

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSIONSECTION 29 HEARING"IN CAMERA"

DATE: 23.04.1997 NAME: TREVOR GRIFFITHS VERMEULEN

HELD AT: Cape Town

DAY: 1

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CHAIRPERSON: Ladies and gentlemen we are about to start. This is an inquiry in terms of Section 29 of Act 34 of 1995 in respect of Trevor Vermeulen. The proceedings today form part of an on-going investigation by the Commission's investigative unit and no findings will be made at today's proceedings precisely because it is part of the investigations which are being conducted on behalf of the Commission.

I have satisfied myself that Mr Vermeulen has been properly subpoenaed to appear today. I have noticed that Mr Vermeulen is legally represented so I will not, unless he indicates otherwise, explain his rights to him in terms of Act 34 of 1995. I assume that those rights would have been explained to him by his legal representatives.

The panel representing the Commission today is under my Chairpersonship, I am Denzil Potgieter, I am a commissioner, and the other members of the panel, on my right is Miss Zoelpha Carr who is a member of the investigative unit. And on my

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left, immediate left is Miss Pumla Dwane-Altman, another member of the investigative unit. Next to her is Mr Mark Killian, also attached to our investigative unit, and on the extreme left is Miss Madeleine Fullard, who is attached to the investigative unit and the research department as well.

Now before we proceed I am going to ask Mr Hiemstra, who obviously represents Mr Vermeulen today just to place himself and his people assisting him on record.

ADV HIEMSTRA: Thank you Mr Chairman. I am R C Hiemstra instructed by De Klerk & Von Gend, Mr Stefaan Claasen appears from that firm.

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you Mr Hiemstra. Perhaps I can also just place on record that all of the other people present are employees, officials of the Commission. They are either members of the investigative unit or our technical staff who deal with sound equipment and with the simultaneous translation of the proceedings.

And whilst I am at that perhaps I can just explain that there is a simultaneous translation device which is available to you. It will enable you to listen to the proceedings in a language of your choice. On the little box, part of the device there are two wheels, the one has the word "channel" written next to it. That will enable you to listen into the proceedings either in English or in Afrikaans. If you turn the wheel to no.1 you will be able to listen to the proceedings in Afrikaans and channel 2 will enable you to listen to the

proceedings in English. The other wheel is simply just to adjust the volume of the set. So that is at your disposal should you require that.

I assume that the questioning will be led by Miss Dwane-Altman. Alright, then I'll hand over to you.

TREVOR GRIFFITHS VERMEULEN: (sworn states)

ADV HIEMSTRA: Mr Chairman before the questions start I would just like to indicate that I have prepared a statement on the basis of the details provided to my client and precisely which information you require. Copies of this statement will be provided if you have access to the statement. If you are satisfied with this I would like to distribute copies. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Maybe it is more appropriate if your client - well does he intend reading out the whole statement or only portions of it?

ADV HIEMSTRA: We are to a large extent in your hands. We have analyzed the questions put to him and apparently the crucial question is what kind of information he received. Now to understand his position - (would the speaker please speak up the Interpreters are struggling to hear him).

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Sorry could you speak through the microphone because the Interpreters are struggling to hear you.

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Hiemstra please just sit and pull the microphone closer to you. Please feel free to sit.

ADV HIEMSTRA: Chairperson I think in an attempt to assist the

Committee I would like to suggest that he reads out the full statement, the first two or three paragraphs you will notice are simply setting out of the matters that he dealt with.

Paragraph 1 is simply a reference to the summons to appear here. And paragraph 2 sets out the further particulars which he received. 2.1 to 2.3 relate to the questions put to him simply in a translated version, and we've tried to answer those questions as fully as possible. And in paragraph 3 and 4 he puts it on record that he was placed in possession of certain documents yesterday and we assumed that the questions which you want us to elaborate on, that these are linked to those documents and we've tried to assist you there as far as we can.

You will also notice that the document on page 2 also - under Ad.1 and Ad.2 relates to answering the questions listed in paragraph 2 so I suggest that Mr Vermeulen starts from paragraph 5 onwards.

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Vermeulen would you then start reading from Paragraph 5 on page 2.

MR VERMEULEN: Thank you Chairperson. I've already placed my name, Trevor Vermeulen on record, and I would just like to convey my congratulations to the panel for the very professional way in which they have dealt with this questioning. I am saying this in anticipation of what is to come today. The members of the investigative unit have impressed me with the way they have conducted themselves.

If we leave page 1 and if everybody is satisfied that we do that then I can immediately go to page 2.

"During the morning of the 3rd of June 1997 my legal representatives were furnished with a number of documents which form the basis of the Committee's investigation.

Paragraph 5. - In order to understand my own position in the Joint Management System it's necessary to give a very short analysis of the structure within which I have performed my task.

The Western Province Joint Management System, afterwards the WPJMC was part of a Joint Management System which was operated during this particular time from the national level to the ground level. The WPJMC obviously served the then Western Province.

As the structure of the JMC there was the Western Province JMC, afterwards called the SJMC which covered the Peninsula's four districts, namely, Cape Town, Wynberg, Bellville and Athlone. The Sub JMC was under the leadership of a senior police officer as chairman in this particular time, and a deputy chairman was appointed from time-to-time. To the best of my knowledge each JMC, right down to the level of a mini JMC, to which I will refer hereunder, consisted of four components in principle.

7.1 A component for constitutional, economic and welfare matters, CEM, in which the State departments were involved as well as other role players from the

private sector.

7.2 A communication committee or COM, which consisted of police liaison officers as well as all liaison officers involved in paragraph 7.1 supra."

In other words what I am saying there in 7.2 is that the communication committee which consisted of police liaison officers as well as all liaison officers involved in paragraph 7.1.

"7.3 A joint information committee, the JIC, consisting of the so-called information family, namely national intelligence, safety, security police and military intelligence.

The safety component or the VACOM consisting of the South African Police, South African Defence Force, Railway Police, Provincial Administration, Regional councils, Civil Defence, Traffic Departments and other role players as they were needed from time-to-time. The mini SJMC consisted of the four Peninsula police districts which each in turn was a mini JMC with the district commissioner of police as chairperson.

Under this structure there was the local management system or PBS LMC attached to the different police regions, departments. The role players at this level were inter alia the traffic chiefs, the reservists, neighbourhood watches, ratepayers associations or whatever body had an

interest at a particular time in the activities of the LMC or in matters dealt with by the LMC.

The divisional commissioner also had the services of a riot control unit under his command. This unit operated in its own operational room where the unit also did its own planning.

In my capacity as secretary of the Sub-JMC.....

in the previous paragraph it's indicated that the unit, in the previous paragraph take the word "no" out. It did its own operational planning.

In my capacity as secretary of the Sub-JMC I received copies of the units written planning and I was also furnished with information regarding the outcome of operations and actions. The commanding officer of this unit also sat on the Sub-JMC.

9.1 It is interesting and important to realise that the object with this Joint Management System as far as I knew was in the first place to serve as a forum for identifying and resolving problems in the community; to combat the basic causes of crime and unrest. Progressively, however, the structures became more unrest orientated.

9.2 The objective is also that the system should work from top to bottom and not the other way round, or from bottom to top and not the other way round. Problems arising on the ground level had to be solved

on the LMC by the particular role players or if that was not possible by the intervention of the mini-JMC or the Western Province Sub-JMC.

10. I point out that during the period January '85 to October '87 I was secretary of the Sub-JMC and not the Western Province JMC as alleged in Section 29.

I think it's very important, Chairperson, to emphasise this and it seemed to me in the documents which I received from your office that there was a misunderstanding on this point, that I was the secretary of the Western Province JMC. I was, however, the secretary of the Sub-JMC and I repeat paragraph 10.

10. I point out that during the period January '85 to October '87 I was the secretary of the Sub-JMC and not of the Western Province JMC as alleged in Section 20 notice.

During this period I had the rank of a Captain but during this period I was also promoted to a Major.

11. During this period my functions and duties as secretary were the following:
  - 11.1 To ensure effective communication in whatever way between all role players, and to inform them on a continuing basis regarding the functioning of the JMC system on the level of the Sub-JMC and lower down in the hierarchy. Note - not above. I worked from the Sub-JMC downwards.



I point out that the intention of the JMC was in the first place to ensure effective and coordinated practical functioning within the State dispensation right down to the lowest level. It was therefore necessary that all the involved parties had to know which role players had to be involved from time-to-time, and amongst these I am referring to State Departments, but not only State Departments but also on occasion instances and bodies such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Community Organisations, religious and church organisations, etc. and this depended on the nature of the problems which had to be solved on the ground.

11.2 Secondly, it was my function to take the minutes of the LMC meetings and the mini-JMC meetings, to receive these minutes and to identify matters in those minutes which required the attention of the Sub-JMC to be able to submit it to the last-mentioned body.

11.3 I also had to keep up to date the Daily Incident Reports which were received from the station or other district levels so that there would be a full and consolidated report of all incidents in the past 24 hours which could then be submitted to the Police Headquarters in Pretoria. I was also tasked with drafting the joint contingency planning, for instance

the dealing with demonstrations, uprisings, patrols, joint crime prevention operations and joint operations and exercises.

The planning was done on the basis of information about future events. This information came from the security police in the form of daily security reports which normally covered the following aspects.

- (a) Funerals.
- (b) Marches.
- (c) Meetings - ordinary meetings which had to be secured and illegal meetings.
- (d) Attacks on security forces and related matters.

The safety and security reports were duplicated by me and handed to the chairpersons of all the mini-JMCs who also had sitting on the Sub-JMCs. They had to do the planning for the events mentioned in the report in conjunction with the relevant police stations. Each mini-JMC for instance had it's own unrest prevention platoon in order to disrupt normal policing as little as possible.

11.5 The commanding officer of each station had to do their own planning and it had to be submitted to me in writing and I then had to coordinate this planning also relating to the South African Defence Force, the then Railway Police, the Traffic authorities or whatever other role players were involved by drafting

a joint contingency plan.

The coordinated planning document was thereafter submitted to the Divisional Commissioner for approval whereafter the coordinated planning was then taken back to the station level.

12. I point out that detailed planning was not initiated with me as the secretary of the sub-JMC and forced down into the hierarchy, but that I was a coordinating and liaising - I had a liaison function in respect of the planning which was done on the ground level in the first place.

13. As part of this coordinating function which I have I, after joint operations also reported back to the various role players about the outcome of the events and these reports were based on radio, telephone and written reports which were received by the sub-JMC operation room which was then under my command. All the information was reactive information of events which had already taken place.

The only pro-active information with which I was ever involved was that contained in the daily security reports to which I have already referred.

General instructions such as those contained in the encoded message of 25 March '86 were sometimes via the divisional commissioner or the Western Province JMC relayed to the Sub-JMC for consideration and

execution.

Regarding my role as the secretary of the Sub-JMC, vis a vis the Crossroads Committee and the Committee of the Fathers(?) I must say that I have no recollection that I, in any way, played a role in this regard. Without reference to specific incidents or documents in which my involvement might be raised I am not able to give you any information about this, or to comment on it. The only reference to the Fathers in the documents submitted to me are shown in documents of the Western Province JMC in which I was not involved and it also appears in document H, paragraph 7, which to the best of my knowledge was drafted on the basis of document Western Province JMC 22/7/3/2 dated January 1986. The nature of the information which I dealt with in my above-mentioned capacity I have already dealt with above.

16. I have no personal knowledge of the events which contributed to the violence in KTC and vicinity. My knowledge of the events is restricted to the reports regarding any incidents or operations which I received as commanding officer of the Sub-JMC's operational room.

Records of the reports so received is, as far as my knowledge goes, already in the possession of the Commission.

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you Mr Vermeulen. And for the record we have a written document which was handed in and now forms part of the record of these proceedings in which the evidence which you have just given has been set out for us for convenience sake. Thank you very much. Miss Dwane Albert.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Perhaps before we start the questioning we should actually start labelling the documents that you have in the proper order. The first document you have refers - it's called "Nominations". It's dated 1985, 10th of the 1st. Can we mark that Annexure A.

ANNEXURE A HANDED IN

The second document refers to "Notice of Meeting Sub-JMC of the 1st 1985" could we mark that Annexure B.

ANNEXURE B HANDED IN

The third one "Establishment Western Province JMC 14.10.85".

If we could mark that Annexure C.

ANNEXURE C HANDED IN

The fourth one talks about "Plakkers Probleem - Kruispad or Terreinsee" dated 24.10.1985, if we could mark that Annexure D.

ANNEXURE D HANDED IN

The fifth one says "Stigting van Sub-GOS Kaapstad" if we could mark that Annexure E.

ANNEXURE E HANDED IN

The sixth one says "GVS GOS Instruksie - GVS riglyne vir

optrede toe bekamping van die onrus of onlus situasie - krefte berig" dated the 25.03.1986. ... (intervention)

ADV HIEMSTRA: Will you please Madam, I have a problem there, we had E, up till E we were correct.

CHAIRPERSON: Alright let's just look at the documentation, let's just see if we can't get it in proper order.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: I think you refer to it in paragraph 13, "Algemene opdragte". Yes, could we label that Annexure F.

ANNEXURE F HANDED IN

ADV HIEMSTRA: Is that the letter from General Wandrag ... (intervention)

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Correct, yes.

ADV HIEMSTRA: Yes, I have the document.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: I think it's a telegram or telex.

ADV HIEMSTRA: Right - F?

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: F, yes. Annexure G, if that could be "Materials wat getref is soos voorgestel en Sub-GBS VAKOM" dated the 25.03.1986.

ANNEXURE F HANDED IN

Annexure H will be "Notule van vergadering tussen amptenare van die Wes-Kaap se ontwikkelingsraad en veiligheidsmagte" dated 25.4.1986.

ANNEXURE H HANDED IN

And then Annexure I we shall name that "Korttermyn bekamping van die onrus in Wes-Kaap".

ANNEXURE I HANDED IN

Do you have a copy of a signal message as well dated the 21st of May 1986? It's written under the Western Province GBS.

ADV HIEMSTRA: A signal message?

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Yes.

ADV HIEMSTRA: Yes we have that.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Okay, if we could label that J.

ANNEXURE J HANDED IN

ADV HIEMSTRA: We are missing Annexure I.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: So what did I say up to?

ADV HIEMSTRA: We've got up to H.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Can you put that as I then.

ADV HIEMSTRA: And J but not I.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: I think it's a document saying National Security Management System dated the 19th of November 1985. Sorry which one did I say was I?

ADV HIEMSTRA: National Security Management System.

ANNEXURE I HANDED IN

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Okay. And the last one will be that Signal message dated the 21st of May 1986, that will be J.

ANNEXURE J HANDED IN

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Before we actually get into the details of your statement and the documents I'd like you to sort of outline your career, where you were, how you started and how you joined the Sub-JMC and so forth.

MR VERMEULEN: I joined directly after school I joined the South African Police on the 14th of December 1964 on the West

Coast, a country boy. I was educated at Vredenburg High School. And then I after the initial training I was posted to Cape Town, Rondebosch, Muizenberg, wrote exams and became a Sergeant at the age of 21. Stationed at Claremont, at the age of 23 Warrant Officer passed exams, stationed to Cape Town Central.

In 1973 I wrote exams to lieutenant, passed the exams, went on selection course and was commissioned in '73 to the rank of lieutenant. From there I was - from Cape Town I was transferred to Athlone. From Athlone to Guguletu as station commander. To Langa as station commander. To Lansdowne as station commander. Back to Athlone and there from Athlone as lieutenant in '76 I was at radio control which is the communications centre of Cape Town. From there I was posted back to Cape Town in '78.

In 1980 I was then transferred to Divisional Headquarters in Cape Town, Thomas Boydell Building, but seconded to the staff of the divisional riot unit.

In 1987 I reached the rank of Major and '86/85 I was subsequently appointed the secretary of the Sub-JMC of the Western - and in fact the Western Cape, the four districts.

From there I was transferred to Port Elizabeth and from Port Elizabeth I was transferred to Stellenbosch as station commander. From Stellenbosch they sent me to Paarl to the district commissioner's staff as a lieutenant-colonel. From Paarl I came back to Cape Town Central as station commander.



From there I was posted to Bellville as district commissioner and retired medically in November 1995.

That is how my career went. All my life I had been in the uniform section. I was never in the other branches of the South African Police.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now you make reference to the fact that you were appointed in 1985 as the secretary of the Sub-JMC here in the Western Province. What was the procedure for appointments? I mean who actually served on that body, what criteria was being used?

MR VERMEULEN: First of all the JMC was activated and they were looking for somebody that would merely act as a secretary and who knew the Peninsula very well at the time. Perhaps I had been conveniently near and they got hold of me and they said you come and sit there and you start taking the minutes, and this is how it happened that I got involved with the Joint Management System.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Who actually did the appointment? Could you be more specific on that.

MR VERMEULEN: I think it more spontaneously happened than any appointment that was specifically made. You did not have to have any specific aspirations of, or - I just think you had to be normally intelligent to understand what the proceedings are.

You did not need to have any wishes or whatever.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: And what about the chairperson and other members, how were they appointed, was it also spontaneous?

MR VERMEULEN: The chairman because of his position, because of his rank as a divisional commissioner and his second in command of the division held the chairmanship chair of the JMC.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now I would imagine that there were other members on the Sub-JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Can you just give me a few names of the people that actually sat on this body and whether it was on a permanent basis or a voluntary basis. I mean when I talk about permanent, were they always there or did they specifically come when the meetings occurred?

MR VERMEULEN: I think in my - I refer to my statement which dealt with that matter and I've already discussed that. The frequency of meetings depended on what matters were at the order of the day irrespective of whether it was a crime operation or whatever. Now paragraph 7, I must just point out,

"The JMC stood under the command of a senior police officer or the deputy chair which was appointed from time to time. To the best of my knowledge each JMC down to the level of the mini-JMC constituted of four components".

and then paragraph 1 I said what these components were, the Constitutional, 7.3 the JIK and 7.4 the VAKOM, the communication committee etc.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Okay. Now I need to know, I am quite aware of what you have mentioned, I actually need to know the

people that sat on that structure around about 1985 when you assumed your duties as secretary.

MR VERMEULEN: Okay, well then we will have to go back to the minutes, to the documents, and I think if I referred to one on the Sub-JMC, H, there is a document H, there is a minute of a meeting held by the Sub-JMC on 25.4.86 and the names in paragraph 1, that is a minute which I myself signed as secretary.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: So these would all be members of the - were they the members of the Sub-JMC in 1985, because I see it's dated '86, 25.04.86?

MR VERMEULEN: Well if we have a minute of '85 then we could see who was there because it could have been different people, because of transfers and sick leave and leave and whatever. I will have to see whether we've got one.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Can we go to Annexure A. We have got minutes of a meeting in '85 and it doesn't have the names of the people ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Annexure A?

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Yes.

MR VERMEULEN: In fact Annexure A is a letter rather than a minute.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: It mentions just the chairperson and yourself as being a secretary and I think the chairperson was Brigadier van Dyk. if you look at paragraph 3.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, quite right.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now are you trying to tell me that the people who were making up the membership of the Sub-JMC in 1986 would have been the same people that were sitting on this Sub-JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: No I don't think so, because as I just said people were transferred and people were coming and going, but who held basically the same post.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Okay. Could you recall any names maybe that could sort-of help us with our investigation?

MR VERMEULEN: The names as reflected in the minutes are there, of the Sub-JMC. Have you got a minute of the '85?

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Yes we have - no we don't - I don't think the issue is actually referring to minutes. I am just trying to sort-of test your memory whether you remember the people that sat on that Sub-JMC together with you in 1985.

MR VERMEULEN: Mr Chairman with all due respect to anybody's memory, over a period of 12 years I need to refresh as far as possible my memory and give, within the spirit of this Commission, as true and as honest as possible. I notice that there is a document G, then I draw attention to document G, that there was - you see here is now a typical example of a different person again being the chairman and that was not done with any other reason than that the person that was available, and then you see the district commissioner of Athlone, the district commissioner of Wynberg, van Zyl, Schreuder which is from Bellville, Major Odendaal who is from the Riot Unit and

then myself as the secretary.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Alright. Going back to this issue of criteria about appointments. I'd like to actually refer you to Annexure A which is dated the 01.10.85. If we can go to page 2, paragraph 7.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: I don't know, my Afrikaans is not that excellent but to my understanding people are supposed - who are members of that Sub-JMC have to have security clearance.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: So what you have just mentioned is that there wasn't really a criteria for appointments. I mean just earlier in your testimony didn't you mention that?

MR VERMEULEN: Oh well, as far as - I was referring to the person's qualifications.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: I specifically mentioned criteria.

MR VERMEULEN: Well I could have interpreted it as a person's qualifications, that is how I interpreted it and then I qualified by saying that you didn't have to have an extraordinary intelligence to be a secretary.

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Vermeulen the question related to the criteria ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Yes it's clear from this - I'm trying to help you.

CHAIRPERSON: You are answering the questions in English, the questions were put to you in English, we are referring to

criteria, in other words what we are talking about are the criteria, that's what you must react to, nothing else, just the criteria.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes well these persons had to have been selected and had to have a security clearance because the matters were confidential that we dealt with, those were the prescriptions coming from the JMC that you had to have had security clearance. In fact some of the documents were classified documents and to deal with these documents you obviously have had to be selected on that basis or had clearance.

CHAIRPERSON: So what does that mean in practical terms, for a layman, what does that mean?

MR VERMEULEN: Pardon me?

CHAIRPERSON: What does that mean for a layman?

MR VERMEULEN: You see if we look at the type of things we dealt with there were things which were of security importance and relevance, for instance such as operations like road blockades etc, these were documents which you just didn't leave lying around.

CHAIRPERSON: No I understand that. I understand why there had to have been security clearance, but what does it actually mean and who did it? Who does the actual clearance and how do you qualify for that kind of security clearance?

MR VERMEULEN: All security clearance of safety and security people that was actually done by the security police, not by

the uniform branch. They did the selection or clearance on the basis - not only relating to people at the meetings but also regarding other organisations such as for instance people in the private sector, security firms for the private sector for instance who worked in the Reserve Bank. People who worked at national key installations, Koeberg Nuclear Reactor, those kind of people. They all had to have security clearance.

CHAIRPERSON: We know that it was done by the Security Police.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: So you had to have been acceptable to them on the basis of certain criteria which they laid down?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, you had to qualify.

CHAIRMAN: Are you aware of the type of criteria which they used in turn to be able to give you that security clearance?

MR VERMEULEN: No, no, I didn't work in that department. I only worked in the uniform branch.

CHAIRMAN: All right, but we do know that the Security Police applied some kind of criteria and you had to comply with those?

MR VERMEULEN: I suppose you had to have been honest and disciplined and educated and not have any political aspirations of whatever nature, I don't even know what other criteria they might have had.

CHAIRMAN: So, is it a little bit more than just as you put it earlier, than to be comfortable in the area and to have normal intelligence and so forth, in other words you had to have gone through a certain process?

MR VERMEULEN: The process of getting to the rank of an Officer is a process in itself and that already proves that the man or women has certain qualifications to pass exams, so that is already a selection process to become an Officer.

CHAIRMAN: No, obviously but this is a specific criteria, in other words you had to have been selected and you had to have been acceptable according to the tests applied by the Security Police?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes. You see Chairperson, that is what I tried to point out. I wasn't called in before the establishment of the JMC in the Western Cape. When this thing was already in progress, well underway, about six months after it was established, then I myself had to apply for security clearance from the Security Police.

CHAIRMAN: Yes, but how did it happen that you became the Secretary of the JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: It was a fact that I was at Headquarters between 1982 and 1984 and because I know the Peninsula well and I worked at radio control and knew Athlone and Mannenberg and all these areas, I knew the Cape very, very well, I had already been working in the Peninsula for about 25 years at that stage, I suppose they could have used somebody else but ...

CHAIRMAN: Well, that is exactly my point. That is what the questions are aimed at discovering. Who approached you specifically, how did it happen?

MR VERMEULEN: I don't know who the -I don't know what was



happening in the head of the Commanding Officer at the time.

CHAIRMAN: Were you surprised?

MR VERMEULEN: Anybody asked to do or perform a specific task such as myself, that is the way I see it, would simply just do it. If a man comes to you and he is your boss, if he is your senior Officer, if he calls you in and tells you something there, you can't really refuse.

I sat down and made certain notes, as I was told to do and that is how I became involved.

CHAIRMAN: So, are you saying that your superior Officer just called you in and said Vermeulen, come in and write down some minutes?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: And that is how you became the Secretary?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Of the sub-JMC which included the whole Peninsula?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, it was a terrible job.

CHAIRMAN: You referred to the police districts which you served?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Wynberg, Bellville, Athlone, those are big, big areas, important areas.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, yes it was and all the municipalities and State departments.

CHAIRMAN: So you said that he had just called you in and said Vermeulen come and write down these things?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, I suppose he thought I was able to do it.

CHAIRMAN: Who was the Commanding Officer?

MR VERMEULEN: At that stage it was Colonel Van Rensburg, he was my Commanding Officer and he - was he - he was a Regional Riot Commanding Officer, but he then later retired. Reports came from outside to the operational room, for instance relating to a case of arson or stone throwing or whatever, then the ordinary police who investigated the normal cases of house burning etc, they did not deal with unrest related matters, because then the matter was classified as unrest and that is where the difference came in. Ordinary stone throwing, it is actually difficult to distinguish between public violence and an ordinary stone throwing incident or gang fighting or criminal activity, but in this way the thing would land up at the radio control room and radio control would tell me that there was stone throwing in whatever area it had taken place and as these incidents escalated, the more it became clear to us that they were unrest related. For instance people would go to the schools and chase away the children from the schools and that sort of thing.

CHAIRMAN: Yes, I think I am going to conclude, I just wanted to clarify the question. Can I just refer you again to Annexure A. According to this in paragraph 1 reference is made to the office of the Divisional Commissioner and it seems as if there is a reference to a letter written by yourself?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: In which you say - you refer to a Cabinet decision whereby instructions were given and then in paragraph 4, Captain T. Vermeulen, I suppose that is you, was appointed as Secretary?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: and all inquiries to be directed to him? So it is on the basis of this letter, Annexure A, it seems as if you were formally appointed and as if this came from the highest authority in the land?

MR VERMEULEN: The JMC came from the State Security Council and then it devolved to the various provinces and then to the sub-JMC's. And the mini-JMC's and then the LMC's. That is how it worked. It was a State Security Council instruction and the State Security Council got its instructions from the Cabinet, from the Government of the day.

MR HIEMSTRA: Chairperson, I am sorry to intervene here. Could I just make quite sure of this question that you put. Is the statement which you are making to Mr Vermeulen that he as Secretary was appointed by the Cabinet?

CHAIRMAN: No, no not necessarily so. I am asking him to explain this because he is saying to us that he was just called in out of the blue by his superior, Colonel Van Rensburg who said Vermeulen, just come and take down the minutes, and that is how it all happened that he became the Secretary. We are just trying to test that statement of his.

MR VERMEULEN: That is how I was actually drawn into the whole

business. There wasn't an application which you had to lodge to become the Secretary of the JMC, that is not how it worked, it happened spontaneously.

Because it was a new thing, this was in 1985, so it was a new phenomena.

CHAIRMAN: But who appointed you? Did you write the letter yourself?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, well the Secretary had to do many things. In this letter, I refer to the fact that Brigadier Van Dyk who was at that stage the Chairperson, well I think he gave me the instruction to let people know that I, Van Dyk, am the Chairperson and you Van Dyk, are the Secretary. Van Dyk was by virtue of his office, he was the second in command of the Province.

CHAIRPERSON: That is why he was the Chairperson, so he qualified ex officio?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, yes.

CHAIRPERSON: But you weren't appointed, you were just called in by Van Rensburg?

MR VERMEULEN: Well, I suppose I just put it like that here in the letter, appointed.

CHAIRMAN: But you were never formally appointed, it just happened, you were just sort of drawn in?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Ms Dwane?

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Thank you. You mention that Colonel Van

Rensburg approached you about a sitting on the sub-JMC as a Secretary. Now did this happen in this particular month, in October 1985 or when did it happen?

MR VERMEULEN: No, because he was already off before that the JMC wasn't structured. It wasn't necessary before that that they should formally establish the JMC and in fact if you look at the letter, the instruction that we got in paragraph 1, the instruction was to hold formal meetings.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now, I think you did to some extent mention the role of such a structure that you were the Secretary of, it being there to sort of, the forum to discuss problems, especially in the communities and so forth. Now, I need to know if in those forums whether solutions or strategies were adopted or made to such a forum and whether such a forum actually made recommendations in that particular meeting. Where did these recommendations go, I know you mentioned that they went to a lower structure, could you just explain those two questions?

MR VERMEULEN: I would like to point out sir, a certain incident, how this LMC functioned in Hout Bay. They had a problem in the community regarding water in the hostels and in the factories. And they didn't have enough showers and hot water and the people were very upset about that.

And the local Station Commander, the local management system at Hout Bay mentioned this at a meeting at mini-JMC at Wynberg which they fall under. Because they didn't have the

necessary clout, and what I am trying to say there is, the decision making powers, that problem came through the constitutional channels to the sub-JMC and within a week the management of the factory at Hout Bay was approached by the constitutional chaps who had sittings on the sub-JMC at our level.

And they said look, let's get together, let's make something happen and very quickly the people had water. As I mentioned in my statement, I mentioned that the JMC was a structure intended to work from the bottom to the top and to identify problems in society.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Can we refer to Annexure D.

MR VERMEULEN: I see.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Page 2, paragraph 3 or point 3.

MR VERMEULEN: Page 2.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Point 3 actually.

MR VERMEULEN: Oh, yes, all right.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Where it is mentioned that four of the seven remaining groups are sort of moving to Crossroads. I am not sure if I am interpreting this properly and then it says that one group is refusing to move and something about intimidating persons. Maybe I should just read it out in Afrikaans, and then it could be translated. "Four of the remaining seven squatter groups at Crossroads, undertook in writing to move and that communities was under pressure from other communities to move from there. One group where they had

access to water, there were complaints that the so-called sell-outs may not use the water any more. They were afraid of faction attacks."

So I mean are these the kind of problems that you discussed at such forums?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes. Now I notice that this is a letter, it is not actually the minutes and this letter was addressed as information to the Western Cape Joint Management System, which is one level up. And there all the discussions that had taken place between various role players in the JMC on the sub-level, had identified this problems and this was then given through to the level above for information.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: So what you are telling me, it would have been something that would have been discussed at that particular meeting?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: And then referred to the Western Province JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN; Now in terms of recommendations, would your body actually make recommendations to the Western Province JMC itself about certain issues that were affecting Cape Town for example?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, I was just pointing out, in fact in paragraph 3 right at the end, that the Western Cape, the Development Council, that was a body which looked after the

constitutional stuff of Guguletu, Langa, Crossroads and that area, the roads and the - like their municipality.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: so you would need the approval of the Western-Province JMC to actually ensure that that happened? I mean you would make a recommendation and then go at a higher level which would be your Western-Province JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, they would look at this and if there was anything that they had to discuss and they wanted to act on, then it was up to them to do it.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: So the matter wouldn't be referred to another body, say for example seeing that it would come from your body to the Western-Province JMC, would it be where it ended, where you would actually get ...

MR VERMEULEN: Well, if they could have solved it, yes, they would have solved it there.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: And if they couldn't solve it, what would happen?

MR VERMEULEN: Then they would send it up further to the head of - the following step.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now, I would actually like you to take me through that process. Can you do that?

MR VERMEULEN: Well, I can't because I wasn't serving on that Committee, but they obviously the State Security Council - they had to inform the State Security Council if they couldn't sort out the problem at their level.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Do you mean to tell me that the only body



that you are aware of that you had to communicate with, was the Western-Province JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: And you didn't know of other structures in between right up to the State Security Council?

MR VERMEULEN: No, I didn't communicate with them. I basically communicated with my own Head Office in Pretoria, my own Head Office, the Police Head Office and when it was a JMC matter, I had to communicate with the Western-Province JMC.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now if you mention your own Police Headquarters, would that be COMPO?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, Ma'am.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN: Mark Killian?

MR KILLIAN: Thank you Mr Chairman. Mr Vermeulen, we remain on that page and we move to paragraph 2. The question is posed whether the sub-JMC has the necessary power and authorization and aids to in cooperation in Western Cape Community Council plan for various services in order to fulfil certain criteria.

Do you refer to yourself as Western-Province JMC, do you feel that you don't have the necessary authority and that causes a problem and that every time you had to write to the Western Province joint-JMC?

CHAIRMAN: I just want to set something right. The question as asked as a representative of the sub-JMC, not as the Western Province JMC.

MR KILLIAN: From what I can gather from this is that you did not have the necessary powers. When such matters or problems arose, you had to write to the WPJMC, you regarded that as a problem that you could not take decisions there yourself, is that correct?

MR VERMEULEN: The people who were on my level were not top management of the Western Province Development Council, that was just one level below that, but the top management of that Council was part of the WPJMC.

MR KILLIAN: And you felt that these people who were on the top Council, should also be involved so that they could make decisions where you were the first level of discussion?

MR VERMEULEN: If a problem was identified, it deserved attention, we described what that problem entailed and then we asked that this problem ~~should be addressed~~ by the Western Province JMC.

MR KILLIAN: We move on to paragraph 3 on the same page. That is a recommendation coming from the sub-JMC and it is written the Western Cape Development Council must attempt to get Black people to act as legal people.

They had to be recruited as the so-called Kits Constables or as Municipal Police Officers, they had to act as Security Officers. There were a few people - because there were a few people and they were throwing stones, they had to appoint their own people to look after their own possessions.

MR KILLIAN: Your powers as a sub-JMC was a bit suppressed?

MR VERMEULEN: We couldn't decide on things like, on matters - how to appoint, because it is a budget of the Western Cape Development Board or whatever the name is. This has an inference on their budget.

MR KILLIAN: And your big problem was here we are and we have too few powers. Should we get more powers from the Western Province JMC, we will be able to make decisions.

MR VERMEULEN: No, no, we did not get any powers, authorization from them. We had our own limited powers and if we could not solve the problem accordingly, we had to refer the matter to the Western Province JMC for them to solve, that was their function.

If we had to do their work, it means they would have nothing to do.

CHAIRMAN: Ms Dwane?

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: You mentioned limited powers, can you just give us an example of what powers you actually had in that structure, just to give us an idea of how actually you could actually deal with some of the situations?

MR VERMEULEN: It is now a very broad question Madam, but I will try and answer it. The powers that you have, is not super powers just because there is a JMC. It is not all of a sudden now you become a super power within a given structure.

You had to use your authorities which was the normal policing of areas and if there was a problem that arose whereby you could address it with another Government Department which

was present at the sub-JMC meetings, it was merely discussed in an orderly fashion.

And in fact the other party would then say yes or no, I can do something about it, but I can't do, or I cannot and if they couldn't, they would then go back to their Regional Director of whatever Department that is.

If you look at Department Health Services, if there was a problem as far as health services is concerned, the Department of Health would then look at their own budget, their own structure, but we cannot tell them what to do at our level.

In other words you must now give 24 ambulances for Guguletu and appoint the people now and paint them green, that we couldn't do.

CHAIRMAN: I just want to determine whether I understand your question correctly. If I refer to paragraph 1.1 of annexure D, I've referred to the type of powers you did not have regard yourself as a super power, but paragraph 1.1, the second part of that paragraph, that last sentence reads "all planning actions by authorities to move the squatters should be terminated till further notice."

MR VERMEULEN: Mr Chairman, with this type of thing you should be able to explain fully. During the meetings, I accept on the 24th of the 10th month there was a discussion held and people from the Western Cape Development Council were present and this letter followed should have been addressed to the Western Province JMC, there was an official of the Western

Province Development Council who must have been present.

If you could get hold of minutes of that meeting it would probably indicate that such an official was present. You should hear this first hand from me - all planning actions by the authorities to move the squatters from KTC should be immediately stopped. To make certain conclusions today is dangerous, but this is what I would think that a person from the Western Cape Development Council could have said that.

CHAIRMAN: The sub-JMC they, it seems, if they are sending instructions to the Western Province JMC, this is what I could gather from his words, this is why I am asking based on what you've mentioned that your powers are ... This says that it should be stopped immediately.

MR VERMEULEN: The Police never moved them it was the Development Council. The ~~Police was~~ only there for protection, we did not do it all ourselves.

MR CHAIRMAN: I understand that, but my question is what were the powers of the sub-JMC? You are writing this letter on behalf of the sub-JMC and it appears as if the sub-JMC gave kind of an instruction, it said all activities should immediately be suspended so the sub-JMC actually told the authorities that they should immediately stop and you gave this through to the Chairman of the Western Province JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: I am saying again it was a discussion where people from the Western Cape Development Council were present. They received instructions to move these people immediately

and that instruction, I handed over.

If you look at the structure, the Western Province JMC was one level ahead of us. If I gave instructions to the Western Province JMC, they would say that we are talking nonsense, we cannot give instructions to them because the channels of communications did not work like that.

CHAIRMAN: The impression that these words create is not correct. An objective reader could conclude that the sub-JMC is given instructions to the Chairman of the Western Cape JMC and telling them, tell the authorities they should not move any people until further notice?

MR VERMEULEN: When we come to the end of the letter, there is a recommendation. I want to come back to my point. The people who were in this JMC system had a particular relationship and they don't read an instruction, they don't read an instruction into these words and think, oh, Vermeulen is telling us to do this or that or what the situation is.

You must remember the levels, authority levels were very strictly applied. The levels, the horizontal communication lines or rather vertical communications lines were strictly adhered to. Because of this fact they would have never interpreted that as an instruction.

You cannot give instructions to the top management, you can make recommendations, but never give them instructions. You have to be very careful with interpreting words.

CHAIRMAN: In certain circles the impression is created that the

National Security Control System at a certain stage was an alternative channel for governing this country by means of Security people.

People who were in the Security Portfolio's, these were alternative government channels for the country?

MR VERMEULEN: No, no. On my level I could give no instructions to any top levels. On the contrary, this document was written in 1985, in all honesty, referring to all the other documents, perhaps if we were prophets to think that Adv Denzil Potgieter would ask me this question today, then I would not have written this letter.

CHAIRMAN: I am just mentioning this, perhaps the panel would take this further. The structure worked up to the State Security Council, from there to the Cabinet and therefore the whole Government system was involved in this process, according to what you are saying?

MR VERMEULEN: The State Security Council had to look at the problems and identify why people were throwing stones, why there were problems and they had to use various structures and asked these structures to ask them can't you do anything? Why are these people not happy?

That is why there were these various components. This component, the constitutional, economic and social matters was very important components. Constitutional development, economic power, this is an important aspect. I would like to bring it under the panel's attention. Economic matters were

handled by the Department of Finance, Department of Agriculture for example and social was for example handled by the Department of Education.

And those people for example a case where they planted greased poles in Guguletu and we asked them, don't put them there, rather put a steel pole there. This is the kind of things we were involved in.

CHAIRMAN: The Municipality couldn't do that, but in any case I don't want to debate that point any further. I just wanted to ask that point.

Miss Carr, have you got some questions. Mr Vermeulen, hallo. Can you tell me, just correct me if I am wrong here, but according to what you have said previously, people that sat on the sub-JMC's had to have security clearance, the person had to have some portfolio, it had to have some status, it is quite a reliable person, am I correct?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, Madam.

MS CARR: And obviously the position that you would hold at the sub-JMC would also be something where you would be relied on, your opinion would ...

MR VERMEULEN: My position?

MS CARR: No, the people that - over all?

MR VERMEULEN: Oh, the role players?

MS CARR: Yes.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes Madam.

MS CARR: They would be relied on and their opinion would be



highly regarded, is that correct?

MR VERMEULEN: Because they were senior people.

MS CARR: Yes, exactly they were senior people and these senior people had to be held in high esteem, am I correct?

MR VERMEULEN: Correct.

MS CARR: Yes, and obviously if you as a grouping sitting together, come to some decision as to for instance in that you need some assistance for anything, that your recommendation, if it had to be made to a higher body, which is the Western Cape JMC, it would be very highly regarded, am I correct?

MR VERMEULEN: Hopefully, yes.

MS CARR: So, your recommendation would be of such a nature that it could almost be as an instruction, am I correct?

MR VERMEULEN: No, no.

MS CARR: Because these people - they don't have insight into the area that you are dealing with?

MR VERMEULEN: No, but hold it Madam. If I may, once more, at the level of the Western Province JMC, the senior person or the person that sat with me, he is sitting there, in fact they are sometimes sitting in the same office or the office next to it.

So the Western Province JMC was the Regional Directors.

MS CARR: Okay, I am hearing what you are saying, but what I am asking you is that your recommendations that you would be making, it would be very highly regarded, am I correct?

MR VERMEULEN: Hopefully, yes.

MS CARR: Now, further if you were to recommend that

"waakdienste" and as you have said these are people from the communities that were protecting the communities as such, no these "waakdienste" would obviously be some kind of people that would maintain the law and order that the rest of South Africa was kind of used to, am I correct? And uprisings would ...

MR VERMEULEN: It was more or less security guys looking after their own stuff.

MS CARR: But it would be people ideally from the community?

MR VERMEULEN: Well, this is what we asked.

MS CARR: Now, taking that further, if you were to suggest that these people from the community had to be employed as Municipal Policemen, then it would be ideally those people that was ideally maintaining law and order all the time and not those people that were causing uprisings all the time, am I correct?

MR VERMEULEN: Well, you see, I had no, no, we are now speculating. The matter who they have to appoint, if they had to appoint, it is entirely up to them. We couldn't say to them you were to appoint X, Y and Z.

MS CARR: I have peace with that Mr Vermeulen, I have peace with that, but my question to you and I want you to listen to me carefully. My question to you is those persons because obviously here you are suggesting that some security measure is needed and there is people in the area that have insight of how to deal with the security measures.

Now my question to you is these people were people that maintained the law and order of the land at the time. And they

were not the ones that caused the uprisings, so if these people were to be employed, would these people be from the same grouping?

MR VERMEULEN: I can't answer that question Madam, because it is not my decision.

MS CARR: Would you suggest something like that?

MR VERMEULEN: No, I wouldn't suggest anything, because it is not my decision.

MS CARR: Okay.

MR VERMEULEN: They were quite capable of running their own affairs.

CHAIRMAN: Just to follow up on that question Mr Vermeulen. The reason why these guard services or security services had to be appointed, was because there was a problem. There was a problem regarding vandalism, taps being stolen etc etc. Is that not so?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: So there was a section of the community who was responsible for the problem which had to be addressed, correct?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: The question then is, isn't it logical that the recommendation which would be made to try and resolve the problem, would be to appoint those members of the community which weren't responsible for causing the problem in the first place. You wouldn't appoint the vandals and the trouble makers to protect the property?

MR VERMEULEN: Let us look at the recommendations again. You see it is a bit arrogant in that set up, it would have been arrogant for me to prescribe to them. The recommendations from the sub-JMC that the Development Council really had to do something forceful to tackle the squatter problem, those people were experienced people, they were supposed to be experienced people.

And if they saw fit or had the necessary budget to address the problem.

CHAIRMAN: Now as a sub-JMC, can one assume that you would logically expect that if these recommendations were implemented that the so-called Blacks who were appointed or who were to be appointed to address the problem, would not be the people who had caused the problem in the first place.

MR VERMEULEN: Chairperson, could I please clarify this question. MR HIEMSTRA: Is this question whether it is Mr Vermeulen's personal opinion as he sits here today or whether it was the sub-JMC's position.

CHAIRMAN: What is the difference?

MR HIEMSTRA: This man Mr Chairman, can respond to the question if the question was what he thinks today. What the logical thing would be to be. With respect this recommendation must be seen in context and with great respect the suggestion made to Mr Vermeulen, cannot be gleaned from this letter.

CHAIRMAN: No, not at all Mr Hiemstra. The question is very clear, he is asked to actually imagine a situation which these

recommendations have to be implemented and in light of his experience as the Secretary of the Western Province sub-JMC, what would he have expected to have happened to these recommendations? How would they have been implemented and I haven't heard him complaining of him not understanding the question.

What you are saying is that you didn't say appoint the people or don't appoint these people or appoint others. The question is, let us assume the recommendations are implemented, what would your expectation as the Secretary of the sub-JMC have been? What would you have expected to have happened?

Would the implementation have involved the people who were the actual trouble makers and the vandals or would it have involved the type of Black person who would have been regarded as somebody who would combat the problem, it is a very simple question?

MR VERMEULEN: They would have to appoint the people they saw fit to appoint.

CHAIRMAN: Exactly, so they would not appoint the people who were actually causing the problem? That would just actually be exasperating the problem?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, I suppose that is so.

CHAIRMAN: Now on that note, I think it is time for tea. We will adjourn for 15 minutes for tea.

COMMISSION ADJOURNS FOR TEA FOR 15 MINUTES - ON RESUMPTION.

CHAIRMAN: Okay, we shall adjourn after the tea adjournment.

TREVOR GRIFFITHS VERMEULEN: (still under oath)

CHAIRMAN: Just to round off this aspect we had been addressing before tea, that is the possible implementation of the recommendation you made regarding the guard services. The system you said, worked from bottom to top, not from top to bottom.

It was generated on the ground, grassroots level. If we look at the specific matter and if we refer to grassroots, this recommendation is that Black people in the communities should be involved?

MR VERMEULEN: They should be recruited to be trained as security guards, they were just normal appointments if they would have liked to do it.

CHAIRMAN: If you wish to apply the grassroots approach to this specific incident, how would you have gone about to do this? Would you have gone to the community itself, would you liaise with leadership in the community itself to recruit applicable people or suited people?

MR VERMEULEN: Let us pay attention to the procedure. Just for the record when a post is advertised, people apply for this post and say for example there are 10 posts for security guards and then it is the Head of the Department, he has a budget to handle these posts, he must follow the normal procedures and appoint the people.

CHAIRMAN: In 1985?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, the procedure has never changed.

CHAIRMAN: Given the situation during that time and also the informal nature of the environment we are referring to. It does not seem to me it would have worked to advertise in "Die Burger" or "The Argus" or "The Cape Times" and to say we are looking for specifically Black people from these specific communities to act as safety guards.

Unless you are saying that if it did not work in the conventional manner, how did it work then?

MR VERMEULEN: This was how we did all the appointments.

CHAIRMAN: How did you appoint managers, people who open gates or painters?

MR VERMEULEN: Ii don't know how they made these appointments.

CHAIRMAN: Especially here, you were looking for a specific kind of person, you are not looking for the people who caused the problems, you were looking for people who could solve the problems.

I want to ask you also that you've mentioned in your evidence just before the tea break, you did not make recommendations yourself, rather recommendations regarding the recruitment of the people because they were qualified to do that themselves. To whom did you refer?

MR VERMEULEN: I referred to the Western Cape Development Council in this regard and then this council, they could do the recruitment themselves.

CHAIRMAN: I understand that, but is that how you saw this implementation, it was done according to the conventional

channel?

MR VERMEULEN: It was advertised, people would react, yes, they did it like they did with all other appointments.

It was never expected and it was never prescribed that you should also do the Department of Health's work. You should also do work for the Department of Foreign Affairs, they had to do their own work.

The JMC was only the forum where these things were discussed and where these matters were identified, for example this or that would have been a good idea to take further.

CHAIRMAN: I understand that. I am asking now on the basis of your own experience. You were involved in that system, we were not and we want to learn from your experience how a recommendation would have been implemented and this grassroots approach, would these people go to leaders in the community and those leaders would recommend suitable people that could be recruited, how would they have gone about to do this work, to get the right people for these jobs?

M VERMEULEN: The best people to answer these questions are the people who were part of the Western Cape Development Council during that time.

CHAIRMAN: Miss Carr?

MS CARR: Mr Vermeulen, you said previously that you never worked from the top down, but rather worked from the bottom up, is that correct?

MR VERMEULEN: That was.



MS CARR: Now other sub-JMC's you didn't have to work up against them or you didn't have to work down, you could have worked and looked at how they also operated, am I correct?

MR VERMEULEN: Other sub-JMC's?

MS CARR; Yes.

MR VERMEULEN: With all due respect, the other sub-JMC's were never in touch with me, I was never in touch with them.

MS CARR: Yes, but you appears to be somebody that is diligent and somebody that would look at how the operations of sub-JMC's are operated and obviously if you started something, isn't it just common sense to look at how some other sub-JMC was operating at the time? Or to look if there was any flaws in that JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: I couldn't do that, I couldn't look at another JMC's structures and their ways of operating, I couldn't do that. I wasn't entitled - in fact - they had their own things, you know the divisions that sub-JMC's was ...

MS CARR: Boland?

MR VERMEULEN: Boland had one.

MS CARR: And this Boland also ...

MR VERMEULEN: But we never got together discussing ways and means.

MS CARR: Okay, but this Boland sub-JMC, were you aware whether they had any "waakdienste" at the time?

MR VERMEULEN: No.

MS CARR: Okay, thank you.

CHAIRMAN: Ms Dwane?

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: In your early testimony and also if we look at this document, they would talk about employing local people as security guards or law enforcements.

MR VERMEULEN: Where?

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: If you look I am referring to Annexure D, page 2, especially on paragraph 3, at the bottom of the page.

MR VERMEULEN: Just repeat again please. I've got it now.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Paragraph 3, it mentions appointing Blacks as so-called law enforcement Officers or security guards, however you would like to interpret it.

My question to you is that why was it so important that local people be employed, as opposed to the Police actually policing the area itself? Couldn't that have been an alternative?

Why couldn't the police have been used to protect, to prevent the vandalism in the area?

MR VERMEULEN: Normally, even today I saw staff doing the day to day operations like investigating crime, attending to matters of police nature and during this period the escalation of incidents had caused more strain on our own police resources and therefor one would have thought that by making a recommendation like that to the JMC, Western Province JMC, is in context with the climate at the time.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now you are just describing to me a violent climate, and you are going to make use of people who are not

necessarily involved in the vandalism. Now would these be people that you want to recruit, come from the same area where the vandalism is happening?

MR VERMEULEN: First of all the people should be recruited by the Western Cape Development Board, they should recruit their own people, not us.

And they should use them in a passive security role, looking after their assets.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: But wouldn't this still cause conflict within the area? I mean making use of local people to protect assets and things like that, as opposed to having police policing the area and protecting those assets?

MR VERMEULEN: I wouldn't know. The proof of the pudding would have been in the eating and it wasn't tested.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: No, I am just asking for your opinion.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, that is why I am saying. If they were appointed, we would have seen what would have happened, but I don't think there would have been a negative influence, I don't know.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now about your structure, this Western Province JMC, let us talk about the decisions that you would take on particular problems. You are there solving problems on this forum. Now can you describe to me, how from that process, I mean from that body itself, how things would be implemented and you know, going through the various levels and how you actually worked, from the sub-Western Province JMC to other

local structures and what those local structures were where the actual implementation would happen?

MR VERMEULEN: Sub-JMC consisted of the District Commissioner's areas which I described and the constitution, economical and welfare components or Government departments attended these meetings as was necessary.

A problem would arise at a certain place where the police were involved, at a school for instance that people would come into the school and chase out the scholars and intimidate the teachers.

The teachers would then phone the local police station. The local police station would attend to that situation once or twice but if this occurs on a regular basis, it becomes a problem for a local police station. They would then feed in the information through to the local management system where the school principal is and if he could not resolve the problem or solve it, it would then go through to the mini-JMC.

The mini-JMC might or might not have a very senior person from the Department of Education on their JMC. And if the problem persisted, it would come through to the sub-JMC where the sub-JMC would see if they could deal with that type of problem.

If they couldn't solve the problem, it would go through to the - now you see the decision making powers, there were none, there were actually as I say, there were no decision making powers to say to the Department of Education, you must close

the schools, you must stop - lock all the doors, do this and do that. We cannot do things like that, they had their own policy.

Every Department has its own respective policy, we could merely state to them what the situation was for some or other reason the scholars were dissatisfied and we couldn't say to them, look you are not allowed to have school tomorrow.

They would then have to make up their own minds, and apply their own minds to what they were going to do about the problem, but the fact that it was pointed out to them, is enough for them to act.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: You've just mentioned to me a procedure whereby reference is made to the local police station, I would guess that would be the first place where a problem would be referred to, right?

MR VERMEULEN: Normally, yes.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Then your local management system?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: And then your mini-JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: Quite right.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: And then if that problem cannot be solved, it goes to your sub-JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: Sub-JMC, yes.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: So what you are telling me in effect is that if a problem could be solved before coming to you, I mean problems could be solved before coming to your structure,

couldn't they?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: So it didn't have to go up to the highest level to the Western Province JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: Quite right.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now, in terms of local management systems and mini-JMC's I mean, how would they be able to deal with problems like that? What resources did they have that the local police stations did not have?

MR VERMEULEN: It all depends on the seniority because the local constitutional Educational person or whatever that attends the local management system, is normally not a very senior person. And at the mini-JMC level would be a more senior person. At the sub-JMC would be a more senior person and at the Western Cape-JMC there would be a very senior person, if not the most senior one in that Province at the time.

In this case, in Cape Town.

CHAIRMAN: Madeleine Fullard?

MS FULLARD: I wanted to ask about your relationship with the Western Province JMC in terms of reporting. How often and in what form would you have to report to the Western Province JMC, for example would all minutes of your sub-JMC meetings be sent to the Western Province-JMC as an example?

MR VERMEULEN: It should have been, if - I think it was. We normally sent our minutes through to them, because they had to

see if there were any issues which like for instance which we couldn't decide upon.

MS FULLARD: Okay, so you would send minutes of your meetings as well as ad hoc problems that you encountered that needed further resolution.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS FULLARD: What kinds of reports or communications would you receive from the Western Province-JMC to the sub-JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: If they had received communication from the State Security Council, the joint management system at Head Office, and it was necessary for us to know, they would give it to us. If it was not necessary for us to know, they wouldn't give it to us.

MS FULLARD: All right, and if the Western Province-JMC - would it be able to interact with role players that fell within your geographical area as a sub-JMC independently or would they have to always word through you as a sub-JMC? Say for example they wanted to meet with role players in a particular area, could they do that independently or would they automatically go through ...

MR VERMEULEN: Western Cape-JMC?

MS FULLARD: Yes, the top structure.

MR VERMEULEN: They could do it, yes.

MS FULLARD: They wouldn't necessarily have to inform you?

MR VERMEULEN: No, they wouldn't necessarily inform me. Perhaps later on, in fact as I say, I could not prescribe to

them what they had to do or what they could do.

MS FULLARD: Okay, and any relevant decisions that were obviously taken by the Western Province-JMC, that would affect your geographical area, would be communicated to you as well?

MR VERMEULEN: If they felt so.

MS FULLARD: Okay. I also wanted to ask about the interaction of the Western Province Command of the SADF, the army and their participation at the various levels of the JMC system, starting from the top - Western Province-JMC and particularly at your level, sub-JMC. What representation would Western Province Command have had? And I am talking specifically about late 1985, early 1986?

MR VERMEULEN: All right. If we look at the Defence Force structure, we particularly looking at all the role players of the Defence Force, we are looking at the Department, the Army, the Air Force, the Navy and the Medical Corps.

If it was necessary, if all four of them had to be at the JMC, at the sub-JMC, they would have been asked, invited to come. The Western Province Command would send a senior Officer which normally the rank of in our case a Colonel or a Brigadier.

MS FULLARD: To the sub-JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: To the sub-JMC.

MS FULLARD: Okay.

MR VERMEULEN: To the local management system you would get one of their Staff Officers with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, or



Commandant at the time. Even Major and they would sit in at a local but not at - at a mini, but not at a local, because then there would have been too many people running around just to go to meetings.

MS FULLARD: And were they serving permanently on the sub-JMC or you mentioned by invitation only?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, because of the fact that the Army had assisted on in patrols on the N2 and so, they were permanently, you can say permanently in the sub-JMC.

MS FULLARD: Okay, and would the representatives be able to independently meet with role players in a particular area without necessarily informing the sub-JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: I wouldn't know. If they did it, I wouldn't know.

If they didn't tell me, I wouldn't know. Because it wouldn't have been ethical if they did it.

MS FULLARD: Yes, okay, thank.

CHAIRMAN: Thank you Ms Fullard. Mark Killian?

MR KILLIAN: Thank you Chairperson. Mr Vermeulen, the document which was discussed beforehand, I think we have covered that quite thoroughly. If we go to the next document, that is the Establishment of sub-(indistinct) in Cape Town, that is C. No, not E.

MR VERMEULEN: All right.

MR KILLIAN: It is a letter from Brigadier Van Dyk. I would like to refer you to the Secretary of the State Security

Council's letter regarding the coordinated action during state of emergency and the combatting of the revolutionary activities which was sent in July 1985 to all the JMC's.

I would just like to ask you if you can explain to us what that letter was? Can you recall what that letter entailed, that letter that dealt with the instructions and the combatting and the state of emergency?

MR VERMEULEN: Firstly, I would like to point out who the writer was. The person who wrote this letter, wrote this letter and I had no say in it. I don't know specifically what he is referring to in this letter.

It mentions the State Security Council and coordinated operations, I can only speculate, I don't know what he is talking about here.

CHAIRMAN: Ms Dwane?

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: But as the Secretary of the sub-JMC, didn't correspondence pass to you?

MR VERMEULEN: The correspondence was given to me to file. In fact I never held the filing system, the filing system was held by filing clerks and I noticed that the endorsement that was made on the top of this letter, was merely the word file.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Okay, now referring to this letter, I just want you to explain two things to me. If you go to paragraph 2, it mentions "GOS" and "GIS". Could you explain to me what those bodies were and what their functions were and how they fitted into the sub-Western Province-JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: GOS is an Afrikaans word for a JOC, a Joint Operation Centre, that is what it means. Now in the Joint Operation Centre you have a Joint Operation Staff that sits there. So the Joint Operation Centre is manned by a Joint Operation Staff, but in this case they are talking about a Joint Operation Centre, "GOS".

Now it is not actually, the terminology of a "GOS" is also used in civil defence operations and by the fire brigades and in any other mountain rescue operation where there is a JOC, where there is a Joint Operation Centre where things has to be coordinated, coming in reports that were coming in and compiling of and so forth, that is the workbench of the JMC, "GOS", that is the workshop of the JMC.

You that where, according to Cape Town we had one of the 5th Floor of Thomas Boydell Building, there was a JOC there, where the radio's are and the links.

a "GIS" is a Joint Information Staff, that is the people within the structures who deals with various information that comes in from either wherever they get their information from and it is very important because some of the information that comes in has to be weighed and tested before you can react.

You cannot because of I hear that "X" or "Y" or "B" has certain items in his or her possession for instance, now go and rush without getting the necessary information. And it is the Joint Information Centre, which is a "GIS" in Afrikaans, it is their duty to weigh the information and so that it can be given

through at the sub-JMC meeting and according to that information that came in, we then related to each other and we reached a consensus on what should be done, patrols should be instituted, we should ask the Department of Divisional Council to assist in Hout Bay having water and so forth, and so forth.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now, you talk about weighing and testing information? What do you mean testing information, would you have people on the ground going to establish whether something was happening? I mean how did this happen?

MR VERMEULEN: The Joint Information Staff cannot come to a meeting with a lot of hogwash and a lot of things written on a piece of paper without at least having reliable information.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now, what I am trying to say is, could you just tell me the procedure in this whole question of testing, how did they go about that?

MR VERMEULEN: Oh, I don't know how they tested.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN: Ms Carr?

MS CARR: I refer you back to Annexure E.

MR VERMEULEN: I've got E.

MS CARR: You're on there?

MR VERMEULEN: We have got it, yes.

MS CARR: Now in Annexure E, paragraph 2 it says according to the above-mentioned letter, (indistinct) must be established at police Headquarters and other police stations. Where was it usually situated, was this something new that it had to be at

both the District as well as the Divisional offices or was it just for this state of emergency situation?

MR VERMEULEN: As long as the JMC functioned, they had to have these things at the mini and at the sub.

MS CARR: So it wasn't new or something that had to be established as a result of the unrest, that it had to be both at District and at Divisional levels?

MR VERMEULEN: I mentioned earlier that the incidents escalated and because of the escalation of incidents, we were practically forced to gather more often, to meet more often and that the Joint Information Centres had to be established at the mine and at the sub level, that is the instruction that this Brigadier had given to, but now he said according to the letter here, "according to the above mentioned letter", it was established, there were "GOS" and "GIS" at the mini and at the sub level.

MS CARR: Okay, now my question further to that is in paragraph 3, it says "with the outbreak of the unrests", now further in that paragraph it says that usually "Officers of the SA Defence Force, the Navy, the Air Force withdrew after a while", now from this one can infer that they usually formed part of this grouping, am I correct?

MR VERMEULEN: That is exactly so.

MS CARR: Now if this was an unrest situation, if this was a time of chaos, why was it that they now withdrew from this and more "GOS" and "GIS" was established.

MR VERMEULEN: Now let me just read this paragraph, because "at

the outbreak of the unrest a "GOS" was activated at the Departmental Headquarters, right, that was my office at the Division, that was at the sub level.

Officers of the Navy, Defence Force withdrew after a while. All right, what also happened was that the Defence Force also had their own operation centre, right and that we were quite capable of handling the incoming reports from various sources at the sub level.

So in fact from time to time they were there but once normal patrols had taken place and incidents had happened, the Joint Operation Centre of the mini dealt with it, the Joint Operation Centre of the riot unit dealt with it, and there they were. It wasn't necessary for them to be at the sub level, because the sub level Joint Operation Centre, the "GOS" from the sub level, was only receiving incident reports from the various "JOC's".

MS CARR: Okay, so would you say at the sub level the SAP and the SA Railway Police were working very closely together?

MR VERMEULEN: At the mini level?

MS CARR: Yes?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS CARR: So if any operations were conducted by the SAP, it would conducted jointly with the Railway?

MR VERMEULEN: Well, it all depends on how the situation was at the JOC there and I couldn't tell them what they had to do because they were senior people and ...

MS CARR: Yes, but from what you can deduct, would you also agree with me that if operations were conducted jointly, then it would be more likely that the SAP and the Railway would be acting closely together in a joint operation?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, they did, quite right.

MS CARR: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN: Mark Killian?

MR KILLIAN: Thank you. Mr Vermeulen to get back to a certain point here. At Cape Town on the fifth floor of the Thomas Boydeell Building there was a Joint Management Centre?

MR VERMEULEN: Correct.

MR KILLIAN: Who was in command of the JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: I was.

MR KILLIAN: So you were in command of this Joint Centre and also of the JMC? The JOC and the JMC, so you had two positions?

VERMEULEN: Correct.

MR KILLIAN: Now, the other JOC's for instance there was one in Athlone, you are aware of that one?

MR VERMEULEN: There were two in Athlone.

MR KILLIAN: There was one in Athlone and one in Mannenberg.

MR VERMEULEN: That is right.

MR KILLIAN: Now the one situated in Mannenberg, did that fall under your command?

MR VERMEULEN: No. They had their own Commander and their own infrastructure.

MR KILLIAN: So that fell under the Western Province JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: No, it was still under the command of the sub-JMC.

MR KILLIAN: So if they were planning an operation, would they then have first sent the planning of the operation to you and said look this is what we planning to do, and you said that you worked from the bottom, would you then have had to give approval to the planning?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MR KILLIAN: So all operations taking place in the District, I am talking about Bellville, Athlone and Wynberg and Cape Town, had to first obtain the approval from yourself because you are saying - I am getting to the question - you say it fell within your competence to approve these operations or not?

MR VERMEULEN: No. Normal operations planned or discussed during normal JMC meeting, it happened that the mini's then went back and planned their thing and then sent me the copies of the planning.

I then submitted it to the Chairperson of the JMC and I made copies and then it was returned to the people and then implemented.

Some of these operations, I was not aware of. It was only afterwards and I mentioned this specifically in my statement that we sometimes received reactive information in other words information about events, incidents that had already taken place.



MR KILLIAN: Yes, that is actually the question.

MR VERMEULEN: We weren't aware of all operations.

MR KILLIAN: So were you sometimes bypassed to the Western Province JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: It could have happened, I don't know. For some reason if they did do that, I wouldn't have been aware of it.

MR KILLIAN: So the operations were then discussed and you filtered it back through the hierarchy saying that yes, we are satisfied with what you've planned, continue, you can implement the plan?

After the operation had taken place, would then then have to report back to you on the outcome of the operation?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MR KILLIAN: Did you then in turn report to higher authority as far as the outcome was concerned and who did you report to?

MR VERMEULEN: To Police Headquarters.

MR KILLIAN: Is that Pretoria?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MR KILLIAN: Would you send a copy to them as well as to the Western Province JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MR KILLIAN: So all role players were notified of the outcome of the operations.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MR KILLIAN: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN: Of which operations did you not know about?

MR VERMEULEN: Afterwards I only heard about operations which had taken place.

CHAIRMAN: But how did that happen?

MR VERMEULEN: It just happened like that.

CHAIRMAN: How was it that you only heard about it afterwards?

MR VERMEULEN: It was when they presented their reports.

CHAIRMAN: Did you receive reports?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, if there was a specific incident, I received a report from their JOC and that was ...

CHAIRMAN: And was that the first time you heard about that incident?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, in some cases.

CHAIRMAN: How did that happen?

MR VERMEULEN: I don't know, it just happened like that.

CHAIRMAN: Was that irregular or not?

MR VERMEULEN: I don't know whether that activities were irregular or not, it just came back and reported back about what they had done. They did not come beforehand and told you what they were going to do.

Mr Chairman in all respect, the situation on grassroots level and my situation sitting in an office, are completely different. I cannot expect that all operations in which people were involved, in which there were people, patrols involved, that I should receive all the information beforehand. They would not know whether stones would be thrown at them or what.

CHAIRMAN: If you go out on a patrol and stones were thrown at them, you had to act. You can't come back to a JOC and a JIS and a sub-JMC and report back, that I understand, but other operations planned operations of which you did not have any knowledge, that is what I am interested in. How did that happen?

MR VERMEULEN: I don't know, they just planned it like that.

CHAIRMAN: Were those inferior people?

MR VERMEULEN: No, they were superior people, senior staff. In any JOC there was a senior Official, he was a District Commissioner.

CHAIRMAN: In every JOC, they went about and planned an operation, they executed the operation and just came back and reported that this and that had taken place, ten people were shot and killed or whatever happened.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, that is what happened.

CHAIRMAN: Was that regular?

MR VERMEULEN: I don't know what were the circumstances surrounding these incidents.

CHAIRMAN: If they had the time to do the planning, if they could execute this operation, then there would have been time to report back to the various structures?

MR VERMEULEN: I hear what you are saying and I am aware of what you are meaning and I am repeating, operations were executed by various joint structures of which I did not know.

CHAIRMAN: Should it have happened like that?

MR VERMEULEN: No, it should not have happened.

CHAIRMAN: So do you regard that as irregular?

MR VERMEULEN: No, what I am saying is I don't know whether they could be regarded as irregular, but I do not know what the circumstances were.

CHAIRMAN: What did you do about this matter then? When one of these JOC's presented a report to you that ten people were shot dead, 50 people were injured, 100 shacks were burnt in some or other squatter camp and this is the first time you receive this report on your desk, this terrible report, what did you do about that?

MR VERMEULEN: All these reports were entered on a log sheet and I said that operational centre reported back about that specific incident, why it happened, that had nothing to do with me, so I just entered the information on a log sheet.

CHAIRMAN: What did you do, did you just file those things? You just take that report and file it?

MR VERMEULEN: No, the next morning we discussed that at the meeting.

CHAIRMAN: What happened then? Now this terrible report is presented to the JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: Go look at all the previous days' incidents, they consider all these incidents, how many had taken place, etc and then the Chairman ask the people who were involved in these incidents, perhaps to report back and then those things were followed up. Then the sub-JMC had to be satisfied that it

was justified that this incident or activities were justified.

CHAIRMAN: And then you reported to the top structure, you report to COMPO and Western Province-JMC etc regarding that specific incident.

MR VERMEULEN: I came in I sat at my desk, I gave a report to everybody concerning the previous days' incidents, or whatever ha taken place the previous night for example. They scrutinized it, we read it out aloud, the Chairman hands it back to me. If he wishes to discuss it, he does that, if he wants to ask questions, he asks questions, I couldn't do anything more about it.

CHAIRMAN: Did that happen often? Were there many such incidents? Was that only an exception to the rule that incidents happened where you only heard about it afterwards by means of a report?

MR VERMEULEN: I don't know how many such incidents happened, if there were such incidents, I wouldn't know.

CHAIRMAN: Based on your experience, was it only by exception that you would only get a report afterwards and then you had to investigate and then you had to report back? That was not something that happened regularly.

MR VERMEULEN: No, I hope no.

CHAIRMAN: Should it have happened regularly, you would have taken certain steps?

MR VERMEULEN: Not me, my structure would have taken some steps via the Chairman to the Western Province-JMC. They would have

tried to normalise the situation and they would have said perhaps he is not happy with the planning because he acts as Chairman.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Still back on Annexure E, on this "GIS" issue. I just want to know the relationship between that structure and the Joint Information Communication structure, known as GIC. How did these two, I mean what relationship did they have?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, you see a "GIS" and a GIC is basically the same thing, it is the same thing. A GIC is a Joint Information Committee, a GIS is a Joint Information Centre, so a lot of these words, for that matter they could have written GIC, I hope I am quite clear there.

CHAIRMAN: Mark Killian?

MR KILLIAN: The JOC is compiled of Security Police, it consists of Security Police, Military Intelligence, National Intelligence, therefor you obtained very good information?

MR VERMEULEN: This information was provided to JOC, the information from JIC was provided to JOC and it came then to the sub-JMC.

MR KILLIAN: Was there a member of the Safety Committee, was there a member in one of the Security Members, did that serve on your committee, on the JOC?

MR VERMEULEN: He would come back with that information, for example the information is or could have been that there would be a faction fight in a squatter camp.

MR KILLIAN: Do you filter this information down to the PBS to the LMC and did you send it back to the top again?

MR VERMEULEN: This report was handed in during the morning to the representative of the JIS, to the JOC in which people from the Riot Unit was present. Copies were made to all the various role players who were present during such a meeting.

MR KILLIAN: So he would have provided his information then already to COMPO and then also to the Western Province JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: The Security Police handled this type of information.

MR KILLIAN: I refer back to the question asked by the Chairman regarding operations you did not know about and only heard about afterwards. Could you give us an example of such an operation, a big operation of which you only heard afterwards, of the JOC if they - can you tell us, give an example of an operation in which they were involved, of which you only heard afterwards, which you did not know about?

MR VERMEULEN: The one operation which is well known is the Guguletu seven, I only heard about that one afterwards.

MR KILLIAN: That would have been an important discussion the day afterwards at the JOC meeting?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, of course.

MR KILLIAN: I don't want to expand about this now but some of these people involved were also people who were members of the JMC, if we look at your minutes for example you mention Dolf Odendaal, he was involved in the Guguletu seven incident.

You mentioned that he had never informed the JMC that such an operation was going to take place. Okay, Ms Carr?

MS CARR: Mr Vermeulen, Mr Vermeulen, you know you are speaking about operations which you came to hear about afterwards, right?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS CARR: Now, you have mentioned two of those operations that you came to hear about afterwards. Now you were also the District Commander of Bellville, right?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS CARR: Did any operations occur in your area of jurisdiction in Bellville with a group by the name of AOE, Number 10, Western Province?

MR VERMEULEN: I was the District Commander for Bellville from 1992, hey, 1992. I was appointed as the District Commissioner of Bellville in 1992. If it is still relevant, then we can answer the question.

MS CARR: Okay, yes, just answer the question.

MR VERMEULEN: In Bellville the District Commissioner's area the Divisional Riot Unit, I can't think of any incident where they acted where I didn't know about.

MS CARR: Okay, now as Secretary now, in your capacity as Secretary not as District Commander in 1985, 1986 I am sure you did know, I mean you did know Major Odendaal at the time?

MR VERMEULEN: I knew him, yes.

MS CARR: And you know he was second in charge of course of, I



am just putting it on record of course, that he was second in charge of this group, right?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS CARR: And there was also a group - Group 40 at the time, also operating under the - Group 40 at the time also operating under Mr Rheeder, Colonel Rheeder?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS CARR: And they were also acting at the time and did they also, they also formed part of these meetings that you attended, isn't it so?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS CARR: Now, I am not asking you as to exactly what you knew what they were doing at the time, but as information that filtered in, what exactly did these units do? I am sure they were long on these Committees with you?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, of course I know what they were doing.

MS CARR: So what was the whereabouts or what was the operations that these groups were involved in?

MR VERMEULEN: Group 40 was as far as my knowledge is concerned, a Group 40 worked together basically with the minis, but mostly with the riot unit.

MS CARR: Okay and what ...

MR VERMEULEN: Group 40 is the mobilisation division of the South African Army which consists out of Commando and Civil Force members, such as the Cape Flats Commando, such as whatever. Group 40 has also to do with the call up system of

members who had to do certain camps after they did their initial training.

That was Group 40. They were equipped with normal patrolling vehicles on the N2, on those streets together with the riot unit at that stage.

MR CARR: But they were ideally from the Army, right?

MR VERMEULEN: Pardon?

MS CARR: Group 40 was ideally from the Army?

MR VERMEULEN: they were from them, they were Defence Force members.

MS CARR: Okay.

MR VERMEULEN: Group 40 is from the Army and they were assisting the South African Police at the height of the unrest.

MS CARR: Okay, now it was already stated to this Court that AOE number 10, Western Province, which was mainly dealt with by Major Odendaal, right.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS CARR: Now it was already stated that this was a very specialised group?

MR VERMEULEN: Major Odendaal's group?

MS CARR: Yes.

MR VERMEULEN: They were the Divisional, the AOE, do you know what that means?

MS CARR: What does AOE mean?

MR VERMEULEN: It is the Divisional Riot Unit, DRU in English.

MS CARR: Okay.

MR VERMEULEN: That is it.

MS CARR: Okay, now this group specifically, it was said to this Court unless of course you dispute what was said to this Court?

MR VERMEULEN: No, I don't know what was said.

MS CARR: Oh, to this panel, sorry. It was said to this panel that this group or this unit was highly specialised in that it had sharp shooters, it had very skilled people in this unit itself.

MR VERMEULEN: Yet, quite so.

MS CARR: Now it was operating ideally in which areas?

MR VERMEULEN: Well, in the areas of unrest basically.

MS CARR: Mainly KTC?

MR VERMEULEN: Well, they were all over. They had to be all over at certain times because they were equipped with the right equipment.

MS CARR: Now what kind of equipment did they have?

MR VERMEULEN: Well, they had the right equipment, they had a hardened vehicle, not a soft skinned vehicle, they had a vehicle which is strong with an engine that can pull vehicles out of the road which is not a normal patrol van. They had a recovery vehicle, where there is a bit tip truck set alight, to move that thing off the road. They had special - the mini's also had equipment, but not the right gear that the riot unit had because it wasn't economical to.

MS CARR: What heavy metal things did they have?

MR VERMEULEN: What heavy metal is that?

MS CARR: Like ammunition, because I mean what sharp shooters in this group, I can only wonder what kind of equipment, what kind of enforcements these people had because ...

MR VERMEULEN: I think you should - the equipment they had, one should look at normal policing equipment as well as firearms and tear smoke equipment and rubber baton equipment, that kind of stuff.

MS CARR: Were they in uniform at the time?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS CARR: Do you know if they were operating in uniform?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS CARR: Okay, nothing further.

MR VERMEULEN: I should think so. They were - well I saw them in uniform, I didn't see ~~them in private clothing~~.

MS CARR: But did you actually observe them?

MR VERMEULEN: No, when they were at a meeting, they came in uniform to the meeting?

MS CARR: All of them?

MR VERMEULEN: No, the people that came to the JMC.

MS CARR: Yes, but you didn't know those people operating on the ground - what they were clothed in?

MR VERMEULEN: No, I wouldn't know because I wasn't at the ground level job. Normally I would have thought they were in uniform.

MS CARR: But you are not sure thereof?

MR VERMEULEN: Well, I can't answer for that.

MS CARR: Okay, thank you.

CHAIRMAN: Why did they need sharp shooters?

MR VERMEULEN: Sharp shooters, the position was as follows. If we look at what happened at the Silverton Bank where there was a hostage drama. If you look at the years when there was a hostage drama at Fox Street and if you also look at all the robberies where people are taken hostage. It is one of the most untenable situations to be in, but that special training which the police underwent as sharp shooters was very important in that context.

CHAIRMAN: You told us that this Divisional Riot Unit, Western Province 10, operated only in the unrest areas?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes. And when there was no unrest they were engaged in the normal combatting of crime activities.

CHAIRMAN: We are not talking about 1985, 1986 when there was a lot of unrest, there was a state of emergency etc. Why was it necessary for them to have sharp shooters for the unrest?

MR VERMEULEN: No, at that stage they didn't deploy sharp shooters as far as I was aware. Sharp shooters weren't deployed, because if you deploy a sharp shooter, you do so for a specific reason.

CHAIRMAN: Well, that is my point.

MR VERMEULEN: So they weren't deployed, and that is as far as I know.

CHAIRMAN: As far as you have knowledge, they weren't deployed?

MR VERMEULEN: No.

CHAIRMAN: So they weren't deployed by this Western Province 10 unit as far as you know?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Are you sure of that?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: Would it sounded strange to you, or seemed strange to you if sharp shooters had been deployed for the combatting of unrest?

MR VERMEULEN: No, I don't know why they would have done that.

CHAIRMAN: So you don't need sharp shooters to combat unrest?

MR VERMEULEN: No. Unless they are shooting at you, and you know that, that is a different matter, then you could deploy sharp shooters, because I won't allow myself to get shot at.

CHAIRMAN: So it is possible that they might have used sharp shooters?

MR VERMEULEN: No, no, I can't speculate on that. No, I won't speculate on that.

CHAIRMAN: Ms Fullard?

MS FULLARD: I asked you just now, a little earlier about your reporting to the Western Province-JMC. What would be the next structure up from the Western Province-JMC to the Central State?

MR VERMEULEN: The JMC.

MS FULLARD: The National JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS FULLARD: Wasn't it called the "GVS" at that stage?

MR VERMEULEN: No, not at all. The Joint Security Staff, that is now with the Commissioner of Police and the Chief of the Army and the Air Force, that is the National JMC.

MS FULLARD: All right, and we are talking about say the first six months of 1986 here?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS FULLARD: When we are talking about the National JMC.

MR VERMEULEN: So what about it?

MS FULLARD: Would you as a sub-JMC at any stage have had communication with that next level up or would it always go through the Western Province-JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: They would normally and in most cases, they would communicate through the structure down to me, normally.

MS FULLARD: Through the Western Province-JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: If there might be ... pardon?

MS FULLARD: Through the Western Province JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS FULLARD: Okay. And above that National JMC, what would be the next structure?

MR VERMEULEN: State Security Council.

MS FULLARD: Okay, all right, and would you as the sub-JMC ever had the opportunity to communicate directly to the ...

MR VERMEULEN: To the State Security Council?

MS FULLARD: Yes. Or the Secretariat of the State Security Council or its working ...

MR VERMEULEN: Not that I can think of, directly with them, no.

MS FULLARD: So in your recollection, your sub-JMC at no stage had any direct communication?

MR VERMEULEN: Not that I can remember.

MS FULLARD: Either from them or from yourselves to them?

MR VERMEULEN: From them there might be, yes, via the system.

MS FULLARD: Okay, all right. Was there at any stage any regional representation of the State Security Council present in the Western Province?

MR VERMEULEN: I think when Parliament sat here, they would have been here, I think and that is very, well obviously because they had to advise the Cabinet of the day of the security situation in the country.

MS FULLARD: And would the Secretariat of the State Security Council or the State Security Council itself, would it have visited the JMC structures say prior to June 1986?

MR VERMEULEN: Not that I can remember.

MS FULLARD: Okay, and would you at any stage have had to prepare special briefings for the State Security Council around issues that fell within your geographical area as sub-JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: The Western Cape JMC, if there was any briefings to be prepared, it had to be them, they had to prepare it.

MS FULLARD: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN: Ms Dwane?

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: My last question on Annexure E. I see on paragraph 4 it talks about (indistinct) of Athlone was in



1985, the 12th of the 9th activated. Now I would guess this about the setting up of mini GBS in Athlone?

MR VERMEULEN: Mini JOC.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Mini JOC? Now which areas would this JOC cover?

MR VERMEULEN: Mannenberg, Guguletu, at that stage Langa, Lansdowne, Mitchells Plain, Philippi, Grassy Park, Khayelitsha, Site C, Nyanga, Crossroads, New Crossroads, well that is it.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: What about KTC?

MR VERMEULEN: KTC, yes, as well.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: So we are talking about a structure which is actually dealing with Black areas, I just need that confirmed?

MR VERMEULEN: No, it is not necessary, there was European areas in that area as well at that time.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: but the areas that you've just mentioned, are actually Black areas, aren't they?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, well Crawford, Rondebosch-East, it is also ...

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: That would also be included?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, Zeekoeivlei.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: But the majority of areas it dealt with, were Black areas?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, quite right.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Thank you. Okay, now we are finished with this issue, if we can go on to Annexure I. I think it is

correspondence from the National Security Management System.

MR VERMEULEN: Okay, here it is.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: It is dated the 9th of November 1985.

MR VERMEULEN: All right, I've got it.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: What I find interesting is that this document does actually refer to your geographical area, I can see that it is actually addressed to the Western Cape GBS, but would you have knowledge of, surely you would have had a copy of this in your offices at the time?

MR VERMEULEN: Let me just see, where was this document - it is a document if I may just identify the document for the purpose, it is a document which is a National Security Management System. It is a document that came from Brigadier Kritzinger, at that stage might have been the Chairman or the vice Chairman. All right he ~~was the Chairman~~ of the Western Cape Joint Management System.

The document that he had set up was addressed to Brigadier wart who is also the Chairman of the Security Committee of the Western Cape. That is what I can see and if I had, I can't see if I had received it because it wasn't addressed to me.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: I am aware it wasn't addressed to you, but surely you would have had access to it considering that it did talk about your region, I mean your geographical area?

MR VERMEULEN: Not necessarily Madam. Yes, but not necessarily I would have had access to this document.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: So it was issues like Crossroads and things

like that, Nyanga West, you wouldn't be informed about those, would it just sort of stay at the Western Province JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: It wouldn't be filtered down?

MR VERMEULEN: Not necessarily.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: But shouldn't information actually be flowing up from those structures to the lower structures?

MR VERMEULEN: Once more, I repeat, I cannot say to the Joint Management System of the Western Cape what they've got to do with their documents and what not.

CHAIRMAN: Mark Killian?

MR KILLIAN: Thank you Mr Chairman. Brigadier C. Swart, was he also previously a Commissioner of Police in the Western Cape?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MR KILLIAN: He was automatically the Chairman of the Western Province NSMS where Brigadier Van Dyk was the Deputy Chairman?

MR VERMEULEN: That is correct.

MR KILLIAN: Naturally the communication system would then be enforced because it has to do, or it has an influence on your area specifically. Then how would you then not know about this or it did not come from you? The question arises you receive the information from the bottom up, that means where Western Province JMC should be informed, that for example this is a problem area, from your minutes?

MR VERMEULEN: They would get, he would get the information

from my minutes.

MR KILLIAN: Yes, I agree with that. Now I refer you to paragraph 4 on page 2 and it says broadly I recommend that the Security Forces should first clean up the Black areas, I don't know what they mean by that, for example weed the lawn or the grass? He compiled this letter from the minutes you sent to him? From these incidents, he could draw up this letter. In military terms, what does clean up mean? We are all adults here today and we know that the Security Forces were not involved really in weeding or digging trenches, in military terms what do you mean by cleaning up?

What did they mean by the Security Forces should first clean up the areas around Crossroads? JOC must provide the information which they require to execute these operations. We are not military people and we do not understand what is meant by this terminology. Just explain to us in easy terms what this means. You were the director of JOC and please explain what this term clean up means.

MR VERMEULEN: There are two various disciplines which we have to keep in mind. The Army is trained for war, police are trained for policing and those two people - their ideas about things are different. What he meant there I do not know and you cannot expect from me to answer that, you have to ask him yourself.

MR KILLIAN: Let's look from the stand point of the police.

MR VERMEULEN: No, I can't answer that question.

MR KILLIAN: Then I refer back to page 1. Let us look at point number 5 of the second paragraph and it says on a daily basis stones are being thrown and petrol bombs near Crossroads.

Crossroads is furthermore very quiet and it is not to say that these people who throw these bombs and stones, come from Crossroads, they could come from Guguletu.

This is inter-related with paragraph 4. You must remember that this is from your reports. The reports to the Western Province-JMC that he could get the information to draw up this letter. Did he regard Crossroads as a problem area at that stage?

MR VERMEULEN: The incidents on which I reported on which happened are not discussed. This man went and he wrote a letter and he speculated, not me. I cannot answer you.

MR KILLIAN: But the question is - I will put the question differently. The sub-JMC, did they discuss Crossroads as a problem area?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, we discussed all areas where problems occurred. Crossroads, yes, it was a problem area.

CHAIRMAN: Before we continue, it seems as if in Annexure I the situation regarding certain so-called Black areas, regarding unrest incidents, that that Annexure describes those situations in the sense that in paragraph 3 on the first page in his comment the Chairman of the Western Province-JMC says that from the above I can see that the bad spots are the Black areas and the priority areas, Guguletu and then Nyanga-West.

It seems as if there were terrible problems in those areas according to the viewpoint of those senior Officials in the National NSMS. What is priority one, he referred to?

MR VERMEULEN: I do not know.

CHAIRMAN: You've never heard that expression previously in your whole life and not in the situation of the JMC in which you operated?

MR VERMEULEN: Never before. These people were mostly Army people.

CHAIRMAN: What are the bad spots that they are referring to?

MR VERMEULEN: You have to ask him, it is obviously areas where there were problems.

CHAIRMAN: Mr Killian also indicated and he recommends that in broader terms I recommend that the Security Police should first clean up the areas around Crossroads, perhaps he is referring to these very bad spots? Would it be reasonable and I am asking in the light of your experience as a Police Officer, it is a long experience, you've also been in senior posts and you were directly involved in the National Safety Management System. This proposal by the Chairman of the Western Cape JMC regarding cleaning up of these so-called bad spots. It refers to some or other activities by the Safety Police.

MR VERMEULEN: If we discussed this document and if he refers to cleaning up, why did the Western Province JMC not instruct us to do something about it, they never instructed us and referred us to paragraph 4 and told us what that meant.

I don't think I've ever seen this document. You see all documents I usually received, I paraphrased.

CHAIRMAN: It was addressed to the Chairman of the Western Province JMC, it was one of his Officials. He was involved in Kritzinger's JMC, it was a Mr Swart.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

CHAIRMAN: And he expects a kind of input from Swart?

MR VERMEULEN: Therefore I cannot give comment on that.

CHAIRMAN: I don't want you to answer about the concrete situation, from your experience I just want to determine whether we could benefit from your experience.

MR VERMEULEN: This is now a deadlock concerning this matter, I do not know anything more.

CHAIRMAN: Don't give up so easily, logically it seems as if the cleaning up operation refers to some or other activity by the Security Police to combat these bad spots and the heading of this is Short Term Combatting of Unrest in the Western Cape, that is the heading of his letter. Do you experience this also as a Police Officer, this proposal regarding cleaning up refers to an activity of the Security Police regarding these bad spots? Could it have referred to anything else?

MR VERMEULEN: I don't know.

CHAIRMAN: Logically speaking what do you think? This cleaning up operation, see whether you can help me. Mr Killian referred to a possible interpretation which would be ridiculous in this context but cleaning up it doesn't refer here to what people do

for example like picking up papers laying around etc? Do you think it refers to that type of cleaning up?

Did the Chairman of the Western Cape JMC had that in mind, that the Security Police should be picking up paper or garbage or whatever?

MR VERMEULEN: They had to take all these burnt out vehicles from the roads, they could have done that and it could have been that these burnt out things should have been removed from the roads, he could have referred to burnt out tyres for example.

CHAIRMAN: From your experience Brigadier Kritzinger for example could refer to the removal of these wrecks or the burnt tyres and the stones and the barricades?

MR VERMEULEN: It could have been because the usual police services couldn't help with those incidents. I mean this person isn't very specific in what he is referring to.

CHAIRMAN: We know that, but you are here now. You have a lot of experience. You were there - we haven't been there and we want to learn from your experiences.

Your reaction is that that was a type of cleaning up operation this Brigadier had in mind, for example to open up the streets, etc.

MR VERMEULEN: With all respect, it doesn't help to ask me about information concerning somebody else's letter. I can't speculate about what this person who wrote the letter had in mind.



CHAIRMAN: The only cleaning up you can think about is that for example removing all these wrecks from the road, or taking away all the burnt out tyres, is that what you think? Is that all you can think of? Is that all that cleaning up refers to? Is there any other possibility as an old, ex-policeman - you can think about?

MR HIEMSTRA: With respect Mr Chairman, he said repeatedly he can't speculate and he has given some explanations what it could mean, it could have meant. What he is saying I am under oath, I am not going to answer about any speculation he is going to give, is nothing more than a speculation.

MR CHAIRMAN: I am just trying to place what he is saying in the correct perspective, so that we all can understand what he is saying. What he is saying that the only possibility that he can think about is cleaning up the streets in the sense that he mentioned. I can't understand what the problem is.

MR HIEMSTRA: He has already said that is not the only possibility, he said I cannot speculate about this, I am not going to speculate about this.

CHAIRMAN: He said that was the only possibility he could think about that, if I understood him correctly. I just want to test his reaction on this matter.

Mr Vermeulen, do I understand you correctly?

MR VERMEULEN: I've already said I do not know what this man meant. I don't want to be hostile, but that is my answer.

CHAIRMAN: What I am asking is, is the only possibility, the

only possible explanation of this idea, the only possible thing you can think about that he was meaning with cleaning up is to remove the wrecks or burning tyres, etc? Is that the only comment you can make? You do not want to speculate about this?

MR VERMEULEN: I think it is very unreasonable to expect from me to say what this man meant.

CHAIRMAN: I just want to know whether you can assist us in this regard as a policeman. If you were to have received such a letter on your desk ...

MR VERMEULEN: I wouldn't have written a letter like this.

CHAIRMAN: If something like this landed on your desk and you were reading this letter, or this report which landed on your desk, was that the only thing you could think about when this man referred to cleaning up, did you only think he was referring for example to wrecks of motor cars in the streets of those so-called bad spots?

MR VERMEULEN: This letter came from the JMC. Is this letter from my records, I do not know? I was not present when these things happened, when these things were removed, I did not know about this, I was not present.

CHAIRMAN: I do not want to comment about this, is this the only point you want to make about this aspect?

MR VERMEULEN: I do not know any further.

CHAIRMAN: Do you want to add anything further?

MR VERMEULEN: Nothing.

CHAIRMAN: Ms Dwane?

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: I think now we would like to refer you to Annexure F, G and H. I think it is (indistinct), the 25th of March 1986.

MR VERMEULEN: F, document from General Wandrag?

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Yes.

MR VERMEULEN: All right.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Seemingly there are quite a lot of operations that are discussed in this telex and the one that sort of appeals to me the most is the one on page 3, talking about counter mobilisation. It is paragraph 11. Can you find that?

Now the implementation of this strategy is discussed in your body, the Western Province sub-JMC on the 25th of March 1986, which is Annexure G and the 26th of March 1986, which is Annexure H.

Now looking at Annexure F and Annexure H on this counter mobilisation, I just want you to explain to me, especially on paragraph 7 of Annexure H it talks about the setting up of a (indistinct) Committee. Could you explain that to me?

MR VERMEULEN: Paragraph 7, is that what you are referring to?

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: No, paragraph 7 of that last document, it is dated the 26th of the 3rd, 1986, it is referred to as Annexure H.

MR VERMEULEN: Oh, Annexure H.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: It is WP sub-JMC.

MR VERMEULEN: I will get it now.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Have you got it?

MR VERMEULEN: I've got it, yes.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now, if you go to page 3, the bottom of that page it talks about counter mobilisation.

MR VERMEULEN: No, I haven't got the same document. Are we looking at page 3, yes?

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: Page 3, the last paragraph. Now if you look at that document together with (indistinct), they both talk about in the (indistinct) 1 (b), it says positive resistance movements must be encouraged and it must be done in a clandestine way.

Paragraph 7 of the implementation, I think it is Annexure H, it says this is a specialised operation of the proposed clandestine Committee of the sub-JMC when the climate is right and appropriate for it.

Now, what I am interested in is that setting up of that clandestine Committee, I mean what is a clandestine Committee?

MR VERMEULEN: Exactly what it says. It is a committee that, for whatever, not in this context, any clandestine Committee is a committee that is - that works under the cover of secrecy.

MS DWANE-ALTMAN: What does secrecy mean there in terms of this documentation?

MR VERMEULEN: Secrecy in terms of this document means that it should not be advertised what they were doing.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: If that whole JMC thing is secret what is so special about this?

MR VERMEULEN: The whole JMC?

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: What happens at the JMC is secret what is so special about this counter-mobilisation strategy that it has to be secret?

MR VERMEULEN: First of all this paragraph which I wrote there,

"This is firstly a specialised operation of the proposed clandestine committee. When the climate is appropriate for it, it should be established".

We never had a clandestine committee, we never had one, no we never had one.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: So we can have that on record that you never had a clandestine committee... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: No we never had - in the Sub-JMC we never had a clandestine committee.

CHAIRPERSON: Why all the clandestine operations?

MR VERMEULEN: If we look at the context which the lady referred to is very true where it was said road blockades, presence operations, propaganda etc, etc, where was this mentioned? No.11. -

"Counter mobilisation: Attempts must be made to motivate Black townships to mobilise themselves against the revolutionary actions. This must be done on a small scale and on a regional basis. Positive resistance movements must be encouraged and done in a clandestine way".

But we, at the Sub-JMC never established a clandestine committee and we never had any clandestine operations.

CHAIRPERSON: So what is it about?

MR VERMEULEN: I don't know.

CHAIRPERSON: To whom is it addressed? What are these clandestine operations?

MR VERMEULEN: I don't know.

CHAIRPERSON: What is counter-mobilisation?

MR VERMEULEN: To whom is this addressed?

CHAIRPERSON: Forget about that, just look at Annexure H.

MR VERMEULEN: I must look at this thing because it's the first time that I've seen it.

CHAIRPERSON: Annexure H is your own document.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, that is why I am saying,

"This is a specialised operation of a proposed clandestine committee".

so they are only proposing it, but we actually never executed it.

MR VERMEULEN: But forget about that for a moment. You further say that when the climate is right ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Ja.

CHAIRPERSON: .... and it can be created, so you envisaged this as the Sub-JMC?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, but let's just look at the guidelines of counter-mobilisation, it must be done in a clandestine way, Municipal Police must be extended, now those things hadn't been

done yet what we are talking about there, the climate wasn't yet ready so it wasn't necessary.

CHAIRPERSON: Yes but the question is, you as JMC what were you actually busy with, why did you have to get involved with clandestine matters?

MR VERMEULEN: That's exactly why I am saying Chairperson we never did it, we never established it.

CHAIRPERSON: We understand that. You are not saying in your document, Annexure H, that those people can go and jump in the sea, Wandrag can do what he likes, we are not getting involved in clandestine operations, that's not what you are saying. What you are doing is busy talking about the implementation of Wandrag's document. So the question is, what clandestine actions, as the JMC were you envisaging?

Why did you regard this proposal in a positive light because you were prepared to do so once the climate was right for it?

MR VERMEULEN: Let me repeat, when the minutes are taken down and sent to a higher level it had to be done so with a degree of discipline and without appearing to be contentious. Here we had guidelines that there should be a clandestine committee and clandestine operations.

CHAIRPERSON: Right.

MR VERMEULEN: Now, in my answer which must be read by the Chairperson of the Sub-JMC and we are talking about counter-mobilisation, this is firstly a specialised operation. Apart from anything else it's firstly a specialised operation of

which I was not aware. I didn't know how it was to be operated. They couldn't have expected it from me. I was a captain in the police at that time and I was very low down in the ranks as far as the brass was concerned. So there were many things that I was aware of. So now they are telling us or telling me to establish a clandestine committee when the situation is right. Now the Chairperson must decide on that. My answer was that it was in the first place a specialised operation of the proposed clandestine committee, so there is this proposed committee of the Sub-JMC when the climate is right for it.

CHAIRPERSON: Correct. That is what your Sub-JMC is adding here, that is what you are adding as Sub-JMC.

MR VERMEULEN: Correct. But we never established this clandestine committee. But if it was to be established we were proposing that we should have one when the climate for it was ready and ripe. But if you look at my introduction I refer again to what I said that it was a specialised operation.

CHAIRPERSON: Absolutely.

MR VERMEULEN: So specialised people had to be involved in this but I didn't know how to do it.

CHAIRPERSON: No, no, no, that doesn't matter, the point I am making is that you are not saying in this document that we take note of the fact that Wandrag, in his encoded message, is proposing this clandestine committee and we as Sub-JMC are not interested in this, our proposal is that there must be no



clandestine committees or operations, that everything should take place clearly and cleanly and out in the open. But that's not what you said. You were actually going along with this proposal and busy refining it, isn't that so?

MR VERMEULEN: Could I please point out something to you, that is that other document written by - the encoded message written by the Western Province JMC, Annexure J or schedule J.

CHAIRPERSON: Go on.

MR VERMEULEN: Alright, Annexure or Schedule J, a signal message was sent to the secretary of the State Security Council from Western Province JMC, look at the stamp on the left.

CHAIRPERSON: Right.

MR VERMEULEN: Right. So it was sent to the State Security Council, to the secretariat, paragraph F.

"When the fathers return to work attacks could take place again. The fathers are not hostile to the security forces. The fathers cannot be supported openly due to hostility in the left-wing Press. The old men (under D), the old men ...."

take note of who is speaking, this is the Western Province JMC speaking here, so it seems to me as if they were already busy identifying that the fathers - you see for instance the word "fathers" and committees we never used words like that.

CHAIRPERSON: It is all here.

MR VERMEULEN: I didn't use those words. I am talking about the fact that in paragraph 7, I want to place it on record

there was never a clandestine committee.

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Vermeulen what I want you to react to is the following, do you agree that what the Sub-JMC was busy doing in paragraph 7 on page 3 of this Annexure H was in respect of the proposal, Wandrag's proposal to refine it?

MR VERMEULEN: How do you mean?

CHAIRPERSON: As part of the implementation you were proposing firstly that the climate had to be right for it, so you were actually busy refining the proposal.

MR VERMEULEN: Continue.

CHAIRPERSON: Do you agree?

MR VERMEULEN: Continue please so that I can get a question.

CHAIRPERSON: No I am asking you, do you agree with me? What you were doing was busy refining the proposal because for instance you said it could be done once the climate was right, correct?

MR VERMEULEN: What are the duties of a secretary? A secretary simply writes down what is said at a meeting. So that doesn't mean that I said that.

CHAIRPERSON: You were part of this body Mr Vermeulen ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Yes I was, but what was written here is part of a discussion at a meeting at which I simply took the minutes.

CHAIRPERSON: Yes but Mr Vermeulen it doesn't say here that the secretary Mr Vermeulen didn't agree so you can't withdraw from this, you can't distance yourself in this way. What I am

asking you is do you agree that this body of which you were a part were busy refining this proposal or instruction by for instance saying that the climate had to be right before continuing this?

MR VERMEULEN: But I must point out once again that's not what I was saying. I was the secretary. I was a captain and I think it's conveniently forgotten that a captain didn't have the authority to question these people who were sitting around that table. And you are actually placing me in an extremely difficult situation if you expect or regard everything that's written down here as being my own words or ideas. I was simply the secretary and it was my duty to keep the minutes. That was my function.

CHAIRPERSON: No, that's a very responsible function.

MR VERMEULEN: So that's why I am asking, is it not time that the chairperson of that committee be approached so that he can come and testify here. I think you've got hold of the wrong person here.

CHAIRPERSON: No, no, but you must try and help us here. Please tell us, this National Security Management System, the NSMS, what are these clandestine things?

MR VERMEULEN: I don't know, I don't know because I didn't have one. That's as simple as it is.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: You mention that this committee was never set up.

MR VERMEULEN: Never set up.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now can you go to the paragraph below that one?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: It says,

"There is already from the divisional riot unit is already giving attention to this".

That is in paragraph 7.

MR VERMEULEN: It's worded "from" the Western Province, and I am already referring to J again. The Western Province JMC is working in this regard and they already referred to the word "fathers" to act against the comrades. This is a quotation from this letter.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: So what I am trying to illustrate to you is that there wasn't really a need to set up a clandestine committee ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Not for me.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: For the meeting.

MR VERMEULEN: Not for the Sub-JMC wasn't it ...(intervention)

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Not for the Sub-JMC because there was already conflict between the fathers and the comrades, isn't that correct?

MR VERMEULEN: But I had - well I don't know ...(intervention)

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Mr Vermeulen ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: I believe you did take minutes, but I also believe that you were also at those discussions and I am sure

you do ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: What discussions?

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: ....remember what was discussed at that meeting.

MR VERMEULEN: What discussions, where?

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: I am talking about the discussions that happened at this meeting about the implementation of "kripte berig".

MR VERMEULEN: You are talking about document H, let's have a look, let's qualify this document, the old H.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: No I am referring to paragraph 7.

MR VERMEULEN: No, no, no but it's very important that - this is not minutes, this is not minutes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: This is a summary of the discussions at the meeting.

MR VERMEULEN: No, no, no. This wasn't minutes otherwise it would have stated that this is minutes. This is a reaction on questions that were asked. These are not minutes. If these were minutes on the 23rd, on the 26th of the 3rd there would have been a list of people present.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Sorry, my apologies, but it is - you say it's a reaction ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: It's a reaction to that other one - to that other crypto-message ... (intervention)

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: To the crypto-message.

MR VERMEULEN: This is a reaction.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Then can we look at G. They are minutes on the 25th of March 1986. Now quite a couple of things were discussed about this document seemingly, you were also present at this meeting.

MR VERMEULEN: Definitely.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: I mean your name is right at the bottom there on page 1.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: And it does talk about the following having been implemented from the crypto-message itself, am I correct?

MR VERMEULEN: That's a statement not a question. What is the story now?

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: This memo that I am referring to you was ... (intervention)

ADV HIEMSTRA: Mr Chairman might I just ... (intervention)

CHAIRPERSON: Yes Mr Hiemstra.

ADV HIEMSTRA: ...to try and ensure that we are talking about the same document.

CHAIRPERSON: The document at the top it says "Secret measures adopted". Mr Hiemstra this is right in front of you.

MR VERMEULEN: Right, we are looking at the same documents now.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now if you look at paragraph 1.

MR VERMEULEN: 1.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: It mentions "KOMPOL Berig no.25/386".

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: And it also mentions an attachment of a memo.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: I don't know if I am interpreting correctly.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: I am.

MR VERMEULEN: Right.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now this memo actually goes into more detail than the minutes themselves.

MR VERMEULEN: Right.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: About the implementation of this "KOMPOL Berig" which are not necessarily reflected in the minutes of the meeting, but your memo goes into further detail about what was discussed at that meeting, am I correct?

MR VERMEULEN: Right.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now please correct me if I am wrong.

MR VERMEULEN: No it's not necessarily that it was discussed, not necessarily that it was discussed at that meeting.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: So where did this other information come out of?

MR VERMEULEN: What other information?

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: The information about counter-mobilisation in this Annexure H if it wasn't discussed in your meeting?

MR VERMEULEN: You see H, the old H, this document dated the

26th of the 3rd, page 3, this is an answer to that crypto now to inform the person who is asking the questions, in this case General Wandrag was asking the questions, am I right or wrong now? Right. Now I merely answered his questions which was true at the time. Here I am stating what we did and how we did it. And if you reflect into paragraph 7 which you reflected just now that I am stating to them that the Western Cape JMC was busy with certain things "vorwerk om die vaders teen die comrades...." it wasn't my committee, it was the JMC of the Western Cape. Therefore I refer to document J where they in fact acknowledged the fact that the "die vaders is die veiligshheid maagte....." (not translated)

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: My argument is that you actually did know about it because this document came in May 1986 ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: I didn't know about it, I did not know about the clandestine committee which was supposed to have been set up.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: I am not talking about a clandestine committee being set-up, I am talking about clandestine operations.

MR VERMEULEN: I did not know of it.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: I mean if you look at that paragraph, I mean please explain it to me in another way. To me is that you already have a situation in place that is not going to expose any people in the security forces about their involvement in



this conflict. That is my reading of the situation. I mean of what relevance is the fight between the fathers and the comrades to this particular document?

MR VERMEULEN: The Western Cape, the Western Province, South African Weermag Kommandment, they as according to their own document, (reads daar word reeds in hierdie rigting vanaf WPSAV Kommandement....." (also not translated)

MISS FULLARD: Can I just clarify something. When they say here that Western Province Command is busy getting the fathers to resist the comrades, obviously at the meeting it must have been reported because this memo that you send in response to General Wandrag's questions is in essence a summary of the points that were discussed in the meeting, you've drawn up a memo ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: I can't remember that. I got that information from the ...(intervention)

MISS FULLARD: Yes, yes, okay, but I am asking you what is that information? Obviously this is a summary, so what efforts are being made ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: I wouldn't know.

MISS FULLARD: Or were being made by Western Province Command?

MR VERMEULEN: I was not aware of what they did and how they did it because it wasn't my business to know.

MISS FULLARD: So they just reported in the meeting that well, we as Western Province Command we are busy working ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS FULLARD: To get the fathers against the comrades and you duly report that.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS FULLARD: That's your interpretation.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, that's what I did. I think the relevant questions should be asked to the relevant writers.

MISS FULLARD: Ja, it's just that you are the scribe as it were of that discussion and you could give us insight as to what was meant in ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: No I don't know, with all due respect, I am honest, I am as much as what I can say and what I know and what I can recall.

MISS FULLARD: Can I also just remind you that the fathers, this document is sent in March 1986, that in December and January, December of 1985 and January 1986.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS FULLARD: There was already violent conflict between the fathers and comrades in which numerous people were killed, many homes were destroyed and a great deal of violence occurred, so in essence the fathers had already been involved in violent confrontation with the comrades and this document then seems to indicate the approval thereof by Western Province Command in continuing to support their efforts to get the fathers to resist the comrades. Could you agree with that?

MR VERMEULEN: I can't answer to that. I cannot answer to

things which is directed at other people who were involved.

MISS FULLARD: Ja, ja, but I mean you yourself would recall, you issued the daily unrest reports and you would surely have been aware of that violent conflict in December/January?

MR VERMEULEN: I was aware of conflicts. If we look at all the records it will reflect what happened there.

MISS FULLARD: Yes, yes. So you would have been aware that the fathers were involved in violent conflict ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: I wouldn't know - I didn't even know that the fathers existed or a committee of the fathers ... (intervention)

MISS FULLARD: Well it was in the front pages of all the newspapers, ummm... ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Even so I don't even know that the committee - because I had no discussions with these people.

MISS FULLARD: No I am not saying you had discussions, I didn't have discussions with them but I read the newspapers and it was spoken about on the very - we can produce those newspapers where ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: We know that there were incidents, but I don't how those incidents came about or how the incidents were apparently fired or ... (intervention)

MISS FULLARD: But what I am attempting to establish here is that you were aware that there was violent conflict and this document which you were the scribe of is essentially pointing to support by Western Province Command of ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Well if you want to read that into it...

...(intervention)

MISS FULLARD: ...the one group ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: ... then you can read that into it  
...(intervention)

MISS FULLARD: Is there another reading, I mean perhaps you could help me with another reading?

MR VERMEULEN: No there is no other reading than what I have said there.

CHAIRPERSON: Before we leave this point it's clear Mr Vermeulen that what is happening here is that there is a conflict between the older people on the one hand and the comrades on the other side, the younger people, the people for whom it is important to resist the government of the day. This documentation indicates that the police, and this encoded message comes from General Major Wandrag from Compol in Pretoria and the documents presented to you regarding your own activities as a secretary the documents of your structure indicate that support was given to either one or the other side in this conflict, is that so? In other words fathers were supported.

MR VERMEULEN: If we look at J and I quote from this document:

"The fathers are in favour of the security forces.

We cannot openly support them".

How other can we do it than clandestine?

CHAIRPERSON: In other words they were supported?

MR VERMEULEN: I don't know by whom.

CHAIRPERSON: No, no, no, it's very clear from this that the fathers were supported from the official side. This is very clear - I mean this is absolutely certain and you agree with me regarding this matter?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON: The idea that it should be clandestine because the English press is giving us trouble and we have to keep this clandestine, is that correct?

MR VERMEULEN: Correct, yes.

CHAIRPERSON: Is this regular activities? Is this a lawful activity that the police should suggest that instead of ending these activities, this conflict, that they should instigate it on the other hand, is this really lawful activities?

MR VERMEULEN: I cannot give an answer to what a general meant in his letter, I don't know now what he meant by saying what you are saying that the police should promote and support this whole clandestine operation.

CHAIRPERSON: Ja, en ondersteen dit. (Not translated)

MR VERMEULEN: En ondersteen dit. One, we never did that, I did not do that. We did not have an operation at the Sub-JMC. We never supported this idea.

Secondly we should investigate from where this document was sent and to whom it was directed, and it was expected from me to react to this document.

CHAIRPERSON: I am not blaming you Mr Vermeulen but we have to determine what went wrong in the past exactly because we never

want to land in such a situation. We know what happened at KTC, we know what happened to the Witdoeke, we know what pain and suffering they caused. We don't want to blame you but with what we have here in front of us is this not a far-reaching unlawful activity this? What other conclusion can we come to?

These activities of the police, these outrageous activities of the police ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: The police never caused unrest, not that I know of.

CHAIRPERSON: I am not blaming you for anything.

MR VERMEULEN: In the structure of the Sub-JMC the Police never instigated people to attack one another.

CHAIRPERSON: That's good, good. Let's just direct our attention to what is written here, to what is proposed in this document. Would you agree with me that this is outrageous? You are a policeman.

MR VERMEULEN: I would never support things like this. These clandestine operations to instigate people I would never support this.

CHAIRPERSON: That's correct. Do you agree with me?

MR VERMEULEN: Would you agree that it is outrageous - you should ask this gentleman that question with all respects.

CHAIRPERSON: No you are a policeman, you were there to enforce law and order in the country, that was your job, and I am asking you is that not outrageous?

ADV HIEMSTRA: Mr Chairman, with respect, if you want to put

to this gentleman is this incident outrageous or not, what you are saying is very vague. Certain recommendations were made, there were reactions to this, a memorandum was written and reference was made to certain activities of the army. If you look at this document there are various interpretations which can be attached to these things. If you look at J K the fathers are in favour of the security forces and subscribe to law and order. This is not irregular or unlawful.

CHAIRPERSON: No please don't argue the case for the police. We are asking a specific question to Mr Vermeulen, we just want to determine what his reaction is. It does not help that you are arguing that this action was justified.

ADV HIEMSTRA: This is not what I am saying.

CHAIRPERSON: Good.

ADV HIEMSTRA: All I am saying, if you want him to answer a question then you should determine whether A or B was unlawful he must know what you are asking.

CHAIRPERSON: I don't know what your problem is.

ADV HIEMSTRA: It is a very encompassing kind of question, do you agree that that is outrageous.

CHAIRPERSON: It's written in the documentation, the client can read, it's in Afrikaans.

ADV HIEMSTRA: Mr Chairman all I am asking when you are making that kind of statement you must tell him exactly what he is saying ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: I agree, come let us ask the client, Mr

Vermeulen do you understand what I am asking you? Do you understand?

MR VERMEULEN: Can you repeat the question.

CHAIRPERSON: You've read the documentation in front of you?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON: On that which is proposed by the police in this documentation do you agree that that is outrageous, that which they are proposing?

MR VERMEULEN: What is outrageous?

CHAIRPERSON: That is to instigate a conflict.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes I agree to that. The police cannot instigate conflict, they are there to enforce law and order.

CHAIRPERSON: Exactly, that is how I see the role of the police. Thank you. Miss Carr.

MISS CARR: Mr Vermeulen I just want to ask you one last point on this issue that kind-of baffles me a bit. In this - to do with this paragraph 5 "kontra mobilisasie".

MR VERMEULEN: Alright.

MISS CARR: You wrote there that to be able to have this clandestine operation or committee, right, the climate must be correct. Now obviously you knew what the content of the climate had to be and the content of what this clandestine operation had to be. Now I refer you back to this krypto-berig Annexure F, and I refer you to no.6, "selektede operasies". Now to be able to conduct any of these specialised operations obviously when you responded to the climate the climate also



had to entail whether there was a specialised grouping to conduct these operations, am I correct?

MR VERMEULEN: I have lost you somehow, will you repeat where we were and what we are looking at.

MISS CARR: Okay. When you say that the climate wasn't ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Please can we go back to the document, which document are you referring to?

MISS CARR: Annexure F and Annexure H, the very annexures that you were busy with all along.

MR VERMEULEN: Annexure F, I've got Annexure F, is it a document dated the - the crypto?

MISS CARR: Ja the crypto.

MR VERMEULEN: Alright.

MISS CARR: Okay. Now your response to this crypto-berig with regard to the contra-mobilisatie, is that the climate had to be correct to establish this clandestine committee.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS CARR: Right. Now this is obviously you had to respond to the content of what was written in the crypto-berig, right?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS CARR: Now part of that response was the information that you read in the crypto-berig which is on - and I refer you now to page 2, paragraph 6 in which it says that there had to be select - specialised operations.

MR VERMEULEN: Ja.

MISS CARR: Now when you look at climate did you not also look at - at the time of looking at there had to be coordinated searches, quick rapid "pad blokades" ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Ja, ja.

MISS CARR: All these things had to entail a very specialised grouping to conduct these things ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: No not quite, not quite. Let me explain to you what would happen then. That was normal - the guys would - normal policemen and riot unit members and whatever, they in their patrolling of the area to combat the unrest there was;

(a) - searches done to find petrol bombs and to find whatever were used to attack vehicles and there were - the places were surrounded so the people can't run out; and

(b) - there were roadblocks, which is normal police action, where specialised forces are not necessary, and

(b) - gryp operasie is what in fact is to ensure that you have arrests. And then,

(d) - is that the teams had to change their area from time-to-time otherwise the opposition would identify a pattern.

That is all.

MISS CARR: Okay. Now bearing that in mind, what you have just said, would you - and knowing what kind of or what sort of operations Unit 10, AOE, Onrusting ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Ja, ja, ja, ja.

MISS CARR: Would you say that Unit 10 would have been a very

suitable grouping to conduct these things? Also bearing in mind that they were operating in the area at the time.

MR VERMEULEN: Ja well I also said in my statement this morning that the district commissioner also had a platoon and that - a platoon of men as well as the divisional riot unit was operating in that area.

MISS CARR: So you are in agreement with me that Unit - that this grouping no.10 would be used in such a situation?

MR VERMEULEN: No, no, no not necessarily only them.

MISS CARR: But they could also have been utilised very effectively?

MR VERMEULEN: They could also, yes.

MISS CARR: Thank you.

MR VERMEULEN: Both the district commissioners and the other, they were the same ... (intervention)

MISS CARR: Yes and this Group 40, the Army as well that was working together with Group 10 ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, yes ... (intervention)

MISS CARR: These two, and we have previously established that these two were working together and together they would be used very effectively for this type of operation.

MR VERMEULEN: As well as the platoon of the commissioner the district commissioner.

MISS CARR: Okay, thank you.

MR VERMEULEN: That's quite right.

CHAIRPERSON: Miss Dwane continue.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Okay. Going back to your earlier testimony you mentioned something about setting up this clandestine committee when the climate is right.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now I want to highlight when the climate is right, what did you mean by that?

MR VERMEULEN: One cannot set up a clandestine operation if the climate is wrong for instance. The situation, if it requires, the fact that there is an unrest climate in the country is a situation which is described as something which is happening, for instance the climate - the climate of unrest, the climate of war, a climate of peace, a climate whatever, now - in fact this paragraph doesn't even say much, that doesn't even say much. The fact that I wrote, not what I said, what was said at the meeting, ~~the fact~~ that I wrote that a specialised - which first of all is a specialised unit that had to do things, anybody couldn't go out and do clandestine operations, there has to be trained people to do things like that, and we were not suitable to send people into the field as a clandestine operation. Not at my committee.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: So when you mentioned the climate is right, are you talking about the fact that the people had to be trained ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Yes ...(intervention)

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: .... in order for that clandestine committee to be set up.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes they had to be trained.

MR KILLIAN: Thank you Mr Vermeulen. You say in that memorandum that this office ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Hang on where are we now?

MR KILLIAN: We are going back to the clandestine issue. We are talking about the first page, the very first page, you say that this office since September '85 has, in respect of the guidelines received from time-to-time from the State Security Council have implemented those guidelines established by those bodies ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Right.

MR KILLIAN: So in other words the memo then says that before the Compol encoded message was received - well as you said the climate had to be right for clandestine operations so in a previous year already there had been such operations?

MR VERMEULEN: No we hadn't launched such operations.

MR KILLIAN: Clandestine means covert, is that right?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MR KILLIAN: Now you knew what the circumstances were then. You for instance mentioned two incidents, the Trojan Horse incident and the Gugulethu Seven matter.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MR KILLIAN: So use could have been made of askaris to conduct these covert operations? I am not saying that you did it yourself, askaris might for instance have been used to carry out the clandestine operations.

MR VERMEULEN: I wouldn't know.

MR KILLIAN: Take for instance the Trojan Horse operation, that was a clandestine operation, a covert operation. A vehicle was sent in ostensibly a civilian vehicle but full of soldiers, so that was a clandestine, covert operation.

MR VERMEULEN: Are you talking about mine?

MR KILLIAN: No, no about the police clandestine operations ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Well I wouldn't know about that.

MR KILLIAN: You see these are guidelines.

MR VERMEULEN: Ja.

MR KILLIAN: Coming from the top.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, guidelines.

MR KILLIAN: And your answer to these was that this office has, since September 1985 has carried out and implemented the guidelines from time to time. In other words Mr Vermeulen you want to tell us that you never carried out any clandestine operations but yet you say here that since September of '85 you had been busy doing exactly that?

MR VERMEULEN: I am saying under oath and unequivocally that I never carried out any clandestine operations, I never knew of any clandestine operations.

MR KILLIAN: So then your memorandum is not a true reflection of what happened? In other words you were misleading General Wandrag?

MR VERMEULEN: No, no, that's your inference.

MR KILLIAN: But that is what you wrote here. You said,  
"This office since 1985 have adhered to the  
guidelines that were implemented by the State  
Security Council".

MR VERMEULEN: There were many, many guidelines which we  
received. It's not necessarily so that that paragraph related  
to clandestine operations.

MR KILLIAN: But you were answering directly to the encoded  
message.

MR VERMEULEN: Mr Chairman if you look at the way in which I  
answered this encoded message I answered each paragraph very  
specifically and each paragraph was specifically addressed and  
if there had been clandestine operations I would have said so  
in paragraph 7 because I could not have foreseen that I would  
sit here in 1997. I never foresaw the fact that one day there  
was going to be - then why would I have said what I have said  
in 19 - 11 years ago?

MR KILLIAN: You see Mr ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: I hope you understand what I am trying to say  
... (intervention)

MR KILLIAN: Ek is ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: If there had been clandestine operations in  
that time then I would have had no scruples about saying so. I  
wouldn't have had any fear whatsoever to write it in 15 or 13,  
12 years ago. Now we are having a post mortem, with all due  
respect, and that's quite right we are having one, what did the

man try to say, was there a covert operation, was there a clandestine operation, yes or no. Now I am saying to you, with all honesty, that this document was set up way back in 1986 with not the faintest idea that one day there would be an investigative inquiry and I honestly went ahead, and I have no fear in all my records which are now in the possession of the Commission, I have no fear of any of those documents that anything clandestine will be in those documents. And that's my answer Sir.

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, thank you Mr Vermeulen. I was hoping that it would have been possible to complete the proceedings in one sitting but there are a few outstanding issues that still remain to be dealt with. At this stage we will have to adjourn for lunch, we are not going to be able to finish in any case, and I don't want to see us all dropping off at this stage. So I want to suggest that we break for lunch. It is now 13H20. I am in your hands. I hope it's in order to ... (intervention)

COMMITTEE ADJOURNS

ON RESUMPTION

CHAIRPERSON: We would like to start again after the luncheon adjournment. Mr Vermeulen I am just reminding you that you are still under oath.

TREVOR GRIFFITHS VERMUELEN: (s.u.o.)

CHAIRPERSON: Could I perhaps refer to something which we referred to before lunch. I'd like to try and get some more details from you about the concept of counter-mobilisation.



How did you understand it as a structure?

MR VERMEULEN: Chairperson, first thank you very much for the lunch. What is important here is that the South African Police was firstly not trained in the ways of the State Security Council. By that I mean if we look at military terminology and the military academies and their style the environment there is such that they have their own terminology and ways of speaking and I had to learn this way of speaking, this terminology. It's very difficult because at that stage I had already been in the police for 25 years so it was difficult at that fairly advanced stage to learn the terminology, so my answers would be couched in normal terminology, reporting terminology. These guys are talking of things that I didn't know about. General Wandrag specifically was a man who grew up with military terminology as a senior officer. I had to deal with the district commissioner who in one instance came from Oudtshoorn who never had any dealings with this type of thing and this should form the backdrop for many of the things which we've talked about today. The educational process which I had to undergo at very short notice was quite difficult. I was actually thrown in the deep end. And eventually these guys had a sort-of a paper war. It's very easy if you are a General to write a letter and to say Vermeulen you down there in Cape Town you must answer this letter. The result of that, and I am saying this to sketch a kind of a background here is - I was just thinking to myself just now if I perhaps would just be

walking down the passage I would never have got involved on that particular day, but anyway I am not a racist and I am a lover not a fighter, and I made myself available in this way during the conflict. On the contrary I joined the police hoping that the army would leave me alone, but this is what ultimately happened.

I have peace of mind as far as this thing is concerned. I don't have a problem in saying that, but what I do have a problem with is when I can't give you an answer to certain things, and I think that mutual trust and communication is extremely important. I didn't hide away. I came here today, I would have come here simply on the strength of a phone call. I didn't apply for amnesty because it wasn't necessary for me to do so. If you apply for something it implies that you want something. And that is how Vermeulen landed up in this system.

There is some rather heavy terminology used here, what do they actually mean by some of these big and heavy words. It's quite a frightening document some of these things when you look at them for the first time, but for the army people it was all old hat. They were used to these words and terminology. That was their milieu.

Now you are asking me what is counter-mobilisation. You see then it's rather difficult for me. I have to actually think about what it means. Mobilisation of what? Against what? And then I have to actually read the whole thing and I

have to see it in that context and that's very important.

Maybe it's a little bit unfair to expect snap answers but counter-mobilisation, well let us go back and have a look - you see I don't understand this, mobilisation of whom? Are you mobilising whom? Are you mobilising the wrongdoers, the culprits or mobilisation of the peace-loving people? It seems to me that that's what it amounts to, namely that counter-mobilisation is the encouraging of peace-loving people to do something. Let us look at this word again, counter-mobilisation. ... (intervention)

CHAIRPERSON: Ja, perhaps in your own document. Do you have the encoded message? ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, yes, that's what I have here in front of me. "An attempt must be made to motivate the residents in Black townships to resist the counter-revolutionaries". That's exactly what I have just said. As follows - and now it gives guidelines.

"Counter-mobilisation must be done on a regional basis and on a small scale. Positive resistance movements must be encouraged and that it must be done on a clandestine basis. Municipal police must be extended and pressure must be brought to bear on the authorities to do that".

Now "counter-mobilisation must be done on a regional level and on a small scale", now how do you do that? That is why we at the Sub-JMC responded at some stage and I think the lady asked

that question what - asked the question as to what I meant. We didn't need a clandestine committee to do these things because as I understood it it was already being done by the JMC. Let us look at my answer to this thing. Page 3 paragraph H.

CHAIRPERSON: That's right.

MR VERMEULEN: Counter-mobilisation. This is firstly a specialised operation. Now I have explained that these district commissioners, these policemen they would come into the situation not knowing what counter-mobilisation was and could more than likely really make a mess of it because this was a very specialised thing which needed specialised training, people who had been in the military academy for three years they probably would have been the right people to do this kind of thing, not me.

And then the proposed clandestine committee. They were proposing something, the guidelines were proposing that I do that but we didn't have the necessary training, we were just policemen and we weren't used to a climate of unrest so we had a problem with this. The Western Province JMC what they had done where it says they were already moving in that direction, whether the killed people or necklaced people I don't know and that is why I am asking a very serious, or I am appealing to the Committee in a very serious way, please go to the people who actually dealt with these things at that level, then you will get perhaps the answer that you are looking for but I can't do that. That's the story.

CHAIRPERSON: So in brief you don't have a very good idea of what this was about?

MR VERMEULEN: I did have an idea but I can't pretend to be a military strategist because it's a strategist who would sit down and work out these things, and it was on the instructions of the State Security Council. The State Security Council gave the police the instruction to actually make the country governable and peaceful.

CHAIRPERSON: And in respect of the Sub-JMC do you have any idea of how those structures understood this concept? Yes, your men, at your level, what was their idea of what was going on here?

MR VERMEULEN: I suppose I had to phone around and ask what does this word here mean and then the secretary of the Western Province JMC, the secretary, would say "come on, come and tell me what does it actually say in this piece of paper? I am an ordinary policeman. Okay we were officers but still we were just not trained for this sort of thing. Later on we were actually able to understand this sort of language but initially I didn't know what it meant all this GIK and VAKOM and stuff, and I had respect for the people who or for the investigating team because it's not easy to understand all these terms. I must actually congratulate the investigating team, they fared very well.

CHAIRPERSON: Well it's exactly in that context "die taal van die..." (no interpretation)

MR VERMEULEN: Terminologie van die ... (intervention)

CHAIRPERSON: Ja. This .... (Afrikaans that has not been translated).... Well that's what I am trying to say, as you started becoming familiar with these terms did it become clearer to you what it was all about?

MR VERMEULEN: If we look at the start of the whole drama out there I suppose I would have been able after say six months to have been able to answer this more easily. Counter-mobilisation is exactly what it says here, you must try and sway the law-abiding people to join your side, to join forces with you because you can't make the culprits the security people to guard the situation. I am not trying to justify what went on I am trying to understand what went on.

If I arrive at a certain person's home in a volatile situation where for instance sometimes were seeking informers and terrible things were done, you can't just go to Advocate Potgieter's house and say look what happened because then his next door neighbour would have identified him as an informer and then there might have been problems. That's why we had to do certain things in a clandestine way. It doesn't mean that there was anything sinister about it. I couldn't just drive around in a patrol vehicle and speak to people because it caused problems in the community for those people. So we had to contact certain people in a clandestine way, we had no other option.

CHAIRPERSON: Yes, that I understand. But if you mobilise

you then get a group of people to do something, in other words you encourage them to act, that's the one leg of a concept. The other leg of that is counter - in other words against, it's a counter action.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes well the term mobilising of the masses was used a lot and that was mobilising of the masses which one party or what a political party does is they mobilise for electoral or whatever, and now to counter that, and this is what I think it means it simply means to mobilise the other side, in other words you go against the one.

CHAIRPERSON: You must mobilise against an existing movement in such a way ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Yes in such a way that you don't cause greater unrest. That's why I mentioned it in this response of mine that it wasn't just every Tom, Dick and Harry who could undertake such a thing, you had to have had specialised training.

CHAIRPERSON: Yes exactly that's one of the problems which we have we know that afterwards there was this war between the Witdoeke, there was a war between the Witdoeke and the fathers and the comrades and everything which accompanied that clash. So that is why we are trying to clarify what happened.

MR VERMEULEN: This is why ..... 1985, paragraph 7, it's a very important paragraph and I don't blame them for looking at the paragraph in their context, this is firstly a specialised operation, an extremely specialised thing of the proposed

clandestine committee of the Sub-JMC, they proposed that we do this in their guidelines when the climate is right. It was clear that we needed experts to do this kind of thing, professional people, academically trained people. To just send in a group of men with casspirs and guns would just cause a lot of confusion and trouble.

CHAIRPERSON: Well that is exactly what happened later in KTC.

There was a huge - there was a massacre, there was a mess. Now what is important for us is that this idea of counter-mobilisation seems to crop up in documents which emerged in March, round about March. In the first half of May, in other words a couple of days before this Annexure J, the signal message form, before that document saw the light of day there was a terrible massacre. ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: I wish I could help you.

CHAIRPERSON: In the satellite camps surrounding KTC. And these are objective facts which I am mentioning to you, there is no doubt about what I am telling you now. About 30,000 people were involved in this conflict.

MR VERMEULEN: I know there was conflict but I don't know who caused it.

CHAIRPERSON: Yes there was this conflict in the satellite camps around KTC, 40 people died, so by the 21st of May when it was written that the fathers are well-disposed towards the security forces and that they want law and order, they were one of the conflicting parties and they were obviously the subject



of a counter-mobilisation force. So that is the type of situation which we had, so it's in that context which we ask you what was the counter-mobilisation all about? I am trying to sketch a little bit of background for you, why it is so important this idea of counter-mobilisation. It really - it perturbs us, it's very important. The subject of the counter-mobilisation seems to us to be one of the facets of the conflict.

MR VERMEULEN: I cannot answer that.

CHAIRPERSON: No, I heard what you said.

MR VERMEULEN: I think I have said a lot more than what was actually needed.

CHAIRPERSON: We appreciate that. We want to understand each other. Miss Dwane.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: In your ~~early~~ testimony you mentioned that there are other people we need to speak to about this terminology counter-mobilisation, do you think you could sort-of tell us who these relevant people might be that we could actually get this information from?

MR VERMEULEN: You know that to name names of people where they fitted into the various structures are available in the first place in documents which we have in our possession, and it's very clear that those are the relevant people to approach.

MISS FULLARD: Can I just ask though that we did consult the documentation and your name was evident, so we spoke to you

...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Yes alright, yes, yes, yes.

MISS FULLARD: Now you are telling us that you are not the right one, we must talk to others, so we are asking you, who are those others because clearly you know we looked at the documentation and we assessed, aha, here we've got the super-troop, this is going to know ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Oh, no you got hold of the tail of the thing.

MR KILLIAN: And now we are looking for the body  
...(intervention)

CHAIRPERSON: And now we are looking for the head.

MISS FULLARD: We are asking for your assistance here.

MR VERMEULEN: If we look at a name such as Kritzinger, if I can remember correctly, Kritzinger was a Brigadier, he was the commanding officer of the ~~Western Cape~~ Command of the Castle down here, that was the one gentleman. Then the other gentleman was our divisional commissioner which is also relevant in the document, Brigadier Swart was there. There's also a - well these are the two chairmen at the time. I hope you've got somewhere a document so that I can refresh to look at who were the members of the Joint Information guys. They need only ask the Chairperson. They could give him the information. The other guys that were involved were the various chairman of the minis and of the JOC of the divisional riot unit. Look at document H, I think there's a couple of  
...(intervention)

MISS FULLARD: Okay, and these names that you have directed us to, in your view these people could assist us in understanding this counter-mobilisation concept?

MR VERMEULEN: Well let's certainly hope so. But as I explained to the Chairman that it is basically the writer of the original document as well as the military terminology of these things.

CHAIRPERSON: It's General Wandrag.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes but Kritzinger also features somewhere. Wandrag wrote the encoded message.

CHAIRPERSON: Are they still available, are they still alive?

MR VERMEULEN: Ja I think they are. I don't have contact with them.

CHAIRPERSON: Good, we have ways to get in touch with them.

MR VERMEULEN: Where is that document H, there are a couple of names listed in that document as well. H, Mr Mostert - Western Cape Development Council, that's on H. But these are Sub-Western Province JMC, Colonel Hen, he's important. Once again he was only a secretary.

CHAIRPERSON: Is Commandant Hen he was the secretary of the Western Province JMC, is he still around?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes I think he is, I don't know where he is though because I don't have contact with him.

CHAIRPERSON: Oh okay.

MISS FULLARD: In our understanding Hen comes in from 1987 who would have been his predecessor?

MR VERMEULEN: Du Plessis.

MISS FULLARD: R P du Plessis would it be?

MR VERMEULEN: You should have it.....

CHAIRPERSON: Good, thank you. Miss Dwane.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: On this - it's not on the issue of counter-mobilisation but something has just struck me that you mentioned that you needed academically trained people. Now in my mind I am trying to figure out whether during those periods, let's say '85, '86.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Before the conflict. Were there any workshops that were actually run in the body that you were secretary of? Let's say for example on things like the Oil Spot Strategy ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: The what, the what?

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Oil Spot Strategy.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: You did?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Could you just explain that to me?

MR VERMEULEN: Right. There were workshops, yes there were. That's exactly why they had because we didn't understand what they were saying and we would try - and they then realised but the South African Police these guys they don't know what these military chaps were talking about, and then they called us in and then they said now what is the Oil Spot Strategy. I

thought it was something that would be found underneath the motor or something.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: What is your understanding of it now?

MR VERMEULEN: The oil spot strategy is when an area is normalised, one should, in that normalised area there is no riots and everybody goes to work and there's no burning of tyres and whatever, then one should use that situation so that one can have it expanded into from there on.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now the person who used to conduct those workshops do you remember who it was during that period?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, Colonel Rheeder, an army colonel.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now were you actually given a practical situation for example you have a problem in Old Crossroads between the comrades and the so-called Witdoeke.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Did you ever get practical examples about things like that, putting your theory into test?

MR VERMEULEN: No I wasn't involved with those people.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: So you never attended those lectures?

MR VERMEULEN: I attended the lectures, yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Surely now if the theory came at the workshops there would also be a practical aspect to that workshop wouldn't there be?

MR VERMEULEN: No you know if those workshops came after the incident or before the incident I cannot recall now. But it might have been - you see the people that were involved with

these things they must have the necessary, that's coming back to the story that I am trying to say, must have the necessary training, must know what they are doing, and some of them said no man what nonsense is this again, we've got other things to do at our police station. But some guys felt it was a waste of time. Things had to be done.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Okay. What I need to establish is whether these workshops were actually run before the incident or after the 9th of June ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: That's what I can't remember, perhaps we'll have to go and look at records after this.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON: Miss Fullard.

MISS FULLARD: Colonel Vermeulen earlier on you mentioned that you would be responsible for, in a way vetting the joint operations that were planned by the minis, they would draw up a plan, they would refer to you, you could approve it and send it back for implementation, you described that situation earlier.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS FULLARD: We have a situation now where there is a mass attack of a group of armed people on the 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th of May 1986, okay, and then again on the 9th, 10th and 11th of June 1986, those were the very well-known attacks by the Witdoeke on firstly the satellite camps surrounding Crossroads, and then secondly the KTC squatter camp, okay. Now was it not your task as these areas fell in your geographical area, was it

not your task to essentially approve or draw up, compile and be responsible for the ultimate implementation of a security strategy to manage that situation? You have a situation where 60,000 people are rendered homeless, their entire belongings were destroyed and 70 to 80 people are killed, now what strategies were actually drawn up for the containment of that situation, if as you say it was, as far as you were concerned the Police were.... Well what I am asking you is essentially what strategies were drawn up to manage that situation? In other words the deployment of forces, how to stop that situation, how to stop the destruction of the homes of all of these people.

MR VERMEULEN: Let's look at the structure, Western Sub JMC Sub JOC, the JOC of the Sub-JMC Western Cape where I sat.

MISS FULLARD: Right, yes.

MR VERMEULEN: From there we have four district commissioners. They each have their own JOC.

MISS FULLARD: Okay.

MR VERMEULEN: There was then the Department of Constitutional Development and the economics and - they have - in fact they didn't have a JOC they had their own office. Then you had the South African Railway Police, you had the Army, the Air Force with the helicopters to assist us if it was necessary because we only had one at a time. Then you had the divisional riot unit.

MISS FULLARD: Yes.

MR VERMEULEN: Then you had the dog unit. Then you had the explosive unit of the security police. Then you had the security police. Then you had the traffic department. Then you had the Town Clerk. Then you had the civil defence people.

So you had quite a lot of people. Now to go and draw up for each one the instructions were normally that they had to go and see what could they do. How many people could they make available, how many vehicles could they make available to patrol in these streets. There was a lot of people involved so that we can render services whatever we had to render. We were generally, at the Sub-JMC, were generally involved in serious normalisational plans, and if there were other people trying to trip us in the mechanism I don't know about them because that is what the purpose of this exercise is, is to find out who that was. I wouldn't know. ~~But now these~~ plans would then be discussed and these plans would then be drawn up by their own operational centres. So you must understand we've got a lot of people involved now.

Then they would say alright, now they would send - now say in the morning there was a discussion and in the afternoon three o'clock I must have all these plans, from that - now what I've got in front of me is the only thing that I can now work from, if they left something out or didn't say anything I wouldn't know, from that what I got from the various role players in this whole arena I then drew up a Joint Operational Plan.



MISS FULLARD: Okay.

MR VERMEULEN: Now in that operational plan a lot of things are covered, like the radio frequencies and where, who is driving what and how many - what is the call signs, and what is the purpose of the operation, blah, blah, blah - a lot of stuff. I wonder if there isn't one somewhere, there should be a joint plan somewhere in the documents that you people have, then you will see how this thing got together. Now once this was done then I would study this document, type it out, there was a set way of doing it, it was before they had computers on the job, now it had to be done by hand and then it had to be typed. And then once it was typed I looked through it and said alright, then I went through to the - normally if the chairman was available then I had to go to the Chairman of the Sub-JMC and say to him look here's a document Sir. Then he would look at it and say look what nonsense are you writing here, this and that or whatever the thing is alright and then he would give it back and then we would distribute it so that all the people will know who is who in the zoo.

MISS FULLARD: Ja, okay you've described now the process in general and I am now asking you in specific terms, in terms of those six days of attacks which were three weeks apart, right?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS FULLARD: There was three days of attack and then a three week period and then another three days of attack. Now surely at the end of the first day you say look guys we've got a

serious problem here, 30,000 people's homes are being burnt down how are we going to deal with the situation, let's make a plan. So I am asking about what plan was drawn up in that specific instance?

MR VERMEULEN: No we'll have to go back to the records. I don't know.

MISS FULLARD: You cannot recall?

MR VERMEULEN: No we'll have to go back. If there was - if I say now that I did have a - called in Afrikaans a contingency plan, a plan or happening whatever, a contingency plan then - I can't remember, really.

MISS FULLARD: Okay so you are saying that at this point in time you cannot remember if you were coordinating a coordinated plan for ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: That would normally be my function to do things like that, to coordinate the thing ...(intervention)

MISS FULLARD: For the containment of that ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: That was my function. But we will have to go and see what - there must be somewhere if they - I don't know.

I left - you see my problem is I left the office in '87, so then other people took over from me.

MISS FULLARD: But I mean this was quite an extraordinary event ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Yes I understand what ...(intervention)

MISS FULLARD: And it kind-of does stick in the memory, I mean if you think back to 1986 I mean it possibly is one of the most

extraordinary incidents of 1986, an incident that mobilised the resources of the whole of the City.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: To manage the refugee crisis. So I am asking again if you cannot remember any of the contingency plans that were drawn up by yourself as the commander of that JOC to deal with the ongoing attacks ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: The aftermath?

MISS FULLARD: No, during the course of the attacks which continued for day after day after day.

MR VERMEULEN: There must have been because they were planned for patrols and things like that - what more can one do. The situation is so that it's a squatter camp and we know that these people were living very close to each other, and to patrol that area is impossible ~~virtually~~ you can't go in there.

MISS FULLARD: No, I think with the attack on KTC the area is surrounded by tarred roads, it's not a question of ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: No, no alright, but then you patrol - you are patrolling around the road but the moment you turn the corner these guys at night they come up behind you, I don't know.

CHAIRPERSON: I assume that you are done with that line. Miss Dwane.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Okay, now taking you back to Annexure G, I just want you to actually look at the listing of the people there.

MR VERMEULEN: Alright, here we go, Annexure G. Good.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: You see at that Sub-GBS VAKOM meeting?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: So it would be normal for these following people to attend representing the mini-JMCs like from Athlone, Wynberg, Bellville and so forth?

MR VERMEULEN: Alright. There is a difference, the people that are there were normally at the Sub-JMC meetings, but you will notice there are only policemen there, there are only policemen there. There are no other ...(intervention)

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Yes, yes I am aware.

MR VERMEULEN: Alright, because the crypto message which we refer to was directed at policemen from General Wandrag.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Yes, apart from that I mean - so usually at Sub-GBS VAKOM meetings you would have these kind of people coming into those meetings ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: And others as well.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: And others.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Now I just want to take your memory back into April 1986, are you aware of any report being made from the mini-GBS in Athlone at this particular meeting that the Witdoeke approached the police for assistance in the provision of weapons? This was on the 24th ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: The provision of weapons.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Yes.

MR VERMEULEN: The Witdoeke?

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Ja.

MR VERMEULEN: I wouldn't know about that.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Wouldn't people from Athlone actually report to this structure?

MR VERMEULEN: Athlone's man was there.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Yes ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: There, Athlone's man was there, where is he now, Colonel Schreuder.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Colonel Schreuder.

MR VERMEULEN: Ja.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: He would report to this structure that such a meeting happened?

MR VERMEULEN: He would have but I don't know if he did. If he reported something like that ...(intervention)

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: But that would be the proper procedure wouldn't it?

MR VERMEULEN: If he reported that there was a request for arms.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Ja.

MR VERMEULEN: From the Witdoeke then he might have kept quiet or if he mentioned it I would have written about it or didn't I.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: No I am not referring to specific dates here, I am just trying to establish that this ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Oh I see what you mean ...(intervention)

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: ...this is the proper forum where things like that would be addressed.

MR VERMEULEN: But he was normally, they were normally at the meeting.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: They were normally at the meeting.

MR VERMEULEN: Now are you aware of any, I mean this information that I've given you, was that ever reported at any of the meetings that you attended?

MR VERMEULEN: This is the first time I am hearing something like that now.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: But it was also in the newspapers I believe.

MR VERMEULEN: Ja but I - that the Police gave them the arms, is that what you are saying?

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: No they were never given any arms, there was a request for the Police to assist them in the provision of weapons.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes, but I don't read all the papers, I was too busy writing letters and going to (...indistinct)

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Alright, even if you were busy writing letters what would happen to the minutes of, for example, the mini-GBS in Athlone, would that actually come to this structure?

MR VERMEULEN: That would come to me, yes.

MISS DWANE-ALTMAN: Okay, thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON: Miss Carr.

MISS CARR: Just going back a little bit. You have spoken about Joint Operations and that you had to coordinate the planning of certain operations, is that correct?

MR VERMEULEN: I had to coordinate, was by drawing up a joint document, right, but not telling them what to do.

MISS CARR: Okay.

MR VERMEULEN: Right.

MISS CARR: Now tell me did you ever come across this thing called ZENON, Operation ZENON.

MR VERMEULEN: Chairperson ZENON, OPS ZENON is defence force terminology I don't know what it means. Perhaps if I can recall, if I refresh then it might come back to me. If you give me more information perhaps I might be able to answer that question better, but OPS ZENON was a defence force terminology.

MISS CARR: OPS ZENON Mannenberg Sitrup does it ring any bell?

MR VERMEULEN: Alright. Now you are coming nearer to me, while you are giving me little information I can't answer like this.

MISS CARR: Okay.

MR VERMEULEN: OPS ZENON Mannenberg, wasn't it - they were very fond of giving names to things. Mannenberg had an operations centre in a back yard of the big Police Station. Now was it a fact that that place they called ZENON or what, I don't know.

MISS CARR: Excuse me I am trying to find out ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: I wouldn't know.

MISS CARR: What is your knowledge.

MR VERMEULEN: I know it's an army word but I wouldn't know what it means, if I can't ...(intervention)

MISS CARR: No but what do you suspect it is? I am not binding you to anything ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: No but no I don't know, I am telling you I don't know. Give me papers to ...(intervention)

MISS CARR: Okay. Can I ask you something further, that during this joint operations, I mean you were sitting in and you knew about certain operations that were run, not that you instructed them in any way ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Wait, wait, wait, what operations, please be specific.

MISS CARR: No I am just talking about in general, you knew about certain operations that was being, or you came to hear about certain operations as you had previously also said, right?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS CARR: I am not saying that you instructed them in any way.

MR VERMEULEN: Right.

MISS CARR: Okay, we are understanding each other, okay. Now in your discussions at the Sub-GBS, right, did you ever come to discussions with regard to helicopters, with regard to patrolling the areas of KTC and being used strategically to



inform ground level people or people on patrol, they couldn't patrol in the areas with regard to the activities in the area?

MR VERMEULEN: I think - Sky Shout.

MISS CARR: Is it Sky Shout?

MR VERMEULEN: You've got the name now, Sky Shout.

MISS CARR: What is that Sir?

MR VERMEULEN: Alright, that is a loudspeaker system which is normally linked to a fixed wing, a slow moving air plane.

MISS CARR: Air plane or helicopter?

MR VERMEULEN: Or helicopter.

MISS CARR: Okay.

MR VERMEULEN: And if there was a Sky Shout operation it might normally have been planned by the JOC at Mannenberg, because I cannot recall that we had a OPS ZENON with such stuff.

MISS CARR: But you see evidence was given to this panel previously that there were two helicopters that were used in this process and that the helicopters were used timeously on patrols of an hour at a time and refuelled and there was a joint operation between the SAP and the Army, do you have any knowledge of this?

MR VERMEULEN: We had one helicopter if I can recall and when there was an incident which that helicopter is tied down there had to be another one to continue the observation.

MISS CARR: Well according to the evidence - will you dispute the evidence then that was given earlier to this panel that this wasn't just used as a means of availability but it was

also used as a mechanism of control to show that there was joint operations, because the SAP would patrol for an hour thereafter the Army would patrol for an hour in this helicopter and sometimes the Army people would actually fly the SAP helicopter ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: No, no, no, that's wrong.

MISS CARR: Will you dispute that evidence that was given?

MR VERMEULEN: I will certainly for the simple reason if that had happened it was grossly negligent on whose side whatever because for the simple - the other day we had a helicopter that fell, can you imagine what the result would have been if a helicopter fell and they had to find out it was an Army guy flying a Police helicopter. Although it's government property but there would have been - I don't think that would have been the right thing, there was ~~no such thing~~.

MISS CARR: Sir I am not asking you as to what you personally knew, but what I am saying is that this evidence has been given to ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Given to you, ja alright.

MISS CARR: Ja to say that because it was such a closely coordinated joint operation between the army and the police, that the army at times...(intervention),

MR VERMEULEN: The Air Force you mean?

MISS CARR: Ja flew, the SAP helicopter...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Well I'm not aware of that, I'm really not aware and I don't think that happened. If it happened I'm not

aware of it.

MISS CARR: Okay, then further to that, you said that the patrols in the area couldn't go into the different areas because of the housing problems and that, so how would this, from your knowledge of this helicopter, how would it be used strategically to the people on the ground, to inform them of situations that...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Alright, you see obviously if you are in a helicopter, you can see better than obviously when you're on the ground, and that you can communicate with vehicles on the ground. You would then see that there is a group of people gathering and then setting a tyre alight and rolling obstacles in the road. And it's a very dangerous situation because if I can remember Mr Beaton and Mr Jansen many years ago, before I was involved with these things were killed innocent people were killed in Crossroads and burnt because they passed Klipfontein Road and they were trapped, and therefore you use helicopters.

There was a lady that brought her servant back one day and her car was stoned. Now we don't want a situation where people get trapped in situations where they don't know, they're driving in the area. So when you've got a helicopter you have observation better.

MISS CARR: So Sir from what you are telling me now there is nothing unusual...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Nothing unusual.

MISS CARR: ... about that helicopter. So if I put it to you that information regarding to any kind of records or record-keeping with regard to flights of this helicopter was restricted from being admitted into court, would you find that strange? In light...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Why should they do a thing like that?

MISS CARR: Ja but would you find it strange ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: No I don't know why they would have done a thing like that.

MISS CARR: But you find it strange?

MR VERMEULEN: No I can't answer that ... (indistinct)

MISS CARR: Tell me based on your ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Surely that should have been debated in the court case?

MISS CARR: Ja but I'm asking your opinion as the secretary and as somebody that had knowledge about the helicopter activities.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS CARR: The fact that this kind of evidence, in view also of the fact that nothing, as you say nothing strange has happened with this helicopter, but in view of that, do you find it strange if this helicopter had nothing to hide or there's nothing sinister that happened on this helicopter route, that such evidence was to be prohibited in a court of law?

MR VERMEULEN: I can't answer that.

ADV HIEMSTRA: Chairperson I don't want to be obstructive but Mr Vermeulen cannot possibly answer that question.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes they're actually painting me into a corner, I am not a pilot, I can't answer that.

CHAIRPERSON: Yes I think you've dealt with that.

MISS CARR: Can you just tell me, while you were sitting there on the Sub-JMC right, did you people get any reports about court cases or interdicts that were given to any of those persons or departments that were on this body?

MR VERMEULEN: Interdicts came through from time to time. And I think the people who were instrumental in setting out the documents were the Legal Resources Office. It was the Office of Legal Resources or something like that and I think they drafted the documents, and they would apply for an interdicts or what other they are called, I am aware of that that, that there was such things, yes.

MISS CARR: Okay that's all.

CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

MISS FULLARD: You explained earlier that you would receive regular, I think that you even possibly mentioned every morning, briefings from the GIK Committee ...(intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS FULLARD: Which would be responsible for gathering intelligence on the situation on the ground?

MR VERMEULEN: Yes.

MISS FULLARD: Now did that body ever bring to the Sub-GBS any

reports about impending attacks by the Witdoeke? In other words did you receive warnings that these attacks were possibly on the cards?

COL VERMEULEN: There were always attacks from time to time between factions, one group fighting the other group. One has to again look at the records to be exact of those meetings, what was put in and if I say yes or no, I don't want to feel that if I don't want to help you with any information, but I can't remember.

MISS FULLARD: So you don't recall for example, in the three weeks between the two major attacks, when there were rumours going around that KTC was to be attacked to the extent that an interdict was launched, did you in fact receive notification of those warnings, through your GIK?

MR VERMEULEN: Ja. Once more, I need the documents so that I can assist you.

MISS FULLARD: Okay, alright and just one last question ... (intervention)

MR VERMEULEN: I cannot answer that question, twelve years, thirteen years ago.

MISS FULLARD: We accept that.

MR VERMEULEN: A lot of things happened.

MISS FULLARD: You have explained to us that in your view you did not have any knowledge of any dealings with the Witdoeke or support to the Witdoeke. Is that accurate?

MR VERMEULEN: I cannot recall that.

MISS FULLARD: You cannot recall that. Okay, for yourself. Would you say that in your view that would apply to the whole of the security forces, and you have indicated that you yourself were not involved? Is it your belief that none of the other security forces present in the Western Province, which would include the SAP, the SA Army the Riot Police, were involved in such support?

MR VERMEULEN: There could have been, I don't know.

MISS FULLARD: So you're saying in your knowledge?

MR VERMEULEN: No I don't know, I never discussed anything with those people.

CHAIRPERSON: Mr Vermeulen, thank you very much. I understand that my colleagues don't have any further questions to put to you. I want to thank you for your cooperation and for your presence here today, and for the help that you have given to us thus far. I'm sure that if there is any further assistance that you can give us you wouldn't have a problem with that.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes I have no objections. I think that if I had prepared myself I might have fared better.

CHAIRPERSON: No we understand that and we are very glad that you came.

MR VERMEULEN: Thank you Sir.

CHAIRPERSON: It's very valuable that you have placed information before us which you indeed have. Obviously we have to look at this whole thing from the outside, to look at the structures etc. and it is often very difficult years after the

event to try and piece together a picture of what happened and we really couldn't do this without the input of those people intimately involved in the structures of the day and what actually happened.

So we thank you for that as well, we thank your legal team for their assistance and we'll probably see each other in the not too distant future.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes there is another notice, next week Wednesday I think.

CHAIRPERSON: You are always most welcome here.

MR VERMEULEN: Yes I will just find out when there is a sitting because we had a good meal.

CHAIRPERSON: No you are always very welcome, thank you very much.

