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- J.F. Can you tell me where you were born and when?
- R.M. I was born in 1940 (?) in Port Elizabeth - I was born in 1940 in Port Elizabeth.
- J.F. And what part of P.E.?
- R.M. New Brighton - I was born in New Brighton.
- J.F. When you were born there was it only for Africans or was it all people there?
- R.M. When I was born was it?
- J.F. Was it for Africans only or was it like Sophiatown - was it a bit mixed or was it always just an African area?
- R.M. It was non-white.
- J.F. So it had Coloured and Indians?
- R.M. There were Coloureds - there were not many - not - there were no Indians - there were Coloureds and Africans, but there were no whites.
- J.F. And what were your parents' politics like - did you grow up in a house that had politics or....
- R.M. Which is exactly what I usually tell people, you see, that I didn't join the ANC - I never joined the ANC - I was born into it - my father was a member of the ANC - I understand he had joined in the late '20s - in fact he joined in 1928, the year when he - he was meant to - to marry, but it didn't come off that year in fact - he went to get married in 1930, but he had already joined the ANC - we grew up in Port Elizabeth, a lot of us at home, ten - five, five - five girls, five boys - I'm third born but I'm the first son - father was not educated, just a Standard Four guy - mother was old teacher, Standard Six teacher - she didn't teach for many - for - for a long time - she taught just for about three years, and she got married and she - she stopped teaching - she became full time housewife, I can put it that way.
- I went to schools in Port Elizabeth - well, all of us we went to school in Port Elizabeth - ended up at Newell High School - it's in New Brighton, Jolobe Street - at the time I was in Newell High the principal was G.B. Molife, a social democrat - not actually a social democrat, a bit reactionary old man.
- J.F. What did your dad do - what work did he do?
- R.M. My father was a driver - he worked for L. Barris and Sons - he had joined the firm in Johannesburg - he ran away from the mines - there was a strike of some sort in 1922 in Johannesburg and they were beaten up, so he ran away from the mines - he went to the townships in Johannesburg and the following day he started looking for employment and he collided with somebody who (?) was opening up a shop in Johannesburg, this L - Louis Barris was opening up this shop and he was employed - that was in 1922, I think - yes, 1922 - and then in 1936 they transferred to Port Elizabeth, where L. Barris had bought - well, he went to open up a wholesale business.

R.M. My father went to die in 1972, having worked for 50 years for L. Barris, but at the time my father died I was no longer in South Africa, I - I was out - in fact when he died I was in prison.

J.F. When he - when you were growing up - you said you were born into the ANC - what was this ANC you were born into at the time - was it something that you saw as a really militant organisation - if you were born in 1940, by the time you were getting aware of things in the '50s, did the ANC - did he talk about what the ANC had been like when he was in it - you said he'd been in it in the '20s - there was a time when the ANC was thought to be a bit of a gentlemen's organisation - there was the critique that it needed the youth league to build it up again, but did you always have the idea that the ANC was powerful or did you ever - did any other people who weren't ANC families say : Why's your father been in the organisation - or - just to take it back - I won't ask you about the '50s, but just to take it back to growing up in the ANC, because that's something unusual - that's something that I haven't had that many people I could ask about - what was that ANC that your father told you he joined?

R.M. Well, about my father talking about the ANC, there was not much of that - my father didn't talk much at home - he did now (?) well, occasionally, you know, but not very much - the thing is this, my father was active and so I - well, myself and my sisters would be sent about delivering messages, you know, running ANC (.....) that were sent by my father, letters, and then we would participate in pamphlet distribution, leaflet - leaflet distribution - but I actually, off my own now, with my - of my own volition actually became highly involved in 1952, but in 1952 I was 12 years old - I was still very young - that was at the time of the defiance campaign - we wanted to go and defy as well, but then of course we were not allowed by well, the officialdom of the ANC at the time.

My father didn't - well, we had asked my father's permission for it - he - he - he said he didn't deal with that, so we had to go to the chairman of the branch - at the time I think it was somebody called Nkosi Nkulu - and at that time again Caleb Mayekiso was either a treasurer - you see, I'm slightly mistaken as to the actual positions they held at the time - Mayekiso, Nkosi Nkulu and my father were active prominent, you see, so my father said he didn't deal with that part of it, so we had to go and ask Nkosi Nkulu.

We went to Nkosi Nkulu - Nkosi Nkulu pushed us to somebody else - we went to that one - eventually I ended up at Raymond Mhlaba's house - then he told me that no, he couldn't allow that because we were very, very young, so the whole problem was solved by simply giving us tins to go about collecting money in aid of - the money was going to be used to support and maintain the families of the people who had gone to defy.

With the defiance campaign, well, you should remember that there was no - there was no defence briefed (?) employed - there was no - no fines paid, no bails - they were simply sentenced and they went to prison - that was the basis of the thing was that they should go to prison for having defied unjust laws in South Africa - so we ended up collecting money and we ended up distributing leaflets, but the joy of it for me at the time was that Mandela came down to Port Elizabeth, and later on - that was in 1953 when he was - it was Mandela and I think Alton Ngwenje - I think - Alton, yes - Alton Ngwenje, who eventually was banished to - to the Transvaal - Alton Ngwenje was in East London - I think he is A.S. Ngwenje - the A. I think it's Alton.

R.M. They came to Port Elizabeth, and then there were some sort of (.....) given to people who had defied, so the beauty of it was that I was also (Laugh) - I was also bemedalled (?) as it were, you see (Laugh) - I hadn't defied of course - everybody had refused us going to defy, see, but then in order to sort of please us or encourage us, we also had to be well, medalled, as it were - we - we - there was the youth league at the time - we did attend meetings, political meetings, but well, not so much really at that time - well (while) the youth league was in existence - I actually became highly involved now with the youth league in 1954 - that is exactly the year when it issued out membership cards - there hadn't been membership cards of the youth league before - now from then on there - there were membership cards, and we subscribed - it was two shillings a year in youth league, and in the ANC it was - the joining fee at the time was two and six and subscription was sixpence a week.

So there I was, well, I had a youth league membership card and I became very, very much involved - in 1955 we went about to everybody all over Port Elizabeth - well, all over South Africa, it was the same thing - we (?) were instructed by our chiefs, go to people with an exercise book, a pencil or a fountain pen - at that time I was already using a Parker, which was a very prestigious fountain pen - there was something else, Platinum too - I was using a Parker - so we went - we went from door to door, simply went to people and asked the question : How would they like South Africa ruled in order for themselves to - in order for them to consider themselves a free - leading a free life in a democratic South Africa - basically that was the question we went to ask to people, you see, because prior to this there had - there was a programme that was raised, I believe by Professor Matthews, somewhere in (?) one of ANC meetings, executive meetings.

Professor Matthews said yes, we were fighting for freedom, but what kind of freedom did we want - what did we actually want - and then the ANC resolved to go to the people and ask them exactly what they wanted - that was how the Freedom Charter was collected - the Freedom Charter is not a programme of action, like the programme of action of 1949 - neither is it a point like the ten point programme of the Unity Movement - it is a policy document that this is what people of South Africa want.

Now the Freedom Charter was not formulated by an elite in the ANC intellectuals or whatever, officials who sat down as a commission or something like that, as a committee to draft it, no - we went to the people from door to door - now Port Elizabeth you should remember now - Port Elizabeth has - well, I think you will have noticed, Port Elizabeth has always been a stronghold of the ANC, and it still is, by the way - we were very, very active in Port Elizabeth - basically the - the - the main reason for the ANC to become so strong was in - the reason - the main reason - O.K., I can put it this way, one of the reasons was that we always had a very reactionary city councils, and so right from 1953 city councils in Port Elizabeth had banned ANC meetings in the urban area of Port Elizabeth, as a result of which it was very, very difficult for us to have public meetings, public rallies.

We had our public rallies outside the urban areas of Port Elizabeth, of course not very far, but at least a bit of a distance away, about eight, ten miles away - roughly ten - ten miles away in a place called Veerplaats, which was outside the urban area of Port Elizabeth and....

J.F. Veerplaats?

R.M. Veerplaats - V e e p l a a t s - we held our meetings there in the private person's plot, small plot, so people from New Brighton and from Korsten went to Veeplaats for ANC public meetings, and therefore you will understand, you'll realise that this couldn't happen, you know, daily or weekly, you see - therefore - it did happen weekly really, but meetings were not always well packed, except when there would be something very, very important to be - to be spoken about or to be announced - so as a result of which we - by this time Mandela had drawn up what came to be known as Mandela Plan, which was merely something, you know, a plan of operation, how, you know, in - in small units which were called cells, zones, and then, you see, Port Elizabeth had 28 zones - now each zone would have round about ten - no, any (?) number, you know, between six and ten cells - now each cell was composed - was attended - was composed of ten members and we - who (?) held their meetings in - in their houses, in private houses.

Of course it was not always ten - those cell meetings would be packed for anything up to 30 sometimes - just one cell would have about 30 members - and so that was why Port Elizabeth actually was very, very proficient - that was how ANC became very proficient - I mean Port Elizabeth became proficient in the implementation of underground structures - right from long before the ANC was banned - because we had had very reactionary city councils who had banned ANC public meetings.

Now in Johannesburg and in Cape Town and in Durban they didn't have this - they still had lots of public rallies at New Clare, at Sophiatown and all and - now the tendency in such situations is that people simply go to public meetings and then they go away - they are not - I'm - I don't want to detract - I don't want to portray other places other than Port Elizabeth as if they were not seriously committed, but what all I'm trying to say is that they - they were not as active as Port Elizabeth....

J.F. Why was that that Port Elizabeth was - is always the cradle of the ANC and active and they implemented the M. Plan - let me ask does it have anything to do with the topic that I'm looking at, which is non-racialism - I'm looking at - I want to ask you about things like the rise of the ANC youth league and the kind of Africanism element of that as opposed to the - just the militant aspect of it, whereby there was just an effort to make it a more powerful organisation to build up the ANC - but if I look at history it doesn't seem like you ever had Africanism in the Eastern Cape - you didn't have those other kind of tendencies.

R.M. No, we didn't.

J.F. And why was that?

R.M. That one is going to be very, very difficult to answer - we didn't - but I suppose it is the nature of the people - basically the nature of - well, basically the Africans aren't anti-white, they aren't racist - they may be fed up now and - now and again they may be, you know, fed up with the situation, they may be frustrated, and they may voice racist sentiments, but basically they are not generally - that's not just peculiar to Port Elizabeth but just generally - that's my idea of it - now - but no, there is a danger of my wanting to put it simplistically and saying - you know, I mean that way it's simply really to put it simplistically - I should think it goes deeper than that, but that one is going to be very difficult at the moment - we'll skip it for a moment anyway.

R.M. But as you rightly have observed it, that in Port Elizabeth we were never attacked by, you know, Africanism as such, but that is also probably due to the types of leaderships we've always had and the consultation with the people generally - you see, ANC is a very democratic organisation - there's a lot of consultation - sometimes you get fed up if you are, you know, the sort of the type of a person who feels dynamic who should stand up and fight and so forth - you feel a little bit fed up - for instance, just here, you go around here ANC meetings, there's a lot of talking - sitting down and talking for hours on end over one small issue, and people disagreeing and people repeating each other's contributions, but that should generally actually contribute towards consultation and which, in turn, breeds fairness, open-mindedness, not racism, not Africanism as such - I should think it's one of the things that contribute towards that, but as I said, I want to skip that one a bit for now because maybe that is putting it rather simplistically, you know....

J.F. But I don't want to skip it because it's really the area - it's one of the areas I'm looking at - I'm looking at how people developed, but I want to know how did the ANC develop into a non-racial organisation - there was a period in the '60s and '70s, BC, when it wasn't so non-racial, and there was also a period in the '40s and '50s when there was Africanism - you were down in the Cape - can you think back and remember people talking about the Africanist, people talking about the youth league being formed - even Mandela and Tambo said that they initially were somewhat taken with Africanism and that they were anti-white and anti-communist - how did you feel about that - did you have any of those kinds of people in the Eastern Cape - or what did you say about those people - did you think oh, that's the Transvaal, they're not clear - or what did you say when you heard of - what was the talk in P.E. about Africanist?

R.M. Well, come to that, yes, I'm not - when I said let's skip it for a moment I didn't actually mean that we should not discuss it - we'll come to that - you see, in Port Elizabeth we - we always ran classes, political classes - the cells I was - I have just told you about were - discussed ANC business and all that, but besides the cell meetings, the regular cell meetings, we - we have always had political classes from as long back as I can remember - I didn't join these - I did, I'm sorry - I did join these, but I was not very regular before 1953 - I'm saying this - I say before 1953 because I remember specifically distinctly Robert Maji was the secretary of the ANC at the time in Port Elizabeth, Port Elizabeth branch - he is the first person to - I attended classes of regularly - for a very long time - I think for about a year and - I mean for - up to the time when he left Port Elizabeth - he went - he went away - he's in - I believe he's in Lesotho now, and at one time he was an MP there, I understand, Robert Maji.

He is the person who - he's - it's his class that I joined and attended regularly, but before then my attendance at political classes was not as regular as it became after 1953 - you know, it is in these political classes where we discussed real issues - I mean now not ANC business - real issues, and I heard (?) what is democracy and what is Africanism, what is nationalism, what is communism, what is socialism, what is capitalism - it is in these political classes that we met world leaders - I mean the - the writings of world leaders - where we met the writings of eminent persons, where we met a number of political shades from the back to Africa movement of Marcus Garvey 1933, where we discussed W.E.B. Du Bois, which we used to pronounce as Du Boyce - I say Du Bois now having had the benefit of having been in France not long ago.

R.M. We - we discussed Lenin, we discussed Marx. Engels, we discussed Ludwig, Feubach, we discussed a number of this - you know, we - we discussed the French revolution, Paris Communes - where did they go wrong, how they failed - we discussed, as I said, French history, Robespierre, Dalton - it is in these political classes where we discussed the - the - the - what is - who is that man who - who led a - who participated in - in the revolution here in '60 (?) which terminated in the beheading of King Charles the First in 1649 - who's that - I forget the man now.

It is in these political classes we actually discussed history, and the history that I was doing at high school I also met in these political classes but now in a different perspective altogether, with a political analysis - we discussed the industrial revolution, we discussed the repercussions of - and things like that - the - the struggles of the - of the British people themselves there at the beginning of the 19th. century in 1832 when they went mad, burning barns and all that, killing each other - we discussed the Wars of the Roses, we discussed the Crusades - it is in these political discussions, and as I said, we also discussed what is Marxism, what is - and what of - what - what - of what use can we make of it, and it is - it was again - it was again in these political classes, later on now.....

END OF SIDE ONE.

R.M. It was in these political discussions where now later on we began the system of - sort of of specialising, as it were - for instance, we zoned in one of these classes - we zoned the world (?) and I remember at one time I was considered as an expert on Argentine, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Kenya - that was my region - I had to know everything about the struggles in - in those countries, what was taking place - now another member of the class would take other regions - for instance, I remember Zola - Zola Nqini, the man whose - who died in - in Lesotho not long ago....

J.F. Zola?

R.M. Zola Nqini - N q i n i - he dealt - in our class he dealt with Algeria, and Asia, I think it was Japan, and in Europe it was France - so each member would have a - a zone, a region in which he specialised - you had to research the geography of your - of your region, the history of your region, economics of your region - to answer the question that I said we should skip a bit, I can only answer it in that fashion, that at least from as long ago - from as long back I mean from as early as that, we've always been exposed to political discussions, to political classes - well, I should believe it's one of the things that would contribute - I'm not saying this didn't happen in other places, but I do not believe that it was as extensive and intensive as it took place in New Brighton.

Now I just want to say to you, Zola Nqini came from Uitenhage - his home is in Uitenhage, but he always went to Port Elizabeth for these political classes - we all contributed - you had to resear - there was - there would of course be the - the leader - there would - O.K., we will put it this way, the actual lecturer, but mostly we did this by ourselves - we did the researches by ourselves, and he simply was the guide, I can put it that way.

R.M. And it was in these political discussions where we first met such issues as sex discrimination - we began to appreciate the fact that there was a lot of discrimination between the sexes - I remember one tricky situation in which I found myself - there was the forerunner of the mini-skirt - it was called a leg-out - the skirts were shorter than they had been before - they had become a little bit shorter - there was an old man who said - who asked me - not an old man - he wasn't - he - he wasn't above 30 at the time, who asked me : What is your opinion, what is your attitude towards the leg-out - people - our girls are beginning to lose their morals, their manners, their respect, their - their traditions and all that - they're losing their values, their African values - what is your attitude towards that.

I answered him very, very simply, and in fact I was actually confused - I didn't know how to answer, but I did manage to tell him that all I was interested in was that I wanted the girl in a political meeting and in political classes - I didn't particularly bother whether she came with a - a bikini or anything of the sort - I - it wasn't my - it was of no concern of mine, and now from - because now each time you came across such difficult questions like that you reported of course and, you know, told the others and sort of asked for guidance as far as such things were concerned - that's when then well, others then would contribute, and it's then that we - we were for the first time - well, I was for the first time exposed to such issue - issues as sex discrimination, which I had not thought of before - I had only been concentrating on the fact that I was oppressed as a black person - have I answered - do you think I have answered that question?

J.F. But you said you were only concerned with the fact that you were oppressed as a black person - it sounds like from all the reading you did didn't - did you not think about yourself being oppressed as a worker or because of your class?

R.M. Not at first I didn't - not at first I didn't think it - of myself as being oppressed as a class until, as I say, I was fully in the political classes that I attended - not at first - at first there was quite a bit of nationalism in me - I'm not saying racialism, I'm saying nationalism.

J.F. How was that different from racism - what do you mean - for you how is it different?

R.M. For me it means that we're oppressed as a nation - predominantly the nation is black, but I knew we were oppressed as a nation, and I was very much aware of the fact that South Africa as a whole was actually under the thumb of world imperialists like the British, so I at that time considered that to be rather wrong - I considered it that the riches of South Africa should be used to the benefit of South Africa - I was very much aware of something that now strikes me forcibly now that I'm here in Britain, that there is in this country right now over three million people who are being paid for, being unemployed - where does the money come from - I'm struck by the realisation that Margaret Thatcher's attitude towards the issue of sanctions, it is simply because she knows if she would implement sanctions, the situation would radically change here - class structure would be affected one way or the other here - South Africa or countries like South Africa are actually paying the unemployed people in Britain.

Now if they were to impose sanctions, they are aware that such a situation would lead to their downfall - now it's a question of capitalist way of looking at things - capitalist or imperialist reality - that is why she's so vehemently and adamantly against the imposition of sanctions....

- J.F. Don't talk about Margaret Thatcher because that goes out of my area - but just back to in our area.
- R.M. I was very much aware of such a situation even at that time, so I thought we were oppressed as a nation - not necessarily racist - I don't think I've ever been a racist - I've - I don't think I would have ever become an Africanist - even besides the fact that Africanism never manifested itself really to - to any extent in Port Elizabeth - there were some people who did claim to belong to the PAC after the organis - those organisations - I mean after the organisations had been banned I did meet a few of them in Port Elizabeth, but it didn't take on as it did in Johannesburg and in Cape Town, so even if I hadn't been in Port Elizabeth I don't think I would have ever become an Africanist.
- J.F. And why didn't some of the arguments of Africanism appeal to you - if I just look at the argument, there would be people who'd say that the anti-white bias is natural, that in fact workers or your grassroots feeling would be more leaning towards Africanism, that the average black in South Africa knows he's oppressed, feels he's oppressed because he's black - he knows that his boss is white, and that that's in fact - even tactically it would be easier to say to people : Instead of running political classes on Marx and the Paris Commune, that if you just said to blacks : Look, they're white, we're black, that's what it's about - how - why....
- R.M. They - the hatred is not natural - you just said that it would be natural - what did you say - you said....
- J.F. I'm not saying I said it - I'm saying that's the line you get.
- R.M. Yes, yes, I understand you very well - you - you are - you are saying this is what would have been said, but hatred is not natural in anybody - you can't simply hate naturally - you - hatred develops in a human being as a response to a given set of circumstances, not - it's not natural - it's not natural at all - I remember in my military training one instructor - I'm not going to mention the country - one instructor said to me : You people have to be able to develop hatred for your enemy in order for you to win - I asked him : Is that natural - he said : No, I didn't say so, you develop a hatred, you really develop hatred, you - you - you can't simply be born hating, you - it's just not possible, just not - just I - I think you would be an animal if you were - well, a wild animal - we all are animals, but I mean a wild animal to be born hating, I - I don't think so - I don't think so.
- Yes, we did come across a lot of these arguments that you say would have been said - all right, yes, it's quite true we did come across them, but whenever I looked at, let's say the pan-Africanists when they were now a factor, or even before then - you should remember now the ANC is a mass movement - it is composed of a lot of, you know, different - it has people who subscribe to a variety of thoughts, political opinions, philosophies - the ANC has democrats, it has Africanists, it has nationalists, it has liberals, it has capitalists, it has thieves (?) it - they are all there.
- It is a - it is not a part - it is not a party like the Labour Party, like the Communist Party, the Conservative Party - it is a mass movement - in the ANC there were Africanists - the people who went to form the core of the PAC had been calling themselves Africanists from - from long ago - they - they became vociferous in 1949 and then later on again when just shortly before they went to form the PAC - they were always there, but when you looked at them, what did they offer, what did they say?

R.M. You found that they were not saying that - they were actually, you know, when all - when all is said and done, they were actually saying there was nothing wrong with the situation in South Africa, the - the socio-economic format - the socio-economic structure of South Africa, there was nothing wrong with that, except that the wrong colour was above - all that they wanted to do was to simply invert the situation and place the black above, so we were fighting against a system - we were fighting against a system, not a colour - we were fighting against the system of oppression and exploitation - now exploitation everybody - the boers are exploited in South Africa, the white - the working class of the Afrikaaners is exploited in South Africa - perhaps it is not as fully aware of it as I am, but it is - you get my point?

So there is no way an Africanist can ever convince me that his cause - his cause is genuine, because he does not address himself to the social - to the socio-economic structure - he's addressing himself to - to - to - I mean to the - the question of colour, you - what - you know, some things that are rather - that have no substance - now we want to get to the roots of the matter - that is why - and we were very much aware of this even before when, as I've just said to you, we attended political classes we were very much aware of this long before the manifestation of the PAC.

In fact generally their - it was not their intention to break away from the - from the - from the ANC - they simply wanted to dominate - they tried this by - well, they had always been trying - of course communists have always - have also always tried to dominate the ANC - the Africanists as well did the same thing, and they tried - they filled up a busload and a truck or two from Johannesburg to Durban in 1958 when we had an - our annual conference - they brought a lot of people who weren't actually delegates but who wouldn't then be chucked out of the - of the conference, because they were members of the ANC, except that of course if you were not a delegate you didn't have vital powers - I mean you - you did not vote but you'd be allowed, but when it came to voting people would be asked to leave - I mean people who were not delegates would be asked to leave.

The intention was simply to come and create - you know, make a lot of noise in order to try and influence the situation so that the people they wanted nominated, the people they wanted elected into - into the national executive committee of the ANC would be predominately the Africanists - they failed in this - they failed dismally - I like telling this part of the story, that Tambo was the - was the chairman - was chairing the meeting in the absence of the president, President Lutuli - Lutuli was always under banning, so he - he didn't attend this meeting - Tambo was the chair - was the chairman - very, very steady - type of a guy who - who gives the devil a long rope to hang himself.

Because what I remember very much was that I was very, very much fed up with him at the time, because we kept on lifting up our hands in order - you know, we wanted to speak - he simply, you know, bypassed us and gave a floor to these PAC people, Africanists at the time, a lot of chances to speak, and they were making a lot of noise at the time - there was Josia Madzunya, there was Potlako Leballo, who shouted from - from the door right up next to the stage crying, you know, and waving his fists about, Africa for Africans, Africa for Africans, and they were making a lot of noise - there was - there was one social democrat from - Mfaha from somewhere - there was also T.E. Kachanungwa (Laugh) - one confused element from Queenstown, but very articulate, and in fact an orator.

- R.M. So Tambo gave them a lot of chance to speak and - but when he did give us the chance to speak we addressed ourselves to the issues - well, unfortunately the meeting didn't end very well because these chaps, when they found that now they could not answer us now, they resorted to what all minorities usually resort to, violence - well, it was a non-starter with us - well, we - we simply dealt with them very fast, quick, and they ran away from the conference in ord - and then three months later on, in January, 1959, they announced the formation of the PAC.
- J.F. This was the conference that they ran away from - where was it being held and when?
- R.M. In Durban.
- J.F. In Durban, 19?
- R.M. '58 - round about September, October.
- J.F. What kind of conference was it?
- R.M. Annual conference of - of the ANC.
- J.F. Just tell me a little bit more about that because I'm just so interested - for some people who (?) would ask them about the ANC youth league and the Africanism, they would have been up in the Transvaal and had a different perspective - you had been down in P.E. mainly, right, and you'd gone up to Durban for the conference - so for you - you didn't tell me, were you working by then - you were like 19 - were you - when did you leave school?
- R.M. I left school as soon as I finished my matric - that was in 1956 - I skipped Form One - I had skipped Sub A the first thing, and I had - I went on to skip Form One because I had passed well my Standard Six, and at the time if you earned yourself a bursary you skipped Form One - you went straight to Form Two - at that time there wasn't much tobacco and (.....) in my - so I left school in - at the end of 1956 - I worked for an insurance company - oh, first of all, my first employment was as a driver for a commercial salesman - travelled throughout South Africa....
- J.F. A commercial?
- R.M. A commercial salesman - we travelled throughout South Africa and half Namibia....
- J.F. Did you do any - were you able to do - did you do any political work then or you were just driving - you couldn't be?
- R.M. No, just my - my - my responsibility was the car - I just drove him about - he told me where to go, I drove there - his chauffeur - his chauffeur....
- J.F. A white guy?
- R.M. He was a white guy - he was - he was - he was seven years older than me - he was 24 at the time - he was a white guy - his name was Gerald Marco - we were representatives of a firm in Johannesburg, John Hess and Godfrey.
- J.F. Did you get any sense of Africanism and ANC support in other parts of the country by travelling or were you too busy with the work you couldn't

R.M. Oh, yes, I did in the places in South Africa (?) - you see, we would be out of - we'd be away from Port Elizabeth for six weeks - two weeks in Port Elizabeth, six weeks out, two weeks in, six weeks out, so at weekends I attended ANC meetings in - in the towns that I - I visited - East London, Durban, Johannesburg....

J.F. So what I'm trying to say is, being in P.E. up until you were 17 and you were growing up in the ANC, you had a feeling of a clear organisation that educated you politically, that had an agenda for transforming society, not just for putting black faces in where whites were - you were very clear and you're saying that's what P.E. was about - I'm asking you when you drove around to these other places you went to other ANC meetings, did you think oh, wow, there's some Africanism out there, or did you still feel it was a tiny tendency - did you encounter it at all or did you - was this Durban meeting the first time you saw the Leballos and co....

R.M. No, no, it was not the first time - no, I didn't - I - I - I didn't get that feeling as I was travelling about in South Africa - no, I didn't get that feeling at all - the only things - the only minor issues that I noticed was that the - the branches were - other branches were not as active as Port Elizabeth, that's all - well, I'm being a little big regionalistic here, but then it is - it was quite true that what I observed was that they weren't as active as Port Elizabeth, but I didn't see any manifestations of - of Af - rabid - rabid Africanism as such, no, I didn't - it's only when these people actually started making themselves a nuisance that I noticed it, but now at the time I was no longer a traveller - I only travelled for one year three months.

J.F. When did they start making themselves a nuisance (.....)

R.M. I can say roughly 1957 really, after the treason trial - you see, the treason trial was sort of - it also acted like a sieve in a way, because leaders from all over South Africa, you see, were - you know, were in Johannesburg, and so these ideas sort of permeated (?) amongst them, and it's then that they began making themselves noticed really - I'm not saying that they weren't there before - I'm not saying that we were not aware of Africanism before, and as - as I've said to you, that from as long back as 1949, for instance, Madzunya was already a nuisance, but he was an Africanist within the ANC - he was still tolerable, I can put it that way, or tolerated - they - it's only during the treason trial that now they sort of became more of a nuisance than they had been.

Perhaps, on the other hand, because we were developing politically, we were maturing politically, and the - the revolution was sifting now, so I suppose because we were developing and they became noticeable, they became - you know, they sort of were stumbling blocks in the development of the revolution, so I suppose that was why now they became more noticeable now in - you know, after the treason trial - or let me say during the treason trial, which was from December, 1956.

J.F. If they became more noticeable would that be because they hadn't - they got more support?

R.M. Well, at the treason trial they were always discussing politics and all that - I mean after the trial they met, they - they sort of conversed, they socialised and all that and well, they influenced each other, and then they also had their own political classes, by the way - then people who were a little bit reactionary came out into the open now and then they openly - well, I wasn't in the treason - I'm simply now supposing from hearing from people who were accused, this is actually what was happening.

R.M. Well, they met, they socialised and all that, and then they exchanged ideas, and chaff was sifted and they became the chaff.

J.F. Were they in the trial - they were treason trialists?

R.M. Ja, they were treason trialists, yes, yes....

J.F. Madzunya, Leballo?

R.M. Well - Madzunya, was he a treason trialist, I don't remember - I don't think so - I don't know - I don't know - I'm not so sure about Madzunya, but I know Potlako Leballo, T.E. Kachanungwa, Mfana, Peter Rabaroko, Peter Molotsi, yes, they were treason trialists as well - yes, yes, they were there - they were there - they had been active members of the ANC, you should remember....

J.F. Let me just....

R.M. Highly committed, by the way - I mean I'm not trying to detract from the - well, their commitment - no, they were highly committed - actually good politicians, and as I've said, many of them were very, very articulate - many of them mastered their points very well, except that of course they couldn't convince us that they had a message - we want the message, we don't want a lot of talk and nothing, you see, so they - they - they didn't make much of an impact - they didn't make much of an impact as the BCM has of late, for instance - I don't think that - well, I don't particularly care for the BCM, but I think that it had more impact than the PAC really ever had, except that PAC's always making a lot of noise - making a lot of noise, then there's nothing - right now at the moment they're making a lot of noise, but what are they doing - we - we look at people, we look at an organisation or at a movement in terms of what it is doing, in terms of performance - now what is it doing - that is what we - we look - that is - I - I'm not saying we - I mustn't say we, because I'm active in the ANC - I mean people will look at the deeds more than what is said....

J.F. And when you looked at the PAC back in the late '50s and on did you see - what - how did you explain their motivation - did you think they were just confused, did you think they had more of an agenda like a liberal or, as you put it, social democratic agenda that they clearly just were - did you think they were anti-communist, did you encounter that, or did you think they just hadn't been educated or how did you explain it - were there elements of all of those perhaps?

R.M. Oh, well, yes, they had elements of all of those, but they - they were clear of what they wanted, even if I - I don't agree with them, I think they were clear of what they wanted, but as an.....

END OF SIDE TWO.

R.M. so I - I didn't have much - I didn't - I didn't experience much discussions with PAC people, meeting them in the street or in the halls - it's only when I go to Johannesburg that I meet them, but now at the time now when they were already an - a different organisation, oh, well, I was no longer discussing with them anyway.

J.F. Where were you?

R.M. Oh, I - well, I - I wouldn't have had such a time, because each time I went to Johannesburg I went for my other businesses, not in order to go and exchange, you know, with - with PAC.

J.F. But did you people in P.E. or when you went to Jo'burg and you talked to people, did you think these were confused people or did you think that they were specifically political people who were anti-ANC because they were anti-communist - did you see any political ideologies clashing, did you think it was - because I....

R.M. Yes, I was very much aware that they - we were clashing with them ideologically - I did think that they were confused, yes, in a way, but I did notice - oh, well, I mean, well, even from reading newspapers I did see that at least they thought they had a message - in any case, they did make a lot of noise, as I said - they did say that they had a message - they wanted Africa for Africans and they wanted to - to chase away the Indians, and they said nothing much about the - the Coloureds - the Coloureds made them a little bit disconcerted, you see - they were not much decided about the situation of the Coloureds at the time, which is why - which is why I base my assumption that - my assertion that they were - they were a little bit confused, but they - well, they had a message, as I said, and well, I accepted that.

J.F. Was the message anti-communist explicitly?

R.M. Oh, yes, they were anti-communist, yes, yes, yes - they were anti-communist - they definitely were anti-communist, but mostly rabidly anti-white, you see - I have said (?) they were confused - listen to this - when they started their campaign, their anti-pass campaign, which they had stolen from us, by the way, but simply because we are tardy, conservative, always wanting to do things on the 26th. June, we were preparing for a - a once and for all campaign against the pass - what they did now was to steal a march on us and they - they - they started their campaign before we did, you see - they started it in March, as everybody now knows, that they asked people to go and surrender their reference books at - at police stations on the 21st. March.

We met a few of them who were - who said : Listen, you were going to expose people to the trigger-happy police in South Africa - one of them said to me : Ralph, you are a member of the ANC, I'm a member of the PAC - you run your ANC your own way, I never interfere - now stop wanting to interfere with our organisation - which was fair enough, I let him be - they said in this campaign of their they would follow the policy of no bail, no defence, no fine - now a group of them travelled down to Port Elizabeth some time in February - they came down to Port Elizabeth, but now, you see, in Port Elizabeth, oh, well, they had no chance, let me just put it briefly that way.

They came down to Port Elizabeth in a - in two cars - we went to the house where they - of the person they had arrived at, so we asked them politely to leave Port Elizabeth, and they told us that we were not the government and we were not the police, and we're not going to push them about - then we told them point blank that : Listen, we were going to push you - we were going to push them about - we didn't want them - we didn't want them to come and pollute the air of Port Elizabeth - let them remain in Johannesburg doing their dirty work there and people in Johannesburg will deal with them - we don't want to import troubles into the Eastern Cape - there was a bit of pushing that ensued, you see - well, it ended up with their running away.

R.M. So they drove away to Uitenhage, which is about 27 miles away - is it 21 or 27 miles away - as soon as they crossed the bridge entering Uitenhage they stopped somewhere - they - they were stopped by somebody who simply told them that : Gentlemen, if you take this direction, you are going to the townships - if you take that direction, you will be on your way to Johannesburg - please, out, just go through - just go past - so they were surprised how we had communicated with - so fast we had communicated with Uitenhage - so they drove down and they went to Grahamstown - now in town there, in the city, they drove to a filling station - they wanted to fill up - they were filling up petrol - the attendant, the petrol attendant there filled up their car and he charged them and he - as he was giving them the receipt he told them - he said : Gentlemen, drive through Grahamstown, we don't want you stopping here - they had to drive through.

As soon as they arrived in King William's Town they went to Amatoli Hotel, I think, or is it - was it Royal Hotel - they bought themselves a meal - one waitress served them - as soon as she was through with serving them she told them : Gentlemen, you are not welcome in King - in King William's Town - they were surprised, so they drove to East London - now in East London they were met by police - they were seen by police driving to - to (.....) Hotel, I believe, and they were followed there, and then they were arrested for entering East London.

I don't actually know exactly what happened, because you - you still could go to any town in South Africa, but you had to report at the administrative offices - administration offices within 72 hours - but then they were arrested and were charged for - for passes - O.K., for one infringement or another - they were charged - they paid what is known as admission of guilt, which is a - a device to enable you not to go and appear in court - you'll simply agree that O.K., I've committed a crime - O.K., you've committed an offence, so - I have committed an offence, so can I pay an admission of guilt - you - well, the station commandant will charge you, and then you'll be released - that is what they did now, which is as good as having paid a fine, in spite of the fact that their campaign was - campaign policy was that they would pay no bail, no defence, no fine.

And then again later on now outside South Africa - now we had one mad-cap from Cape Town called Patrick Duncan, son of a former governor general of South Africa - Patrick Duncan belonged to the - well, he belonged to every organisation in South Africa - he belonged to the - lately (?) he belonged to the Liberal Party of South Africa, and he was the editor of Contact, Contact being a - their periodical they produced, weekly periodicals - weekly - at the time I was working for New Age - I was a news reporter for New Age - I was in Port Elizabeth...

J.F. From when to when were you with New Age?

R.M. I was with New Age from 1958 until I left South Africa.

J.F. So basically after your driving?

R.M. Yes, I had left driving, yes - I was only one year driving.

J.F. And then you went right....

R.M. I went to work for a new - South African Life Assurance as a clerk - well, then Govan Mbeki had come down to Port Elizabeth to open up ANC - I'm sorry, New Age office - he asked that I should work with him - I - I went to work with him, you see.

R.M. I didn't actually want at first, you see, because I was working for an insurance company - I was getting 33 pounds, seventeen and six a month - now he came down and then he went to see my father - he asked about me : Where is that one of yours - my father said : Oh, he's grown up now, he's employed - oh, I want somebody to work with here, I've come to open a New Age office - my father said : O.K., I'll send him along to you, you'll talk with him - so my father told me about this, so I - the first question I asked was : How much a month - my father said : Twenty five pounds - I said : No doing - from thirty three pounds, seventeen and six a week down to twenty five pounds, no doing - I'll look for somebody for instead - my father said : No, he wants - he wanted you because he knows you - he wants somebody who is also in the struggle - I said : Yes, O.K., there are hundreds of them here in Port Elizabeth, he - he just has to tap and get them.

So my father's advice that I should first go and speak with Mbeki - that's one meeting I should not have gone to, you see, because when I came out there I had accepted the 25 pounds a week - a month - so I went to tender (Laugh) my resignation with the insurance company, see - I'd been hooked (Laugh)

J.F. But you were telling me about Patrick Duncan and I interrupted.

R.M. Ja, see, we were working for - for New Age (Interruption)

J.F. let me just say in terms of conserving your time.... - selves with people like Duncan, because I'm just interested....

R.M. I'm as interested in that one as you are because I - I couldn't under - you see, Patrick Duncan was rabidly anti-communist - he was just a frustrated element who wanted, you see - people like Patrick Duncan are people who are merely interested in - in themselves really - in placing themselves somewhere in the hierarchy of an organisation - whatever organisation, it doesn't particularly matter to them - he - he was in the Liberal Party - he ran their newspaper, Contact - most of what he did was to be attacking the - the - the congress alliance rather than address itself to the - the situation of oppression - it simply concentrated on sniping at us, and he was at the helm of this - he was the - the - the editor of Contact.

He ended up - he was just a confused element - he ended by - he ended up by aligning himself with the other confused elements, the PAC - they were saying they were anti-white, then they accepted him and they made him their - their chief representative in Algeria.

J.F. Did you ever ask them how they could be anti....

R.M. No, well, this time I was outside here - I was outside South Africa - I had gone out for military training and it was of no interest to me, it was of no concern to me - in any case I wouldn't - I didn't have time to be asking at that - I didn't - I didn't - I didn't meet them often in order to, you know, sort of discuss with them, no, and I don't think I would have been disposed to that really - I didn't care - but it was quite interesting to me - here's Patrick Duncan, violently anti-communist - here is PAC, violently anti-communist, but PAC's been saying that they are also anti-white, but now they've employed - they have taken him as a member, and you should remember that if a person is a - a chief representative of an organisation anywhere, he is in an important position in which he knows much about that movement because he has to be informed of almost - of everything so as to be able to - to - to - well, he is an ambassador, so he has to consort with other governments - with the government of the country in which he is and representatives of other governments from all over the world.

R.M. Therefore he is in a central position as it is - his - his - he's in a - he's in a central position, in the position where he knows almost everything about - he knows everything, and at that time I don't know if they did get to train people in Algeria, but at that time they were also asking countries to train their people for - you know, to give them military training - so now here they were, they had changed.

Now as I said to you, I - I at one time said to you that they were just really confused - basically they were confused, O.K. - right, they may have had a message, they may have believed in what they - they were saying, but here they were - at first they said no bail, no defence, no fine, and then the very - the very leadership of that organisation went to pay an admission of guilt - here they were saying they were anti-white, then they come and accept Patrick Duncan.

J.F. What's the root of anti-communism in the black community, do you think - in the white community you could see why people might be anti-communist and that they would think (.....) that it's the same kind of thing - if everyone gets together to change the system, blacks get together and the whites'll be out, but with black people did you ever get any insight into why people were - why blacks were anti-communist?

R.M. I've never met - well, except PAC people I've never met anti-communist people - I have never - I've never met - I can't say I did meet people who are anti-communist and vociferously so - if they were, they didn't make much - they didn't say much about that - but there's a problem (?) I come from Port Elizabeth - you - you get my point when I say that - I say there's a problem because I come from Port Elizabeth, and Port Elizabeth generally we - we are not anti-communist, one - two, we are not Africanist, and we are just ANC.

J.F. Did you feel that the commercial press, the white run press gave - was more pro-PAC than pro-ANC or more ANC than pro-PAC?

R.M. They didn't exist for a long time - they existed for one year....

J.F. But after....

R.M. But they were given, yes, a bit of publicity, but not much - they were given a lot of publicity when they were making a lot of noise, but not really that much - I - I - I can't quite remember that they were actually given more publicity than we were, because generally the principle in South Africa was that they should ignore black opposition, black movements, see - they should not popularise them in any way.

J.F. Why was it that the press at the time the PAC had its launching did it spend for a year - apparently all the white commercial press had picked Madzunya to be the leader, and it turned out to be this....

R.M. Not necessarily - it's not that - it's just that he was - he - he - he talked too much and he - he always went to prominent places, he always went to - you know, like for instance, he would stop near the Park (?) Station in Johannesburg and start, you know, addressing people, you see, so he - he kept himself - he gave himself quite a high - a high profile in that respect - it's not necessarily that he was given high prominence by the press as such - I can only remember - I do remember of course that he was once given - he was once interviewed by Drum, I think, where he - he was just talking nonsense - I don't actually remember the - what he - the exact thing that he said at the time, but I remember thinking oh, this man is just off his mind (Laugh)

J.F. Do you remember seeing Sobukwe - was he different?

- R.M. No, I never - I never - I never actually differ - yes, I - I met Sobukwe once or twice, but I never actually discussed with him and never had much impression about him, but I know there were some people who were surprised that he had aligned himself with the - I mean he had gone to PAC, you see - there were people who were surprised, but I knew nothing about Sobukwe really - I can't say anything much about that.
- J.F. Lembedi, did you know....
- R.M. Lembedi, Anthony Lembedi - no, I never knew him - I only heard of him.
- J.F. Let me take it from another side aside from that - first of all maybe you should just tell me a bit about what else you were doing - you were in New Age from '58 until - just tell me a bit about what else you got involved with and how you came to leave the country - just pick up more on your life story.
- R.M. No, it's very simple - how I came to be outside the country is simply that I joined the MK....
- J.F. From when?
- R.M. From before its - its official announcement - I'm one of the founders of the MK in the Eastern Cape command - I worked with - with Dlamini - you know him?
- J.F. (.....) Vujsili Mini the singer?
- R.M. Yes, at the (.....) - I worked with them - I joined the MK - we formed the MK and I....
- J.F. Tell me how you came to form it - it was '58 you were working in New Age - you had this wonderful job for 25 pounds a month - didn't you see that as a way for change - how did you get to - I don't want to gloss over the decision to joined the armed struggle and not to join it but to create it, so I don't want you to just say you created it - can you just tell me what in your mind led you to - there were people who were stalwarts of the struggle but they stopped short of picking up arms and putting themselves at risk at that level, so I just don't think you should just gloss over it - how did you come to found it and why?
- R.M. I'm not going to say what I did - there were not I did - I'm going to say very few - I'm going to do a little bit of a selection here - I'd always felt that we can - we'd never win in South Africa without resorting to violence - I am not the only one to have had that opinion - I'd always thought - you see, because the situation in South Africa was as it is, as you see it, where we were engaged - engaging in extra-parliamentary methods of struggle, but non-violently - deputations, delegations, conferences, protest marches and all that from long ago.
- The very first action the ANC did in 1912 was to send a delegation to England in 1913 - they were pushed about here until they were ignored, because at that time the world was at war now, in 1914 the - the - the First World War began, so they - they were ignored - they went back to South Africa - in - in the South African war - in what is called the South African War, which wasn't (?) South African war - the war of 189 - 1898 to 1902 I can safely say 75 percent of the blacks were supporting the English - the blacks in South Africa always wanted to be friendly with the English - well, O.K., England, Britain and all that.

R.M. You will notice from the structures of the ANC - the very first structure of the ANC we had - it - it took on the model of the British constitution - we had a house of chief and a house of commons - I'm glad we no longer have that rubbish - we had a house of chiefs and a house of lords, you see - we always hankered after British way, British system and all that, but we were always betrayed by the English right - historically right from history.

Incidentally at the moment - we've to divert just a little - incidentally at the moment I'm engaged in a research here - we are producing video films - we have the premise - we start from the premise that apartheid actually predates the advent of the Afrikaaner National Party government in 1948 - there was apartheid in South Africa at British administrations in the 16th. - sorry, in - in the 19th. century there was apartheid - there were passes in South Africa in 1806.

What the Afrikaaners did, what the National Party did in 1948 was to constitutionalise a fact - a factor - they constitutionalised apartheid, they legislated for it - they've created a situation where it is an offence not to practice apartheid in South Africa, but they merely rubber-stamped a situation that had existed - I'm not saying that they are not racist - I'm not saying they wouldn't have done the same thing, but I'm drawing attention to something that is sometimes not mentioned, not highlighted, especially by the British media.

As I said, the African people always hankered after, you know, English way of doing things, but they were constantly betrayed - as I said, in 1898 to 1902, 75 percent of the blacks were on the side, if I can put it that way, of - of the English against the - the Afrikaaners, but in 19 - and they said they - they - they were drivers and all that - but in 1910 they were sidelined - they were not there at the formation of - at the unification (?) of the country - they were not there, they were not represented, and the ANC was formed - it sent a delegation to England specifically in order to make a representation on behalf of the Africans.

In 1914 again most blacks were - were - were on the side of - of the allies - well, I will (?) say now all blacks were on the side of the allies - they came here, they - a contingent (?) of them - 800 black soldiers went down with a ship named Mandy - it - it was sunk by a U-boat, a German U-boat between the Isle of Wight and Southampton in this country - 800 blacks they went down with that boat - they'd come to fight alongside the - the - the British against the Germans - they had forgotten the betrayal of 1910.

The Second World War at - at the declaration of hostilities, the ANC suspended its political programme and encouraged people to - to mobilise, to - to - to - to go and fight on the side of the allies against the Germans - what were the Afrikaaner National Party people doing at the time - they were saboteurs, they were treacher - they engaged in treason in - in treachery - they were sabotaging, they were doing all sorts of things - many of them were - were - were interned, many of them were detained for the duration of the war - Vorster, for instance, was detained for the - for the six years of the war - there were others.

There was Erasmus, a former minister of justice in South Africa - well, I mean later minister of justice in South Africa who was also detained during the sabot - why need I enumerate - there were many - all of them they were - they were on the side of the Germans against the - the - the British alliance - or the allies.

R.M. But let me revert a little back again to - to history - the war of 1835, which is called the Inza War and it is called the sixth - the Inza war - the Inza war of Inza, King Inza....

J.F. How do you spell that?

R.M. H i n t s a - it is sometimes said it was the sixth war, kaffir war - I don't call it that - to me it is the tenth war of dispossession, because I number my - I number the wars from the very first - from the very first war of dispossession in 1658 to 1660 - I say that was the first - I don't say it was a khoi-khoi war, no, no - I say that was the first - now - and I don't say the first Basotho war - it's (?) the second Basotho war, the gun war - I say the - the - the - the eleventh, thirteenth war of dispossession - I - there - I - there's no way where I'm going to distinguish and try and create divisions - there was just resistance right through from all sections from all over South Africa.

So now what happens is this - the Hintsas war, it was the English predominantly - Sir Benjamin Durban and Sir Harry Smith who - who - who were fighting against the people of South Africa - the war of 1846 to 1847, it was - now this one now - there had already been the Great Trek, many Afrikaners - there were English as well - many Afrikaners had left the Cape and, you know, the exodus of 1835 - now by the - of 1836 - by - by the war of 1846 to 1847, it was the English who fought in the Eastern Cape, mainly - the boers fought elsewhere - they fought in the - against the Zulus in 1838 at the Battle of Ncome, which has come down to be known - well, I - I rewrite the history, so you'll have to bear with me - it has come down to be known as - what's that - Dingaan's Day - later on there was that battle of Blood River, you see, so I don't name them that way - I say the Battle of Ncome, Ncome being the river.

END OF SIDE ONE.

R.M. In 1838 the boers were involved with Sekwati in - in Marotaland - in what I call Marotaland - that is in the Transvaal - Pediland if you - if you prefer - in - in - in Zululand the boers were fighting - in the Cape we were fighting - the - the - the English were fighting in the Cape in 1847 - 1846 to 1847 the same - 1850 to 1851 the same, you see - now look at it now - look at the collusion of interests here between the English and the Afrikaners when it comes to dealing with blacks, and when there was no war it was because the blacks had won that round, the war ceased - but as soon as they were stronger - in a stronger position they - they - they started the war - they went to war - there was that constant struggle for land, that constant struggle against oppression, against the incursion, against the invasion - the intrusion.

There was truce when the blacks had won, so all of this history has always been in my mind, that the best way is to fight it out - there is no way the imperialists are going to let ground until they are beaten and they are beaten thoroughly - before then there's just no way - look at a non-violent sit - look at the situation where we are asking the world now at present for sanctions and Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan and the others keep on vetoing the - the sanction resolutions at the UN, but this is a non-violent action, so what do they want - what do they want - this is non-violent.

R.M. Then they come to tell us that - they come to tell the ANC that we must lay down our arms and accept the Botha reforms - that one is a non-starter - we can't - there's no space for non-violence in South Africa - we have been responding to the violent - to violent regimes - we have - we have responded to a violent situation, we - we were not violent - we didn't start the violence - we didn't shoot the people in Sharpeville in 196 - in 1960 - it is the state - and we didn't ban ourselves in 1960 - it - it is the - the - the regime that banned us - there was no way now we could even engage in non-violent in the extra-parliamentary methods of struggling - we were not allowed that - but we are oppressed we don't want to be oppressed - so we want to come out of oppression - what else is there to do now - what else is left now simply is that we should fight.

Now I've always been having this opinion from - I have always not satisfied - for a very long time I wasn't satisfied with the situation of the - of the ANC being non-violent and making too much of its non-violence and all that - I - I - I - I never dissented - I never said anything - I never - I was - I am a disciplined member of the ANC - I go by the policies of the ANC, by the decisions, the resolutions of the organisation - I'm a disciplined member, but that does not mean that I was content - I wasn't content at all.

The state was violent against unarmed innocent people, against people who were merely saying that we want to be freed - the state responded by being violent - there is only one way you deal with a mugger in your house, to be simplistic - there's only one way you deal with a mugger in your house - you beat him down before you handcuff him or before you - you call for the police - you are not going to run to the telephone when there is a - you are accosted by a mugger here - you fight it out first before you call for the police - that's just exactly what we are doing.

So as soon as the organisation was banned, discontent now was increased - first of all the organisation announced that it was not disbanding - it was not going to change a name - its name from the ANC into something else to - to - to exploit that device - we were not going to do that, because we were going to be constantly banned and so we'd have to be constant - we would now be engaged in - in a struggle of changing names and not doing any other thing - not addressing ourselves to the situation - keep on trying to manoeuvre what name can we use now - we - we were not going to do that - we simply went under - we decided we were going to go and operate underground, and we went underground.

But you should understand - you should remember that the situation is a little bit different now - it is not as easy as all that to - to - to - to operate underground as it had been before, and the state was being more violent - you get my point - I was detained during the state of emergency in 1960 for the duration of the state of emergency - I was detained actually on the 30th. March before the - before the actual declaration of the state of emergency and the banning of the organisa - two - two days before then we were - we were - we were - we were collected and put in prison before they ran the law in parliament, the - what was it called - Native Amendment - it's either general amendment (.....) Native Amendment, something like that, under which the state of emergency clauses came - it was run through parliament very fast - one day second reading, third day within an hour third reading had passed and it had gone through parliament, the president had - he was not the president at the time - what was it....

J.F. Prime minister?

R.M. No, no, no, the governor - governor had signed, and then now they were now of course simply officialising our arrest, see - we had been arrested illegally, as it were, so - but by now it was quite illeg - it was quite legal now - it was legitimate now - you - you see - you see the resorts - you see the lengths they go to - how do you respond to such a situation - how to you respond to such - I was detained - and let me make this remark, I - you see, for me I don't always like to talk about myself, especially for things of this nature, where we - where I know this whole thing is going to come out in a book or in newspapers - I don't like that very much - but here is the situation now - I was 20 years old when I was detained in 1960 - in Port Elizabeth I was the youngest prisoner, detainee, and throughout South Africa I was one of the three youngest detainees - today how old is the youngest detainee in South Africa - today how old - six years old - you get that situation - it has deteriorated - how do you address that situation - how do you respond to that situation if you - you - you - you are fighting for freedom - these are things that led us into taking the decision to fight.

We are as good as dead so it's better you - you - you go and fight - we are not naturally violent people - I - you know, I've - when I came out of prison in 1980 I - I - I owned - at one time I owned about 1,500 chickens - I've never killed a chicken in my life - that's not to say I haven't killed a human being - but what I'm trying to say to you is that basically we are not violent - we are driven into violence, we are forced to respond violently - it - it's the other man who's violent - what do I do - do I fool my health (?) - do I run - do I stand on my rights that you are not supposed to be beating me up - what do you do when you walk down the street and you meet a bulldog charging at you - are you going to stand on your rights and start telling the dog that : Listen, I have a right to walk in this street - no, you don't do that - the first thing you take to your heels, or if you have an umbrella you use your umbrella - that is exactly what we do.

We're not going to stand on - on the morality that you people are savages, you shouldn't be doing this and all that - no, they are doing it - that's - those are the reasons that led us into forming the MK - I joined - I operated in Port Elizabeth - well, in fact I operated in the Eastern Cape, I can put it that way, but mainly in Port Elizabeth - I did a lot of other things besides the blowing up of buildings - I - I did some other things in connection with administration, in connection with the organisation - I worked with Mini, I worked with Kayingo and (.....) Mkhaba.....

J.F. Mini, Kayingo?

R.M. Mkhaba - M k h a b a.

J.F. And Kayingo?

R.M. K h a y i n g o - I worked with them - we did (didn't) notice that the boers were after them - the boers in this case - the police were after them - we did notice this - we sat, we discussed it, we said - because there had been some incidents that took place in Port Elizabeth that made us realise that these chaps were after these men, and they eventually got them - there was a reign of terror that was conducted by D.J. Card, Donald J. Card, member of the special branch from East London who had come down specifically to deal with the ANC in Port Elizabeth - his actions indicated that he was after the blood of those three men - he arrested a brother - the wife of Zinagile's brother, that is Zinagile's sister in law, Zinagile Mkhaba.

- R.M. Zinagile's sister in law, she was arrested, and another girl there - he went on to arrest a choir - you know, members of a choir in - at Zakhele, among who there were - there was a younger brother of Wilson Khayingo - he went to arrest some girls in Koneker Street in the same street where Mini stayed, and he went to pick these people up at the police station in New Brighton, and he was ask - he was asking the whereabouts of those three men....
- J.F. And what's his name again?
- R.M. D.J. Card - Donald J. Card - some time ago he's been a mayor in Port Elizabeth and some people want to tell me that he's liberal - he belongs to the liberal - to the PFP - that's rubbish, that's bullshit....
- J.F. What's his surname - how do you spell it?
- R.M. Card, Card - C a r d - I listened to him in court later on - I was a reporter, news reporter - listened to him in court, giving an air of innocence when he was giving evidence against some people there - Your Worship, I was a stranger in a strange - in a strange country amongst strange men - after he had - he had, you know, committed atrocities, after he had beaten up people, children - one girl was seven years old, who was a member of this choir I was telling you about - after he had suspended young Khayingo's - Khayingo's young brother in the ceiling here, asking him about the whereabouts of his brother - after he had attempted to recruit that girl to working for him as a spy to spy on the movements of Mini, that girl wasn't beaten, she - she - he didn't beat that girl - he only concentrated on trying to recruit her to working for him....
- J.F. Where were you during this period?
- R.M. I was in Port Elizabeth.
- J.F. So you weren't detained any time in the country....
- R.M. No, no, this was - this was in 1962....
- J.F. So after the state of emergency you were let out?
- R.M. Yes, we came out in September, 1960, same year.
- J.F. And you went right into MK?
- R.M. No, no, no, we formed MK in 1961 - formed MK in 1961 - I - I worked as a newspaper man and worked - operated as a - well, in the organisation I carried out the work of the organisation - we organised the all-in African conference in - in Pietermaritzburg, where Mandela was the - Mandela became the secretary of that and he immediately went underground, which eventually went out of the country - he came here to Britain, he went to other places - we formed the MK in 1961, and then we started operating, that's (.....)
- J.F. When you were operating were your targets only supposed to be buildings, symbols of the state - they weren't people initially....
- R.M. No, we made - we didn't want people - we didn't want people - we didn't want to kill people at the time - if they got killed in the process it's just hard luck for that particular one, and we were not going to go and pray for him, we were not going to go and apologise for it.

- R.M. I'm not - well, I'm not talking about myself here - we - we - we simply wanted to destroy government structures - we didn't place bombs in people's houses, in people's businesses - we simply placed bombs in administration buildings and all telephones, pylons, the city council - the city council (.....) offices and all that - we did all of that - the railways - that's what we did (.....) - we were very much aware we were in the - in the first phase of the struggle, which was merely sabotage, without actually shooting.
- J.F. Was your unit made up of....
- R.M. No, I don't want to talk about my unit....
- J.F. I don't want the people, but was your unit made up exclusively of African people?
- R.M. No, no, no....
- J.F. All I want to know is - because a lot of people have talked about that - I don't want anything that's going to hurt anyone, but I'm just interested in knowing if your non-racialism - for example, I interviewed.... (Tape off)
- R.M. The - the - the MK stric - I mean totally non-racial - totally non-racial - you see - O.K., first let me give you a bit of the background of the ANC and SACTU - the ANC is the - was the head of the congress alliance - the congress alliance was composed of the ANC, the Congress of Democrats, South African Indian Congress, South African Coloured People's Congress, South African Congress of Trade Unions - now why should there be that separation of races - it - for the convenience that they - they live separately - you can't attend a branch meeting from six miles away, so specifically for that, and the other thing is that well, there were other quite legitimate political grounds, like for instance, the - the - the Congress of Democrats, the whites had to address themselves to the whites, concentrate there, but it was not racialism.
- Now - but SACTU was different because SACTU is an organisation of workers in factories where they all are there mixed, and there's no SACTU meeting in the location - SACTU meetings - I mean trade union meetings are in the factories at - at the factory floors - now MK operated in the same fashion as SACTU in the sense that there was just no racialism now - I mean there was no separation in any way now - we - we belong - there were whites, blacks, Indians, Coloureds in - in - in the MK.
- J.F. On the other hand the goal of MK is a very specific goal of sabotage at that time, and you would want to be involved in whatever way would further that goal - you wouldn't want to do something symbolic - you would just - if it worked to have Africans just working with Africans because that's how you could get the target you'd do that - if it worked to have you hide out in a white person's house....
- R.M. I - I didn't under - I don't quite understand.
- J.F. I'm just saying I'm wondering if being in MK you experienced non-racialism in terms of on the ground - maybe it made sense to just have Africans in - I interviewed Indres Naidoo and in his unit it was mainly Indians - he was....
- R.M. Of course there were such situations - for instance, there were very many units (Laugh) not that many - there were not that many young whites as there were units - obviously one unit will be - many units will be totally black - is that what you are asking?

- J.F. I'm just wondering if - without giving any specifics that you don't want to reveal - if you could tell me than in actually operating and actually getting the job done, did it actually mean you worked with people of other races or would you say : Well, in order to operate in P.E. we just worked with....
- R.M. No, no, no, the - the - let's not look at it this way, in order to be able to operate let there be all the races within one unit, no, no, no, no - that was not the consideration - the consideration is the units were created - the units were created - they - there were very many units that were just black African, there were units that were just Coloured, there were units that had all the - all the races - it depended on - it depended on what the unit was formed to do.
- J.F. But from your experience, did you gain more non-racialism by being involved with white people, either legally above ground or underground - I'm just wondering - because in Johannesburg you had the Hilda Bernsteins and the Rusty Bernsteins and the people who were involved who were whites and Coloured - in Durban you had a lot of Indians - in the Eastern Cape there aren't that many COD white democrats that people have mentioned to me that they actually worked with - I wonder....
- R.M. Wait a minute - you said there weren't many COD?
- J.F. COD.
- R.M. Oh, C O D....
- J.F. Maybe your experience of non-racialism was more working with Coloured people - I'm just wondering....
- R.M. No....
- J.F. Other people have said to me - I can't remember who it was I interviewed - I think it was Edgar Ngoyi, who said that - he couldn't even remember the names - he was thinking and I think he was trying to think of one of the Levys, but he actually couldn't think....
- R.M. We were detained together with Edgar Ngoyi, and at one time we were charged for murder together - we hadn't murdered - well, at least I hadn't murdered anyone - I don't know about him, but we were - we were not sentenced.
- J.F. But what I'm trying to say is when he was thinking of it - the people in the Transvaal would be able to think of the Hilda Bernsteins or the Helen Josephs - he couldn't even think of a white person, and yet he was totally non-racial, so clearly his non-racialism didn't come from having worked hand in hand with Albie Sachs - having been....
- R.M. No, when - when I - when I began being very active in the ANC I didn't work with any whites - I was in the locations - it's only when I was in New Age now where I can say I worked with whites - there were whites in Port Elizabeth - I'm going to give you names - there were whites in Port Elizabeth, and again as I told you, that I oh, frequently went to Johannesburg when I - as I told you, that at one time I - I think about thrice - four - three or four times I slept at Hilda Bernstein's house, but the first time I slept at her house, by the way, she was not even - they were not even there - the whole family were not there, but then I was there in - in Johannesburg, they would phone (?) - nobody knew what to do with me, until one enterprising guy said : O.K., here you are, come - he went to throw me at Hilda Bernstein's house, see, and they arrived at night and they found me sleeping there, you see, so I told them not to interfere with me, see, so (Laugh)

- R.M. You see, so it wasn't that - it wasn't that - my non-racialism didn't stem from the fact that I worked with - with whites - I hadn't - no, I hadn't - and as you have rightly observed with Ngoyi, he's non-racial but he had difficulty even remembering the first white - in Port Elizabeth there weren't many - there were - there weren't many - there was Todd Vernon (?) an old....
- J.F. Who?
- R.M. Tony Bennan - he's the father of Max Bennan and Mervyn Bennan, Mervyn Bennan being one - one is a lawyer, one is a doctor - one is in Kenya, I don't know where the other one is.
- J.F. How do you spell the name?
- R.M. Bennan - Bennun, but Tony - Tony Bennun was a communist - there was Lattie, who was also a communist - there was Piet Vogel, just ordinary COD member - there was the - well, there were others who we don't actually mention - then there was - there was - there was a - A.F. Robinson, who's just died here in England about two months ago - there - there were very - McCarthy was there - there was a McCarthy and there was - there were lots (?)
- J.F. Who was Lattie - what was the....
- R.M. Lattie, well, I don't know his - I don't know his name, but we called him Lattie because he's a Latvian.
- J.F. Because he's what?
- R.M. A Lat - he comes from Latvia, so he was simply called Lattie - Lattie by everybody, see, so I don't actually know his name - he may have been Lattie in name but I - I don't know about that - I know I - I - I - I worked with him very much....
- J.F. So what was non-racialism about in the Eastern Cape - everyone says this is the strong area, there's no Africanism, they're so non-racial - but there's hardly any whites.
- R.M. Search me.
- J.F. So did you actually use the word non-racialism ever - do you think you discussed it?
- R.M. Listen, have you read the Freedom Charter - you had?
- J.F. But it doesn't have the word non-racialism in it, and I'm asking you did you ever use the word - maybe it's a useless word, maybe....
- R.M. We, the people of South Africa declare for all the world to know that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people as a whole - what is that - there's no non-racial - there's not the word there non-racial, but what is it - that's the preamble to the Freedom Charter - what is it - there isn't the word - it doesn't appear - the word non-racial doesn't appear, but what does - what is it - we would be very - we would be the - I don't know what can describe us - we'd be very, very stupid not to appreciate the fact that that's non-racialism (Laugh) so - so - so I - your question is very difficult to answer, I want to say that, because one, as you have observed rightly that we didn't work with whites as such - there weren't many in Port Elizabeth, unlike in Johannesburg and in Cape Town and in Durban - there weren't many Indians, but there were Indians.

- R.M. There was (.....) there were - well, not a lot - in any case in Port Elizabeth there are not many Indians, but a sister (?) - no, it's not the sister - it's not the brother of this girl here - the Reddys, Pillay, Naidoo, who - who - who's this dentist - forget his name now - we had quite a - we had quite a few Indians, but fewer still whites in Port Elizabeth, so it's going to be - it's very difficult to say why were we non-racial because we - there weren't even whites amongst us - if you look at it in that way, you are going to have a difficulty in getting into the right - the answer....
- J.F. It's so hard to make any generalisations because you could certainly generalise that the white security police of the Eastern Cape, and that the whites generally in terms of the white population is much more racist in the liberal Cape than - the Eastern Cape is where they killed Biko - I'm sure they - that's where they....
- R.M. Oh, where the most vicious special branch, yes - yes, yes....
- J.F. Didn't you ever come across....
- R.M. I told you I - I said I told you that hatred is not natural - you develop hatred.
- J.F. But if you've been tortured by white security policemen didn't you ever.
- R.M. That does not - that's not going to make me necessarily hate the whites because of that, because whenever they torture me there are blacks who kick - who kick harder than the whites there as well sometimes - I was - I was - I was arrested in - I was arrested in Zimbabwe - it was the blacks who - who - who - who - who beat me about far more too much than the whites, although of course it was the whites who - who - who carried out the - the - the most brutal torture, electricity - who applied the electricity and all that - electric shocks - but the blacks were just, you know, punching me about, you see, all over the room, and of course I did fight back, you see, but then that earned me more beating.
- J.F. But you didn't ever have white - blacks who'd been tortured by white security policemen who'd been picked up who would say it was - even if the black kicked it was the white who was paying him who said to you : What is this non-racial policy, we must just drive these guys into the sea - and just got - that hatred grew - you keep saying it's not natural, but through the unnatural process of torture, of harassment etc., you didn't ever see a non-non-racial thing come up?

END OF SIDE TWO.

- R.M. You are asking me personally did I ever - now in South Africa I don't think so - in South Africa I don't think so, except what I told you about the PAC, what the PAC people were saying - in Zimbabwe, yes, maybe once or twice, where somebody would say : Ja, O.K., I can see these dogs, but they are actually paid by that bulldog behind them - you know, something like that, you see, but even there not so much as to - to - to be extraordinary, or else to be really noticeable - no, no, not so much really - not so much really.

- R.M. I - well, I'm talking about my personal experience - I'm not saying there wasn't anywhere else - there is a possibility that there was because, for instance, there are PAC - there is PAC in South Africa who will have that mentality because - and they - in Zimbabwe there will be people who have that mentality (.....) I - I didn't meet much of it - I didn't meet that type of people.
- J.F. Then you went out and you joined MK and then how did you - do you want to tell me about leaving and what - just continue with your story that I keep interrupting?
- R.M. Well, I came out for military training, and from there....
- J.F. You're one of the youngest, right?
- R.M. In military training....
- J.F. Were you....
- R.M. No, no, no, now I was - no, no, no, I was no longer the youngest now - Chris was still younger than me.
- J.F. Chris Hani?
- R.M. Chris is - is younger than me - he's born 1942 - he talks strong to me now, you see, but he - he's young boy, you see - no, no, no, I - I - I don't want to impute that he's behaving here - what I mean he - he's grown up now, you see - he talks with a - a - a deeper voice, you see, but he - to me he remains a young boy, you see - like the wheels of a bicycle there - there's that saying (.....) like the wheels of a bicycle they - they never meet - the one in front is always in front (Laugh) - no, I was not the youngest, and I was even married by then. (Sound's bad on this one.)
- J.F. So when did you go out?
- R.M. 1963.
- J.F. You were 23?
- R.M. Yes.
- J.F. And you were married?
- R.M. Oh, yes, that part - that part, ja well, that's (.....) - you marry any time and you can marry when you are 16 - that is not important.
- J.F. But did your wife know what you were leaving for?
- R.M. No, I only told my father to tell her after I'd gone, and he did (Laugh) he did.
- J.F. Wasn't that a difficult decision to make, to leave a wife at a relatively young age to put your life at risk?
- R.M. I do want to appear - what - like the other people and say : Oh, that was a very difficult decision to make - at that age I was recently married - but I'm very sorry, I will disappoint you a bit in that - it wasn't a difficult decision to make - it would be very, very difficult for me to make that decision now.

R.M. You should remember that I hadn't lived very much with my wife, but now, you see, now I've lived with her for seven years now, and that one it'll be very, very difficult - of course not - not so - not very - not actually very difficult - even here at present (?) she's in a different town altogether - she's in south west of this country - I mean north east, diametrically opposed - I mean diagonally opposed - no, diagonally....

J.F. Opposite?

R.M. Opposite, ja, so now - and she - and I haven't been with her effectively for two years now, since 1985, see, so it won't be that difficult, but it would be far more difficult that - than when it - than what it was in 1963 - I did - it - I did of course think about it, that now here's this girl - I brought her home here and now I'm leaving her, and I'm not even doing her the decency of telling her that I'm going away - but let me say to you something that one Zimbabwean once said when we were in prison, that when a man is fighting for his country he's mad - doesn't care about any other thing - he cares only about his country - I loved my wife, and I still love my wife very much but (.....) and when I was in prison I would also think about her, but well, I would still take - given the same situation, I would still do the same thing - I'd still go away from her, you see, I - I love her very much, and I'm not even the type to mess around - O.K., O.K., you see - well, she doesn't believe that one anyway, you see (Laugh) - I'm not even the type to - to - to - to mess around, you see - I love her very much, but given the same situation again, I will leave her - I will leave her - if she - if she - it's up to her what to do thereafter - well, what she did thereafter was that she stuck at her home then until I came out in 1980 - she came to Zimbabwe and we've been together since, so it wasn't such a difficult decision - not to say that I didn't think about it - I did, but it wasn't a difficult decision - listen, I had to fight - I had to fight.

We had to fight, and who's going to do the fighting for us if we are going to start thinking about oh, my lovely young wife, oh - oh, my - I can't live without - you can't - you've got to fight - nobody's going to do the fighting for us - we want to be free - who's going to free us - we've got to free ourselves, so that's the main consideration really - maybe that's making myself a little bit - what - well, not a (.....) - O.K., O.K., you can ask another question (Laugh)

J.F. When you left in 1963 was it some particular thing that made you go or was it just you were recalled (?) that this was the time to go for training, and you didn't get particularly upset about something and make a move - you were just under discipline at that point....

R.M. Both, lady, both - I was arrested for a totally different thing altogether - we went to Uitenhage - well, not a different thing - not a different thing - I went to Uitenhage - I was in the company of Zola Nqini - we were going to do something there - we were going to do some work there - as soon as I entered - I happened to cross a street which happened to be a boundary between cen - town - city centre and the beginning of the locations - as soon as I crossed that street the special branch in - in - in Uitenhage were onto me - they had been following us right through - we hadn't noticed them - one squint-eyed chap called Swanepoel, he was in the company of about six blacks - he was the only white - he was in the company of six blacks - he said : Ralph, you have entered a location without permission, so you are under arrest.

R.M. I said : What location, I haven't entered a loca - he said : This is the boundary - so I was arrested, and then - well, that was on a Friday - on Saturday I was sentenced - I don't remember the length - I had only two pounds in my pocket - I couldn't pay the fine - I was sentenced - we were separated immediately with Zola Nqini and he was taken to be detained under the 90 day detention law....

J.F. This is what year now?

R.M. 1963 - so I was sentenced - then on - on Sunday I was transferred to Port Elizabeth, and on Monday I was there, on Tuesday I was (.....) - and then I went to the townships in the evening - I went to the townships in the evening, you see - I - I sneaked out of the place where I was - I was sold (?) to....

J.F. What do you mean you were sold - you mean your fine was paid?

R.M. No, what happens is that there is - in South Africa there is the system that white farmers and all can buy prisoners, take them - remove them from prison and keep them in their - in their farms and make them work for them - now I was not sold to a farmer - I was sold to a wardress who worked in that very prison - now she stayed in Walmer - Walmer suburb in Port - of Port Elizabeth, so I got to her house on Tuesday, slept there and worked - oh, a devil of a woman, jees - no, I don't want to meet that woman - I really would never want to meet that woman, because should I meet her thereafter I - it will be very difficult for me to convince you that I am non-racial (Laugh) or to convince you that I am not a woman - a woman what - beater - it would be very, very difficult for me to convince you of those after the meeting that woman, no I - I cannot convince anyone after that.

I slept there on Tuesday morning, on Wednesday - Tuesday night - on Wednesday night I sneaked out, I ran to the location and I told the chaps that - where I was and why and what had happened, and then I got information that the police were - the special branch were hunting for me - something had happened that had connected me with something that had happened somewhere (Laugh) so now I was searched by the special branch and there wasn't going to be a question of a 90 days detention - now the police didn't know that I was arrested, I was in prison at the time (Laugh) - that was a lovely one for me - let me look for (.....)

J.F. (Tape off) - story.

R.M. Oh, I see, yes - the police didn't know that I had been arrested, so the chaps told me - now I didn't want to come out of South Africa, I didn't - we had already sent out some men - I took the stand that they would come back and train us inside the country, but then the chaps confronted me with the situation that viz-a-viz they would not be responsible should I be arrested, because they've warned me, and that the - the chances - and there wasn't going to be a situation where I was going to go for a - for detention - I was simply going to go for trial.

I was involved in a number of things, one of which was a little bit serious, more serious - I had been involved - now they were hunting for me - they had gone to my - to my home - and I went to see my father later on, you see - my father told me also that they have been there - in fact they actually had placed somebody around the house, you know, patrolling around to watch out for me - of course the chaps had already told me of this, so I knew that he was there, see, so I first had to seek him out and locate him before I went home.

R.M. Before I went home, because - well, to, you know, approach my (?) - I mean entering our - our yard by - at a friend's side (?) - different direction altogether - so I went home - my father told me that the - they were actually looking for me, and so I said : Well, O.K., I'm going back - so I went back - that was on - on a Wednesday night, as I said - I went back, I worked the whole day, and then in the evening I went away - I went to the - I went to New Brighton - I - I went home first, I packed a bag, a small bag, and I hid it somewhere within my home - I told my father that : O.K., this is it - and he said : Good-bye, here's 300 rand - I said : No, no, don't worry, I have money and I'll be bought ticket (?) - I mean I'll be given money by the organisation - my father said : Hey, take this 300 rand and go, I know the ANC (Laugh) - and he knew it, you see.

So I went away, you see - I went to - to the contact, and that began the process of moving out of Port Elizabeth - I didn't move right away, same - same - same week - I remained for - I remained within Port Elizabeth for two weeks, and I was damn busy in those two weeks - I would have been arrested - then we left - to Botswana by round about route and to Tanzania, and then to country then back to Tanzania, back to Zambia and into Zimbabwe.

J.F. This is - what year did you go into Zimbabwe?

R.M. '67 - 1967 - we went to fight in Zimbabwe, Sipolilo, not Wankie - the whole operation is known as Wantu (?) operation, but now I was in the Eastern Detachment - in the detachment that operated in the eastern part of the country.

J.F. What was the detachment called, Lutuli....

R.M. Lutuli Detachment, yes, but it was formed of two companies - I was in the company that operated in the - in the west - in the east, I'm sorry - the other men fought in the - in the west in Wankie, Wankie area (.... ..) - we were to join the fight (?) with the English there....

J.F. The what?

R.M. We had a jolly fight with the English....

J.F. You mean Rhodesians?

R.M. Rhodesians, yes - we existed in the bush for a long period and we were caught (?) one by one, other fell, others had the opportunity to go back to Zambia - we were nicely sentenced (?) - I told - I spoke my rubbish in court and I was sentenced - we were - we were released by - by Mugabe in 1980 and so I'm here now, but I lived there for three years thereafter, and then I went to Lusaka and now I'm here - I'm going back I don't know when, but I don't like Zambia - no, it's not that I don't like Zambia - I don't like working at - where - in proximity - proximity with the headquarters there - I don't like it, although, as I say, I don't control my - my life so - but I very much am going to try and avoid Zambia if I can.

J.F. Tell me, you - in '67 - the longish period you existed in the bush - about how long was that?

R.M. Nine months.

J.F. Nine months?

R.M. Oh, yes, others - there - there're three other - one, two, three - there were three other men who came as close as (?) two years.

- J.F. Sipolilo is - it's changed now - near what is it exactly?
- R.M. The east - do you know - but Sipolilo is actually the town now - it's in the Doma....
- J.F. It's where?
- R.M. In - in Doma.
- J.F. Ndoma?
- R.M. In Doma - D o m a - but that's the Shona pronunciation - the Zulu area, the area where Mugabe comes from - Mugabe, Chinamano, Chikarema, they come from that area of Mount Darwin - do you know where Mount Darwin is - that's the area - Doma, Mount Darwin, Lions Den, Mangula, Sipolilo, you know, that area - it's north east towards Fayrer (?) - towards the corner where meets Zimbabwe, Zambia and Mozambique - that's our area.
- J.F. To be there for the nine months, wasn't it a problem not speaking Shona or had you learned....
- R.M. Oh, yes, it was - it - it - it - it was a problem - no, I didn't, but we - we lived in the bush - it was a problem because we - we, the South Africans, couldn't simply go among the people unless they were already known to us - we had - it - our Zimbabwean who - who went to comrades to - to - to the local people - it was - it's a big difficulty, but then there - they were not so much - the other Zimbabweans amongst ourselves were not so much better off - you see, if, as we were, in that region, operating in that region, as soon as you show yourself up, whether you're Zimbabwean or South African - as soon as you show yourself up you are the attraction, see, you - everybody knows that you are a stranger because everybody knows each other, everybody knows everybody else - your clothes, the first thing, your wear - your dress, your attire, you know - people there (?) at that time - you know, that's the farming area - people are in tattered overalls and so forth, you see - they are dirty, they are muddy and all that.
- So now whenever we go to villages, see, we'd sort of spruce ourselves a bit, you see, so that immediately takes us out of the norm, you see, so you are recognised as soon as you appear, to be a stranger first and foremost, and then of course the - it was quite easy for anyone to conclude that here's a terrorist (.....) so it was a bit of a difficulty but it was not - not that very much really to - to have caused problems in operations, no, not so much.
- J.F. (.....) - the word for terrorist in Shona was?
- R.M. (.....)
- J.F. Gandanga - but you didn't want to spruce yourself - you wanted to look...
- R.M. Even if you didn't want to spruce yourself up your - your clothes sold you out.
- J.F. So even those Zapu guys had the same problem?
- R.M. Of course we had a similar type of clothing - I mean you - your clothes are (?) good clothing - if I presented myself there now as I am, everybody sees that oh, he's a stranger.
- J.F. But you wouldn't be wearing that clothes for your time in the bush, would you?

- R.M. We had a little bit better - we had over - we had - what's this - uniforms, but then we had better mufti - you know mufti - you know, the civilian clothing - it's type of clothing - we had - we had I mean generally better than - which gave you better appearance than the ordinary....
- J.F. Was that a mistake?
- R.M. It was, but what could we do about it.
- J.F. So you had to rely on the Zapu people to go and get food from the villagers and....
- R.M. We also went as long as we kept quiet (Laugh)
- J.F. As long as you didn't use speech?
- R.M. Well, yes, as long as we kept quiet....
- J.F. With them you went (?)
- R.M. Well, whilst we were among the people.
- J.F. And were they Ndebele or Shona people - were the Zipras Sindebele speaking or Shona speaking?
- R.M. Both.
- J.F. And did - was there anything you noticed about - did the Shona speakers get better received - were they more - better received than the (.....) because it was a Shona area, right?
- R.M. Most of the time the people - the person who would be speaking - the people who would have chosen - selected to speak with the locals would be people from that region who spoke the dialect, so they - there was - you see, with people in Zimbabwe - you know, I speak Shona, I speak Ndebele, but as soon as I open my mouth in Bulawayo - as soon as I open my mouth and speak Ndebele you'll find, you know, somebody asking me : Are you Fingo - meaning do I come from (.....) - do you know (.....) - you don't know (.....) - it's about 25 miles east of Bulawayo - it's predominantly Fingo area - now Fingos are Xhosa people who came to the country in - in 1902 with Cecil Rhodes, you see - they are still there - they speak my dialect and they - they speak like - speak as I speak, even if they speak - when they speak Shona (.....) Ndebele all - everybody knows oh, this one is not actually Ndebele, he's Fingo, you see, so there's always that difficulty everywhere, so what we did was whenever we sent people - whenever we went to meet people we simply used people who came from that region, because we wouldn't use a Shona from Victoria province - that is Masvingo now - we wouldn't use somebody from there - we wouldn't use somebody from Manicaland, because he would be speaking a different dialect altogether - they would simply know, so we used to take on people who came from that area who spoke the same dialect, you see, so there were no difficulties because of that - it's just that well, there were difficulties in the sense that we were known to be guerillas and we - they received different receptions - there were different receptions in different areas, some people were afraid of us, some people didn't want us - they hated us - some people wanted us - so it just depended on - on the people we met.
- There would be nice (?) situations where somebody was asking you a direct question and you had to answer so, but you didn't know Shona, so you looked at - you simply looked at him and looked at the comrade you would - who would have been selected to do the talking, and simply keep quiet - you wouldn't say (?) - and walk away, you see.

- R.M. So in order for you not to - but then there - there was another slight problem - not very much - there was the question of complexion - slightly different - slightly different, but that - not much really....
- J.F. Slightly lighter?
- R.M. Yes - generally yes, mmm, but not much different - not much in that line as to pose the problems like you encountered in talking, you see - so that was that.
- J.F. But were - what were you trying to operate against - there obviously would be some people who were pro-Zipra and were receiving and were being the kind of mujiba supporters, right, and then there would be the people who would - you were worried would turn you in to the security forces, right - you didn't want informers or you didn't want the chiefs who were siding on the government to report you, right, but did you ever encounter someone who supported Zipra or supported the struggle to free Zimbabwe but thought what are these South Africans doing in it - when they saw you there....
- R.M. No.
- J.F. Was that because they never got to know there were South Africans - did you have a - I don't know how you'd describe the intermediary, if it was a mujiba or what it was, but....
- R.M. No, they were not called mujiba at that time - no, no, they were not - they were no special names....
- J.F. Anyway the supporter of the struggle who would bring you to get food, who would arrange for things for you....
- R.M. Most of the food we ate we stole ourselves - we didn't get food from people - we simply went to the farms and grabbed food and went to cook for ourselves mostly - generally - there were very few occasions where we were given food by the locals - what we wanted from the locals was - we were recruiting them, that's all, and training them, and yes, we would - we require some things like, for instance, we would want clothing - we'd give them money to go and buy us clothing, or sometimes we'd give them money to go and buy us something well, food, if we wanted to buy food, but most of the time we simply fed ourselves off the farms - at the time when I was there maize had - you know, had ripened - had very big crops of maize, and there were pumpkins, but that was later on after we had begun fighting and....
- J.F. Aside from the food, the people you dealt with, and then you would be dealing with them about recruitment mainly - when somebody looks away from you - when you don't want to be talking - when you were trying to look away so you wouldn't have to talk to the person - I'm just wondering - there's one battle to get someone to support the guerilla movement, there's one battle to figure out who you're going to recruit, right - there's one way of figuring out who's going to support you, but I'm wondering once you figured this person would support you, was there ever anyone who would say : What's going on, you have South Africans with you - did they know what ANC was - did you get that far?
- R.M. (Laugh) You know (.....) - O.K. (.....) you'll understand (.....) but this - whenever we - we cross we already have a contact in front - who to contact - you get my point.

R.M. We are not coming there as invaders, as foreigners or anything - we are coming there - we have a name of a contact - we have been given a contact - go and contact so-and-so - he has also been briefed that he should expect us, so then there's no problem in that - so as soon as we make contact with the person, if he is not arrested - that is if he hasn't been detained prior to our appearance - if we make contact with him things are a little bit easier, so we - we talk - we talk our business with the person and it - perhaps beyond (?) the second, third meeting that he will realise that there are South Africans, but generally such contacts were people who were active Zapu members from before.

Now this is one thing you must know - Zap - the - we were just Zapu at the time - we were - it had not been named as Zipra at - at that time - we were simply Zapu soldiers - now there were people who had been primed (?) before, who had been met before, were told, and they would of course when - whenever now they discovered that there were South Africans we would explain of course, yes, there are South Africans - I am a South African, he is a South African, he's a Zimbabwean, he's a Zimbabwean, we are all Zapu - we are not here as ANC, no - forget about ANC, but we're not - we have not come here to join Zapu, become members of ZAPU - we've simply come to fight, that's all, that's our business - our interest is to fight - we don't - we don't want to be citizens in this country, we don't want to be members of Zapu, we've just come to fight, that's all - we are South Africans, we are contrib - we - we regard Southern Africa as oppressed, we - it is - Zimbabwe - Rhodesia is as (?) oppressed as South Africa is oppressed - it's just one form of oppression, so we - our business is to liberate the Southern continent - we never had any difficulties about that - we never had awkward questions, we just got co-operation.

You would recruit who he recruited - he brought him to us - it was left to us again to tell the people that : Listen, there are South Africans here - and they all knew, those who we recruited - there was of course the difficulty that at one - one or two places, each time we got there the - the - the contact was already in prison - he was in detention in - in - in Gonagudzingwa, you see, so things would be - things would be a bit awkward at that time, because now we would have to go back to another one somewhere, perhaps a person you had already - invariably a person we would already have had contact with - go to him to use him in this particular area where the contact is arrested, so you know, and ask him to - to go there and seek for Zapu people he knew.

J.F. But where were these conversations going on when you had to avert your eyes and that people might notice you had a different complexion - what people versus - viz-a-viz which people were you worried about not letting your South African English or non-Shona or accent come out?

R.M. Well, we - we crossed villages.

J.F. So that would be when you encountered people?

R.M. Yes, that would be when we encountered people - sometimes we - we are avoiding a village and we walk along a river, we come across some lovers (Laugh) you see - you see, so that's an awkward situation - sometimes we - we - sometimes we happened upon farm labourers, farm workers - that's an awkward situation....

J.F. But did you ever get any feeling from the Zapu contacts when they got to know after the second or third meeting that there were South Africans - did you feel that they 100 percent supported that line of we want to liberate the sub-continent, or did you think there were any who thought wait a minute, what's ANC doing in this or what are the South Africans about or - or but South Africa, they're richer, they're....

- R.M. Ah, no, we did - no, we never encountered that - and you must remember again the Radio Freedom in Zambia was operating full blast - Chikarema was talking over the radio almost twice a week - twice, thrice a week, and so - and in any case it got on to be known by the world that there were some - we - there were ANC people who were operating there, so it was not such a secret - it was not such a secret - the world knew we were there.
- J.F. Radio Freedom of Zapu or ANC?
- R.M. I now call it the Radio Freedom - it wasn't Radio Freedom at that time - no, no, it wasn't anything - it - it simply went to Zambia Broadcasting Station and broadcast it - we didn't - there wasn't South Africa - I mean there wasn't Radio Freedom in....
- J.F. It was - it was for the Zimbabwe Zapu - it was for people who were supporting Zapu to listen to?
- R.M. Well, people who (?) would have radios and they - they listened to Zambia to the....
- J.F. But it was talking liberate Zimbabwe - it was advocating the liberation of Rhodesia - Zimbabwe - it wasn't about South Africa....
- R.M. No, not about South Africa.
- J.F. But did Chikarema mention on this....
- R.M. Oh, yes - oh, yes he mentioned some - at one time he - yes, yes, yes, he did - yes, he did, and at one time he - he - he just went on and on talking rubbish - I was already arrested at the time.
- J.F. So when you were - you said then you began fighting - so you were actually there and you actually did fight - you did have encounters with the security forces before you were ultimately captured or arrested?
- R.M. I didn't have what?
- J.F. You did have some encounters, military encounters with the security forces....
- R.M. Oh (Laugh) yes - yes - we had clashes, yes - yes, yes, yes, we fought - as I told you, that some men fell down, some were captured - we (?) were captured one by one - some had the opportunity to run back to Zambia - the chance to run back to Zambia, which was very, very slim, which was very, very small really, because what they - what the - the - the security forces did was, as soon as we were inside the country and we had started clashes with them, they simply went to swim (?) off the Zambezi, so there wasn't no - there wasn't a chance to - to run back even if you wanted to run back, you see, so you simply had to be there and fight and fight it out, but there were of course some who - who - who were lucky who - who went back, and of course there - we did get onto a situation where we did send some back and we actually had found a point where - a way by which we could send them back - they did - there were not many of those we sent back - we would send somebody back for a particular purpose, not just going back because it was tough, no, but for a particular purpose - yes, there were those who went back - there were a lot who fell (?) - and then we were captured one by one, as I said, and where (?) we - we - we did inflict casualties, a great number of casualties among the - in the enemy security - in the security forces.

- R.M. There was a nice situation in court - you see, the newspapers at that time were trying to play down our effect - the casualties and that among the security forces, and then all of a sudden when I come to court I find that I - I'm charged for murdering 87 people - I said : No, no, no, no, it can't happen that way, man, it can't - I must have killed only about three - for the whole period I've been here I've killed only three - according to radio and the newspapers I killed three - I don't know where the other 84 came from now - wait a minute, let's go over it again - and they thought that I was trying to be funny (Laugh) - well, they said so - you see, so there were casualties among them, a big number, and we had....
- J.F. What was the truth, 84 - 87 or three?
- R.M. Well, there - there were far more than that - there were far more than that - added the Wankie, the....
- J.F. More than which, 87 or three?
- R.M. We were charged with my group - we were charged for having murdered 87 - that does not mean that there were only 87 who fell among them - we were charged with having murdered 87, and there were more than 170 wounded - that is not taking - they had traced the operations in which my group had been involved in, not the whole operation - only the clashes they said we were involved in, some - they missed some, they added some - there were other clashes, and that again does not include the numbers in Wankie, Wankie the worst - if you were to add all of that number will come - can - will easily come to 200, 250.
- J.F. And were those all - those security forces, were they all white, were they all Rhodesian, were they all - were there some South Africans, were there some blacks?
- R.M. All - black and white, South African and Rhodesia - from South Africa whites only, in Rhodesia black and white.
- J.F. Going back to your MK instructor who said you must develop a hatred for your enemy - when you were fighting those battles did you hate those security forces?
- R.M. Well, of course I did, and I still do.
- J.F. Did it have anything to do with them being white South Africans?
- R.M. No, no, no, no - no - no, no, not at all - I was fighting security forces - they were composed of black and white - there - there's no way where you are going to try and choose white faces in the forest there - I'm shooting at white faces - the black face among them is shooting at you - you are shooting at the enemy and most of the time - yes, most of the time you don't even see, you simply hear gunshots, you take cover, you shoot in the direction in which the fire had come, and later on you - then you position yourself properly until you can see where they are, how - how - how - how many they are, how are they dispositioned, and what are they carrying, what type of guns they have, what - how have they displaced, how have they emplaced their guns - and that's what happens - then you start fighting it out - you are not going to be picking and choosing white faces - and sometimes you are not even going to see a white face there - they have blackened themselves so - so what are you going to do.

R.M. In any case that's not - that's not what we are there for, to be picking out - looking for white faces, no, no, no, no - you are shooting at the people who are shooting at you, or you are shooting at people who you see first - they haven't even seen you - you shoot - if they've seen you first they shoot, if you've seen them first you shoot - that - that's the business you've gone there for - that's - that - I mean as simple as all that.

J.F. When you were finally captured was it in a battle or were you arrested?

R.M. No, no, no, I fell into - not - it were after some battles, but I fell into an ambush - I was crossing from one point to - we were two - we were walking from one point to another point and then we met some of these chaps - we met a group where we hit it out with them and we - we separated, you see - he took a different route, I took a different way - we didn't meet - and then I walked for a number of days until I fell right up into a - an ambush - at this time I was nearer Mangula - I'm sorry, nearer - nearer Centenary - I was in the area of Centenary at this time when I was captured, I was - I fell into an ambush - it was in a hill, you know - in a hillock - these chaps were there - I didn't see them, I - and I suppose my mental alertness had lessened a bit (... ..) because well, I should really have been more careful - I wasn't - I suppose it was because I hadn't been eating for 18 days or something like that - I was tired and all that nonsense, and I simply fell into an ambush, that's all, and they caught me - they took me to - to Doma, and from Doma they took me to Mangula, from Mangula transferred to - to - to - to Karoi - later on we went to Salisbury.

J.F. Were they interrogating you along the way or....

R.M. Oh, yes, yes, yes, oh God, yes - yes, they were.

J.F. And did they send South Africans up for that or they were already there waiting?

R.M. There were South Africans, but the special branch from South Africa came later on - there were South Africa - there were South - we were fighting against South African soldiers and Zimbabwean soldiers - I mean Rhodesian soldiers in Rhodesia - they were there, they were in units.

END OF SIDE ONE.

J.F. interrogated you - was there any sense that they had that - that they were threatened by the idea that two different - I'm sure they asked you a lot of things, but I'm interested on the focus of was there any sense - maybe there wasn't - of them being threatened by the idea that there were two different groups of black people fighting together, because the line of the regime is that blacks - the black different ethnic groups, the tribes will never get together, and that they're - that's what they're counting on - or did that not emerge - did (.....) that that upset them specifically....

- R.M. (Laugh) They were - they were - yes, they were - yes, we actually - we actually suffered for that - I mean the South Africans actually suffered for that - yes, they were - they didn't like our participation in that struggle one bit - they said a lot of things that I don't care to repeat, I - ja, they didn't like our participation at all.
- J.F. But did they say (.....) - did they say anything that specifically illuminated that, like what are you doing here, go back to your own country, these guys'll sell you out or this or that?
- R.M. Yes, yes - oh, they did that constantly, right through.
- J.F. Saying what?
- R.M. Why - why do you fight here - what business have you got here - you are an intruder, you are an invader - then they would take on a different line - another line, like for instance, Zimbabweans can't fight, you are the only people who are doing a lot of fighting here and, you know - you know, something like that - something to that effect - it's the old enemy tactic of trying to drive a wedge among - between you, see - it didn't have effect - it didn't have effect - they didn't impress us one bit - they did not impress us one bit - those Zimbabweans, I want to tell you one thing, I bloody well respect them - we came off our own - I like telling this bit.
- We came - we became men in - in a fight, but whenever we were walking, hell, the Zimbabweans walked, man (?) - those men are strong - basically - well, perhaps this may not really be scientific, but basically because generally 99 percent of Zimbabweans come from the rural areas - even those who work in towns, weekends they go to rural areas - at planting season they go to the rural areas and work there - they are rural bound, rural orientated, and it makes them used to walking long distances and they are bloody well tough, I can assure you - I - I remember, you know, I used to marvel at them really, used - we would walk for a long distance and take a break, and as soon as we stopped - as soon as we stood up to - to - to continue the march, I would look at them, I would find - well, I would be given the impression that they've just arrived from Zambia (Laugh)
- We became - we became men only in battles where we fought - we fought very well, but in walking distance - particularly myself, I don't want to place myself in a situation - I mean I don't want to paint a good picture of myself in walking - no, I wasn't - I would simply jees, man (?) - I'm not a good long distance walker, no, no, in spite of the fact that I'm a good runner - I'm a very good runner, but walking long distances, ag, I don't like it.
- J.F. And with all the time you spent together and with all the tensions and all the deprivations, did there not ever emerge times when there'd be a kind of ethnic - where there'd be somebody resorting to some kind of oh, these South Africans can't walk, or it's the South Africans fault or you - there was any kind of....
- R.M. No, no, no, no - no, not that way, not that way at all, but I want to tell you one thing - we quarrelled in our headquarters meetings - somebody puts a line and somebody disagrees, not because he's South African or he's Zimbabwean - he disagrees for a reason - we - we - we - we would quarrel, we discussed - take too long discussing only one issue, come up to a decision, go and work, and we worked marvellously.

R.M. That doesn't mean there weren't disagreements now and again, not because we were - we never dictated to - to the - the first thing is you - we - we - we couldn't dictate to them how to go about operating and all that - this was their country, we were conscious of that - they knew their country better, or they were supposed to anyway - they didn't actually very much I mean know that region - many of them didn't know that region really - in fact all of them - there was only one man - I forget his name, Patrick somebody - his brother is still here in England - his brother is a priest somewhere here in England - he's - he came from Sipolilo - he was the only one to come from Sipolilo - all the others came from south, so they weren't actually good in - they didn't actually know that region, but then of course we didn't dictate to them and tell them how to conduct their struggle - our business was to fight.

I was in the headquarters there - I was in the commander - the commander was a Zimbabwean - he had to be a Zimbabwean - because you'll understand that even if the - the - the - the numbers of the detachments - even though the numbers of the detachments accept us they would accept - they could - they would have accepted a South African commander, but now we are not going there in order to work only with the members of - of the detachment - they were going to people there who are not going to understand the situation, so they would like to sort of - they would like to communicate with somebody from that area - you'll get that in South Africa - you will get that in South Africa - you will get that in the Transvaal, get that in the Ciskei, get that in Venda, you see.

So you have to have somebody who comes from that area who will be doing a lot of communication with the people there, you see, and then people are sort of now, you know, not disconcerted, not alarmed by the fact that they have to deal with, you know, sort of foreigners, I can put it that way - and you are a foreigner in Zululand if you come from the Ciskei, you are a foreigner in the Ciskei if you come from Vendale, do you understand me - so there wasn't a question where among ourselves we disagreed because he's a Zimbabwean - there wasn't such.

Listen, we were mature politically - this is what you know - must know about the ANC people - ANC cadres are matured - we were trained - we received political training - I - I'm very sorry to have to say to you that that was not much - that did not happen very much after our group - after Wankie operations - the Zanu chaps, for instance, were not so - were not trained politically, and even in Zipra there was not much - there was not much political training - now but that is - the basis of a guerilla movement, it is the political training of the cadre - we don't just win by - we don't - we are not just fighting by pulling the trigger and releasing the bullet, no - we also have to win people - hearts and minds - they usually like saying that in this country - we have to win their hearts and minds - we have to win the people - you can't win people from an empty shell - well, if you are empty politically - you have - you have to know what you are fighting about - you have to be able to tell the people what we are fighting for, why we are fighting, how we are fighting, who you are - why they should contribute - so we were mature - we had a very good sound political training of our cadres - we weren't (?) just - we didn't come from - from - from - from the gutter.

I've just told you that I was a reporter at home, which gave me a lot more money than many - than - than any (.....) - it is far more above the average - let me put it to you this way, the - the average wage of a black worker (?) in a factory, for instance, was two pounds seventeen and six a week - that is about three pounds - that makes it 12 pounds a month.

R.M. At the railways they were - they were getting - people were getting ten pounds a month - now I've just told you that in New Age I was getting 25 pounds, but before then I had been getting 33 pounds - I was getting a lot of money, but now....

J.F. A week.

R.M. I was getting it a month - 33 pounds a month - when the average person gets ten pounds, 12 pounds, I was getting 33 pounds - in New Age I was getting double that - I was getting 25 pounds a month, all right, O.K., but now I'm still very far low in - in relation to our leaders - look at Mandela - Mandela ran the first legal - the first law firm in Johannesburg with Tambo - he was - they were raking in oodles and oodles of money, so they didn't actually have to fight simply because they were actually hungry themselves, but they were - they were fighting because of their conscience - we fought because of our conscience - we didn't come from the gutter what - by which I'm trying to tell you that we were matured, we knew what we were fighting for, you see, so there was no question where I'm going to start quarrelling over with you because you are white - I'm going to start quarrelling with you because you - you are Sizulu, or you are Ndebele, or you are South African, no, no, no, - we disagree - we were putting a point against which - I mean a point that I don't accept so (?) you have to convince me - I'm putting a point, I have to convince you - I mustn't string (?) - and there never was a situation where I thought that you were disagreeing with me because I'm South African - no, there wasn't such - there wasn't such - our very - the - well, I want to confine myself when - when I say that now I'm confining myself to the Wankie operation, all right.

Our group was matured - our group was matured - the brother of this girl (.....) was the chief of security of Zapu who (?) had left them in - in Zambia - you know Domiso Dabengwa (?) - he - he's just been in and out of trouble of late now, but he's out now, I - I understand he's employed - works for a government department or something - you know Domiso Dabengwa, ja....

J.F. That his sister?

R.M. He has a sister here - this - this girl who's seated here - (.....) spectacles (?)

J.F. So just let me - one thing I forgot to ask you about - when you were put up on your court charges what was the charge exactly?

R.M. Murder.

J.F. Murder of 87, with all of you together?

R.M. Murder.

J.F. And is your court statement anywhere that you've ever seen it recorded - you made a statement in court....

R.M. Oh, yes....

J.F. I'm sure it wasn't rubbish.

R.M. It was just talking a lot of....

J.F. But is it in (.....) book - is it in any book ever?

R.M. There is a bit of it in, yes - there is a bit of it, yes, there is.

- R.M. It's lovely you should remember that because - I have to say here, by the way, and I have to - tomorrow's Thursday and I can't see into (?) tomorrow's election day - nobody wants to be seen by anybody tomorrow, so I think on Friday I'll make means to see him - I'll travel back home on - on - on Sunday - either on Saturday or Sunday, so I have to see him - I'd forgotten now.
- J.F. He knows - I....
- R.M. We have met - we have met....
- J.F. I used his book a lot - in fact he - I met him once - I told him I like the book - what's it called again?
- R.M. I don't remember the title - I - I - I have it somewhere in there....
- J.F. I actually never - I had to use it from a library - so I can find it in (.....) book?
- R.M. Yes, you'll find my name in there (Laugh)
- J.F. Did they change the name?
- R.M. There's a very, very big problem, by the way, with me that you must know. Wherever I am I have a different name (Laugh) so that (.....) so - so that (.....) are not going to go into it, but wherever I am I have a different name altogether (Laugh) so you have a problem there - yes, in South Africa I'm Ralph Mzamo, here I am Ralph Mzamo, but where - anywhere else besides those two countries I - I - I - so....
- J.F. But what was the statement about and I'll find it - just tell me - because I remember those statements quite well.
- R.M. It's a lot of junk, I don't remem....
- J.F. Please just tell me what....
- R.M. I don't remember it very, very much, you see, but there was somewhere (?) where I did ask what - what does - I want to - I don't remember what appears actually - I said a lot of things - I don't remember actually what appears in (.....) book - I'll try and remember it - I'll try and remember it so that I know what I said in court and I mean what appears in Kies (?) book (Tape off) - I don't - I don't know who (?) - in the telephone book.
- J.F. So you made the statement and you - what was the trial - did they try in the trial at all to try to say these blacks were fighting together but they actually have different interests - did that come out at all, any of this divide and rule, put the wedge in, or did that not emerge?
- R.M. That one will always be there - always - wherever you are - in the forest, in the police stations, they would make that attempt - in prison the warders they will make that attempt - in - in - in court they will make that attempt - in prison again after you have been sentenced they will make that attempt of trying to sort of create divisions amongst you - they will do that - you get a question like : You are a South African, what business of - do you have here, you - you answer him : Oppression - he says : You are not oppressed in Zimbabwe, you - you - you answer him : Of course I'm not, I - I don't live in Zimbabwe, I'm oppressed in Southern Africa.

R.M. Listen, I'm cosmopolitan, I - I - I don't care for the imperialist or colonialist borders - Africa is all mine - you're not going to tell me where to stay, where to fight, what to do - basically I am opposed to your telling me what to do - who's placed you there - there was a time in court I asked O.K., what authority did the magistrate have - the - the - the judge have because one - for one thing we - we - he's employed by a government for which we did not vote - I did ask again another question : How is it that somebody I'm fighting against happen - then becomes the man who is the judge - I did ask that, yes, I - I - we fight together - how do I come up - how do you come to a situation where now you are going to be the judge - you see, such questions like that, they always arose, you see.

There - on the other hand, they did try to say : No, these peop - these South African - in court they didn't say that, that the Rhod - it were the police before then who were saying that the Zimbabweans were not fighting very much before you happened, you see, so you are - you see, we were - they were trying to say we were people who were, you know, well, O.K., very bad people, I can put it that way - and they did try to sow that among the Zimbabwean chiefs (?) - they didn't win - they didn't win - as I said to you, we disagreed occasionally over issues - didn't mean that we disagreed because ethnic division, you know - because well, I came from South Africa or I disagreed with him because he was Ndebele or I disagreed - there were Ndebeles, there were Shonas, there were - there were - there was - there were ourselves - the Zulus, Xhosas, Sothos, Tswanas.

And you should remember another factor in Zimbabwe - in Zimbabwe again there were Shonas, there were Ndebeles and there were Sothos, you see - there were Karangas - Karangas and Zulu, Manica, Karanga, Kalangas, Zizuru, Manica and Shangaan, Ndebele, so - but the police did always try to make that, you see, but they - they never succeeded - there's no way where they ever succeeded.

J.F. So the whole time you were in prison you don't think that you had any exacerbation of your differences because of the ethnic factor - nobody ever got pissed off if you (.....) go back to South Africa?

R.M. I can only tell you one thing about - as far as that is concerned - it is when we were in prison now in Khami when the - there were a lot of people from different organisations - people from Zanu - and who always said we were mercenaries - yes, there were people who said that, who said we were mercenary when they were talking about us, not people - not Zapu people saying that we were mercenaries - but then you should remember that there are very big differences between Zapu and Zanu - they never got on along together - they are not getting on along together just now, you see, so - in the same way as the - the - the - the - it - they are not unique - they are not the only people to have said that about us - there's PAC people in Lusaka - I knocked down one bastard there one time before I went - I crossed over, because the Wankie - the Wankie detachment crossed before we crossed.

Now it came out in the newspapers, and then PAC were interviewed by the press - were they going to - they were asking if they were going to send some South Africans to go and fight alongside Zanu now that Zapu had accepted ANC to fight alongside in Zimbabwe - in Rhodesia, and PAC said they were not interested in sending mercenaries - that was PACs - that's South African organisation - what I'm trying to say to you is that it's not only the Zanu people who regarded us like that, and there were not even many of them who thought that, you see, who said that.

- R.M. Well, I don't know what they thought, what they said when they were (.....) because they were - they - they - they stayed, you know, separately from Zapu people - now I don't know what they were saying in their private meetings or when they were talking alone there, but they didn't - there were not many of them who said we were mercenaries, but PAC people said the same thing, and I had to knock down one in Lusaka.
- J.F. But do you ever feel with all the problems there've been between Zanu and Zapu that that might be something that would happen in the South African struggle?
- R.M. The question is (?) that will there be similar problems, oh, well....
- J.F. I don't think there'll be directly (.....) problems currently (?) but do you think you've seen first hand problems - let me just say in that there is some ethnicity behind Zanu and Zapu, which nobody denies....
- R.M. There is a bit of it, yes.
- J.F. That bit of it, aside from the ideological and that experience that they had that was different and all that, just only on the ethnic and also just the geographical - there's a lot of nonsense like the people will say like that the ANC's Xhosa dominated, which one could say forget that, but still there are people who live far from another part of the country - there are people who've never been to Natal who are in the Eastern Cape, and that different experience from different area and the different ethnicity factor itself - you don't think that will ever be a problem in the South African struggle - you've seen it in the Zimbabwe struggle - you were in a Zimbabwe prison - you say you're non-racial....
- R.M. It will be quite naive of me to say that there will not be such a problem, but I want to say this - generally such situations are fostered by people, other people - of course by other people, leadership, for instance....
- J.F. You're not saying they're caused totally - you're saying they're worsened by - you wouldn't....
- R.M. They - they are caused by general - generally people - I've just told you - I'm trying to tell you that my philosophy is that people are nice except when there comes along somebody who tries to mess things up - generally people don't bother - I - I remember a friend of my uncle - my uncle didn't speak Sotho - he understood Sotho very well - this friend of my uncle didn't speak Xhosa - he understood Xhosa very well - they sat together, they drank their beer, mqombodhi, and they conversed Mqombodhi....
- J.F. What's that, brother to brother?
- R.M. No, no, the name of the beer, Mqombodhi - they drank together, they carried on two, three, four hour conversations sit - sitting together there, each speaking his language - generally people are like that until - until a Roger comes along to say : This is a wrong situation altogether, you see.

R.M. O.K., having said that I'm not saying that people are actually very, very sophisticated - no, I'm not saying that, but what I am saying is that there will be elements in South Africa who will want to say that ANC's Xhosa dominated, ANC's Zulu dominated, ANC's Sotho dominated - there will be - there will always be, because their interest is to cause - to sow chaos within the ANC - it - it's to their advantage, it's to their interest - I mean I - I - I have to acknowledge the fact that - that it will - they are fighting me - they will use any means to try and wreck me.

But I want to say that again to you that if we were going to look at people because this one is Zulu, this one is Xhosa, this one is this that, can I ask you a question - which president of the ANC was Xhosa - this is off the record, but which president of the ANC was Xhosa?

J.F. I don't know, none.

R.M. All right, I'm not going to answer that - I shouldn't be asking that question - it's wrong to answer that question because it - it suggests that I have looked at this, which is true, I have - let me ask you a second - a collary (?) question to that one - which president of the ANC was not popular at any time because he happens to be Sotho or he happens to be Zulu - which president was not popular at his time - if you can answer that question you will have answered your question.

J.F. So you're saying that it doesn't affect things viz-a-viz the mass perceptions?

R.M. Ethnicity doesn't come into it really - in the end - at the end of the day, no, it doesn't - there will be people of course who will try and sow discord - there will be - you will always have agent provocateurs - by agent provocateurs I mean people who are within you but who are working to the interests of your enemies - they may have been sent directly - I mean consciously - they may be working consciously for that particular purpose, they may be working unconsciously, just confused elements - you will always have that problem.

But having said all that, I do not believe that it will be as bad as it is in Zimbabwe - I do not for one moment believe that - I don't at all because - particularly because people in South Africa are, very, very different - very, very different and - that is the first thing - the second thing is that - and I'm going to keep on harping - I'm going to repeat it now time and time and again - the second thing is that the ANC teaches political understanding - we don't say : No, my business is the gun, I have no business with politics, politics is Tambo's domain, my business is the gun - we don't say that - we teach people politics - we go to the people, we ask the people - you see, for instance, I always like to say this in Britain - when I address people here - they (?) were asking people to - to impose sanctions against South Africa - that we didn't - it is not the people who are in the comfort of exile, people like Ralph Mzamo, who are asking for sanctions - it is not the leadership of the ANC that is asking for sanctions - it is not - last year or year before last or in 1972 that we have asked for sanctions - it is the - it was the people of South Africa in 1960 who asked for sanc - who asked the world - it is the people - we are merely reflecting the wishes, the aspirations of the people - we are merely carrying out the message of the people of South Africa.

Now that is what the ANC has always been - the ANC's fed back - is fed from below generally all the policies - I think I've just illustrated that by telling you how the Freedom Charter was written - no - no commission or committee sat and started writing a document, you know, a draft which went on to be - to - to - to be endorsed, no, no, no - it came from the masses, from the people.

- R.M. That is - that is exactly the ANC - that is the - the - the - the soul, the being of the ANC - that is how it operates, as a result of which there is no way where it is going to re - it is going to stop that and allow people to be carried by, you know, malcontents, people who are going to try and sow discord among people - no, we go to the people and we teach the people, people - and once people are in the ANC they are matured.
- J.F. What sentence did you get in your trial?
- R.M. What sentence did everybody get?
- J.F. I don't know.
- R.M. Death - you cross the river with a gun, you are - you are carrying a gun - whether you shoot or you - you haven't shot, your intention is to go and shoot - you are therefore charged under section under chapter 36, which has a mandatory death sentence - once the judge has found you guilty he - there's no other sentence - if he has found you not guilty, he lets you go - there is no way he's going to find you not guilty, because you are guilty by just having a gun and crossing the river - have I answered your question?
- J.F. So you were sentenced to death in 1967 or 19....
- R.M. '68 - committed to life imprisonment and then....
- J.F. Commuted?
- R.M. Commuted - oh, well, the - the - the government, the Smith government.
- J.F. Why did they commute it?
- R.M. In 1968 they were preparing - well, I - that's my conclusion - they were - in any case it's a fact they were endeavouring to - to - to - to - to have talks with the British government under Harold Wilson in order to lift sanctions, so they - and in - and - and again in 1968 the whole world was clamouring for us not to be killed - pressures were make - exerted all over - and Smith decided that before he went to the Tiger talks, to where he was going to go and talk with Harold Wilson, he probably wanted to mollify, you see, so by - say : O.K., I'm not killing these chaps, they will die of their own in prison - but by 1980 we came out free - the country had....
- J,F. What day and month....
- R.M. July 1st,, 1968.
- J.F. And how many were you sentenced together?
- R.M. We eventually became - well, there were just about - well, man, I don't know the numbers now - and in Khami - there were 700 in Khami, not all of - not all of us had been sentenced to death - we - at the (.....) there were a hundred and I don't know how many....
- J.F. But on July 1st., 1968 how many were....
- R.M. Nine.
- J.F. You were nine together - I think I remember the trial from my reading.
- R.M. From?
- J.F. Just from my reading - I think I'm remembering reading it.

- R.M. What did I want to say - there's something I just forgot to - maybe it will come, maybe it won't come, but I want to go now.
- J.F. I'm just going to ask you finally what language did you speak in prison?
- R.M. When?
- J.F. In Zimbabwe - were you the whole time in different prisons or were you just in Khami....
- R.M. From Salisbury we were transferred to Khami, so that's why I'm asking you when.
- J.F. Tell me the different time - I don't know how to ask the question, so you'd better tell me.
- R.M. Ja, O.K. - first I spoke English or Ndebele....
- J.F. You can speak Ndebele?
- R.M. Zulu, Zulu, Zulu, let me put it that way.
- J.F. You just speak Zulu and they answer in Ndebele - it's about the same?
- R.M. Yes, and those who didn't understand Ndebele, who spoke Shona, I spoke English to, and then I learned Shona.
- J.F. Did you take lessons or you just learned from being with all the people?
- R.M. I learned from being with the people and I also read a lot Shona books, all that.
- J.F. When you were in prison and you thought you - you must have followed the trials - you got newspapers at all or did you get newspapers?
- R.M. My God - yes, when we got there they were giving prisoners - they were buying newspapers for prisoners, but they noted (?) the people who had been there before then noticed that after we'd gone there there was a censorship - newspapers would be censored - were censored, but that became worse now after we were there, they were censored but - and then they - they would stop for a - for a month or two, and then one day bring a tattered paper, and then eventually they stopped altogether.
- J.F. Did you ever know of the other trials that were going on or did you just hear by word of mouth?
- R.M. We heard of them - we would read about them - sometime we would come across them and we did smug - do a lot of smuggling, but then generally they were brought here to us....
- J.F. The reason I'm asking was did you ever know of any trials of freedom fighters of any party that involved anyone besides Africans - any Coloureds, Indians or whites in Zimbabwe?
- R.M. No, Coloureds, Indians or whites....
- J.F. There was John Conradie?
- R.M. Yes, I was looking for that name - I remember that one, yes - he was sentenced to....
- J.F. 12.
- R.M. 12 years?

- J.F. Which he served in full (?)
- R.M. Yes, and....
- J.F. But there's no other white (?) (.....)
- R.M. There is a Coloured man - his name - his name or his name is George....
- J.F. Was he in prison with you?
- R.M. He - well, now in - but of late he was - what sentence did he get - either six years or nine years, I don't remember exactly what it was.
- J.F. Was he with you people?
- R.M. Yes, he was with us in Khami.
- J.F. Did he get along O.K. - was there any problem for him that he was the only non-African of the politicals?
- R.M. No, I don't think he had - well....
- J.F. I'm just wondering in South Africa you have so many - you have Bram Fischers - there're not many but there're enough that I can name 15, and you can many more, but in Zimbabwe I can't name anyone besides John Conradie and (.....) an Indian guy, but there're not that many - I'm sure there're a few more, but it's just much, much, much less than South Africa, partly because it's a tiny population, but I'm just wondering did those people you were with, the Zimbabweans, did they have a non-racial view of the struggle, did they think their struggle was African for the Africans, or did they think it was all blacks or did they think whites could be involved, or did they - did it ever come up - did they ever say to you : Gosh, the South African struggle is strange, you've got this Slovo running the army and you've got famous whites involved and....
- R.M. No, Slovo wasn't running the army at the time - at our time he was - he was just there - he was - he was....
- J.F. Jed Bolberg (?) who was in MK - you had very high level people - it didn't matter what race you were you could reach higher levels - did that ever come up - maybe it didn't come up, in which case I won't....
- R.M. No, it - it - it would come up in the sense that they were fighting for a black government, I can put it that way - they were fighting for a black government, unlike us, who are simply fighting for a non-racial democracy in South Africa - yes, it did come out - it wasn't so much of a thing really, perhaps because there weren't many whites in any case - well, there were no whites in Khami, for one thing, and this George I'm telling you about only came to prison in 1978, so no, it didn't come up really as such - but then they were fighting for a black government.
- J.F. Just two last questions - do you think it made you more of an internationalist to have fought with people from another country and been in their prison together with them - do you think that you're a nationalist, do you think you're an internationalist - which are you?
- R.M. Internationalist - I don't know now - that one is difficult to - you see, I'm internationalist - I don't understand - I don't actually think I - in what context?
- J.F. Just saying you clearly fought together for the liberation of Southern Africa, you didn't - you - would you ever say to someone : Look, now that it's possible when - when it's possible go to South Africa, you - they'll (?) be concentrated on South Africa only - do you believe in transcending borders and do you believe in the concept of internationalism and did it matter.

J.F. Was it a factor (..... he's coughing) people of another nationality, ethnically and by their border of their country?

R.M. I'm not internationalist in the sense of involving the whole wild - wide world, I - I'm not internationalist in that sense - I can fight in Zambia, I can fight in Zimbabwe, can fight in Angola, can fight in Namibia, I mean I can fight in Southern Africa - I don't believe I could fight say, north of Sahara, I mean let me put it that way, and I don't believe I can fight outside Africa - I can't go - I would never go to America and fight like - like we have had - we have seen William - William Roy - William Pomeroy of America who went to fight in the Philippines, like you have seen Wilfrid Burchett, unless of course - well, as - as a journalist I can definitely go there, yes, but just as a journalist, not to fight....

J.F. Like Che Guevara.

R.M. And like you have seen Che Guevara going to fight in - Che Guevara fought in eleven countries in - in - in Latin America - I - I don't think I can ever do that.

J.F. Do you think it's wrong or is it....

R.M. No, no, no, not at all - not at all, it's not wrong - it's not wrong - it's definitely not wrong, and they believe and they are angry enough to be able to do it - I'm not that angry - I'm angry for South Africa, yes, definitely I'm - I'm angry for Southern Africa, but I would want to con - to confine myself to Southern Africa - once we are through with that, concentrate on the business of reconstruction - that I can do - but I am not a racist and I am not - I - I'm not tribalist and I'm regional - I'm regionalistic in the sense that I have said to you I can fight in south of the Sahara.

Now let me say something in relation to that - we went to fight there for a number of reasons - the political reason that it was just oppression, and those were our brothers, to put it simplistically again - we went to fight there because we had no friendly borders at the time - there was a belt of reaction, of - there was that belt of retrogression - Mozambique, Rhodesia, you see - there was a very big buffer - we had no friendly border - what I mean by a friendly border - now we have a friendly border Zimbabwe is a free country - you get my point - we have a friendly - we have friendly neighbours - now we have Mozambique, it's a friendly neighbour - we can be in a situation where we can - we can - we - we - we can jump across the border and fight and - and jump across the border, take our wounded or take respite or anything, because there is a friendly bord - I'm not saying that happens - it's not happening, but then that - that is a - a - a possibility now, which was not possible at that time.

We went to fight because the boers were there from 1966 and they were gaining anti-guerilla experience - we weren't gaining any experience - we went to fight there because the country - those were our brothers and they had - they were oppressed - as oppressed as we were - they are free now - they are not free - if we were to be free tomorrow and they were not free, we would be free but we would not be free - do you get my point - what I'm saying is that no country will be free in Africa until South Africa is free - at the moment they are destabilised - they are subjected to destabilisation, activities by South Africa, because they have to rely on South Africa - Zimbabwe and Zambia and landlocked countries - they have to carry their things, imports and exports through South Africa - many of their businesses are still owned by interests in South Africa - therefore they can never be free until South Africa is actually free.

R.M. So even if it had been South Africa that was free and they were not free, that would have meant that we would not be free if they were not free - we - we can't be free with our neighbours not being free.... military reasons - those are the political reasons behind it, and the military reasons that, for instance, we had to also gain experience in war, and the boers were there in any case.

J.F. in prison?

R.M. We were 15 in prison - two died there.....

END OF INTERVIEW.