

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY REGARDING
THE PREVENTION OF PUBLIC VIOLENCE
AND INTIMIDATION

SECOND INTERIM REPORT ON THE VIOLENCE
IN THE TAXI INDUSTRY

GOLDSTONE REPORT; GK - 8

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NOT TO BE ISSUED

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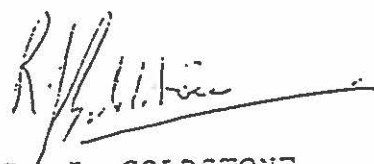
EP250692

The State President

The Commission of Inquiry regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation has the honour to present its second interim report on the violence in the taxi industry.

The committee investigating public violence and intimidation in the taxi industry has submitted its second interim report to the Commission.

The Commission has decided that this report should be submitted to you at this stage as its publication may be of assistance to the persons and organisations seeking to bring about peace in the taxi industry in the Midrand area and especially in Ivory Park.



R. J. GOLDSTONE
CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMISSION

PRETORIA
2 JULY 1992

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SECOND INTERIM REPORT TO THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY REGARDING
THE PREVENTION OF PUBLIC VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION FROM THE
COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED TO INQUIRE INTO THE TAXI INDUSTRY.

D.J. Rossouw

D.J. ROSSOUW
CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE

L.S. van Zyl

L.S. VAN ZYL
MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE

PRETORIA
2 JULY 1992

SECOND INTERIM REPORT TO THE COMMISSION BY THE COMMITTEE INVESTIGATING PUBLIC VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION IN THE TAXI INDUSTRY

1. On Thursday 11 June 1992 the Committee established to inquire into the violence occurring in the taxi industry held a preliminary inquiry regarding the causes of violence associated with taxis in the Midrand area.

2. The transport of passengers residing in Ivory Park has become an issue of conflict between two existing taxi associations which erupted into violence and resulted in the death of at least two persons, one being a passenger, and injuries to two other passengers. There are suggestions that the dispute has not died down and that further violence may be experienced if the root causes are not addressed with alacrity. Ivory Park is a fairly new squatter community of some 70 000 persons. The roots of the discord are to be found in the commercial competition between taxi associations for the new market opening up there.

3. A circumstance that has an impact on the situation is the fact that Ivory Park does not seem to receive any official recognition in the sense that the Municipality's application to have it declared a township has not, after eight months, been approved. The result is that the Municipal law enforcement agencies do not enjoy official recognition in the area. The Mayor of Midrand complains that the South African Police are understaffed and ill-equipped to deal with some 200 000 people in the whole Midrand area. No armoured vehicles are available and the area is policed from

Halfway House, some 20 kilometres away, when Olifantsfontein, a mere 2 kilometres away, would be the natural command post.

4. Without examining the details of the violence (which is in any event the subject of urgent police inquiry, we are assured), the most obvious steps that can be taken to alleviate the position are the official recognition of Ivory Park as a township and the accompanying upgrading of the police presence and facilities in the area.

5. As in other parts of the country, the complaint emerged that the permit system as administered by the Local Road Transportation Board (LRTB) was ineffective and was a contributory cause of tension. This may be due to two factors: first, that two LRTB's had jurisdiction in the area and, secondly, that the type of permit that was issued, i.e. the "radius" permit, led to misunderstandings and tension. In the Interim Report tabled in Parliament on 19 June it was indicated that the existing permit system would require to be revised. In this instance the representatives from Midrand refer to the LRTB as a "remote issuing body, unrelated to local conditions". On the other hand, the Chief Traffic Officer of Midrand testified that there was good co-operation between his office and the LRTB.

6. The Committee attempted to involve SABTA (South African Black Taxi' Association), the national body, but to no avail. All the taxi associations are affiliated, directly or indirectly, to SABTA

and it seems to the Committee that SABTA has an important role to play in mediating in a dispute of this nature.

7. The Council of the Municipality of Midrand, within whose area Ivory Park lies, has, with the support of all the taxi associations, established the Midrand Taxi Forum in an attempt to facilitate conflict resolution. It is still too early to determine whether the Forum will play a valuable role and whether its decisions will have a lasting effect. According to the Mayor and a representative of the Municipality, a cease-fire is in operation, but the warring parties are not really at peace with each other. Evidence given on behalf of the feuding taxi associations also tends to indicate that the hatchet has not been buried, although a peace agreement between them was signed under the aegis of the Local Dispute Resolution Committee. The Committee urges the parties to use these bodies as facilitators of negotiations. As events in Cape Town and Springs have shown, the way to peace lies in the hands of taxi drivers themselves. Solutions imposed on the industry by outsiders do not work.

8. In the Committee's view many of the features which have a negative impact on the taxi industry elsewhere in the country are also present in the Ivory Park situation, in some cases with less intensity. These features will be addressed when the Committee submits its final report on violence in the taxi industry as a whole.