

JF Can you tell me just when and where you were born.

TN 1952 March 23

JF Whereabouts?

TN Here in Durban.

JF In what area did you grow up?

TN I grew up in my aunt's place in Port Shepstone, that is a rural area.

JF Port Shepstone?

TN Yea. I grew up in my aunt's place there and then I came here to Durban when I was roughly between 15 and 14 or so.

JF So was that the South coast?

TN Yea it was the South coast.

JF What did your parents do?

TN Oh just nothing special, so to say. My mother, actually, my mother, she is working as a domestic worker. And my father died while I was still very young - I think about 6 or 5 years.

So actually I grew up under my mother's direction so to say.

JF And where was the home? Was it in the kia or was it in the township?

TN It was in the township actually the township we got there through my mother because she married again in the 70's and so that's how actually we were able to be in the township so to say.

And before that we were staying at they were staying actually at Nkumbane which is an old place near Chesterville near Mayview which was of course destroyed.

JF Was it a township?

TN It was a not really a township in the sense but people used to build their own homes there and so on.

It was a big place at Mayville. Actually that is where in 1948/49 the clash between the Africans and Indians erupted at Nkumbane.

JF What is it a kind of shanty town of Durban?

TN It was that.

JF Squatters

TN It was that yea. And then in the sixties it was actually destroyed that's how Marshal ? came to be around.

JF So.. I'm still unclear. Growing up in a rural area was a township of Port Shepstone.

TN No. Just a rural area.

JF Which is what? White or black or?

TN I'd say its black.

JF What, a rural township?

TN No not really a township. You see in a rural area what will happen is that you find the people there having their own houses, you know these rondavel..

JF Oh so it's like a little village?

TN Yea.

JF And did your mother so any subsistence farming?

TN Ya. Of course they were involved in that. That is, my mother was all along working as a domestic worker until even now she is still working as such.

JF What was her view of those whites? Did she come home from working for those whites and say anything about them? Was she subservient or was she scared or was she anti. How did you grow up hearing about whites?

TN I will say..

JF What was the kind of image you had of whites?

TN I would say it was that of subservient so to say, because she's not anti definitely she's not that.

And I think her view actually is that of accepting so to say.

JF And when you grew up how did you see whites? Did you think she should make more of a stand against her madam or anything.

TN Yea actually you know she is a christian person you know. A highly religious person and so we used to clash on many issues while I was still growing up especially about 14 16 17.

Asking many questions .. even the way you know I was .. we were brought up - that's me and my brother. And I used to ask quite a lot of questions. "Hey how do you account for this?"

Of course you know through religious point of view so to say you see questioning this and that "You are a worker, you are a poorly nothing and you don't even have a home yourself." But how do you answer that, how does that answered, and so on and so forth.

So well we used to really clash really. Because you could say anything but you can't start questioning her on her religious beliefs and things like that.

So my .. I'd say in terms of whites per se, I didn't actually have any specific I'll say attitude so to say. It was just that of course I grew up with my mother in this small backyard rooms that are in the what you call suburbs, white suburbs.

So even having white friends while I was still young you see and of course going to school if I had to go to school at Kushlanga where I went to. We had a room there where we used to stay.

And then I'd always come back on weekends, go to my mother and so on.

And then actually to have a house and say you know at least I have a home. That is something that came I think about the '70's, '72 if I'm not wrong or roughly early '70.

When my mother got married to Mr Kumalo in Chesterville. He was a widower himself. Then there was a place there where one could say at least now I have got a home so to say.

And he was quite a nice old fellow and he completely accepted us with no problems. And he is late unfortunately also. He died I think about '75 or so.

JF So you could stay at your mother's like in what they call a *kiya* but you also went home to your auntie in the rural parts.

TN Rural areas yes. But that ... yea I used to go there visiting so to say. I used to go there visiting. Even now I still go there visiting at times.

JF Go where?

TN That is at my aunt's place at *Port Shepstone*.

JF But your mother had a room, you could stay with her if you came to her?

TN Mm

JF Do you ever remember - maybe this is a bit far fetched - but do you ever remember playing with those white kids and then beginning to ask yourself why did they live in a nice house, why did they have more...?

TN That I think.. that actually came up in my younger days. And the only person I always could pose questions to was my mother. And of course she could not explain anything either political or whatever you see, except that no, whites are what what, whites are, they are more bigger than us and so forth.

So that's why they have these beautiful houses. And at times you know she would just fight me and say "hey go on, do stop asking questions" and so on. You know when she is in a corner.

Then she will start argueing and fighting and say "hey you have no right to ask questions" and so on.

JF Did she ever say this is the way God meant it to be? He created it this way or...

TN Yea. You see when I was still young, I mean my mother being a religious person you know. So I grew up under her and I was really very keen in attending Sunday schools and things like that.

And until of course I started asking questions. Now that was I'll say between

JF And then you went to school .. what kind of a school, a boarding school?

TN Well it was both - day school and boarding school at the same time. That was Ushlanga that is at Unanga in the ..

JF Is it a mission school or was it just a government school?

TN No actually it was a .. it was actually built by Mr Dube and after coming from America he was actually I think if I'm not wrong that he was a doctor or something like that. He had a doctorate.

JF Which Dube was this?

TN At Inanda.

JF Which Dube, what's his first name? It doesn't matter.

TN Actually he's .. you'll get it as well.. he's quite actually a figure. A person who was involved in many ways in many things and the school itself was actually built.. he organized funds and things like that for the school to be actually built.

JF Its not the Dube of the old ANC.

TN No. No. But its still a .. its not a government school.. its still a private school I think a mission school or something like that. The problem is that right now I don't know really.

JF And so did you matriculate?

TN Actually no. I only passed my Standard 8 there.

JF And what happened?

TN And then I had to go out and work you see and assist my mother. Also my brother was still very young at the time.

JF What work did you do?

TN Well just ordinary labourer .. labouring work. The first place actually that I worked for was at a furniture shop here in West Street actually in Punt Street.

JF Were you at all resentful that you had to leave school? Would you have wanted to finish or were you bored with school or how did you feel about that.

TN I felt very bad really because that was one of the things that we used to discuss you see, with my mother. Because even when I had to leave school my mother did explain that, no, listen now, you are old you can actually have now a reference book in which case you are eligible to work as well and I cannot of course support you any longer. Take you to school and things like that. Specially since there was also a brother, my younger brother.

And of course my mother was earning about 50 Rand a month actually so having some people .. some children that had to go to school in the 50 Rand as well as pay in whatever place that we are actually we have rented or something like that.

So you find that it was really a burden really and I also actually understand that. Grudgingly I left school. Agree and left school and started working.

JF What year was that that you left school?

TN That was in 1967 actually. So in 1968 and then I started work.. if I'm not wrong I think it was '68 or '69 when that I started working for that furniture shop.

JF From all that we've discussed so far was there any political content. Were people in the rural areas ever discussing historical movements or anything like the current political situation, do you remember the political events, Sharpville, or anything like that?

TN What I could say is that the family that I grew up under both here and in the rural areas at my aunt's place and things, were really people who were.. what I could call non-political so to say.

People who could not actually connect one thing with the other, you see. People who seem to.. they are more, you know, religious.. for most of the people you find that for lack of doing anything or lack of understanding certain things they become more religious, you see.

Because they have to drown their sorrows so to say. Have that hour or two where they could forget everything.

JF So they just weren't political.

TN I actually became more involved in politics personally now outside the so to say-outside my home that is. Because even my mother wasn't aware that I was actually involved in politics or anything until I was arrested in 1977..

Then she was really surprised.

JF So tell me about that evolution when you left school and went to work in the furniture shop. Do you think you had ever even heard of the ANC?

TN I don't know when.. on which part .. or about which years when I started knowing about the existence of the ANC and such organizations.

Because I remember that.. I think it was actually after I was out of school that I remember at one stage.. I don't know where.. with my auntie now. In Po [redacted] I was staying with my aunt and there were also uncles and such people you know, in about 2 kilometre distance and so on.

So I used to visit them and so on. So it was then that one uncle actually started mentioning the .. even then we were not really .. really I wouldn't say it was a discussion or so. You know something that is mentioned you know.

I don't unfortunately remember the whole discussion itself but he used to mention of course ANC every now and again. But of course at that time.. actually that was during the late '60's .. or the '60's when there was that lull you see. And people started forgetting.. those who were in the rural areas, started asking questions about "hey man, these people, what happened to them?" and so forth you see.

So it was during those period, I would say-that period. But even then it was not something that I really took seriously. I have to make that clear that even then it was not really something that I would say .. it might have of course influenced me in later years.

Or some of the questions raised then-you know, but questions that are actually embedded in my subconsci [redacted] that I could not actually just recall at will.

And that is possible of course. Because even my own self when I could not actually pinpoint very well say this is when I started somethings and things like that.

JF So did you during that time when you weren't .. part of things, did you.. how did you feel about whites then. You had your mother's line about whites but did you go through any stage of feeling anti the whites when you got into the workplace or did you feel like these are the people who are oppressing us in any way you know in a non-political way?

TN Yea you see most of the people of course they kept that feeling but I cannot really honestly say that at a certain stage I had that feeling. I really cannot say.

It is possible that at a certain stage in my own growing up and so on I had a certain feeling like that but I think one of the things that maybe might have contributed is that I was more nearer you know to to whites in terms of that, that is I only meet them because my mother used to work there and then stay there so obviously if I come to Durban then I go to my mother.

And then in the process I'm maybe mixing and playing and so on with the white kids. And although I had questions many questions which of course I'll pose to my mother and things like that, but I cannot really say that I really had an anti-white feeling you see which is actually experienced by the people in the black consciousness movement and things like that.

Although when.. during the.. those days, black consciousness days I was.. it did affect me as well you see. That really this thing cannot be done any other way than this.

JF So did you continue just to work in different jobs?

TN Yea. Actually I had many many jobs because I couldn't stay in one for long.

JF Why not?

TN You know.. at times you see it used to overpower me the, you know the so to say the acceptance so to say of the whole structure, the whole system - working getting pay only depending on that wage that you earn which is not even enough for that.

And I think that that made me short tempered so to say in a way. So if there is anything that goes wrong or something.. At times in some other places well I used to clash with the supervisors and things like that and I'd tell them hell and that would be the end.

So I go to another place, I work there and.. You see I just couldn't stay in one place you know. I had that.. I was restless so to say really. You know I moved in many places in a very short time of space.

JF But not political..

TN No No Not actually getting something or I'll say involved in anything political, that could be described as political as such. Even my involvement really I cannot really pinpoint when how.

But it was something you know developing you know in me so to say. And of course by then I was starting learning ~~many~~ lot of things, reading and I was very good in reading. I could simply close myself there in the bedroom and read the whole damn day not going out and so on and getting books and so on.

JF What kind of books?

TN History, political books because.. In fact I remember at one stage I think it was '69 or '70 where some one of my friends just came and gave me one book "There, you must read this book." Now that was actually by an American on black consciousness .. black consciousness.. and.. who is this chap man.. the author of that book. Malcolm X.

So after that I think reading, going through that book actually I became more you know I wanted more, I wanted to get more. But even then I wouldn't say really it affected my general attitude you know but I accepted quite a lot of these things because I just looked at reality and saw that no actually this is.. what this chap is actually talking about are some things that ~~are~~^{is} actually happening right now.

And well in the '70's it was a period of black consciousness movement but I personally did not I would say get into contact with the black consciousness movement as such, apart from as an individual so to say.

I completely accepted what I was reading in some of the books. And so somehow or other I got myself more and more involved now, becoming more and more involved.

But what the really thing.. I would say the turning point really was at the last place, not actually the last place.. in one of the places that I worked for a workers security police.. actually not a security police but its a security corps. It's this municipality police. Ya, its a Port Natal (?) police.

Now at that time it was still under Durban corporation, that is under City what you call.. City Council at that time. So it changed then it was a Port Natal and things like that.

So I worked there. Now the types of jobs that they do is to guard the premises you know.. all premises that are under Port Natal like for instance the influx control offices down there at Onins (?) road, like beerhalls.. its head office was there in Dalton, I think its still there in Dalton even now.

And they are also at the townships.. you will find them in the townships so to say maintaining .. law and order something like that.

But there was a system that they used to do. You see there were those raids that are used to be taken about 2 from.. actually from 12. From 12 midnight

JF Raids?

TN Raids. You know they will go into a house, raid people there, go inside there and start roll calling. So if you are not in the house permanently you are obviously here illegally and then you are taken and then relatives have to come and run after us to pay admission of guilty fines and things like that.

And that.. those were the things and as well as of course working at the influx control offices in Onins (?) Road where I started now actually you know seeing how these things actually affect us.

Now I started linking up what we were actually doing and the general condition of the African people. And I was.. I will say a new generation in that in those police force there. Because most of the people there are old people that were recruited some time back from the rural areas you know.

So they were just starting actually to take younger people now. And I think I was among the first. So much that actually even the captain who was the head of that what you call.. it was Captain Fisa..

When he interviewed me, when I went there and he interviewed me, then he asked me "But why do you want to be a security corps?" I said "Well I want to work. I don't have money. I'm not employed and I just want to work." He said "Yea, but your friends will of course despise you" and so on and so forth.

Now, I said "Oh well yea that's true" but at the same time I had to live, you see. Really you see I think if I'm not wrong I was the first amongst the young generations so to say or amongst the first anyway.

So I worked there really I.. that is the only place where I could say I worked for a year because I worked for five years. So it was quite something new.

JF Those five years there(?)

TN Yea I worked five years there. And at the same time you know collecting in my mind so to say, collecting in my mind evidence of what actually we are doing you see.

And linking this up with the general condition, the oppression or whatever. Then I came to the conclusion actually that my being part of the whole machinery actually I am directly suppressing and oppressing our own people.

Because that was the major thing that actually made me resign from there. And even when I resigned you know there were questions.. they didn't know why they asked me why but why do you want to resign? I said no, I think now I have had enough.

Enough of what? I said no well I was working for money because I wanted money now at least I have made so much so I could get married and that's fine so I don't want to work any more.

You see I couldn't even then you see tell them straight because my ideas observations and things like that were not really in a coherent manner so to say.

But you see the things that we used to do..you know really made me feel no, no no no I shouldn't be part of the whole thing.

TN 18/8/85 (2)

JF Was there.. I'm asking people if there are any anecdotes or anything because a lot of what you have been saying is kind of theoretical. But in practice was there anything specifically that you did that was just the worst, that made you think now this is bad, I must stop.

TN Ya, the main things actually was in terms of raiding houses you know, arresting people for being in Durban with no ^{permission} or whatever.

And even raiding you know old women who were selling in the street corners, especially in Dalton you'll find them there lined up you know selling meat and things like that.

Now we used to go there and have.. take those raids there and then we'll just take the whole.. because they'll run. When they run then we just take meat.

And we are just going to eat that meat. We, personally we are going to eat that meat and then it ends there. Right, take it to our homes, different homes, some we brai there you know and roast them there, eat them there you know. Have a sort of a party of some sort you see.

Now that thing we used to do and initially I used to enjoy it but then I started asking myself questions, "But these people, these people they are actually selling these things simply because they need something, they need to live and things like that."

And what we actually engaged in is not really because something.. because maybe its unhealthy for them to do that because we actually eat this meat. So if its unhealthy for them to sell them there, then we come and actually eat them, so the reason is not that because its unhealthy and unhygeinic and things like that.

So, I started asking myself questions. At the time you see I could not really come up with the answers but I could link up the whole thing and I was you know I was I will say sort of an individual you know.

Because well as I said that when I read I will just lock myself in the bedroom and read the whole damn day and noone will know that I am actually in.

And so most of these things that I observe and when I get home then I will start thinking about them and I won't discuss them with anyone actually. Start thinking about this, thinking about that, thinking about this, and now bringing these two different things and connecting them and then the whole big picture will come into my mind that no man but it is actually like this because we are oppressed.

So at that time my observation was tinged with that you know information and reading people like Malcolm X and things like that. So no its because of whites that is why.

But really having that feeling you know.. I wouldn't really say but whom to blame? I know its whites. It was just like that.

JF Was it racial then..

TN It was clearly whites, you see, ya, no, with the.. with no actual hate that I could feel that no really I hate these people or you know ^{feeling} when we are walking that we could just hit one or something like that, no.

But my answers were always "No, because of whites."

JF It wasn't because of the system, it wasn't bad whites or good whites or wasn't bosses or workers it was whites.

TN It was simply whites. Although even then.. I was actually having some whites who were friends. So I would ^{out} know of course remove them from the whole rotten thing you know. Say "No, so and so is a very.. is a good one you see."

You see I used to.. actually I used to be free with whites. While at the same time when I start thinking about these things and so on I will say "No, its whites man against us."

And getting his.. reading history and so on of course it will give the clear picture of what actually happened. Then I will simply blame them but at the same time be able to make friends with them.

You know it was completely a new thing, I don't know. I don't know whether that is the usual thing in some other cases or here in South Africa for that matter but I will say it was really a complex thing so to say.

JF Did you ever say to your white friends its you guys who are causing us trouble.

TN Yea at times, at times. But not really you know actually going out of my way to tell them and so on and so forth. Because even myself, I wasn't clear but I was actually accepting or taking what is actually obvious you know.

Taking the history of my own growing up, supported by my mother who works for Mrs So and So and so on you see. And I couldn't even stay at her place of work.

I had to stay somewhere. As well as the type of work that we were doing, the harrassment that we actually were doing to our people and all these things you know sort of grouped together.

They came to me and then I started thinking about that and that and started linking them up. Some things that were happened quite some time back, some that are still happening, and so on.

So I did actually have that feeling of blaming whites, I said "No, actually its simply whites," and so on. And I think it was actually because of after reading Malcolm X because during that time before I read Malcolm X I could not really clearly say that no I had actually this attitude you see.

And then during the BC days, black consciousness days, '70's, there used to be meetings around. SASO, BPC and.. but these meetings.. but in these meetings because I think .. the meetings actually used to concentrate on people who were in the universities and things like that you see.

So we .. you will hear of course ~~that~~ and get it too from somebody there was a meeting yesterday and something like that.

And even if you go there because I remember at one stage I went to one which was at Wansia (?), I think that was about '73 or 4. Hey you know, find those people actually conversing in English and really big English you know.

Well we who could not just understand you see. And then so it was simply something Oh well these things are for those you know who are in universities and things like that you see.

And I think that is one of the reasons why I actually I did not get myself involved in the black consciousness movement at that time.

Otherwise I would have you see if there was a way but I think they were you know far removed from the person down there you know. So as a result you know we couldn't really get to know what actually should we do and things like that you see.

But during those times of course I was starting to have my own ways and thinking and so forth but the thing is that I never really had physical contact with any particular organization during the '70's. Either BC that is BPC or SASO what no.

Although I knew there was SASO, there was BPC and so forth you know, political organizations that were actually for us you know. Our own organisation..

But because of the level I think there was communication breakdown so to say between these organizations and the normal person there. So there was no way of linking that up. Until of course they were banned. Until of course.. but I used to read their publications. When I get hold of them I will go through them you see. And actually support you know the whole thing.

JF How did you get them if you were a worker and they were intellectuals, how did you get access..

TN There was no way, no way. Until they were banned actually.

JF Then what happened when they were banned?

TN Then.. you see.. it was.. I think to try and describe this thing correctly. You know they say black consciousness fellows.. you know it.. it came as a wave you know.

You know you'll find yourself actually because we get to understand or we get to know or read some of the publications that are published and things like that.

And as a result you find that its something that you accept but not directly linking yourself with you see. But knowing then actually becoming more and more proud of yourself.

You know because that actually was the philosophy of black man you are on your own and things like that and you should be proud you know of being a black man and so on and so on they go on and on and on.

So people, most of the people they got this philosophy in an indirect way so to say. Not in a direct way that is by going to a meeting or getting or becoming a member or something like that.

But an indirect way.. generally all people you know. But you find that when we discuss with friends that includes close friends "hey but how do you get to know more.. to know these people?"

Then that will be a problem because even if you go there you find that communication wise you can't communicate with these people you see.

I remember at one stage I went to their offices, it was down at 13th (?) Street. I went to their offices that is SASO/BPC office. So I went there.

~~But~~ ^{But even} then I didn't know what to say so I just.. I was around I was around and then I left. (laughter)

And then I think more.. but people started actually becoming more involved. Most of the people. After the banning actually of these organizations.

JF Why was that?

TN I don't know. Really I don't know. You see I think it was this tendency of feeling that you are actually aligning yourself or something and yet you are not directly involved in it.

But at the same time you know.. you have.. your sympathies actually are with these people so to say. Its something like that.

Or especially the BC thing. You know it.. it brought sort of awareness to an ordinary person you see.

But the problem now is that you can't get someone from them who will actually explain the whole thing to you.

Because of the you know the levies ^{levies?} (?) They are there and in your ear, you see, and so there is always that breakdown.

But when they were banned, after the banning, that was in October '77, then you could hear people talking about this thing. "Hey you know these Boers.." and things like that you see.

"They keep on banning our organization, they keep on banning our organization." You could find people talking, discussing that thing in the what you call bus stops and so on, buses, trains and so forth.

But not because really they were involved or practically involved you see as members of these organizations or something like that.

I was in that actually position myself. But by then of course I had read enough. I had known that there was an ANC, there was a Freedom Charter and so on and so on.

And my sympathies personally were now actually with the ANC. No, no man this ANC that will I think more because not really of understanding the difference between the two but more because maybe of ANC's being the oldest and been around for quite some time.

And even leaders, and some of them are in prison you know. So you know then I started saying "ho man, this is the right thing." Well that was through material reading books and things like that, papers and getting this and that from them, the ANC (?)

And then, ya, I think roughly my political background really is not really clear you know as with some other people like going (?) and somebody will say "Actually I joined this.. something like this.

I never joined anything. I never joined any political organization, I will say until, ya, until very lately probable (?)

But by then of course I knew knowing existence of some other things and so on, so I was now starting..

JF How did you get to hear of the ANC?

TN It was mostly through the.. through books reading books.. reference

JF People passed them to you.

TN Yea people passed them and the reference to.. some you find that you are reading a book and then it refers to about something that was done when the ANC was pushing it and so forth and so on.

And

JF Was there any particular book that influenced you a lot?

TN No..

JF You said Malcolm X, the BC.

TN Ya, initially the first actually the first political book I will say it was that of Malcolm X.

JF And friends (?)

TN And thereafter I used to get this and that, publications and things like that. Some you know you had to be used in very clandestine ways otherwise you get yourself..

So then I started you know following so to say the general understanding and getting to know certain organizations and things, even the existence.

That there was also the PAC, there was ANC and so forth. So then I started so to say educating myself. I think that is actually the right term.

I educated myself politically. Of course using the reality and especially my own experience as Policeman and then really I started more and more knowing now which direction I should take and so on.

And even when for instance the BC was banned, the BC organizations were banned, I said to myself "Well they have banned them now and then they will come up again in the near future."

But not specifically because of the BC thing or what what. Simply because its a political organization and its for us so I identify myself with it while I was not even a member of that you see.

And you know there wasn't that clear cut you know differentiation now that we could make for instance (?) by saying "No this year I don't want so and so, I won't join so and such you see." Or

Or, "No I'm a Mhlangu.. maybe my sympathies are with ANC so I can't join BC because of this or that you see. There was no clear cut really line that "No I'm with the BC or with.. So I was just with anything as long as I see that thing it stand for black people, well that's all fine.

JF Was the PAC also OK?

TN No, unfortunately about the PAC you see here in Natal its not really.. it has never been actually ^{known or} popular here in Natal.

So as a result you find that if you say discuss with old people they will tell you about the ANC. So actually I never even knew about the existence of PAC until I got it from the books very very late, that there were also other organizations like PaC and so forth.

But even then it was just a dead thing you know. Something far removed from me and things like that. So, ya, I think that is about.. ya that is about all my..

JF How about your arrest in 1970's, 1977.

TN Oh ya, in 1977, December, December 7, then, of course then I was involved really. And..

JF What do you mean involved?

TN I was now actually involved in.. somehow I had made contacts with the Organization outside, the ANC, and so I was actually involved in many things.

And then I was arrested from work. They came where I was working. I was working for another small textile firm that was called Prestige Lingerie.

JF Doing what?

TN Its womens underwear.

JF You mean a factory?

TN Its a factory, it was a factory. That's where I was working and.. And then they came and arrested me then.

So that was '77. During that time of course it was still the.. I was still.. there was this terrorism act. So detained under Section 6 of Terrorism Act and charged in 1978, July 25 with seven others.

Now amongst charges were that we were sending people out for military training, instigating, encouraging and so forth. Actually propagating the ideas of banned organizations and things like that.

Yea there were, actually there were three.. initially there were three charges. That of sending people out for military training.. Oh as well as wanting to undergo military training and then instigating what what and encouraging.. Hey quite a lot of things anyway.

So that was in 1978 July 25 when we were charged. Now we were eight. There was my brother, younger than me, but not from actually home but you know relatives so to say.

And he had gone out and he came back and he was arrested while we were still in detention. And we met in detention. That's when I started knowing that he is back and arrested.

And when it was alleged that he was also one of the people amongst the groups, the last group that we sent out. So but now he had to be charged and I had to be charged. So obviously in so far as that is concerned no he cannot give evidence no he actually sent me out.

And at the same time I cannot actually give evidence and say no I actually sent him out.

JF Why not?

TN I mean we were both..

JF Both charged.

TN Yea we were both charged and so on. Well they tried to.. they tried to.. There were really a lot of people you know because.. I think the really thing that or the real thing or the real reason really or the how they got to actually arrest us was that there was another group, last group, which young students wanted to go out and say now that we have you know done this at school and so on.

Now the security police are looking for us. So we sent them to Joburg to cool off a bit and then after that they came back. And then they were arrested.

So, and then when they were obviously.. when the police asked them where were you because we have been looking for you and so on, then it came out that no actually they were.. I'd taken them and sent them to Joburg and things like that.

And then they started cooking the story around that no actually we were trying to send them out you see to undergo military training and things like that.

And they were arrested. And then they were actually made the witnesses. The total number of witnesses in our trial were 38. Ya 38 witnesses in our trial.

JF Who was the number one accused?

TN It was my brother. Well..

JF What's his name?

TN Muntu Nxumalo. That's Muntumali (?) He's actually in Robben Island serving 30 years sentence.

JF 30 years?

TN Yea he was sentenced.. he was given 30 years and eight to run concurrently with 22 so he is actually serving 22 years.

And thereafter it was another comrade from Chesterville who was number 2 and myself number 3 and then the others followed like.. I don't know whether you heard of Mlaba (?) Kwenza ndaba Zelewe, Kweze guape Mlaba. He was actually accused number 4.

And 5 and 6, they were other, they were former students of Kwa.. Zululand University, melezonguwe. Former students, and then they are actually out I think. They are no longer here.

And, there was like.. (outside interruption). Yea so, Oh and Sebongile from Bonmarsh.

JF A woman?

TN Ya, a woman, very short.

JF What is her surname?

TN Kupeba.

JF That's the mother in .. (?)

TN That's the mother in law (?) ya. She was number 8.

JF What was she charged with?

TN She.. same charges as us.. same charges. Then after that we were transferred to Maritzburg where our trial was to be held.

And then while we were there of course there were a lot of raskas and we fought in court in Maritzburg. The first day we got there we were..

JF What, ras..?

TN Yea we fought, we fought there with the security police. Hey it was a.. all hell broke loose.. (laughter) back in court.

JF Why?

TN Because (laughter) we were actually singing you see after the court case was adjourned and so on. Then the Judge stood up, it was Justice Crick. He stood up and he went inside. Then we stood up and we sang.

Then the Security Police started now pushing us "Hey come on come on come on get up get up get up!" And then we.. you know of course if you want to un.. taking take this later (?).. we have been through their hands you know during the detention period which was eight months.

And you know the torture and things, humiliation that we were subjected to and things like that.

So you know it makes one feel that "... if I could get this person, if I could get this one somewhere else.. and then I will really do something." So it was something like that.

And that's how actually it erupted into actually physical confrontation right in court. Then we started giving each other.

Well after that we were taken to jail and then the trial continued of course and the judge actually ruled that we should not sing in court and so forth you see.

So we said "No, we are not going to bow down to their will simply because we had been arrested. We shall continue fighting wherever we are under those conditions that we will be actually living under."

So we asked Mqenda, Mr. Mqenda (?) was actually our attorney. And the advocates were Mwerane, that is Boyse Mwerane (?) and Pias Langa.

So we asked their advice well legally, legally whether the judge has the right to simply bar us from singing and things like that. And they told us no the judge cannot actually.. unless he comes first in the court you know, court room (?) as under first (?).

And then of course well if you sing then well while he's seated there and then you shall be charged for contempt of court and things like that.

But if he's not in then its not the court until he comes in you see. So Oh well after that we started going.. singing and so on - defiance so to say you see.

Then he started.. he saw that loop hole and then he started coming first so that now we won't be able to sing inside the court.

And when we got to know about that then we started saying OK we devised (?) ^{strategy} another.. (laughter) We said Alright if he goes in first then He'll have to wait for us. Obviously nothing can go on without us.

So they will fetch us from the cells, they come and then we start singing there. All the way coming to the court room. Then when we are there we won't go in we'll just sing around there in the passage and he'll have to wait for us. (laughter)

So we really gave him a headache really. Really gave him a headache and you know until.. then really we decided actually that no we cannot continue with this and then we somehow we used the prosecutor to actually apply for separation of trial you see.

Now we said no actually our trials are not the same, Accused number one is charged for undergoing military training and found in possession of guns and also intended using the guns somewhere.

Therefore these others are not actually charged on the same charge so they have.. they can go and then this one must remain with me.

So through that I think charge.. I mean really sentencing ^{him} for 30 years as he did was really trying something you know to hit back because he tried to frighten us and we were not frightened.

So I think because really they weren't reviewing the whole trial or at least the evidence that they had on my brother. It was not really something that could warrant 30 years.

JF How did you feel about the whole system of justice in this country after that experience because the South African Government always tries to say that they have an independent judiciary.

TN Yea yea, Oh no there's no such thing really. Well they used to say and I think they have to say it since they can't say no actually we control it you see.

But in reality no, there's no such in reality. I think.. I think that was proved actually in the.. in the treason trial that is actually going on where you'll find that the judge is actually instructed by the Attorney General to refuse bail on these people simply because the Attorney General said no bail and therefore noone can decide on that you see.

JF So what was your sentence?

TN I was sentenced to five years.

JF So where did you serve it?

TN Robben Island.

JF From..

TN From 19.. we were, I was sentenced actually in December, December 3.

JF '78.

TN Ya. And then.. no, no '79. The trial took actually about 18 months or so. The trial alone.

And then in 1980, I think about February or January. Then we were taken.. we were transported to Robben Island. So I was there until actually..

JF There until..?

TN Ya I was there until last year, June 12.

JF '84?

TN Ya, it was '84.

JF Was that a four/five years?

TN Not, not really. Apparently you see they we they also gave us some of ~~the~~ this thing you see. It was in 1983 then they started saying that OK even the political prisoners will also be eligible for remission and parole and things like that. Of course in parole you have to denounce violence and so on as well as undertake that you won't involve yourself in politics again.

And actually the whole thing both remission and even parole actually they put a statement that anyone who wants it he can get it.

And then as time went on I think that was impossible actually to get a respond because noone wants actually to stand up and be seen that actually saying now I'm tired of politics and things like that you know.

And then they started actually relaxing all these things that they were saying and then they started actually giving anyone.

You see you won't be told. You are just going to be told that OK come, go and take your things you are going. You don't know where to, ne.

And.. whether you are going to be killed wherever you are going you don't know. So you are taken and then sometime you come.. for instance like us, we were taken there to Pretoria. We stayed in Pretoria about for five days or so.

Ya, about five days in Pretoria, that was Central Prison. And then we were transported down here to Durban Central Prison.

And then when we got there and then they started checking and then we heard while they were discussing there with the local prison officials here there saying no but these people are supposed to go out last month.

Then they started saying OK OK let's release them now. So we were released the same day that we came from Pretoria. And it was, it was on Tuesday.

JF And your brother?

TN My brother of course is still there.

JF He got no remission.

TN No, no, no.

JF Now I think, Temb0, the only.. there's a trouble with the way you told the story. It sounds like you just got into the ANC without knowing anything and I don't want to give that impression.

You were saying there (?) you supported anything and there was the BC, so can you.. you don't have to say anything that's going to cause trouble. I just think that otherwise it just sounds like you were just hanging around the office.

You left your job with the municipal police when?

TN That was 70 actually '75. That was '75...

JF Then did you go to work for what..

TN It was '75 or '76, yea '75. Then I became a seaman. Ya. Then I became a seaman thereafter with the Unicorn Shipping Company, its a local company and of course we used to travel all over.. Africa and Latin America, Panama, Mexico.

As well as here in Africa-places like Mozambique.. That is how actually that's when the contact was really made, during that period.

And.. then I think somehow or other, I don't know whether actually the people, that is now the the officers that I was working under, they got to know some of the things or so, because in some places where we will go then I will make contact with the officials from ANC and things like that and then we'll discuss a lot of things and so on.

And.. and then we'll come back of course and so on while we were moving up and down.

Now the really thing that ha.. that made me actually stop working there is that I didn't really what I will say, they didn't want me in the ship. They said no I was full of communist ideas and things like that you see.

JF The whites..

TN Ya, ya the white officials of the ship. That I was full of this and that and that and that.

And I remember we even quarreled with one chief mate.. we were in Namibia then. We quarreled and then he started telling me I was also engaged in Karate doing Karate and so on, so I was actually teaching others.

Then he started saying that ya you know you, he was drunk, he called me and then he said ya I know you you are actually communist and you are teaching these people Karate so that they will come and fight us and things like that.

Those were actually just allegations that were unfounded so to say. That is as far as I was concerned. I don't know in terms of others.

So then I.. it was then that I actually foresaw that no really things are becoming more and more dangerous for me so I just decided there and then that as soon as we come back in Durban I'm going to leave.

Ah.. well we made the necessary arrangements and then when I came back of course I left the Company, then hanged around for a date and then I went to work for the factory.

Well about (laughter) actually making contact, it was made during that period but that was in terms of sort of what, tasks so to say. Tasks that I had to do and things like that and so on.

But the contact actually with me was made through one friend of ours in Chesterville who actually went out, came back and worked. Noone knew and anything and so on.

So it was through those channels that we were actually able to.. the thing is that you know his story was quite long and the police actually were really crazy ~~butxxxx~~ about him. Because he used to come in, then they'll know, they'll get the day we saw him was around, then when they go he's no longer anywhere. (laughter)

And so he was that type of a person. Even when he came back here, he was actually went out and came back. Went out for about a year or so and then came back about '72.

Then he worked in one of, in Jacob's actually a factory. He worked there from '72 up till '70.. actually '77. When he went back. He lost his job then he said Uh uh, I'm going.

So, and then he left you see in '77 so all those years he had been around moving around and so on and so on. And then periodically going out and coming back and continuing working and so on.

So I think really that is actually the person I will really say.. through him I was able to make contacts or able to actually actively now be involved in in the struggle here in South Africa.

JF And what was it that attracted you? Did you think about what it would cost you if you were caught, imprisoned and all that. Did you you know what was your political understanding of what you were doing. ~~Yes~~ Do you think you were naive in any way? Do you think you were well educated? Can you just tell me because its just that compared with what you said before, you know. Just tell me what was it that motivated you to take such a risk? Were you married at that point?

TN No, not yet.

JF But still it could cost you a lot..

TN Ya, ya, ya..

JF What motivated you to take such a stand?

TN I think its what actually motivates, generally motivates others. The conditions that we live under. The experiences that we actually acquire through our life and practically the experience that I actually acquired while I was still working as a security corps.

And as well as you know I think more in the way that I was raised up. There was no security you see because I didn't have any home actually. A place that I could really call home.

And all those things you know, I think those are the really things that no actually made me declare to myself that no I must somehow or other be involved in order to change this situation you know in South Africa.

And it was as I said a little bit later that actually I became more now clear that no actually I have to.. the ANC's an organization of this and actually exists even today and despite of course ~~the ANC's~~ being banned and things like that.

And its an upright organization that one of course must identify with, which is actually involved in working for the struggle here in South Africa and it has been doing so for many years since 1912 really.

So I would really say that it was.. well it was really.. thing you know the general conditions.. general oppression.. the different experiences and so forth, totalities of the thing.

You see especially when you are that those police, they actually called popularly called the blackjacks. And they are really brutal you know those people.

JF The ones you were with?

TN Ya. The turning point is really there. That's where I started as time went on, started actually saying no, this thing has to stop and yet I could not stop it as an individual.

So as an individual the only thing I could do was simply to resign from as I did.

JF Were you quite quite an exception or do you think among those blackjacks among people working for the State there are those who see that its wrong and they change and act (?).. I mean am I to believe that with all the attacks on black police and all those people.. and that even among those people there could be those who would be supporting the ANC?

TN Yea, yea. Because you see there's one thing that one has to understand. You see we.. most people they work.. or there's one thing that pushes us actually to go and look for work because you have to live right?

And you find that actually in the in factory companies, factories and so on at certain stages you are returned (?) and so on. But there is one place that is always open, that is a sec.. SAP, those blackjacks and today the army as well.

Employment there is always open you see. So most of the people they go there simply to work you know. Not really actually understanding the overall work that they will be doing you see.

How actually does it affect the people and so forth. So, and of course this illusion that is always being propogated that no actually the police are there to protect you and so forth.

So before, if you haven't had or had an experience, personal experience with these police so called law and order police, then you really think that no at least the police is somebody to run to.

Of course that illusion is really really been more and more now actually exposed, that its a farce and things like that. So there are many people who join the police force or such agencies like the one that I was with and simply because.. not really because you want to be a policeman.

Of course there are those who actually want to be a policeman. So meaning that he's going to accept anything. Then there are those who are there and then they see these things happening day in day out.

And then they start questioning themselves, I'm not you know what I will say with courage enough to stand up you know and be counted. And some, of course right now today you may not know about (?) today.

Because even myself if I have made contacts before I came out, maybe I wouldn't have resigned from there. Because at times it becomes necessary that you should remain in that instead educate more people about what actually you are involved in.

But it was you know an individual reaction to a certain thing you see. And I ran away. And that's alright actually in time because by resigning was simply running away from what actually I was again doing (?)

With no actually consideration of others that I was with, that they must also know or if they don't know actually one must discuss with them.

So it was actually something like that. There are still people who are actually really joined (?) for instance some of them used to come to our trial you know. They used to come to our trial and listen to that - "Hey, hey ^{now are} you" you see.

So you could see that despite I was called a terrorist and things like that you know but still they can't accept that just like that.

So obviously it means that well one could take it that those who were able to come to our trial and things like that were people with courage so to say because they I mean the whole place was full of security police and so on.

So only a person now determined who could come you see. Those who are still afraid they will say "Ay no that place is full of security police and security police are really causing fear."

Even amongst the what you call the police force itself you know the ordinary police, when you mention the security police then it starts moving really.

JF Which (?) the one the blackjacks

TN No, No

JF The SP?

TN The SP's now, yea. So no the blackjacks are just township police so to say. Ya they are township police. People man (?) certain institutions and guard them and so on.

JF You know I'm just worried that.. I don't want.. I just think if I write this I want to change it because to say security cops to some people they might think..

TN Ya its SP ya ya

JF What can we call it instead?

TN That is how they call it actually

JF I know it is but I just think its too misleading I don't..

TN No, Blackjack is the actually if you mention blackjack all people understand who are the Blackjacks.

JF Yea yea. So that that Ciskei Colonel, called Colonel Bliss (?) who got bound up (?) he could have, one doesn't know what he really stood for. He obviously made a mistake.

But do you think its even possible that he could have not been an anti person. Ah its a pretty theoretical question.

TN Ya. The sub. who was in jail?

JF Huh?

TN Is that the one, the suba (?) that

JF You know the one that they burned at Mxenge's (?) funeral. You remember.

TN Oh yeah, Oh yeah. No well they attend these days. Not because of any feeling, special feeling. They attend to continue with their work. Bringing tapes with them some of them.

And, you know some people are really I don't know. Yea I really don't know. But because I remember that even there were, there was one incident, actually it happened in my.. I was still in jail at that time.

When one teacher, he's from Chesterville - he was actually a Principal - and he.. after they killed Sizi Dube from Lamontville he was actually also he was also killed there in that funeral. He was there with a tape and everything you see.

JF Oh yea, yea I do.

TN So they come, but not because they have any feeling to continue you know with their thing and so on.

JF Tell me, when you got exposed to the ANC initially when people could have hurted (?) you, did they speak about what the struggle was really about. Do you think it was anti white.

What did they say that you wanted to work because you were against the boers or did they say anything about non racialism. When you joined them did you think OK now I'm going to fight those boers.

TN No actually the person, the friend that I had referred to because he's actually the one who I will say really grounded me about the ANC and things like that.

He made it clear to us or to me in particular about the racial question because he used to make you know examples like saying for instance OK if you say whites, whites in general, OK they are wrong, they should be killed and so forth, what do you say about Slovo?

You haven't even done anything and yet Slovo is actually suffering right now and you come to me and tell me that Slovo is.. should be killed as well. Is that what you actually want?

In so much that the only person, the only white person that I definitely (?) know at that time was Slovo because he used to refer to him you know (laughter)

He used to refer to him. Then that is the person, the white person that actually when I speak I know that no that one is also involved.. involved and he's also suffering and outside.. he was an advocate, he could be actually making money and you know living well and things like that, especially whites have priveleges and so on.

But he forego all that and decided actually to live as he's living now and things like that. So at that time or up to the time when I was arrested, now I was very clear in my mind, ^{very} very clear in my mind.

And there was no longer any problem, actually even then it was easy for me to now understand the position because I remember that in 1978 we were still in trial, in Durban (?) trial, when we heard that there was a BCM being formed in London.

There was a meeting, that was after the banning of the black consciousness organization you see, in '78 there was the meeting in London where they wanted to revive the whole thing and..

So we actually criticised the stand like that (?) actually went so far as to criticise and say no, these people they shouldn't be doing this because outside there is an ANC.

So BC was alright while it was inside the country. Something had to be done you see, somehow people had to be actually you know revived so to say you see.

And the Black Consciousness really contributed towards that and because even after that there was no longer that tranquility period like the '60's and '70's you know.

That period where there was completely lull you know, people had forgotten some people were blaming Unitas (?) and saying look these people they ran away, referring to Tambo, they ran away. And Mandella's they got themselves arrested and things like that.

So, since then.. since then there were completely no problem about in terms of whites and we actually while I did not actually become a member or more involved practically involved in the Black Consciousness thing, but I used to understand.

Actually when I started understanding more things and as well as the.. this black consciousness thing and so on, then I accepted no, no this thing was actually good at that period. And it actually contributed then but its time is no longer here now.

Now it should have given in to actually the organizations that are actually continuing the struggle.

So now of course I'm with the trade unions and so really.. now I'm OK. I went to Robben Island and I became more clear than I was and started understanding quite a lot of things that I actually did not understand.

What actually I got from the friend that I told you about was what I'd actually say was just a background - information, knowledge about the whole thing - but now I became more clearer on certain issues and so on when I was there.

JF What do you think was the most important thing that happened to you when you were on Robben Island, what can you.. what was the important experience.

TN The hunger strike (laughter)

JF When was that?

TN That was in 1982, six day hunger strike.

JF Of all the prisoners?

TN Yea. That.. you know apart from the general things that used to happen and things like that. But that was completely something new you see. And an experience for me I will say because throughout those six days we didn't eat and putting forward our demands and things like that.

And actually it was immediately after that hunger strike when comrades Mandella and others were actually transferred to Pollismore Prison. Immediately. I think it was about a week, no not a week, I think about two weeks after the hunger strike then they were transferred to Pollismore Prison.

JF Why do you think it was, because they were having too much influence on the other prisoners?

TN Yea, that is actually what was that. (?)

JF What were you protesting about?

TN Well there were a lot of grievances that we had. And more it was in terms of food itself which was not really good. Although it was better if you compare it with the usual food that you get in prisons you know, eaten by prisoners and so on.

So that one is actually a bit better, but in itself its not adequate enough right. And issues on visitors as well. You see there was a problem of languages you know.

You know people coming they are Tswanas, Vendas and Shona^s. Also Zulu, Xosa's and..

JF Shona's?

TN Ya

JF From Zimbabwe?

TN Not necessarily those who are actually in the what you call North or East of Transvaal, Northern Transvaal.

And the language became more a problematic issue because the wardens that were there were white wardens and these are that is prison officials whites and some of course they know the languages and so on. But not all.

So, it means that if you don't have noone.. you don't have an interpreter, somebody who could actually listen to, then you have to convey your,, you have to actual all convey your you know discuss in English.

Even if you don't know English or if hex doesn't know English or whoever is your visiter. And many others of course demanding rights to do that and that, especially in terms of advancing our education.

Because there were you know there were those strings (?) attached, hey you can continue your education only if you see otherwise you cancel it and many other things you know.

JF But tell me.. when I asked what was the most important thing, what did you learn in terms of understanding. You became more clear what was in a short answer way what was the most important thing you learned that made you more clear?

TN Well we used to actually have political discussions.. daily.

JF With who? Really.

TN Yea, organized political discussions. One in the morning between 7 and 8. Lunchtime, lunch hour, evenings. Theoretical grounding. And on Sundays it will be a big meeting, mass meetings at times.

Big meeting where we will then be discussing certain issues that came up during the week like for instance if we get the paper, things that we find in the papers.

Analysing the situation generally and so on. That will be on Sundays. But these other political discussions and things like that they were day in and day out, day in day out.

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J.F. in these political discussions about non racialism that people asked about?

T.N. Ja, actually, you see, in the Island there were those who were still followers of B.C. philosophy and P.A.C. as well as A.N.C.

Actually, in the Island there are no individuals - there are organisations, you see, and even the prison officials, when you go there - if you arrive there, then they will start asking you which organisation do you actually (Laugh) part of (007) and then you -

I remember, in our case, when we refused to answer that - we said : No, we don't belong to any organisation - they said : No, I'm asking you because we have to know - that's our - ja, so -

And then later on then they explain : No, it's because I need to know. And then, of course, later on we said : O.K., we - no, we sympathise with the A.N.C. And then they said : O.K., then it means that you are A.N.C. because there is no such thing so (Interruption)

J.F. O.K., I think what I wanted to get, for you to say clearly was, and you started to say what happened on Robben Island - were there ever any debates around the issue of non racialism - you said your friend told you about Slovo, but still it seems that it was a bit - it wasn't so clear - how did you get clear on the issue - were there specific people on the Island who spoke about it, or was there any specific debate?

T.N. Ja, there were actually. You see, the - although there is that problem that it's difficult really to sit down and the person, specially on the leadership level of B.C. - the B.C. thought and things like that - to sit down with and discuss, really discuss seriously, the political situation in South Africa.

They will really try and avoid that question because - I think more it's because some of the things they really cannot justify, so to say. They can't really say why they are doing this and that, but in Robben Island there used to be some of these discussions actually...

Firstly, we tried to have joint discussions with both P.A.C. and B.C. guys as well as ourselves, and that was really something that they were not really keen on, but gradually - or some forces within the same two camps, to say (030) because there were those who were actually saying : But, no, man, but we had to discuss - who knew that actually we were more engaged.

There was an intensive, so to say, theoretical study of the situation in and things like that on our part, whereas in the B.C. camp they didn't have much really to discuss on, you see (034)

As I said, we have these discussions almost throughout the day, and officially, you know, it means when you go there you are actually allotted your own group, you see. If you'll be in the certain cell, in that cell you will actually join with comrades there, and in the morning, then you will be told in the morning your group will be in that cell you

T.N. use there, and during lunch time, if you go out with this band to work then you will actually discuss there.

So now you - this thing or the - the young generation in the B.C. guys, specially those after '76, specially those who were involved in the '76 uprisings and things like that, they, you see, they tend (turned) (043) while, of course, some of them still maintaining their B.C. background and actually being a group in Robben Island, but they like to know.

Young people actually want to know the facts, and it's really difficult actually to, so to say, suppress them - something like that, so there were those who were actually pushing in the B.C. camp that : No, we - let us have, you know.

And the people which we actually also use pushed them : Hey, man, why don't we have joint discussion and things like that.

So then the question on non racialism actually - it's a question that used to come in our own political discussions because it was - it is actually a sensitive issue and it needs a clear understanding, so it's something that used to come every now and again, and more especially because we were staying like that.

We found that in the cell, of course there was - of course, the majority will be A.N.C. people and then there'll be a few maybe B.C. guys and a few P.A.C., but actually the whole prison, each cell always A.N.C. people were in the majority and so on.

And then they agreed at a certain stage that O.K., they can have those discussions - they can have their joint discussions, so then we started, and then, of course, initially we will avoid contradictory issues, so to say, so as to actually make them relax, and then - and so on.

But, of course, on the side we'll discuss sensitive issues because, for instance, if you are have - let's say you are friendly with two or three people who from different - one P.A.C., maybe two B.C. and so on, so you will actually discuss with them, and to us it was - or should I say, to me, personally, it was something that I actually used to like to do because I wanted to learn, and at the same time I wanted to see them - how actually do they account for this and that and that, see.

So I will actually - I was really troubling them. I will just call those that I'm closer to : Hey, come, come. Then we'll just go and take a walk and then I'll start opening this discussion, especially on the non racialism issue, you see.

That is actually the one that you can - although it's difficult at times for them to actually discuss that with you, but people who are closer they are more open than officials and things like that, you see, so we used to discuss and then I'll put my argument and so on and so on.

T.N. Then they will put theirs and so on, and then there's only - always one question, you see, where they - I used to be referred to sort of what about Slovo and so on, so I started doing the same thing (Laugh) myself (077) - then I will simply ans(wer) O.K., I understand, so as far as we are concerned whites are all bad.

And then he will say : Ja, ja, ja - and then I will say : And then what about people like Slovo, Braam Fisher and so forth - what about those people? Then they will start dodge that - they won't come directly and say : No, even him, you see, because of, I think, of they can't actually hide his involvement and things like that, so they will start saying : No, there are exceptions and so on - oh, well, there are exceptions, ja.

Or if there are exceptions then why you don't have those exceptions in you - why don't you organise them? (Laugh) And then they will start : Hey, but actually it's a very interesting and - interesting question, really, and sensitive in a way, but a very interesting question.

And my own understanding more on the question of non racialism, I will say that through those discussions we used to have together with the B.C. guys as well as generally were - that's how actually I got to clearly understand why actually we, or the A.N.C., or the congress movement in general, pushes for non racialism rather than anti whitism and so on.

And - well, of course, the reading and studying Marxism, Leninism, one of course has to understand. You get to know that : No, this actually is a - whatever - what is actually troubling us here in South Africa is not something unique, only in South Africa, but it's something with different forms, of course, that happens in almost all over, and of course the forms will be different, but it's still the same thing, you see.

So - on the question of B.C. really, or non racialism, it's - even today we still actually discuss those questions - still discuss those questions with the B.C. guys and - but now it's not a matter of now trying to know whether non racialism is good or bad, you see.

Now we - I'm clear on the question and - but I like discussing it (Laugh).

J.F. Why are you so clear - what if - do you ever think that it's worth all that debate - wouldn't it be easier just to work with blacks and not have the hassle about this - what's so important about it - there's so few whites anyway.

T.N. Ja, there are. Ja, but, you see, the thing is that, first of all, historically whites came here (to) South Africa. They took the land - of course, people resisted all that and so on, and if you look at the character of the people who actually were sent here, people like Jan van Rebeck and others - those were criminals.

People taken from jails, whether you choose - whether you stay in jail or you go on these voyages and so on, and so those are the type of people who actually came here, but now, looking at South Africa, what has happened in South Africa, development that had taken place in South Africa

T.N. First of all, during those early days we find, or we see a situation where, while we have these whites and - but at that time they were not spread as they are today, or as they were in 1910.

But first they entered (the) Cape, and of course, there were people from Holland and some of them were, of course, these - what do they refer to them - who were actually Huguenot (121) and things like that.

People were actually running away because of religious group and things like that so....

And then, unlike in the rest of Africa, or in any other part of the world anywhere, where you find that the metropolitan countries are actually fully controlling the colonised countries, and the aim there has been to extract raw materials and send it back for processing and things like that, and bring it back, of course, in a ready form and sell them, but the more in extracting than developing any of these countries - right.

So those people, of course, you*could say that they are not the people of those countries - they are not - of those colonised countries, and they don't even identify themselves as such. couldn't (?) (131)

But now here in South Africa we have a unique situation. Unique situation because the colonisers actually made South Africa their home and they had no way back. You see - they had no other place that they could actually say that is also their home.

The relationship that develops in South Africa and the Western world is - initially stem from the fact that, while of course they are whites, all of them and - but in terms of trade and things like that, as well as support, of course, especially insofar as this advance by the people is made, so they need support and so on.

But they actually regard South Africa not as a colony as such, but as their home. Now the people are actually - these whites who are here they are people who were born here, not people who came, imported or whatever so

Then in our own - or in my/opinion, which is, of course, general but now I'm trying to be personal, these people they have no way - nowhere to run to, and in that way they are Africans in the sense that they were born in Africa, despite the fact that, of course, they seem to remove themselves from us, despite the fact that they don't want - /own.

For instance, let's take the Afrikaaners, the Afrikaaners meaning it's an Afrikaans word for African (Laugh) Meaning that he accepts that he's in Africa (he's an Africa (156) and this Africa is his home, but the only problem with him is that he sees himself, since he's in the minority, sees himself that if we - these people will develop like we've developed in many - in so many years back, they will sort of overshadow us, so to say, and in that case they have to

T.N. try now and say : No, they must then we must keep them there - right - the oppression it's/reality. /a There is an oppression here in South Africa.

Nationally the African people who are actually oppressed, suppressed and otherwise, right, and on the economic side of it they are actually the most - more, or should I say - ja, most workers - workforce in South Africa are the African people, right.

Now, in other words, to me it was easy for me to understand the approach made by the congress movement in trying actually to bring all forces that are opposed to apartheid involved in the struggle, and that is what I also say.

I say, for instance, the system itself - this white government, if we have to put it that way - this white government recruits people from our own camp. Recruits informers, policemen and so forth, and actually goes so far as to actually recruit people who are actually we are told that they're our leaders and people who actually stand for the interest of this government.

Now, if that is so they are dividing us in that way, right, and have managed to do so, then why shouldn't we make an effort to divide them? Why shouldn't we make that effort as well, to divide them as well?

Now, the question there - the question that arises actually is now a class consciousness, right. The question of class now becomes more apparent because if you - for instance, if - or explaining the situation in terms of class.

In terms of class it's not - it's immaterial whether a person is black or white, right. If he's - he falls in the working class he falls in the working class - he's a worker, right, and here in South Africa that is also true. We also have white workers in South Africa.

I've read, studied the history of the working class here in South Africa, and I have actually noted incidents, or not actually incidents but periods where the white workers were actually revolutionary, right, and until they were actually bought - bribed with privileges, job reservations and things like that - those things are meant actually to keep them, or so that they will actually identify themselves with the ruling class rather than the working class.

So if that is so - we do actually have these white workers who actually - of course, they have been removed from us and they also don't identify themselves with us, but they are there - that's a fact.

Now that is on - in the economical situation, right, and in terms of class and so on. Now in terms of the national problem now - that of whites oppressing blacks and things like that, now one - or should I say - in politics we did also develop - the anti whitism is the first step in understanding. If you just ask an ordinary person : Hey, what do you say - what do you think about whites? And then

T.N. he will say : No, whites are - actually oppressed us and so on - right - that's the shortest and simple answer that he could give you.

But, for instance, in the factory situation you also find him saying that : Hey, man, but this lousy - the word he will be used will be Sikaga (217) meaning poor, so to say...

J.F. Poor? : Correction : Boer?

T.N. Poor - that this poor is actually playing around with me. Now - meaning that, you see, if you refer to someone as isikaga it means that he cannot be an employer - he can only be an employee.

Now - in other words, they acknowledge (223) that he's also an employee and yet he acts so big and so on and so on, right.

Now that is ^{also} something that they know - of course, this is an employee, this is an employ(er) - that is the big one - the boss, you see. Now - but at the same time he cannot really identify his needs in the same light with this employee, which he actually - what do you call - accept that he's an employee like himself.

So on the national question we find that now there the question of apartheid comes in. The question of apartheid comes in because they were right (232) - there's this oppression, right, or I don't know - control, so to say, of people that lost, then you control them and so on and - but the fear -

You start to understand that why actually do they react this way? Why is this fear in the part of these white people here in South Africa? Then once you understand, once you get to the truth that, no, actually it's fear that makes them react in this way.

It's fear because they see themselves as a drop in an ocean, so to say, right. Now they have that fear the day this ocean will swamp us all, and our identity will actually be lost or something like that.

Now that is why I said I take the B.C. philosophy - it becomes the first step in political understanding, and as you develop you come to a stage where you actually realise that, no, I have been making whites enemies when, in actual fact, some of these whites are very good, and some of these whites are really dedicated.

But now the problem is that we have - we had had liberals and - the majority of which (Interruption) -

So, as I was saying that now you see that as a first step in politics then you develop, and as you develop now you appreciate, and you are able now to understand the problem or the situation - approach it in the correct way, and that correct way is the one that will actually teach you that, or show to you that actually fighting whites and saying these whites must go to the sea - they must throw them to the sea, like - that is the P.A.C. slogan that they were using - then it's really - not really practical.

T.N. First of all South Africa has developed in many ways. Gold, diamonds, coal and everything - we have got minerals - it's very, very rich. If the wealth of South Africa could be really equally distributed to the people no-one will go (.....) (272) in South Africa, and even then there will still be a surplus, right.

Now, with all those developments, technology and so on, it's easy for us to say O.K., whites will go - O.K., they can go, right, and then who will man these things? No-one, because we have - actually right now we are not raised in the same standard of understanding....

J.F. Can I interject with some questions - (Somebody shouting behind you - might not get it all) that's a long theoretical answer - just on a level where you would speak to some of the workers who come in that you're dealing with now, how do you say to them : I don't think any more you're combatting B.C., it's finished - there's no P.A.C. - but just generally, if a worker comes in and sees whites all the time oppressing him, why do you think it's so important to try to make them understand about non-racialism - they may never even see a white in the next five or ten years before this country's free who'll really help them - you have contact with different whites but maybe they won't, so why is it that you think non-racialism has to be the way forward - just the short answer - how would you say to a worker who'd say : This sounds like rubbish to me, which whites are you talking about - I've never met (292)

T.N. Ja - well, we have actually in NFW we have an education committee which conducts seminars and workshops from time to time on trade unionism in general, and specific issues particularly, so we actually - if you embark on trade unionism.

If I teach you or I try to tell you or show you or teach you about trade unionism, I will not help but (by) saying that I refer back to England, right (Interruption) so that, of course, capitalism started in England and these - and people started suffering then.

Being transformed from being peasant into (Interruption - tape off)

J.F. Again you give me a longer one but O.K.!

T.N. O.K., let me try and give you a shorter one - the question was?

J.F. Why is it important to educate the workers here about non racialism - don't they ever say to you.....

T.N. Oh, why - oh! No - now I get your question right. Oh, I think the reason why it is actually important and the reason why we have actually taken a stand on that question, is because we don't see this thing in a short term period. We see it in a long term.

In a long term the working class struggle it's not deficit (327) (I think he means defeatist) In other words, it cannot be only black workers - it'll be workers in general, whether yellow, green or whatever. Now, if we are really sincere

T.N. about the working class struggle as well as the outcome that the worker can only be free when he is the one who controls the political power, and then he'll be able to change the economic policies and things like that.

Then, of course, then the whites come in then. The white workers come in then. That is why, for instance, in the - now I don't know whether this will make it longer (Laugh) but it's just a reference.

That is why, for instance, in the - we are presently engaged in the national democratic revolution, because first of all the workers - before we move to socialism or anything like that, the workers themselves have to unite, and they can only unite after the first stage which will be in the national question - answering the national question.

Then they can start identifying closely with their white counterparts and so forth, right, and then the working class will actually be the right time now to use.

Right now I cannot say the black working class, because once I say class it means that there are no more workers outside that, right. I can only say black workers and white workers, but as a class they haven't come to that consciousness, that level of understanding that they actually belong to one - they are brothers and sisters, you see, so it is important, right now, to start telling or teaching the workers about non racialism in order for him to accept his white counterpart in future.

J.F. And do you find workers accept it - do you ever have workers who say to you : Look, as far as I see it the whites are the enemies, that's that?

T.N. Ja, no - many, many, many cases of that sort - many, many cases of that sort, and we don't know - no-one actually - you can't blame that person. All we do, we simply explain. We put the facts, and then we say it is on this bas(is) - on the basis of these facts that we say this.

Otherwise, right now, they are not. They don't identify themselves with us - that is a truth, you see, so you tell them that. That is why they were actually - they are actually being used against us.

So it is that question that it's - that's the contradiction that we have to correct. That is what we must be clear - we must open our doors so that tomorrow they won't say that we closed our doors, like they are doing now - closing their doors, so to say.

J.F. To whites?

T.N. Ja.

J.F. You know, you said such an interesting thing about the whites actually recruit from the black ranks so why shouldn't you.....

J.F. with the blackjacks taught you something about non racialism in terms of seeing that blacks could be the enemy as well.

T.N.

Exactly, because they were perpetrators of the policies made in Pretoria and elsewhere, right, but the really people who carried the whole thing it was not the whites.

For instance, we had only two whites in the whole total number of the whole people in - engaged there. There were only - that was the only - the captain who was in charge, and the lieutenant. That was Captain Fees (416) and Lieutenant Osborne.

Otherwise - of course, the areas that we work in is the black areas - that is the townships, right, so only those two, and the whole - the people who are actually engaged in doing these things they are blacks, so that is -

For instance, to me it is easy, for instance, to say, no, but we can't say why - when we have blacks we will do these things and these things and these things to us, you see, and actually an experience - I have experience on that thing.

I did it myself, on other poor and - poor African people, but in that time I was saying, no, I'm working, I'm working. As you will get the argument right now they will go -

For instance, when I came back I confronted some of them, you see. I confronted some of them that I met. Some came to me : Hey, you are back here - you'd better - now you must look for a job and so on, so I confronted them with : No, but you people were stupid - you are still there - why did I run away?

You say, no, you have no - you are not connected with all these things - what do you mean you are not connected. Is it not you who go there. Was it not us who were actually harassing and doing all these things to the people?

Then they started understanding - some are starting understanding, and then they start, of course, when we are old you say you are - at least you were still young and things like that, you see, so I think that experience really - although it's not something that I always remember, but it's in me, so to say.

J.F. This - let me ask you to give shorter answers just as I've so many other things to ask you and I'm sure you don't want to be with me for the rest of the night - when you talked about non-racialism, does that also mean in relation to Indians and Coloureds - was there some racism in you as you were growing up about Indians or...

T.N. Ja, in the factory floor level you will find that as far as Indians are concerned, with no ill feelings - I'm saying this with no ill feelings because actually right now I don't - I regard Indians, Coloureds and everything as my comrades. There are, of course some that are sell outs

T.N. and they are known and just like that, but in the - when - now in the factory floor level - I've worked in the factories and I've experienced this and people are actually expressing this. You see, they tend to understand, when you talk about non racialism in terms of whites, some of them, and then when it comes to Indians, because Indians you'll find, not really that it's them but those that, or some that actually one has come across in the shop floor level, you'll - they will be the - what will I say - the really people who will be harassing - who will harass rather than the white foreman or supervisor or whatever, right.

And go so far as to actually inform on you, you see. For instance, saying : O.K., you can go to the toilet - and then immediately going to the supervisor and saying : See, he's not here; he has been there for about an hour or two, you see. Those are practical (447) things.

For instance, in one place that I was working for here in Smith Street - Corner Smith Street and Fourth Street - there's an office - there was an office - a company there called Mercer (449) and Something. It was a survey company, right.

I were - actually - I actually fought with an Indian guy there, you see. I had now, you see, I've tried to control myself until I can't control myself any more, then I started fighting him and then there was that.

J.F. So how did you get past that anti Indian racism and to non - is that part of non racialism?

T.N. Ja, it is. It is because I cannot, because of that individual Indian that I met, or that other individual Indian that I met, and then conclude out of that that all Indians they are the same. I think that will be wrong for me to do so.

J.F. Where do you think, in your experience, you actually got past that kind of racism - did it happen, or did it happen only on Robben Island - did you meet Indians there, or had you begun to get past it before?

T.N. No, even before that. Even before going there because - in some instances the problem is that some of these things are very sensitive, especially since we are still here. One is still here, and some of these things are very sensitive, you see. One - of course, about A.N.C.

That was in the charge sheet when we were charged and so on, but, of course, I cannot openly say, no, I am a member of A.N.C., you see. That is, of course, a -

So it was actually we - even before I was arrested, you see, there was that contact between (Biscuits to kids etc.!) We used to work together on some issues, you see. Some issues that we had to actually contacting them - the comrades, you see. Then - I think then you see, it started

- T.N. working then, then, no, no, there are some that are very good, you see, so when actually now I was looking at this non racialism question I could now actually say that, no, there are some that we are actually working with and there are some that we are not working with, as much as in whites as well as Coloureds, you see.
- J.F. So were you surprised to find that it was Indians you had to contact?
- T.N. Initially, ja, ja, I really was surprised, I must say - really I was surprised, but then I understand. I accept it and I understand, and then it was actually explained to me by the comrade I told you about
- J.F. Were there any white....
- T.N. ... who was the only one who was grounding me more and same (479) thing, so if I have any questions I will go to him and ask him : Hey, man, but how do you explain this? (Laugh) so...
- J.F. Were there any whites that you had to contact?
- T.N. Not directly - not directly, but I was aware that there was also some whites but I noted directly that me (482) contacting them directly or something like that.
- J.F. The fact that you noted that there were some whites - was that a surprise to you?
- T.N. Ja, - you see, much of - I will say that I became more intense - I became more involved now in actually doing certain things, certain tasks and so on, in '77. By then I was actually understanding certain things. I think my understanding was actually a little bit higher than before and -
- So some of the things I will still have questions on and then ask, you see. At least there was somebody that I could ask, and, oh, so much as accepted (491) you see - that, no,/it's like this and that and that. /of course.
- You know, I started actually - because we have started actually reading material, especially real - produced by A.N.C. or African Communist or something like that, through that comrade I told you about, that he came back and then -
- So through him we used to get all these things, you see, and read these things and so on, so by the time when I actually became more involved and had contact with certain groups, racial groups, I will actually - I was actually understanding then that - but I was really puzzled by Indians involved (Laugh)
- Initially, I was really puzzled how come they - because, although this thing was not a pronounced thing, but it was there that : Indians, man, are sell outs and things like that, you see, and we had to work the - do these things and so on, so.....

- J.F. Even more than the whites you were puzzled by Indians?
- T.N. Ja, I mean, you know that the whites they have control, and then at the workplace, of course, managers will be white...
- J.F. No, no, no, but I'm saying the fact of whites being in the A.N.C. - was it even more surprised that Indians were in the A.N.C.?

T.N. The Indians was more of a surprise than whites. At least the whites they are - I only this Joe Slovo - Joe Slovo, Joe Slovo, Joe Slovo, you see, so even though I didn't actually understand why he was doing that, but he was there, you see. (505)

Now Indians which was something that came very late, especially when I started hating (508) I had to have certain contact with them while working and then I started discovering certain things, you see.

- J.F. Now tell me, just moving all the questions - was the moving to non racialism - did that have something also to do with the whole ethnic thing - did you - I forget if - I've asked so many people - interviews - if we talked about the thing of Biggie Zulu (513) - the beginning, but that was not in this context anyway - when you talk about non racialism does that have to do with being not anti people who are not Zulu - as being understanding that you don't have tribalism, to use that word - do you think that's part of non racialism - when you were growing up were there other black African people who said : No, the Zulus are the best?

T.N. Ja, I think honestly all of us had come to that influence in some stages of ad(olescence) especially growing up (519) where you become proud of being a Zulu and so on and so on, but when - I think I will only explain this in this way, that after understanding the political situation, or more the history of South Africa, then it became apparent to me that actually we are Zulus. We are not the only - they are not the only Zulus in South Africa. There are also other ethnic groups like Xosas and Tswanas and so forth, and, as well as, of course, during the B.C. period.

Those were some of the things they used to push - criticise Gqha, criticise Matanzima and things like that, and of course, saying that those people are tribalist and so on and so on, so some of the questions that I had were answered as we move forward - some were answered and so on.

But that feeling that, no I'm a Zulu, it's something that one - because, you know, in schools you will get - you actually - their text books, that will only propagate Zulus, and then how superior Zulus are and so forth and so on, right in school, you see.

So when you come out of actually school you come up with the idea. Of course, not nowadays (Laugh) but during those times, and of course, other people, like for instance, we used to refer, or the Zulus - that is the - used to refer to people like Sothos and Tswanas as animals - noisy zilwanyanas.

What's the word in Zulu?

- T.N. Zilwanyana.
- J.F. Ilwanyana.
- T.N. Ilwanyana, ja - so in Engli(sh) it's ilwana - it's an animal, so - it's a diminutive now. When you say zisilwanyana it's meaning something smaller.
- J.F. How do you spell it?
- T.N. It's isilwanyana, ja - so this will be isilwane (547) that will mean there will be an e here, meaning an animal, but now this is a diminutive meaning that it's a small thing, you see.
- J.F. Just little animals?
- T.N. Ja, something like that, but I - really I think I outgrewed that very, very sooner than in some other things like acceptance of Indians and whites and things like that, but that I think I outgrewed that very, very soon then.
- J.F. And when you got to know about the A.N.C., did they have a line on Buthelezi - were they anti Buthelezi - I know that there has been a change - '77...
- T.N. No - actually the person who also (Laugh) was very keen and almost speaking about A.N.C. from now and again was Buthelezi. Actually initially, Buthelezi was saying that they were working hand in hand with the A.N.C., and in fact, starting from backwards, before he formed this INKATA, of course, he said he was reviving INKATA that was there - formed by Mpandes (559) some decades or centuries back.
- And then he said, no, he was actually reviving A.N.C. I remember those were his actual words that : I'm reviving the A.N.C., and to prove that I will actually adopt the A.N.C. colours as well as its slogans and things like that.
- J.F. How did you feel about that?
- T.N. I didn't know Buthelezi - I actually accepted him. I didn't become a member of INKATA at any stage but I accepted him and then I said, Oh, but I'll have to see first how this thing goes, and at that time actually when it came - when these moves of forming the INKATA and so on came, there was nothing really against Buthelezi but there was this thing of now this homeland system, you see, because it had become now apparent that there was this homeland system which is actually meant to divide us, so I had my reservations with him insofar as that was concerned.
- But actually saying, I'm a member of - actually I move around, I meet Oliver Tambo. Every and each time he comes from abroad he will say : I met Tambo and we had some political discussions on the future of this country and so on. So, you know (Laugh) then, hey, but on the

- T.N. other hand we'll fight this side, criticising him, you see, of being in the homeland system and so forth, and actually supporting the government policy of separate development and so on, and, ja.
- J.F. So when you came to know about the A.N.C., did they tell you Buthelezi's not with us or did they say : Look, we're still.....
- T.N. No, nothing was said.
- J.F. Nothing was said, O.K.
- T.N. Nothing was said, and actually something that came out actually was, oh, I think it was '79 - from '79 onwards when they actually came out.
- J.F. With all - when you got recruited and you were excited about working, did you ever think to yourself : Look, I could be arrested and go to jail for a long time, or did you not let yourself think of those things?
- T.N. Oh, yes, we did - oh, yes, we did, but it had come to a stage where - you see, the main motivator was that I don't want to reach my mother's age at - in - under the same conditions, and one of the things was that I would like to see my mother happy at a certain stage, and not working, just relaxing and things like that.

So the dangers that were actually involved if one is involved in politics and things like that were things actually that one could see, that one will be arrested and things like that. The security police kills people nowadays and probable I will be killed like that, but even then nothing can stop me, you see. They can either kill me but still the whole thing will still continue moving forward.

So it was - that was the attitude really, because even when we were arrested I was never afraid. When they came for me I simply asked them who are you, I said it's the security poli(ce) they said, no, C.I.D's - that is Criminal Investigation Department.

Then I started thinking, C.I.D's - what must I have done - no, but there's nothing - can't be C.I.D's. Then when we came - when we went through West Street - now here in Masoni Grove (604) was the offices - head offices of C.I.D's, so they didn't turn anywhere here - they went past.

Then I knew, because even then I knew that the security was at Fisher Street and so on - that was before Serrswart (608) So when they went past then I started to realise these are not C.I.D., these are security, and then they started saying : Oh, you are surprised, eh; ja, we are security - so really we were actually expecting such things, but

- T.N. we were - come to a level where we say, no, we don't care.
- J.F. And did they do a lot of torturing of you ... did they (614) have a case already?
- T.N. Yea, they did. Actually I think they did torture us - me specifically - they used much torture...
- J.F. Like what kind....
- T.N. ... and - there's one that they used to use. They will, of course, handcuff me, my back and put a stick here and then I have to put my hands like this, so they handcuffed me that way, and I'd become a small (Laugh) and it's really painful.
- Now you stand like that - you sit like that - actually it's sort of sitting now you are actually handcuffed from here, then they - you are handcuffed this way and the stick it was actually here...
- J.F. By the knees - behind the knees (625)
- T.N. Ja - that they will put it there and then they would start telling you to jump around and things like that. And one that they used was also to tell you to take off your things, and then you will stand there for hours on end naked and things like that - well, that was more psychologically humiliation and things like that.
- But they did not really, I would say, really go to me in full force.
- J.F. They didn't use shocks?
- T.N. No, no - and - because, you see, I think in me they have their case ready but now they wanted to connect us with certain people that they have, so you'll see they will want to ask questions : What about so-and-so - how do you know him, why and so on - trying to get the whole network, so to say which was, of course, possible.
- You know, especially in my case, I had to resist. I was - it was on Wednesday when I was arrested. Now I resisted until Friday, certain things. Now resisting in order to give others a chance, whereas I wasn't aware that*they want actually that I was trying to protect was taken at the same - almost the same time with me - the same day (Laugh) *the one.
- J.F. And when exactly had you been recruited - when had you actually first gotten involved with working - just wondering how long you were working successfully before you were arrested.
- T.N. I think the right year will be '75 - '75/'76/'77. Initially it was small things like that, and then as time went on became more things like for instance, having to organise people, send them out and things like that, so it was really (Laugh) it was really tense.
- Now the problem there is that if these people - even now you pray that these people should not be caught on the way, you see - it's just something like that, but otherwise

- T.N. I think I would say actively, because even when they were arrested they told me that they had been actually after me from 1972, and in 1972 there was nothing - I don't know - I personally don't remember anything more that could have drawn their attention - probable there was but I didn't really register it as something important.
- And so they actually said that my involvement is earlier than that, but they started to know me from '72, but I personally from about '75, I think there were - I started actually now involved.
- J.F. And what was your mother's reaction - she had no idea you were political?
- T.N. She has no idea whatsoever.
- J.F. So it's you and your brother - how many in the family were you?
- T.N. We were - only two of us.
- J.F. So both her sons - how did she (Interruption - kids again!) So how did she take it to have both sons in such trouble?
- T.N. Well, I think she just accepted it. I think that was the case actually - she just accepted it. She actually accepted it because there was no any other way anyway.
- She didn't know a damn thing. Of course, I used to discuss a certain time when she's happy, then I could see, oh, today she's a bit happy - then I will probably discuss certain things and - while covered, of course.
- And we will discuss for some time just to try and get her views on certain things and so on, but she was really surprised when she heard that I was taken.
- J.F. And then did she - was she strong - did she come to court or did she not have.....
- T.N. Oh, yes, she used to come to court and even to prison to visit us there - she used to come. She has been supportive in actual fact - very supportive - very supportive.
- J.F. O.K.-
- T.N. Because even in Robben Island she also came there.
- J.F. Has the experience changed her - do you think she's more militant (693)
- T.N. Oh, yes - oh, yes - oh yes - oh, yes. If you hear her talk today (Laugh) then you will really know that, no, she's a changed person really. No, she - actually no - I have no problems of her today. I have never actually sat down with her and tried to politicise her, so to say, but it's this condition - the situation itself that did that.
- J.F. Now let's just talk about the unionism part - when you were in all these different jobs had you ever joined a union?

T.N. Eh, no, it was actually the last place where I was working - at Prestige Lingerie. There was, of course, as a clothing factory, there was also these union which is under TUCSA, so they had a closed shop agreement there, so automatically become a member, and so*I employed. *are.

So then the organiser used to come, not actually to tell us to join simply because we are all members - the unknown, you see, and all members because you all lick (look) (712) at that through your pay slip,*that you're funded that you find that you are being deducted for union membership and things like that.

But that woman used to come then she would start telling us certain things and so on and so on and so on and this and that there are - they are going to get increment on this and that and so forth, and I started questioning her on certain things, but even then I was not really more interested, so to say - I wasn't really interested.

J.F. Why - did the union - didn't the union represent helping workers?

T.N. Well, no - the one that I'm talking about was just something that we don't even know.

J.F. You just had to pay money?

T.N. Yea, the money's actually drawn from our pay slip and you don't physically go to that office and in so much that I never even went to that office throughout the time I was there until I was actually arrested I never...

J.F. So why...

T.N. so it was something actually removed, so to say.

J.F. So how is it that you've come out and gotten involved with the unions - tell me what happened when you came out, or was it decided inside or you thought that you'd do it or - how did it happen that you came into union work?

T.N. Ja, we used to have, amongst other discussions, we used to have a session on trade unionism which was actually conducted by Curnick Ndlovu.

J.F. By who?

T.N. Curnick Ndlovu.

J.F. Who's that.

T.N. Curnick Ndlovu is the national chairman of UDF.

J.F. Oh, Curnick?

T.N. Ja.

J.F. Oh, so you knew him inside?

T.N. Ja, ja...

J.F. So he was at SACTU?

T.N. Ja, so he is the one who used to conduct sessions on

T.N. trade unionism inside, and that the role of the working class in society and in our struggle in particular and so on, so then I became more and more and more interested in trade unionism, and actually my interest in trade unionism not because - not simply on trade unionism as such, but more specifically in terms of the struggle that is going on, and in terms of the experience that I also I personally had suffered, you see.

It was then that I actually decided I know the really place that I will like to work for will be in a trade union.....

END OF TAPE.

J.F. Why do you think that it attracted you so much - when you say that you've decided that that's what you want to do, do you think it's because - had you seen yourself as a worker before?

T.N. I - ja, as I was a worker before and unable to work for longer periods in each place for reasons that I couldn't actually stand to - I would say exploitation, although at the time I wasn't actually aware that it's actually exploitation that I'm running away from, but running away from one thing and going to the same thing but in a different form.

Running from one employer to another employer. It was a serious - that type of a situation - your ears open (008) It was that type of a situation so it was really something that I could feel myself part of, so to say.

J.F. And did you speak at all with Curnick or anyone to get any advice - did you say to him : Look, I want to do this; would I get out, or did you just - when you got out you got in touch with him (012 - lots of noise - kids etc.)

T.N. No, it was something, of course, that was more encouraged, that people should be involved in trade unions and people should actually understand and people should actually be in a position to educate the workers on certain issues, and specially since there are many trade unions around here in South Africa.

Some of them are just their name - they don't actually stand for the workers, and as a result the worker suffers, while at the same time he's expected to be - he's supposed to be in unity with other workers, but even then you'll find that, no, they are just office trade unions, so to say, where one, where you ask a worker : Hey, is there any trade union in this factory or company, then the worker will say : No, the trade union is there, and then he direct you to the office, you see. Now it means that the reason why

- T.N. actually he removes this thing from him - he doesn't see himself as part of it, it's simply because the way it works - the way it works and so on.
- So people have been actually - some people actually are frustrated on trade unionism because of that. They're saying : No, man, this is a company trade union.
- J.F. O.K., but by the time you got out there certainly were unions that weren't company trade unions - there was FOSATU, there was Food and Canning - all these ones, so it was a long way since TUCSA - how did - did you - you got out, what did you do when you were released - just tell me, did you get right into the...
- T.N. When I got out?
- J.F. Ja.
- T.N. No, I didn't do anything much. I went to my aunt to visit my aunt, stayed there for, I think about three months, then I came back - of course I was around and active and things.
- For instance, when I came out there was that campaign on - a million signature campaign, anti what you call - this anti what...
- J.F. Elections?
- T.N. Election campaign.....
- J.F. what month were you released?
- T.N. That was in June^{'84} - so I was able to continue, especially on the election and as well a million, so I participated - I was....
- J.F. you went right into UDF?
- T.N. Ja, so I became more active there.
- J.F. Had you heard about UDF - you were - ja, O.K., that was pre-UDF.
- T.N. That I was still inside - ja, I was still inside when actually we heard of UDF. UDF was formed in 1983, August...
- J.F. Right - but you were released in June.
- T.N. In June last year.
- J.F. Oh, '84.
- T.N. '84.
- J.F. So you heard about UDF from inside?
- T.N. Inside, yes.
- J.F. From the papers?
- T.N. Ja, through the papers, yes, so then we became more - I came out and when I came back from my aunt, then we started - became more active. Actually I was approached by Mapalala.

J.F. Who?

T.N. Magwaza Mapalala.

J.F. Who's that?

T.N. That is - he is actually the president of the National Federation of Workers Union. He's the one who approached me, saying I must come, because I will have actually - I would have actually gone to SAWU, and then here this thing started happening in SAWU. I was still in SATU(047) and start happening these fights and in-fights and so on, and which ultimately actually divided SAWU, especially here in Natal.

Then when I came out I said to myself : No way; I will no longer go there - and I was approached to go and join SAWU. I said : No, it's full of contradictions right now, that I don't know anything about. Well, I can't see myself joining or being part of those things.

Then later on then the - Mapalala then contacted me - actually collaring (053) me at a UDF rally - Howard (?) College. Contacted me there and then I said : O.K., that's fine. Then I came, he interviewed me and told me about the problems that they exist and things like that, and that the NFW doesn't actually have another source of income except through subscriptions, and as a result I wouldn't get any pay in which it could be said that this is your salary or wage or whatever, because it will depend.

You see, it's a - as a federation there are many unions, you see - industrial unions. Now I will be in one of those unions, and as one of those unions I'll be the one actually to know - who will be in a better position to know that the income of this union this month is 200 rand and I have to pay 150 probable for rent and stationery and so on, so obviously the balance will be 50 rand.

So if it's 50 rand obviously I don't get anything, so I can only get probably half of that 50 rands just to keep the account open and so on, so I said : No, that's fine, although, of course, my family will expect me to work but they had to understand, you see, and I'll explain that to them.

So I did explain them to my - although they didn't actually accept it, they said : O.K., you can do it, and then next year - that was last year - they said : O.K., you can join that thing and do it, but next year then you must go out and look for work (Laugh)

So - well, I used to hold discussions myself (071) but you know the position - economic position is really bad - the economy's going down, inflation and so forth. There's no work and so on, so I'll continue working, and then - well, now they tend to accept. Actually this is where, really, I feel myself I could work here as a trade unionist, and

- T.N. really I don't see myself actually going and working in the factory again, because at least I'm at the level where I could be of use to the workers, both on the theoretical and practical problems, whereas if I just go to a firm and work there then I wouldn't have that opportunity of contributing something to the working class struggle.
- J.F. Are you involved in the unity talks in Jo'burg?
- T.N. Ja, since June this year. Initially the unity talks started in '81, and then some unions were kicked out and NFW was actually not amongst those, but it was amongst those because it was never actually approached in even at any stage - that is, invited for the initial - the first meeting of the unity talks, so it's never been involved.
- It was in a court hall (087) it was - there were - it was never involved until now they started opening their doors again - that's the usual term that they use - no, the doors are always open, so and so.
- We have started so we are actually involved. Next week actually, on Thursday, there will be such here - held here.
- J.F. In Durban?
- T.N. Ja, for the first time. We pushed that, that, no we must come down because we'd been going to Jo'burg in that other week and this other - the last - and last week - for instance, we just came back on....
- J.F. Ja, I know.
- T.N. Ja - came back on Friday.
- J.F. Now tell me, just because I don't want to take longer time - I think the whole issue of NFW I want to find out about but I don't need it on tape because I'm doing non racialism, although just a quick answer, if indeed this federation is launched in November, as is in the papers, is NFW going to go into it?
- T.N. Actually, we are actually involved and there is a committee that has been formed, and they will - an open committee that means that includes also us - actually this will be the meeting of that committee next week, and, ja -
- We had no problems in terms of the five principles that had to be the sort of a guideline or so, and the interesting question, or the interesting thing about the unity talks is that in the meeting of June 29 : Correction : in the meeting of June, '89 in Soweto there were also B.C. unions (105) (- does he mean 89 unions?) under AZACTU...
- J.F. Azactu, ja.
- T.N. Ja - and of course, at a certain stage of those talks they were prepared to compromise. For instance, saying non racialism's talk (108) anti racism because - anyway they said, no, anti racism. When, of course, they were asked to define anti racism they were saying that they said that non racialism actually is a sort of passive term, whereas anti racism is an active term meaning you are actually engaged in fighting racism - something like that (Laugh) so

- T.N. we were prepared to actually have them - we want them to be part, you see. If they were able to compromise on that, at least it is a step forward - ja, at least it's a step forward...
- J.F. But then they let..... (114)
- T.N. but the FOSATU groupings has decided : No way - you either say you accept non racialism or out.
- J.F. As I said, let me - maybe I can have the good fortune to have another brief meeting and we can talk about that because I think I would love to hear about it, but for your constraints let me just ask some more related to my thing - just in a general way - you came, you started - you got involved with a union that was non racial, that was affiliated to UDF?
- T.N. It is affiliated to UDF.
- J.F. Now you had the experience of being in prison, you learned about SACTU - how did you respond if someone said to you : Look, look what happened to SACTU; they smashed SACTU - how can you start in such a kind of political union grouping in 1985 or '84 and it's going to be smashed again - you get into politics, that's not the workers interests - what do you say to that?
- T.N. Ja, that thing that I say is that it was smashed because of its effectiveness, so simply for that it means then that they were actually on the right track. Then that is the way that we should also take. That is, I think, the shortest answer I could give for that question (Laugh)
- J.F. And are there any other unionists or people involved in politics that also have your background in terms of the fact that you didn't go to university, because a lot of the people that I interviewed, even someone you might know from the top Māngezi?
- T.N. Ja, ja, ja.
- J.F. I suspected (133) - so many Diliza Mjili, went through, even if they didn't go through B.C. experience they did - it's always the criticism, that people/are involved are educated - they're all university - they can't relate to the workers - do you know other people? /who.
- T.N. Ja, I know plenty or plenty people who are actually - some who don't even actually have matric.
- J.F. But who are big leaders?
- T.N. But who are actually very important in the trade union movement.
- J.F. And do you at all feel - have you ever felt any gap within in the intellectuals - the ones who've been to university - is that anything that, in your past or present, has been something that you felt a gap - either that you felt they had more education and that in any way was a factor that was a problem, or that you felt that you knew more than them or anything - do you feel a gap?

T.N. Ja, at times - at times - at times, because for instance, in terms of - you see - I don't know how I could really answer that very quickly, because there's a lot of things comes in my mind - ja, that gap one feels.

Actually that gap one feels more specially in these unity talks - there have been a lot of things, and the people there who are actually behind this and also people who actually claim that we must have this one federation in South Africa and yet, at the same time, saying that, no, the unity that we seek is not the unity of all workers but unities of those, and then that thing comes up then, that if, by the way, this person doesn't even know - doesn't even have the experience of being a worker, and today comes and tells me this.

When I - when we speak - when I actually - I am for the unity of the workers. I see the federation as uniting the workers of South Africa, and in one industry having one union, meaning that not all these hundred unions around, so -

But you find that, of course, not - I can't say really that it's because of they went to universities and things like that, but I think what the really thing one could say is that it depends whatever line one wants to - what he wants actually to achieve and what is it that he wants, and then, of course, he will then push for that thing wherever he is, so that thing, of course, comes up, but there haven't been any feeling really, let's say just on day to day issues where you say : Hey, but this one is an intellectual, you see - no, no.

Although that criticism is there, that the intellectuals they come from universities and then they go straight and become officials of the trade unions without any experience whatsoever, and then at the same time, they direct - they want to direct the trade union their way, you see.

Of course, at times we - that is - it happens to be a correct way at times, but in most cases it's not the correct way, the way I see it, in terms of understanding the working class struggle and so forth, so -

So I would say really it's a matter of, not really of education as such, but of different ways - of different ways of looking at the problem - interpretation of the problem.

J.F. Do you think that whites who are intellectuals, or intellectuals who happen to be whites are especially prone to being a bit distanced and - do you think there are any problems - I know you're non racist, but do you think that some of the criticisms of this kind of union official is especially common with whites or do you also see it with blacks?

T.N. More with whites - more with whites.

J.F. But now how - what if someone says : But/you're a non racist - what do you mean exactly? /you say

T.N. Because, for instance, in FOSATU, for instance, we - there are a lot of trade unions that are actually under or that are actually controlled by whites, right - well, there's nothing wrong with that.

But now it becomes wrong when you see somebody coming from university - a white coming from university to NFW, and then in NFW he becomes an official on the seven days secretary general of the union.

Now the worker will not identify himself with that white. First of all we need to educate the workers before we come to that, but more - and the criticism has been levelled that I've - and in some of the discussions I've been present, in some absent, was that they are the people who actually push for non racialism, right, but in terms of officials, you see, they want to be accepted as officials of these black trade unions, and yet they don't go - they don't make any attempt to organise these whites - workers - no attempts whatsoever.

For instance, they are people who have been - who have a long history of being what you call - like Jan Theron, for instance, but I don't even know one white worker that he organised to come and actually be a member of this union that he's working with, but -

So that criticism is actually in terms of - especially it came out as this non racialism was debated in these unity talks. Then it came out there, where you find that these people they speak of non racialism and yet they don't go out to organise.

If I speak of non racialism, myself, it's because actually I'm the affected party in the whole thing, right, but I say to myself : You are also part of me, right, so in other words, I have my doors open for you to come when you are ready to come to me, and when you are ready to actually regard me as a brother, as well - a class brother.

But now I don't think it is right - really I don't think it is right. For instance, NFW is - it is a non racial in its policy and so forth, but it will be a lie to say that we organise across colour line and so forth - that will be a lie.

Why is it so, because it is difficult for us to reach the white workers, right - more difficult for us to reach the white workers, but the white workers could be reached by a white official, right.

Now if that white official doesn't make an attempt to do that, obviously it means then he wants that non racialism in terms of him accepted as an official of that union, so he comes from the university and then he wants to control NFW, whereas NFW had been in existence before he was even maybe interested in trade unionism anyway.

Then one starts asking the motives of these people rather than whether they are white or black, but the motive. What is the motive of these people?

- J.F. Do you have any whites who work with NFW?
- T.N. We don't have any official with NFW but we - I would say, for instance, we have people like doctors - the union doctors who are whites. We don't say, no, we want black or white chaps (232) who are whites and so on, and there's nothing wrong with that, you see. Even the workers they accept it as such, you see. (Interruption)
- J.F. What's your membership?
- T.N. Total membership? I think it's roughly between 20 thou - it's twenty thousand and something.
- J.F. And when was it founded?
- T.N. '81.
- J.F. And who are you organising - this is just quick questions (246) Who are you organising?
- T.N. We - well, we have actually eleven - eleven industrial unions under NFW, so each union is specific(ly) for that industry and so on, so on, so on.
- J.F. Which industries?
- T.N. Like for instance, we have the National Post Office and Allied Workers Union. We have Municipality and Workers Union. We have the Health and Allied Workers Union - that was engaged in the recent strikes in hospitals here in the (.....) (252) and things.
- We have Bricks, Clay and Allied Workers Union, so on and so on and so on, and even farm workers, domestic workers and so forth.
- J.F. And how many agreements do you have?
- T.N. We don't actually have none - we have none. We don't sign any agreements. We only - I think - how we - this is how we do - we actually go about it. The shop stewards committees in each factory they are in direct contact with the management, not the officials per se.
- So if the workers decide that they want an agreement then it's for them to decide on that, and then they come and tell us.
- J.F. What could you point to, just in concrete terms, to say : This is my proudest achievement - what would you say to something that showed that you've done some good in the past year? (267 - you're not very clear)
- T.N. (Laugh) No, I don't think I have any, really, to point to...
- J.F. But if.....
- T.N. I don't think, really, I have any that I could say I'm proud of, that I was able to accomplish this or that.
- J.F. Well, just generally - what are you doing that's worthwhile?

- T.N. Well, I regard work - my work in the trade union with the workers as a paramount thing because of my understanding that the national struggle that is actually going on in South Africa, the true liberation that could come could only become through the workers' effort, and that actually the workers must actually take a lead in the struggle themselves if they actually expect concrete changes in the next government, because I believe that it's not easy - I mean it's not hard for Botha, for instance, to stand down today and give Gqoqa power, but the workers will still remain in the same place - same position, whether Botha was there or not.
- Probable more*oppressed than when Botha was in power, more exploited. *repressed. For instance, if you check around the townships - shops, supermarkets and things, the workers working there are more exploited than the workers working in town under whites and so forth, so I regard actually trade unionism and working in the trade union as actually involved - myself involved in working class struggle and of course, I'm also involved in other organisations - community organisations.....
- J.F. Such as?
- T.N. For instance, like Chesterville Youth Organisation. I'm also involved in the joint rent action committee, JORAC. I'm also actually a member of an executive of the regional executive of UDF.
- J.F. What position?
- T.N. As a - I'm representing labour there.
- J.F. Labour officer?
- T.N. That's right, ja - and so I'm really actually involved in....
- J.F. Do you think you're organising the unorganised?
- T.N. Ja, that is the main thing, although - although we more tend to organise the organised (Laugh) but there's al - about 10% of organised workers in South Africa - in the total workforce of South Africa, so almost about 90% are unorganised, so the main actually thrust, I think should be directed towards that, and we are actually making attempts to organise there.
- J.F. O.K. - just some quick things to wrap up - who impressed you most in Robben Island?
- T.N. (Laugh) Mandela, although probable because I - he's a popular person, but I'll say Govan Mbeki (324) and Harry Gwala - Harry Gwala - they are the people really - I'll say really who really impressed me. You see, we didn't mix with them.
- J.F. You didn't?
- T.N. No, we didn't mix but, of course, you'll meet them accidentally, maybe in the hospital or something like that - these prison hospitals and things - some place like that, or probably make a prior (332) arrangement that : O.K., you go - that a certain stage or time we'll meet there, but - so if they want to communicate with us so well, there are a lot

T.N. things like celebrations on this, commemorations of that and so on, so we hold those things there, so then they will write something on that, specifically on that.

Or even just on theoretical questions, you see, they will write certain things, and so I'll say it's through all those documents and things like that that we actually got to know more about them because we were in another section of N.G. (343) and Mandela, Sisulu, Mbeki and others were in B Section

END OF SIDE ONE.

T.N. and Harry Gwala and others were in A Section, so

J.F. So how long was Harry Gwala have - how many is he serving?

T.N. He actually serving life sentence.

J.F. When did he get sentenced?

T.N. '77, I think - either '77 or '76.

J.F. How old is he, about - is what (454)

T.N. I think he's about fifty something - fifty - actually I have a sticker in the office there - his bed there - sticker.

J.F. Is he from Durban?

T.N. No, he's from 'Maritzburg.

J.F. From 'Maritzburg - that's right, ja - O.K. - and then I have my real final questions - so what's your position in NFW?

T.N. Presently I'm an acting secretary general.

J.F. Acting secretary general - who was the former secretary general?

T.N. He's at Newcastle - he's mandla Qele (459) - that was the former secretary general.

J.F. And what's he doing now?

T.N. He's actually organising in Newcastle.

J.F. And O.K. - and how did you spell that word isiaga?

T.N. Isikwaga?

J.F. Ja, how do.....

T.N. That is - ja, that's right there.

J.F. Isixaga.

T.N. There should be c.

C instead of x.

T.N. Ja, c k - Isic aga.

J.F. O.K.

T.N. That's c a k a.

J.F. Oh - uhuh, I see - and your surname is T h e m b a
N x u m a l o?

T.N. That's my surname, ja.

J.F. Ja, that's your surname and - O.K., then this is my final questions - how do you envision the struggle evolving in the future - you can see what the level is now of struggle and the attcks, and it certainly, especially in the Transvaal townships - how do you see it evolving - do you ever sit around and think about what's going to happen in the next few years - do you see it as five years or ten years - and then what do you think is going to happen afterwards - what kind of future is ahead - is it non-racial - can you just talk about from now till when?

T.N. Ja, I think as it unfolds, actually we - the stage that we are actually in now, right now, is the stage where it's no longer an individual who is actually engaged in this or that, but the people have taken it up to themselves now and they are - actually - and they are actually pushed to do that.

For instance, what has been happening here in Durban in the recent weeks is a proof of that. Many, many families who have actually - who have been claiming that they're neutral they found themselves now to be actually forced to take sides, and the other side it seems to be so bad (482) to them that - and perpetrators of all these brutalities and killings and all that that has taken place around, that people now see, actually really see that now these people are not actually for us, therefore we must not rely on certain individuals to bring about our Freedom here in South Africa.

Now that is the stage that we are actually in, and what is actually happening in the townships around the country is that the people are actually putting that into practice - that since we have to take things on our own, we should be engaged. They are actually doing that.

I cannot, unfortunately, give a deadline to say probable in five years time we'll be free, because this is a process and a process has those times when things go smooth and then, at certain stages, they rock and things like that.

But I think, really, we are near to our objective than before.

J.F. And what will the role of whites be in the future South Africa?

T.N. As far as I'm concerned, and as far as the movement that I identify myself with is concerned, whites will be whites as much as they are whites. The problem is that when we speak of freedom and all that - liberation and so forth, we don't actually only mean amongst the African people, but

T.N. including the whites themselves. They need to be free. They need to be liberated from this fear. They need, themselves, to - actually I see it, really, that they will feel that thing themselves - that you are liberated. You know, I was living under fear of this or that.

I had been considering or looking or checking under the blankets, under the beds for this or that - today I don't have that thing.

The future of the white South African here is as, the way I see it, will be as bright as our future will be if that future is within or, ja - if the, ja, the future will be within the freedom charter, as the freedom charter has - actually states that the people shall govern and all people shall be treated equally, and South Africa belongs to all who live in it - that is true.

And we - actually I, personally, accept that, endorse it, and actually involved in the struggle today to see that future, where really South Africa shall belong to all who live in it.

J.F. And what about the recent events in Durban - how does that feature for non racialism - the state says that shows the blacks can't live without Indians, and blacks are killing each other and - what do you think about that for non racialism?

T.N. It is - I think the first thing that we have to consider in answering that question will be - is - to whose advantage is this actually happening - who will actually say : I gained?

Will it be us or is it the state? The UDF it's a non racial organisation - political front, and itself it's nothing. It's just a name and a few officials there. The really UDF is the affiliates of UDF.

Now, how come that overnight they will - the Africans who have been, and who are still, the majority of the UDF in terms of the affiliates, and turn around and say : No, no longer manje, an Indian will no longer be my brother.

So the whole thing is actually - something that had been actually, the way I see it, pushed and organised by the system to - here - specially here in Natal - to sort of open cracks in the UDF itself, because once the Indians and Africans start fighting amongst each other, obviously it means the UDF dies, you see, so it also in the interest of our honourable Mr. Gqha Buthelezi because he had been actually fighting UDF ever since the first - before UDF was a week old Gqha Buthelezi was, at that stage, actually levelling accusation on it, claiming that it is a ANC thing and so forth.

And later on he went on and then he changed his tune and then started saying that UDF is controlled by Indians, right - petty bourgeois and things like that. Well, all those things were meant by the state, as well as by him, as of course, an agent of the state, to discredit UDF and as well as to make people actually sort of move away from UDF influence or something like that, so what happened here in

T.N. Durban is this - they actually killed Masis Mxenge . The students decided that O.K., they'll have a wake - mourning and during the period, the boycotts - school boycotts started on Monday, Tuesday, then Wednesday, at the memorial service of Masis (Mrs) (555) Mxenge , held at Umlhazi Cinema, INKATA attached there.

They surrounded the place, they destroyed the cars and so forth - damaging cars, tyres and all that, and then they started pushing now to go in. Well, the youth resisted.

Resisted until someone - one individual decided or remembered that, Oh, by the way, there is a tap of water here - that is these fire extinguishers - the pipe there, so he just went there and fetched that pipe and he opened the water, and then he opened the doors and then they put the water there - they started running away - these people.

Then they were able to get out in order now to be able to fight back, so to say. You not really fighting back when you don't have anything in your hands. I mean, coming from a meeting - actually in a meeting.

And what happened was that the police force was covering up for these INKATA people. Immediately they were pushed the police force then started throwing teargas and things like that, not to all the people who were engaged in this thing but only to those who are actually advancing and pushing the INKATA while he was back (570) - they started throwing teargas and started shooting, so - right - that was Wednesday.

J.F. Were you there that night?

T.N. Unfortunately I was not. I was in Jo'burg on these unity talks. On Thursday, well that was still that situation, but the main thing is that the enemy has decided actually here in Natal, in order to keep Natal in a different planet, as one can say, they said - they try - they started deciding that if moves are made to organise Natal then they are going to be on the offensive one way in order to actually disorganise us.

That way, we won't be able to organise anything, you see. That has been actually the thing - the thing of Indians - that looting - these things happening in Umlhazi, Lamontville, Chesterville, Kwamashu, in Tuzung (584) - right, and then out of the blue, this thing of Inanda, and started coming up - that actually there were people harassing the Indians there, and actually looting and so on - assaulting Indians and so forth.

But the Indians from these areas they say these people were actually carrying shields and (.....) (588) and knobkerries and spears. Obviously there is no UDF supporter who do carries those things except the INKATA, right.

They don't hide that fact, so if it was INKATA sent specifically to do that so as to defeat the whole thing so that - to confuse the people actually as to what is actually happening, especially people from outside Natal, then the whole thing - people will simply see - for instance, in the papers, the much publicised thing was about this confrontation between the Africans and the Indians - what - people killed

- T.N. and injured in - at Mlhazi - you get small things like this in a paper. Kwamashu, same thing, Lamontville, Chesterville, same thing.
- So it is not in the interest actually of UDF or any of the UDF affiliates to see this situation as it is, therefore - but it is in the interest of the system, in order to cause chaos and such things here in South Africa, so I don't think, really, it's something that was - that just came up because people hated Indians and things like that - no, no.
- J.F. And when you say They killed Mx enge, who do you mean?
- T.N. Well, the system, obviously.
- J.F. O.K. - where do you live?
- T.N. In Chesterville.
- J.F. And does your wife work?
- T.N. Ja, but nowadays she's still out on maternity leave.
- J.F. What does she do?
- T.N. She works in Fedicks (610)
- J.F. As?
- T.N. Fedicks as a - Fedicks is actually food services in companies, you know.
- J.F. As - what did she do?
- T.N. She's a what you call - what is this - this cashier or something like that.
- J.F. Is she in a union?
- T.N. Ja, they are.
- J.F. Which is
- T.N. The FOSATU union.
- J.F. FOSATU union?
- T.N. Ja (Laugh)
- J.F. Did you meet Billy Nair in prison?
- T.N. Yes, yes.
- J.F. And do you - I think I'd better just stop asking you questions - this is the other one that was my last question and that was - a little bit about what you said before about SACTU, but what is the lessons of the fifties - do you ever worry that non racial and progressive organisations can be crushed now as they were then?
- T.N. Oh, no, no - no, no, no.

J.F. But there's so many parallels - UDF, million signatures, SACTU - there's so many parallels - why not?

T.N. You see, the people are on the move now, and the democratic forces here in South Africa are actually swelling, and this state of emergency and things like that are meant actually to curb, if not stop entirely the whole movement, will not succeed because it's no longer something like sitting back, saying somebody will have to do that or that.

It's now the time when people actually, themselves, are saying : What am I doing? So they won't be able to crush those forces, and we are really marching forward despite that, of course, most of us will be killed on the way, but I'm really optimistic that what we want is actually around the corner and we are going to get it, and Botha is aware of it (Laugh)

END OF INTERVIEW.