

Interview : Zelda

JF I can ask you first coz you wanted to get going. Do you mind giving me a bit of time? Just, you heard the statement that Zelda made about non racialism, about blacks and whites together, is that something that is new for you? Did you grow up in coming to feel anti white and then changing? Did you go through a stage of being black conscious^{and} anti white at all?

A Mmmhmm. Well, I do say with frankness that the stages of..is a process of growth. It was a liberation. There isn't..I wouldn't claim none BC in me because my motivations are black conscious. But I've got a room I have to transcend and grow and find that there need of S.A. teacher can never be isolated to blacks only. There are white South Africans who are concerned, who want to be living a jst life in S.A. Therefore we are not saying to our sisters in white constituency that they can just be there by themselves alone. If there is a room like the UDF is a forum for all; it embraces every relevant democratic aspiration both of any colour and any language in the struggle but we say we have constituencies; the white must mobilise the whites because after all the oppressor is also needing a liberation. He is inhuman by oppressing somebody.

So in fact we, if we could sincerely say the person who is most oppressed is the person who is the oppressor.

JF How did you come to that? You didn't get that from the days of Black Consciousness. How did you come to that point of view?

A As I said, a growth...liberation struggle is a process of growth. It has its stages. Until such time that we are today finding ourselves under the umbrella of UDF.

JF And do you think it's useful to...do you think that even me asking you is it at all useful, do you think it's important to talk about the non racial aspect of the struggle? Or do you think that it's just a minor part or how do you feel about somebody asking you about the role of whites and nonracialism?

A Well, maybe you are asking for the sake of knowing what is our position within the country of what the whites ought to be doing. But on the other hand I wouldn't totally know whether you are just asking for interest sake or you are saying to us what will be the whites are doing

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A in the struggle of...maybe in the future of S.A. of which me at this moment I haven't no answer for it. The future of S.A. depends on its.. how its been liberated.

JF Is that something that you find that people agree with you about? Do you ever see black people, maybe young people that you're involved with who say come on how can you want to work with whites, you know look at what they have done to us? Do you get that from blacks who say they don't support non racialism?

A Well, non racialism is an institute that at any given situations in S.A. - we have people who are BC. We have no room for white constituencies, I mean. And we have people who say men we can. There is still room.

JF And do you feel that it's important...I'm just wondering if you ever had encounters with people who say look, I just can't support that; I just can't see how you can work with whites? Do you try to argue that? Have you had any kind of interaction or have you seen younger people grow and change their point of view in this regard?

A Yes, we insist on that that every...the base, the foundation of our struggle is really to identify ourselves as black people and growing as a nation and then as we say when we have kind of reached a certain stage we see the room of that..it's not something we can blanket that we can..I don't know how to express myself but you grow to accept that whites are there, some of them there for life and they are part of S.A. But as I say it will depend on those peoples own attitudes to what's what they are actually fighting for with us. Myabe if I can divert your question and say are they fighting for one party government or something of that nature; it will come from them really whether they accept what we are fighting from them. Like the Freedom Charter. That is our vision and our goal, for S.A.

JF Where were you born and what year?

A I was born in '35 in Petersburg and grew up in Soweto.

JF And if you don't want to answer this you don't have to: I'm interested to know did your court case change things for you? Did you find that people in your church or people around you treated you at all differently because of that?

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A No, not so much. I don't know what my church is thinking much. That's very supportive but it was supportive throughout my trial I must say that. And maybe in my own community I guess, speak up about my own community with the sisters that's who I'm living with, I found them so much grown up in awareness of their situation in S.A. that anything happening to me now I think they are part of me.

JF So through the trial they grew also?

A Mmm. Just as I grew, so they grew.

JF Did you expect to get a sentence? Were you worried about that? Did you get a sense that you really had to steal yourself for getting a harsh sentence? Or didn't you think about it?

A No, I didn't even think about it, really. I..as I always say it's part and parcel of being what you are in understanding of what you are... vowed your life for as a nun you know. It's a break away..in fact it's a quite a break away from double personalities of being traditionally trained and being relevant to what it is happening today in S.A.

JF Alright thanks a lot.

Now in our struggle for non racial democracy lead by the working class is the strongest force, the leading force in our struggle for a national democ...democracy. We need all the support we get. And I would..I feel personally that there is room for whites in our struggle. The problem lies in realising those objectives.

What does non racialism mean in S.A.? Now we understand that for whites who have always been in a superior position, they have always been the masters, to now make a complete about turn and say we are part of you, we have the same objectives and we want to achieve that, is difficult; and at times we do find that whites want to take over, they want to play a leading role but I think it's up to the oppressed majority to dictate the terms and I strongly feel that we have whites that have made outstanding contributions to our struggle; that have made lots of sacrifices. There are examples of that, I don't need to mention it but we do have..at times there are indications of whites dominating this scene. But it's up to the progressive forces, the progressive movement to jump in and say look, this should be your role.

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A Now I can understand the frustrations of whites in playing a supportive role, being in the background, doing research etc. It is frustrating, they want to get out and say we are here, this is what we want to do but I think it's a matter of strategies and tactics and for eg. there are lots of issues that whites can get involved in. And it's not always an easy task. It's not always easy to convince the oppressor that they are wrong and it's probably the most difficult task if you say that their task should be to mobilise whites - how exactly do you go about that? You are shunned at every corner you turn around and it's very tempting for them to want to go and organise and mobilise the oppressed communities but that is our task.

The black South Africans to do that. So I would say that we believe in the non racial democratic S.A.-that is what we are fighting for; those are the principals along which we organise.

I do admit that there are problems at times in trying to realise our objectives and that it is difficult for whites to play the supportive role. But I think just to sum up, that it is the task of the oppressed majority to dictate those terms in which whites would be involved.

JF Would you ever have made a statement like that five years ago?

A Definitely not. I think the basis of...for blacks, the basis of the involvement are elementary consciousness or political awareness is that of black consciousness but I think that going beyond that at a higher stage, or higher level of consciousness, which I would like to believe we are at at this stage in our..in S.A. and I think that is probably seen through the support for the UDF. There are people who have...are still at the level of BC who would say there is no room for whites. But fortunately at this stage they are in the minority.

The UDF in S.A. is today a household name and people know...knowing what the Front is all about, that it allows for whites to participate. There are lots of white organisations like Black Sash for eg. It is largely..organises in the white constituencies that are affiliated and people do not have problems with that.

JF I guess (ja?) what I'm interested in is it seems a bit easy to say well, we move past BC and I'm interested to know how you...why you said you wouldn't have said that five years ago, how you could say it now. I'm also...

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A How you make that move. It's very difficult actually. I think its very difficult to distinguish between the two. But I mean to experience personally my belief is the oppressor is the main educator of the people. I mean you find everybody is..from the black oppressed people they first ...I mean thier first feeling is we are oppressed and who is oppressing us? The whites are oppressing us and that's a kind of feeling that's.. implanted into everybody especially the people who are in not..who are not in organisations.

And then I think for me I only started to outgrow that when I joined the organisation and then realised, being politicised by the seniors, that no, there are some other whites who are also oppressed because of their situation we are living under in S.A. So these whites would like to take part in a..our struggle and then if we have got an attitude of saying we are the only people who are oppressed as black, right we are oppressed as blacks but because of the...I mean the whites would like to participate too, to solve their situation.

And because there is a lot they can do in their communities, I mean more than researching and that and that and information but there is a lot they can do to contribute to our struggle in their own communities. Like not even going out by starting from their own homes, because this is happening; in fact frequently like you'll find a white woman who is involved outside but when you go and visit her you'll find that she's doing the very same thing that she is preaching outside, like people mustn't be exploited but she has got a maid; she doesn't recognise this maid as a person who is oppressed, that she's preaching about outside her home; so from there I think they can start from their own homes, into their own communities and then into the broad struggle.

I think that that would help our...their contribution would help our struggle, very much.

JF I'm interested in any story you can tell me: Have you ever confronted a white person and said hey, how can you be like this when you're oppressing your maid or have you ever had any experience like that?

A We go through that experience every day. As I say the problem is realising those objectives. Sometimes, quite often whites do over step the mark and as I said because they are used to being the masters they feel that it is their right to..or just..should be in front. They should actually be telling say for eg. they are involved in research so get white man getting together and writing stories about black woman without even

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A realising that it's the blacks themselves, even the struggle is..an educative experience, that if you're saying that we should share with people our knowledge, our experience and it's a training process as well. So I would imagine that if white woman do have such an idea or want to get together a book on black women, to involve grass roots women in that process. They could show people how books are written for eg. It's not only the task of whites.

So quite often one is tempted to say look, I think you're being opportunistic or over stepping the mark. And it's very difficult for them to accept that if they haven't actually worked through that. Also more particularly if they haven't got class consciousness to identify those objectives and also to work through thoroughly what their role is. I don't think as yet or that I know of where whites actually got together and worked through what exactly thier role as whites should be and how even involved in non racial organisations doesn't...we can't just make assumptions about how whites can go out and organise in black communities. But actually how they can realise those objectives in their organisations.

JF Can you both tell me a bit for the people I have been....?

A Ok. I was born ^{in 1953} in Elsie's River. And then in 1960 I moved Nyanga, the squatters Nyanga and from 1969 we were moved to Guguletu; so I grew up between Nyanga and Guguletu, Cape Town.

JF You know I spent a long interview with Vester yesterday and she also grew up in a mixed area and then was moved to Noordge? . Is that something that affects your consciousness; to grow up with..or was Elsie's River then all African?

A No, Elsie's R was a mixed area even then.

JF Do you remember as a little girl growing up there? Was that a factor in you at all to have grown up with people of different races and suddenly have to be in one area?

A Ya, I think it has some affect because I remember when I was young, though we moved at..before..I was 10 years old when we went to Nyanga, but already we were schooling together and then we were not looking at our coloured sisters as people who are far away. You were living with them in the house some of them and the neighbours were schooling together and everything and

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A it was very difficult for us. It was a bad experience in fact when we moved to Nyanga because we were still schooling in Elsie's River. So we had travel by bus. But already, I mean there was that indoctrination that now all of a sudden when coloured girls were seeing us they would remark 'Die elle kaffirs' or so, but I am sure those were ^{not} the people who were living in Elsie - we usually meet them in the bus or whatever.

JF And after that what about your family, your background? Were your parents political people at all? Did they influence you or were they more conservative than you or what?

A Ja. I think from my father's side my father was involved in..in fact he resisted the removals from Elsie's to Nyanga but at the end he was moved to Nyanga and then in Nyanga...then the ANC was still unbanned and he was involved in ANC, more in the sports side, like rugby. He was one of the people who formed the Fly Eagles which were the Youth wing of the ANC like the rugby and soccer and everything. So in a way he was involved.

JF And your mother?

A No, my mother was never effectively involved though she understands what was happening and she is the kind of person who is giving us a lot of support, even now. If anything can happen to me I know she's there to take care of my kids and everything. She's giving us a lot of support.

JF So she never would say look, this will get you into jail?

A No, no, no she would never say that.

JF What about when they see you moving with white people that are not African people; do they ever...would anyone from your family in years past ever have said look what are you doing, you can't trust those people? Were they always non racial or do you think they have moved?

A No, I think because of my father's influence; I mean my family were fortunate in that my family has been non racial because I remember from the early age when I join up organisation, it was a funny thing for them if I bring any white friend or whatever, it wasn't funny for them. But ja it was different for the neighbours - they would comment. But at least the family itself was no problem.

JF And did you go to university or to work or what did you do?

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JF From after school?

A No, I went straight after form 5 to work.

JF In what area? What did you do?

A My first area was a machinist in one factory and then that's the only kind of job I've done. Then I moved into the community work - I'm still doing now.

JF With United Women's Organisation?

A Ja, but I am working at a resource, Zake - it is a resource organisation which works closely with all these organisations, UDF, UWO, and civic.

JF What is it called again?

A ZAKHE.

JF What does that mean?

A It's to build yourself, its a Xhosa name, to build yourself.

JF Were you ever a member of a union?

A Not really. I'm just helping with S.A. Allied Workers Union but I was never a member of a union.

JF Did you ever think of getting involved with the unions or was that just not something that attracted you as much as community work? Or what?

A No I think; Mainly because my belief is people who must be involved with trade unions, are people who've got that experience. They have been workers, they have been exploited from work and then grow up from their exploitation and be able to lead workers. So I'm sure..I mean though I am interested, like mainly if I'm helping unions like I'm helping at the moment, if I have got time I am helping with the admin side of it. But not as a organiser to go out to workers.

Because when I work in the factory there was no union - then there was

no union so I was never really involved in them.

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JF Now since we're the same age I can work out that in..at the time of BC was quite active you were in your twenties say, was that the time you also got attracted to black consciousness?

A I think so, because in the..was it seventies? I think there was SASO in C.T. I was in a..active member of it but my elder sister was an active member of SASO. I was never..I mean I was..never belonged to a BC organisation.

JF I'm pushing this issue a bit but can you tell me any concrete details about how you actually came to move from being ...to the non racial stance? Was it a very slow process? Or was there ever a white person you met or a black person who talked to you about what the way the ANC was, what its policies were or the history of S.A. anything about that...would have been ...?

A No I think...as far as ANC is concerned the only education I got from it is through books; to reading their books and all that. But no, as I said I never belonged to any organisation before I joined UWO. UWO was my first organisation because in '76 when they were uprising, when I was just involved but then we didn't have an ideology really; we were just fighting the oppressor and then from then I went straight to work and then it's only when I joined UWO that at least I had an ideology.

JF And how did you get into UWO? What prompted you to join them?

A Not really. I was a woman and then here was a womens organisation - I realised I ~~am~~ not a student anymore and then because of my involvement I was looking for something that I can be involved in, constructively. And then here was a non racial womens organisation and then I joined and nobody..in fact I went out to check if there are any women organisations.

JF Are you married?

A Married and divorced.

JF You have how many kids?

A two kids; a 14year old and a four year old.

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A I was born in Maitlan and then I think the same year I was born - it was 1961, we moved to Pointeville which is a coloured township and it is where I grew up until Std,8. Since then I have been moving it up. I would say that as a child I had a very basic political consciousness and that was because of the conditions. I could never..I always used to question my mother why does she have to pay rent every month to the City Council, who doesn't improve the conditions that every year the rent goes up? and by the time we say after five years the house has been paid for, why do we always have to increase the rent?

Those were issues that always puzzled me and my mother in fact cautioned me and all I remember was that at fourth standard she said I shouldn't further my education beyond Std. 8 because I'm going to land into trouble. I must say she was correct.

Standard 7 that was in 1976 and our school - I attended Bountiful High - it was the first coloured school that came out in boycott and I think that was the first time I could get vent to my political frustrations and actually, and to my emotions as well. It was very gut level response. I was extremely emotional about the issue and I can remember singing 'Now Azania we will set you free'.

But from there Standard..well I schooled then in Joberg for a few months and then I came back to C.T. I couldn't attend Bounty High because my subjects changed and I went to Kingston High and there I got involved with other women and we used to just discuss things at that stage I was very excited about the Chinese Revolution. I used to fantasise about going to China one day and stowing away in a boat; those were our dreams.

And from there I went to..I matriculated in '69 and we moved (when was that?) in '79. And I went to university at UWC (Western Cape) and it was there that I met other people who have been involved in the '70s who came from the unity movement, BC Movement - they were actively involved in SASO and the Unity movement. We started having discussions on the S.A. struggle, the S.A. reality and then I was exposed to literature and I started reading. And I think it was my change from a very gut level emotional response and identifying with the BC Movement that sense on an emotional level on campus was a time that I actually had a chance to work through these issues: What is our S.A. reality .

And in discussing with other people and tracing our history and we looked at the history of..as being one of a nonracial...struggle and various people involved in it looked at the ANC and what its aims and objectives

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A are. We looked at the coloured people organisation and the COD and what contributions they made. And also the major impact I think that actually made me change in terms of my ideas and developing ideology was looking at our historical roots and tracing back the history of resistance and seeing where people actually found themselves. Was it only blacks that were involved - there were coloureds for eg. and Indians and whites.

We found that...people actually were involved in different organisations and the..what had the greatest impact on me was the Congress Alliance and also the formation of the Freedom Charter and what it stands for. And I think for many of us that now find ourselves in..or that supports the non racial struggle, non racialism rather in our struggle are people that would identify with the Freedom Charter as well. I think it goes side by side.

I would say that...I can understand the feelings of people that claim to be B C in saying there's no role for whites but I would say that they still have to go beyond that.

Also just to add in terms of my...family background, in 1983, was '83, I was detained for 5 months. My parents, mother coming from...she's a machinist at a clothing factory, my father is a commercial artist and they are seperated. I wasn't staying with either of them, but both my parents got involved in the Detainees Parents Support Committee and I think that for my mother was...brought about a complete change in her life.

After my release she said that she'll continue in the Detainees Parents Support Committee because there are other kids or parents whose children are still being detained and she feels that as long as people are being detained, as long as the struggle continues, that is where she'll be. She also joined the Clothing Workers Union and is actively involved in the union. In fact quite often I'm surprised she attends more meetings than I do and I just say in terms of that experience, helped to conscientise my family.

My father is supportive of the struggle but he doesn't see himself getting involved. But I grew up as one of 6 and the rest of the family, my brothers and so on they are all involved in the youth..um, students organisation. And my sister involved in the civic as well. So I would say that that was the conscientising experience for my family who previously had been completely apolitical and now that assisted in raising their level of consciousness.

Just a couple of follow ups. The first school to come out in '76 - first coloured school you said, was there a racial issue there? People of...some

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JF people talk about that.

A No, we were extremely anti white at that stage and I think it was for most of us in '76 people had...it was a ~~man's~~ or time that we could actually give vent to our frustrations because things just...I mean lots of spinoffs after that, or spiralled after that, the events to all coloured schools, African schools throughout the Western Cape, throughout the country. And I think that was maybe the first time for us in my experience, that African and coloureds stood and expressed a solidarity and fought side by side. We were blacks and that was it; wasn't colours We...it was a complete...or we denounced the racial terms completely and identified with the common cause.

I can remember we were still very idealistic - we felt that our demands at this stage, was that we will boycott until ...

End of tape.

A (contd) we are free and we had those dreams. We thought this is it. We are going to bring about the change, this is the revolution. But also just on the social level, any white person was the enemy at that stage. I think you can bear me out, the white person was the enemy. I think that people, whites in S.A. were very scared. Previously when you entered a shop and you...might have been there first at the counter but if a white person comes in they..the shopkeepers serve the white person first. But we found even when we came in last that they would ask you first, can I help you please, and that in itself was a totally different experience, that now you know we are a forced to be reckoned with. It gave us a sense of power.

JF So you said it again in the theoretical way that you read about the historical, and all that and that helped you move but are there any incidents you can ^{tell me} about that you remember in that movement of..when you said you thought you would boycott until freedom came and very anti white, through the late '70s and into the '80s that was an example of you changing so that you weren't anti white. Did you have any contact with whites who you felt this is different than the anti white or you know was there any specific you can tell me about?

A Ja, I think my first experience of...I've never been involved in organisations until I went to university and that was in 1980. And then I joined UWO. In fact before it was UWO it was still a steering committee

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A and it was the United Womens Association, that steering committee and there were whites involved in it. But that was at the same time that we actually discussed those questions and involvement of whites and it wasn't...before it was a theoretical experience but until I'd been actively involved with whites I think that...just emphasised or just clarified things for me.

I would say that..also we went through many experiences like we find there would be black people who would be opportunistic, white people that are opportunistic and we do tend to even now, when whites try to play a dominant role, when they try and personalise issues and project themselves we focus a lot on that as being a white person that is trying to project herself because she's white. But sometimes it is at gut...when I won't say gut level experience but is sometimes an attitude that one does develop.

Non racialism on one level is still theoretical because in practice as I say we haven't clarified that. Even now if you can see our organisations emerge; while we felt a need at a time for the African people to have an organisation of their own, that was the ANC, and the coloured people that had the Coloured Peoples Congress and the Indian people had the Indian Congress. And the whites had their own organisation and quite often we are asked why is this so? Why can't we have one organisation, why not have just one political organisation? But because we can't just go to.. I mean imagine a white person knocking on the door and saying hello aunt do you have any problems, how will that person respond? How would the person in Bontifal and Guguletu respond^{to} that : who are you coming to ask me about my problems or they may respond and say that's very nice but will tell them all kinds of lies.

That is proved say when we go around with surveys; there was a time with... when UDF had a signature campaign we went around asking for signatures from people to sign the UDF declaration. And people^{would} respond differently to whites. And when they asked certain questions, if a survey is done they would respond differently for other people, hide figures, hide facts because they didn't know who people really are and even just being a member of an organisation doesn't give you that credentials to just go in and say ja, I'm from the UDF. People are always suspicious and understandably so.

JF From your experience has there been, I've been asking you about whites, but non racialism also has to do with all the different race groups, maybe it wasn't you yourself coz you grew up in Elsie, had Elsie's experience but are there blacks who still or have, went through a stage, they're black, they're

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JF Africans and that doesn't include coloureds and Indians and Asians as well? And do you think that's a problem and ^{is} that part of non racialism to be able to not have to deal with those groups? I mean you talked about that with '76, but there are people in Soweto who lived in the Transvaal who ^{would} say those coloureds didn't support us and this kind of thing.

A Maybe just on that I could relate a little incident. You know we have... lots of people, especially now, youth organisations are fairly popular. It's been popular since 1980 and we have in the Western Cape organisation of youth called the Cape Youth Congress and it has branches in all the areas; in the coloured and African areas. So we know each others somehow we see each other around and one day we sat ~~on~~ on the train...now the train from C.T. to Strandfontein services the coloured and African areas, but what had happened was a lady was sitting two seats away from me and there was a guy sitting next to me. This guy got up, he was coloured, he got up for an old coloured lady. Colour wasn't the issue; it didn't appear as such but the next thing when this coloured chap got up I saw someone worming himself in and sat down before the lady could sit down and it was an African guy. And I...when I looked at him I recognised him as being involved in the organisation and I said to him but you shouldn't be doing this. And then he spoke Xhosa and I understand a little bit and he was saying, ja the coloureds practice apartheid and then I chimed in and said I understand that that does happen; its the apartheid poliices or the way we've grown up that makes people act in this way but its our talk, as people involved in the struggle and fighting against apartheid to educate people and that's no way that you are going to do about it. He was extremely apologetic so he said don't apologise to me and here's the lady to speak to and everybody..that was a talking point in the train.

Everybody responded and agreed that we shouldn't...be doing what the govern ment wants us to do to fight each other. I mean it's like one master having a cat and a dog and only feeding the dog and get the dog and cat to fight each other for the bone or the milk. And forget it's actually the master who should be sharing equally between the two of them.

JF Is that still a struggle...is there still education in these that needs to be done? Do you find that in the Afrcain areas that there is still some prejudice?

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JF I think because of the experience, like from '76 when coloured schools went out in support of the African schools, that started to educate people from the African township that we are all black.

Even now the government just recently have announced that it is going to move all Africans townships into a Kialeicha and then put coloureds in all these established townships like Langa, Nyanga, Guguletu, but I think the response of our coloured sisters educated even more though the government wanted to...a fight between so-called coloureds and the Africans. But their response really educated the masses, like when people were saying we're not moving, we're not moving to Guguletu, Nyanga and Langa, black people stay there. Build more houses for us and for Africans.

And that helped in education...in educating the people who are not in the organisation. Because that was a direct issue; that was a civic issue for them. And the other thing in Kialecha, Kialecha is right next to Mitchells Plain and in fact the government intended, knowing how, the way they structured the whole system, he knew, in fact he thought that if Kialecha and Mitchells Plain people are staying nearer they would fight about the beach, because there is only one beach, Mnandi beach, which... I mean it's a so-called African beach. So they would fight about that because now...well Mitchells Plain was built...I mean more people went to Mnandi beach and then they'll fight about trains.

I mean definitely those things happen when Kialecha was started. Like you get people commenting that; but what was inspiring most of the comments was coming from government stages like MPs and that and that. People were saying no there must be a different beaches and different things for the black people, coloured people. Coloured people can't mix with the black people but so far the experience of the people living directly in Kialecha, they think..I think they have been educated through the practices of our coloured sister who have been there a longer time than them. Because I mean they are not doing what the government wants them to do. In fact I think they are quite happy.

JF I asked you what..did it have anything to do ...the move to non racialism did it have anything to do with meeting a white person that you liked; maybe I should ask do you think that the move to non racialism now has to do with black people that you object to? I mean there's the whole attacks on community councillors and black policementand people in this parliament and that kind of thing. It seems to me then to have something to do with non racialism. I mean that certainly denies that black is beautiful and it really denies that it's just a person's colour of their skin that shows

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JF where they stand. Can you just talk a little about that? I think it's so important to understand because someone..so many people ^{in the} outside world think that blacks are killing blacks. Why is this? And they think its like Buthelezi and the whole thing.

A I think that actually is important and I think one needs to look at that election campaign. Where that was proved and I think that was one thing that...where people..one issue that people could identify with. Initially when..what is this called..the Black Alliance of Gatsha and All ~~Rendrik~~ was part of that and he broke that. Somehow he broke ranks with them and he decided to participate in the tri-cameral system. And people were initially saying now lets see what the coloureds are going to do.

But when on a large scale, under the banner of the UDF, people mobilised around that and it gave us an opportunity to speak to different kinds of people. We went into middle class areas, into working class areas and one could gauge the response of them and I think it wasn't strange for ^(from India) an Indian to go into Bontival and knock on the door and say and speak to the person about the anti-election campaign and ask her to sign the UDF declaration. And in the same way lots of people went into Crossroads for example and was a natural and in fact people all got together and spoke about it.

I think that that was one symbol that struggle was a symbol of unity. And proved...our principal opposition on non racialism, to be correct that people ... the time has come that people actually now open to that. Of course with its limitations as it is but also the oppressed...the black oppressed including well, the Africans, coloured and Indians, had a chance of..opportunity to show that they are united. I think that struggle in itself was a breakthrough. Where that was proved, that there is such unity because now people are saying that they are resisting All ~~Hendrik~~sa And also the polls actually show that as well; they got very low percentage polls. I mean they..the African comrades were there; they...on the elections, at the polling stations...people were around. Everybody was excited to see whether our work in the anti election campaign bore fruits. And it wasn't our struggle, it wasn't a coloured struggle, we tried throughout to ^{project} it as a non racial struggle.

The anti...forced removals to Kialecha was another issue where we constantly immobilising people; try to show the similarities and one issue, one demand was clear in the anti election campaign, what we are fighting for is a non racial S.A. We are being offered the vote but what about the majority of the people who are denied the vote. And that was a theme that ran throughout.

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JF Has that happened in your area, in Guguletu now are you? (Ja) Have there been community councillors who have had their houses petrol bombed? Or any black policeman who have been killed or in the Cape Town area?

A Ja, I think the bombing of the councillors have happened but so far it's only three policemen who have been..in fact unfortunately white policeman who have been...no black. But I think..I mean as much as people would see it as black killing black it's not..I mea for me and for all progressives I'm sure, it's a symbol of non racialism again because we recognise that an oppressor can be black, and an oppressor can be white. And that is why those people if they are prepared to be the government stooges though they are oppressed, but they are prepared to be the government stoooges and oppress other people for whatever they can get.

For eg. this community councillors; they live in the same house we are living in, they are oppressed like us. They pay the same rent we are paying but because there is a little recognition of them they are given a hundred rand or R200 a month; except the mayor who is given a R1000 or something and when they go to offices like admin board or whatever, they are recognised as community councillor. They don't understand that government is using them as a buffer between him and the people.

Now when people are angry they must go to community councillors and that is a response is given..if you go and report anything knowing very well community councillors don't have funds don't have everything and then people are rejecting them. The Admin Board people would tell you that we have got nothing to do with that township, you have got your councillors. They are supposed to take responsibilities of the townships and these councillors, they would ...are also prepared; they know they don't have money, they don't have anything, they don't make the law; I mean...whereas... everything is coming to them on a plate that you must do this, do that to the people. But they would agree if the Board is telling them that you must increase rent, you must increase water rates, increase that and that etc. They would agree to do that.

That is why people are angry to show that if they are prepared to be oppressors for whatever they can gain, the anger of the people is also going to affect them. As much as they are blacks, because you are not fighting white persons, we are fighting the oppressor.

JF Do you..what do you think of the methods that those people are being told that they are puppets or whatever; the fact that their houses are being fire bombed? What would you say if a liberal South African said

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JF look I understand, but you can't resort to that kind of thing/violence. How do you feel about that argument?

A I think we can expect that because when people are angry they can resort to anything. And I think we wouldn't say...I mean people...humanly it's the wrong thing because when you burn the house you kill people and there can be kids and that but I mean everybody should understand, that if people are angry, and it's not only today's thing, because the community councillors has been formed, it's a years...people have been burying/[?]bearing all their suffering for years and years and then we know very well it's difficult to get to...like we use strategies of organising people, forming organisation and all. But the government is far away from the people.

If he was near to the people I'm sure by now people should have done something to him. But ^{now} here are these people who know very well they are staying with the people but they are doing the government dirty work. So it's difficult to completely say people were right or they were wrong. It's difficult.

A₂ It's not as if they were not warned. Repeatedly people have made attempts have appealed to them to resign from their jobs and if they are sincere in what they are saying, that they are fighting for a better future for people, that the coloured people went into the tri-cameral system, into the house of representatives, and they are fighting against apartheid; if that is the case then why not join the progressive organisations, ^{but} why sit at one table with the oppressed, why accept the big houses and all the concessions that went along with that?

Maybe just...one thing that I was quite interested to know, what people were thinking, what people were saying in the factories, in the seats, and in the church after Landers house was bombed. Landers, the coloured MP. And people were saying it was a pity he wasn't killed and I was actually quite shocked by this. This was actually the response of ordinary people and because that was one thing that..it's been happening in African townships and people have been identifying ^{with} with that on a mass level. But if that happens to coloured MPs what would people then be thinking.

Like I would be quite interested to know what people would think if the same thing would happen to Allen Hendrikse? But it somehow seems if people on a mass level are saying look, they got what they asked for; we have told them several times, and it is just a pity that, in the case of Landers that he wasn't killed. To me that came as a complete surprise but it just shows where people are at today.

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A We, also just with regards to violence, it is not as if we are actually ...we are not violent people. The UDF organisation to which ^{we} belong to, is ~~not~~ committed to non violent means to bring about change, but one cannot stop the anger of people and I think people are saying that now has come the time that we must make a choice: Either on the side of the oppressed or on the side of the oppressor. And some people that have chosen to be on the side of the oppressor have to be ...face the consequences.

When one looks at violence this question often comes to us; what do you think about violence? Everybody is concerned but I would say that the apartheid regime is a violent regime; It is illegitimate and it uses violent methods to maintain that system, so whatever people, whatever means people resort to violence begets violence. And if people do resort to what to Westerners might be quite shocking, seeing people being burnt out and burnt bodies etc. the police is doing that to our people as well. People are disappearing and we find the charred bodies afterwards and that is just what violence actually brings about. It is, I would say that violence comes from the state.

JF I am interested that you brought up the disappearances because that the Mathew ? way for Hashe and all that. That has had so little publicity I think. Are people talking about that? The fact that people have been disappearing in the Eastern Cape?

A₂ Not only in the Eastern Cape, all over. I think the concern of most of the people when they heard that we were coming to Nairobi and meeting people from all over the world they said please tell the world about the people who are disappearing. It is an Argentinian type style of thing that has been removed from us, we can understand people dying in detention. I think that people could understand that the Botha regime was prepared to go so far, but people disappearing, and those we cannot account for now, I mean one thing on March 21st people who were shot in Uitenhage, there are bodies that haven't been produced now.

And people are actively involved; they are not scared any longer, with or without Reagan, they are prepared to go until the last drop of blood; Botha regime is saying and removing people who they feel threatened by. People challenging the apartheid regime and actively involved in community organisation that we can give no account of; we must say there is a case of...the Eastern Cape people that have disappeared mysteriously and there are sworn affidavits that they have been seen in detention. One person has been in the same cell; they went to the police, organisations

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A went to the police and say we heard that you are keeping these people and they deny that emphatically. Our concern is now that they have denied that they have these people, what are going to happen to them? We can only draw our own conclusions from that now. The logical conclusion of what will probably happen to them and it is of major concern. And people are talking about that all over.

JF Is that the PEPCO three that you are talking about? (Ja....) So were there any others besides the PEPCO three and the Craddock, where the 4 bodies were found?

A You can speak on the COSAS people who have disappeared as well and found murdered.

A You know recently in Eastern Cape again, there were eastern...there were COSAS students...

A Not only in E. Cape, even in Pretoria there are youth especially who just disappear. For eg. in Duduza there are about 6 youth who disappeared from early May up to now, they don't...and most of those youth belong to COSAS. Up to now they are not known where they are. There is no body, there is nothing. And then, no, we are not talking about this recently, where... I mean we were shocked with this grenade and they are claiming that the banned organisation send those people to bomb houses. But we know very well, those people were not trained; it is either somebody from the system gave them and then instructed them in a false name as the movement and instructed ^{them} to operate them like this, knowing very well they are not experienced and they are going to be killed.

Now I think it's important to mention like even for the international community to mention the names of those people we think they are still alive but this apartheid regime is just thinking what to do with them. It's either alternatively they are going to kill them; like Comrade Hashe, Comrade Gotloze and Comrade Kalela. I mean even Mrs. Hashe is in detention now. Her kid which was taken when..after the disappearance of her husband they took Mrs. Hashe and the kid in detention and the kid came back all the fingers, they cut all the fingers and the mother is still in detention. So that family has been disorganised completely; I think it is only one person who is there now and that very person the husband is Popa Mulefe; who is in detention too. And she is expecting worse of all, she is expecting a baby if she is not having her baby now.

Si, it is just inhuman level..I mean

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JF How does Popa Mulefe relate to Hashe? I'm sorry I don't understand?

A Popa Mulefe is..Hashe's daughter is Popa's wife.

JF I like what you said this conference is about womens' issues. What issues do you want to see addressed here? What are you telling people are the issues that need to be on the agenda here?

A We think, if we are talking about women's issues, as much as...I mean the women are suffering at home, they are organising to get out of their sufferings but we think there are important issues of the harassments and detentions of most of the women. There are women who are detained right now: they have done nothing but because of organising and mobilising the other women, and in particularising the Hashe case, is..needs to be mentioned because she is a woman; who is involved in PEWO; that is one of the reasons that the apartheid regime is focusing its..I mean on that particular family because the husband is in PEWO and....

JF If I were to ask you..tell me about one woman in S.A. that you can think of whose plight might indicate some of the issues you're trying to address.

A I can think of one woman in E.Cape who recently, end of May, her husband disappeared, with 2 other comrades and after that when she went to enquire from police stations, she was detained herself and the police went back to her house and detained everybody who were there and put police to guard the house. So no other people were able to come into that house because police were actually living in that house, guarding the house. And then they detained them and the kids, and one kid who came out from detention, came out with all fingers from the right side, cut. That was because of the torture she was receiving from the detention.

JF When you say disappeared, is this a new term in S.A.?

A I would say maybe as recent as last year that it has become a reality. I think even for us in W. Cape the repressive measures are not as severe as say Joberg and E. Cape. We have always been saying that we are fortunate people are detained, and we were not subjected to the torture methods that people have gone through in the other areas of S.A. But imagining people all back home in C.T. now trying to understand that people are just disappearing is just something that is totally out of our experience. I think that because it is happening so frequently and it's not just one

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A case, it has become the order of the day. That people are very aware of it and very concerned about it. And it also means as activists now we have to resort to all kinds of measures to ensure that we are safe, or people know where we are going to or even just going to the shop for eg. The Four men that disappeared and whose bodies were found later, they were fairly big, they weren't small frail men. They were all together in a car and if they could disappear, what about an activist going home alone at night, what could possibly happen to them.

And it..I think that people maybe at the beginning they sense panic and paranoia has stepped in but people are addressing the issue and I think as Indi? said earlier, that won't stop people, that won't stop resistance, it probably makes us more determined, that our struggle is a hard one but it's worthwhile, worth fighting for. (474)

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