



Project name:	Zenzo Nkobi Photographic Archive
Date of interview:	16/10/2011
Location of interview:	Bulawayo
Language/s of interview:	English
Length of interview:	1:31:30
Name of Interviewer:	Mary Ndlovu (MN)
Name of interviewee/s:	Moses Mzila Ndlovu (MMN)
Name of translator:	
Name of transcriber:	Mary Ndlovu
Notes on access and use:	
Audio file name/s of interview:	

TRANSCRIPTION

Speaker	Dialogue
MN	This is an interview with Moses Mzila-Ndlovu who has agreed to be interviewed as part of the Zenzo Nkobi Photographic Archive Project. The interview is taking place in Bulawayo on the 16 th October 2011 and it's being conducted by Mary Ndlovu.
MN	Moses, I'll ask you first to tell us a little bit about how you got into the struggle, what interested you, why you joined ZAPU and how you got involved in the military.
MMN	<p>Well, let me say firstly that I come from a family I think that already had some kind of political consciousness, even though we were ...we grew up in a rural area, in Plumtree in Tegwani which incidentally that's where Zenzo Nkobi comes from. And so that area ... that Methodist missionary station already had run-ins with the colonial regime and you would also understand that a number of Methodist missionaries you know fell foul with the law, and so the products of that school, whether as a primary or a secondary school, Tegwani, were likely to have a higher political consciousness in terms of what was happening.</p> <p>And I remember specifically when I was young in 1967 as a primary school child, and the first contact between the South African ... combined operations between the South African - a South African military unit and a Rhodesian military unit against the ANC MK and ZPRA in our area called Mabogani - you're talking about something like 80-90 kilometres but this is in Plumtree - after school we met this convoy of trucks carrying these huge men, both white and black, you know the huge Zulu men, big men, were well fed, and huge Afrikaans</p>



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>men, with hairy arms, you know they were such a frightening sight for us. But I remember with my friend, as primary school children we counted 37 of these trucks, and we didn't understand but we knew that already there was a war because there were said to be freedom fighters fighting to liberate the country and these men were going to fight them. And you know, being a child you felt you were missing in terms of the action that would then happen if they met with the freedom fighters. And so I think at that point one ... besides our own experience, the rural area experiences of discrimination by white men coming from the Ministry of Agriculture, I think, who wanted to make sure that the size of herds of cattle per family unit was the prescribed one; they would count regularly our stock and issue stock books and to ensure that you don't keep herd – I mean cattle - more than the number you are allowed to, and the abusive language and what as a young person you saw this happen. And you also saw it happen when they came to your home to ensure that, to check if you actually cultivated more than the stipulated size of land. And all these things you know had an impact on you.</p> <p>So eventually when I grew up and left Tegwani to go to Gloag Ranch, to St Bernard's, I already had some bit of political consciousness to know what was happening. Even when the Pearce Commission, for instance in 1972, came down here to seek the views of the people, I was aware of the position of ZAPU that that had to be resisted, and then that accounts for my participation in the youth wing of ZAPU as a student activist at Gweru Teachers College, 1974-75. When most of our nationalist leaders were released in 1974, November 11, it then brought in some excitement amongst us as students to see how our nationalist leadership would steer ZAPU towards a victory, and that did not happen until I finished my college in 1975, left ... Gweru Teachers College was a prestigious black Zimbabwean compared to others, it was almost the equivalent of the Hillside Teachers College which was called <i>the</i> College ... you remember that one from our days that we were now lecturing, teaching at <i>the</i> College'. And so this was a prestigious you know college, producing secondary school teachers. And again the racial tensions were very evident because most of our lecturers at Gweru Teachers College would do reservist, you know, duties during the weekends. And I remember one day travelling between Gwelo and Bulawayo I found one of my lecturers called McCarty – he was, I mean the most committed racist I think amongst the rest of the white lecturers there – I found him at this roadblock but you can imagine what it said to me as a student ... that I'm accustomed to this man wearing a suit, a civilian suit, but here he is wearing a military fatigue, armed with a weapon and you just don't quite make sense and you are feeling you have somebody weighing down on you to say he's your lecturer, he's also ensuring that in order to maintain the order he's got a weapon so that if you don't agree with him in the lecture room, you then have to agree with him in public because he's got the force that he wants to use. And that I think for me was the beginning of a desire to then participate in the armed struggle and bring to an end what ... to what I regarded as racial nonsense of the Ian Smith regime. And I remember McCarty saying to us when we went on strike on some occasion to say that "You African boys think that money grows on trees and that is why we, we, the Rhodesian</p>

¹ After Independence in the mid 80's the interviewer and the interviewee lectured together at Hillside Teachers College
AL3291_NdlovuMzilaMoses_20111016



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>government, allocates 13.5% of our national revenue to African education but your parents don't pay taxes, so you must be thankful to us". And I remember that at around the same time, that is when Ian Smith said "Not in a thousand years would a black man rule this country". And I'm trying to say when you then look at this collective, and say the collective experiences that as a young child it's what you were subjected to, exposed to, until you graduated at a college, that you have this anger building up in you, and you feel left out.</p> <p>So I then came down to Bulawayo to teach at Sobhukhazi, for almost a year and by the end of the year I had left you know for ... because I come from Plumtree, being near the border it was so easy for me to cross. But I want to tell you this one, that my dilemma was that my maternal uncle who comes third, or second after my mother ... because our people crossed into Botswana seeking opportunities during the colonial days ... so he made it up within the ranks of the Botswana police ... this is Jackson Ndibuwa... to the point that he became the member-in-charge of the Francistown Police station. And I knew that if you wanted to go to the refugee camp you then had to surrender yourself. And this is what I had heard from some of my ZAPU colleagues who already had been to Botswana and out to say that guys are actually going out to Zambia and ... you remember that was soon after the Geneva conference – the failed Geneva conference - and so information was this. And I found myself ... if I surrendered myself in Botswana at Francistown Police camp and I knew that my uncle was there but I gave them a wrong name – I mean a false name – and the following day we were taken to some place for fingerprints. On the way back when they had to report to the Member-in-Charge just to say that we've got so many refugees going to the refugee camp, my uncle went through and I could see through the small window of the prison truck to see my uncle and he looked at these names and he even opened the door, and he saw me and I ... now when we discuss he says "Look, I just got disarmed because there you were with some other young people, and I thought honestly, if I pull out my own nephew and allow these other people to go, whatever I say ... so I just allowed and asked you "where are you going at the moment?" "I'm going to Zambia" [inaudible] "OK, take them" So he released me, we then went to the refugee camp where I spent some bit of time in Francistown, and transferred to Phikwe, thereafter we were flown to, to Lusaka, where I then, together with other people went to Nampundwe where I think I remained for some four or five months and we got prepared for training in Angola</p>
MN	So this is now 1977
MMN	<p>77, yah, early 77. And so, you know if I ever felt disappointed was that ... an announcement was made that ZAPU was planning to introduce refugee schools and they have heard that there is a teacher, a qualified teacher who has just come to Nampundwe, and this man will have to remain there until this project is started and you'll be one of our teachers, you could have qualified teachers, but I remember also that some schools which were being closed down by some of our comrades already in operations were being force marched to Zambia and so I was just looking at myself as being one of the contingent of teachers who were just going to live there in exile and teach. And I argued my case to say "No, no look, I left teaching back home and I can't be seen, I don't want ... I want to go for training". But that was source of suspicion from some of the trained personnel like a guy called Killion ... In fact Killion was in charge of Nampundwe ... helped me because when I</p>



Speaker	Dialogue
	argued he says “but what’s wrong with you, wanting to go for training?” There was one called Teddy. Teddy was saying “No, he must be a Selous Scout. No he must be an agent of Ian Smith.” But Teddy wanted my boots. [laughter] Because I knew that I was going to the struggle and clearly you cannot go there wearing your teacher’s shoes. So I had bought these nice brown kind of military boots, and he was saying “Look, this man must be put in the prison”, you know the pits that they had dug, and Killion said “No, it can’t be if this man ... I interviewed him and I’m happy with what ... his history... he’s an activist, he’s a ZAPU person, he was a student activist, in Senga in Gweru, so where is your source of suspicion?” And they were arguing right in front of me to say “Does he go to the guys who are going to start the school, does he go to what was called a special unit which would go to the Soviet Union to do pilot training, does he go with the rest of the ordinary rank and file guys to Angola?”
MN	And what did you want? You wanted to go to Angola?
MMN	I wanted to go to Angola. I wanted to go to Angola to do the basic military training because I understood that you want to fight and you are not going to be fighting if you are in some rear bush school in Lusaka. I didn’t think that ZAPU was ready ... this was my thinking ... was ready to fly MIGs into Rhodesia. I saw this perhaps as a long-term this thing but it kind of depressed me. The action that probably I wanted would then come if I was part of a unit that went to Angola. And I insisted and finally I think Killion won and said “Look just join that section”. I joined that section, that section became a company and so I was attached there and we were kept there until we went to Angola. And I remember the day we left we were transferred from Nampundwe to FC. We were a group of some 2,000 ... 2,000 recruits, yeah. A group of 2,000 recruits. We we took seven days to drive from Lusaka to Boma. Boma ...
MN	You did go by road
MMN	By truck, yes. Trucks. A convoy. You can imagine 2,000 people being transported by trucks, and these trucks ... it was my first time to come into contact with Cubans. We were driven by Cubans ... everything, security, food, logistics, and what have you, was done by Cubans. It was a highly organized, you know, convoy. And we went through Solwezi, you know Solwezi, we went through Solwezi and into ... what part of Zambia is that as you go ...?
MN	The North West province, you cross the river somewhere.
MMN	The North West province, very close to to ...
MN	To Zaire it was then
MMN	To Zaire, yes, and then into Moxico, what they call it Moxico what they call it that’s the area but we then got to a town or city called Luso, or Luena. And Boma was some maybe 50-60 kilometres from Luena, given the time that it would take us to drive from Luena to Boma. But also let me share with you my experiences of the horrors of the civil war in Angola to say that as we drove through Angola this bit of the southern, southern eastern part of Angola, there were skeletons, human



Speaker	Dialogue
	skeletons in the open. This was in aftermath of that war when UNITA seemed to have been defeated, and we were seeing this as we drove. There were also refugee centres for mostly children who were being collected from the remote rural parts and being put in these what they called companments [?] for children, and we could see ... I think these must have been NGOs that were responsible for food distribution or so. But it was so tense, it was so tense I think the Cubans ... of course they had a language problem ... they could not trust anyone that they came across, so they made sure that they kept many people away from the ... this convoy. But also, what I was admiring was the canopies of trees, long tall trees that you drove in the heat, you know this was temperate Africa ... you drove under the shade of trees it was so humid but so beautiful also to see tall trees meeting at the top and here you have a channel, your road is just a channel. But also it was frightening to say that you could expect an attack any time, and you would not know what is happening. And so, but they managed to ...
MN	An attack ... a ground attack or an air attack?
MMN	A ground attack
MN	A ground attack
MMN	Arial you were sure you were largely safe because of this canopy, but also ground attack from UNITA to say that "Look you will be MPLA recruits." But we managed to get to Luso, I mean to ... to Boma. What we were going for here was a specialized guerrilla warfare training, called advanced guerrilla warfare.
MN	You had done something in Nampundwe.
MMN	No we had done nothing
MN	Nothing at all.
MMN	No nothing, nothing at all. And so we were then broken down into units. The first ten units or companies did infantry training. And because maybe of my education then they put me into artillery training so you had a ...
MN	OK so let's come back to infantry training. So you didn't do the infantry training?
MMN	I did it, but it was part of a
MN	A larger programme
MMN	A larger programme.
MN	OK. What's included in infantry training then?
MMN	Training, it's basic military training that has to do with disciplines like ... use of small arms, yah, combat, you know, skills like what you are seeing here [3A_07_09]
MN	The small arms being the rifles, and ...



Speaker	Dialogue
MMN	Yah, the rifles, and things like the AK, pistols, and then, communication, eh .. sabotage .. no no infantry would not do that because sabotage ... what the Cubans called <i>sabatori</i> ... it was part of the artillery you know, the more specialized units, and so the infantry unit really specialized in drills like you know physical
MN	This type of thing? Judo, to help you handle close combat [3A_07_25]
MMN	Judo ...how to attack your enemy within close range with your body
MN	So you would start with this kind of drill, would they? [3A_10_16]
MMN	Yeah, you can start with this basic ...
MN	Marching, running,..
MMN	Yeah, and the Cubans were so good at it because they had clearly laid out programmes of how to ... you start with the physical training, and then of course if you were in an infantry you would then go to small arms like grenades, and of grenades, kinds of grenades, and small arms like AK, the pistols and so forth. You know, this kind of became basic. We did this, but in addition to this basic training including the communications and including ... reconnaissance, for instance ...
MN	That would all be part of the basic training.
MMN	Part of the basic training. These other guys, I think they went through a selective process, they selected us in terms of what they expected our abilities to be.
MN	OK
MMN	And put those that probably would be the most capable to master this basic training and to be given specialized training in bigger weapons for instance, like the mortar training that I did, where I was then identified because of my easy understanding of the Cuban language... you know the Cuban language is Spanish basically but Spanish also is related to English, you can easily understand it, and Italian. And once you have this global view of categorizing, you know, languages, it becomes easier for you when you listen to an instructor and you you .. who is interpreted with ...we had interpreters ... and then realize that your level of comprehension is much higher than your colleagues, then you are said be a commander of your company so eventually I became a commander of this company.
MN	Because you could understand the Spanish
MMN	Of 120 people. My understanding. I quickly picked up you know basic you know communication codes and even instructions, even though it was disjointed by kind of pigeon Spanish but you know it made communication within the units very easy, even between you yourselves as a unit and your instructors, the commanders. It was very easy.
MN	So all the instructors were Cuban



Speaker	Dialogue
MMN	All the instructors were Cuban, but we also had a Russian contingent, the Soviets. They were there but they kept their distance from the Cuban activities. I think they were monitoring because ... I think they must have been sponsoring
MN	Were they providing the weapons?
MMN	They were providing the weapons. They were providing I'm sure ... the food, the food came from Cuba, the rice came from Cuba, the fish came from Cuba .. I'm not quite sure but I never really bothered myself to say what exactly in addition to training, designing training programmes and inspecting what we do, but they were smaller, a smaller contingent who were also based there. Later of course I came to understand that ... well as a major sponsor of ZPRA they needed to be on the spot and they would be reporting to Moscow on a wide range of activities and also even taking the responsibility in the event of an attack like what happened some two years after I had left when that same camp was attacked by the Rhodesian forces together with the South Africans of course. They attacked both the ZPRA and the ANC No no, even Namibians, Namibians
MN	Were they all in the same area?
MMN	I think they were all in the same area. When I talk to the ANC guys they were in the same area. They could have been out of Moxico but it was not very far. It was the southern part of Angola ... the area that was kind of free from the UNITA activities.
MN	But you were trained separately, you never saw them while you were there.
MMN	No, we never saw them, we never saw them
MN	But were you the first group to go to Boma?
MMN	I was the second, part of the second
MN	You were the second group.
MMN	The second group, yes. It was the second group so ..
MN	So you were saying that you were being trained now on artillery.
MMN	In artillery, yah. And then of course we started with the basic weapons and you went through this, you had your physical training which was largely done with the ZPRA model of toyi toyi, physical exercises you know which you did before your breakfast and then after your breakfast you go for lessons ...very good programme I think very ...by those standards it was really good. You had your lessons then you had of course your political education [inaudible] I remember this guy called Moyo, Moyo was ... what's his name ... he's late now ... you remember those guys who were ...I forget now ... George ... he was Vote Moyo's ² son. Yes, George was Vote

² Later a ZAPU MP



Speaker	Dialogue
	Moyo's son. He was the commissar attached to our unit and so he went around giving political lessons and also identifying people who could actually give other, you know, trainees, lessons in a ... in ZAPU's ideology. I think in addition to that, to the artillery, the training ... we had some bit of communication
MN	The artillery training ... does it require some understanding of mathematics?
MMN	It does. It does. If you wanted to tell maybe ... it does because this is one of the weapons that does not fire directly at the target from the weapon. I mean, you have a weapon that fires into the air in order to hit a ground target. And so you have to calculate your angle for instance of positioning the barrel of this weapon to ... and understand also that the higher ... the bigger the angle, the closer you are to 90 degrees the less the distance your shell will go. And the closer to to the ground you are, the further it is likely to go, but the chances that then you have the obstruction of trees and what have you ... so you are operating between 60degrees and 90 degrees. But you have to calculate also, say what is the furthest distance that I can go, but also being able to estimate the distance of the target
MN	Yes, I was going to say... how did you do that ... you just had to guess. You had no instruments to to calculate distance?
MMN	No, you had to estimate but also check with the instrumentation that you had, the foresight ... the sight of this weapon to say ... you have a gauge and on this gauge you have a range of distances ... to say, if you can see this object on your gauge or on your sight, the object must be approximately this distance away from you.
MN	OK, so it would work for something you could actually see, but ...
MMN	... you could actually see, and then use it to estimate the distance. And that distance then is a base for calculating the angle of your positioning of the barrel and once you have set your barrel you then would go on to fire your, your shell, just by popping it in, it pops out, and when it pops out, where it lands it will tell you by your estimation of the target whether you should fire more because you hit the target; if you landed beyond the target it means you then increase the angle and you bring it ... so it's a kind of trial and error kind of a ... you know, a firing, but eventually you zero in on the target, and you are looking at massive targets like buildings that you are to destroy and these are stationery targets, you are not looking at mobile targets like human beings, you know, cars, trains and what have you. No these are stationery ... buildings ... And once one of your shells, your shells lands close, you can then make adjustments quickly and begin to fire at your target and hit it and you land as many shells as you can. And this is ... of course I mean you've got different sizes. What I did in Angola was a mortar 60 that means one with a 60 mm bore and then a mortar 82 with an 82mm bore.
MN	Bole?



Speaker	Dialogue
MMN	Bore. It means the diameter, yeah, the diameter of this tube and so ... I then later went to Egypt to do to do 120 mm bore. This is really large. That's the one that we used at Mana Pools, the first one
MN	OK, and this this photograph here,.. where is it
MMN	In fact, I should be able to bring you...
MN	That one, what weapon is this? [4A-18-21]
MMN	This is a ZGU
MN	A?
MMN	This is an anti-air
MN	A Ze Ge Z, G?
MMN	Yes. Z dash G then U I'm sure it's a Russian ... but it's an anti aircraft weapon
MN	OK that's not a ground target, that's a
MMN	You can use it for ground targets like we did in Mana Pools, you can use it to attack ground targets ... I remember there were laws that we learned all through our training that you cannot use some of these weapons for extra military, you know ... ways of killing your enemy. You want to be humane in the manner in which you kill your enemy ... like you don't want to tie a grenade to the head of your enemy and and and you blow them up. It's unethical
MN	Did you ... were you taught ethics ... and international law relating to warfare?
MMN	You needed to be able to ... I believe most people did not understand. This is one other area of our training that I think many people did not understand. Of course given also the kind of information that came from different operational areas, the kind of ways of elimination of the enemy our people were using, it meant probably they didn't understand that component of our training to say that even if you are to kill your enemy kill them in a humane way ... in a contact, kill them ... if you are blowing them up that's fine but ... say you have captured them, how do you kill them, if you have to kill them. No ... that kind of training ... and I had a special interest in that because somewhat it had coincided with my religious training in the home that, you know, you can't be cruel and being a soldier it meant you had to overcome that, but it remained kind of being part of you that you have to be humane ... you may have to kill because of the greater cause, but you want to do it in a humane way. And so I'm saying the mortar therefore was a demolition...or is a demolition weapon that we used.
MN	Mostly for buildings
MMN	For buildings, enemy establishments like if you have a ... fuel tanks for instance,



Speaker	Dialogue
	you can easily use mortars, destroying bridges if you have to ... if you can't get there and mine the bridge and explode it you can destroy it from a distance using, you know, mortar. Or if you have to bomb a road in order to create craters that will impede enemy forces from fleeing or from getting to you, you could use those shells. So it's a multi-purpose weapon but largely, I mean, entirely for stationery targets.
MN	But it's considered part of guerrilla warfare.
MMN	It's part of guerrilla warfare given the size. The mortar 60 is a very light thing that you can carry on your shoulders but the 82
MN	The 120, or the other one ...
MMN	The 82 you'd need a unit of guys because you need five men, one to carry the base, you had something like a half a meter diameter steel base on which you mount your barrel, because it's a heavy force on, on ...you know explosion, not explosion but when you ... it then lands on the trigger inside the barrel it kind of kicks back, so you need a plate to put on the ground to make sure that your barrel then does not change positions affecting your position, your aiming, yah. You needed to ... and I'm sure I still remember that very clear, and sometimes I wonder how, but it had such an impact on me it is not just easy to forget.
MN	The 82, this is the 82.
MMN	The 82
MN	And did you carry that into ... into the country?
MMN	Yes. We had some units. I never brought mine into the country but we had some units that had it, because for my second training in Egypt when I came to be based in Zambia at the Zambezi valley across the thing, we were part of the units that were going to create, you know, a no-entry for the Rhodesian forces to go into Zambia, and literally start the war against them and push those units that were based in the Zambezi further inland.
MN	They were on the Zambezi on the Rhodesian side
MMN	But starting from the Zambian side, and that was the reason ... in my understanding ... was that the deployment of the first battalion which this guy would be talking about. The understanding was that more battalions would be deployed along the Zambezi River, thereby you know testing the enemy's strength in terms of dislodging us from the gorges, the mountains along the Zambezi Valley. If then that failed we'd push further inland and then the strategy was eventually we'd go for towns and capture towns. That's how I understood... understood [inaudible] So the training that was being done there saying advanced guerrilla meant that you had a kind of combination of guerrilla warfare, kind of hit and run you know activities, but



Speaker	Dialogue
	you want to transform those ... those operations to hit, assault and stay. And the hit, assault and stay approach would then be useful when you go for settlements – enemy settlements, whether they were police camps, they were ...
MN	Farms
MMN	Farms ... you know, but something that is an extension of the government of the day.
MN	How much did the ordinary guerrillas understand of this whole strategy as opposed to tactics, I mean this is strategy you're talking now
MMN	I don't think that many people ...
MN	Was it explained to them like that, or was it more like you follow your orders and
MMN	Yah, you follow your orders and do ... and because of the insistence on this secrecy ... the very secrecy that people are abusing now in present-day governance started off with that: do what you have been assigned to. Period. It ends there. Please, stop being inquisitive. If you are inquisitive you must be suspected of being an enemy agent. Why are you inquisitive? Why don't you do ...
MN	But did you ... you understood this at the time or you are understanding it looking back now?
MMN	No I understood it at the time because I mean coming into contact with people you know who had trained elsewhere, who had been to the front and what have you ... when you discuss these things you then have a broader view of things and probably your eyes are cast further than simply your own unit's activities and you then understand that as you talk to the other guys that it's a common understanding on the issue, but selective guys ... some of the people, not everybody, and it was ok that some people understood that we needed a long-term strategy. And that is why some of us were given training that was kind of different from the guys, I mean what the other guys got in the 60's and the 70's ... you know, that at that time if you wanted to make progress then it means that you must produce the kind of cadre who really will go for the enemy, defeat them and stay there and advance.
MN	So you ... how long were you in Angola then? You trained there for how long?
MMN	What was it...six months, yes
MN	Six months, and then from there did you go to the front or you went on to the next training.
MMN	No, we came to the front.
MN	All of you.
MMN	Yes, all of us came and we were deployed in various places depending on the kind



Speaker	Dialogue
	of training ..
MN	Inside the country
MMN	Inside the country, yah, because I remember many of our infantry guys went through Sipolilo, that's Feira I think ... many of them because I mean they were many, they were then broken down to smaller units to actually suit the situation . so in groups of tens, groups of twenties, no more in groups of five hundred or 120 as they are companies
M N	Were you mixed with people from other trainings or you were all kept together. In a unit you'd be just be from Angola.
MMN	No no, no. We then went to be mixed with units from other training camps. For instance when we came I remember there was a group from the Soviet Union and I still see some of my colleagues who were training in the Soviet Union. So they had all the specialized different weapons which we did not have in Angola. For instance there was a gun called gun 57. This is a long barreled weapon, that has a long range, much longer than the mortar 82 and it was kind of a shock to us to say "ZAPU has this kind of weapon? How far will this thing go?" You are told it can go 5 kilometres ... 6 kilometres. You say "What? Is it possible?" "Yes, it is possible". And so you are really excited to say I can't wait for the day when you are going to have to, you know, fire this weapon. And then of course there was the most the most respected, most prestigious strela, heat-seeking missile which eventually I was removed from the mortars to go for training for the strela in Zambia by some of those guys that had trained in the Soviet Union.
MN	There's no photograph here of the strela. None of these pictures have the strela.
MMN	No I haven't , and unfortunately I ...
MN	But I mean of these ones here. That anit-aircraft one was something else.
MMN	No, no
MN	Yah, it was the other one.
MMN	Yah, but you see, both ... both of them are what is called ground-to-air anti-aircraft weapons. But this strela, I still believe it's the most prestigious, you know, weapon that we ever used as ZAPU. And I believe also it played a very significant role in creating the turning point in terms of the conquest of the arial space that the Rhodesian forces always bragged that they were in charge so they could fly their aeroplanes anywhere ... besides being missed by a few bazookas and what-have-you which was really infantry kind of weapon but when we then started knocking some of their aircraft from the sky
MN	In Zambia



Speaker	Dialogue
MMN	In Zambia. Even in Zim..in Rhodesia
MN	Really
MMN	Yes, remember the Viscounts.
MN	Oh the Viscounts, yes.
MMN	Yes, they were downed by our strela units. There was this very small unit in ZPRA and very secretive, we were not supposed to mix with other people because the the idea was that you minimize information going to the enemy in case of capture of some of the people so they would not start talking about how does this thing look like ... because if the enemy captured you that's what they would go for. How does the thing look like, how does it work and so forth... So we were kind of a special case and this is what I did at the end of my operatinal ... this thing and I'll come back to this one.
MN	So you went to the front; then you came back to be trained as strela in Zambia
MMN	In Zambia and was then deployed
MN	Who was training you
MMN	There was a guy called Morgan
MN	Were they other ZPRA guys.
MMN	Yes, they were ZPRA guys, yah. I was not trained by the Soviets on the strela. I was trained by the Cubans with mortars, trained by the Egyptians, mortars and in between came to the front, but also trained by the by the ZPRA guys who had done training in the Soviet Union and they did that in ... around Mwembeshi, and that was 1979 by the way, and I remember very well the attacks on Mkushi for instance. And this is a coincidence. I told you about the 37 trucks that I counted when I was a young grade ...standard 6 child but also the helicopters that attacked Mkushi ... we were there as a unit laying an ambush and we decided that these helicopters were just too many and I was the one holding the binoculars, counting them. I counted 37 of them.
MN	Where were you ... around Mkushi?
MMN	No no we were by the Zambezi
MN	Oh ... and you saw them coming over ... you didn't know where they were going.
MMN	I was... I was kind of in a very advantaged position where I was sure that I was under cover, that I would not be detected, but at the same time being able to see them. They were hovering at very low altitude and this was a mountainous area and they were very clever those guys because they didn't fly high.
MN	Whereabouts, in which ... below the dam.



Speaker	Dialogue
MMN	No no, far, towards Feira
MN	Way down the river OK
MMN	If you know, Mwembeshi ... where Mwembeshi was
MN	Mwembeshi was down that side?
MMN	Yah further ... further than the ... what do you call it ... the dam, far far
MN	Way down there ...near the Mozambique border.
MMN	As you go towards ... not towards Tete but not very close to Tete but in that area, because isn't it Feira, Tete you know and this is kind of a cluster, but you are going that direction. You can see where Mkushi is in Zambia and it was easy for them to then fly, but it's mountainous and they flew at very low altitudes, precisely to prevent the ZGU attacks on them. But our predicament was also that, look a helicopter you can actually use a bazooka to hit it, you can use this thing, ZGUs ... why would you want to use a strela on a helicopter? So we counted 37, I counted 37 ...I counted 37 ... there could have been more, but I counted 37 and that figure has always remained stuck in my mind and you know later on I began to think about this beginning of my political understanding ... I said "But with my friend Mtshana", who by the way went to Zambia in 1975 much earlier than myself and by the time I got there he was already trained, "we counted 37 of these trucks, the South African trucks going into a combined operation against combined ZPRA and MK". But it was also on that day that after the withdrawal of the helicopters there was a huge Dakota which I believe was not covered and probably they thought if there was going to be any contact with ZPRA on the ground, then they would radio the Dakota which was a troop carrier to say that "Don't use this route", but that Dakota used the exact route, flying at a much higher altitude - being a bigger aeroplane they were flying at a higher altitude - and that was the aeroplane which we gave instructions to a guy called Stanley to fire the strela.
MN	And did he
MMN	He did. We hit it.
MN	Oh you did.
MMN	We did hit it. That strela, the strela is a maybe this, what would be a 100 mm bore, meaning 100 mm internal diameter, very light weapon, greenish in colour by the way ... coincidentally the MDC has taken a green ...in my mind it's like the colour of the... what do you call it ... lime green. It's lime green colour ... it was ... I'm not sure, I'm sure the Soviets have improved versions now for the strelas. It's just a tube kind of made from ... not quite plastic, some combination of plastic I think it was ... it was very strong, takes some bashing as you ran through the what have you... with a cover at the rear, and a cover at the front. At the front you can see



Speaker	Dialogue
	the head of the missile inside the tube, and this head of the missile is called a gyroscope. The gyroscope is the one that carries the heat-sensitive material. If you point the strela towards the sun, it will actually, if you fire, it will go towards the sun and when its fuel gets exhausted it will explode and it does what they call committing suicide. It explodes on its own, yah, because it either explodes when the fuel runs out or it explodes on impact with the target, yah, and at ... towards the rear you've got fins that are like... you are standing with your arms down ...and you are in a cylindrical tube. When you are let out and you are asked to stretch out your arms and fly that's what exactly a strela missile does and each time it looks for the heat ...source of heat. And on that day the source of heat was the engine of that Dakota and it went in and exploded and you could see one side of the aeroplane catching fire, and eventually it lost the altitude and started going down. And there were guys on the Rhodesian side we radioed and they went to assault. They counted 33 dead soldiers. I'm not sure.
MN	It went down on the Zambian side ... on the Rhodesian side.
MMN	On the Rhodesian side, because when a plane ...
MN	So you hit it when you saw it coming from that side. You were on the Zambian side.
MMN	We were on the Zambian side. This thing came from further on the Zambian side, from Mkushi.
MN	Oh it was coming back.
MMN	Yeah, it was coming back.
MN	Oh, ok.
MMN	It was coming back, just like those helicopters that were coming back.
MN	Oh they were coming back. I thought they were on the way, yeah.
MMN	Sorry, I didn't mention that. These were coming back ...
MN	Oh
MMN	... after the attack. And we counted those helicopters ...and I decided no we cannot want to use a missile. Little did we know that they actually were flying ahead of a bigger troop carrier, a Dakota. And when it appeared ... I don't know ... it was around about 4 o'clock, 5 o'clock. It was really getting ...kind of ... it was cloudy, kind of getting dark, but you know clouds, normally most of the cloud systems like the nimbus, and you learned this in your training apart from the ...
MN	You did weather patterns as well
MMN	Yah, apart from your geography geography that one did at school then becomes you know an advantage to say that the nimbus for instance would be about 500



Speaker	Dialogue
	metres to a kilometer above so you can estimate, if it's on a cloudy day ... estimate the kind of the cloud that you have, and the altitude of the aeroplane to say how then do you position yourself in order to hit it. If it's on the other side it will be very difficult unless if it's a patchy kind of cloud, but that Dakota was flying below the cloud level but higher than the altitude of the helicopters, and so we hit it and our guys went to assault and found that they were already dead, burnt. And the guys in there were burnt.
MN	Everybody was dead.
MMN	Yah. And these are some of the things that I believe created the Turning Point that ...
MN	So a lot of these guys that attacked, that landed as paratroops in Mkushi died before they got home.
MMN	Well I don't know how many they were all in all, but 33 was such a big number.
MN	In that plane, yeah
MMN	These would have been assault soldiers. If you talk to Cecilia she will tell you that they were actually smoking them out of their hiding places, using grenades, using all sorts of things and those that were eventually ... who eventually escaped ... I mean, saw it all, and they wouldn't of course have been able to count, but they would have an estimate to say, look if there were five hundred to a thousand trainees and you are being attacked perhaps you have something like a hundred, hundred forces, so 33 really would be a large number, given the fact that you would not ... in fact looking at that Dakota and the 37 helicopters, I believe that the helicopters were equipped with gunship, I mean, yeah... they were really gunships
MN	They weren't really carrying paratroops, they were
MMN	They would have had some paratrooper forces as well, but I I I want to ... I remember the excitement amongst the infantry guys who were around our ...us ... because we had to be given special protection.. the excitement, you know, the whistling, the screaming, that we had "We hit it, we hit it we hit it" And there was this collective, you know, joy that you heard to say, if this is part of the drums of war and I remember saying this to Mabuza, saying, "I think the drums of war are beating even louder now". With something of your education and being able to express and say "It means that we can actually increase our attacks on the enemy, hit back" and we had not heard anyway that Mkushi had been attacked. We had ... we only learnt of it the following day when we reported that we had seen helicopters and hit one of them, that the guys at the headquarters then said "Your women's counterparts, your women's base had been destroyed and many had been killed". And this was at the time that I was withdrawn from the front to say attacks were greater in Lusaka. You remember the Works department was attacked and John



Speaker	Dialogue
	Nkomo was there, and in fact when my unit was then taken there to defend ZAPU's installations ... John Nkomo remembers and they told him that that idiot ³ was part of the unit that [inaudible] and he came that day.
MN	Maybe we could just go back and talk a little bit about the specific pictures here.
MMN	That's not what [inaudible]
MN	This one ... is this an AK they're using? It doesn't look like an AK [3A-07-09]
MMN	Let me see. It looks like a Semenov. The one that ... if you find one that has a bayonet at the bottom of the barrel, this bayonet is ... can only be a Semenov
MN	A Semenov ok.
MMN	A Semenov bayonet, yes, that's how they are and the bayonets have four [inaudible] on the side and if you find any picture that has a bayonet with a long drawn-out tip and not in the form of a knife, cutting knife, but in the form more of a pin, kind of a spear, you know that's a Semenov bayonet, and the the Semenov would not have a big magazine there. That small magazine. The AK magazine would carry more ... like 31.. 30 bullets and the Semenov would take about six, and so that would be a Semenov weapon ... of course they came in different versions but they're basically the same.
MN	So this was part of the infantry guerrilla training.
MMN	Exactly. You had a Semenov and if you find a picture with a short ... short one and a big barrel and a round you know big magazine, that is called a Pepesha
MN	A what?
MMN	Pepesha. I don't even know how it was spelled, but this was a Russian, I think, second world war weapon that carried something like a hundred or something. It is an assault rifle for close range that will actually ... the rapidity of firing is much higher than in the AK but the degree of accuracy is much lesser in terms of hitting the target, so it's a kind of noise-making kind of weapon spraying so many bullets you know to hit many targets like personnel ... you're firing at many people at the same time
MN	So they would learn this tactic, then also shooting and using the bayonet
MMN	Then what these guys would be simulating, NaGugu ⁴ if you can go back, these guys are simulating an attack, a close combat attack. You can notice the barrels are pointing towards ... that guy would be pointing in the air - that's a wrong position - but most of them would be kind of pointing horizontal, assaulting, like

³ Probably this is a reference to a recent event, as the interviewee is now an MDC minister.

⁴ Name the interviewee commonly used for the interviewer, meaning "mother of Gugu"



Speaker	Dialogue
	then you have moves, like you are moving with your left leg if you are right-handed. One leg forward, your left leg, one leg backwards which way do you want to go... do you want to go forward, you keep moving your right foot - your right leg- forwards and backwards, to teach you that you actually are making a movement of your body in terms of making you closer to the enemy without running away and these are the movements. Now if you have to jump, maybe your enemy wants to hack your legs, your feet, you have to jump to escape a swing, a blow
MN	OK so this jumping is not for attacking, it's for defending.
MMN	It's for defending but at the same time moving forward. But finally the purpose also is that these movements confuse the enemy, they intimidate the enemy ... which makes sense in psychology ... that when you make the noise like hah hah hah, you know it says you've got confidence, you're not scared, you know you want to destroy this person. And I know many people who would have fled from the scene because of this kind of a
MN	So these guys were shouting, these open mouths and that's part of the training is to actually teach you to do that.
MMN	To teach you to do it and when you make such noise and maybe there's about 200 of you in this unit, you doing that ... can you imagine if you are to surround a group of enemy forces, maybe they are few ... 5, 6, ... and you all start making the kind of a noise that you are making, how many people would really think of jumping onto their weapons and firing back. A lot of people would be disarmed and this is how you achieve and arrest with psychology without even wasting your ammunition because ammunition is an
MN	And did you use this in the front?
MMN	Yah, they did but ...
MN	Not in large numbers like this though
MMN	No particularly in the ... towards the end of 79 when our units became even bigger in the front, like the attack on Makuti, Makuti ... you know Magunje police camp. That attack, it was the noisiest when our guys wrote ZPRA ... I always people in Magunje when I go there to say that "Do you remember ZPRA inscribed on this police station?" The police fled that police station.
MN	Where's Magunje?
MMN	As you ... on the Chirundu road from Harare, if you use that road and you go to Chirundu ,but remember Mana Pools is not far from Chirundu Bridge, and so Makuti ... when the, the Binga road then comes off the Chirundu road, that`s Magunje. It was a small kind of centre for the Mashonaland West province ... remember that was the most productive farming area, Mashonaland west, the Karoi



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>area, and so Magunje was kind of a remote area but it was all surrounded by farm land. It was all farm land and I think the nearest rural area therefore would be the Binga- Kazanga area. And so if you then inscribe the name of your guerrilla army onto a police station and you are making such kind of noise, and anybody who flees that one for a long time they've been traumatized by that noise and they're not likely to be confident enough to fight you, and that was why even the Rhodesian forces resorted to hiring mercenaries, because I remember, some of the guys you know that were killed by ZPRA had tattoos in the Jewish language. And how I learned to identify Jewish language which I was not conversant with ...when I went for my training in Egypt they took us to what they called General Bar Lev line, the forty-five fortifications, forty-five fortifications between the Suez Canal and Alexandria in Egypt on that Suez Canal and remember that Suez Canal was a very important route for the west to Australia, India to Asia in fact and so ... even up to now the events around the Horn of Africa have to do with the routes .. that is why many of them fell prey to pirates and what have you. So even at that time after the Yom Kippur, the Six Day War, those places were preserved as kind of historical monuments, because what the Israelis and the Americans did, was to say on the northern side of the Suez Canal they built fortifications then they called ... I don't know why they called it after Bar Lev because this was a soldier – Soviet General. I don't know whether the Russians, after helping the Egyptians and was it Syrians also involved in the 1973 ... 1973 war that they then called it the Bar Lev line. But these fortifications were done with such an expertise, Mary, that I've never seen before, because they were underground, you know, military fortifications with ... built of steel tubing, this is large tubing probably whose diameter is bigger than my height. In fact you had whole stations in each of these fortifications. Communications room, strategy room ... I saw that ... and these guys were telling us that `Look, this is the Arabic alphabet, this is the Jewish alphabet. Bar Lev. But what we found here was Jewish alphabet to say what is this room – logistics room – you know, dining room ... this is under ground made of very big steel, these tubes, and they made channels, channels, underground channels. And on top of these steel tubes or tunnels underground they then put a steel girder ... you know the railway, rail steel girders ...yah, where trains run on ... they would have one line, one series of these rail lines going one direction, and another line going across ... yah, steel ...On top of this steel they made a one cubic metre stone cube, made of course of smaller rock , but they put them in net, in net to make one cubic metre, one metre, one metre and put them, lay them on top of these steel girders. So what was happening, when the Soviets first identified these fortifications they came in to bomb, they kept bombing and the Israelis and the Americans inside were having tea. Even the ... without any sign of vibration or sound, then these ... it was life as usual. And then on the northern bank of the Suez Canal they put net right along the bank, and they electrified it. So they were sure that the amphibian unit</p>



Speaker	Dialogue
	would not be able to cross. In fact, many soldiers who were assigned to try to attack these on foot through the water were electrocuted. It was only after that this happened that the Soviets then decided you want acqua unit that has specialized anti-electrocution equipment which they used to cut the net. And the Israelis I'm sure they would have known that ... look, the power is down and something has happened. But by the time they discovered this it was already too late, because the Arabs ... many had crossed, they had crossed and were banging on the entrances. But these were awful heavily fortified entrances but they were not as fortified as the top...
MN	So you were shown these things.
MMN	I was shown those things and why I'm telling you is that the kind of this Jewish orthography is what I found on the tattoos of some of the mercenaries that we killed.
MN	... which you killed inside the ...
MMN	In Rhodesia, yes. To say that Ian smith was already hiring mercenaries but you also remember the John Banks story, the 17 year old British boy who was recruited by Carlos ... Carlos the Fox, remember Carlos the Fox who was operating in Angola. He was a hired mercenary then he went to recruit people for Angola to fight against the MPLA and then he recruited a young man called John Banks, and when John Banks actually refused to fight in Angola the ... Carlos ... I'm sure you can still google that name ...if you were in leadership you would know. Carlos lined them up against a wall ... I think they were many, more than twenty, and killed them all. He then was arrested by the MPLA. I don't know what became [inaudible] he was called Carlos the Fox. But I'm saying the use of mercenaries clearly said that a lot of the Rhodesian army you know soldiers, were really intimidated by , by ZPRA. And when we then introduced the strela, heat-seeking missiles, we then said they'd lost the war here because they were not sure if their planes would be safe. In any case even whether they were missed or they were shot down it said that now they had no 100% control of aerial space.
MN	Yah. But most of these photographs are actually infantry, isn't it.
MMN	Yes, most of these are infantry, even the ZGU the single barreled gun would generally be regarded as ... even though it was an artillery weapon because it's something that you could easily dismantle and carry as a ... as a small unit.
MN	And this of course is infantry. This judo, is this ... this hat here, this man with this flat-topped hat [3A-07-25] ...
MMN	I'm not sure. I saw this... you showed me this... but this would be somebody kind of somersaulting... is there



Speaker	Dialogue
MN	I think it's judo. I think they're doing judo
MMN	Okay
MN	You didn't do this one in your training.
MMN	We did, we did, because I can't see properly
MN	It looks like ...
MMN	Even then, yes I can see these are ... this is a different position.
MN	They're throwing each other.
MMN	This one is carrying forward this one is carrying backwards, but to say that in close combat this is how you could fight back, and it would also include your having to fight back somebody who's armed with a knife. By the way I told you yesterday I got attacked by someone with a knife, some type ...
MN	In the front?
MMN	No, no, two weeks ago?
MN	Oh yeah, then you remembered what to do
MMN	I just went for his wrists, just like that, and that's how I survived
MN	And you learned that in training.
MMN	Yah, precisely to say how do you... But in training you know I was taught that if the worst came to the worst somebody coming with a knife, a bayonet, what you'd need to do is quickly remove your shirt, tie it around your wrist and then use that to hit back. When you hit back like that the knife or the bayonet you then are left with one hand to go for either their eyes, their nose, their mouth ...
MN	These guys have got different types of uniforms. This one has got sort of a combat, fatigue; this one has got trousers and a shirt, belt. Did they mean anything?
MMN	They, they do mean something. Those that are in complete uniform, even though the uniforms could be a variety of types of uniform coming from different countries, like you would say German Democratic Republic, the Soviet Union ... which other one ... the Arabic, the Arabs, countries like Egypt I'm sure they didn't give us uniforms but largely the Soviet Union ... this is a Russian uniform, this looks like complete but this one you can see a German Democratic ... I can see by the side pockets almost like what I've got.
MN	That it's a German one
MMN	Yah. It was a German one, but this shirt would look like a Soviet shirt. It was a much ...
MN	But here you've got guys with different things all together ... the ... why was it [3A-



Speaker	Dialogue
	10-16]
MMN	Some of them being completely silly ... look at those tennis shoes.
MN	Some of them don't even have proper shoes.
MMN	Yah, look at. These would be recruits under training., but I think ZAPU tried very much to say recruits must be very decently dressed. The majority of these guys would be wearing boots, yah
MN	Quite a few
MMN	Something would have happened... there's just one, two that I can see wearing tennis shoes. But this mixture of uniforms from different countries we then say that perhaps it was at a time when the party you know was having difficulty in such logistics, yah
MN	And then ... ok. And now this unit, they all seem to have the same uniform.[3A-10-21]
MMN	This is why I'm saying...
MN	And we don't know what they're actually doing here.
MMN	Looking at the ages, approximate ages of these, these are fairly young people, very young people, and I'm just wondering which training camp would this be, but this guy here, clearly what I can see ... the bandolier...
MN	What are these things here
MMN	Bandolier, this is the AK magazines. He's the only guy with an AK rifle. The rest of them have Semenovs.. Semenovs. You can see the short, this thing, and so this guy is likely to be the instructor ... maybe him and that one, unless that one is just one of the recruits who's being asked to explain something. But if you notice also he's the guy, the only guy wearing tennis shoes. Tennis shoes in a training camp are easier. Boots are very heavy, and so if you have a group of recruits you'll not allow them to wear tennis shoes if you have boots. So you'll be the only ones wearing something that is easy like tennis shoes. [inaudible] He must be the instructor given of course the number of magazines he has.
MN	.So this, the AK is used by more advanced people... trainees or what? What is the difference there between ...
MMN	Yah, I think the AK was the basic weapon even at training to say that at least let every ZPRA person know how to use an AK and then of course you would have the Pepeshas that I've talked about you'd have the Semenovs coming in, and then pistols like the Makarovs you know coming in, but this was now a basic weapon that even people like myself who would have been using mortars or using heat-seeking missiles you'd have your own rifle



Speaker	Dialogue
MN	Still have an AK to carry.
MMN	Yah so it was a standard, kind of standard weapon that you'd have. But at a training camp then you are saying if you really are saying the training camp is in an operational zone where the enemy could attack, you then probably you would train your recruits who are already armed with Semenovs ... the chance is that they would not be loaded.
MN	... not defenseless ... Oh they would be
MMN	They would not be loaded
MN	What do you think was going on here. What do you think they were learning?
MMN	Look, this should be under a subject called topography. This is, well you said earlier on, map reading. Topography it's like a ... you are studying landscapes and the kinds of soils and how you could actually find direction if you were given direction as to the location of the enemy forces, direction as to the location of your own logistics, to say there was a unit that went to this operational front and they left ammunition at this place, please go and find it and use it for this thing. And you had to have some you know knowledge of how to make interpretations of maps and signs.
MN	How to draw
MMN	How to draw as well as how to read, to read this, so this guy would have been teaching ... even bearings also, directions, you need to ... at least if you can estimate where north, south is so that when you get a map and you find that on the map there is a bearing, then how then do you move from that point to the located place whether it's your
MN	Thirty degrees north or whatever
MMN	Yah. That's my own suspicion, my own thinking.
MN	Okay and this one .. this is a fairly straightforward [3A-14-20]
MMN	Straightforward one stripping the AK ... people have got blindfolds. This blindfolding will say to you to what extent is the programme succeeding. If somebody now is able to feel each component of the AK and say look, this is a cock handle, this is a trigger, this is a barrel, this is a magazine, this is a cover a chamber cover, and all these things ...that when you can touch them without looking at them it says to you ... kind of an examination to some degree
MN	this person really knows what they are doing
MMN	Not all these people would be able to do it blindfolded, but once in a training programme you find yourself having to produce one or two people out of twenty able to do that it tells you whether the unit is ready. But you can see this guy is



Speaker	Dialogue
	holding an AK magazine, this banana like and this one to me I'm not sure if he has got something in his hands like binoculars but clearly he's standing in a position that then says you are looking at the far distant place, I'm not quite sure ...
MN	I thought maybe he was taking off his blindfold or putting it on or something.
MMN	Oh okay, yes I can see a string there [inaudible] maybe, or putting on, yah, ... you're right, using hats, you're right, putting a cap
MN	Yah, there's the cap coming down here. And that one ... this is again part of guerrilla infantry training or maybe everybody had to do this. [3A-21-01]
MMN	In fact, everybody did this. It's called obstacles, when you are either crossing, running on poles, you know suspended in the air or you actually suspended yourself and moving like this, what this guy is doing ... because the major obstacle for us was the Zambezi and so ... besides Zambezi numerous other rivers that feed into the Zambezi, and so there will be need to be able to cross the rivers if you had this kind of equipment like this. [inaudible] How then do you carry your equipment to make sure that you don't lose it. You can see the way he's carrying his AK that is strapped around him and his kit bag, there, that's all that a soldier needs, yah. And for me this guy is like either he is departing from a point going that way but you you yes ... this would be the direction rather than ... yes
MN	Feet first
MMN	To go feet ... because then it gives you an advantage to see where you are going, because
MN	Yes, this way you'd be going backwards.
MMN	Because if you're going backwards you don't know where you're going, you don't see what's happening. Yah, but it depends on the ...
MN	And could you carry these heavy mortars and things across obstacles like this or was this just for small weapons
MMN	Yah, for small, small kind of things but mortars were ... you know the dinghies that we used? This stuff looking like a tractor wheel with tube with a base that you sat in and tried to row across the Zambezi. You have your equipment like mortar barrels and base. You then would need to use a dinghy for crossing, for carrying, but once you crossed you could then have one man carrying one component and another carrying... you need, like I said, five men. Some ... one man carrying the barrel another carrying the bipods, that's the front, the legs, the bipod, another man carrying the base, and then you have someone carrying some of the shells. That of course the third one being the commander carrying accessories like binoculars and so forth. Once you get to your point and start assembling this in readiness for ... for combat



Speaker	Dialogue
MN	OK and then this one, what this guy is explaining here[3A-23-08]
MMN	You know, I wish we could identify this one. I don't know why ... I keep thinking this guy looks like George Moyo. I don't know, but George was a commissar, and
MN	He wouldn't have been doing this type of instruction
MMN	No, it's something technical ...
MN	And this uniform ... you said it's something different. This uniform ...
MMN	The jacket looks German, but the belt is broad ... looks like a Soviet kind of belt. The trouser I can't tell but... again it looks like the Cuban ... this guy looks like George Moyo. Do you know what, there's a guy called Pilate, Pilate Ndebele ... he's an MDC fellow. You may want to show him this picture and say "Do you know this person?"
MN	OK He might be able to identify
MMN	Be able to identify because it's important also that in the pictures you put names.
MN	Exactly, exactly. If we can recognize anybody the better, but in this situation now, they're sitting there with their AKs...why would this guy be standing up. Is he a lookout or something for security or it's just answering a question or something.
MMN	It is possible, yes, that he's interacting with the instructor and perhaps he was asked and perhaps it's further explanation and I'm trying to look at him and say ... he doesn't have his weapon, unless if he put it down, which would
MN	Yah, weren't supposed to do
MMN	Yes
MN	But now these guys had different hats from other ones we've seen, these ... or is it just because we're looking from behind.
MMN	From behind
MN	These look like berets more, so there was no standard uniform really, they were a mixture.
MMN	Yah, yah ... in most cases it was a mixture but, because especially with the operations, guys came in and their clothes were torn in no time, and they ... you wore what you could lay your hands on, and though the civilian clothes were used when people kind of wanted to get into civilian areas without being noticed, but when it comes to operations there was no way that you'd then go in wearing a light shirt something white that you could see [inaudible] and so, but with again these are the same things that people were withdrawn from the front for one thing or another for going to collect ammunitions or weapons from the Liberation Centre ...they would probably be stationed at a refugee camp and they bring in their own



Speaker	Dialogue
	uniforms and when they leave they are also given new uniforms and leave that uniform, so somebody would take a shirt, the other take a trouser, a pair of boots, a cap and so forth. This is how the situation eventually went to training camps to say you have a new group of recruits already wearing some kind of military fatigue, but different, all shades [inaudible]
MN	Oh, but this one, they're learning about some kind of weapon, it seems, is it?
MNN	It would look like
MN	But some of these recruits, the trainees, some of them were illiterate, wasn't it?
MMN	The trainers?
MN	No, the trainees
MMN	Yes, completely illiterate
MN	But yet you could use a blackboard with drawings and writing like this. Did they understand
MMN	For the majority of the people yes, people understood, but you know we had people, as illiterate as somebody who could not distinguish between left and right ... I remember this guy ... the Cubans would say "uno, dos" .. this is "one, two" ... the guy had a problem synchronising when I say "one", you move your left foot, two, your right foot and "frente" forward march ... that guy just couldn't get it. I had to go down to Ndebele to help him. He was in my unit even though I was also part of the training ... I had not undergone training. It did not matter how I tried to explain to him – when you said left then he would move his left and then the second time his left leg instead of being simple to say... once you move you left leg automatically the next leg to move would be the right one, but he'd move his left leg twice and say "what's your problem?" I'm not sure that the level of co-ordination in some of these people that ... you know they had not grown up in educational institutions but also being totally unable to read, unable to write, but you'd be amazed that a number of them, Mary, who were illiterate, they made good soldiers ... in combat. And I did not understand, understand that how does he then calculate in terms of locating the enemy where they are located, also firing at him and position himself in a position in a way that he'll be able to fire and kill his enemy
MN	But they had a sense ... the same as shooting an elephant I suppose
MMN	Yah, and some of your guys, like me for instance who would understand things easily became the worst soldiers when they literally fled... because in a way they understood the danger that ...
MN	They understood too much
MMN	Yah, too much to be able to fight. That's the kind of sense I made.



Speaker	Dialogue
MN	This last one [4A-18-21] Is this just for show?
MMN	I think so
MN	Yah, it was a demonstration or something
MMN	Yah, because if you notice, now all of them are carrying AK rifles, including this ... that one, that one would be security, but also you can even argue that no, this is some kind of training ... you look at the uniform it's almost the same, except for the guy, but you are saying ... there's someone there ...yes there's someone there [mostly obscured in the buses] and you are saying it can only be either a demonstration or some kind of training. I'm trying to understand this ... this would be a protection unit for the ZGU as you fire you need a protection unit and perhaps this is what the instructor's trying to explain, to say the direction you are expecting to get an attack though ordinarily this would not be the formation that you would use
MN	You wouldn't lie in a line like this, this is a practice more.
MMN	Yes, more of a practice, in fact simulation of an actual position
MN	Okay, we've looked at all those photographs ...anything else that ...I know you have many experiences to to tell us but if we come back and focus on the training issue, anything else you think that is important about the training?
MMN	Yah, I think the... the infusion of a collective spirit, you know, trying to minimize the importance of individuality and transform people into just the elements within a collective ... my sense was that this training was ... without discussing the concepts really with anyone ... my own understanding of what went on was that the whole objective was that if you have to succeed with ...I mean in a war situation where you create unity and cohesion in a military unit, you really must minimize the the importance of the individual concerned than for their own welfare, their lives as individuals and give themselves over to the interests of the group. So clearly the group became more important than the individual. But also you are looking at ...
MN	And do you think that was successful... that ZPRA succeeded?
MMN	It was; to a large extent ZPRA succeeded in developing some selflessness in individuals, to say I'm serving a group interest after all the ultimate is the freedom of our people it's that we want to liberate ... I think this spirit was there, it was just cutting across the whole thing. But also, the effectiveness of ZPRA's training in my view was the success in operational areas as a result of the thorough training, because training was really thorough... I mean whether we're talking of physical training in terms of producing someone who's tough who'll be able to withstand the long distances, you know, here associated with crossing a river infested with crocodiles, and all these, you know, even surviving attacks where you fall into, you walk into an ambush, and the way people attack targets, whether they are mobile



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>targets or they are stationery targets, you know the spirit that you saw being inculcated at training was very close to the spirit that you saw in the front line ... with a few exceptions of course with people that would desert, like some people who we trained with and eventually they found jobs something to do with people they were closely connected to some high ranking party leadership they never went at all, but we were aware of this but I think people were rather more concerned with the effectiveness of ZPRA in terms of the carrying out missions as assigned by the army command and so it is the degree of precision in terms of executing these tasks compared to the purpose of the command to say to what extent would you fulfil that ... to a large extent we were able to do that, as a result of the kind of training programmes that we went through. And finally the periods that we went through ... you know we took to train and qualify maybe there were people who failed but I'm saying when you went for pass-out parade, and you are actually said to have graduated, you can now go into operations ... you know this was the reward at the end of the arduous training...that eventually you'd be deployed as a trained personnel and becoming a trained personnel amongst your colleagues, you know you get acceptance within the trained, the operating ranks, but you also are superior to those that have... are not yet trained and you serve a kind of an inspiration to those who would want to emulate you and say "I also want to go for training like so-and-so". So much that even the losses that we suffered in the ... in the operational area, or even in the rear, they did not create you know a sense of despair in our people, to say that we are defeated. I think the resilience regardless of what we went through came about as a result of the kind of training that we had exposed ... we underwent and ... look, I did not receive a training anywhere else, but I can compare with what I saw in Egypt for instance where I was doing actually commando training together with some Arab fellows, guys from the PLO, yah, guys from Sudan. I remember this guy from Sudan who kept saying each time we were hungry, there was an aeroplane that was overflying our base and he was saying "Bukara Sudan" ... bukara means "tomorrow" in Arabic. So he was saying "Oh, I'll go to Sudan tomorrow". He must have been kind of an illiterate fellow, but you know he looked at that aeroplane with such awe that you can see that his hopes are that "I'll go back home". I couldn't understand if he was sent by his government to come and do specialized training why maybe he was so unhappy to be there</p>
MN	Was it government or was it SPLA?
MMN	<p>No no it was ... he was Arabic ... I'm sure he was government ... they were government soldiers coming in to do some kind of specialization. But you are then ... you are able to compare yourselves with other armies like the Egyptian army for instance where you felt look your basic training was more superior than some of these fellows were getting from an established army like the army of the state of Egypt . You really felt someone proud to be ZPRA and we had a party mandate to</p>



Speaker	Dialogue
	<p>say represent us, you are our ambassadors, represent us and you have this urge to do well, even to succeed and you find ... in fact I've got some pictures that I want to bring to you also I think I'll check through my [inaudible] and that book that I'm saying must have come from the information department because at some point I was also doubling as a commissar to say that one will ... can finally appreciate the kind of training that the Cubans gave them to say we survived through very difficult times because of the kind of training. Of course it could also be by sheer luck that you did not fall in line with the enemy fire, but your training had a large role to play in the way that you conducted yourself, the kind of discipline ... not discipline kind of fearing but discipline in terms of adhering to the principles of warfare... to say that even drinking beer you are not going to go to the villages and drink yourself to rubbish. You are disciplined enough to say I'm going to stay out of ... though some of our colleagues took to drugs because perhaps they were too scared, took to beer, they'd drink and probably desert the unit, you'd go literally look for them in villages.</p> <p>Like there's a guy... he had a Shona name. I'll tell you this guy was one such guy who was such a good fighter because I found him in the front but this man, somewhere in Mashonaland West where we a lot of us were even if those people were coming down, to Matabeleland, you know, up to Matabeleland South through Mashonaland, Mashonaland so that was the most important area for us, but Rangarirai, yes he was called Rangarirai... Rangarirai fell in love with these girls. I wouldn't call it love really but he had been accepted by this family and so he literally stayed in that homestead as a... as a <i>mkwenyana</i> – son-in-law - and the beautiful girls – little did he know that this home was a ... you know the Muzorewa soldiers called <i>dzakudzaku</i>... had been designated a catchment area for terrorists and so on one ... one fateful day the mother, his mother-in-law, wrote a letter saying that Rangarirai is around, please come ... and gave it to her grandchild to pass on to Muzorewa's forces. That letter was [inaudible] intercepted by some of us and they carried that letter to him and said read this letter. He read it, and asked his mother-in-law "Are you... did you write this letter?" Because people were now there and she said "Yes, I wrote it". Now, how could you?" she just said "I was instructed to organize your capture". She admitted it. I'm not sure if any body has ever given you such details Mary, but that woman was butchered literally with bayonets, by Rangarirai himself...killed those two women, one of whom was his girlfriend, killed them</p>
MN	But this would have been his own hot-tempered reaction, not something that was authorized
MMN	No it wasn't authorised ... his own
MN	Would it have been authorized?



Speaker	Dialogue
MMN	I don't think so... this kind of murder, I don't think so. I don't think such execution would have been authorized by ... because we were clearly on missions to kill armed people who were fighting against us and these others that had to do with ... coming out of relationships .. they would not have ... In fact, he would have been sent back to Zambia for punishment. But perhaps because of the nature of the offence other people decided just leave it. But some of the horrific sides to the war where you say... ok they would have connived with the enemy force, but you are the one who put yourself in that position to be sold out, to be betrayed and so you are not quite sure ... at least for something that you can easily go to Mashonaland West and say I was part of the unit that killed that woman in that village and burnt down the homestead. That is something else that you have to do.
MN	Ok have we finished now?
MMN	Yah
MN	Okay, thanks so much

