

After ten minutes after he left, the police spread out the wire. There were trailers that had the wires and after that...they started to shoot at us. And while they were shooting at us we could not run to the shacks where we live, we could only run towards the front there and that side was already closed off.

SURVIVOR

WAITING TO BE HEARD

Voices from Marikana

Excerpts from *Marikana: A View from the Mountain and a Case to Answer*

They lied about rubber bullets. They did not use them. People were not killed because they were fighting. We were shot while running. [We] went through the hole, and that is why we were shot.

MINER

MINERS

You were shot if you put up your hands. I was taken by a gentleman who was of Indian ancestry. He held me and when I tried to stand up I was hit with guns, and he stopped them.

There were no warning shots.

I get very amazed when the police say they were defending themselves, what were they defending themselves from?

I will just look at them and they are like dogs to me now...when I see a police now I feel like throwing up... I do not trust them anymore, they are like enemies.

I am still traumatised by the incident. Even when I see it on TV, I still get scared because I could not sleep the days following the incident. It is worse because this has been done to us by a government we thought, with Zuma in power, things would change. But we are still oppressed and abused.

Before, we had no borders in Africa. So it was colonisation who came with borders.

Those people who were saying that RDOs (rock drill operators) are machine boys who are illiterate what do they need R12 500 for? They are still using the old school excuse [and this is because] they have no idea how difficult the job of an RDO is at all. [That is why they think] that we deserved peanuts.

SURVIVORS

And we went as workers to the NUM offices but we were shot at by the NUM people and two people died and we ran and they came after us until we passed the ground and they stopped chasing us when we got to the grounds and that is when we came here in the mountain, and we saw that we were beaten and blood has spilled also and our people have died too.

Then we decided that when there is a fight a man should also have his own knobkerrie and then we decided to go get our knobkerries and we went back to the mountain again and we slept there until Sunday.

On Friday [the 17th] the South African President Zuma [came]... He said he will bring his people here to come and kill us and then it was clear to us that he was the one who told his police to kill us...

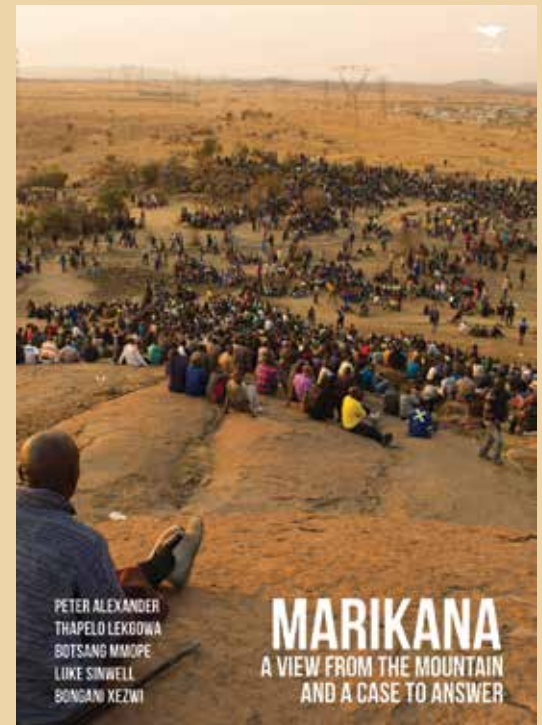
And this thing, people [the media] say that unions are at war, saying that NUM and AMCU are fighting. Those are lies. Here workers are the ones at war.

"Mr Zokwana I am happy that you came to us, and we plead with you to come out so that we can be able to speak with you." And Mr Zokwana said, "No, it is the rule here in South Africa that we should not come out of the Hippo when we speak with you."

It was the union leaders, the union committee. They were the ones who shot at us, they killed two boys. We ran and left them there. Even the mine security guards were shooting, but not at us. They were shooting upward in order to scare us and we ran away and left for the mountain. When we tried to go to them on Sunday the mine security guards shot at us.

Hey, my man, my head was not working on that day and I was very, very numb and very, very nervous, because I was scared. I never knew of such things. I only knew of them like what had happened in 1976 and what happened in 1992, because of history. I would hear about massacres you see. I usually heard of that from history, but on that day it came back, so that I can see it. Even now, when I think back, I feel terrible, and when I reverse my thinking to that, I feel sad, still.

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SURVIVORS

And after the soldiers arrived with the two Hippos the police said they will not take that wire out and they will go on with doing their jobs, and that is when we got hurt. Like me, I was able to save myself, because when I ran, I ran to this side and a lot of people who got hurt ran towards that mountain there. Those are people who got hurt the most, they ran towards that kraal there and some were left behind here and some were taken by soldiers going towards that mountain. What happened in that mountain, god knows, because by then they were using that green tear gas, bluish like the sky because that mountain was green. What happened in that mountain I cannot say because I was very far by then and the helicopter was shooting at us too and that went on like that on Thursday on 16 August.

This struggle is from Lonmin in its entirety, what we wanted was money. We were not fighting. I heard management say that we were fighting the unions. We were not fighting the unions, we just wanted money: R12 500.

I lied on the ground when they shot, because if you stood up they said that you were going to get hurt. I was crawling and then proceeded to lie on the ground, and that was how I survived... By crawling on the ground and lying down flat, I crawled out of the scene and ran to a nearby shack.

They said, "Right here we have caused women to become widows. We have killed all these men." It was the police who spoke in that manner. The police were speaking in that manner. Even at the police station in Phokeng, we were asked why we wanted R12 000 because we were uneducated.

SURVIVORS

Others ran to Marikana and those who ran to Marikana were shot at the most, even from helicopters. Others were run over by Hippos. It is not everyone who was shot at, others were stepped on by Hippos...

I can say that what happened... We were killed for nothing. They were fighting us for our money. We were not fighting with management. We simply wanted to know when they were going to give us our money. Management thought it was better for them to call the government to come and kill us.

Listen Sir, this is how the story goes... when the workers went that side to tell them that we wanted more money, we found that NUM had not confronted management about this issue. So, we told them that we could see that they were unwilling to help us, so we will go to management ourselves because we were the ones who were suffering, and they were just sitting comfortably and drinking tea. When they got to their office they found us there and asked us why we had gone above their heads. Then on Saturday morning they [NUM] went there wearing their red shirts and they shot people.

[We] were arrested on... the 16th and left on Thursday the 20 something... It was on Thursday when we were taken to Mogwase because our case was postponed to the 6th... We were treated badly... we couldn't eat, not phone our families to tell them where we were. As a person with TB, I was unable to take my medication. I was unable to call my children. I even told the police that I was a widower, and my children were left by themselves... I couldn't tell my children where I was.

I earn R4000, but it does not last. Children must go to school, and when they go to school, they need some lunch money, and books are expensive. The children are really struggling...we don't have enough clothes. The workers of Lonmin are really struggling, but we work very hard. You will hear that the stocks are up, but we get nothing in return. The white people reprimand us if we do not do our work properly or make a mistake. It would have been better to be reprimanded knowing that we were getting better pay. The white people pay each other better, but we get nothing.

SURVIVOR