- J.F. ... and if there's anything you want to say that you want to turn the tape off and say anything, then just tell me, O.K. the way I've been starting is just to say to people where were you born and when, and then just a bit about what kind of area in terms of politics and the race make-up and the race relations, so can you tell me where you were born and when?
- M.G. So this is just me alone speaking?
- J.F. Ja, at this point it's just you and me (007) (You're very faint) why don't you tell me your name first.
- M.G. I'm Masterpiece Gumede.
- J.F. How do you spell that just p i like that 0.K. Gumede was that the name your parents gave you, or is it a name you came to have later?
- M.G. No, this is my nomer degere (011) I was born in Durban in 1952.
- J.F. What kind of area was it that you were born what part of Durban was it?
- M.G. Well, I was born in the hospital in town in town we were living in the ghetto of Durban which was known as Mkumbane.
- J.F. What's it called?
- M.G. It was known as Mukumbane. This is the place where the equivalent of Sofiatown in Johannesburg, so people had to be moved from Mukumbane it was demolished, and people from that place were taken to Kwamashu, some toUMlazi, but mainly to Kwamashu.
- J.F. How old were you when you were removed?
- M.G. Nearly ten.
- J.F. So in your early childhood did you grow up with people of all different races?
- M.G. Oh, no, it wasn't Sofiatown in terms of racial make-up it was purely African it was only Africans, but I mean it was Sofiatown in the sense of being just a sprawling a large sprawling slum, you know, but not Sofiatown in the sense of racial make-up.
- J.F. And what did your parents do did they both work?
- M.G. Ja, my mother was a domestic worker domestic servant, and my father had a small business.
- J.F. And did you ever get to the place where your mother worked or ....
- M.G. Yes.
- J.F. You did?
- M.G. Ja.
- J.F. Did she because she stayed in the township?

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M.G. She stayed with us, yes, every day.

- J.F. So would she bring you sometimes or how did that ....
- M.G. Ja, she'd take me there sometimes, ja, and my father would take we would all go there sometimes. She worked for an old lady.
- J.F. So when you were quite young what kind of experience did you have of other race groups was it just that old white lady that you had contact with, or did you have any contact with other whites?
- M.G. Oh, no contact with white people. We saw them in town saw them in town when we went to town, and when we went to the circus could see them there I mean the whites were sitting on the other side blacks were seated on the other side. And then, of course, my mother's employers, but no close contact when I was young.
- J.F. And your father's work was what?
- M.G. Well, he had a driving school.
- J.F. Also in that area?
- M.G. He operated in town but it was Africans. All his students were Africans.
- J.F. Now when you were quite young what was your way that you conceived of the whites who employed your mother were they exploiters were they just people you knew nothing about did you have a sense of any negative feelings about whites because of your mother's being a domestic, or was it just something...
- M.G. No, I didn't form at that early age I didn't form any, you know, coherent and firm attitude about white people. I didn't form any firm ideas about white people, but around the '60's I mean there were times when the times when the A.N.C. was very active, and we could see the volunteers in our areas I mean with this (these 047) beret (?) and the thumbs up sign, and they were burning schools at that time and our school was burned also.

So at least we would have this - we knew that something was wrong, but I could never identify it immediately with whites, but we knew that maybe something to do with this country or the running of the country was wrong, because we also participated in the burnings of the schools - I mean we looted the offices of the principal and so on, but we were children.

We really understood nothing I mean in terms of white society and blacks in the ghettos.

- J.F. So what year would that have been the burning of the schools?
- M.G. Yes it must have been because I must have been doing sub Standard B must have been 1960 or so or '61 '60 or '61.
- J.F. At the time of the banning of (..........056)
- M.G. Well, I well, that I knew later that I knew later, but we knew we just knew that volunteers were going from place to place burning schools and so on, and they went to Chesterville which was next the township the township which was next to -

SAMA

- M.G. ... just adjacent to Mukumbane. They were burning there, too, and they came to our school and the principal's office was burned, and we came in there and looted milk and bread which was stored there.
  - J.F. And the volunteers were who, exactly?
  - M.G. Well, we knew them as volunteers, but now I would say these were A.N.C. volunteers because they were volunteers during the defiance campaign in 1952. They were called volunteers, so with these people who were walking around singing freedom songs in the slum in that slum area we also called them volunteers but now, talking as a media person of the A.N.C., I mean I can't be firm and say these were A.N.C. volunteers of which started in 1952.

But we call them volunteers. They were known in the area as volunteers.

- J.F. And was your family a political family?
- M.G. It wasn't a political family.
- J.F. So how did they feel about the volunteers and the burning of the schools your own parents?
- M.G. I don't remember I don't remember what my father said he's they are not very political but they're not political in the sense of really taking up political struggle, but they have the usual black people's grievances against the system, against soci(ety) the system, against the regime.

I think they are liberals, you know, and they just - they are prepared to make bread and criticise the regime, you know, without risking banning and detention in taking part in active struggle.

- J.F. And what was your own motivation for the burning I'm just interested because people in the West have this concept this picture of people burning down what we build for them kind of thing, but what would have been your feeling why would you have been doing that the burning of schools what why do you think you joined in with that?
  - M.G. Well, we joined in the looting well, we only looted the bread and the milk.
  - J.F. So it wasn't really it was just something happening that you remember?
  - M.G. It was yes, it wasn't my I can't really give, you know explain clearly my motivation and so on at that age. Really I it must have been something spontaneous must have been largely spontaneous.
  - J.F. So maybe I should let you define for me what really was what were the factors that led you to be political can you tell me yourself....
  - M.G. Later ....
  - J.F. Ja, but just take it from the '60's through if there's nothing to mention then don't, but I'm just interested through school,

- J.F. .... through high school, what were the motivations, and again my focus being the non racialism if you can remember things about ideas about race and ideas about class as well, but what were those ideas about your understanding of your political situation as you grew older?
  - M.G. I see ja, well well, if we have to focus on non racialism it would be a bit difficult because I'm also one of those people who went through B.C., so non racialism came much, much later to my thinking, so my political development did, before I left the country, embrace some ideas of non racialism, but that was much later.

In fact, it was the same year that I left the country, so most of the time, ever since I started being, so to say, political or politically involved, I was in the B.C. movement.

- J.F. So tell me how you got to be political I don't\*mean to say some people didn't get the non racialism specifically (102) but what made you political what was the evolution? \*need
- M.G. Right well, like many other people it happened at school I mean.
  Well, I've seen I mean I've heard people say they've witnessed the oppression of this or the exploitation of that or the suffering of that I also noticed, but I mean this is not something that made me feel that I have to stand up and be counted or do something about it.

It came gradually. It was - for instance, '71 I was doing Form Five at high school, and then there was - there were the celebrations of the Republic. I think it was ten years. Ten years of the South African Republic, and some students there they must have had older brothers who were at university and they had SASO ideas, and some political id(eas) -

Maybe some children came from political families, but suddenly there was this meeting in our school I mean of the Form Fives, and we took a decision that we have nothing to do with the celebrations. They supposed to be at the stadium - at the stadium and everybody was supposed to be there, and I think cattle were to be slaughtered and there were refreshments served, and we decided to boycott and it wasn't because we were not in any organisation - youth organisation or students organisation.

It was not well planned and it wasn't organised. It was only the Form Fives who decided and it's the Form Fives who stayed away, as far as I'm aware, but I mean that started us thinking I mean, but then, even in '71 we started receiving some SASO newsletters, and there were some students from the medical school in Durban who were teaching some of us mathematics and other things during week-ends, you know.

People like Keith Muqapi in Maputo who is with the A.N.C. now. I mean these were people who started politicising quite a num(ber) because this, I think, compared to - in comparison with the kind of activity and militancy of the youth and students today, we were quite passive at that time, and our school was party (partly \$\frac{1}{3}1\$) I think it was the only major high school in Kwamashu and - but I think by today's standards it was politically dormant, you know, very passive, so I'm sure this means that ....

M.G. ... the medical school decided that they had to come down to the high schools and so on. You know B.C.M. was - I mean B.C. was mainly in the universities, and I'm sure they were also bothered by that fact, and they wanted to spread their tentacles to the high schools and the higher primary students and pupils.

So we got some ideas, but this was only the last year before one went to university, you see, and that's as much as I can say at high school.

No organisation - one didn't belong to any high school based political organisation.

- J.F. And during that time was there no INCATA around you must have been in high school in the mid to late '70's.
- M.G. It was yes, it was Gasha had just accepted had just accepted serving in the homelands system, and it was the time that everybody was mad about I mean mad is not the word. Everybody was impressed, I mean was taken up everybody thought Gasha was the main was the great thing great new thing that was happening on the South African political scene.
- J.F. When you say everybody you mean Zulu people in the Durban area?
- M.G. Well, no, I don't mean Zulus in Durban. I mean the political circles. I mean people who were interested in change thought that a new man had come on the scene, and he had this long, very strong speech he made on acceptance of his serving in the bantustan, and he said that the regime had said they are aware that accepting him as the head of Kwazulu, it means he's a calculated risk he's a calculated risk, and no, he's a risk he's not predictable he might turn out to be subversive and so on and so forth.

And he was going on on that and he was criticising, and people impres(sed) - people thought he was really going to be against the homeland system and against the regime - he was just accepting this as a platform.

Well, we, at that time, we were not - we were politically naive - we were young - we didn't know anything about that - about Gacha, but we just felt, Oh, there's a new Messiah - I mean, Oh, there's a new person around.

It was only when we came to university campus, and we understood people - the role that's played by people within the homeland system, and why previously gays had stayed away and fought to the bitter end the whole system of bantustans. It was then that we discovered that Gacha was not only a member of the homeland system - he was the most dangerous because he was - here he was articulating, wearing this mantle of being an anti apartheid campaigner, or being an opponent of racist regime and so on.

And in other words he was, in short, lending credibility, more than the others who were outright sell-outs - I mean who were outright rejects. He was lending credibility to the whole system of bantustans.



- J.F. Let me ask you do you think there was a factor in your accepting of him before the criticism came later, in the fact that he was Zulu had you grown up in any way that the fact that he was a strong Zulu guy meant something to you or was it just that he was black?
  - M.G. No, I don't at well that's a very interesting question, but I don't remember, myself, embracing anybody because of his tribal affiliation. I'm not trying to be a saint but to be honest to myself, I don't remember any stage in my growing up politically when I preferred one person over another simply because he was of my tribe.

I'm - I have a Zulu upbringing, but although I - I have a lot of contact with people - I had, even from childhood, a lot of contact with people from Johannesburg, other provinces, which sort of broadened - my family's had so much tentacles.

In fact the - ja, in short I can say I've never felt that somebody is preferable simply because he is Zulu and the other person is not preferable simply because he's non Zulu. I don't remember any stage in my life.

- J.F. But both your mother and father were Zulu speaking?
- M.G. My mother definitely is Zulu I'm not so sure about my father, but my mother is definitely Zulu.
- J.F. What do you mean you're not so sure you mean his background?
- M.G. No, his Surname, I think you see, it's I've we have tried to find out but it's I it's not comfortably Zulu, ja.
- J.F. But if you're in Natal don't you tend to only come mix with Zulu speaking people.
- M.G. The what?
- J.F. Growing up in Natal, don't most people tend to only mix ....
- M.G. Not not they tend. Everybody is Zulu. I am completely Zulu, but culturally I'm Zulu I'm just thoroughly to the bone, because you this is the language you learn at school and everybody is Zulu. In fact, you can come from anywhere else, but if you grow up there you are as good as Zulu.
- J.F. But that didn't make you have any prejudices against someone who might come from the Eastern Cape or from the Northern Transvaal?
- M.G. No, in fact that we I we never met them as a group as a when I was growing up. This that kind of problem was we confronted that kind of problem at university, where you could have an SRC, and you find other people who were quite very traditional very strong Zulu traditional traditionalists, and they would question not only tribalists but regionalists who people who would make you aware that, we are from Natal, we are from Durban, these they are from you know, that ....

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M.G. ... kind of thing, so that kind of problem we confronted it much later. I came across it much later. It was at university, when there were quarrels between people in - from Natal and people from Johannesburg or the Transvaal, about the leadership in the - of the school, you know, SRC's and so on.

That kind of thing - it's only then that con - that I realised that there could be such demarcation lines, but growing up we just - people in Durban just know people from Transvaal because they come during December holidays as visitors.

That's when you see TJ number plates, TS and so on. Then we just know these people are coming for a holiday here - they're coming to the sea.

- M.G. Of course definitely.
- J.F. And maybe you should continue with your politicisation, or was that a politicising experience did it make....
- M.G. It was I mean we started talking about it I mean it was in the I think it was in the Natal Mercury his long speech was in the Natal Mercury and paper circulated at school then, it's Oh, I mean there is this man, Gatha, but we didn't know him but we were just pleased I mean there is a man who says he's going to fight the regime.

I mean there was all this big excitement, but I think there must have been someone in The World, I think, because they started - newspapers like The World/started having articles - there's someone (244) interviewing different people - they said: What do you think of Gasha, because it's clear the English press - the English newspapers were just I mean more than impressed with him, and they gave him favourable coverage, you know.

And then The World started these interviews and then somebody - I remember reading that and somebody said: "Oh, yes, we were together with him in - at Fort Hare. But one thing that I can say about Gasha is that he's highly unpredictable. He's one thing today and he's the next thing the following day, he's a other thing the following day," so I mean -

But I mean we were - at high school because of that - I mean that - in that period we were quite naive. We were just pleased to accept, to say, Oh, there's somebody who has come on the scene and was the talk of the town - he was the talk of the town.

- J.F. And where did you go to university?
- M.G. Ngoya, Zululand.
- J.F. When you came to Ngoya were you still at that point quite pleased with Gasha..

M.G. Of co(urse) - I mean when we came - ja, when we came we were immediately I mean we - we (were) immediately grabbed by SASO. There was no time to sit and think of Gasha again. Immediately I mean the very first things you heard were anti bantustans, anti Gasha, anti this and that, and there was no time I mean really to be impressed with bantustan leaders, although I think I remember '72 seeing photographs of some quite political students the previous year - I think it was '71 - wearing, you know, Zulu traditional clothes for women, and when I asked what was happening they said: Oh, it was the day that the students welcomed Gasha on campus, and I think he had come with Helen Susman to visit the campus.

And the students by then who were quite progressive and militant - I mean there they were, I mean wearibg traditional clothes, dresses and so on, and welcoming Gatha on campus.

- J.F. But were they SASO?
- M.G. Well, the(y) most of them had some of them had become SASO by '72/'73, but '71 they were there, but you must know that even SASO had this period of growing because it was still, I think, after formation I think it was formed '68 but mainly started being active, you know, '70 something (288) started becoming a cohesive force in campuses.
- J.F. So when did you get or what year did you enter the university?
- M.G. 172.
- J.F. 172 and when you say that you were grabbed by SASO, did you respond quite well....
- M.G. Ja, ja, we we had taken up I mean that's all my university days I was SASO.
- J.F. What do you think made you to accept it right away so positively what was it about the line that you liked the best that appealed to you, do you think?
- M.G. Well, it was it I mean it articulated things which I couldn't give words to I mean they they pointed out I mean that we were oppressed as blacks, there was white society there which was affluent, we were oppressed I mean it's you know SASO politics it's just it was a question of colour.

It showed us that we suffer because we are black, and whites are privileged in South Africa because they are white. There is no other reason. The privilege that is given to white people here is because this regime is a regime which is for whites, and we are blacks and we are the ones who are discriminated against, so we just form - I mean we - well, question of we just form - we are just manual workers and this and that and that, but you know that class, I mean in SASO, in B.C., came much later and it wasn't well developed.

The ideas of class were not as developed as in the liberation movement, you know - in the A.N.C.

J.F. And who were some of the people - were there any of the well known leaders who were....

- M.G. At the campus.
  - J.F. .... at the campus.
  - M.G. At the campus we only had Tule Kacheze Mtule Sheze who was (319) killed, I think some time '73 he was pushed onto a railway. That's the man who was leading there, and somebody was I don't know whether he was in black community programmes in Durban Divane Made I don't know whether you met him in Durban, or maybe he has drifted away from politics.

It was Lutule (Mutule 326), it was Vivane, and somebody who had just been there and moved out was Herman Buthelezi, and the present leader of the A.N.C. youth - what's his name - junior man - Walid Nklab.

- J.F. What's this?
- M.G. Walid Nklab or Junior Nklab the one who is the head of the youth in the A.N.C. today.
- J.F. Wellingt ...
- M.G. Welele.
- J.F. Welele.
- M.G. Nklapu.
- J.F. Klapo?
- M.G. Ja.
- J.F. And what were you studying what were you studying at university?
- M.G. Laugh.
- J.F. Did you have much time to study?
- M.G. Ha, well, we didn't have much time to study, but I was doing economics.
- M.G. Yes, I know I know I know some people come into the struggle because they are workers, you know, and they see the exploitation they feel the exploitation at the factory place. This is not my experience. I don't have that experience.

I only got into politics through the student movement at university, you know. I know it's not the safest way to come into a struggle, and maybe not the ideal way, but this is the only way I came to the struggle.

J.F. So was it a question of doing a lot of reading - were there any particular things you've read, or was it just the discussions with the other SASO people?

- M.G. Ye it was practice and theory I it was the racism I mean the racism and the attitude of the professors we saw in class, and the shabby way in which the administration treated us as students and as in our SRC, as well as the SASO literature and the books we read that were made available to us.
  - I mean you don't have to to read much to realise that these books are actually talking telling you the truth or telling you....
- J.F. Which books would you be saying was there any one that was really influential, or any couple you could mention?
  - M.G. Well, for instance, there was in the library even in the library there was Independent Africa, which had speeches from the dock (374) the address of Cde. Nelson Mandela from the dock. I don't know whether it has (.....377) I'm Prepared to Die, or it's another one, but it has Nelson Mandela's speech, it has (......) (379) speech it's called Independent Africa.
  - J.F. Who's it by?
  - M.G. It's it's a compilation it's I think it's taking (383) a greenish cover.

## END OF SIDE ONE.

- J.F. ... black teachers would this be you\*see, having whites at Ngoya was that one of your first daily contacts with whites? \*say.
- M.G. Yes, yes.
- J.F. And what did you did people tell you before you went these whites are useless or had you did you think what could this be what was your attitude when you saw whites for the first time every day in class?
- M.G. Mmmm ja, well, we met we met in an academic atmosphere, and we immediately just thought these are our teachers, you know. We just take it well, I mean he's not here he's not a policeman or he's not a white policeman he's here to teach me.

But already I mean for instance, in commerce, in B. Comm and BSC there were always these stories that, Ah, man, the boers don't want people to qualify in economics and science - they rather all of us did arts - you're all right doing anthropology or - or just studying religious - I mean you just studying all these other subjects, but they didn't want - I mean they - these were things that were said by students, that the boers don't want you to have B. Comm and BSC - can do B.A. - it's all right.

But then I mean we went in there and the main thing - one thing that struck us is that they were Afrikaaners. They were not

- M.G. ... English speaking. I think we had the only English lecturer that I ever had was somebody who came very late in auditing in auditing, but all of them were Afrikaaners and they had problems with the language and they didn't care I mean they spoke English anyhow they didn't care a bit whether you understood what they were saying or not.
  - J.F. Really?
  - M.G. Ja, so but I mean it ja, there were antagonisms, I mean there were always clashes, but they managed to control everything. There were clashes but not something that oth(er) in other in other departments, for instance, in social work, I remember there were very big problems with one professor I think it was called Professor Higgins or something, but there were very big problems with him.

I don't know what the students were - what they were saying.

I think in - also in public administration and political science - I think they had very right wing professors who said - who really said racist - who passed racist remarks in class against the students.

But in my case we only - we had one in economics, ja - we only had one in economics who also had big problems with the students, but...

- J.F. Were there any who were any good .....
- M.G. Good.
- J.F. I mean who you felt were decent people or were they all did they all treat you....
- M.G. No, I think there (they 433) were ja, some were rather neutral, I mean you couldn't say they were good but they were just interested in teaching you, and if you did your work they didn't give you low marks for it they gave you good marks, but if you really didn't work hard I mean you got poor results.
- J.F. And were all the teachers white?
- M.G. In our yes, in our faculty they were all white.
- J.F. Of economics?
- M.G. Economics, Business economics, and all those subjects.
- J.F. So then just tell me on a political level what happened to you at university was it....
- M.G. Yes, '72, the very first year was was the year of boycotts of student boycotts boycotts of classes because of that speech of Abraham Tiro at Turfloop so there were strikes on campus, and there were this was a national issue.
- J.F. Just describe it, O.K. I shouldn't actually say you should tell me what did it mean, the Tito.
- M.G. To me?

- J.F. Ye what was the Tiro issue how did you perceive it and what was it what did it mean to you?
- M.G. Ja well Abraham Tiro at Turfloop University made a very strong political speech on behalf of students, I think, against the university administration, against the whole regime in South Africa, and against bantu education against a lot of things, and I think the authorities they expelled him or threatened to expel him, and then the all the other/campuses decided to go on strike in sympathy with Turfloop but I think=

  Turfloop campus started first and then the other campuses decided to go on strike to boycott classes until such time that Tiro was reinstated.

  /black

But I think the strike - the boycott lasted a week or so and then it collapsed - lasted a week or so. But the very same year also Ngoye had been - we were also involved in another (457) campaign.

They wanted - the certificates that were granted at that time were small pieces of paper - just small pieces of paper, you know, to whom it may concern, and this was the certificate after completion, and the students decided to demand a normal certificate which was in conformity with the other campuses - just a decent ce tificate, and the university administration refused to grant - to change the format of this certificate.

- J.F. You mean the other black campuses had proper ones also?
- M.G. I don't know about the black ones, but I'm just ...
- J.F. The white ones?
- M.G. Yes, the white ones, yes just a normal certificate something you can hang on the wall. Not the (that 466) piece of paper, to whom it may concern.

So because the administration refused to yield we went on strike on the university certificate issue, so - I mean this was '72. These were the issues that (......469) This was the first term.

Second term it was quiet, you know - it was towards exams, and so second term it was quiet, and - I don't know whether I should just continue.

- J.F. Ja, no...
- M.G. '73 then there was the shooting of the miners at Carltonville, and it became a very big thing on the campus, and the or I it's just that I don't remember the exact date, but I remember when I had gone back home there were the strikes, you know....
- J.F. The Durban strikes (476)
- M.G. Yes, the in Kwamashu where I was staying there was I remember the crowd that I joined it was municipal workers you know, those that work in the offices the cleaners and so on the people in overalls. So they were marching from one place to another, so we joined them when they went to another depot to mobilise to get the workers to join the strike, ....



M.G. ... but I mean we - perhaps now I would join with much more thinking and much more conscious. At that time we didn't - I didn't take the struggle of workers that seriously - I mean I didn't realise how much of a force in society the working class is.

We just saw people who I mean (486) Oh, they're just exploited as workers and I mean, Oh, they get - they're trying to get higher wages - Oh, fine - that's fine, and they're singing and running in the streets, and we join because I mean it's struggle, but I mean one would never think of perhaps joining the trade unions and so on.

In '73 there was these miner's strikes and the miner - the miner - the shootings at Carltonville, and I think some leaders - and there were the bannings, I think, of NUSAS and SASO personnel and so on.

And all the time one was a member of SASO at that school, and school politics was consuming. '74 we were - I was suspended - we were suspended with quite a number of students.

- J.F. For doing what?
- M.G. Well, for being active on the campus but funny enough I was accepted the following year. I applied and I was accepted the following year 175.
- J.F. So you went back?
- M.G. I went back '75, and '76 I was there, but then there was June 16.

  June 16 in Soweto, and then the whole campus was affected. We the administration was burned down and some lec(turers) some ye, not a lecturer but some library staff member was nearly
  killed.

In fact there was a - uprising also on the campus of Zululand.

- J.F. Was it right in June or was it .....
- M.G. It was June 18 I think it was a day after we held a meeting on the 17 and the following day campus was in flames.
- J.F. How did you hear about June 16th just through the papers or did you have direct reports?
- M.G. It was the radio we had radio and it kept on saying I mean two it said two whites have died and nineteen blacks up to now it's 19 blacks, and then later on it would the next report would say: Now the number of dead has risen to 23, you know.

And everybody was glued to the radio, and the following day, I think, Thursday, there was that picture of Hector Peterson and that student carrying him running in the street, and that girl next to him, and it was put on the bulle(tin) - on the bulletin board next to the SRC offices so everybody could see it, and ....

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M.G.

... there were long reports from Natal Mercury, Daily News and all the - Rand Daily Mail and plugged there (517) and people were just flocking around the bulletin board.

And that same evening there was a mass meeting and students decided to take action.

J.F. And so were you part of that - taking the action?

M.G. Yes.

J.F. So do you want to continue - then what did that lead to?

M.G. Well, this is as far as - that was the end of my university days.

J.F. Were you detained or kicked out or left or ....

M.G. We left the campus - I mean it was burned down, and then the police came and students (524) were chucked out. We left. We went to our homes - and - that was the end of Ngoy for 176, and that was the end of my schooling.

But then I moved to Johannesburg, because they were rounding up people from their homes one by one - univers(ity) - Ngoy students. So we just felt maybe we could escape the police net by moving elsewhere.

We moved to Jo'burg but I mean we got involved in B.C.M. work there - started working there, doing - taking care of business in Johannesburg, and we landed in jail in September - September under general law amendments act for questioning, which they convert to Section Six after 14 days.

Then at that time I wasn't tortured, but we were just threatened with death and given lots of threats. Mmmm, people like Captain Cronwright who was in charge there at John Vorster Square.

I mean I remember him - he even said: You people call us Nazis - we are Nazis - you call us Nazi s - yes, we - let me tell you, we are Nazis. So - and there was Captain Delima, who was said to be coming from Mozambique - was ex DGS or something, and he's the one also who was threatening us - I mean he's very cool and very sophisticated - always carries this revolver which he pretends to be cleaning whilst talking to you.

And then we were released. I was released after two weeks. Then I remained in Johannesburg for some time - went to Durban. When I came back to Johannesburg I was arrested again. This was November, '76, and released around February '77 - so...

- J.F. And during the second time you were in detention for a longer period were you interrogated?
- M.G. I was tortured, yes the second time I was even tortured heavily interrogated.

- J.F. And did you get any sense from the police I'm just wondering about your B.C. views if they maybe just to go back and just look at where they were during this whole period you've detailed\*for me now, you had no contact with whites then there wouldn't have been any..... \*from now
  - M.G. No no close conne(ction) it's just the teachers.
  - J.F. But and there were some white students and this and that would you were you hostile to them would you have thought, Oh, there's no way they can do anything useful?
  - M.G. You see, I was a member in fact, at some stage I became an office bearer in SASO.
  - J.F. What office was that?
  - M.G. I was treasurer in the local branch, so the the view prevalent at that time in B,C. was that whites are part of the problem, you see, so we didn't welcome - we didn't welc(ome) -I remember even in some meetings white journalists were chased away from meetings - were not allowed.

They could allow black journalists but white journalists were not accepted, but funny - in '75 when we were involved with a campus publication, we were helped by students from the University of Witwatersrand - from Wits.

They are the ones who actually did the spadework and even financed the whole thing, to have just that issue of our publication.

- J.F. Which publication was that?
- M.G. It was Sinza it was called Sinzani it was just a campus publication.
- J.F. So how did you feel about that?
- M.G. Ja, I'm sure I must have thought they could be useful but really we had although we were not against I mean for instance we it was discussed in SASO that B.C. is a means to an end. It was discussed and elaborated that we are not calling for a society wherein whites should be driven into the sea, you see, but somehow when it came to struggle people excluded or we said we could have coalitions.

I remember they just discussions about coalitions or co-operation in certain campaigns but not in our organisations.

- Coming from Durban to Johannesburg did you have any trouble with the Sotho language or any difference with people there, or was that not an issue at all did you feel at all having spent your whole life in Durban did you feel at all a stranger in Johannesburg with other black people?
- M.G. Mmm, ja, I think Johannesburg tends to be bigger when you come from a place like Durban. It's bigger in the sense that I mean immediately even in town or around Park Station the kind of languages you hear people speaking, left and right, I mean ....

- M.G. Well, not much. It's not so difficult, but not much. I could say a few things, but not much.
- J.F. So did you have to learn it or did the people there speak Zulu to you?
- M.G. Yes, there are people who speak Zulu in Johannesburg, too.
- J.F. And when you went into the SASO offices and started getting involved in B.C. stuff or whatever, was there any ethnic factor at work.
- M.G. No, the thing is B.C. people tended to speak English tended to speak English, and then if he speaks Sotho it's just two or three sentences and then he can intersperse it with English. He speaks Sotho or he speaks Zulu I mean if he realises that you can't speak Sotho he'll speak to you im Zulu or in English.

People in Johannesburg tend to speak more languages, they are much more flexible. They can switch from Zulu to to other languages - other than people coming from places like Durban, Cape, Free State - they speak one language, but in Johannesburg people speak many languages, but the -

Then the other fact is that B.C. people tended to speak English because they came from universities.

- J.F. So what happened then you went back and you were....
- M.G. Yes, this was 177, ne and this is the year I left the country ja. Then I got employment after release I got employment in an educational establishment, which is where I came into close contact with white people.
- J.F. This is in Durban?
- M.G. In Johannesburg.
- J.F. In Jo'burg?
- M.G. Ja ..... and these were quite progressive white people. So my first encounter on a daily basis with white people was for me was quite a favourable one I mean it wasn't traumatic.
  I didn't meet racists, you know, hard corists I met people who were not only against racism but I mean we I met really progressive people.
- J.F. Was that a surprise to you given your B.C. background?
- M.G. Yes, it was a surprise to me but I mean ja, it was a big surprise.
- J.F. Where were you working?
- M.G. (Laugh) This is a real biography. This was Sached, , you know Sached?
- J.F. Uhuh, ja.

M.G. Ye, so the people I met at Sached were - were really progressive. The people I met that time - I don't know now - but you know the orientation of Sached is quite - quite rac - quite anti racism, progressive and so on and so forth.

Their orientation was quite progressive.

- J.F. And did that how did that make you feel just in terms of having believed in B.C. and did that in any way affect.....
- M.G. Ja, it ja, it made one rea revise it made one revise one's previous attitudes against white people, you know, towards white people, and when one could real(ise) for example, one person there was had been a member of the congress of democrats herself.
- J.F. Who was that?
- M.G. (Laugh) I don't think (Laugh) I think we....
- J.F. Just an older white person? (Luli Callinicos?)
- M.G. Yes, an older white person.
- J.F. And was that something you had read about it doesn't the names don't matter to me I'm just saying, somebody you worked with?
- M.G. Yes, somebody you worked with so....
- J.F. And had you known historically what that meant?
- M.G. Well, in the A.N.C. books I mean in some books that one had read, you know, detailing the history of the A.N.C. or African nationalism in South Africa one had come across the congress of democrats.
- J.F. So were you did it interest you to ask that person that.....
- M.G. Yes, I asked a lot and I learned a lot, also, from her, you see.

  And I mean the her attitude was really a surprise, because one tended to think that there are some white people who are progressive, but they tend to be either liberal or paternalistic, and here was a person who was just involved in her own right involved in the struggle to eliminate apartheid in South Africa, you know, who just talks as a fellow struggler, as a fellow revolutionary, you know, and who's not paternalistic.

She neither I mean looks down upon you or hero-worships you because you are a black revolutionary. I mean she just takes you as - for what you are - I mean you are involved - we are in this together, and this made one really relax - this one person with whom you could relax and even confide in, you know - could talk with her as an equal - as a partner, you know, and I mean it was an eye-opener.

- J.F. And and then you left that year?
- M.G. Yes, I left that year and joined the A.N.C. outside.
- J.F. During you mentioned once that in one of the books there was Mandela's speech had you been reading about A.N.C. all along ....



- J.F. .... what was B.C.'s view on A.N.C. just the fact that you could know what the was or that you had known stuff about the A.N.C.?
- M.G. Ja, I mean even from the early days at varsity we always knew we also listened to Radio Freedom, for instance. In Jo'burg one could listen to Lusaka Radio Freedom, Lusaka. In Durban I remember we we used to get A.N.C. and P.A.C. in Durban, in Dar-es-Salaam.

On campus, ja, there were groups listening to Radio Freedom, but I just forget which was the station we got - whether it was Lusaka or it was Dar-es-Salaam.

- J.F. And was that cool (681) that B.C. there wasn't any feeling of what are you doing....
- M.G. Hostility?
- J.F. Ja, that you....
- M.G. Oh, no, this was part of the struggle oh, this was part of the struggle.
- J.F. So to you B.C. was never anti A.N.C.?
- M.G. Never to me B.C. was never anti A.N.C.
- J.F. But would wouldn't you say there are some B.C. people who are anti A.N.C., or did you think that came later?
- M.G. Ye, that ye, just before I left just before I left there were discussions there were ja, there were trends that were beginning to emerge. One that was rather pro A.N.C. and one which wanted to have nothing to do with the A.N.C., but I think they the pro A.N.C. wing was becoming dominant.
- J.F. Why would did you ever know why some of the people would have been not wanting to have anything to do with the A.N.C. what....
- M.G. Oh, no, that came later (Laugh) that to me the understanding of why they are against A.N.C. came later. I can say it now with hindsight, but at that time it wasn't very clear.
- J.F. With hindsight why do you think it was that where would someone have gotten a virulently anti A.N.C. view?
- M.G. Well, one one would be the whole question of non racialism, which is still a big question, I mean even with these trade unions today. Two, there were some talk you know some talks that these movements were out of touch and they were just using the people at home because the people at home had the touch you know had were there daily, but these movements, P.A.C., A.N.C. were out, but these were the groups that were anti A.N.C.

I think this is what - it's non racialism and the fact that these movements maybe were trying to just to grab the people who were active at home for themselves.

J.F. So non racialism is a concept that you would talk about now but would - when do you think you first started actually thinking there is such a thing and that you would accept - would it be when you met this person or when you started having

- J.F. .... that contact with whites at Sached?
- M.G. Yes, the seeds were sown at that time the seeds were sown when I was there in Johannesburg working....
- J.F. But...
- M.G. And then it took a firm shape when I was in the A.M.C., where I could defend it where I could consciously say that I prefer this to that where I could embrace it, you know, with my whole adult thinking, you know, and say ja, non racialism is superior to this to black exclusivism, you know.
- J.F. And how did that come did it come through discussions when you were outside did it all come it firmed up (733)
- M.G. No, it didn't form of it's own (Laugh) it we in A.N.C. we have political discussions, and people who are politically mature, or who are much more politically experienced they teach the young recruits of the movement, so we were taught the history of the liberation movement inside South Africa, you know -

The A.N.C., and how the P.A.C. broke away - what led to the break-away of the P.A.C. and so on and so forth, and why the A.N.C. embraces non racialism, and the freedom charter and so on and so forth.

So I grasped all that, and really it wasn't what the West might call brain washing - it was really just teaching - explaining about the history of the A.N.C. - about the history of the liberation movement in South Africa.

- J.F. And because it wasn't brainwashing and there was an exchange of views do you remember, even at that stage was it something that went easily or did you have to was it a process of going past and through and getting rid of those B.C. tenets of exclusivism, or was it something that suddenly seemed to make sense to you how did that process go?
- M.G. Ja, no, I think for me it wasn't really traumatic it went it went smoothly, but one thing I remember very well was that in the initial stages one that is I one tended to to feel so guilty that one had been B.C. before, you know, because here B.C. I mean was shown up for what it was -

I mean all the weaknesses of B.C.M. were exposed to us, and all the weaknesses of black exclusive - the black - the go it alone line was exposed to us, was explained to us, and the weaknesses, and how it is incorrect, you know - revolutionary strategy and so on.

So one tended to feel very guilty and feel very bad about the - about one's past, you know, and one tended to I mean just to - to be sensitive and really try to be among those who were - who had nothing to do with B.C.

I mean lots of people were saying: Ja, of course I had nothing do to with B.C.; I've always had nothing to do with B.C. I mean it - B.C. became quite evil, so one tended.................... (Interruption)

- J.F. I think the main thing that I could ask both of you .....
  is just is this issue something that you try to emphasise and stress in Radio Freedom and in general A.N.C. information and education and publicity does non racialism actually play any kind of role at all is it a major role is it one that you is it one you deal with in the media, or is it at all to difficult is it too subtle just tell me what kind of role it plays in your work.
  - M.G. Ja, I think first the the A.N.C. strategy strategy and tactics which we adopted in 1969, which forms part of the theory of South African revolution as seen by the A.N.C., is that how is it phrased it's as the main content of the revolution in South Africa is the liberation of the African people. This is the main content of the present phase of the struggle.

That is - in other words getting rid of national oppression. So what does it mean? It means that in concrete terms in propaganda, in all our efforts - not all, but a large part of our efforts goes towards the mobilisation of the African masses against apartheid.

They form the main force that can bring down apartheid. The other groups, for instance, the groups which were always - which had always been excluded from the racist parliament have been Indian and - Indians and Coloureds. They've been traditional allies of the Africans in this struggle against(this) because they were also oppressed.

Apartheid also affected them in a very real sense. Whites have always been regarded as potential allies - some whites could be drawn away from the racist ideology of apartheid - but it has always been realised - I mean acknowledged within the movement that we can only succeed in drawing a few whites.

We will not get the majority support of whites because apartheid means protection of white privilege, so that in real terms concretely white people benefit from apartheid and there are very few people who would throw away - I mean throw away I mean privilege - who'd throw away this - because people come from Poland, come from Europe to rush to South Africa because here is a land where they are just going to make it simply because of the colour of their skin.

So we realise that it's very difficult, even for those who are English speaking or Jewish or - or who have reservations about Afrikaaner autocracy - it's not easy to agree to the lowering of their living standards, which are very high by world standards - which are quite high.

It's not easy to embrace a radical alternative which is presented by the A.N.C., which, in the process of struggling for equality of all races, would mean that the whites would have to accept the lowering of their living standards, so that in other words we realise that we will get some whites -

Of course it's easy - it's much easier to get revolutionaries among whites, among the white intelligentia - there it's much easier because these are people who - who are ruled by reason, who want to rationalise, who want to explain away all their deeds (631) and they tend to be idealistic, you know, idealistic and they are much more - they are much easier to convince, you know, over to the side of - of a democratic alter-

M.G. -native to Botha, you know, and even an A.N.C. alternative -So you can find revolutionaries among - well, some, you know. I don't know about people who are presently in the country

because I can't even mention names and I don't know them, but it's easy to see that you can get, you know, among the - in the legal professsion you can get some people sympathetic.

You can get people in the universities - students as well as lecturers. You can get people in other faculties, but it's rare I mean to get real working class whites, you know - blue collar or just white middle class embracing the A.N.C. alternative.

They regard that as taboo - as too radical - you know, too close to communism. In fact the present propaganda in South Africa is that the A.N.C. is controlled by the South African communist party in (and 647) Moscow, so for the white South Africans who grew up with all this propaganda of the state it's very difficult.

So as I was saying, that most of our energies go towards mobilising the African majority for action. These are the people who have the power to bring down apartheid - the African majority with, of course, Indians and Coloureds on the side of the Africans.

This is one thing, but you say is it an issue or is it subtle it is an issue because much as we have a task as a vanguard movement - we have a task not only to mobilise people for action, but also to educate, you know, for the future - for a future society - a democratic non racial united South Africa of the future, so we have a task, as well, to educate people about - about the superiority of the - ja, the superiority of the A.N.C. position viz-a-viz non racialism.

We have to tell our people that South - we have to teach our people about the freedom charter, too, because some of them were - some people were not born or were not yet politically active when the freedom charter was adopted. We have to popularise the freedom charter as our document, and we have to defend it -

That is all our organs - the radio, the print - the publications of the A.N.C. - we have always to defend the freedom charter and to popularise the freedom charter which, in other words, is popularising the ideas of non racialism, the ideas of sharing of the people's wealth, of popular power, peace and friendship and so on - all the clauses of the freedom charter.

Some programmes - it's just that we - we haven't perhaps taken the issue of getting white comrades to work in Radio Freedom, but some programmes we'd address them - we do address them to the white population - especially directed towards the young people in the - in the military, you see, so we - we had many conscientious objectors, you know, and we talk about these cases and we quote the statements of these people from the dock, you know -

What they have to say - I mean most of them are very articulate, or some of them, of course, have been undergraduates, but even those who were not very articulate have said quite clearly ....



- M.G. ... that it's not even on religious grounds I cannot see myself defending apartheid I'm not prepared to fight for apartheid. And we make programmes along that theme (their theme 693) and show that these are people who belong to the future non racial South Africa ...... I don't know whether you want to add anything.
  - J.F. O.K. I think let me just ask one last thing just to wind up yours, and that was just there's so much talk about (.... .... Tape off) talk about that how you'd respond if someone says: Oh, but '76 the A.N.C's trying to claim credit for it but they didn't have involvement.

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- J.F. Are you saying that there was a phase of feeling ashamed and you got....
  - M.G. Ja, ja there was there was that phase, but really it was really one's fault because the the A.N.C. pointed out the A.N.C. didn't just say B.C.M. was ev il the A.N.C. said these were the progressive this was the positive side of B.C.M., you know.

BCM did this at a time when the A.N.C. was terrible harassed and it was forced to operate under difficult underground conditions, so B.C.M. came on the scene and so on and so forth, and these were the positive aspects of B.C.M. and these were the negative aspects of - these were the things that we didn't like in B.C.M.

But then because I mean - we just - everybody wanted to be into be among the angels - we just felt - I - no - really it was bad - it was - one is from hell really - one shouldn't have shouldn't have been in B.C. - we were racists and so on and so forth.

But then later as one grew within the movement one became much more relaxed and confident - we could safely say and explain your - your B.C.M. phase, you know.

- J.F. Just coming back to when you before you left the country, did you hear people talking about so many people left the country then, that when people were thinking of leaving or if there was talk about so-and-so had left, did they say :0h, well, perhaps I should go to P.A.C. perhaps I should go to A.N.C. did you ever think about which group you'd go to?
- M.G. \*\*Oh, but well, in my case I had already chosen the A.N.C. and the P.A.C. became ja, was didn't feature at all. I had already thought of the A.N.C. Even the I mean as I told you, we were listening to Radio Freedom, and we knew Mandela and so on this was the main movement.

One could immediately think: Correction from beginning of \*sentence: \*paragraph

- M.G. \*\*Oh, but well, in my case I had already chosen the A.N.C. and the P.A.C. became ja, was didn't feature at all. I had already thought of the A.N.C. Even the I mean as I told you, we were listening to Radio Freedom, and we knew Mandela and so on this was the main movement one could immediately think of.
  - J.F. So why are there such a if you told me maybe '78 or '79, I knew that there was so much more commitment to the A.N.C. that it came out openly, but it's just that if one looks at the literature there's an impression that's given that there are people who are B.C. was P.A.C. leaning, and I'm just wondering then again, as I'm speaking out loud, the figures reflect a mass movement to the A.N.C. certainly to the training and the army, so that I can see that you're right, but I'm just I think you maybe should talk about it a bit because it just seems a bit I think if you could just explain the A.N.C. line.

- M.G. You know this this whole question of B.C. being P.A.C. leaning is something that I also found out much more when I was here than when I was at home. It wasn't a reality when we were at home, and in fact I mean the from '75 on-ward the executives of B.C.M. that time I mean it's people who who were beginning to talk about class and who openly started talking about A.N.C., you know about A.N.C., A.N.C., A.N.C.,
  - J.F. And you didn't get .....
  - M.G. And I won't mention names, but it's it's people who started talking that kind of language within B.C.M. This whole thing that B.C. falls within the P.A.C. camp, I got it here outside, We never knew that thing at home.
- J.F. What was your view of P.A.C. at home?
- M.G. I knew very little to begin with I knew very little. I remember one old man I talked with at home when I was very strong B.C. B.C. member, you know advocate and he looked at me and said: Are you boys I'm sure if you were around in the '50's you would have joined P.A.C. you would have you have you would have been Sebukwe people I'm sure because he had the historical background and he could just listen to all this: Black man, you are on your own black people this, white white people are that, and so he realised that we were closer.

I'm (Laugh) - at - with hindsight again one might say that we were - perhaps we were much closer to the P.A.C. than we realised, you know, but not consciously choosing the P.A.C., but because of the B.C. strategy and tactics, you know, and the - the rhetoric I think we were close to the P.A.C., but the people we wanted to be with - we thought we were with people like Mandela, you know, and Lutul and A.N.C.

- J.F. So what did you think when that old man said you would have been P.A.C. what did you say what did you think yes?
- M.G. No, I don't I don't know what I must have said to him, but these are things I remember when I'm here already.
- J.F. And what about the the A.N.C. or P.A.C. were all in the '76 uprisings at the time when the Hector Peterson pictures came out, and just from the outrage of the the brutalities going on, and then once it came out that the kids were organising the SSRC and all that, did you even think of the A.N.C. having a role in it did you make any assumptions or did you just think these guys are old they wouldn't have had a role or how did you did it occur to you for them to think that they would have been still able to organise that kind of thing?
- M.G. Ja, I think I think it was although I don't know what I could I could have I must have thought at that time, but it is it is known now that the A.N.C. had a role in organising perhaps not the exact day on June 16, but had a hand in in the planning and the mob(ilising) in the organising of the people of the students and the youth against the regime.

But I mean at that time at home we just - I mean from the campus we just came to Johannesburg - we said: Oh, there's an explosion there. It didn't appear as planned I mean when you were there doing everything every day, but I mean when you ....

- M.G. .... started seeing pamphlets and you pamphlets you didn't know where they came from and so on then you realised that, oh, there's much more organisation...
  - J.F. Oh, I see, you did actually see an A.N.C....
- M.G. I think I did see a pamphlet.
- J.F. O.K. and did in the whole time you talked you didn't mention Biko was he a hero of yours in the early days at all or what did you have much exposure to him or...
- M.G. I didn't you know, I was at Ngoya but I never met Biko. I must have missed him by inches every time he was in Durban, because he used to come to the head head office was in Durban so I missed him I missed him completely I his pictures were always there in the SASO head office, and everybody would say: Oh, there's Biko there's so-and-so there's so-and-so.

And he was - I could see his writings, and I think there were some publications which were compiled and....

- J.F. So you were an admirer of his?
- M.G. Ja the him, Barney Pityana and others I think these were the most articulate in B.C.M.
- J.F. 0.K. - and just one last thing - do you think that being an exile or being outside and getting involved with the A.N.C., would your non racialism - did you continue to see it as being important - to you is it a central issue - what do you think about asking questions about non racialism in the way I'm doing did it assume greater or less importance - was it something where you came to grips with the colour question and you thought : O.K., I'm not being stupid - I'm not going to take the old Line -I accept it's non racial - or did it begin to assume a central importance - I'm just wondering if - I'm just saying like back in your B.C. days non racialism would have just not figured it was definitely race - then there were aspects of both in A.N.C., and then you left the country and it was really put across to you non racialism - did it continue to be a central thing for you - does it continue or is it something you get past, or how do you see it?
- M.G. Mmmm ja, I think I think it is it is important, and it does occupy a lot of my time when thinking about the struggle at home, more especially because nowadays it is becoming it is an issue at home, you know. You have trade unions, you know, moving towards those that call for non racialism in the trade union movement and those that say, No, we want black leader—ship in the trade unions you know the CUSA and other affiliates.

So even if you wanted to forget about non racialism you can't - as long as we're involved in the struggle in South Africa you have to address yourself to this very important question of non racialism. You are either for or against, you know, so -

Well, we - my thinking about non racialism starts from my acceptance of the freedom charter as a very correct document which correctly lays down the basic demands of the people at home, you know, so the preamble which - when the preamble says we the - South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white - once you accept that - once you accept that as correct,....



M.G.

.... you know, not just being told but once you feel - once you internalise it you make it yours - you say, no, but truthfully South Africa does belong to all in it - I mean even in B.CM. we never felt that people who had been in South Africa for over 300 years had to start afresh and look for a home in Holland or Britain or anywhere.

But now we - you really see that I mean - you see, the non racial approach is morally superior, you see, which makes the A.N.C. a much more matured movement than a young leftist black exclusivists immature move(ment) - irresponsible I mean - people who don't care what are the consequences of what they say I mean as long as it's militant and it makes sense for the moment, you know.

So the A.N.C. plans ahead and it's responsible - I mean it - you know the whole composition of the A.N.C. - the young and the old and the working class and so on, so you get a much more steady and responsible leadership and people compared to the fringe that you get in campuses and some other areas, which can have this rhetoric irrespons(ibility)

So we - we accept - I accept that South Africa belongs to all who live in it - black and white, and..... as I was saying that, even at home today non racialism is an issue so we are keeping in daily contact with this question of non racialism.