The text below was taken from website “Why we are white refugees”, update of 16th September 2010.

Excerpts: Mbokodo: Inside MK: Mwezi Twala - A Soldier’s Story, by Mwezi Twala

Further below are excerpts from Mwezi Twala’s book: Mbokodo: Inside MK: Mwezi Twala - A Soldier’s Story. Herewith two preface perspectives:

In Women in the ANC and SWAPO: sexual abuse of young women in the ANC camps, by Olefile Samuel Mngqibisa, October 1993, Searchlight South Africa, No 11, Pages 11-16 [...]; Olefile Samuel Mngqibisa, a former soldier in the ANC’s Umkhonto we Sizwe, describes the education of an Mbokodo officer in a poem which he presented to the Commission of Inquiry into human rights abuses in ANC detention camps, chaired by Mr Sam Motsuenyane.

Give a young boy — 16 years old — from the ghetto of Soweto, an opportunity to drive a car for the first time in his life.
This boy is from a poor working class family.
Give him money to buy any type of liquor and good, expensive clothes.
This boy left South Africa during the Soweto schools uprising in 1976. He doesn’t know what is an employer.
He never tasted employer-exploitation.
Give him the right to sleep with all these women.
Give him the opportunity to study in Party Schools and well-off military academies in Eastern
Europe.
Teach him Marxism-Leninism and tell him to defend the revolution against counter-revolutionaries.
Send him to the Stasi to train him to extract information by force from enemy agents. He turns to be a torturer and executioner by firing squad.
All these are the luxuries and the dream-come-true he never thought of for his lifetime...
This Security becomes the law unto itself.

In Mbokodo: Inside MK: Mwezi Twala - A Soldier’s Story, Mwezi Twala writes:
The death rate grew to horrific proportions, some by suicide but mostly by murder. Others went insane under the constant stress or from everlasting pain. From time to time prisoners were removed from our cells and we forced ourselves to believe that they were being transferred: we preferred to look on the bright side because we could not handle the psychological devastation of facing probable reality... No-one knows how many people were slaughtered at Quatro and the other camps, not even the ANC leaders. The use of MK names and Quatro names added to the confusion of keeping track of who was dead or alive: I heard one bizarre case where due to a confusion in code names a prisoner being tortured confessed to having murdered himself. Another confessed to murdering cadres who were subsequently found alive. Many of the guards (and prisoners) were young teenagers and were not particularly responsible people. The youngest prisoner at Quatro was a ten year old boy named Inzindlebe... because he was an “enemy agent”. (p. 90)

Mbokodo: Inside MK: Mwezi Twala - A Soldier’s Story
by Mwezi Twala and Ed Bernard
Jonathan Ball Publishers
Preface to Excerpts by Andrea Muhrrteyn

The following are excerpts from Mbokodo: Inside MK: Mwezi Twala - A Soldier’s Story, by Mwezi Twala and Ed Benard. The excerpts below include details of some of the Quatro atrocities committed by ANC security/Mbokodo at among others Camp Quatro, and Twala’s comparison between the Apartheid Goverment and ANC’s treatment of their prisoners.

Mbokodo was submitted as one of the list of authorities evidentiary documents in support of the argument that the TRC’s “crime of apartheid” was a falsification of history; in Radical Honesty SA Amicus to Concourt (PDF). [Ed Notes are in square brackets, bold emphasis is added]

The Viana Papers and the Mkatashinga Mutiny

In 1981 began a time of terror and death for ANC members in exile. In February a strong ANC National Executive Committee entourage which included President Tambo made the rounds of all ANC camps in Angola. Cadres were warned of the presence of a spy network and the need for vigilance was emphasised. Enemy agents and provocateurs were rudely warned by Piliso, in Xhosa, “.. I’ll hang them by their balls." An “internal enemy” psychosis had been whipped up and whenever ANC leaders visited camps they were heavily guarded. Many men and women were apprehended on suspicion of dissidence were to be exterminated in the most brutal manner in
the months ahead. Those dis disillusioned MK cadres who returned from Rhodesia were the first to go. (p. 49)

I became aware of these developments by word of mouth, but I was to discover later on, by personal experience, the terror of Quatro, to name but one death camp. People were removed from amongst us -- taken to Quatro or Camp 13 -- and disappeared forever without reason. Many of them were slaughtered by one means or another and their ultimate destination was a shallow grave. We heard rumours of execution by being buried alive, amongst many other techniques beyond civilized imagination. The purge created great fear amongst all of us, to the point where the smallest criticism, such as of badly prepared food, was seriously reconsidered by every individual, for one could never be certain that a “best friend” would keep his mouth shut. (p. 49)

Our own security people became exceedingly arrogant, to the point where an innocent slip of the tongue or even a simple gesture could land you in a torture cell at Quatro. Security men of the lowest rank and intelligence -- fourteen to eighteen year olds -- became our masters, with the power of life or death in their hands. They acted on a mood with impunity. (p. 49-50)

Oliver Tambo visited Pango [Camp] at the height of the terror. The path from the entrance to the admin building was lined -- like a scene from “Spartacus” -- with men, bloodied and filthy, hanging from trees. When his entourage arrived at admin, where I was officer on duty, Tambo’s chief of staff told us that there would be a meeting at “the stage” (a clearing in the jungle...where we held meetings and discussions). Runners were sent out to notify everyone in the vicinity. On his way to the stage [Oliver Tambo] again passed the men tied to the trees. Being officer on duty, I could not attend the meeting, but my deputy went. After a while I saw guards come up from the stage, release the prisoners and take them to the meeting. There, my deputy told me, instead of objecting to their treatment, as I had hoped, Tambo berated them for their dissident behaviour and appeared to approve when Andrew Masondo declared that on the presidents next visit they would be in shallow graves behind the stage. The prisoners were returned to their trees.. where the president [Oliver Tambo] passed the unfortunate men without a glance on his way out, and they hung there for another three months -- followed by three months hard labour. (p. 51-52)

Tambo was a brilliant and ruthless man...... After his appointment as acting president of the ANC at the 1969 Morogoro Conference, a power struggle developed. In 1975, eight members of the leadership were purged... The next ANC national conference would not occur until 1985 at Kabwe... Tambo effectively became a dictator... A Tambo hero cult was promoted and cadres were required to sing his praises in a reverent manner as though sacred hymns were being sung... Gradually the Mbokodo tried to instil in cadres the belief that the ANC leadership was infallible, and any cadre who refused to voluntarily accept this premise was coerced by threats. Mzwai Piliso summed up this approach when he said: “If you as much as point a finger at the ANC leadership, we will chop off your whole arm.” (p. 52-53)
The [Viana] Report pulled no punches, despite its tactful approach. There was general consensus that the ANC in exile had lost focus and there was widespread disenchantment with its leaders. A consultative conference was called for, to elect new leaders who would be charged with getting the ANC back on track. The cadres were floundering in fetid Angolan camps while the leaders were wallowing in luxury in Lusaka. There was very strong evidence that ANC funds were being misappropriated for the personal use of the leaders, many of whom had acquired expensive real estate in foreign countries. An audit of ANC funds was demanded. Corruption was rampant: some ANC leaders were using ANC personnel and facilities to indulge in illegal activities such as drug smuggling, car theft and illicit diamond dealing, while other abused their positions to gain sexual favours from young female cadres. (p. 55)

I was one of the more vociferous speakers.... [National Commissar Masondo] convened a meeting in Viana to be very critical of the report. His eyes bored into me like laser beams... He lashed out at me personally and told me that I should take cognisance of the fact that trying to be a “Lech Walesa” would be to my detriment: if I persisted in rocking the boat I would be crushed. My response was that I was not making trouble for anyone and that the report-back was an honest and truthful statement of the facts as we knew them to be. He angrily retorted: “You should be very careful, because at times, truth and facts are very destructive and should be avoided.” (p. 56)

... Three NEC men in particular were singled out for bitter criticism: Joe Modise, the MK commander, who most men felt was incompetent and who was seen to be abusing his position to facilitate corrupt money-making ventures instead of advancing the fight against apartheid; Mzwandile (Mzwai) Piliso, the chief of the Mbokodo, who was regarded as a soulless ideologue bent on the suppression of dissent and democracy in the ANC; and Andrew Masondo, who as National Commissar was responsible for the implementation of NEC decisions and for providing political guidance to ANC personnel, but who abused this authority to defend corruption. Apart from Tambo, these men were the only NEC members who had direct access to Quatro (p. 61)

... [After another mutiny where approximately 90% of MK had mutinied, another list of demands were drawn up, to be represented by a Committee of Ten, demanding (a) suspension of Mbokodo, commission to investigate Mbokodo and Camp Quatro activities, (b) review of ANC policy towards apartheid and armed struggle; (c) a fully democratic conference to elect new leaders. Thereafter on 16 February 1984, Twela is shot by Mbokodo on instructions of Joe Modise and Chris Hani. He is shot in ribs, piercing his lung and liver. The Committee of 10 are transported to Camp Nova Installacao.]

The Plot and Nova Installacao
The conditions were beyond imagination. Within the four walls the only item was the bed, which was a concrete slab jutting out of the wall about thirty centimeters off the floor. No mattress was provided, nor even a blanket. In one corner was a toilet, blocked to the seat with faeces and stale urine, surrounded by a cloud of bluebottle flies and a stench beyond description. To add insult to injury, there was no water. I was told the Angolans had been instructed not to give me medical assistance: “You get nothing, you are going to die here!” (p. 72)

[Another white female prisoner, an Angolan citizen in prison for a civil misdemeanour bribes the guards to get him medical attention and he recovers. He remains there for about 18 months, whereupon he is informed he will be transferred to Quatro.]

Quatro

All the buildings at Quatro had concrete roofs and floors with no windows...

Rules of the Camp:

1. No complaints would be tolerated and severe punishment would be meted out to any such complainant.
2. Under no circumstances were we to utilise holes, cracks or other apertures for the purpose of observation or communication with the occupants of adjacent cells. To break this rule was regarded as a very serious crime.
3. During the entire period of detention at Quatro, the only human relationship allowed was with cell mates.
4. Detainees had at all times to run. Walking was forbidden.
5. Severe punishment would be meted out to any detainee who when outside of his cell, failed to hide his face, turn his back or take cover when in the vicinity of another detainee.
6. It was the duty of every detainee to maintain a minimum distance of five meters from any of the armed security guards. Failure to observe this rule was punishable by a beating.
7. Orders issued under any circumstance by the security guards had to be obeyed instantly. Failure to comply was punishable by a beating.
8. When you were punished by a beating you were not to block or attempt to evade the blows. If you did so, further punishment would be meted out.
9. Detainees had only one right, to obey at all times the rules and authority governing them. (p. 82)

... The cell was long and narrow, barely wide enough for a tall man to lie across it, and empty except for a four-litre plastic container, neither bottle nor bucket, which was to serve as a toilet. The only source of light and ventilation was the three three-inch pipes that protruded through the wall... The door was solid steel but did not fit the frame very well, which allowed some extra
light and air to filter in. From about 0900 hours to 1500 hours the light was poor; thereafter the cell was dark. (p. 82-83)

...

Quatro routine was monotonous. Reveille was at 0500 hrs. In the blackness of the cell we awakened to our first chore of the day, to roll up our blankets (We slept on the floor, there were no beds). Next, two of us had to be ready to remove the toilet bucket, filled with its odious contents, at the orders of the guards. (p. 86)

At 0600 hrs the cell door was opened with a crash and impatient guards gestured to us to grab the “toilet” and start running with our load to the cesspool some hundred meters from the gate. In itself a fairly easy journey, the only problem was that we had to run, negotiating our way through an avenue of guards armed with an assortment of sticks, whips, baseball bats and even sjamboks, with which they beat us as we ran. Despite the unrelenting blows raining down on us, we faced punishment if we stumbled and sloshed the “cargo” as we ran down the steeply sloping hill. On arrival at the pit we emptied the contents into it, leaving the chamber at the pit side to be collected by us later in the day. We then turned and ran back to the cells. The return journey was fraught with danger because the guards thought it good entertainment to grab a detainee or two and give them a beating or a lashing. This abuse was handed out purely at the whim of the guards or in order to pay back a grudge. Bruised and bleeding, the inmates would stumble back into their cells. (p. 86)

The significant result of this chore-cum-beating was that the only toilet facility in each cell was now down at the pit. Those detainees destined to remain in their cells for the day would be without the luxury of a toilet until 1700 hrs. Furthermore, we had no water or soap to wash our hands, so the men and the cell degenerated into a pretty disgusting condition. Because of the unhygienic conditions under which we lived, much of the time we had diarrhoea and it was absolute agony not having access to a toilet facility during the day. One could not sit down or one was sunk! We “tap danced” all day to avoid messing in our pants or the cell. Aside from the embarrassment, discomfort, humiliation and of course the smell, if one had an “accident”, the guards would beat up the offender. At times I felt that I had been degraded to an animal status and I had to keep reminding myself that the guilt must lie with Mbokodo, not me. One had no privacy, and when the four-litre containers which had dried faeces on the inside and outside were returned to the cells, we all rushed to join the queue to use them. The physical discomfort was so great that one was oblivious of any sense of shame or embarrassment. (p. 86-87)

At 0700 hrs breakfast, mixed in a 20 litre tin. The “mix” varied, from a piece of bread to porridge or half-cooked beans. The choice between eating or getting medical treatment was left entirely to the inmate. (p. 87)

At 0730 hours work began.. such as chopping and carting large logs to build bomb shelters, chopping firewood, digging trenches, hauling a thousand litre steel Russian water tank up a very steep incline nearly 1300 meters long. (p. 87)

[The guards beating was considered sport]
... This activity (or sport) reached revolting excesses and was amply demonstrated on the occasions when a team of six of us was assigned to spend a working day collecting firewood. The guards, fully armed, two for each detainee, would escort us through the near-jungle terrain selecting suitable dry trees. On sighting such a tree we would call the guards. Once approval was given we would move towards the target tree. Before any further action took place the guard would instruct one of us to chop sticks from surrounding bushes, with which to chop the tree down very quickly. We were called “bandits”, and “bandits” did not get tired. “Coffee or guava”? meant did you prefer to be beaten with a coffee or guava tree branch. If they decided we were not cutting down a tree fast enough, they simply laid into us with increased fury.... We were prodded and whipped like oxen as we struggled in the heat to pull the stacked trestles up the hill back to Quatro.

[Lunch from 12:30 to 13:13, then back to work till 17:00] (p. 87.88)

... The death rate grew to horrific proportions, some by suicide but mostly by murder. Others went insane under the constant stress or from everlasting pain. From time to time prisoners were removed from our cells and we forced ourselves to believe that they were being transferred: we preferred to look on the bright side because we could not handle the psychological devastation of facing probable reality.... No-one knows how many people were slaughtered at Quatro and the other camps, not even the ANC leaders. The use of MK names and Quatro names added to the confusion of keeping track of who was dead or alive: I heard one bizarre case where due to a confusion in code names a prisoner being tortured confessed to having murdered himself. Another confessed to murdering cadres who were subsequently found alive. Many of the guards (and prisoners) were young teenagers and were not particularly responsible people. The youngest prisoner at Quatro was a ten year old boy named Inzindlebe... because he was an “enemy agent”. (p.90)

I heard that the Quatro gravedigger was often forced to dig the grave of an Mbokodo victim by hand. Often while doing this he would unearth the remains of previous Mbokodo victims buried in shallow graves. ANC leaders, command authorities and international cohorts of the ANC would in the future vehemently deny that such things ever took place, but I for one was there, I saw it happening. I was personally involved and brutalized at Quatro for the better part of four
long years. (p.90)

... The dehumanisation of the detainees damaged, as it was intended to, the very core of the men. I watched healthy young men disintegrate into cabbages with no will to live. They became little more than robots, morons. No longer did they care about the lack of soap and water to wash their hands, soiled day after day with excrement. The increasing stench went unnoticed for it became a condition of life. We could not smell it any more. Personal hygiene was no longer recognized and all of us broke out in boils, cracked lips festered, insect bites turned into ulcers and foot-rot was rampant. When the pains were most acute some of the men would rather crawl than walk even when this invited cruel lashings from the guards across exposed backs, creating even more open wounds. (p.94)

... Real torture, as practised at Quatro by security specialists, was such that the bestial Khmer Rouge of Cambodia could have learnt a thing or two. They could, and did, keep detainees incommunicado for anything up to four years with no access to any kind of reading matter and for no apparent reason, and under no circumstance would a detainee be allowed the comfort of a Bible. One of the most horrendous events involving torture occurred during my sojourn at Quatro, involving one of our cadres who had managed to escape from Viana to a refugee camp in Luanda. This poor wretch had decided to quit the ANC by resigning. He had gone to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to seek protection, which was accorded to him.... Under the eyes of the UNHCR authorities he [and another ANC cadre also wanting to resign] was kidnapped by ANC security and brought to Quatro, where they were sealed in separate isolation cells. The one who had left Viana Camp underwent mind-blowing torture and questioning for days.. and shortly thereafter thrown bodily into our cell. His Quatro name was Pudi. (p.95)

My first sight of him almost caused me to faint with horror, as it did my cell mates. His head was rotting and the smell was beyond description. One could even smell his head above the normal stench that prevailed in the cells. He had a white burn scar running from what had one been his hairline down to his nose. His eyes were swollen and closed and the only sound squeezing out of his deformed and battered lips was an agonising moaning whimper. His poor body shook as though he had epilepsy. We did our best to comfort him and over a tortuous half-hour he painfully told us that his captors had brought him to Quatro, questioned him, beat him and poured boiling water on his head continuously until he had lost consciousness. When he awakened a few days later, the injury to his scalp had not been treated. Consequently, as we could see, the infection had putrefied into a rotting mess. (p.96)

... He told us that the friend who had been kidnapped with him could not walk because the security men had burnt the soles of his feet with red hot coals, and then forced him to stand for lengthy periods. We never found out where the friend was being held in Quatro, so we presumed he
must have “disappeared”, as had so many others. (p.96)

...

Soon the guards became aware that our severely burnt comrade was healing, whereupon they stormed into our cell and dragged him out, took him to one of the nearby trees, made him hold the trunk and thrust him head first into the tree time after time, until his burn wounds again burst open into a terrible mess. He fell unconscious to the ground and in this state was savagely beaten about the head and face with sticks. When the guards were too exhausted to carry on, they dragged his body away, alive or dead I could not say, but he disappeared for good, almost certainly to a shallow grave. (p.97)

...

A particularly sadistic torture employed at Quatro was to take a bag, place a live rat inside it and then tie the bag over the victim’s head. (p.98)

[Twela compares ANC imprisonment to Apartheid imprisonment]

... I meditated on the journey I had taken in order to be a soldier, to do my bit to free my people from the yoke of apartheid. All I had achieved was to be subjected to another kind of repression, imprisonment, and torture. If I had stayed in the Republic, fighting my own war against the Regime, I would have achieved far more in a week than I had over the past fifteen years in Angola, Mozambique and Zambia under the communist ANC leadership. Also in the event of being apprehended by the South African authorities, I would have faced a proper judicial trial and been sentenced to a prison term. (p. 100)

Prison would have consisted of a clean bed and blanket, and decent clothes would have been issued. Reasonable hot meals would have been provided. Clean hygienic cells with running water on tap, a civilized toilet facility and shower cubicles. Added to this would have been an acceptable prison work ethic and a small but welcome income, enough to allow me the luxury of buying cigarettes and toothpaste. I might have had the opportunity to study, as Nelson Mandela did, almost any subject, with access to the prison library. I would also have received medical care for injuries and illness, plus spiritual comfort from a prison chaplain of a denomination of my choice. In no way would I have been misused, beaten and tortured at the whim of a spiteful revenge-driven warden. (p.100)

Had the South African [Apartheid] government treated me half as badly as the ANC, it would have been deserved to some degree, as I had broken South African laws. In the case of the ANC, there was no such rationale. It was virtually impossible to find a detainee who had committed a clearly defined crime against the system, because there was no system. I concluded that the policies of the ANC leadership were based on personal ambition and fear. (p.100)

....
As the family listened to my adventures they began to see that there were similarities beginning to manifest themselves in the townships. Intolerance, anti-democratic and totalitarian political structures supported by intimidation, violence and necklacing had become an everyday occurrence, almost the norm. In fact, it was not long before I was told that I had “forfeited my right to live in the townships”, following a “comrades” meeting in Evaton. The “comrades” proudly told the Weekly Mail (8-14 June 1990), “we ordered the family he was visiting to kick him out immediately”. I was driven from my own home. (p.153)

....

[Two of his fellow Mbokodo victims -- Sipho Phungulwa and Nicholas Dyasop -- go to Transkei to visit one of their’s sister. After attending a meeting with Transkei ANC leadership, they are caught in an ambush and Sipho is assassinated but Nicholas gets away. A year later Nicholas identifies the alleged assassins in an identification parade, whereupon the alleged ANC assassins are arrested.]

They appeared in court, only to be released on a nominal bail, and were never brought to trial! The truth of the matter was that Transkei had degenerated into the same situation as Angola, Zambia and Tanzania, where the governments supported and were accomplices in torture and murder of ANC dissidents. (p.155)

A month after Sipho Phungulwa’s murder, Nelson Mandela was confronted with full documentation of it, together with a demand for a ANC enquiry. It fell on deaf ears.. (p.155)

....

The only history of governance that the ANC has had was characterized by incompetence, corruption, cruelty and a callous disregard for democracy and human rights. Under the tutelage of the SACP, the Mbokodo subverted Albert Luthuli’s ANC into Oliver Tambo’s, which Nelson Mandela has found expedient to retain. He has ignored the recommendations and advice of the two ANC-appointed commissions of inquiry and decided that no reparations will be made, nor will the Mbokodo be punished. The ANC’s dismissal of the matter is typical of the manner dissidents were treated in exile. (p.160)
Excerpts: Mbokodo: Inside MK: Mwezi Twala - A Soldier’s Story

[...]

Mbokodo: the soldiers of the ANC inside its hell
Friday, 05 July 2013 07:07