

ANDREW MLANGENI 2 MARCH 1994 INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR PHIL BONNER:

KEY WORDS:

Move from non-violent struggle toward Armed Struggle 15,
Adoption of Armed Struggle 16,17,
Operation Mayibuye 17,18,19,
Sabotage Activities 20,21,
Description of brush with the law in Botswana 24,25,

KEY ISSUES:

- The pressure to stop the non-violent method of struggle and to adopt armed struggle was already building up from the mid 50's. The leadership, particularly Luthuli were against the adoption of armed struggle insisting that the ANC was a non-violent organisation. 15,
- With the banning of the ANC in 1960, those who had been advocating a move towards armed struggle gained ground. Mandela in particular opposed the leadership and argued that it was now time to adopt armed struggle. Ultimately the leadership of the ANC agreed to the adoption of armed struggle on the condition that it not be linked to the ANC as a political organisation. The leadership of the day supported the move to armed struggle, they encouraged Mandela to set up an armed wing and to recruit people to join it but they made it clear that they did not want it to be seen as an ANC baby. 16,
- Later in 1960 Mandela would make a public announcement from

underground that the ANC had adopted armed struggle as an official policy of the organisation. There was an outcry from many people about this as some believed that it was not wise to make public statements from underground. Mlangeni was one of those who was critical of this statement. He had reservations about the ANC's ability to operate from underground. 17,

-During the Rivonia Trial the defendants made the point that Operation Mayibuye was only under discussion, it had not been adopted as official policy. They were afraid that if the appellate Division found that it was an official policy document of the ANC many more people would be arrested and charged with having been members of MK. 18,

-Mlangeni maintains that Operation Mayibuye was never adopted but was under discussion when they were arrested. Many people were still critical of some aspects of the document. 18,

-There were groups of ANC people who became involved in sabotage activities before the first people were sent out for military training, and before armed struggle had become official policy of the ANC. 20,

-The first acts of sabotage were carried out in August 1961. Mkonto was only launched in December 1961. 21,

LIFE HISTORY:

-Mlangeni became interested in politics in the early 1940's while he was still a school boy in Fimville. He would watch the police harassing the women for brewing liquor and this incensed him. Later on he was required to carry a pass and

this led him to believe that as an oppressed individual he had to fight against this unjust system. 1,2,

-He joined what was called the Students and Ex-Students League in Pimville. It was a youth organisation which would organise outings for youth to go and learn about political issues. When he attempted to form a branch of this movement at St Peters Secondary School, his teacher Oliver Tambo, advised against it because the headmaster was strict and he feared that they would be expelled for forming such an organisation. 2,

-He joined the Communist Youth League in 1945. he was introduced to it by two people with whom he would travel to school on the train. 2,7,8,

-In 1951 he joined the ANC Youth League. At this stage he was not particularly active in the Communist Party. He joined the main body of the ANC in 1954. 3,10,

-In 1954 he moved from Pimville to Dube and with a number of others he formed the Dube branch of the ANC. 3,

-In 1958 he became Secretary of the South Western Region of the ANC. 3,

-In 1961 he left the country for military training in China. He returned in 1963 and was arrested the same year. In 1964 he was sentenced to life imprisonment along with Mandela, Sisulu and others. 4,

-Mlangeni was part of a group that carried out sabotage activities from August 1961, before the formation of MK. 20,21,

-He was sent to China for military training in October 1961. He was one of the first six to be sent for training. This was before the launching of MK in December 1961. 21,22,

In China, Mlangeni was trained in radio communication at a military academy in Shen Yun in the North. Other members of his group were taken to Nanking where they were trained in military science. 27.

EVENTS:

Suppression of Communism Act passed, 1950, 8,

Formation of the ANC Youth League, 1944, 9,

Treason Trial 11,

Freedom Charter Campaign 11,

Rivonia Trial 14,

MEETINGS:

PLACES:

Pimville 1,2,7,

St Peters Secondary School 2,7,

Dube 3,10,11,12,

Vrededorp 6,

Orlando East 11,

Mapetla 11,12,

Zola 11,

Sofiatown 11,12,

Meadowlands 12,

NAMES:

Bernstein Rusty 19,
Delling D.H. 2,
Fischer Braam 20,
Furst Ruth 8,
Ginwala Frene 26,27,
Grabi Joe 20,24,
Harmel Mike 19,20,
Heppel 19,
Kathrada Ahmed 18,19,
Luthuli Albert 15,
Madiba Moses 23,
Mahlangu Robert 7,9,
Mahlangu Aaron 11,
Maloyi Albert (MHQ) 12,
Mandela Nelson 4,8,16,
Masibuko 2,
Mbeki Govan 18,
Messina Leslie 11,
Mhlaba Raymond 23,24,
Mkwayi Wilton 23,
Mlawa Patrick 11,
Modise Joe 11,13,
Mthembu Ivan 20,24,
Mtsale Obed 12,
Nkadimeng John 24,
Nthabizita? Jeremiah 9,
Ntjage Eric 9,
Numakwe Isaac 12,

Sisulu Walter 4,9,11,16,18,

Slovo Joe 8,

Suzman Helen 15,

Tambo Oliver 2,

ORGANISATIONS:

Students and Ex-Students League, Pinville, 2,

Communist Youth League 2,3,7,

ANC Youth League 3,9,

African Presbyterian Church 5,6,

Ethiopian Church of South Africa 5,6,

MK 16,18,20,21,22,

Liberal Party 21,

SACTU 23,

LEADERSHIP POSITIONS:

Andrew Mlangeni, Secretary of the South Western Region ANC,
1958, 3.

Leslie Messina, secretary of SACTU, 1954, 11,

DOCUMENTS/PUBLICATIONS:

New Age 14,

Operation Mayibuye 17,18,19,