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Name of Interviewer:	Mary Ndlovu (MN) and Zephaniah Nkomo (ZN)
Name of interviewee/s:	Longman Ndebele (LN)
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TRANSCRIPTION

Speaker	Dialogue
MN	This is an interview with Longman Ndebele, who has agreed to be interviewed for the Zenzo Nkobi Photographic Archive Project. It's being carried out by Zephaniah Nkomo and Mary Ndlovu on behalf of Mafela Trust and South African History Archive. It's being carried out on March 1, 2011, in Bulawayo.
MN	Right, first of all can you tell us a bit about yourself, where you come from, your origin and how you got into the struggle.
LN	Good afternoon, My name is Zakhele Ndebele which is my real name but when I got to the struggle my name was changed to Longman Msipa ... which was much referring to my slender body then ... I used to look tall and slender. I'm born ... I was born at Plumtree, which is Mphoengs, that's my rural area. Much of the time I spent at school, especially mission schools, farm schools, where I did even agriculture, brickwork, before I left for the struggle. I left in 1977. It was very unfortunate, for the people whom I was supposed to leave with, they left some few days before I had reached home. These guys were from the same area, though they were coming from Plumtree North, I was coming from Plumtree South. I left town in the morning, without the knowledge of my uncle whom I was staying with and went straight to my home village which is about just less than two and a half k's, kilometres from the crossing border. This place, I was quite familiar to it because during my young age I used to herd cattle within the area, and I could even cross to Botswana and we called this place Matsiloje, and at Matsiloje there when I crossed some of the people



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>could ... I remember one of the elderly persons who knew my father, he asked me "Ha, you are the son of Mr Ndebele; you have crossed coming this side today. Are you looking for your cattle" for there wasn't any fence which was erected as it is now. The place ... only people who knew the place, that the other side is Botswana and the other side is Rhodesia. And with our people there most of the people speak Tswana so by then I wasn't very conversant with Botswana, for I spent much of my time this side in Bulawayo but I could speak quite fairly that with our communication nobody had any problem of getting exactly what I wanted. So with that old man, when I spoke to him I didn't hesitate to tell him where I was heading to. So he mentioned that "No, they had ...there was a truck which had just left with a few people who had crossed, from Rhodesia, going for struggle." I waited for a while and he told me there were some patrol vehicles that are, that were patrolling the area. Then he said they were very amicable people. I trusted him and fortunately I stayed for just some few hours. One of the patrol cars came by. So he stopped them, he spoke to them, I spoke to them and I told them where I come from and that I was just from across the river. They asked me, they told me that right I get on, their car had left some people at a certain distance. We drove ... probably it was some three kilometres ... we picked three guys so they drove us east, it was 20 k's. Then they caught up with the vehicle which they said had left to Botswana ... to Francistown. We found it had a puncture. So they assisted those people, then they put a new ... another spare wheel, from there they gave us to those people, then we continued. I think we were about fifteen.</p> <p>By that time they were using some Chevrolet vans. So they took us straight to Botswana ... to Francistown; the first place we got, they put us at Francistown police station where some people from ZAPU came and had some interviews with us. Fortunately most of us, we were still young guys, of course we were already above 19, because they asked us what we were interested in much: are we interested in going to school or interested at going to liberate our country. Then most of us, all of us in fact said no, we were interested in going to liberate our country. So they tried to explain that no, with people going to struggle, people should know the consequences they face and then we all said, no it would be better that we had some hardship or meeting some hardship already knowing what we are doing than being at home or wait since some of the colleagues or some of the young guys in the area we lived with, we learned that they had been taken for call-up. So most of us especially I didn't like to say we be taken for call-up because I understood what it meant to be taken for call-up. It would be taken that one ... you are taken to go to be a soldier for a cause you are not interested to be in, and again you are going to fight your brothers who are already involved in the liberation movement, since some time whilst I was still at home I had met a few guerrillas.</p> <p>I remember one time when I was in Lupane - I was at a mission school, Fatima - they came, whereby by then I was headboy, they spoke to me and I even went to Reverend, he was Father Waldemar and told him about their presence. And he asked "What really do they want?" I told him that no, these people they are liberators, they are not the soldiers that we have often met here. But they were all - two in uniform, in combats and the other was just putting some jeans, a military hat, so as I spoke to the Father Waldemar he said</p>



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>“Right, how do you think we can help them?”. I told him that they asked food and these guys seemed to know exactly that within our school we do make some sausages, some food and he told that “No if we could help them with some food”. Right, then he prepared, he asked it was [inaudible] he asked for some food, and we put in the paper bags, and I took one of the guys, it was Ephraim ..., Ephraim Ndlovu, that’s the guy who we came from Plumtree together,so ...and the other guy ... was it Patrick Ngcobo Yes, it was Patrick Ngcobo, Ephraim Ndlovu, and Esau [inaudible]. So those guys were very close friends of mine for we spoke much in Kalanga, that was our major language. And we took that food and gave those. Then they just went and didn’t do anything to the mission. So the following day the priest asked me, as I was the headboy of the school that “Zakhele, are you sure that the food which you gave you gave to the rightful people, or you gave to ..to the regime’s agents?”. Then I mentioned that “No, what convinced me was that those people were not harsh and they were not all that interrogative, they showed us even the badge for ... it was a badge for ZPRA, plus the head of Mr Nkomo, the President of ZAPU”.</p> <p>So from there ... already I was in Botswana, I was just trying to and narrate how I got familiar to the freedom fighters... So when ... when they had finished questioning us, the Batswana at Francistown police station, we were told that the following day some people would come and take us and we go to the camp where some people who had fled the country were.</p> <p>When I got there we found that there were a lot of people. I had not really had it in mind that I could find women who were saying they were going for the struggle. Some were carrying babies, and some children were too young to think of going to liberate the country. And my first experience which really amazed me was that the very young boys already were there, some the age of seven, they were already toyi toying, singing, showing that they really understand what they were up to, for they seem to have liked the life that they lived. Of course, when analysing these as somebody who had spent much of his time in town, and in the mission schools, I was saying that the young boys were too young. And in my mind I thought, as it was mentioned in the propaganda of the regime, that even the young people were taken and forced to be trained ... but these people were going to allow these people to be trained, then what is going to come out.</p> <p>Right, we stayed there, I met some people like somebody by the name he was called [inaudible] and he was ... he was not the overall commander in fact he was staying out of the camp, but he was monitoring people staying there trying to see the situation even their welfare, I think he was much concerned on that one. So with some comrades who had come from the front were already ... some were probably had missed after contact with the regime’s forces ... they would cross and they would come at the camp, they stay there. They were the ones who used to tell us “Right guys, when you stay in Zambia you are going to meet this and that and life is not as hard as what you hear from the radios and what is being mentioned in the propaganda of the regime that they can go to the extent of using sacks to collect guerrillas is very untrue. And the number they claim that they are killing is very untrue for the guerrillas were never moving in large numbers”. So all that we were told by the comrades who were there. And the people, they were showing us,</p>



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>teaching us the type of exercises which we are going to encounter when we are already in Zambia and at the trainings, though it wasn't all that as one could think could be a hard work. Most of the people they enjoyed the exercises which were introduced to them at the transit camp.</p> <p>So we stayed there I think it was from November. We didn't stay much there for we happened to be some students, some former students who had finished our form fours so we were selected. We left that place, I think we were about 75 of us, we were given a chartered plane and with some people there, some elders, I can't really call them elders, they were men and women, whom we boarded the plane together, so from there we were taken straight to Zambia, where we were taken straight to Nampundwe Transit Camp.</p>
ZN	Who met you at the airport
LN	<p>At the airport I can recall this man. There were two men who met us at the airport. The other one was a tall guy, I can't really recall his name now. That was no major problem, for this person when he came he received us from the Zambia International Airport and spoke to us, he led us to the.. the airport lounge. So we waited there. After waiting for a while there came two guys who ... one was a driver, but they were not putting on ... on the uniform, so he directed us to a truck which was waiting for us and that was a benz ... was it a benz or or whatever ... it was a green benz. So we went there, they took us, they told us that "Friends, comrades" – we were being addressed as comrades ... by the time we reached Francistown the name of ... the word friend was erased from our heads and our mouth, we started ... called each other comrades. So he called us comrades. Now they said "Comrades, now you have arrived in Zambia", but to be very honest with us, he told us, "You are already soldiers, you are not going to stay in the houses. You are already going to a transit camp where other soldiers are. You will meet some trained personnel; you will meet some people who are on transit for training, you will meet some elderly people who cannot go for training and some young people who are not going for training you are going to meet" So we left the airport, I think it was around 5 o'clock for when we got to Nampundwe the sun had already set and when we got there we were introduced to the camp commander. By then I think it was Killion, it was Killion who was the commander, and some security guys - one I had known him from home. He was Bango, Charles Bango and who was the other one, the other one wasthere was this guy Thodlana and some other security guys. So they took us to some huts that we were being taken one by one to go and be asked a few questions and to be ask exactly why one ... why one has joined the struggle and what really made him to join the struggle and what really worried one to leave home to join the struggle. Anyway those questions were not all that hard. The only question which happened to be hard to me was the person whom they called ... this person was a special branch who operated at Mphoengs, for I had spent much of my time in town and I didn't know his name; they asked me his name but his surname was Moyo and I said "No,I didn't know him". When I said I don't know him, they said "Ha, whilst you say you come from Mphoengs, the Brunapeg, [inaudible] that's your home place, most of the people who come from that area know him, why?". Of course I explained to them that "No, much of my time I spent at school. Again I was schooling at Lupane mission, always during the holidays I'd be in town. Anyway it didn't take them ... it</p>



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>didn't make me to have a problem at all. Right, from there we were shown some place where to sleep and we were told that in the morning we were going to join some other comrades.</p>
ZN	<p>What did you eat that evening?</p>
LN	<p>Oh, that evening, yes we found that ... what did they have those people, they had thick porridge with ... what was the relish ... it was cabbage ... was it cabbage or what ... I can not really recall properly, but really the food it wasn't palatable to me, for it had already changed from the diet that I thought was not good for me when I was in Botswana when you got there the food still .. in fact it was not well cooked. You could find some, some mealie meal which was not well mixed in that thick porridge there ... most people we called it sadza. Since I had been informed from Botswana that "Guys where you are going now it's not that you're going to expect to say you are going to live as at home. Everybody is to live life, which means you are sacrificing" for they even mentioned that it's not guaranteed that when you are here you are safe. "So always you are ... people you are to try to be very vigilant. Some people who are here ... you can't trust everybody. Some enemy people are among us but since it's not like an X ray that you can see in somebody that this person is not with us". So they said "So as you are guys are a little bit read the one, some of the guys will try to help us to figure those people who are not really good here and you know people here there is a lot of gossip among people they can say that's a person they know to have been doing this or this. If you hear of such a person please inform us that". That was said by Charles Bango. For Charles Bango he once worked at Lindela bus service which I used to board when I was from home going to town or from town going home. So that's how we got close to each other.</p> <p>Right from that day, the following day we were taken to the parade. There were at least three parades. There was a parade which had people who had stayed for some time where just at the entrance when you were coming to Nampundwe, which we used to call Ntabeni; then the second, the main parade was just near the ... there was a clinic, then there was a kitchen, there was a library, and there was another building this side I forget now, that building was used for ... anyway, with us we were taken to a place which was called judo place. Right, when we got there we were put in sections and ... company ... our company mainly it was composed of school leavers from Form 2 it was from not ... even Grade 7s were there, but much, I think much of us they were Form 2s, Form 3s, Form 4s up to Form 6. So when we were there, they told us "Guys, right here" ... they introduced us to other comrades, but not mentioning the names ... they just said "Right here are new recruits, so as all you are recruits here, you are to get together, know each other, and the time for your training will be coming, but it is not here, you are not yet at a training camp, you are at a transit camp".</p>
ZN	<p>It was during daytime?</p>
LN	<p>It was during daytime</p>
ZN	<p>How did the camp look. How did the camp look like</p>
LN	<p>With the camp here, the most interesting thing was that people had built some bivouacs</p>



Speaker	Dialogue
	using some grass nearly like when we are looking at the South African huts, yes the South African huts, but those of guerrillas were so small. One would make his way if it's with a friend, being two, to help each other, maybe just to protect you from rain, for during the day we were not staying inside. We would only go there when we would be from our lunch or from our exercises, you see.
ZN	These bivouacs were really used for sleeping or ... were you really sleeping in them?
LN	In the evening, in the evening sometime we slept there. Most of the time we slept there. But it wasn't really something which you could say you were sleeping in. I remember the one which I made with my friend, we just put, there was a tree, we put something just by the tree with some branches, a few grasses and we were sleeping there. When the rain came you would just be rained inside, but maybe to say it was raining heavily I don't recall noticing that to say it was raining very heavily to be really soaking. My surprise was that rains in Zambia were raining differently from what I was experiencing here at home. The rain could rain for maybe two hours, then it is over, then you find the sunshine, you get dry, you squeeze your clothes, dry them. After two - three hours the rain comes again it falls right when you say you are already wet, you dry again your blanket ... we were given some blankets ... which looked like ... if ever you can recall the jackets which were used by people in the second world war. That was the type of blankets which we had, so you easily squeeze it, dry it, or even if it doesn't dry, just you sleep there. There wasn't a problem. You didn't find ... at least myself I didn't find any difficulty to adapt to the situation.
ZN	How long did you stay at Nampundwe?
LN	At Nampundwe, I stayed ... I think I stayed about three months. I didn't stay long at Nampundwe. In fact what happened, since we were a selected group of... I can say the informed group, the people who had a bit of academic. So when it came the time when they were taking the people for Angola, we were called in to go with them. That's when we went to F.C. So to F.C., we were put into companies whereby I was with my friends, I was in Company 12. Company 12 was composed of most of the guys who were ... who had done Form 2 up to Form 4. I remember at least there were two guys who had done Form 6. One of them his name was ... was it Kingsley, it was Kingsley, and he didn't stay much with us. When an opportunity came for people who were going to school, he was asked with some of the Form 4's we were about ... I think we were left with about four - six guys who were taken to join the group who were going for better trainings or for doing some courses. Then we remained there in F.C.
MN	Why were you taken to F.C.?
LN	No, it was a ... in fact in F.C. it was a freedom fighters' camp. Now it was only the recruits and the trained personnel who were staying there, by the time when I was there.
MN	Why were you moved from Nampundwe?
LN	From Nampundwe we left for F.C.
MN	And then at F.C. what were you doing?
LN	At F.C. ... that's where we started much of our physical training. That's where we did



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>much of our physical training for some people when we were in FC would be chosen among us' especially I recall there is a group we found in FC where much of the guys who are ... when we came here were captains and so forth ... were taken from that group and they went straight to further training they didn't go to Magodini and whatever. So that's the place where we stayed. That was around ... so we arrived in February, we stayed February, March, April and part of our group were taken and were ... there was another group that was added, up to July, in July when they took the group, the second group of Angola came, from Company 1 up to Company 9, yes, they left for Angola. Then we remained doing our physical training so we stayed there ... that was in July, August September, October, so that's the time when we were bombarded, in October. So when we were bombarded in October we were about to leave the camp, but really exactly where we were going to, it's ...we were not yet informed, for the day we were bombarded since I was already a company ... a company logistic, I was hit when I was in the shed giving some other comrades some combats. So the other group of comrades were at the parade and some of us were giving some combats to some of our colleagues who were there.</p>
MN	<p>What kind of ... what kind of weaponry hit you?</p>
LN	<p>In fact, personally really I was hit whilst I was in the logistic. I was hit by a bomb.</p>
MN	<p>Was it a bomb?</p>
LN	<p>It was a bomb, whereby ... when I came out of that logistic house, already I had already been cut my arm whereby you can see here now [inaudible] ...from there I was ... in fact when I came out of the logistic, the house, where it used to be it was ...</p>
MN	<p>Is this the building you were in [3B-10-08]</p>
LN	<p>No, there was another shed which was here, that's the building which I was in. When I came out here this building was already on fire, so instead of going this side, I went towards the parade, and before I ... before I was just near the kitchen, where there's an open space, that's when I noticed four jet fighters coming, and by the time when I took the position, I was somehow blown up, for the bomb probably burned about three or five metres from me, then my foot was shattered. With that one that's when I felt ... in fact I didn't feel any pain. I thought I wasn't hit, so when there was somebody who was already commanding in the field, telling us to move out of the camp for we were being raided ... so when I tried to stand up my foot was already shot. I stepped on my foot and I felt as if I'm falling into a pit, but it wasn't really a pit; in fact my leg was shattered so the bones came out a bit. I noticed, I fell down and I lost consciousness for a while. So I regained consciousness. When I regained consciousness, it was just a brief ... it was just a blackout . I can't say it really was losing consciousness. It was just a blackout. When I ... I looked at my other side, I found that there was a room or a space where I could come out from. As I was crawling, towards ... there was a latrine which was there I think that was the last plane which came through ... it lit the toilet for it was a grass built toilet, which I think it was napalm, so it went ablaze. As it went ablaze I was very fortunate, there were already some defence trenches which we had ... I fell in this trench. I crawled inside and there was a comrade who was not injured who helped me to pull me. We went into the defence pits up to .. you see the place at FC it was a field and they had already harvested everything. It</p>



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>was very clear, anybody could see anybody at any distance. So by the moment when those planes had gone, there happened to be some helicopters at the side where I was ... I think there were about three. They were the ones which went around shooting people who were trying to have a break-through, for those helicopters were trying to push people who were in the camp so that they could not come out and the planes could hit their target. So that man, he left me in the trench. He said, "No my friend, don't move out". He tied me with a belt ... a belt, my arm, so that I could not lose much blood. Right, I remained there for a while and by the moment when it was quiet ... it's only that there was ammunition in one of the logistics in that shed. It started those bullets and grenades since that place had been bombarded so they remained blasting on themselves, you see. So by the time when it was happening like that somebody shouted as if no already there is a ground force, they are making an assault, saying people try to move out of this place, there is an assault. Right, I crawled still, then I found ... somebody found me, he pulled me out of the trench. With the helicopters it seemed they were already following up the defence pits, but it wasn't like that, it was by the time when they were going. I crawled out, that man assisted me, that comrade assisted me. We opened ... there was a fence which was surrounding us ... we opened the fence and already there were some comrades who were already injured. Some we passed .. there was a road ... I think you know it, Mr Nkomo, which was going close to the camp. Some were dead along the road and we passed them, there was nothing we could do. So that man assisted me. When we were about it was 50 to 100 metres out from the road, and he left me by a tree and he brought three other comrades and he left us there being four. So we stayed there, we were four.</p>
MN	Four injured people
LN	<p>Four injured people So we started feeling the dehydration, we wanted water. So there was another comrade who was crying very loudly. So he attracted some of the comrades who were not injured. So when they came there they ... they found that that man was severely injured, for he was somewhere torn close to his rib and probably those were ... what you call it ... could be intestines, what, but I think they were intestines, you couldn't really figure out what was really, for his combat was full of blood and so on. That man asked for water, so when this guy went to fetch water ... before we drank that water another comrade came and said "No, stop giving these people some water. If you give them some water they are going to bleed and die". That's what he told them. And most of the comrades who happened to ...not to injured, some of them seemed not to know what they were doing for you find them just going running all directions. In fact what they were really trying to do was to figure out where some people were injured.</p> <p>So that incident happened around 8 o'clock, so the people who came to collect us, they concentrated much in the camp. So with us we remained in the ... in the bushes for a longer time. I recall when I was taken, I was some ... I was already losing my memory. I could not really figure people properly. What I can sincerely recall is that the men whom I noticed who ... who identified us all, who found us at that place it was USigoge. He's the one who called some people that they are to come and collect us. The guys who had been bringing ... who brought my comrades who were injured in that shed, I can't tell really who they were. Even up to now I cannot figure out who took me to that place.</p>



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>From there we went to, we were taken to Zambian Teaching Hospital. When we were there, we stayed for some time, and I remember from the day I was injured, I can't really recall seeing November, December, for already somehow I had lost memory and how I was amputated I can't really tell how I was amputated, but I was amputated above the knee. I recall around December, it was already at Christmas, that's when I started to noticed people were coming to give us food and so forth and one of the doctors and a nurse they came to me and they said "Ha, you man" they said they were not sure that I was going to survive and the way I was sleeping in that bed, I was not really covered with the blankets. They had put something like a cage and they would put blankets on me so that I ... they would not touch my wound and I feel pains. And by that time I recall the nurse there was Miss Banda and Miss ... there was Nurse Banda and Nurse Nyirenda. Nyirenda used to stay at a young age at her parents ... she asked me where I stayed, I told her Mzilikazi and she told me no, her parents used to stay at Barbourfields. And she happened to treat me like a young brother. So with those people especially with the hospital I felt that they really sympathised with us a lot. I remember that somebody was saying "But most of you guys you still look young, how could you join this?". So, with the guys who were injured, most of them had high morale. Most of them they told the reality that "No, the situation at home, though we were not most of us were beaten at home, but what our parents, our brothers some of them had passed through some hardship and even some of the comrades who had been injured some were narrating stories that they once came across the Rhodesian regime which beat them, sometimes some say they lost their parents, and some mentioning about their homes which were destroyed". So all that with the Zambians, they tried to console us that "No, it will pass" All things have their time and they do pass.</p>
MN	Were you all together in one room
LN	No I think we were occupying more than four or five wards there, I'm not sure how many wards
MN	But you were all staying together, you weren't with ... in normal wards
LN	Together with who?
MN	With each other, I mean they put all the ZPRA guys together?
LN	<p>What it is really, among, I mean in those wards I doubt there wasn't any person from Zambia; it was only ZPRA. It can happen that, for there was a village that was nearby;. if ever they were bombarded too perhaps they were the ones who could have come in those wards. If I'm not mistaken we were at .. is it first floor .. I think some were at the ground floor and some at the first floor.</p>
ZN	Did you fully recover while you were in the hospital
LN	<p>When I was in the hospital one of most interesting thing I'll tell you is that in January I had mentally recovered, but I no longer wanted to dress. I remember when I was given a short to put on I refused, even a shirt. What made me to refuse, my arm could not move upward well, so when they were trying to dress me I was feeling pain, I was saying "No, leave me like this". So it was towards the end of January when I was discharged. When I was</p>



Speaker	Dialogue
	discharged already our party people had come to take photos, prepared my passport that I go for further treatment, whereby I went with some other comrades. The other person we who went with was [inaudible] so we were taken to Czechoslovakia. We were accompanied by ... is it Norah .. I'm no longer sure ... between Norah and Lucy ... accompanied us to Czechoslovakia where we were treated at the Prague. When I was in Prague, when they had started treating us, finding out whatever we could be still experiencing on our pains and so forth, I happened to develop an ear problem. So this ear was ... was operated. What they discovered ... there was a sharpening which had entered the ear
ZN	A sharp nail?
LN	Yes, from a bomb. So they ... they removed it.
MN	You never felt it up to then?
LN	No, I had not felt it. Really with pain ... I started feeling pains very late. Even after receiving the treatment, with this phantom feeling that I do have feet and so forth with some this time when the weather changes I feel it. I think I started feeling it right at home here around ... I think it was in 88 when I was in Ruwa, no Danhiko that's when I started to feel it. Most people say that when a person is injured or has an operation when the weather changes that's when they start to feel pain but with me it delayed up to 87. I think I started feeling it in 87. So when this ear of mine starting giving problems, I was treated there ... they discovered the object that was in there, removed it, and on the X-ray, that's when they discovered that I still have another shrapnel here which, I think this one, could it have got into my throat, it was going to pierce my throat and I would have died instantly. So the doctor who was operating us, or who did operate me, he could speak English, though his English was not as fluent as all that, and he liked to communicate with us. So he asked me that "do you want ..." whether I wanted this shrapnel to be removed then. I said "yes" and he said "It won't harm you. Just for your remembrance when you tell people that you nearly lost your life. Since this shrapnel which was in my ear was removed which was going to damage my eardrum, but this one doesn't matter. Sometimes when I'm with some comrades or some people trying to find out exactly what happened, I even say "touch here" and they touch and they find it.
ZN	It was never removed
LN	Yes, it's still there. Then I ... when I ... when we were still in Czechoslovakia, I ... some comrades happened to come home and I remained for the doctor said I had not fully recovered, they were still monitoring me, especially. I probably ... the way how I was talking they thought probably somehow I was losing memory. When I left ... the last time when they discharged me, I had been taken to another hospital then that doctor said "No, the reason why I had remained there they thought that I wasn't talking like a person who had experienced hardship, I was taking life as if it was normal, so then I remained there ... some left, my comrades left me in...
ZN	So did you go ... did you undergo some kind of counselling or ...
LN	In fact when I was in Czechoslovakia I can take that to be part of counselling. You see,



Speaker	Dialogue
	those people ... the medical staff ... used to come to me and talk to me, give me books I read and so forth. The other book which I read was written by this Nigerian, this book. It was something "Things Fall Apart"
MN	Achebe
LN	Achebe, and then the other one was written by ... was it ... yeah, I read even "Animal Farm", though I had read it being at home. So when I was reading those books I noticed that they would come and discuss with me to find out whether I exactly understood and I was concentrating with books, yes. So I take that it was part of the counselling they were giving to me - they wanted to determine whether I was mentally sound. That's the thing which I drew up when I was alone. Right, from there I stayed for two months.
MN	Did you get the artificial leg there.
LN	Yes, yes, that's where I got my first artificial limb, yes, so they used to take us to orthopedic and that's where my other comrades got their artificial limbs and among us I remember there was a man called Bible King ... whom I don't know how that disease is but when I asked they said it was malaria. He was drained some fluid from the back so they used a big injection and drained fluid. I wondered what's happening and I think it helped him a lot. So when I stayed there for two months, I remained there for two months. Then I happened to get information ... it wasn't really information ... there were some other comrades who were learning in Czechoslovakia so they used to visit us. One I recall who was doing engineering in the railways. He was Khumalo, and Nxumalo was doing... he was doing a bit of medicine for when he came here he was working at Mpilo, orthopedic department; and then the other one was Raymond Takavarasha ... he was doing journalism. So those are the guys who used to visit us. Even Dr Bulle and Dr [inaudible] but Dr Bulle met me when other comrades had gone for ... Raymond Takavarasha happened to come and take me from the hospital, for he was the one who was much in communication with hospital staff. So they could tell him that "come and pick him" and we would go wherever we would go, so I happened to visit some few places there in Czechoslovakia. From there, that's when I came home.
MN	Came home, you came to Lusaka.
LN	To Lusaka. So when I came home to Lusaka I... the first night I slept at Makeni, and when I was at Makeni we were told that we were to open a school at Kafue, so that's the place where I stayed a bit longer. When we got to Kafue we opened a school for the disabled. So I was one of the teachers there, I was teaching other comrades, so we could even be driven to VC and to JZ where we could meet some other teachers there and make some drafts, they helped us with our books so we could help our comrades or even in their education. And one of the most pleasing things was that some of our comrades in their education and one of ... the most pleasing thing ... that most of our comrades whom we were teaching, some of them they had left home without even seeing the door of a school, so they were very pleased to get the chance of reading. I remember one of the guys who was very much familiar to Dr Sikhanyiso [Ndlovu]. That man was called Philip Mutambanengwe so they arranged with this one it was Mthuthuki ... I forget the name of Mthuthuki ... They arranged, Mthuthuki went with Philip Mutambanengwe to Sikhanyiso



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>Ndlovu. He gave them some good literature and some books which he got, I think he was in UNZA university, I don't know what he was teaching there. So those books helped our comrades. And the most amazing thing that teaching a person who has a morale at an adult age. Some of them, it didn't take them time to know how to write and some it was difficult, but the understanding they had it was so fast. Just within months we could find that one had already acquired a knowledge of a qualified people, some getting a knowledge of a Grade 7 knowledge by that moment. So with these comrades, some had come from the front having suffered some injuries and when they, they healed up, by the time when we were coming this side home, some went back to the army. I remember somebody by the name Israel ... it's very unfortunate that the names I mention here, they are pseudonyms ... with this Israel I met him when he had left home here. He said he had just done standard 1 but when he got here, when he was integrated in the army, when he met me, he said "You know, Longman, the thing which you ... the education which you gave which you had given them, it helped them a lot". He happened to be graded to people who had passed grade 7 and he really upgraded the education that we gave him that he managed to get a position he was a para surgeon whatever but he was a sergeant. The other guy I sometime meet him he stays at Nkulumane, we used to call him Nampundwe but now... I'm not sure of his name but he told me his surname ... he's one of the guys who said the basic education which he received at FC assisted him for now that man told me he's repairing some refrigerators, for when he got to army there were some courses they were taught, he opted to do refrigeration.</p>
MN	<p>So after being injured like that, there was no time to lose morale, you had something to do, a purpose to fulfill.</p>
LN	<p>Yes with me I think even now they way how I mix with people I'm one of the persons who really doesn't take their time to settle, for the people whom I meet, when you meet them, I really meet with people of sound minds, doctors, lawyers, so forth. They are the type of people I mix much.</p>
MN	<p>Can you tell us how you came back home and what happened when you came home.</p>
LN	<p>Yes, when we left Kafue ... with us we didn't come by road or by rail, we were airlifted, airlifted straight from Lusaka to.. to Bulawayo airport. From the airport we were met by some people ... you know with the names, you know most of our people their names were changing. It is only time when after discussing with Z Nkomo he told me that he is one of the persons who was meeting us at the airport, you see. Then by the time when he mentioned that I recalled ... I can remember some time when I was ... I think I was going to a certain church ... when I met him I noticed that the face is of a person whom I knew, but how I met him, I had not really had it how I had known him.. through talking to each other he really mentioned it these days that "Mr Ndebele," he mentioned that he used to meet people blah blah blah, so that's the thing, that's why he noticed me.</p> <p>So from Luveve, at Luveve really I slept on the first day and I went straight home, and not really home at ... but the house at Mzilikazi, that's where I used to stay much. Always in the morning I would wake up, take a bath. By that time we were so fortunate we were not paying anything in the buses as long you had a ZAPU card the omnibus would take you, so</p>



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>that's the advantage we ... or I can say the advantage which we had in the buses. So always in the morning we would go, I think with my comrades and in the evening I'd come home and I'd be with my parents. In fact I was staying with my... my uncle. Then it came the time that we were at Luveve we were told "No" ... the accommodation which we were given at Luveve was not good for us, because some slept in the tents and you know as somebody who is having an artificial ... some of us we could not squat on the toilets which were there and even the place for washing was not really conducive ... that one where you could take a bath and so on, so that's where I met people like Angelina Masuku, and the old man ...this Mr, Ndlovu now he's staying at ...</p>
ZN	Aaron
LN	<p>Aaron Ndlovu, and Ndabambi, yes. So Ndabambi and Angelina Masuku worked very much close with the disabled people, so one time when I'd come home, I don't know what I was going to do at Mpilo Hospital, I met some of the comrades, they told me "Longman, quickly tomorrow you are to come to the camp for we are going to be taken to a place where we are going to be given some places to stay." Then somebody ... I recall someone who was saying "Oh no, Ndebele, we are going to stay at Ntabazinduna". Then ... at Ntanazinduna ... I said "do you mean Ntabazinduna flats?"¹ They said "Yes, yes" ... one said "Ntabazinduna flats, for they say the place where we are is not good for us." Then I turned to one "Ntabazinduna flats?" Then I told them that no, that is very impossible. You know people who are staying at Ntabazinduna flats, they own those flats". Then that person he said "Ah, you don't know, since we have got Independence those flats... we feel the party has negotiated for us to stay there". I thought of some people whom I knew who stayed at Ntabazinduna ...that those people had really the [inaudible] The following day when I got there, the person who told us we were going to Ntabazinduna he never really defined that we were going to Ntabazinduna flats but he said "Ntabazinduna near the township". "Near the township" ... what does that person mean? You see people who didn't stay in town probably would say township is Barbourfields, Ntabazinduna, they are only flats. We boarded the bus, took our luggages, we came over the flyover at Nguboyenja ... instead of turning to the right the bus drove straight into town. Right, into town the bus actually joined Harare road ... with me Harare road I already knew, for I used to board the buses up to Ft Rixon, whatever. Right, the moment we passed this place ... what do you call this place ... Brady Barracks, that friend, that comrade of mine was seated opposite ... no we were not opposite, he was seated at the other side of ... you know.. three in the bus, you sit close to each other, some would be sitting that side ... then he asked, "Where is this Ntabazinduna?" We said, "No, the place which you had mentioned, we have really ... we have left it behind ... we are already going out of town. Probably what they are referring to is the place at Kayisa place"². Then people, by that moment they really hated Kayisa. They said "Oh, we're going to that sell-out, whatever". Then I said "I don't know exactly in Kayisa place, where we're going to stay. But I understand there is a township". Then we</p>

¹ The confusion here is between Ntabazinduna flats in Barbourfield township in Bulawayo, and Ntabazinduna, a rural settlement outside Bulawayo which had a relatively developed area known as a township.

² Chief Kayisa Ndiweni, who had supported the internal settlement of Smith and Muzorewa



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>thought probably we are going to stay at Ntabazinduna township which is near David Livingstone.³ Exactly. Then the moment when we got to David Livingstone, the bus turned. Right, we could see the township, we thought, ah we are going in the township probably, our organization had bought some houses there. That's ... that's what was in our mind. From there we passed through the business centre, from the business centre we got to Ntabazinduna Training Centre, so that's where we were dropped. That's where there is that other building where I recognized two ... where I recognized ... yes where I recognized two comrades [1A-31-06]. Right, when we stayed there, by that time it was around November, I think so, yes, it was around November, if my memory serves me right.</p>
MN	November 1980
LN	Yes, it was November 1980, so we stayed there.
MN	What month did you come from Lusaka?
LN	Wasn't it around June or so?
MN	It was after the election?
LN	<p>It was after the election, yes, it was after the election ... was it June or August I think it was June but it wasn't cold by that time it was just off cold season which could have been July and August, I'm no longer sure with the dates. Right, when we stayed at Ntabazinduna we were met by villagers who really admired us, for even at the kitchen I can remember people from Bingo, people could walk from Bingo to come and they be with us, and the Xhosa⁴ young men would come with their knobkerries and say "Brothers we are going to stay with you, there is nobody who will touch you". And really they made it a point that always at night or during the day they'd be walking around the place saying they were protecting us.</p>
MN	What did you imagine was going to happen to you. At this stage, you had no idea what was
LN	<p>Really, at that moment we never thought there would be any problem. We were so happy without suspecting any upheavals that would come. And our .. even our fellow comrades who were in the barracks could come at the weekends or during the week when they get time, you'd see them visiting us. Some when they were off, and those who had not been integrated and were living among the villagers, would come and we talk to them, trying to keep our morale very high that "Comrades we attained independence; don't worry of what has really transpired that our party didn't win, but as long as we are here our leaders are going to make it that we have a good life". And the way how they used to bring food to us. We were fed from the army ration, I think so, for the food which was being brought ... it was good meat and so forth, though some of the meat had too much fat. But as people who had stayed a long time without really getting good meals we just enjoyed it. And again when we were from Zambia, a lot of fish been brought and some tinned stuff and so we could eat and ... bread was now served often. It went up to a time when we were receiving</p>

³ A secondary school at Ntabazinduna

⁴ The Ntabazinduna settlement had originally been formed by wagon drivers who had come from the Cape with the pioneer settlers in the 1890s



Speaker	Dialogue
	I think there were 100 ... how much were we receiving ... it went up to 180. It started by 90
ZN	Demobilisation?
LN	<p>Demobilization came later, but there is some money which we were given, where comrades paid some 50 dollars to buy ...yes. So every month end when the guys were still active in the military side, when they were getting paid they would come and give us some money too, In fact we were being paid.</p> <p>Up to the time when there happened to be a problem. That was in ... was it in January? I remember I had gone straight home, then when I was from home I slept in town, then that Saturday I boarded a bus around 6 o'clock, going to the camp. For by that moment already there was a brigade ...a battalion which was already stationed, or which was already put just east ... south-east of Ntabazinduna township. They were about... I think it was about two kilometres from our place where we stayed. So when I had gone home, I came ...when I came that night I passed through town going to Ntabazinduna for I had stayed for at least two weeks at home, straight at my rural area. That's when ... when I arrived ... before I arrived at the camp ... we were about to get to David Livingstone ... there is a flyover at the bridge, we noticed some tracers. Then I was with a friend called Rex Mpofu. Then Rex Mpofu said "No, Longman, are you aware that already there is a fight in the camp there". I said "I'm just watching, this, I'm very much aware, and I can hear the sound". But the people whom we were with in the bus, they thought there was a big lightening We saw those tracers at a distance ...and they said there is going to be too much of beans. You know with our people usually when they see this lightening they think that there will be a good harvest of beans.</p> <p>Already I was feeling some cold running in my spine that ... no where we are heading to is no longer nice. Ah, then we said we are going to see as we are going. But the moment we turned to David Livingstone the sounds of the guns started being heard loudly and the bus driver said "No, there is a fight at the .. at the National Army camp. So he wanted to turn ... there is ... then somebody who was in the bus said "No, it can't spill to the villagers". He said "let those guys sort each other". Right, we drove, some people started disembarking the bus at their bus stops. When we got to another bus stop we found some two comrades already who had run away from the disabled camp. They asked the bus driver to take them along for they had no place where to go. That's when we asked, I spoke to one of them, his name was Naison ... we used to call him Naison Chiremba, Naison Chiremba, but his real name when we were here at home is Surrender Dube. It's only I just learnt of his death last year, for this guy used to come from Gweru, so he died in Gweru he's now late, so the man who told me that "No at the camp, we can no longer go in the camp. People have already started shooting each other at the ... what you call it...at the National Army camp". Then I asked him the problem, how it started. So this man, this comrade of mine told me that "No, they were at a bar called Matiliga beer garden. Noise started at Matiliga beer garden by some ZANLA guys who had said they spoke to our comrades and said in fact they gave them a real warning and said that much of the ZPRA comrades were integrated in the army, they are not in the camp." They had all gone for a weekend, and the people who had remained there I understand it was the logistic guys, the quartermaster</p>



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>probably there were five or six, and plus one ...there was one or two who was at the ... at the armoury with some ZANLA guys. So they say, what really took place at Matiliga bar, they provoked each other over this thing of despising each other. So by the moment when these ZANLA guys were despising our disabled guys they happened to start fights; when they started the fight ... as I told you that there were some local boys. They could not watch the disabled comrades be beaten; they joined and that guy was beaten. So when he was beaten I understand that's when he went to the camp and when he went to the camp there, they picked a quarrel again with a guy who was in the kitchen who, I understand, took a shovel and hit one of them. I think he injured him or he killed him, something ...</p>
MN	<p>One of the ZANLA guys?</p>
LN	<p>Yes and our comrades who were there happened to ... since they were few ... happened to run away and already some ZANLA guys had already taken some weapons - I don't know where they had got those weapons - and put among the villagers who were in the township. So wewhen ... we slept at a certain home - this woman, I forget what was her name, for she used to come to be in the camp, especially in the morning. I had already told you that there were people who used to help in cooking, though some comrades were supposed to cook for us, the villagers had opted that they come and cook for the disabled. So this thing ... when we woke up in the morning I went with this friend of mine, with Rex, we met some other comrades who were just from the fields, because some people slept in the fields they didn't even go to sleep in the villages. We grouped and I think we were about fifteen or so, then we found some other comrades, we came to number around twenty-three, twenty-four ... I can't be exact on figures. Then now we asked where were the other comrades. I remember one of the comrades who had happened to be injured when he was running away, his ... his amputation was just below the knee a bit, it cracked, it was already bleeding, so they assisted him to bandage him for we had a clinic and the guys who were managing our clinic, all of them were gone in the exception of one by the name ... this guy who lost an eye ... what do you call this man, Most of the names ...</p>
ZN	<p>How many disabled were there at the camp?</p>
LN	<p>At the camp, I think ... we were many there, we were quite many, I think we were around seventy-five, though some of them were not really, some had not really not lost limbs, but they were injured for some had some cuts, deep cuts and so forth, though they had healed. I think we were around seventy- five people who were really having some ...</p>
MN	<p>What made you stay at the camp when you had your home there at Mzilikazi? But you kept, you know, you wanted to remain with the others at the camp?</p>
LN	<p>You know this thing of comradeship, you tend to be a family - that when you are not ... without your comrades you feel that there is something is amiss, for the people you would be staying with at home or wherever you gather, then there'd be no comrade by that time, you feel that somehow you are lost, you'd be like a stranger among those people. Whilst those people would be really interested to be with you, but you'd be feeling as if you are a stranger. You see that's the major thing which made most of my time I preferred to live with my fellow comrades.</p>



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>So we remained there, then some comrades who were not injured who ...who had remained in the camp started to prepare some meal that afternoon. Before we .. we had started eating we started to hear some gunshots. Right, we said "What is really taking place?" It was silent for a while, they finished cooking, we ate; before we finished cooking we found that already some ZANLA cadres were by the fence. In fact there was a garden which was nearby. We saw them just crossing – "these people are trying to encircle us". We remained in the camp; we found that they were just continuing going toward the villagers. We left the camp, and passed through the beer garden ... there was nobody ... and we went to the ... there was an old store ... we remained at the old store. What really was happening there is that we happened not to be sure of what was already happening. We started to see some army vehicles, at least I think there were about two or three puma vehicles which happened to pass by Kayisa road. What I noticed later is that they were not ZANLA people. Now there were some comrades of ours who were already in the national army who were at Brady Barracks – I don't know how they had got those vehicles – they were trying to pick ... and they were the ones who picked some of our comrades who were scattered in the villages and were along the roads. Right, we stayed there ... around this hour [late afternoon] we returned to the camp. That was Saturday evening. So when we returned to the camp, some meals were prepared, we ate, and we put off lights to ensure that ... to make sure that it would look as if there were no people. And some physically fit comrades whom we had - there were about five or six - they remained alert. So when we were still asleep - I remember it was midnight - there came some ZANLA guys, going around knocking, opening the doors. Then they found us in some houses. Mine was just at the corner .. I was with two comrades for our beds were one, two - the other bed, the other bed. They said "Ha, you are still here, you people." What really I cannot understand, those guys, they spoke in Shona, but they sympathized with us. Then they told us that "No, you guys, all your comrades have gone", for really to tell the truth I don't remember anyone who was killed there, it's only that some ... some of them their wounds were really ... what you call it .. they were re-opened and so forth when they were running away, falling and so forth. So they came there and said "Why are you still here?" We told them that ... they said no ... this is Wednesday ... they said "No, why, some have left and you are remaining here." I remember one of my friends said "We have no place to go, this is our main place, we haven't been given a permanent place to stay and we had no relatives to stay in town. Then they said "Please, we are warning you - as you are remaining here you are endangering your lives, for some of the comrades who can come here, they won't be lenient to you, probably they can end up beating you, killing you, doing whatever they can". We remained there, then around ... it was around 4 a.m. that the really person who came , it's not really the very guys who had came, but I think they were in.. in what.. he was in companion with those who came. He came straight again and said "Guys wake up, what is happening now" ... no that was Sunday ... on Sunday we spent the day there, then the very Sunday evening around 4 a.m., that's when they came again. They told us, "Please, move, move out now. There is a train which is coming from Harare and is carrying some ZANLA soldiers to come and reinforce what... our comrades."</p> <p>I didn't know that already at Entumbane a fight had started. So these other guys who were physically fit, they said "Guys, let's move". Went out of the camp, straight away. When we</p>



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>got at [inaudible] ... it's a line where there is Kayisa ... we got there, we met some of our comrades that just happened to be staying with the villagers. And then they said "Hey, comrades, here are some ZANLA people right among the villagers but they are failing to penetrate. What was failing them, they could not trust the villagers for those villagers were so repellant to them. Most of the villagers at Kayisa's place ... much of them were former Rhodesian soldiers. You know with Kayisa's area, all young people who did not go to the struggle happened to join the Rhodesian Front and plus again Kayisa had what ... had some bodyguards who were ... they were called District Assistants, something ... DA's. So those guys were good militants, I think they had confronted each other and told each other that any nonsense which is going to happen in the village they are not going to hesitate, so it means that deterred the former ZANLA comrades who were in the National Army not to harass people.</p> <p>Right, as the sun rised we happened to walk along the road and people showed us that ... people, when we followed the main road they directed that there is a dust road which is leading towards town. We really walked quite a long distance .. I think it was 5 to 7 k's. Fortunately there came another car which was carrying a lot of people. As that man saw us, the disabled, he picked four of us and put us in the car ... we squeezed in the car ... He drove straight up to ... there is an Ntabazinduna turn after Llewellan⁵. So when we got there we found there was already a roadblock, so at that roadblock the soldiers who were manning the roadblock asked "Are there any people from Ntabazinduna?" So that man said "We are all ... we are all from Ntabazinduna." He said "No, there are some people whom we are looking for". As he said so, already the other one came and said "Oh here are the guys ... 1,2,3,4 you come out" We came out. When we came out, at the blink of an eye there was a truck full of ZANLA soldiers and they had mounted a machine gun on their ... on the army truck. I think there were about two army trucks which they were travelling in. The people who were manning the roadblock ... there were some white guys and some black guys and they had even this .. their motorized tanks, but not .. no a tank we found a tank whereby ... no it was at Llewellan crossing but it was just a motorized car carrying a machine gun. When those guys saw us, that white man or white soldier, said "Guys, just get in the bush", then we separated at different directions, for they had wanted ... I don't know what really they wanted to say to us ... and those guys started shouting said "Those are the guys, we'd better shoot them" and these guys, one advanced with his armoured car, facing them and he was already .. he had a flag which ... it was black with a skeleton. Then he said "any nonsense" ... I recall, he said "Any nonsense guys" he was ordering the comrades, the soldiers he was going with that anything which is happening, you return fire. I don't know how ... you know by that time ... I think the white soldiers still had an upper hand. That man didn't hesitate ... the other one who was just holding a radio ... he went straight to them and told them that "Here, that's the ... there is no crossing point here ... it's better they remain that side, they don't cross" It was showed them by a hand that please you don't cross here, you are to remain there. Right, we moved a bit ... I think about a hundred, hundred metres. I don't know where that truck of the soldiers came from ... it was a jeep, a land rover but they came and picked us, they took us to Llewlyn</p>

⁵ An army barracks just outside Bulawayo off the Harare road



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>barracks ... no to Brady Barracks where we found a few comrades who were already there. So when we stayed, we got there, it was around ... I think it was around 12 ... 12 – 1. So we given some food, we ate, that's when we started to learn that at Entumbane there was a fierce battle. As we stayed there, there came again some certain comrades who came there and wanted to take us. I don't know whether they wanted to take us back to to ... what's this place ... Ntabazinduna, for when ... the question which I had which they directed to us "Are you sure that there are other comrades which remained there" Then we said "Yes". Then they said "No, let's go", we alighted their vehicle. Before we went out of Brady Barracks we were met by ... it's Angelina Masuku. I'm not sure who that other person was ... was it Vote Moyo or who? There was another a man who was with her. Then they stopped that car and they asked "Where are the comrades?" They said "No, some of them we have them here in the car, some we have left them still eating". They said "No please, all those in the car they are to disembark" and they came, you know our civilian buses, those small buses, they came they took us where ... to Lido.</p> <p>Then when we were in Lido, much of the comrades who were at Ntabazinduna, few of them ... a few in number did not turn up, through the fear or the experience which we had before, they thought living in the camp was no longer at their side. I recall somebody by the name White, whom I met very late, probably it was in ... around 87, 88 for I was already from Harare, he had come to fill up some papers for compensation. When I asked him "Why did you delay to fill these papers?" then he said, "No", since the day when we were attacked at Ntabazinduna he felt he could no longer stay in the camp, and I think some of them still now they decided not to stay in the camps from there and they went straight and stayed at their homes. Right, when we went to Lido we were given some places to live but with me at Lido definitely I no longer had a proper dormitory to live in, for I was living in and out, so I spent most of my time coming home, in the morning I'd board a bus going to Lido I'd be with my friends. When time comes round 5 or 6 with some comrades we'd go back to the townships. But definitely in the morning especially with our lunch we used to eat with our comrades. Breakfast, no, even supper sometimes we could not eat supper there we'd straight have come to town. A word came again that we have been given a farm to stay. Usually whenever any development cropped, a new development cropped, they were prepared to take the disabled first to give them a better transport. So we were given a good bus, we took our luggages, we were taken to Zvishavane that is Zvishavane where there is an OCCZIM co-operative. There were some new buildings which were built there, and the toilet facilities were not good. I remember I stayed there nearly for a week. Then after a visit, there was a visit made by some other comrades, who had come to see some of their relatives there ... when they visited us, by the time when they said they were coming back to Bulawayo some of us we asked for lifts, and we came with them. That's the time I last went to Vukuzenzele. When ... when I was here in Bulawayo ...</p>
MN	What made you not ... what made you to decide not to stay there?
LN	No, the accommodation wasn't really good, you see. So again there were few beds there, some were sleeping on the floor. With an artificial limb, when you have an artificial limb you can't sleep properly on the floor, for when you wake up it is very difficult to



Speaker	Dialogue
MN	To stand up
LN	<p>To stand up. Like for me you see I was injured the whole flank, this left flank, I can't balance with the left arm, I have an amputation of the left leg, so it tended to be very difficult. Right, we went ... that's when I came to stay home. When I was staying here home, it happened that some Catholic people got wind that no, Zakhele is back but he's injured . As I was still at home, I was helped by Mr Swazini [Ndlovu] to get a house at Pumula East. So when I got that house I was just seated outside with some certain visitors from the local township when we were still talking with some certain comrades.. we were just talking, chatting, like that ... I saw a van coming to my house; they stopped at the front of my house. I could not..no longer figure well who were those people, then at a sudden one called "Ah, Zakhele" and I noticed it was one of the guys who was a seminarian by the time when I left, for I once lived with the seminarians. His name was Gabriel Silonda. But he had finished what ... priesthood. He said " I have come to visit you now". I said "Who showed me your place" and he said he had spotted my parents at home, then they heard that I had got a house so then he came there, we sat, we talked, ... a second vehicle came there for Brother Roland. We talked he asked me whether I still had interest to come and live with them. I said "Ah no" ... I didn't really wish to live with them. They said "No, when you are at home you are to remember you are to earn a living" and by those days we had ceased getting some money from the army and since I had some ... some friends who were working at the welfare office I remember he was Daniel Ncube he introduced me to Christian Care. At Christian Care I was receiving about 25 no it was 35 dollars, so that money was part of the money which I could get. So they talked to me ... it was after demobilisation. They talked to me, they said "No, we thought you could come and work at the mission." Right I asked them what would I be doing at the mission. They said "No, you are going to be working with Brother Roland to do mission maintenance." Of course at the farm school we had done this building and agriculture, then I told them that in the fields ... no I could no longer be in the fields just because I had a problem of an artificial limb. It doesn't want to be in moist places most of the time. Right, I said "No, I will decide". I stayed for a time about a month or two, they came again and asked me, then I said "Here I have a house, I can't leave my house". They said "Right, we'll be coming to take you, then you come at least for three-four days". Allright, I agreed, Really they would come and fetch me. I got to Brunapeg. When I got to Brunapeg the only job which I used to do, it was compiling the reports of let's say the travels of ambulances, the delivery of fuel, the... what you call it ... if ever the lorry came to town to fetch some food for the mission or some ... whatever for the mission ... I'd take the ... they would give me the mileage then I would compile that. I'd know that each truck went such and such a distance and how much fuel it used, even to the ambulances. That was my major job. At times you know with the Catholic people, they are working like... they are working like a .. like a government system. Any department what it is doing, it has its own records, for there were some ... there was the hospital, there was a garden, then there was the vehicle fleet and ... what was this other thing ... so every month one, you are to have the whole information that this department worked this way and this one worked this way; then they compile it. I think they were given monthly reports every time and those reports, I was getting that information and I compiled it and gave them to their administration.</p>



Speaker	Dialogue
MN	So how long did you stay there. You worked there for some time.
LN	I stayed there for three years, then up to 19... I took ... 86. 86 that's when I thought ... for my O level I had about 4 O's then I said it's better that I go and ...in fact the good passes were three, then I said it's better that I supplement. Then that's the time I went to ...what is this .. to Danhiko.
ZN	So during these developments were you able to meet some of your colleagues who were also disabled. What was their life like?
LN	Yes, yes ...No, you see, really with the disabled, much of them, especially those who didn't have time, or who had not really read to a certain level, I think even now they are suffering, for when you meet them their life is so pathetic.
MN	But you were one of those who was able to make your way because you had the foundation
LN	Yes, really much of them, even now, I can't imagine somebody who is disabled living at the rural area where the ... the living facilities are not conducive to ... I remember someone his name was Mathe who was amputated all legs. Now he's even bandaging his .. what you call ... his artificial limbs. Why? The major problem now is that the offices again for the disabled to get assistance are so unaccommodative, for you can't say that a disabled person can go up to the fifth floor. As I am talking our offices at Mhlahlandlela is at the fifth floor and there is no escalator.
MN	The lifts don't work
LN	The lifts are down, which made me to talk even sometime to Mathema, ⁶ Cain Mathema.
ZN	Which has taken many years unrepaired
MN	This is part of Social Welfare. Is this under Social Welfare?
LN	Mhlanhlandlela. There is an office there
MN	Yah, but the disabled falls under Social Welfare.
LN	Under Social Welfare, yes. So it is so difficult for them and the allowances, some of our people are not really getting their allowances. One ...
MN	You get an extra allowance for being disabled or you just get the same allowances as the other war vets
LN	No the war vets allowances, but the disabled allowance ... since the introduction of this war veteran allowance there has never been any increase, so which means most of us we are just probably 20 dollars above the war veterans allowance, you see, which makes life to be very difficult
ZN	But there is a likelihood that some of you have not been afforded this opportunity of receiving ...
LN	That's very true, that's very true. I remember there are two guys I can recall one was

⁶ Cain Mathema, Governor of Bulawayo at the time of the interview



Speaker	Dialogue
	named
ZN	Have you made any effort to keep up a record of that
LN	We were proposing to do that, but you know, with our comrades, some of them they are now living in fear. The experiences which took place after this Ntabazinduna and the second Entumbane fights made them to say it's better they stay off from whatever is happening. I remember this guy, Mateyo, he had lost ... not Mateyo, it's Thomas, Thomas he comes from, from Kezi. I once met him when he was from Jo'burg having a problem of his heal, for it was no longer healing. Then I asked him whether he was receiving anything and he said no he was not receiving anything he only managed to get to register for this war veteran fund.
MN	Yes, that's what I was going to ask. Did they not ... That time in the mid 90's did they not claim under that compensation fund
LN	They did, I know, especially with the disability compensation ... some claimed, some did not. Some did not. Especially some comrades who were from Beitbridge ... when they left Beitbridge I remember there was one by the name Phathisane and ... who was this one ... Fraction. After our demobilization they went straight to their home, they never came. It's only last month when I was talking to somebody whom I had stayed for a long time without seeing, he told me that the guys I had just mentioned they are all late. I remember the guy whom you were once asking about, you said he was very intelligent, his name was ... but his surname was Ndlukula, that tall slender guy he was from Beitbridge ... between Beitbridge and ... but he is late as well.
ZN	What would you say about the life of disabled persons has been like since coming back from war up to date. Lucky that you have lived to witness.
LN	To be very very frank, you see, I think the life which we lived especially in Zambia as disabled it was quite ... quite alright ... it was quite a good life, but by the moment when we came here after the dismantlement of ... of these places we used to stay, life turned to be very miserable. Cause some even didn't go well with their parents, for you know parents ... some parents were not really willing to stay with them much, especially after these disturbances which happened to be there. They thought our comrades were going to be making them vulnerable to the problems that were facing the country and some I think this group of Tsholotsho some of them died there and their parents lost their homes
MN	During Gukurahundi
LN	Yes
ZN	What's the view of the Disabled Association of Zimbabwe.
LN	That doesn't accommodate the disabled ex-combatants. The ex-combatants ... that to create such an organization, I think we have spoken about it several times that "Look comrades, let's try to create this". The only thing we end up to that some say "What of the ZANLA group, then already when you talk of ZANLA comrades then we felt we can't go along with them, for some of those people already they are advantaged". Like the moment when I went to Danhiko, what I discovered people, the civilians who were injured here in

