VERSTER: Yes, that is true but that was after the closure of the CCB.

MR KHOISAN: Yes, but in respect of the Harmse Commission that flurry of correspondence relates to the fact that you were basically telling them that: "Listen here Joe Verster and the people under my command, I'm not going to carry the bag for you".

And I might - as you've already noted, I'm quite a novice at this but I just want to get that clarification. Why did you feel so acidic towards the SADF and it's then leadership?

MR VERSTER: Because they didn't execute or act what was expected from them as Generals. Leaders should be as far affront as possible, not hide behind the bush.

MR KHOISAN: And in respect of the politicians, the undercurrent because the letters to the Generals, but the undercurrent of that flurry of correspondence between you and the leadership of the SADF is - the sub-text is extremely thick because you're basically telling them that they're in the same camp as the politicians who want to hang you out to dry, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: Yes, that's true.

MR KHOISAN: But in terms of the war that you conducted, it was an extremely dangerous war and black South Africans were used by you. They were not used, they were recruited and they - you're quite right to say you didn't work the Eugene de Kock style because you worked on a more professional style, they were actually trained workers, they were trained according to the CCB line and they were operational and as such, would I be correct to assume that these trained workers of the CCB, not ex-MK people but trained black workers went and conducted a major part of the work or conducted part of the work which should have been, as you put it in this document here, point (K2): "infiltrator".

Now you wouldn't really use an Afrikaner to go and infiltrate a Sotho speaking detachment of the ANC, would you now?

MR VERSTER: Yes, that's true. Yes, we did, of course we used blacks.

MR KHOISAN: So you used blacks.

MR VERSTER: That was not to infiltrate them, that was not to - we didn't try and become the ANC, it's to liaise, co-operate, to work with them, to sell goods to them, to be drivers, to be businessmen, put up shops in the vicinity and that sort of thing.

MR KHOISAN: No, I'm well aware of that. I get a sense from your travels, particularly in Zambia I believe that - and other places, that I get a sense, see it in: "Die dagboek" of Christo Britz that there's a lot of businesses that are mentioned here.

So it seems that the CCB was acting out its function which - essentially it was a business, it was in the business of defending the sovereignty of an established state against an advancing enemy.

Now the use of these black members, would I be correct to say that there was occasion when the job had to be done and to get inside there they had to camouflage themselves periodically for a small period of time as the ANC?

MR VERSTER: There could be incidents like that.

MR KHOISAN: You see and that's what I just wanted to clear up in respect of the point. I think that that's how Mr Magadla

was beginning to lay out the point. It wasn't that you were using a Eugene de Kock style but you had an objective, you sent people in, they had to get in, you had a front story, a cover story, you do your job, you get out.

It could well be - and as you pointed out that on page whatever of an earlier interview with us, where you said that you had the mandate to recruit anybody from a street merchant or - no, you said you had a mandate to recruit anybody from a homeless person: " 'n straat boemelaar tot 'n Staats President". That was your scope, the sky was the limit and the earth was your ground.

In that respect, was there any occasion for you to leave any of your operators behind for a more longer of medium term mission within the ANC?

MR VERSTER: No, I cannot recall any such incident now.

MR KHOISAN: You say you sold the ANC some weapons?

MR VERSTER: Not that I know of.

MR KHOISAN: But didn't you just tell us earlier, a couple of minutes ago that you sold them some - you'd do business with them?

MR VERSTER: Yes, but I never sold anybody weapons, I'm not sure if you ...[intervention]

MR KHOISAN: No, not you, I'm not talking about you. When I'm talking about you, I'm talking about you as the incarnation, you as the person, the representative of the Civil Co-operation

Bureau. I'm not - this is not a personal question to you but this - let me put it directly, did the CCB do business of any kind with the ANC in the furtherance of it's objectives?

MR VERSTER: Not that I know of.

MR KHOISAN: Maybe I have to review the record after lunch but I distinctly heard you say that you had some businesses and stuff like that and you'd do business with them and liaise with them. And I'm trying to find out if you ever sold them a bag of goods of one thing or another and if you sold them an ice-cream or you sold them an AK47 or you sold them a redeye missile, it's the same thing. So not to your knowledge?

MR VERSTER: No, not to my knowledge.

MR KHOISAN: Okay now Mr Verster, when we deal with the fact that in 1986 you were in - you had the area of responsibility of the Witwatersrand, did you ever have to deal with the person of Winnie Mandela, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela?

MR VERSTER: ...[inaudible]

MR KHOISAN: Did the CCB have anything to do with Winnie Madikizela-Mandela?

MR VERSTER: Not at all.

MR KHOISAN: I see. You see the Madikizela problem is something that is - and we have collected a wide range of information, the Winnie Madikizela problem is a problem that was discussed quite on high. Would it be correct to assume that the person of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela would have been a

discussions/talking point of the security forces at the level that you were at?

MR VERSTER: Yes, I think so.

MR KHOISAN: And in what respect would she be a talking point?

MR VERSTER: Just as a radical, a well-known radical at that stage in terms of the present government.

MR KHOISAN: And as somebody who also had some association with a sports enterprise, a soccer club?

MR VERSTER: We never had anything to do with that, not the CCB. I didn't even - I know it now because of the media.

MR KHOISAN: But did you know that - did you ever have anything to with them? Because we talked about this "Nietverdiend" incident and de Kock has also come forth and made his position clear and we do know that the security police considered her: " 'n teiken, 'n vyand van die Staat".

And she was in fact more than a ...[indistinct] and a "voorbok", she was somebody who was a real thorn in the side and I'm putting it to you that it really makes it difficult for me to understand how a person like Dullah Omar, J. Naidoo, Frank Chikane and others could be targeted by the CCB.

And the major thorn in the side of the State at that time, Mrs Mandela, sort of escaped the - it sort of defies logic that Winnie Mandela wasn't put as one of your targets.



MR VERSTER: I think I've - let me start at the beginning. I think I've said this on quite a few occasions, I don't expect you to believe this. I suppose it's not acceptable for you but there was a Region 6 which was developed and a certain number of policemen started working for us.

The policemen who worked for us started coming forward with names of individuals which according to my knowledge at the time, probably came from the police. It wasn't the CCB's primary function to do that kind of thing. In my view it was a secondary activity of these policemen whilst they were busy to slowly link up with the CCB.

So, the direct targets which you still keep repeating and referring to as if the CCB was far more active internally than it actually was, from that it appears to me that you still accept the story that came forward during the Harmse Commission, namely that the CCB ran around the country murdering people and acted like a hit squad.

If I made a mistake, it was perhaps that I said let the police run around and let them try and come up with names of people that they want to investigate, my argument was that in future you could just tell them to forget about it.

My task was to look at the infiltration into the country from various regions and to try and ensure the safety of our borders and to try and stop the enemy from entering the country.

Now from the questions that you have put to me it seems to me that you still believe that we walked around doing the work of the police. I'm not saying that there were no incidents for which we were not ordered to co-operate but all those remarks relating to Omar and the rest and Winnie Mandela now, all I can say is that it was not our policy.

It was an incorrect perception that the members of Region 6 had of their task and I assumed responsibility for their mistakes because I don't want to disown them and that does not mean that I agree with everything that they did.

So Winnie Mandela had nothing whatsoever to do with us. I can see that I've planted a seed in your mind, so let me say this: in 1986, arising from an instruction from General Joubert, I went to John Vorster Square and there was a meeting attended by some policemen at which it was said that there was trouble in Johannesburg and the environs and: "Are you prepared to help us here and there"? and we said: "Yes, we will help".

One of the policemen said ridiculous things like: "Take a pistol and go to Wits University and just shoot a couple of people" and I said: "That's nonsense, forget about it". I went back to Pretoria and I never saw policemen again. There were no further joint operations with the police, I didn't do anything along with the police. There were no other targets which they gave us, nothing.

MR KHOISAN: But Mr Verster, the way I look at it and the way I see it, it's not something that - you see I'm not rushing around. The way I look at it there are some people who allege that the Harmse Commission was a cover-up.

There are other people that allege that your organisation wasn't totally forthcoming in terms of providing documentation. There are other people who claim that people like Crappies Engelbrecht and Basie Smit and a whole range of policemen didn't do the right thing. There are people who say that there - are people who are running around here who are saying that F.W. de Klerk used the Harmse Commission as a political instrument.

All of those things are filtering through our ears. But when I'm talking to you about the person of Winnie Mandela, it's not just Winnie Mandela. When I'm talking to you, I'm talking to you in respect of a document in front of me, especially in respect of point 10 of that document which is:

"Teiken Benadering - 1987"

("Approach as far as target is concerned")

That is point (a) and then point 1 and 2 of that and your definition or potential targets in your: "Jaar Beplanning" or shall I say your "Wish List for 1987" because you told that - you actually told us that this was not - I shouldn't necessarily accept this as fact, I should accept it as your "wish list" for the CCB would like to be doing in 1987.

And when I'm discussing the Winnie Mandela problem in respect of Frank Chikane or any other problem, for me I'm discussing it in terms of the documentation in front of us. I'm discussing your work. I'm not going through Doctor Stals' stuff, this is not Doctor Stals.

And by the way, Doctor Stals if my memory serves me correct, was on the Counter Intelligence Committee of the Coordinating Intelligence Committee which should have been a nation-wide super structure dealing with intelligence from all branches of the intelligence community and he'd shared a sub-Committee in that.

But when I'm talking to you about this document, I'm talking to you about your document. This is the document you wrote. And I'm looking at here you wish list for 1987: "Teiken Benadering" and "Teiken Benadering" in my view, in my simple translation would be basically putting your - who are we looking at as the potential, who would we identify as the targets for our work, how will our work be conducted in 1987.

So you have here the people who would be the leadership of the UDF, the South African Communist Party and the ANC. Those would be executive members, that's point one. And number two would be Radical Leadership figures inside and outside of the country in unions, in churches, in political organisations, in education and in front organisations.

Now for me the person of Winnie Mandela this being that has been so talked about and who has been sanctified on one level and demonised on another level, but who exists in and of her own right in the body politics of South Africa would fulfil at least two or three of these things, of these categories here because she was somebody that could not really be missed in terms of "Teiken Benadering" in terms of setting out targets.

She was also somebody who according to your definition, of whom the enemy was, would have had contact with military organisations in respect of the SACP. At that time she also had - she also would have had a bunch of young people around her which later developed into a soccer club I guess and so forth and so on. So I'm putting it to you Winnie Mandela is but one figure, maybe I gave you the wrong name, there I should have used another name but when you put together this particular section, point 10, would you have discussed a list of people who would have fit into any one of these categories?

You see, that's what we're talking about here. We're not talking about anything else, we're talking about your work. And I'm asking you whether you would have made a practical list that goes with this?

MR VERSTER: You see you ascribe everything to the CCB because you're still of the impression that Diana's death was probably the work and the job of the CCB. But the fact of the matter ...[intervention]

MR KHOISAN: Mr Verster, I have to tell you I take very strong exception, you know, I mean I take this comic banter between us but the thing is that you know, this is a very serious exercise that we're trying to get through. When I'm asking you a question I'm not going to - you see, I think that putting me in the category of these neo-fights out here who are walking around here who think that Father Xmas still exists and stuff like that and who think that whatever, what you put that the CCB was responsible for Diana's - you know, can you just leave that because you see, then we're going to get on the wrong side of each other.

What I'm trying to do here is in fact very serious because there are people who would say out there that if they discussed a concept, why didn't you put the question. Executive members who will come to this TRC and will say: "Why didn't you go point by point of the list of all the people who were leadership figures in the UDF to ask him: "Did you have a project on Trevor Manual, did you have a project on this and that person, did you have a project on Terror Lacotta, did you have a project on Jonathan de Vries"?

If we go through leadership figures, they will ask me: "Did you ask them, did you have a project on Joe Modise, on Tito Nkobe, did you have a project on Chris Hani"? They will come to this organisation because at the end of the day it is not you that has to account for this proceeding, it is us and I'm not

- I mean, I might be light-hearted about this but for me to sit here and discuss these matters with you is something that I consider a very serious thing.

We are here because we are trying to get through a job, a job which you don't like and which we don't like but nevertheless it's a job that we have to do. So please you know, I would ask that you retract that remark about me associating the CCB as being responsible for Princess Diana's death. I do not, number one, support this institution of the royalty you know. I have my own political orientation which I'm not going to discuss here with you ...[intervention]

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Khoisan, I think you have made the point and I'm sure we'll take the remark back.

MR WESSELS: Mr Chairman, I think we're going off the point now. Perhaps we can get back to the questions and Mr Verster will answer the questions. I'm sure that there's nothing personal intended by these two here ...[inaudible] in this regard.

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Magadla?

MR MAGADLA: Still in Qwandabele. On the afternoon of the death of Peter Ntule, he was found to be blown up at about 2 o'clock in the morning and say 5 o'clock, 6 o'clock, 7 o'clock people were milling around there collecting pieces of his remains, some of which were hung on bushes there around that place.

After all these pieces had been collected they were taken to some mortuary somewhere to some - but that afternoon there was a braai outside Qwandabele on your way to - between Bronkhorstspuit and Danielton. There is a resort there, I think it's Ben something resort, there was a braai there, a big braai, people from Pretoria, Generals and Colonels and people from there came for that braai. Now does your recollection of that thing say to you that perhaps even you as a person attended that braai or if not, any who represented your group attended that braai?

MR VERSTER: I don't know anything about it, I had nothing to do with it. I don't even know that there was such a braai.

MR MAGADLA: Okay. I was just asking that question because I definitely know there was that braai and in fact I saw some of the people who went to that braai. But anyway, I just wanted to find out whether you were there or some of the people that worked with you were there because from that there would then have come some questions that would have actually enlightened me on certain things.

MR VERSTER: Is there anybody that says that I or one of my men were there? Because if so, then it would be very easy to get such a person here in front of me. I really wasn't aware of that.

MR MAGADLA: No, it's not from anybody who says so, it's just from me who knew there was that braai. It's not from having heard it, it's personal knowledge of the fact that there



was a braai where Generals and everybody were there either to celebrate the death of Ntule or to the death of Ntule or something but it looked like it was something that sort of celebrated that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON: It is the stage at which we must go and take food. I don't know if it is a braai but we can go and take food. We will adjourn for lunch and come back at 2 o'clock.

MR WESSELS: Mr Chairman, may I just enquire until what time we're going to sit today because we do have certain flights that we need to take this afternoon.

CHAIRPERSON: Well the matter was raised with me after the tea break. We should have a short day today. I don't know whether Mr Khoisan and Mr Magadla, but I have also indicated that it would in our interest if we had a short day, 3 o'clock or at the worst 4 o'clock.

MR WESSELS: ...[inaudible]

CHAIRPERSON: Is it too late?

MR WESSELS: My attorney says half past three would be as much as he seems able to last Mr Chairman.

MR BOSMAN: We were late the last time.

CHAIRPERSON: Were you? Let's see how fast we can go. I suppose we'll just cover the areas which we think we have not canvassed. Maybe we should come back at a quarter to two? Let's resume at a quarter to two.

COMMITTEE ADJOURNS

ON RESUMPTION

JOE VERSTER: (s.u.o.)

MR KHOISAN: Thank you Mr Chairman.

Mr Verster, just a question in respect of ...[indistinct] maybe we can begin there, in respect of the disbanding of the Civil Co-operation Bureau. From where you sit and according to your meaning, what in your view occurred: (1) with respect to the process of disbanding and what according to your interpretation of how events went, were some of the problems attached to the disbanding of the Civil Co-operation Bureau?

MR VERSTER: With the disbanding of the CCB, I think the biggest problem was firstly - well, to disband is not contractual, it happened in such a manner that it was made that there was no personnel or staff plan or financial procedure which had to be followed.

It is also my opinion that the entire process of intimidation by the former government politically as well as by means of those who were directly involved with it was executed in such a fashion that the basic rights of the people concerned were not taken into account. So comprehensively I would say that those were the major problems.

MR KHOISAN: And in terms of the personnel who were operational and in the field at the time, what was your view and what is your view of how that was handled logistically?

MR VERSTER: I think that it was very weakly or badly managed. What happened was that because I had been removed from the closing of the structure I had no access to all the individuals and I could not execute my managerial duty by accessing all those concerned so I think that there are many of those who were situated in the outer circles who were handled by other people and who did not receive their rightful packages or that which they were justified in receiving, which they were entitled to.

I think that it was attempted to manage them as if they were part of the military and try to enforce and apply military regulations on them. So the only reason why an eventual compromise was achieved was because we had to take the former government to court and through that court, or by means of the court procedure they finally conceded.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. Am I correct when I say that about 30 people - was it 30 people who were attached to that particular court proceeding?

MR VERSTER: I think it was approximately 23, a group of 23. There might have been a number of individuals who joined later.

MR KHOISAN: And according to your understanding and your meaning, the other members of the then existing CCB did not get their packages? They didn't get paid out for their work from which they were no being removed?

MR VERSTER: I think that there were those who were situated in the outer circles to whom I have shown sympathy because they were not treated in the appropriate fashion and because they did not understand or have access to the staff plan, for example one who was in the outer circles had to feel that there was someone looking after his interests and it wasn't that way. But in terms of those who were conscious members and other managers who had access to the contract and as a result of intimidation gave in, they do not have any sympathy from me because they had the opportunity to participate in that which was necessary to observe our contracts.

MR KHOISAN: Back to the question of numbers. At the time that the CCB came to an end, and you were the Managing Director and can probably help us, according to your meaning how many conscious and unconscious members did you, from what you know, have under your command?

MR VERSTER: I would not be able to provide a specific answer, merely a reasonable indication and also because one is never sure of what kind connections the unconscious members had with others but I would say in the vicinity of 185 conscious members and then approximately over 200 unconscious members. But we must comprehend that there might have been other connections.

MR KHOISAN: In terms of the projects, many of which were active, at the time of the disbanding of the CCB there was

logistical problem for you, is that not correct, in that you were physically removed from the structure?

MR VERSTER: That is correct. I did not have access to certain projects so I could not have finished them off myself.

MR KHOISAN: Which competent authority was then appointed to assume responsibilities in your absence in terms of closing down the projects that had begun on under your watch?

MR VERSTER: I think that there are a number of variations. At one stage they attempted to point the head of the military which didn't work, at another stage it was staff officers from the Special Forces who were appointed to take over some of these tasks and then at an even later stage, after the court case, a financial staff was appointed from the head of the military, but it wasn't operational, it was purely administrative.

MR KHOISAN: So according to your meaning, anybody who suggests that after the official disbanding of the CCB that there were CCB projects still proceeding is not telling the truth?

MR VERSTER: I don't know if I could say that but according to my knowledge there are no longer any projects. I don't know if there were other projects which were transferred to the army.

There are certain projects of which I don't know what happened to these projects but I do not know of any other projects which might still be in existence.

MR KHOISAN: But as late as 1992, would you agree that there was still CCB projects that were going forward?

MR VERSTER: No, I don't believe that there were any projects.

MR KHOISAN: Then how would you know that if you were removed physically from the structure and in fact decoupled from the process?

MR VERSTER: I cannot imagine that any operational project - there might be some kind of business project or certain other projects which were transferred to other individuals but no operational project is or was in existence, I would have known about it.

MR KHOISAN: Okay, you've provided testimony earlier in this proceeding to the effect that you've emphatically that the CCB did not have Michael Lapsley as a project. Was there at any time according to your knowledge, surveillance done on Father Lapsley?

I just want to clear it because you've already told us it was - that you guys were not responsible for the bombing of Father Lapsley. I'm just asking: Are you aware of any of your operatives having done surveillance on Father Lapsley?

MR VERSTER: I myself did not know him at all. Whether or not there was any monitoring of people in general, in the community, in the intelligence community, who may have had some or other connection from the previous era.

MR KHOISAN: And just on a technical point Mr Verster, seeing that you're not going to discuss with us or share with us

projects that were conducted in the outside, I just want to get a procedural matter clear because you've talked about channels etc., etc. Was the Department of Foreign Affairs ever utilised by your structure in the day to day conduct of work or in the conduct of any operation that you know about?

MR VERSTER: No, except in terms of greater planning where I later heard in the Security Council that there was a foreign affairs element involved, but we had no further connection with them apart from their reactions in the media to activities undertaken by the Special Forces.

MR KHOISAN: So you can emphatically state that they didn't even play any facilitating role in respect of projects of the Civil Co-operation Bureau?

MR VERSTER: Our order was not to have any kind of connection with other organs of the State.

MR KHOISAN: Some newspapers here a couple of days ago, in February, an Afrikaans newspaper printed an article which said that:

"CCB doctors tested guinea pigs at the bases"

...[inaudible] the view here is that the CCB in late 1980's was at a police, using a police base near the Botswana border to test chemicals on certain people and that members of the 7th Medical Battalion were involved with that and that there was - the view is that that was part of a CCB project. Do you think that this is fiction or do you think it could be true?

MR VERSTER: It is not so at all. The CCB had no doctors who were conducting research, there was no connection with medical staff other than the ordinary medical activities where if one needed a doctor for a military operation or medical services.

There was no project, any CCB project where any tests were undertaken on any person. That is once again a case of twisting the truth which wants to make the CCB appear to be something that it was not.

MR KHOISAN: Okay, now in respect of your logistics, when the CCB closed down what was the state of your inventory? Did you conduct an inventory of stuff that was sent out, stuff that was received back, documents, weapons, etc., etc., and what is your view on that auditing procedure if it was conducted?

MR VERSTER: The auditing of the CCB in it's final stages was actually quite a successful undertaking and if I have it correctly there exists documents where we are congratulated for the successful execution of our tasks. However, the media made it appear that it arose, in light of our audit, that there was disexpenditure. During the closing down of the CCB and the retirement of General Geldenhuys, the audit was undertaken by the Auditor General and insofar as it was possible before I was prohibited from our camp, all equipment was handed back.

But regarding that final process after the audit itself, I do not have any knowledge because I had been prohibited from the premises but I know that a further structure was created where



the remaining equipment was stored and I don't know what happened after that.

MR KHOISAN: It wasn't stored, you said it was: "ingesamel", that it was collected, is that correct?

MR VERSTER: Apart from the audit I'm referring to the physical collection of equipment.

MR KHOISAN: Then how would you respond if I put it to you that the gun which had been issued for the planned murder of Advocate Dullah Omar is still floating around Cape Town?

MR VERSTER: I don't know, I was not there to observe it. I don't know if that is the truth.

MR KHOISAN: No, that's why I'm asking you. Because the view is that the weapon that was issued to Peaches Gordon, and as you admitted that a weapon was issued to him before the tablets were issued, the weapon that was issued to Peaches Gordon in respect of the job that he had to conduct which was to kill Advocate Dullah Omar, the view is that that weapon is still in the hands of the Dixie Boys Gang.

And I'm asking you in respect of Region 6 when you closed down - and it goes back to this thing of caches by the way but when you closed down, did you call anybody to say: "Where are the guns which I issued ...[inaudible] that vehicles etc., did you get an accounting from Staal Burger in respect of the logistics for Region 6?"

MR VERSTER: It was general policy to retrieve equipment but one should have to look at the passage of time and see if I was in a position to do so. I don't know and I will reiterate, according to the statements a gun was issued which had to be - I don't know if that was meant for Dullah Omar but I know that that one gun is just a drop of water, just the tip of the iceberg in terms of all the other guns that were issued.

MR KHOISAN: But one gun is - for us the issue here is that that's one gun that we know about. In fact I believe that we've heard testimony in the Investigative Unit in respect of the fact that when Peaches Gordon went and confessed to his intended target before he did that and before his death, he handed over this weapon to another member of the Dixie Boys Gang.

And I'm asking you, that's one gun but as we've come to know, the CCB and all its regions had access to logistics as you quite correctly pointed out, and as the person in charge not only of Region 6 but throughout, did you ever go to or put it to General Geldenhuys and other people that you needed an exact accounting of what went down on your watch and what went down when your watch was ended?

MR VERSTER: There were several documents which could prove that I said that I was not in the position to end the projects, I said that we should look at the time context in which it occurred but if as a result of that weapon, I see it's going in a certain direction as if the MK had no weapons or brought no

weapons into the country and that this is the source of all the violence and the source of weapons in the Cape, in that case I would go and retrieve the evidence which will prove that the MK also brought weapons into the country.

I did not launch any such action but one would have to go and look at the time, when it took place, whether the project was still in operation at the time that I left the organisation.

The evidence exists that I must have been placed in a position which never occurred and that is to close my own structure but I will not assume the responsibility for weapons that are rife in the country. There are many other individuals who are responsible for this state of affairs.

MR KHOISAN: And I will never accuse you of stashing weapons or engaging in acts of purloining weapons that had the property of the State for ...[indistinct] nefarious purposes and I have not associated you with that, what I am saying is that there's one gun. On the question of Peaches Gordon, did it surprise you that he lost his nerve and went and confessed to his intended target?

MR VERSTER: I didn't have any contact with him, I didn't know what he was doing. It's rather vague news to me, I don't know much about it. I don't know him very well at all.

MR KHOISAN: At the time of the Harmse Commission and I mean, you've got this statement by Edward Peaches Gordon, it's Annexure 3 Mr Verster. It's quite a long statement and involves

a lot of different people and stuff but you see the issue of Peaches Gordon brings us back to the issue of Ferdinand Barnard, that's what is interesting for me.

And we've been given to understand that you were aware of the fact that there was a project to kill Dullah Omar and you yourself have indicated that you were aware of this project.

Now here is a man going to admit to his intended target and then later on he ends up at the Harmse Commission and provides the Harmse Commission with a very intense and comprehensive statement in respect of the work he was engaging in while the employ of the Civil Co-operation Bureau.

As you indicated to us you put no - we shouldn't concentrate on the morality of recruiting a gangster to carry out the job, that's not the issue here but the issue is here that besides him there is the issue of "Slang" van Zyl and there are allegations that "Slang" van Zyl may have been given some kind of psychological treatment by his co-workers in the Civil Co-operation Bureau after he went and made an even longer statement than Peaches Gordon.

But this fellow Peaches Gordon, immediately after the Harmse Commission, strangely enough he ends up dead in Cape Town. And I'm asking you now, he's also a fellow who mentions dealing with Ferdinand Barnard and for me the issue of this gun and Peaches Gordon and his death - there are a number of things, this made headlines throughout the country, in fact if

made headlines when you went to the Harmse Commission, Advocate Dullah Omar was a very public figure at the time, and I'm saying to you, did that come across as a problem to you that this fellow went to the Harmse Commission and went and chatted about this and gave this statement?

MR VERSTER: At that stage it was obviously a problem because it involved the exposure of CCB projects. The fact that he had been used as a source, he was never recruited or trained. He was used as a source but I had no contact with him.

And whether "Slang" van Zyl used Barnard, had nothing to do with me either, there was never such an official order. And lastly, if it had been a problem for me I would applied for amnesty. I would have applied for amnesty for this kind of thing if I'd had anything to do with Peaches or anybody else, I never knew him.

The only knowledge that I gained of Peaches, apart from the broader knowledge of a presentation somewhere, comes from documents which were initiated by the Harmse Commission and I had no access to any other knowledge or operations or who managed or handled him, except that "Slang" van Zyl had been allocated the Cape Region and there was no other person in that respect.

MR KHOISAN: I mean but - you're talking about the fact that "Slang" van Zyl may have used Ferdie Barnard but the fact is that according to "Slang" van Zyl's statement and that is for the

record, it's on Annexure 18, page 28 of his statement, point 41. In fact it starts before 41, it's 40 and the last paragraph there:

"After that I asked Ferdie Barnard to monitor Omar during July, August and September of 198(?). I would just like to add that I discussed my suspicion of Peaches with the Regional Manager at more than one occasion"

...[inaudible] in July of 1989.

Now the issue is that, there's Wouter Basson, there's "Slang" van Zyl, there's the statement of Peaches Gordon and there's a statement of "Slang" van Zyl and according to your meaning and your understanding - and I think that there is even a statement of Karl Casteling Botha which may coincide and corroborate some of the stuff that "Slang" van Zyl's talking about, but the position is that - what I'm trying to solicit from you is that when Peaches Gordon did this bad thing and I would probably say it was a bad thing in that the working procedure of the CCB was that the golden rule was silence and here's a man going to chat up secret projects with people, talk about secret projects and let other people know about secret projects that are going down here and he's going to not only tell it to somebody but he's going to ...[intervention]

MR VERSTER: Which date is this?

MR KHOISAN: This is in July of 1989, September of 1989, August of 1989.

MR VERSTER: That was at the time when we started coming forward. That information might have been in someone's possession and I would not have known about it. The fact that Peaches had gone to speak to someone, I could not have had access to that and if "Slang" van Zyl had done so, if he had spoken to anybody - could you please point it out to me where it says that he told his Regional Manager about Barnard or where he told me about Barnard or especially where he told the Co-ordinator Christo Britz about Barnard?

If they had done this in their training, in their training, in their management, no other member may ever have again spoken to a member who had been dismissed. Barnard officially and in terms of the hierarchy was never a member of Region 6. What Peaches did or what Barnard did instead of Peaches or what "Slang" van Zyl did with Barnard and with Peaches or with Staal Burger or with Christo Britz, this I do not know.

It was not an official order and if in any way it was undertaken by any member of the region it was illegal, completely illegal because Barnard was not a member of Region 6, not at any stage.

And nobody was permitted to make contact with him, it was a training order. During training it would be explained to people how to operate within the cell structure and even you are aware that they couldn't have undertaken all these actions. If it did happen it would have been completely illegal.

And I would just like to say that I don't believe something like that of someone like Christo Britz and if anybody else knew, I definitely don't know about it.

MR KHOISAN: I'm just pointing you to what the man said in point 41 of his thing, and with regard to that it wasn't only the talking about it, it was also the fact that there was an operation which involved very high-ranking members of the Civil Co-operation Bureau, that was the bombing of the Early Learning Centre.

And the bombing of the Early Learning Centre led to a crime docket being opened in Cape Town. That crime docket was investigated by Officer Steenkamp and that particular crime docket: "Athlone MR396/8/89 is what also brought down the heat. It wasn't just the fact that Peaches was talking, it was all the stuff coming - literally falling apart.

MR VERSTER: I don't know anything about that, I don't have any understanding of that. I don't know if there is any documentation which indicates how Peaches and "Slang" van Zyl came together or how Peaches and Barnard came together. And my perception is that there were police sources, the very same police that investigated it could have been the same agents who provided the sources to these people.

All I know is that there were broad activities that on ground level people spoke to these people who served as sources and Barnard was one of them.



MR KHOISAN: ...[indistinct] you are quite correct Mr Verster because in respect of the Athlone bomb incident, if I remember correctly, one of the other people who was recruited by "Slang" van Zyl, one Isgak Gakkie Hardien who is mentioned extensively in this statement of Peaches Gordon and he's also mentioned in the statement of "Slang" van Zyl which you have before you, the position was that here Isgak Hardien was a source, he was a source of Bellville Murder and Robbery at the time of his recruitment and I believe there's an affidavit to clarify that matter.

But I'm suggesting to you, I'm putting it to you that Peaches was killed because number one, he talked and number two, because he knew something of CCB operations. And I'm asking you, could it be that somebody in Region 6 might have initiated one of these CCB type projects which resulted in this man's death?

MR VERSTER: No, I don't think that that can be so except as anybody else could have done it, it might have been the police. I don't know what their connection is in that respect, but it had nothing to do with the CCB.

At that stage the CCB for all practical purposes was already engaged in a process of disbanding, we were busy with the auditing and other activities and I have no idea when he was murdered or what happened. I have absolutely no knowledge of

it.

But in terms of the police and members who were working on their own, I don't know what happened there either.

MR KHOISAN: So there's nothing that you ...[inaudible] at no time did you ever hear about anything in respect of an action. But let me put it to you this way ...[intervention]

MR VERSTER: I beg your pardon Chairperson, may I say that just as I had a broad standing and knowledge of other projects, of other similar projects and for which I asked for amnesty for the possibility that I could be implicated in those, I would have in the same way have asked for amnesty for this incident if it was something that I had something to do with.

I want to put it even stronger than you're putting it now to me, I had nothing to do with that, not at all.

MR KHOISAN: And I'm not suggesting that you personally had anything to do with that. I'm asking more for the purpose of understanding how the CCB worked because here you have your people, and this is Carl Casteling Botha, and that is page 9 of Annexure 3, I guess it's Annexure 3 and it's sort of at the end of the Peaches Gordon thing, and we begin the first statement by Carl Casteling Botha.

In Carl Casteling Botha's statement here he also mentions the issue of Ferdinand Barnard. Now there's something very interesting that he mentions and I want to solicit your advice or co-operation on this matter and maybe find out what you think about it. It's the statement by Carl Casteling Botha, it's right at

the end of the Peaches Gordon statement and you begin in Annexure 3, the statement by Carl Casteling Botha - you should have it there, Kalla Botha ...[intervention]

MR VERSTER: Our bundle must have been paginated differently or put together differently.

MR KHOISAN: We put it together, it was put together exactly as it was put together but so that we can expedite I'll read it into the record.

MR VERSTER: Yes, I have it.

MR KHOISAN: There's something very interesting that is mentioned I believe on page 8 of his statement and the front of it reads:

"Athlone: MR396/8/89"

and I want to ask you to respond to this statement that he's making here and that's paragraph 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. In paragraph 9 he says, and I'll read it into the record:

"At the time of my detention Brigadier Engelbrecht along with Brigadier van Rensburg visited me. Brigadier Engelbrecht told me during this visit that I knew that I had to keep quiet. He said that the message was or the message - this message he'd received to convey to me"

MR VERSTER: What about it?

MR KHOISAN: I want to ask you, at that time what was your knowledge of Brigadier - did you know Brigadier Engelbrecht at all?

MR VERSTER: No, I didn't really know him before that time. He then became involved in what I thought was an investigation and he worked with Military Intelligence in these investigations.

MR KHOISAN: Now, to me and to the mind of somebody who is a novice in these things, it appears there that that is - the gentleman who is making the statement is suggesting that there's a cover-up underway or somebody is trying to solicit his co-operation in the cover-up, is that not correct? Would you interpret it that way?

MR VERSTER: No. The way I see it is that there was a structure which existed and which worked for the State and a person such as Botha was arrested and the rest of the Defence Force was trying to protect the structure by means of Brigadier Engelbrecht saying to him he should keep his mouth shut.

It's logical from this statement that he was trying to disclose or make revelations about a covert structure, that's how I interpret it.

MR KHOISAN: Now I mean, would that be the culture? You see that's the thing, you did have a culture of silence in the CCB and in terms of this culture of silence what would have been the necessary sanctions or repercussions of someone going outside of the golden code that you operated under, with the

ground rules that you operated under? If he made disclosures about the organisation or the work of the organisation?

MR VERSTER: The culture, as I think it's also stated in the personnel plan, was that the person could be dismissed and that he could be resettled or re-established elsewhere but initially upon being employed he had to sign this code.

But what you are misunderstanding here or you're making a mistake about is the fact that - well it seems that Kalla Botha is the man who started talking and that led to the problems for the CCB later on but other people did not know about the CCB.

The name CCB was not known in general usage, that was imported by military people or policemen and they tried or revealed the structure of the CCB and that is an entirely different matter, as to why they did that but that was the written procedure to be followed.

I'm just suddenly remembering something, it was also stated in the personnel plan that even if a person was responsible for implicating himself or responsible for revealing certain activities then the system or the organisation still had a responsibility towards such a person because he was operating in a political climate.

MR KHOISAN: A responsibility from getting him to expose himself or his co-workers.

MR VERSTER: If he'd made a mistake and even if he was guilty then he had still to be looked after in terms of the system in which he functioned.

MR KHOISAN: No, what I'm putting to you is - and what I'm asking you Mr Verster, there are indications and people have made submissions before this Commission that the way the CCB fellows were dealt with when they went and were detained - and other people have told us directly, that they weren't tortured to make statements, nobody came there and beat the hell out of them, nobody came there and put electrodes on their genitals to obtain information out of them, and yet these are long sprawling statements.

These are people that you had selected because of their ability to remain cool under pressure. How did it come that they made these long sprawling statements, 71 paragraph statements, 60 paragraph statements?

MR VERSTER: That was one of the greatest weaknesses of the whole system. There were policemen who worked with us, as a result of their access to these people such has happened in this case and it was just as big a shock for me, it was one of our biggest problems that these people were the way they were but some of them like Botha and "Slang" van Zyl were not subjected to any testing to find out how cool they could remain under pressure. I think that was wrong, they acted incorrectly.

But I'm saying to you that some of these people were influenced to make these statements. How pressure was brought to bear I don't know. I was also detained, they tried to get a statement out of me as well and I simply said: "I'm not interested in talking to you". So there were other forces at work here, other forces outside of my control. It may be that some of these policemen were offered other jobs, I don't know.

MR KHOISAN: Are you aware of the allegation you're making against the police, because if that is so and if I follow it's logical conclusion then what you are saying is that the arresting officers and people who checked the docket acted improperly, maybe even violated departmental guideline, literally bribed the witness. Is that what you're suggesting Mr Verster?

MR WESSELS: No. With respect Mr Chairman, it's not the answer that Mr Verster had given. He is speculating as to what the possibilities were and he did not go beyond that and make any allegations against anyone in particular.

CHAIRPERSON: I'll accept that.

Mr Khoisan, maybe you want to rephrase that question if you want to pursue that.

MR KHOISAN: Okay. I want to put it to you Mr Verster that the person of Abraham van Zyl and this one fellow here, Carl Casteling Botha, Kalla Botha was a security police - was he a security ...[intervention]

MR VERSTER: He had been in the security branch, yes.

MR KHOISAN: He was a security police and I mean, it won't take me a long time to get and obtain his Stripe 5 file or - we can probably obtain his personal file, it's probably lying around somewhere in the Commission.

I would assume that these were fellows that were hard fellows because the Brixton Murder and Robbery squad is not easy pickings you know. I mean I - Johannesburg is not - you're not dealing with Hermanus there, you're dealing with a serious place. And the Brixton Murder and Robbery squad is not the kindergarten of police stations, it is in effect one of the busiest places in the land in terms dealing with the crime problem.

And these people, "Slang" van Zyl and the person of Staal Burger was - I mean, he also came out of there and then Kalla Botha was a security policeman. And we all know now that - we've seen some of the stuff that has come out of the security police, the security police haven't emerged as angels from the period of our mandate.

I'm sure that other intelligence structures of other organisations that were fighting might have some of the same problems, but these were people that were practices, they weren't novices in the police department.

They knew what was up, they weren't tortured to make these statements and yet they made these long sprawling statements and there is the statement of Edward Gordon, there's the statement of Kalla Botha, there's the statement of this one,



that one and "Slang" van Zyl and they all are making points here.

And what I find amazing is that all of them could somehow be lying or all of them could be searching in some - running around in some fantasy. So is it your position Mr Verster, or let me ask you, do you think, are you trying - could you suggest to this Commission that somehow these affidavits were obtained in the wrong way? Is that a possibility?

MR VERSTER: I'm a layman in this field but if some of these statements had been taken in terms of Section 29, then they could not be used if these statements were obtained as a result of coercion. They could not be used in a court of law. But my personal feeling is that there were certain forces at work from outside and these forces compelled people to take up a certain viewpoint.

I simply don't know what is fact and what is fiction, I don't know what negotiations took place with any particular member but it was one of the greatest shocks of my life when I found out how these people were talking and telling stories.

CHAIRPERSON: Your reply is to be saying you are not necessarily alleging that third degree methods were used, they definitely made their statements? In other words there is this section in the Criminal Procedure Act where people do make confessions or admissions which would not be acceptable if it is found that they have been made with undue influence.

Are you saying some influence was put on these deponents, not necessarily third degree but influence of one sort or another was put on them which made them write the statements in the manner in which they did?

MR VERSTER: I'm of the opinion, I think I've said it before, that there was definite influences. I'm not sure if it's coming from the police or Military Intelligence but if you see this from a political perspective, what happened at that stage was to push the CCB in front. And how it was influenced exactly I do not know.

MR KHOISAN: And that was just after President Mandela had been released from jail, that that statement was taken. That statement was taken in March 1990.

MR VERSTER: Yes, that is so. By the way when the negotiations started, the negotiations in respect of Mr Mandela's release we were established.

MR KHOISAN: Am I correct if I assume that you were started for the purposes of having a strong position, something out there that could always be used and when ...[intervention]

MR VERSTER: I don't know, this is - I'm just saying that I didn't know, how would I know that there's Mr Mandela in jail? What I'm saying is that we had to start a new system, new organisation and in the meantime somewhere else there's negotiations on it's way, that's our position. I've stopped my

career, my whole military career to go into this at that stage. I'm just saying that.

MR KHOISAN: So they use you and lose you when it's convenient?

CHAIRPERSON: Do I understand that you're expressing some measure of betrayal? In other words, when things started that indicated there had been a negotiations process even the one that started in '86 in jail and in 1990 when Mandela was released negotiations started, are you saying that this came as something as a bolt from the blue and you had a sense of loss because here you are, you had been pursuing certain projects and certain objectives in support of a government which on the one hand was entering into a process that was nullifying the very same objectives that you were pursuing, is that what I ...[intervention]

MR VERSTER: I'm definitely saying that but I don't want it to be over stressed or used because I don't think the present government is better than the previous one, it's just the same sort of thing.

CHAIRPERSON: I understand that is from your part the fact of the matter, do I - because you see let me tell you, part of our having to write a final report has to be driven by what we consider to have been motives and perspectives of those people who were engaged in the struggle on both sides. What were the motives and perspectives that saved certain actions, by people

who were in the armed formations, whether it was in the SAD, CCB, Military Intelligence you name it, or in APLA Umkhonto weSizwe, AZANLA whatever.

And it is useful when certain conclusions can be drawn because I can tell you now I had a great deal of difficulty myself coming into the Commission when I was first nominated because there were things that I just couldn't understand. So the political compromise came at a time when all of us were confused as to what was going on and we have to say things could possibly have been done better.

For instance, general amnesty is on our evidence something that we think could have been done or should have been done, then we should be able to say: from the evidence of a, b, c, d, people who gave us a view of what they thought of the entire process, how for instance you felt betrayed, and you are not the first one, a number of them in Section 29 sessions from all the forces have said: "Look I think something could have been done better" or "If this is the way the politicians have now decided things should be done, then they should have consulted us. They should have taken us into their confidence, the next thing we find is we are high and dry".

And the worst thing that now happens is that when they come to the TRC they state in so many words for the whole world to know that the things that we did in their name were done by ...[indistinct], by people who were bad apples etc. So

that is why I'm not wanting to overstay the case and I'm not trying to compare the two situations, I'm simply saying it is important for us to say: when we look at motives and perspectives, these are some of the things that should be looked at because there's no point in going into writing a report that does contextualise the motives and perspectives of all the players especially people who were in the armed forces.

Mr Khoisan?

MR KHOISAN: Mr Verster, can I just draw your attention to Annexure 10 please? Do you have it Mr Verster?

MR VERSTER: Yes.

MR KHOISAN: Okay, does everybody have it? That's the statement by the State President, Mr F.W. de Klerk - do you have the statement in front of you Mr Verster?

MR VERSTER: Yes, I've got it.

MR KHOISAN:

“On the 18th of November 1992 in pursuance of Mr Justice Goldstone's statement of 16 November, I gave certain instructions to Lieutenant General Pierre Steyn to conduct a full investigation of all of the intelligence functions of the South African Defence Force”

and it goes on - the paragraphs I would like to bring to your attention are 1, 2, 3, 4, paragraph 4 and 5:

“The activities which have now come to my attention point to a process in which political office bearers, Defence Force Commanders and the Auditor General were not fully informed of or very often were misled. I would like to emphasise that only a limited number of persons and a few units are involved. Nevertheless the information at my disposal indicates that a serious and unacceptable state of affairs. This cannot and will not be tolerated”.

and it goes further there, it basically suggests that - you have that statement in front of you?

“Far reaching steps have already been taken to prevent and eliminate such abuses. These include among others the disbandment of the CCB, important changes to the Security Management System, activities of the Khan Committee, intensified political control and greater powers for the Auditor General”.

From the documents we've put before you, from your understanding of the organisation of which you were the Managing Director and constituted the command element, what is your response to the former State President in reference to his statement of 18 November 1992?

MR VERSTER: Firstly I would like to say that this document - I would like to say that this document - the information that I've got is this was written by National Intelligence of those days, this. Secondly I would like to say that it is a total lie, it's nonsense. That paragraph is not true.

I've been audited by the Auditor General, in fact the detail of the financial plan of the CCB, we drew it up from audit reports from the Auditor General and we presented it to the Auditor General, they've changed it and then we had our big presentations as well afterwards and that is how we initiated the financial plan of the CCB, so this is nonsense.

I would like to add that the closure of the CCB mentioned in this document, that is just the final plan of a plan that was made before, let's give them, let's give the future leaders of South Africa the CCB so that they will think that we're busy doing this.

And I just want to say, my work used to be to make conclusions and deductions from facts and fiction, and if you take these documents and I would present this to you then I will pull out of all the documents in your possession, that it is impossible for one small element of the Defence Force to be able to run around like a pack of dogs and it is facts. I will show it to you with signatures and with detail, only the documents that we've got here in front of us. So, this is nonsense.

MR KHOISAN: That did - I mean, we already canvassed that with you in our first session didn't we Mr Verster? Where we put various documents before you in which senior members of the Defence Force signed down, I think one was Brigadier - the Chief of Staff Finances, what's it, Brigadier Raubenheimer and many documents between you. I think I can point to an annexure here, a memorandum here, a couple of memorandums from you: Office of the Auditor General: "Die Auditeering van Smokkel Vondse", that's a document on 1 April 1987 etc., etc.

But the position is not that, we've put the documents in front of you and asked you to verify and you've spoken to the authenticity of those documents and you verified that you went through a procedure. At times I thought that some of the procedures allowed the CCB to engage in what you call: "Struggle Financing" or "Struggle Auditing" because I have found one or two documents here, especially a document that's in the middle of the CCB document written by Major General Klopper, definitely had latitude to do what you had to do.

But the view is that here's the State President saying that you shall be talked about, the State President saying that you and a small group of you are bad apples who basically have brought down the bad name of the military and have embarrassed the political leadership. And you are saying that the CCB, you put it to us now that the CCB was formed at the same time, from what you now know, at the same time that



negotiations were going on. So, would I be correct to assume that the CCB was the battering ram of the political instrument of the day so that they could get the best deal available in the negotiations process? Would that be fair to deduce from what you say?

MR VERSTER: It's partly right that, but I don't - because I know, I can see how your mind is working in the future and I don't want to put it that way. Of course, I'm happy you've got all the documentation, you know what happened to the CCB and all I expected from the whole previous Nationalist Party is to be honest in what they've done and I expected from a General above me to treat these people like a General. And that's - I think you've got it in front of you.

MR KHOISAN: That's pretty much all from my side Mr Verster. I'd like to thank you.

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Magadla?

MR MAGADLA: Thank you Mr Chair, a few things.

You said you had business with the UDF/ANC during those time but what about the PAC and AZAPO? Did you have any dealings with them in the same manner as you did with the ANC?

MR VERSTER: Not at all, not at all.

MR MAGADLA: Why was this?

MR VERSTER: I was under the impression in those days, I was told that the PAC was infiltrated and that they were under

control and we must leave them alone. That is just something that I remember but I had no direct access to them.

MR MAGADLA: Would that have come from the police?

MR VERSTER: No, I think it was coming from Military Intelligence.

MR MAGADLA: Military or Military Intelligence?

MR VERSTER: I think so.

MR MAGADLA: Military or National?

MR VERSTER: Military Intelligence.

MR MAGADLA: That they were under control and not a threat?

MR VERSTER: Ja, the specific areas, I wouldn't say the whole of the PAC but that was definitely a perception at the time that I had.

MR MAGADLA: What about AZAPO?

MR VERSTER: No, not at all. I had no direct - all the - the only knowledge I had of AZAPO was coming from information from the police but nothing directly.

MR MAGADLA: Would they also have been regarded as not a threat to the government as it were? Not effective as any kind of threat?

MR VERSTER: I don't know.

MR MAGADLA: This guy Veenendal, did you have dealings with him?

MR VERSTER: No, I know that it was in the newspapers that Veenendal was also a member of the CCB, it's nonsense, bullshit.

MR MAGADLA: As far as you are concerned he wasn't?

MR VERSTER: No, he was definitely not.

MR MAGADLA: In your work, did you have anything to do with, not gun running but maybe intercepting gun running or handling the situation of gun running?

MR VERSTER: No, never. I think Botes, at one stage he was involved with getting weapons or getting hold of weapons. I saw it in some of his statements but apart from that no other direct - there was no direct projects concerning that.

MR MAGADLA: Finally, your front companies, did you run front companies?

MR VERSTER: Not at all. What we did is, we had a broad perception of a theoretical organisation of regions and within that system people had their own direct jobs, so he had his own business or he had a vehicle or two, no front companies. It was against our policy to have front companies.

MR MAGADLA: Those businesses, when you say: "own" you "own" in the literal sense of "own"?

MR VERSTER: Yes, in terms of the blue and the red plan.

MR MAGADLA: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Magadla, are you satisfied with this? Do you understand Mr Verster?

MR MAGADLA: Yes, I do and thank you.

CHAIRPERSON: Any questions Mr Wessels?

MR WESSELS: Mr Chairman, I've been told by my client that it may be that there's a misunderstanding regarding exactly how the CCB fitted in in the total picture of things and that if Mr Verster made a presentation to you with documents, well not documents but - you've got the documents but there could be a presentation to you indicating exactly how it all fitted in and what the responsibilities were that would perhaps facilitate you in understanding better how all these documents fit in together and how all the different sections of the Defence Force fit together. That will I'm told, take the best part a morning. If you are interested in seeing that then such arrangements can be made from our side, it is possible.

MR VERSTER: If I just can say, I don't want to be known that I'm working too much with the TRC. The reason why I want to do it is purely to make sure that it is not wrongly interpreted, that's the only reason.

CHAIRPERSON: Well, I'm sure that Mr Khoisan is going to liaise with Mr Bosman. I can tell you know that we will be very much keen to have that sort of presentation. We'll just have to find a convenient date. We'll do it quietly in a place perhaps where we can do it at - so Mr Bosman and Mr Khoisan will get into contact with you. Is there anything else Mr Wessels?

MR WESSELS: No, thank you. Yes, may we have a copy of the record of proceedings again? We received the previous one.

CHAIRPERSON: Yes, Mr Khoisan will see to that.

MR WESSELS: Thank you Mr Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON: Gentlemen and ladies, it remains for me to thank everybody who has participated in these proceedings. And I can only remark that I am the better for these proceedings and I think it is because of Mr Verster's frankness. I believe in a person who is frank. I may not like what they say, I may not even like sometimes the manner in which they say it. I also am a person who believes in saying things directly and if in the course of these proceedings I have offended anyone, it has not been because it is in my nature to do so, it's because I'm a human being.

I have never thought that there would be an occasion when I am able to understand, because I think that's our task to understand what is being communicated to me and I think for us who come here having done our own research and investigation and who come also against the backdrop of information that is so much available in the general public, in the media, Mr Verster had endeavoured to let us open our minds to let in a perspective which we may not have, as a consequence of the availability of all that information in the public domain.

I can assure you that we are going to look at the script, reflect on the notes very carefully and I think, as I indicated,

it's one thing to say: "The facts are the following", it's another thing to say: "These are the motives and perspectives that informed those who were playing in the field" and for me that is the most important part.

I have, since I have been in this Commission, come to accept that we may possibly never know what the truth is. We'll possibly know some of the truth, we'll possibly know most of the truth but we may even know all of the truth when trust has reached a stage where people begin to lower their guard because we have made it possible for them to trust that we are not draping them for a horrible end at the end of the line.

I do not know if that will happen within my lifetime, certainly not within the lifetime of the Commission but as I indicated earlier, I live in this country, I don't know any other country, I am not going to go away from this country and I only hope you also have the same determination and that all we have to do is to find a formula that can make it possible for me to visit you and you to visit me without me fearing that you have an agenda or otherwise.

I thank you therefore for having been patient with us, putting up with out antiques and watching me listening with my eyes closed most of the time but I can tell you it has been a worthwhile exercise. I don't know if you are representing Wouter Basson? Well the, these proceedings are adjourned and

for purposes of the presentation by Mr Verster, Mr Khoisan will arrange with Mr Bosman. We are adjourned.

HEARING ADJOURNS