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J.F. where you were born and when?

F.M. In '29, August 12th., in Gray Street in a flat on top of the shop - that reflects the one, as you would - as you would put it, one class of Indians, Indians who moved off the sugar fields, some of them bought - began to trade, and they had shops in the centre of Durban. You had these shops in West Street where the white shops were in those very early days - now I'm talking about towards the middle of the last century - there was not yet legal discrimination, and if you traded then you were allowed to trade in the centre of Durban city in West Street - later you were not allowed to trade in West Street as an Indian, and then in - so they tended to concentrate in Gray Street and the whole Gray Street shopping complex developed.

Now the ex-indentured Indians were the first to trade in these areas, but from about 1875 onwards you had this other stream of Indians, the passenger Indians, who had not been brought in as indentured, but they were mainly peasants who had lost, well, were in - were - were faced with losing their land because of the exorbitant taxation system imposed by the British in India, and they came mainly from the Gujerat area, and many of them came simply to earn enough money to be able to go back and redeem the bonds that had accumulated, so they came absolutely penniless, and they usually did the usual business - you know, they peddled.

All they could do was sell because there was nothing else that they could do - if they had not been brought in as indentured workers there was no job - so they used to sell, peddling by foot, and then they would, you know, gradually get themselves a donkey cart and do it that ways and eventually set up a shop - that's how the Indian commercial community developed, and they usually lived upstairs and had their shops downstairs, and when they didn't live upstairs then somebody else did.

Well, my parents were not shopkeeping - my father was a journalist and he ran his own paper - he - he worked for the paper and he eventually bought over this paper, the Indian Views - the paper ran for a very long time - it started actually in 1913 or 1912 and it was the second Indian paper - the other paper, which was very similar was the one that had been started by Gandhi, the Indian Opinion - and bought these papers - and both these papers were in English and in Gujerati, so the difference was that Gandhi's paper - Gandhi himself was a Hindoo, and the paper that my father eventually bought over was always Muslim, but both same area and, you know, the papers were - were in Gujerati and in English.

That's how we came to be living upstairs, because if you lived in the centre of town and the press was downstairs, you know, very near by - the press was there, so he worked on the press and we lived on top, and that's where I was born. At the time when I was born he didn't own the paper - he was working for the paper - he wrote both in Gujerati and in English.

J.F. So was there a strong idea of an Indian identity, a Muslim identity, when you were growing up from your parents, from the community?

F.M. Well, I - I'm just trying to figure that one out - I would say there was a family identity - you lived in the family really - you hardly lived even in a community - that's the kind of sense I had.

F.M. I had no sense of people other than the people who were in my family - and I went to the madressa before I went to school - madressa is a - is a Muslim idea - it's a Muslim educational institution - you talk about the madressa as if you - you know, you use the word in Islamic countries - if you refer to a school or to a university the word used is madressa - so I went to a madressa, and what the madressa did was it taught you the Indian languages - we learned Arabic, we learned to read the Koran, then we learned Urdu, and then at a later stage we would be introduced to Hujerati, although Gujerati was the language of my parents - Arabic and Urdu took precedence - because madressas are basically Islamic institutions - so I would say that in my first years developing an identity outside of the family was an identity I developed in the madressa, so all you're thinking about are the children in your madressa.

J.F. Because when I spoke to Shaneen she said that growing up she did not get a sense of we are Muslims, don't mix with the Hindoos at all, and was quite shocked when she got to school and the kids would say : Don't eat from the Hindoos' plates - was that something that you - you knew yourself to be a Muslim and not a Hindoo when you were growing up?

F.M. No, we were - no, we - you see, it's something different - if you are told that so-and-so is a Hindoo and you don't hobnob with a Hindoo, that never occurred in my life. In my life it was the natural and was a done thing that the child went to a madressa - it is still a done thing that the child goes to a madressa - that's the first educational exposure that a young child has, and a Muslim child is sent to the madressa when he's about four years old. By the time I was ten I had - no, nine - I was nine or ten, I cannot remember now, when I first went to English school, so what it means is this, that by the time I was nine or ten I had graduated from the madressa - I had learned sufficiently of whatever had to be learned at the madressa - but if you're at the madressa then you're at the madressa.

There aren't any Hindoo children for anybody to say to you : Don't do this with a Hindoo child, or don't do that with a Hindoo child - I mean that never happened to me ever. I was never ever told by my parents that that is a Hindoo child - that never happened in my life. I actually went to a Coloured school when I first went to a school - I didn't go to an Indian school, because we were living in - in - in town, and the nearest school to where we were living was a Coloured school - well, the nearest school that would take me.

That Coloured school wouldn't take me either, so we were posing not to be Indians - my mother took me there - because my mother wasn't Indian - my mother was white - so she was posing, you see, that her child was not Indian, and she put me in at this Coloured school. I was never ever told at any point to draw any distinctions between myself and say, a Coloured child. I finished Standard Two at the Coloured school, and then I went to the Indian school, and I skipped a year - I don't know how they wangled that, but instead of going to Standard Three I went to Standard Four, which was a good thing because I was already old for my, you know - having spent up to the age ten at a madressa then I pitch up at a school, you know, I was old for my class.

Now at the Indian school most of the girls were Hindoos, but at no point did my parents ever say to me, and at no point did I ever have any girl in school saying to me, you know, that is a Hindoo girl - it didn't happen to me because there were very few Muslim girls at school in my time, so there weren't those Muslim girls trying trying to look after my morals or my strictures.

J.F. And you didn't feel discriminated against or part of the minority being Muslim?

F.M. No, absolutely not - the only thing - you know, I dyed my hair at a very young age, but my hair was very, very - it was your colour, so - and I stood out because I was so light complexioned, and so they used to call me a name in Tamil which meant a white girl, you know - so they used to call me that, but I didn't mind that - they did it more affectionately than in a sort of a - you know, in a sort of an insidious (?) or - or, you know, name-calling way - but that was all.

J.F. And so your mother was a white South African?

F.M. My mother was a white South African.

J.F. And was that not unusual that there was a mixed marriage at that time (.....)

F.M. Well, everything was unusual about my background. My father was unusual in that he was a journalist. There must be - there must have been three journalists in the whole Indian community at the time. My father had married in India his own cousin, and then he married in Kimberley, where he had actually started off - you know, he came from India and he - his uncle was in Kimberley - his uncle meaning his mother's brother - and his uncle was a shopkeeper - in fact a very prosperous shopkeeper in Kimberley - so he went to work as a shop assistant in Kimberley, and that's where he met my mother, and they eloped - and there was lots of trouble because the police were after them, you see, and then when things got very hot he in fact went and left her at an orphanage in Durban, so she could teach, and she taught there for a while, and then when things quietened down only then did they get married and start living together.

And then my other mother came from India as well, so it was a very unusual household because I had two mothers, and they got on together extraordinarily well, and we were never told that my mother was anything but Indian. Nobody ever said that she was not Indian. It was something for me to discover later on. She never said that she was not Indian, you know - we just assumed - well, everybody just took her for granted - and there when we were born there was her position in the family and - and that was it - she was the one mother and there was the other mother, and there were all the cousins, her cousins, you know - their generation, because we - we have an extended family system, and the cousins and all lived in the same household, and that's how it was.

I mean we - we had a - a number of older women in the house - among them was my mother. Later on it seemed to me that well, she looked a bit different from the other women, but I mean she spoke Gujerati as, you know, well as the others - she wore the same clothes as the others - if anything she outdid them in her Islamic religiosity, you know, which often happens, and she of course was the one who was always very concerned that I should not do something wrong - I don't know why - she always believed that I was going to do something wrong, because (?) I was going to fall pregnant as soon as I, you know, reached my teenage years or something like that.

F.M. And I think to sort of prevent me from going wrong she used to beat me quite regularly, and it was my other mother who always sort of saved me from her anger, you know - she was extremely nice - so in fact I resented ever being called my mother's daughter - I always said I was my other mother's daughter - that just shows, you know, how close the whole thing was. As a matter of fact I have a brother who is three months younger than me, and he was born quite sickly, and my mother breastfed both of us, because my other mother was not well at the time - she had asthma and she was sick, so my mother breastfed both of us.

J.F. So how many kids were you among?

F.M. We were altogether nine - my mother had five, I think, yes, and my other mother had four.

J.F. And then you lived with both the two mothers and the father for your - until you left home?

F.M. Ja, not only both mothers and fathers, but we always had another family living with us, you know, a cousin - my mother's brother - no, my father's brother and his family - then my other mother's brother and her family - then my own mother's brother - there were only two of them - he also eloped with my mother, so (Laugh) he also lived with us and grew up with us, my uncle, so we were always more than - you know, we always lived together - there were always other cousins with whom we grew up.

J.F. And when you said that you had only found out....

F.M. That is why the - you know, we grew up in a family, because the family was so many people - the family was a community.

J.F. And when you said you only found out later that she was white how did that emerge - was that some dark secret or?

F.M. It wasn't a dark secret - nobody ever thought it was anything to talk about, you know. My mother never told me anything about her parents ever. I never asked her about her parents ever. She just did not (?) you know - that too didn't seem strange to us because my other mother never had any parents too, since her parents were in India, but she would talk about her father all the time, so the maternal grandfather that I knew of - I never met him - was my other mother's father. My mother never talked about her father - sometimes with her brother she would talk, and then we would hear all these - you know, they would talk about their sister Irene, or they would talk about Bailey was their step-father and, you know, and - and my uncle's name was Farrell, so obviously their father had that.

Later on when my mother died I said to my uncle : Now you tell me about your family - and then for the first time he told me about his family.

J.F. He was the brother to your mother?

F.M. Ja.

J.F. So did he reveal any scandalising with a white family about it or was it not an issue at all?

F.M. In the family it was a big issue - I told you that there had - my father had to go along and leave her because the police were after them, and he said to me - my uncle said to me that the talk went out that the grandmother had sold my mother for a sixpence to this Indian. You see, what had really happened was that my grandfather from my mother's side was a Russian Jew, and he had had his family in Russia, and he had come here, and my grandmother from my mother's side was Portuguese, and he had these two children by her and then left her - and then she had married Bailey who was now step-father to these two children, my mother and her brother - and then she died - she had another daughter, Irene or something - Irene, I think was the name that I kept hearing - I've never met her - she had this other daughter - and then she died, and then Bailey married my granny's sister, and apparently then they were very cruel to these two children in particular, and so the granny took them over - the Portuguese granny took them over, and the - the talk went that the Portuguese granny sold my mother for a sixpence.

When my mother eloped with my father she was only a child - she was about 13 or 14, because when I was born she was only 15, so I mean you ask about unusual - this is unus - the whole thing was unusual, very unusual.

J.F. Do you think all that affected your view of race - do you think that that accounted for - you would find - Shaneen, when she spoke to me there were - it was quite normal for Indian kids to feel that they were very Indian and that not only were they not anything but Indian but they were Hindoos and not Muslims or Muslims and not Hindoos, and the fact that you don't have any of these feelings - the fact that you moved to a political view whereby you embraced black as Indian, Coloured, African - do you think that comes from the background at least - was your grandfather also....

F.M. Which grandfather?

J.F. Was your father....

F.M. I never knew any grandfathers.

J.F. No, I meant your father - he ran a Muslim paper, yet you're saying that he was also quite open.=

F.M. He was open, yes - he had on his staff he had Chamberlain - you know Nat Nakasa - Nat Nakasa's uncle worked with my father - he was doing the compo - it was the old fashioned press, you know, where you had to do that compositing, so Chamberlain was - and Nat Nakasa's father - Nat Nakasa's father was Elfews, and both of them - you see, Chamberlain worked for my father - or I'm not so sure whether Nat Nakasa's father wasn't Chamberlain - any case Chamberlain worked for my father, and then Chamberlain brought in his brother, who was Elfews, so the two brothers worked and both were doing compositing - they were not doing sort of menial jobs, you know, and so my father was very fond of Chamberlain and - and - and Elfews, and Nat - Nat Nakasa was Chamberlain's son so, you know, he used to come as a child there too, and my father took a -

I can remember my father introducing me to Chamberlain's son - I can't remember which son it was, but he was about my own age at that time - you know, because he was such a nice young man with sort of great pride, because he wanted me to know Chamberlain's son, so -

F.M. And then there were Hindoos working there - the person who ran the machine was a Hindoo - his name was Mohan - and then there were other compositors who were Hindoos - so there were Hindoos and there was - there was African - you know, it was a mixed staff, and there was no question of race in - in - on that printing press - I mean you know, he was equally fond of all of them.

J.F. And in an attempt to cover the Indian community or just the Muslim community?

F.M. No, Indian - Indian community, but it also - it - it took a lot of interest in African politics as well, because if you go through the - you know, we had the newspaper, old files of the Indian Views at home, it - you know, it - it - it was alive to the African question as well.

J.F. Where did you get - I can see where you got your views of race - where did you get your politics from - what kind of atmosphere did you grow up in - had you awareness....

F.M. Well, my father was a very political creature - I mean when you ran a paper in those days the paper - you didn't run a social paper - you didn't run social columns - the whole paper from page one to page whatever else is politics - it's about what is - it's about discrimination, it is about what is happening to the Indian people, it is about what is happening to the African people, it is about what is happening in India, with the whole British colonialism - it is about what's happening in the Middle East or the colonialism that is going on there - so you know, it was international politics, but basically I would say that it is the perspective of the colonised - that's what the paper represents, do you see - so we were brought up in a highly political atmosphere, not with my mothers - they were not political - with our mothers you had a different kind of life - you know, they sat and they gossiped and they talked and they cooked and they sewed and, you know, you -

After school you came in because there was - when I say my mothers I really mean my mothers and my aunts, because there were about five or six of them who met regularly every afternoon, and they sat on the beds, you know, in the room and they talked, and when we came from school we sort of snuggled in there with them - we were supposed - we - we didn't talk, we didn't - we were not allowed to participate in the conversation that went on - they would talk about us very lovingly, and that gave us a sense of importance about ourselves - they cultivate, you know, for them their children, you know, are the most important things, and they were constantly talking about their children, and we were supposed, or they assumed, or they pretended as if we were not there, so they talked about us as if we were not there, and we were there.

So we enjoyed being there sort of getting some kind of projection from them of what we were like, you know, and since they were all boasting about each other's children we always, and we might get - we got regularly beaten up, you know, for the slightest little transgression, but when we sat with our mothers there we always had praises, you know, so we got a kind of a nice image of ourselves, because here were these cousins trying to outdo each other in trying to say that their child was the best child, you see.

J.F. And when did you leave home or get involved in (.....) politics, or did you go to university, or when was the juncture where you'd say that you got out of this very small family community....

F.M. I would say 1940s at school - part of the politicisation came through the literature, but it all happened at about the same time. Is it Warren Hastings - essays on Warren Hastings, do you know that? Well, you not British, you American, so you wouldn't know it. I'm trying to remember who was the author - he's a very famous English writer of the sort of colonial era writing the same time as Kipling, but there was this essays, which was our set work - we were very, very - we became very involved with the Indian liberation movement in India, and Nehru and Gandhi were, you know, very great figures - they really loomed as superbeings, you know - they could do no wrong.

It wasn't just simple kind of heroism, you know - you wouldn't just say of them - in our minds they - they didn't just developed as ordinary heroes but they were super-heroes, you know, and they were marvellous people, wonderful people, and they were involved in this whole liberation of India, and my father was constantly writing about that struggle - so we had a sense of goodness and we had a sense of righteousness and we had a sense of freedom and, you know, that the - the thing to do in life was to fight for one's freedom - that emerged very strongly when I was in about Standard Eight, you know, high school, JC, that period.

And then there was these essays written by these colonialists, you know, where they would give how India was conquered, and they would do it from their point of view, and in these essays every Indian would be projected as corrupt and, you know, nasty and vicious and, you know, people who should not be in government, you know - weak and so on and so forth, and it would destroy us inside - we would have to listen to this and we would have to - for our exams you would have to do this kind of literature, and it would kill us inside - we just died each time we had to listen to this, you know - enter into this kind of academic exercise.

So that was happening - on the one hand here was this Gandhi and Nehru, and on the other hand here were they trying to tell us what a dreadful history we had and, you know, how dreadful we were, in other words. And then the Indian passive resistance campaign started about this time, see, and I had an uncle - my father's brother - who was besotted with me - I don't know why, but there he was, and he would take me from that - from the time that I was about nine or ten he would take me to every political meeting, so I had this full conf - you know, exposure to political meetings.

In those days it used to be Kagi and these people - it wasn't the radicalised congress - it was the old congress, but you know, they were still very fiery people - so he would take me to these meetings - then he would also take me to - he - my father only had Standard Four education, English education, though he wrote beautifully, and he brought up his younger brother, this uncle of mine, and he put him through Standard Six - he worked and put him through Standard Six, and then of course he didn't go any further.

But he then went back to university as a part time student, so he was attending these part time colleges, and they would have college functions, and he would take me and he would introduce me very proudly - I don't know why very proudly, but nonetheless he did it, I could see, with great pride, to all his lecturers, and they were like Mabel Palmer, who was responsible for starting the non-European classes, you know, extending university education to non-Europeans.

- F.M. So she was responsible - she was a Fabian - she knew - who's that very famous Irish playwright - Bernard Shaw very well, you know - she had been - he was also a Fabian, so she had been with him - so you know, he would introduce me to his lecturers, and so I was really, one could say, being groomed both for politics and for a certain kind of intellectualism quite early in life by my father, not because - my father never did it consciously - by my father because it was all happening in - and I was growing up in this kind of thing, and by my uncle because he was making it a - a deliberate attempt to do so.
- J.F. And was it - it was Indian oriented in terms of you were talking about the NIC - the political meetings were about Indian - were Indian issues, right?
- F.M. Ja - but you see, it didn't really matter that they were Indian issues because they were issues of race - if Indians were being discriminated they were being discriminated as non-Europeans - they were not being discriminated as Indians - you know, we were all put together in the same way - some laws differed but, you know, when you went out into the world I mean you found yourself with Africans and you found yourself with Coloureds because you were a non-European and that's how you were regarded.
- J.F. And do you remember when you first had any political action with an African or a Coloured or a white around the political issues, or did it - was it mainly through the Indian Congress that you were - did you....
- F.M. Well, when I was in the union (?) - well, in 1946 I mean I'm at school - I'm at high school - I'm in my teen years, so - only one thing happened in high school - we were once taken to play basketball against the girls at the Inanda Seminary - the school organised that - and my own reaction - my own recollection is that we took that very much in our stride in - in just the way we would have had we gone to another school - it wasn't an African school that struck us - they won us - they beat us, you know - so it was just like going to another school, but it was a great event for us because, well, in those days any outing is a great event, you know - you don't get much outing.
- J.F. Then did you - after high school did you go right into university, or what happened?
- F.M. Ja, but you see, at school 1946 we were already - there were Coloureds and there were Africans - when we had the passive resistance, although it was an Indian political campaign, and the act, you know, it was against the Asiatic Land Tenure Act - that was the Act, the Asiatic Land - the Asiatic Land Tenure and Representation Act, because they also gave us some kind of representation in parliament for the first time, so the passive resistance was against that Act, and it was an Act which was now directed against Indians, but then, you see, we did have Africans and we did have Coloureds who came onto our platform to support us, so it seemed that all along I saw Africans and Indians and Coloureds working together.
- J.F. And then when - did you actually join the Indian Congress, or what was your political development from after high school?
- F.M. Well, I didn't become a member of the Indian Congress after - I never became a member of anything ever in my life - that's part of the difficulty that people find with me - I - I'm not an organisation person.

F.M. I went to Wits for one year, and there I became involved in the non-European Unity Movement. I didn't join it - I worked with them - they didn't ask me to join them. There was this ten point programme and this whole - the one thing - I don't know, I've always found it difficult to be asked to accept anything, you know - here is a ten point programme, accept it - and that I shied off this kind of acceptance. I've had the same problem with the freedom charter. Don't ask me to accept it - don't ask me to give - commit myself to a document, you know - I - I really baulk when that happens, why I don't know - you know, one can go into that later on - it caused a lot of problem very recently - but that time too it was ten point programme - to join the Unity Movement you must accept the ten point programme, and my attitude was, well, why only ten points, you know, why not more points, or why not this, why not that - but I worked with them.

That was a time when the boycott, the transport boycott was on in - in the Cape and in - I worked with Seymour Papett (?) - did you know him at all, or heard of him - he was - at that time he was a lecturer at Wits, and I was asked to go around putting up posters - now the fact that I went and I put up posters with Seymour Papett indicates that I was in a sense identifying myself with the non-European Unity Movement, and it was a very foolish thing for me to do, to go out with Seymour Papett and put up those posters, a foolhardy thing, because in the first place it was a very exceptional thing for me as an Indian girl to be sent to university in Johannesburg where now I was staying with a family - not my own family, with another family, and going to university, and I was expected to follow the straight and narrow path - stay with my landlady, go to university, come home.

Instead here I was putting up these placards with a male, and this male business was very - very wrong - I mean if you wanted to do it too you should have done it with a woman - and then the male was not even an Indian male, not a Muslim male, not an acceptable male - the male was a white male - and there were other Indians who then informed my father about his daughter's, you know, so my father very tactfully said to me when I went home that might be better for you.... (Interruption) - so the -

So he very discreetly said maybe I should come home and study at home, so then I started studying at Natal University.

J.F. And was that unusual for an Indian woman to go to the white universities or was....

F.M. It wasn't a white university....

J.F. That it was open to black students (?)

F.M. No, it wasn't open at all - I told you Mabel Palmer had founded these extension classes - these extension classes were held by the University of Natal from about three o'clock in the afternoon to about eight o'clock in the evening - they were held at a high school, at an Indian high school, so we used to be - you know, after they had done their lecturing at the University of Natal proper these lecturers very magnanimously came along and gave us lectures - we had no access to a library, for instance, so we were just lectured there - we were not allowed to go to the library in the white sector - so that's where we went - it was a - it was a non-European classes, lecture classes.

J.F. At Wits as well?

- F.M. No, not at Wits - Wits was integrated - Wits was integrated up to a point - I mean you couldn't live in residence, neither could you belong to the - swim in the swimming pool or participate in a sport - in other words, you were not allowed to mix in the extra, you know, lecture activities, but you attended the university - it was a proper university you attended.
- J.F. And then when you went back to Natal did you get a degree from Natal University?
- F.M. Mmm.
- J.F. In?
- F.M. Social science.
- J.F. And during that time - what were the years that you were at the University of Natal?
- F.M. '49 I was at Wits, and so I was at Natal from '50, '51 - I must have - grads (?) is three year course, isn't it - '49, '50, '51 - then I got married.
- J.F. And were you involved politically or did you take time out for having children at that point, or were you involved....
- F.M. No, I was very involved politically - I was very involved in student politics at the non-European, you know, sector of Natal University. I was - we had lots of protests and things like that there - and '46 actually I was involved in the '46 campaign - that's when I made my speaking debut - I was speaking at meetings while I was at school - I was speaking at public meetings during that '46 resistance - I - we organised a student group, a - well, student meaning pupils, scholars group - was the first time that the Indian girls combined, our matric class combined with the Indian boys high school, which was Sastry (?) College, so there were a group of us from matric from both classes - we combined and we set up this students passive resistance council, as we called it, and we went around putting on concerts and raising money for the - for passive resistance, so you know, we were very involved.

As a matter of fact, we failed that year because of our involvement, and all of us failed - only one girl passed - we had a matric group of about nine - only one girl passed that year - we all failed our matric first year - and the second year when we went back to enrol I was the only one of those nine failures whom the school refused to have back - I was seen as the arch-rebel, you know - the headmistress took exception to the fact that a speech of mine had been reported in the paper and called me up during that year and said that she did not want the school uniform to be disgraced ever.

And I remember one meeting I went to where Cissy Gool - you know Cissy Gool - she was addressing, and then I was asked to come and speak, and I went to speak, and I took off my tie, you know, to sort of - so that the school wouldn't say that I had disgraced its uniform - so that was going on, and they saw me as the arch-rebel or whatever and I was excluded - I wasn't allowed to return to school, so I had to write my matric privately - I had to go to Dundee and write that matric.

- J.F. And your husband when you married him was a member of the CPSA?
- F.M. My husband was a member of the CPSA - he was a vice president of the NIC - he ran the Passive Resister, which was the newspaper - he edited that in Johannesburg - he was a secretary, I think, of the Transvaal Passive Resistance Council - you know, he - I mean he was very alive in politics when I married him - he really was, you know, at the centre of it. He was very close to Dadoo, he was very close to Naike. In fact he was the - the - the main - he - you know, all policy statements he was the background person who drafted them.
- J.F. And how did those issues - was he - in terms of coming back to my issue of race and class he was obviously quite committed to the class analysis of (.....) CPSA....
- F.M. I don't know - I think you must ask these people themselves what they were committed to.
- J.F. I'm saying but what was your experience of it - was it a....
- F.M. Well, I didn't think that they were at all doctrinaire - you know, they were in it because it was a - it was an organisation through which, you know, they were seeking liberation and - and the CPSA was really seen as a liberatory organisation. My own feeling is that they never really got into the Marxism of it and most blacks - I would say that most blacks who were members of the CPSA had very little understanding of the doctrines of Marxism or communism - they were there because this was an organisation which really was pursuing liberation and acting it out because it was also non-racial.
- J.F. Let me ask you about that non-racial....

END OF SIDE ONE.

- J.F. He became very involved - he was with the NIC and he was involved with the passive resistance campaign - did that mean he worked - you said he was close to Dadoo and Naike - did he work pretty exclusively in the Indian community at that stage, or did you have lots of people of different race....
- F.M. You see, he also worked part time with my father in the press - he wrote a column - so he also was very friendly with Chamberlain, and they also had what they called a liberal study group - that was long before - that was in the 1930s. My husband is about ten years older than I am so, you know, you're talking about a little bit - going a little bit deeper, or a while deeper, yes, in a context. The liberal study group was a mixed group - it had whites on it, it had Africans, it had Coloureds, you see, so that was also a mixed group, and then the CPSA was also a mixed group, so you know, people of different races were working together.

- J.F. And were you involved with the CPSA yourself at that time?
- F.M. No.
- J.F. Did you purposefully steer....
- F.M. 1950 the CP was banned - I was quite young - I was second year at university then - I never joined the CPSA.
- J.F. And you married in '49?
- F.M. No, I married after I - I married after I graduated - I married in 1951 or something like that - maybe '52, I don't remember - must be '51 - I graduated in '50 - I must have married in '51.
- J.F. So those years in the '50s were you involved organisationally....
- F.M. Yes, I was.
- J.F. With?
- F.M. Well, student.... (Interruption)
- J.F. I went through these notes on you in (.....) book, so I wanted to ask - and also what I want is to check to make sure these things are actually correct, but it just gave me some sense - can I ask in the '50s when you were involved in organisations was it something that - were you involved with the Indian community or with other communities - can you tell me how you managed to bridge the gaps?
- F.M. Well, in the '50s you had the defiance campaign - we were all moving towards the defiance campaign - the Indian African Congress - Congresses had already united - there was the Dadoo, Kuma Act (?) - in 1949, for instance, they had worked together against the hearings into the so-called Indian riots or whatever they called those 1949 riots, so there had already been a moving - working together between Indians and Africans formalised, so there was no question of working in a particular community, you know.
- When I entered active politics - or let's put it this way, when I started organising on a political level it was mixed - it was never - you know, it was a liberatory struggle - it was never a question of organising Indians alone. The first organisation that we - that I set up was the Durban and District Womens League in 1950 - it was soon after I got married, so it must have been '52 - and that was mainly an organisation of women drawn from the Indian and the African National Congresses, and the whole idea there was for the women to - it was intrinsically political, but the way in which we worked was to try and develop service so we could attract people, so we set up a milk scheme in Cato Manor, which was....
- J.F. A which scheme?
- F.M. A milk scheme in Cato Manor, which was really the hardest hit area in terms of poverty and in terms of all kinds of violence in the Durban region, and we started a - a nursery school, and that was open to whoever came to it, but mostly Africans came - in fact we only attracted African children - and then we used to raise money for the defiance campaign, you know, organise functions, social functions for raising money, and then going out on a fund raising campaign and things like that - that's what we did together in 1952, I think it was - I'm not so sure about the dates.

- J.F. And tell me how you got involved with the Federation of South African Women - you were one of the founder people?
- F.M. Well, when they were founding the Federation of Women then they were canvassing women in the regions, and the Durban and District Womens League was the obvious women's grouping to contact in the Durban area, apart from the A.N.C. Women's League - we didn't really have an NIC Women's League - but you had the A.N.C. Women's League and we had this other body, which was the Durban and District Women's League, which included both women, so we were obviously invited and we went over, five of us - or six of us squeezed into a taxi and we drove overnight and we went to the first meeting and we formed the Federation. I presented a paper at that founding - founding meeting and - but I got banned after that.
- J.F. What was your paper on?
- F.M. On women in the Natal area.
- J.F. And you got banned right after that?
- F.M. I got banned soon after that.
- J.F. What year were you banned?
- F.M. I think it was probably '54, I'm not so sure - maybe you can check up on the date somewhere.
- J.F. He says '52 to '54.
- F.M. Oh well, then that must be it, '52 to '54 - was (?) soon after - so that means that the Durban and District Women's League must have been early - it must have been in '51 - '50, '51 - because that really, you know - that really put me out of circulation, and my involvement, active involvement, you see - that was also the period when we were organising protest against the women's passes, and it was 1950, I think, that the first indication that passes were going to be extended to women came on - was it 1950 - when was the first indication that they were going to extend passes to women - well, any case, you know, before the passes were actually extended - I think it was in 1950 that we were organising in the Natal area against passes - we had this great big march in Pietermaritzburg - you know, we had mass meetings of women against passes in Durban and Pietermaritzburg.

Indian and African women, you know, worked together very closely in that, you know - you had lots of Indian women turning up and opposing the extension of passes to African women. We had several mass meetings, and that was then followed by a mass march through the streets of Pietermaritzburg, and we were all arrested - well, they arrested as many as they laid their hands on - it was about 600 of us who were arrested and then we were - they didn't have a place large enough to keep us or to try us, and so we were sort of in an open, you know, place in the magistrates court - they just put on the lights of the lorries and police vans and whatever to - to have light there - and then we were remanded and we were allowed to go home, see - eventually that case was withdrawn against us - but that was that area.

F.M. The other thing we used to go around doing was - there was discrimination against Africans even within the Indian community on the upper levels - it - it - it happened at the cinema level, not anywhere else, but the only cinemas that black people could go to in the Durban region were - well, there were cinemas that were run by African Consolidated Theatres, but apart from that there was one cinema which was run by an Indian family, and just as in the other cinemas Africans were put onto one side, this cinema followed the same routine - and then we went along and we, you know, brought pressure on the Indian cinema owner - we could do nothing with African Consolidated Theatres - to get them, you know, to drop this business of putting Africans on the one side, and which they did.

J.F. Tell me, since you've written so much about Indians and looked at the community in a different strata of the community, can you tell me a bit about the relations between Indians and Africans, the discrimination that exists and existed - to what extent, what the origins were - how you tried to counter it?

F.M. Well, as a matter of fact the only discrimination that we found was in this theatre - there was no other discrimination.

J.F. Just in terms of attitude - if you have people who were....

F.M. Well, there are family attitudes - they are not race attitudes - the Indian people are a very family centred people, and apart from being family centred they are also very, you could use the word community centred, but religious centred, so you know, there are rituals, and most of the socials that involve people in the Indian community are socials which revolve around rituals - a wedding is a ritual, a funeral is a ritual - and then the only other social occasions that Indians organised traditionally were prayers, and these were rituals.

Now you invited people who belonged to your own prayer group to these rituals - Indians did invite say, others to their weddings - funerals - well, people were free to come to a funeral - you know, you went to a funeral if you wanted to - but even at weddings, you know, if it was a Muslim wedding you would find very few Hindoos at a - at a Muslim wedding - so it is a very - in that respect, because it emphasises the sacred and - and - and the confines of the sacred are fairly confined, you didn't find very many outsiders, so there was never ever a great deal of co-mingling on a formal social level between one Indian group and another Indian group, let alone one Indian group and another African group or white group or Coloured group.

But in the neighbourhood Indians and Africans always lived together, and there was always the same kind of running in and out of each other's houses and sharing and so on and so forth - there was never any discrimination.

J.F. But didn't that change when the Group Areas came in and there was no longer the community mingling - there were distinct African areas....

F.M. When the Group Areas came it meant that - the Group Areas also had the effect of stratifying, or grouping rather than stratifying - it wasn't necessarily stratifying - also had the effect of grouping the Indian people, so that you had, you know, a greater kind of obvious ethnic divisions on a physical basis.

- F.M. So you would have Tamils living together, and now you would have Hindustanis living together - both are Hindus but, you know, and both are more or less the same economic groupings and so on - and you would have Muslims living together in one enclave - this kind of thing became accentuated - whereas previously you would have in one area - if you go into the older areas you will find - because they didn't destroy the temples and things - you would find a temple and a mosque, you know, adjacent to each other - with the Group Areas you found this separated, and of course the Africans were separated into the African townships and Coloured into the Coloured townships, so that intermingling moved out.
- J.F. The - (.....) - are you saying there aren't - there weren't any kinds of prejudices, any kinds of barriers between the groups?
- F.M. Of course there were prejudices - there are always prejudices - the moment you have an in-group there are always out-group feelings - there was always that. There was out-group feelings between Hindus and Muslims - there were out-group feelings between Hindus and Hindus. If you were a Tamil speaking Hindu a - a Hindustani speaking Hindu was a distinct out-group - in the early days if - if a - marriages were never considered between a - a Tamil speaking Hindu and a - and a - and a Hindustani speaking Hindu - they had the same origins - they were both indentured Indians - it wasn't a class factor.
- You know, classwise they were exactly, you know, identical - it wasn't a class factor, but it was a - you can call it communal factor, you know - so there were always these prejudices, and of course they were there, these out-group - an African was a member of an out-group, a Coloured was a member of an out-group - those feelings were there.
- J.F. And what about how you overcame those with some of the activities you were involved....
- F.M. No, you don't overcome these feelings - you - you live with these feelings - you can't - if you want to live in a community you can't be at war with the community constantly - these in-group, out-group feelings are going to be there regardless of what, you know - how you think or how you don't think - as long as you are going to have boundaries of religion you are going to have in-group, out-group feelings - I mean I do not believe that you can get a classless society, if by classless you mean a groupless society - you can work out your economic differences - you can have one Indian earning the same amount of money as another white person, so if class is an economic - if the basis of class is economic you'll do away with class, but you're not going to do away with in-group, out-group feelings.
- Then of course you must say that you must do away with culture differences - you must have one culture, and whose culture are you going to have then - my culture, your culture, you know - this is where the Mau Tse Tung statement becomes very, very relevant - you know, let a thousand flowers bloom together in a single garden - well, if there are a thousand different flowers, then there are a thousand different flowers.
- J.F. And so what do you see the future South African solution as - how do you see the future if people talk about the future non-racial democracy?
- F.M. Yes, but race has nothing to do with culture - you can have race - you can have culture differences - in fact you must have culture differences.

F.M. The moment you talk about one culture, what are you talking about - you're talking about another kind of domination and colonisation and another kind of imperialism - you're really then saying : Well, we're going to have one culture and every - every other culture is going to be destroyed - or : We're going to have one language and every other language we will destroy - do you see - now we - we can't do that - that's intolerance - you start off with the individual person - you cannot destroy individuality - I am me, I have my own little ego (?) or my own big ego (?) or whatever it is - you can't eliminate this.

You can't have a uniform mass, you know - that's not humanity any more. So we will have our culture differences, and we will tolerate and we will understand them, and we will give - and we will create space for these culture differences - we will create space for them on the radio and we will create space for them on the TV and so on and so forth, but we will not inflict race differences, nor will we reserve areas for specific culture groups or things like that - I mean if they want to do that on their own basis that's a different story.

If a group of Xhosa want to live and create a Xhosa neighbourhood, you know, that's a different story altogether, but you don't have laws that inflict this on people.

J.F. What about - this is just a specific instance, but if you're talking - you mention the radio - if you would have the new S.A.B.C. in a liberated South Africa would you have Indian music on for a tiny proportion of the time because it's a tiny minority, or would you have a separate channel or how....

F.M. Well, they've already given us a separate channel - we have Radio Truro, and the Indians are very happy with it - they just listen to Radio Truro just about all the time - I mean O.K., why did the - why did the Afrikaaners do it - I don't know what was their motivation behind it, but it's obvious that the Indian people needed this, and that is why it is such a popular radio. We've always had Radio Bantu, as they call it - now you can't take that away from the African people - they want to listen to the radio, they want to listen to it in their own idiom - they want to have their own people on it.

Right, so you've got to have radio in the different languages, African languages - you can't destroy that - I think it's terrible to do that. So at the moment we have TV also - we have separate channels, so we have separate stations - you pick them up - what happens is that you have certain coordinating - a coordinating national ethos should speak through these various channels as well - your news, you know - your national news and things like that.

J.F. So you're saying that it would be perhaps the same structures but with a difference with an ideology behind it so that it wouldn't be as problematic as it is now?

F.M. No, of course it cannot be the same structure - how can it be the same structure - there is a world of difference, race - race is an institution which is devised to dominate, to decimate, to exploit - cultures don't have that motivation, underlying (?) motivation - culture is I am what I am - I am an Indian and - and - and I will fight to preserve my identity as an Indian - I have a right to being an Indian - I also have a right to being a South African.

F.M. But nobody can say to me that because of my race I do not have rights, do you see - one of the rights that I fight about is - is my right to be an Indian, but to be an Indian in dignity and in pride - that's what I'm fighting about - I'm not fighting that my Indianness should disappear or that I should be demolished and something amorphous and - and unrelated to me should emerge and replace me - I'm not fighting for that.

A raceless society implies a society in which one group does not dominate and exploit another - and to have different cultures does not imply that.

J.F. That's quite a good statement on that - I think that's exactly the core of what one's getting at, that looking at non-racialism doesn't mean the end of race and culture or doesn't mean a freedom to express it within an accepted and (.....) ideology - tell me about your - if there's anything in relation to what you've just said that would relate more anecdotally or in terms of incidents that might have occurred in terms of organising the women - that was - truly the Federation of South African Women was the non-racial organisation that had all the different groups together - you said sure, that the feelings still exist between the groups, but was it a simple matter to bring women together - when you had issues like African passes or particularly Indian related issues, how did you bring all those women together in one organisation?

F.M. Well, you see, the Federation of South African Women was really - didn't really get to the grassroots - let's look at that organisation. It was organised at the top and it carried out - if you - not very many because it didn't last too long - but it carried out a few campaigns, and on that - on the campaigns it brought women together - it did not enter the lives of the women - beyond the campaigns there was really no meeting point - you had a lot of -

If you took the executive of the Federation of South African Women, I don't know what the composition was, but I think you'll probably find that it had an - a lot of white women were on it - a disproportionately large number of white women were on it, and the others were, you know - were not - not as - their presence was not as large. Also at that point in our history decision making still continued to be in white hands - even when you entered the radicalised it was Communist Party, or whether it was the Women's Federation, even there you found that the decision making still was very much in white hands.

Now the white women were usually drawn from the upper-crust - they were from the professional groupings, if anything, whereas the black women who were brought into it were from the working groupings very much lower down the scale - it didn't mean - I mean you didn't sort of move into - the white women lived in their upper-crust houses on a totally different kind of economic level - the social strictures were different - you didn't move into each other's houses - you didn't tea - you didn't socialise - you came together for political campaigns.

It's the same situation - at the moment you find that the Black Sash as a white women's grouping works quite a lot with black people, but you don't find black people moving into their houses and socialising and things like that - the barriers remain very real, and the barriers remain very real even then between the white women and the other women. It was only if you got down onto the more regional level and more community based level that you could hope to develop some kind of a organisation where these barriers would be let down, and where you would be able to involve yourself in each other's lives on a more intimate basis.

F.M. Right, you can have culture differences, but you can be involved on an intimate basis - you can share those culture differences. I (?) for instance, in my own life, we celebrated - looking at it now internally in the Indian community - as Muslims we would celebrate Diwali - neighbours would send us goodies on Diwali Day, and we would send them goodies on Ede Days. Now when you have a common neighbourhood, Africans, Indians and Coloureds living together, that kind of sharing went on, you know.

You send goods to your African neighbours as well, do you see. Now that happens - now - you see, at the moment I can see this still happening - like I have a - she's a housekeeper, right, Irene, but she's also - she's lived with us for so long she's - well, she - she is a great friend of mine at the same time - now she lives - she has a cottage in the garden - she lives there, and she's actually there - I'm hardly there - but she has a relationship with the neighbourhood with the Indian neighbours, and when it's Ede they send her goodies - trays of food will come for her.

When you have the other Ede - when you know, they sacrifice animals, special sacrificial meat will come for her - that's the Indian Muslim neighbours sending it to her. Same, the Hindu neighbours send stuff to her - do you see what I mean - they see her like a friend, like a houseperson - it used to be like that before when we lived in mixed areas.

J.F. And what about on a more theoretical level - how did you feel, looking back at the effectiveness of the Congress Alliance method of organising, the approach where you had the separate groups, separate but working together - some people call it the four nations thesis, although there seems to be a bit of controversy as to whether that actually ever was a proper thesis or whether people just dubbed it that - but the idea of saying there's an Indian Congress, there is an African Congress, there's the Coloured, there's whites - how did it work - how did you experience it - looking back on it, is it something that works now?

F.M. You see, many of us felt that we would like to have one congress then, and we felt if it could (?) just be the A.N.C. - but the A.N.C. at that point wasn't ready to integrate us, and I think that part of the reason was because it felt that it would become intellectually dominated - that was a very big problem - and the intellectual domination came from the whites. When we had these meetings, the different congresses, you'd find that there was a tendency for the whites to dominate - you know, to make the proposals, to - to - to articulate, and the black members used to be listeners and the whites would be the talkers - that was happening in a very big way - this is my personal experience - and I think that that may have been one reason why - I mean it was never expressed, because to say so would be to make a racial statement, and the whole thrust was to be, you know, beyond race, so you wouldn't say this but you felt it - you never said it but you felt it, and you were aware of it all the time - so this may well have been and, you know, there was the - it came out - it came out very clearly when the Africanists broke away from the A.N.C. and - and - and that Africanist breakaway was directly a result of this kind of tendency.

I don't know how many people are going to - to express it or admit it, but I see it that way.

- J.F. And what about the feelings of Africans towards Indians, because I've interviewed some people who alluded to a feeling of that same intellectual superiority....
- F.M. Among Indians?
- J.F. Among Indians - the articulateness of a Dadoo as compared to a working class African rank....
- F.M. No, well, a Dadoo doesn't have to - you don't compare the articulateness of Dadoo to a working class African - you could do - then you've got to compare the articulateness of a Kotane to a working class African - it comes to the same thing - but you've got to compare the articulateness of a Dadoo to a Moses Kotane - now I would think there was no difference in the articulateness of Dadoo and Kotane - in my own experiences Dadoo wasn't particularly articulate or particularly doctrinaire, you know, so Dadoo is a bad example - maybe you've got to take somebody else - take it as a generality rather than look at personalities I would think that the Indians would be more on top of it than the Africans.

You take a Durban area - you know, that's where I'm most conversant with things - now there where do you hold your meetings - you've got to have a place to hold your meeting in. Now the Africans didn't have any infrastructure in the urban area - the laws prevented them from having developed anything (Interruption) - you see, just as an urbanised African has advantages there (?) (they) are more articulate - they have always led the political campaigns - comparing, you know, urbanised African from Africans who remain in the rural areas - so too have Indians - Indians always had rights where there were no - there were no reserves to which they could be banished.

They were banished to the Group Areas, but that only happened in 1950, and right up to 1950 there was no law - there were the, you know - there were ways and means whereby Indian economic expansion was controlled, but there was no law to do it, and Indians bought land in the centre of Durban - they built temples, they built halls, so when you had meetings you held them, all of them, in Indian halls, so Indians provided an infrastructure - that in itself gave them certain advantages over their African compatriots, organisational advantages.

If the A.N.C. wanted to hold a meeting they would not go directly to the community organisation which controlled a hall - they would go to the Indian Congress, so the organisation of the meeting would then be left to the Indian Congress, do you see what I mean - and then when it came to say, printing leaflets and pamphlets, if the Indian went along he understood better because there were Indians printers, and members of the Indian Congress could go along and bargain and beat them down to a, you know - so again it was left to the Indians - a great deal of the organisational - they just could do it better because of the whole structural conditioning that had taken place in Durban region Durban society.

And obviously having arranged the halls, having arranged the leaflets, having arranged the microphone, you know, all these were - it was Indians who provided all these services commercially, but then it - it became easier for the Indian to go along even if you had to get a donation, and to say most times the microphones were provided free of charge, but an Indian would have to go and make that approach to the Indian firm, do you see, because the way things were organised they didn't know the Africans.

- F.M. They didn't know how to trust them or how to think of them - so naturally when it comes then sitting down and talking things over, you know - well, we're going to have a meeting tomorrow, now what do we do and how do we do - it was the Indians who had to say: Well, yes, I've hired the hall, so much has to be paid - do you see - so immediately the Indians were also on top of the Africans, and while you can explain why, the fact of the situation is that at that meeting you see, you experience I don't have, they do have, you see, so I mean the African wants to be alone - you know, I mean it then - he begins to feel well, he'd better do his thing alone because he can't really match up to these other people - somehow (?) this - it - it's intricate, it's complex, you know.
- J.F. So are you saying that there's an inherent law to non-racialism working together, or are you saying even the Congress Alliance system of working separately - where does that leave you - I originally asked you....
- F.M. It doesn't leave you - leave you anywhere - all you asked was that you had heard - I first of all said to you that the A.N.C. was not ready to include the other groups, and I told you why not - I pointed out that they feared domination from the minority groups who were more articulate, and I've just explained how that domination worked, or I've tried to explain how that domination worked, right.
- In the campaigns they definitely worked together, O.K., but it became very important that the Africans took their own decisions - I think that it was only right - it - it was essential that they did so at that point in time - now it is different, but at that point in time it was essential that they did so, because they knew of enormous difficulties, they - they - they knew that African reality - they knew how they should organise - but when they got together in this meeting and only the whites did the talking, or only whites and Indians did the talking, they ended up making the decisions which were then imposed on the Africans, which were unrealistic decisions.
- J.F. Right, so that - there was that debate in the '40s and the - with the youth league getting the same kind of radicalising experience that the NIC in fact had, but what about by the time you got through the '50s, by the time you got to '59 when the P.A.C. breakaway, how did you feel about that - did you feel that at that point you could understand it happening, or did you (.....) was mentioned by P.A.C. people - is white and Indian dominance and the anti communism?
- F.M. Ja, sure.
- J.F. How did - do you remember what the discussion was....
- F.M. Look, at that time the P.A.C. was projected and I did not study it or analyse it or think about it - I just took the projection at its face value and reacted to it, that the - the P.A.C. was racist, and the P.A.C. didn't want Indians and whites or anybody else - that the P.A.C. wanted South Africa just for the Africans - well, that obvious - that was also propaganda - that is not what - what the P.A.C. was all about. In retrospect when I look and I study the P.A.C., I recognise today that there were real substantial reasons for the emergence of the P.A.C., and they were valid reasons, and when they talked about Indian domination and when they talked about white domination and when they talked about the CP domination, they were talking about very real things and very problematic things.

- J.F. And so you had a different feeling - when it happened you were quite anti?
- F.M. Yes, we were just almost sort of - it was kind of an intuitive anti P.A.C., that these were racists and they didn't want anybody else, you know - they only wanted South Africa for themselves - but I do not think that the P.A.C. ever wanted South Africa just for Africans.
- J.F. On the other hand there - other than a few token members there really aren't many Indians or....
- F.M. Doesn't matter - I don't think it really matters whether they have Indian members or not - I mean if you feel that - at that point in history the whole thing was about well, our aspirations are - I - you know, we are just being confused by the tremendous amount of input that is being made by these other people, and we because of our lower level of development are being led away by them, and we have to come to understand ourselves and come to terms with ourselves - it's very valid.

Today I don't know what the structure of P.A.C. is in South Africa - I don't see it - I don't think it exists in South Africa, or if it exists, you know, it - it is so infinitesimal that it hardly exists - and outside I - I don't know what their - you see, what I'm being told about the P.A.C. now is this, they're not objecting - people are not telling me that the P.A.C. is - is racist - they're not saying that - they're not saying that the P.A.C. wants South Africa just for Africans - I haven't heard that as a criticism against the P.A.C. The criticisms that I hear against the P.A.C. these days are that they are being taken over by reactionary forces and used as a sort of a counter-force against the A.N.C. - that is the criticism I hear - how true that criticism is I do not know - you know, that is something that one would have to explore again.

- J.F. Tell me about how you moved from the end of the '50s through the '60s to becoming more involved with BC - you were seemingly a very staunch congress activist - if you could tell me a bit about what happened to you in the '60s - and then I know that you were a prominent speaker at the black renaissance (?) convention and were associated with BC to a certain degree - can you just tell me about - did that mean that you....
- F.M. Well, I didn't get banned, you see - my banning order expired - I wasn't rebanned - 1960 saw a fresh spate of banning orders, and I was spared banning, so I continued to be, you know - there - there were few speakers - 1960, 1970 was - we called it the years of silence, and there were few voices left - now I was free to speak, so I was speaking all the time. I didn't get banned again until 1976, you see, so I had a big inning from 1960 to 1976, a period during which a lot of the other people had been banned and repeatedly banned and could not speak and so on and so forth.

Now 1970 - when did BC develop - it was in the 1970s, right - in the beginning I was quite hostile to the BC ideology. I was always asked to speak from their platform, or to engage in very short....

END OF SIDE TWO.

F.M. When they held their seminars and things like that they invited me to participate - I was always critical of them, and at these seminars I warned that BC could be racism in reverse, but I think it was a question of the very fact that I continued to have this dialogue with them meant that I also had some kind of sympathy with them, you know, some - some sort of understanding of what they had to do - at the Black Renaissance Conference I actually came into confrontation with them - with - with SASO - the SASO grouping - the Black Renaissance Convention doesn't necessarily imply BC - Black Renaissance Convention really drew in all kinds of people, church people, other people.

I was never against this idea - my own experiences had been such that I felt also that I had to get the whites off my back. I can remember in 1960 emergency when a lot of our men were in prison and we women organised - the Indian and African women basically - we organised a march for the release of our husbands - we walked with our children and we were all arrested, and there were with us three COD women, and we had to appear and we were locked up, and then we were released, and then we had to appear in court and we appeared in court, and we talked.

We came quite early - all our black women came early and we talked, and we said under no circumstances are we going to pay fines - we will serve imprisonment. We were all lined up on the corridor and the case was still to start - and then the three COD women suddenly came and they swept past us and they went up to the lawyers and they said to the lawyers : We will all pay fines - now lucky - you know, we were absolutely livid with anger that these women did not have the courtesy to come early to talk to us.

You know, we were about 200 women, but three women on their own walked to the lawyers and said : We will pay fines - fortunately for us that case was remanded, so we had a meeting on one of the lawyer's offices, and we had a very hot meeting and we decided - we took a decision - we said : Well, we will discuss this issue - whether to go to prison or whether to pay fines, and when a majority decision is reached everybody will abide by the majority decision - and we had a lot of discussion, and at the end of it the decision was that we would not pay fines, we would go to prison, at which point one COD woman got up and said - although we had originally taken the decision, you know, that we would be bound by majority decision she got up and she said she's very sorry but she could not go to prison - she said that one (Interruption)

So one of those three COD women, and the one COD woman who stood by us was a COD woman who was married to an Indian, so she was the only one who stood by us, so you know, how did we get to that - oh yes, how I came to be BC - and then of course I was teaching at the Natal University - my experiences there, I was always made to feel - it is quite true, I was invited - it was Leo Kuper - I was at - we - we really went through a very thin time during the treason trial because we had three children - Ismail was in prison - we were getting no money - I had to go out and earn, and Leo Kuper offered me tutorials at ten shillings an hour, but I mean it was great as far as I was concerned.

I think I proved my worth because he then gave me a temporary lectureship in his department. Then Leo left - he left the country - and that department was then taken over by Hansie Pollock, who was a liberal.

F.M. I mean I had a good relationship with her and, you know, specially in latter days - but the point is that they always treated me as somebody who had been taken on out of charity - my academic competence was always highly questionable, and I went through all that - you know, I was the only member on that staff - there was a time - there were - I was getting about 30 pounds a month, and then when Hansie Pollock took over she said she couldn't afford to pay me 30 pounds a month, she was going to pay me 20 pounds a month - and I said to her : Well, I like teaching and I'll do it for nothing, but I won't take 20 pounds a month - which then, you know she left it as it was, but it was this kind of thing,

Then when I did my thesis on suicide I wasn't allowed to submit it - I had it typed, I, you know, just worked and got this damn thing done, got a typist, who came with all her children to my house and we - I had to babysit for her and pay for her typing and got her to type this thesis - you know, it - it was oh, tremendous trouble having the thing typed. I got it done all in time and I submitted it, and Hansie Pollock would not allow me to submit the thesis.

J.F. Why?

F.M. Well, I tried to understand why and the only explanation I can come to is that the senior lecturer on our staff at that stage only had an honours, and his thesis - he was doing - his thesis was now, you know, had gone on for too long, and they had said well, he could submit it as a doctoral thesis and skip submitting it as a masters thesis - my feeling was that he wasn't ready to submit his work, and maybe it would have been embarrassing for me to have had the masters as a very temporary junior lecturer and for him to still have only an honours as the senior lecturer - I don't know, but that was the only explanation I could come to, though I mean Hansie Pollock didn't think that I could write English - she didn't think that I had the competence - she had -

In fact she was my supervisor and we had one very bad session where she said that what I had written I hadn't written, but that my colleague, who had done some statistics for me, that she had written it, you know, and - and I just flew up and I walked out of her house and I said : Well, you know, I didn't want to do the thesis with her any more - and then she came round and - but there were these kinds of things, you know - there was always this attitude that well, you - I couldn't speak English, I couldn't write English, I couldn't think properly (Interruption)

J.F. And so throughout the '60s did you teach at Natal University?

F.M. Ja - when was the treason trial - I started teaching from then, you see, and I did my - eventually I - the next year they allowed me to do my thesis, submit my thesis, the same thing - the external gave me a distinction for it, and so the internal had to, you know, accept that that was the position - but that's how it was - I never had any - look, I - at the University of Natal I came into contact with whites and it was an unhappy experience, so I - my own perceptions were, you know, that whites dominated and so on - even on the Durban and District Women's League I've given you one example - there were other examples of white COD members coming along and dominating and - and challenging, you know, us - I've given you one example, but there were others - so these were the kind of things that made you feel well, you know, you had to do things by yourself as black people.

- F.M. So although on the one hand I disagreed with the BC people, on the other my own experiences had been such that I saw the validity of BC, as I saw the validity of P.A.C.
- J.F. So where did that leave you - what did you - what happened at the Black Renaissance Conference - what did you....
- F.M. Well, we did not - the - the disagreements was not over, you know, BC - the disagreement was over strategies - for instance, the disagreement came over - I moved a resolution where we asked for the release of the prisoners, and the SASO youth stood up and said : Oh, we will go there and release them, we don't ask the government - we don't recognise the government and we don't ask the government to release our prisoners - you know, it was on issues like that - it was more on strategy that we disagreed.
- J.F. And what strategy did you advocate....
- F.M. Well, on the student front, for instance, there - the big disagreement came between myself and - and - and the students, the BC students - that was in the '70s, Turfloop, Tiro, during that period - the Indian students called for an indefinite boycott at the University of Durban-Westville, and they came to discuss this with me - that's one thing - throughout that period the students always came to discuss with me, the BC people, you know - we always discussed even major issues - even if they went on a major thing.
- For instance, they would have their black theatre and I would be asked to come along and open it, you know, so they did recognise me, although I was critical of them - so they discussed with me - they said they wanted to call a boycott of lectures indefinite, and I said : That's stupid - you can never have an indefinite boycott - you've got to work out certain basic demands and say that if these are not met - until these are met we go on boycott, but if you - if you think that you can ever succeed in an indefinite boycott, you know, that's foolhardy and foolish - it'll just - the boycott will just fitter away - but work out your demands, ask for them and hit (?) your boycott to those demands.
- J.F. And did that mean that you were no longer a congress supporter or an A.N.C.....
- F.M. There was no congress, there was no A.N.C. - there was no congress in those days, there was no A.N.C. in those days - there was only BC.
- J.F. There were people who still got arrested - there was Tambo outside - there were people outside....
- F.M. Who got arrested inside - no, we can't talk about outside - we are inside - we have no contact with people outside.
- J.F. Raymond Sutner (.....) got arrested....
- F.M. That was much later.
- J.F. But I mean did you - did you no longer support the ideals of congress, or did you just think they're a spent force or....
- F.M. No, no, I don't think that the BC people did not support congress or did not support A.N.C.

F.M. The point is we are now talking about resistance within the country on an open above-ground level. If something was going on in the underground I was not a part of that underground - I knew nothing about that underground. We are now talking about aboveground resistance - there was no congress, no NIC, no A.N.C. aboveground. People in fact - you may not believe it, but in my class at medical college, which is basically African, in the 1960s I talked about Mandela - I used to lecture to the medical students - and that class did not know Mandela - had not heard the name Mandela - that is how bad it was - so there was no A.N.C. in the 1970s in the country.

If it was underground it was so deep underground that you'd have to dig very deep before you could see it.

J.F. In the '60s or the '70s?

F.M. '70s - '70s - '60 to '70 there was silence - there was not even BC - there was silence, there was nothing - now I'm talking about the '70s, early '70s, there was nothing - it was only after '76 that the A.N.C. made a re-entry into the psyche of the black people. Now Timol happened, and the most active person when Timol happened was myself. Now Timol was killed obviously by the police - maybe they strangled him or - or - or they killed him during interrogation, and then they dropped his body from John Vorster Square - I mean that is how I see it. Now that was '60s - when was that - when did Timol die - well, you'd better check up.

J.F. '68 or something like that?

F.M. Whenever it was - but I organised - there was no NIC. In Durban I organised an got the church and - and the progressives together - we had a committee and we organised this great big meeting at City Hall which - which really was an astounding meeting, and there was no question of saying : You're not A.N.C. and you're not NIC because you are BC - that was not the way in which I saw it at all - to me it was always resistance and at (?) specific historical moments there were specific bodies which were leading this resistance, and it did not mean that the one body cancelled out the other - so that is the reason why I say that I took the leading role, not just a leading role, in the Natal area when Timol was killed.

I organised to go along and see the special branch, because there were other people who were detained at that time, to go and speak to the special branch - there was a professor of psychology who said he would come with me and Archbishop Hurley said he would come with me - three of us were going to see the head of the special branch to sort of tell him to please restrain his men because Timol had already been killed in Johannesburg.

Eventually the professor of psychology said he couldn't come, and so myself and Archbishop Hurley we went to see the special branch at that point - then we organised, you know, street campaigns, standing getting the progs and the liberals and, you know, the people whose names mattered something, and standing in protest just to keep the - the Black Sash came in on this one too - but I mean these were the things we organised, and the people who were detained were detained because they - they were part of the underground A.N.C., so there's no question of saying that because I work with BC - and I never really worked openly with BC either, and I - I was always critical and so on - that I abandoned the NIC or the - or the A.N.C. - it never worked like that.

J.F. And were you organisationally involved with a particular BC organisation in the '60s or '70s, SASO....

F.M. No.

J.F. The black women's federation?

F.M. Black Women's Federation we founded.

J.F. And you were president?

F.M. I was president, yes.

J.F. And how long - when was that founded and how long did....

F.M. Well, that was 1975, at the end of 1975 - we had a women's organisation, the Women's Federation, in Natal - we had that for a long time - it was a black women's federation - we didn't say that in our constitution....

J.F. The South African Women's Federation....

F.M. No, no, no, not that - that was - I don't know what happened to that - that just fizzled out or something - but we had our own Natal, you know, Federation - exactly what we called it I cannot recall right now, but we had that for a number of years, and we worked together - one of the projects that we undertook was sewing school uniforms because they were so expensive, but it was a political organisation basically and we were also talking about developing co-operatives in the townships and so on, and that body organised this conference - we called it a conference on the family.

The special branch came to see me and said : What is it that you are doing - and I said : Well, here are - here is what we have sent out to the women - we are having a conference on the family - and they said : Oh well, that's fine, we haven't - you know, we can't oppose it - so we had a very successful meeting on a national level - women came from Cape Town, from the Orange Free State, from the Transvall, from all over, and some white women also came - we didn't exclude anybody - but they came more as observers - and then we put it to the vote -

You see, for two years while we had the other federation we used to get people like Mamphela - you know Mamphela - she and other women from the BC who would come to our meetings - they were younger women, and they would say to us that the constitution should say for black women only, and I resisted that - I kept saying : Look, we can be a black women's, you know - we - we can effectively be only black women together, but we cannot have a constitution in which we say we are only for black women - so maybe I'm not honest, because although we are black women I'm saying in the constitution we shouldn't say we are only black women.

J.F. Why not?

F.M. Well, I feel that was being racist - that was institutionalising and excluding a group, and I felt, you know, you couldn't do that.

F.M. So even at this large meeting I was not for a constitution which restricted membership to black women, but the overwhelming majority of women there said it's going to be a black - the membership must be confined to black women - and so I accepted the majority decision. We had about 300 delegates from throughout the country - it was a very, very good conference - I mean you know, I've not seen a better organised conference of women.

J.F. And then you were banned in '76?

F.M. I was banned in '76, yes, soon after we had this black women's federation formed I was banned.

J.F. For five years?

F.M. For five years, yes.

J.F. Were you detained as well?

F.M. I was detained as well for five and a half months 1976.

J.F. And where did they detain you?

F.M. Johannesburg.

J.F. You were taken to Jo'burg?

F.M. Ja - you see, when Soweto started burning I was talking to Winnie about it on the phone and she - she was keeping us - because she was a member of the executive of the Black Women's Federation, and we decided that we should hold a meeting and we thought....

J.F. (.....)

F.M. No, Winnie isn't in - in Johannesburg.

J.F. You said you were talking to Winnie on the phone.

F.M. Well, Winnie was keeping us informed about what was happening in Soweto - as it started she phoned and told us what was going on and - and we felt that well, we should have a meeting to protest against this, and we immediately got a church hall organised, you know, an immediate meeting, so it was going to be for the next day - and then the SASO people came to see me and they said that they wanted to hold a meeting, so I said well, they could come in and join in.

Oh yes, very important thing, you know, just to show how the things were - we organised this meeting - we looked for speakers - we wanted Manas Buthelezi and we couldn't find him - we spoke to Archbishop Hurley and Archbishop Hurley agreed to speak at this meeting - so we had already organised the hall and we'd organised some of our speakers, and at that point the SASO people came along and they said they wanted to hold a meeting, and I said : Well, we should hold it together - and then they said no, they wanted a big meeting - that hall we had arranged was not big enough - they wanted to have the meeting in the - in the open air at Curries Fountain, so I said well, and - no, no -

No, no, sorry, what they said was that they wanted to hold a meeting but they wanted to hold it on Sunday - I said : Look, this issue is a burning issue - we can't wait till Sunday - because our meeting had been scheduled for a Wednesday evening.

F.M. I said to them : If you want to hold a meeting on Sunday then we better make it a very big meeting, otherwise, you know, we will not be worth our salt - so we decided then to hold an open air meeting at Curries Fountain - we got Curries Fountain - you know Curries Fountain - we got Curries Fountain. Overnight we got about 100,000 leaflets done, and we got the medical students to go around distributing these leaflets, and we were holding a meeting in a - at that stage the Institute for Black Research had been formed and we had an office, so we were holding a meeting to finalise, you know, arrangements or to - to - to discuss the Sunday's meeting.

I mean the special branch phoned me and said, you know, all outdoor meetings are banned - you can't have any outdoor political meetings - and so I said : Well, we've advertised and leaflets have gone out and we are going to have a meeting on Sunday - so he said that well, we will arrest anybody who we find in any number even going to the meeting - so now of course we couldn't have that meeting, so they gave me permission to use a mike system and go there and, you know, call out to the people that the meeting was banned.

O.K., so we took that precaution, but in the meanwhile now we had to - oh, and that same time our students got arrested for distributing their leaflets, so now we arranged that we were going to have a meeting - we would not have an outdoor meeting, we would have an indoor meeting - we talked to the Catholic Church and they gave us the cathedral for a meeting. On Saturday we had to take food to our students who had been locked up, but we were sitting and we were discussing another meeting that we would now call for the next week - we now had the hall, the cathedral.

SASO boys said : Ja, we'll have the meeting - so I said : Right, fine, now who are the speakers - so I said to them : Now look, I want to tell you, we were going to hold our meeting and you came wanting to hold a meeting with us - we have already arranged for Bishop Hurley to be a speaker - so they said they couldn't have Bishop Hurley as a speaker - so I said : Well, give me one reason why you can't have him as a speaker, but don't give me a racist reason - and they couldn't come up with a reason that was not - you know, the only reason why they couldn't have Hurley as a speaker was because he was white, and Hurley at that point had made a statement where he had said, you know, about the guerilla fighters, that they were not terrorists - I said : Look, he is a man who has stood by us in his definition and his conceptualisation of what is going on so - the other speaker was going to be myself, you see.

So I said to them that if you can't have Hurley as a speaker then I'm afraid I will not be able to speak at that meeting either, because if the only reason on which you don't have him as a speaker is race then I must stand by him. So they were very angry and they said : You see now, one white man, you know, causes divisions between us - it's always the white, so they said it's (?) one white man causing division between us.

Anyway we went around the boys - the students were still talking about all this business - we went to the prison, myself and Virginia, you know, we women, and took them their food - and then the next day, Sunday, we went to Curries Fountain and the dogs and the police were thick, but we managed to send away anybody who was coming, you know.

F.M. We stood at far end points of entrances and we avoided any kind of confrontation between the police and the people - but I've taken trouble to point this out to you because there is no simplistic explanation when you say you joined the BC and then did you abandon the A.N.C. and the NIC - I never abandoned anybody, and that is why I - I - I find it very problematic because I find groups who will come to me - they want me to become member of their organisation but then they want me to renounce other organisations - that's what happened to me when I came out of my banning order.

That banning order was then, you know, renewed for another five years when it - when five years finished, then I had another five years of banning and - but the last five years I spent three years of it - there were two years still remaining when that new law came in and they reviewed all banning orders, so my banning order was then lifted - and then I was asked -

No, before I was asked I had this twerp from Saspo National - I forget his name - Solomon or - I don't know - ja, I think Solomon was his second name, but a white student who came along to interview me for Saspo National - and the forum had just met - you know, the national forum - and he asked me - he said he wanted to tape - I said : O.K., you can tape - then he asked me about the national forum, what did I think about it, so I said I thought that they had had a very good meeting, and then he said but what did I think about their - they'd come out with some kind of a charter, so I said I found nothing objectionable in it, so he said : But there's the freedom charter - so I said : So what, there was also the ten point programme before there was the freedom charter - there's nothing sacrosanct about the freedom charter - doesn't imply that because there was a freedom charter the national forum cannot come up with its declaration.

Well, we had quite a frank discussion about this - at the end of it I told him : Look you've put this thing on tape, I don't want this thing on tape, make your notes that you have to make - please read them out to me, you know, so that I can be sure that what you are putting down as coming from me is what I agree with, and as far as the tape is concerned I expect you to, you know, erase it. He didn't do that - he went and he played it to the - some members of the NIC who interpreted my comments about the freedom charter not being sacrosanct as being anti freedom charter, and still they did not confront me with this.

Instead I had the entire executive of the NIC coming to my office at university inviting me to become a member of the NIC, so I said to them : Well, what does it involve - and I was really thinking in terms of meetings, you know, committee meetings and things like that, because well, I do have a family, and if they're meeting at eight o'clock and nine o'clock in the evenings, you know, I wouldn't be able to attend those meetings - that was the thought that was going through my mind at that point.

And I had one of them say to me : Well, you must commit yourself to the freedom charter - so I said : You must be joking - I'm a born Muslim - I can't say I'm committed to the Koran - now you're wanting me to commit myself to the freedom charter - so -

F.M. And I asked - I said : Since when to belong to the NIC you have to commit yourself to the freedom charter - and I also said that the freedom charter was outdated in certain - on certain issues. For instance, it - I think it was on the - freedom charter was - there are certain - you know, the original charter, there's certain aspects of it which are outdated. I can't tell you now which ones they were, but I was aware of which were the outdated ones then, see.

But I said to them eventually that : Look, I'll think it over and I'll let you know - and then I wrote them a letter and I said I thought that they were doing excellent work etc., etc., but that I did not see myself serving on the executive of the NIC at that point - that did it. The first meeting they had where they were welcoming the people who had been banned but their banning - a whole lot of people's banning orders were removed at that - you know, in one big sweep - as a matter of fact I think only three banned people remained on that roster - they - well, I was at that meeting, my first public meeting, political - they welcomed everybody who had been unbanned, meticulously left me out, and I'm sitting in front with (.....) and I see no (.....) note going to the - to the chairman and, you know, clearly there were people who were saying : Well, why am I not being welcomed back into the fold - and eventually, you see, the chairman could not ignore these notes that were coming to the chair, so he sort of said : There's also here the wife of I.C. Meer, Fatima Meer, and we also welcome her - suddenly I became the wife of somebody.

And then, you see, that's when the vendetta started - at the national launch in the Cape they wanted me to be one of the key speakers at the national launch, UDF - now UDF I would have joined without any problems whatsoever, but they said there that I could not be - I was not acceptable as a speaker because I rejected the freedom charter, and somebody even had the audacity to say that I was actually working in the system - and there was kind of a smear campaign that went on against me, so it - it became quite ugly and there were lots of, you know, things that happened and so on.

J.F. So where is that - how are you now placed - your - has that been resolved in any way?

F.M. No, it's not resolved - it's not resolved at all, and I am not of - well, the UDF does not accept me as - as of it - that's in the - in Durban area - in Cape Town I have a different - in Cape Town I'm very acceptable and I - UDF meetings they - they've invited me often to speak and so on and so forth - but in Durban it's not resolved.

During the whole election campaign, you know, the - I was asked to speak....

J.F. The tricameral?

F.M. The tricameral, I - I - you know, I was - I was speaking at many meetings, and it was the UDF meetings that I was speaking at, but it would be sort of the branch meetings - when it came to the central meeting the central NIC executive were in control and they wouldn't - they would avoid having me, except at one big meeting.

J.F. Who was chairing the - that meeting where they weren't mentioning you....

F.M. Well, Archie was, but the person who was manipulating the whole thing was ^{Mewa} Maywo Ramgobin, you see, so Archie was being very much advised by Mewa (?) who was telling whatnot and whatnot and so on.

- J.F. So would you consider yourself to be part of the congress movement at this stage or a supporter of the....
- F.M. I consider myself as part of the liberatory movement, and I consider congress and UDF and P.A.C. and NEUM and AZAPO, I - I consider all of them to be part of the liberatory movement. That is the difficulty that everybody has with me.
- J.F. And what about the need for unity - if at a certain point - you did say that you felt the P.A.C. was problematic because people were saying that it's being used as a counter-force, so how - do you still say that you consider it part of the liberatory movement?
- F.M. Well, I don't know, you see - I must say that I have not gone into the P.A.C. sufficiently - this is what I - I consider the P.A.C. as part of the lib - liberatory movement - up to the time that this stood (?) out - I have been told that the P.A.C. is problematic because it is being used as a counter-force - I've had that explained - told to me by two A.N.C. people, right - I still have to explore that more, whether that in fact is so - I don't know whether it is so.
- J.F. And what about AZAPO and national forum just in terms of the kind of mass base they have - do you think they have any kind of mass base in the country?
- F.M. AZAPO has, yes.
- J.F. And how would you compare it to UDF's mass base?
- F.M. No, it's a very small mass base - AZAPO is a very small organisation, you know, with a small following compared to the UDF, but it has a following.
- J.F. And tactically how would you explain supporting both - the government is quite keen to support the smaller movement, whether it be....
- F.M. Government is not prepared to support the smaller movement, smaller movement isn't prepared to support....
- J.F. Not support, but I think that they're very keen for people to talk about all the different movements.
- F.M. Oh, they are very keen to - for the - government is keen to - to - to say that there is no unity in the liberatory movement - that is all we're saying - nothing more it is saying, but it is not supporting the BC - it never has - it has clamped down very fiercely - look, let's face it, the Black Women's Federation was banned - the South African Federation of Women was never banned, so you can't say that the government supports the BC - it never has.
- J.F. In the '70s I think they obviously clamped down and did the bannings in October, 1977, but if you look at what's happening in the '80s there is - for example, with the unbannings - initially they - the people who came off Robben Island who were BC were the ones - were the very first people not to be banned, and there is a theory (?)....
- F.M. I must say I have not looked into this - you're telling me this - I don't know whether you have real factual basis for it.

- F.M. I mean how many people are you talking about and when did all this happen, you know.
- J.F. I'm just saying there is....
- F.M. Did they pointedly not ban BC people and did they pointedly every time ban the other people?
- J.F. I think the reasoning is that in about '81, '83, starting the early '80s, that instead of banning people as they came off they were keen to let them out free and have - because they liked to see....
- F.M. Regardless of whether they were BC or A.N.C. or P.A.C.?
- J.F. Ja, but I think the reasoning is that their objective was to see AZAPO refounded, to see the national forum refounded as counter-forces - I'm just saying how would you respond to a devil's advocate position - if I can put it to say : Look, by saying sure, the Azanian manifesto and the freedom charter this that and the other - how does that - what does that mean for unity - how - will one build unity if you are - if you get every little tiny group coming up - in the Cape you have a lot of groups.
- F.M. But I mean that's not a tiny little group coming up - this is ridiculous to say every little tiny group came up - you had the African People's Organisation, which was a large organisation, and you had the A.N.C. - you had the A.N.C. and the APO in the beginning, and conflict arose between those two organisations - now, you know, over certain issues - and there were personality factors involved in it too, but the APO was a very important organisation with Dr. Abdur-ahman heading it, and you had the A.N.C.
- Now you can't say the APO is another splinter group that came up or something like that. Then you had the NEUM, which has been a consistent body with its own well, they will say ideology, and it has continued throughout the ages. Then you have had BC coming up - it filled a vacuum - BC came up when there was nothing in the country, and BC reorganised - we had a whole youth who had forgotten, who hadn't even known about the A.N.C. or the P.A.C. or anything, and in that vacuum after the years of silence you had BC coming up, so what is a splintering group about that.
- You had the BC banned - you had BC people put into prison - then when the government, for its own reasons, created space, political space again you found that these groupings re-emerged, and they didn't re-emerge as splinters - they re-emerged as a continuation of a process that had already happened.
- J.F. So what would you see in a future South Africa after liberation, a....
- F.M. Well, you're not going to see one monolithic people, and God spare us a monolithic political solution, because that could destroy our freedom altogether - I mean you're talking about a one party system, which weighs down heavily on the people, you know - I mean I don't think that is what we want for South Africa, so we - we're going to have groupings - we're going to have black groupings - we'll have A.N.C. in government, and we will have the A.N.C. moderated by its opposition, particularly the opposition to the left, and there will be an opposition to the right.