

Dear Khampepe Inquiry Team,

I hope this message finds you well.

Please find attached our Canadian South African bilateral documentary team's independent research regarding former apartheid psychiatrist Dr Aubrey Levin, who fled South Africa for Canada in 1994/95, avoiding the initial Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) hearings.

Our team of international filmmakers, journalists, and researchers has traced Dr Levin's movements in Canada, where he later served prison time for crimes similar in nature to those alleged against him since the early 1970s in apartheid-era South Africa.

"85-year-old Aubrey Levin is a white former South African Defence Force (SADF) military psychiatrist and Rhodes University professor, also known as 'Dr Shock,' 'Die Kolonel,' or 'Bubbles.' He stands accused of multiple crimes, including physical and sexual assault and the torture of conscripted male and female soldiers, members of the LGBTQ community, and numerous psychiatric patients. Levin claimed to 'cure' gay army conscripts through a brutal mix of heavy drugs and aversive shock therapy."

(Raubenheimer, 2024)

Despite extensive allegations, Levin successfully evaded the TRC's attempts to compel him to return to South Africa and face justice. We are attaching the original Aversion Research Report submitted to the TRC as chief evidence. Although Levin is not overtly named there (referred to only as "the Kolonel" due to funding restrictions), he is explicitly named in a precursor report by The Health and Human Rights Project (1997), which we have also attached.

Our documentary, currently in production and supported by MultiChoice and the National Film and Video Foundation (and just recently a major Canadian production house), aims to shed new light on Levin's crimes and the enduring trauma suffered by his victims. The project was recently previewed in a panel discussion at the FAME Week Film Festival in Cape Town.

Argument for Consideration by the Khampepe Inquiry

We believe that Dr Levin's case falls squarely within the scope and spirit of the Khampepe Inquiry, which seeks to revisit unresolved or incomplete matters from the TRC process and ensure that outstanding cases of human rights violations are properly investigated.

As per the TRC Final Report, Volume 4, the Commission explicitly acknowledged the existence of unresolved allegations of abuse by health professionals:

Page 124:

“The Commission investigated a number of allegations. There were reports of a particular psychologist who used aversion therapy and electric shocks on homosexual military men as part of a treatment for their ‘gayness.’”

Page 155:

“Health professionals who were named in submissions as having contravened ethics or acted unprofessionally will be referred to the appropriate disciplinary body, together with as much information as is available, for further investigation and suitable action. The Commission has neither the resources nor the time to conclude investigations to the point where individual findings can be made.”

Given these passages, Levin’s conduct clearly aligns with cases the TRC acknowledged but was unable to investigate or conclude fully. His actions, and the state’s complicity in enabling them, represent a major gap in the record of accountability for apartheid-era human rights violations. Moreover, Levin’s subsequent crimes in Canada, thus mirroring his conduct in South Africa, demonstrate a pattern of abuse that strengthens the case for revisiting his file. His evasion of the TRC process in 1995 constitutes unfinished business in the pursuit of justice. For these reasons, we respectfully submit that the Khampepe Inquiry consider reopening or formally reviewing Dr Aubrey Levin’s case as part of its ongoing mandate. Doing so may allow survivors, many of whom are now elderly, to provide testimony, participate in restorative proceedings, and achieve long-overdue recognition and closure. We have several survivors who are prepared to offer statements or appear before the Inquiry if required.

Request for Guidance

We respectfully ask: What is the process for applying to the Khampepe Inquiry to have Dr Levin’s case and the Aversion project reviewed?

This may represent one of the final opportunities for surviving victims to see meaningful acknowledgement and justice for the atrocities they endured.

We would deeply appreciate your direction on the next steps and any formal submission procedures that may apply.

Our team has tracked Mr Levin to Toronto, Canada, where he continues to enjoy his retirement.

With thanks and kind regards,

Graeme Raubenheimer
(on behalf of the Canadian South African Bilateral Documentary Team)