

F.M.The whole tape?

J.F. Ja - I ultimately take quite a small part from it but I ...

F.M. Oh - I see.

J.F. I transcribe - get the whole thing transcribed.

F.M. No. I told you that early bit of it because I thought it's important - about how I grew up and all this - and my parents. Many people tend to think that the ANC is well-to-do people - come from middle class or something like that and all this. Especially those who are educated are supposed to come from that middle class. Just wanted to show there are people like me who don't come nearer that middle class - from poverty - from nothing. Any way - continue.

J.F. Would you mind if I shut this a tiny bit? It's no so hot and it's giving so much noise.

F.M. Yeah - just push. And then ...

J.F. And then do this?

F.M. Yeah - both sides.

J.F. Now maybe you can tell me a bit about the run up to the decision to embark on armed struggle. Partly because I think it's important generally because people in the West have trouble getting to grips with an armed struggle in South Africa although they accept it in other circumstances. But for me mainly because I think the other misapprehension about armed struggle is that it is anti-white - that it was blacks coming to a point where they decided that they wanted to kill whites - which of course (....?) a contributor to that understanding of things.

Again if you can think back to the kind of the debates that were held in those years of '59, '60, '61. Did you see it coming? I mean, was it something that was at all hard to accept or was it something that you were quite supportive of in the group you moved in?

F.M. Oh ja. No, there was absolutely no problems with us - it was quite clear - it was a logical step now - so we were all for it. But there were problems with the older generation and that is where the discussions were held and all this - because they had whole tradition of non-violence. Some of them had joined the ANC in 1927 and all these things - they were old men. And now to be told by Mandela, who's up there in Johannesburg, that this is time for armed struggle - this is nothing to do with the policy of the ANC and so forth. These were some of the questions which were argued and debated very seriously - but within the ANC.

J.F. And do you - did it represent in any way a decision that one couldn't reason with whites and this would be - that whites were going to get hurt and get killed and that was acceptable because so many blacks like your uncle and many, many thousands more had been killed? I mean, was there any element, you know, of militance of anti-white - not necessarily specifically, but ultimately anti-white militance?

- F.M. No. Actually, armed struggle was explained very clearly by the ANC in the manifesto of Umkhonto we Sizwe. This new organisation, Umkhonto we Sizwe, is fighting to further the aims of the liberation movement. Umkhonto we Sizwe is open to all racial groups in South Africa. Umkhonto Sizwe itself was non-racial in that sense - so there wouldn't be any way in which one could foresee a black/white confrontation. It would emerge in the locations - anyway in town - but it wouldn't be a policy of the ANC.
- J.F. What do you mean - it emerge?
- F.M. I'm talking about the reaction of the ordinary man in the street - We'll kill whites or something like that. But that wouldn't be a part of the policy or thinking of the ANC.
- J.F. And do you remember how you heard about Umkhonto - or did you see a slogan? - or did people talk about it? - or how did it come into your consciousness? - that it was a reality now?
- F.M. There was already talk, I mean, even in the '60s - I'm talking now before 1961 when Umkhonto was formed. But it was just talk among the young people - no man this thing can't go on and all this thing - we must fight back and all these things and what not. We were not aware the ANC leadership is thinking along those lines. I'm talking about now the time of the Pondoland revolts and in Natal and other areas where people were fighting with arms. So there was already quite a lot of talk in the locations among the young people: No, no we must fight now - we must get involved in armed struggle and all these things - only to discover that the ANC leadership is also thinking along those lines. So when we heard about the decision to form Umkhonto we Sizwe it was in line with our thinking so to say.
- J.F. But how did you hear about it?
- F.M. Oh well it was discussed and announced in ANC meetings - underground meetings - and people were being recruited from conduit activities and what not - sent abroad for training. When I left the country I wasn't sure where I was going to, I mean, it was either Umkhonto or school. I was just instructed to go to school.
- J.F. Because the the kind of line that's put out so often in the Western Press is that people are recruited saying they are going to be sent to study and then said they're trapped and sent to military training.
- F.M. No, no, no. When you leave the country you go to an ANC camp - not camp as such, but residence - and you are asked: Do you want to go to school or do you want to go to, want to go for training? And you take a decision. And then you go for training if you have decided. If you want to go to school first and come back for training - that's a different thing. But you choose - you are given a chance to choose - you're not forced.

- J.F. So what did you - what was your choice? Were you directed and willing to study or did you vow to join Um _____ ?
- F.M. To be honest, when I was in Dar-Es-Salaam I was not clear at that stage whether I should go and train or go for studies. But after some time I decided - I must go for studies first. I thought it would be three years: a B.A. is enough - and then go back and fight.
- J.F. And when you were still in South Africa - can you tell me about how you heard about (..P.O.P.O.?) and that - what its campaign was about and what people were saying about it? Did you in anyway think this is useful and this is at least striking a blow? How did you react to it? Did it seem anti- white?
- F.M. No, their actions didn't impress us much. I mean, I told you about the incident where they went to throw stones at prisons - one of the biggest prisons in South Africa - well fortified and all this - and how can you release prisoners by throwing stones? Stones which don't mean anything to prison walls. And their actions of killing five whites in Umbashe, I think - the river Bashe(?), Bashe River. And they had no real programme which could impress us - in any case we were deeply involved in ANC activities at that time. So we just thought these are misguided elements. Some of us were friends of course, I mean, social level; discuss with them, argue with them. But...
- J.F. What about the line that that it was necessary to shock the white population, a kind of MauMau approach - that that killing five whites would be, you know, a personal - at a level not acceptable but that ultimately one had to take that kind of action - that, as opposed to the kind of sabotage, non-anti-personnel line of the ANC. Did you ever try to talk about weighing those - whether there should be a terrorist, anti-white, anti-people, you know, campaign of killing vis-a-vis the few pylons and hitting installations?
- F.M. No, I wouldn't say we discussed that. I mean, there was general anger at the whites - the whites are doing this. I mean, it's a general feeling, there's no doubt it- but we're too advanced, so to say, to be thinking along those terms - we're schooled in ANC politics. And the anger was there - there's no doubt about it - all of us were angry at what's happening. And - but - we had to go through the disciplined structures and politics of the ANC. You couldn't do what you wanted - you were instructed to do something and you did it and fulfilled your duty.
- J.F. So you're saying if you hadn't gone through those discipline and varying processes you might have been more kind of anti-white and militant and - in in that way of articulating it. That it was in fact the ANC discipline that put you on a path of understanding and...?
- F.M. Oh ja, I think the ANC is crucial in that situation. The ANC has always been the force which guided people's actions and activities in that situation. All of us have to thank the ANC for our political maturity; our development; our perspectives and everything. Without the ANC there would have been chaos - or there would be chaos - or even more blood bath in that country.
- J.F. I'm saying - do you personally - if it hadn't been for that - getting into that track - might you have been one of those who would have supported - pushed towards more violence immediately or more anti-white action?
- F.M. Oh ja. Not only me, I mean everybody who is black and angry.

- J.F. Tell me a bit about that process of leaving the country and getting to be not less black and angry but more channelled of that. I mean, did you - did that happen immediately in the ANC environment or did that happen more when you began to study? I mean, how did you kind of move from feeling that there should be more militant action to supporting the ANC's approach which would not be in any way, you know, anything approaching the (.....?) kind of approach?
- F.M. Oh well, I mean when I was abroad I became exposed to many influences for the first time. When I came to Tanzania, then it was Tanganyika, - so in independent African nation - something which I've never seen in my life - I had to sign documents : nationality African - something I would never do in South Africa - you have to sign your tribal ethnic group. And these are small things but they have a liberating effect on your mind.
- And you go abroad to Europe - you meet whites who are not racists - and you read books which are not necessarily talking about your country but about other struggles and all these things. And this was the time of the Algerian revolution, by the way, and this had a very strong impact on some of us - and the Cuban revolution - successful revolutions. And reading, learning, discussing with other students from all over the world. Their problems broadened your perspective and you had to put that perspective in the context of the struggle in South Africa.
- J.F. Can you go a little bit further and tell me a bit more of the influences on you? And was there anythings that you read specifically that you think, you know, were important influences?
- F.M. As I said, the Cuban revolution, Algerian revolution, and later - Vietnamese struggle and so forth. And of course, Nkruma's works on Africa - later Cabral - and other revolutionary theoreticians - Franz Fanon and others. Of course, as time went on I had to look at them not for information as such but critical assessment - whether I agree with this or that or that and all those other things. Ja, I did get involved in quite a lot of reading as far as that is concerned - and discussions with other students - especially discussions surrounding Padmore's book ...
- J.F. Surrounding what?
- F.M. Padmore - Pan Africanism or Communism. Do you know the book? It was Padmore - it's a book which had a very great impact on certain generation of African freedom fighters - and it was widely debated in student's circles - I'm talking about African students now - the '60s.
- J.F. And what about Marx and Lenin?
- F.M. Oh ja, well, I mean, I studied that. I mean there was more than enough of that in in GDR where I studied - libraries, lectures, everywhere, radio, television. I did study that, ja.
- J.F. Had you read Marx before you got to GDR.
- F.M. No, I had seen the Communist Manifesto - I don't think I had read it.

J.F. And when did you go to GDR?

F.M. '63.

J.F. And how did you - can you remember how you felt going there? I mean, was there any sense of what's it going to be like going to a Communist country? Or even just - was it more more of an issue that it was a white, different kind of scene?

F.M. Ja. No, it had nothing to do with Communists as such - but the shock of living with whites - it's horrifying.

J.F. What? Before you went? Or as you got used to it?

F.M. Ja. I mean when I arrived there - when I arrived there. When I went there it was more idealistic and romantic and all this, Ja. But when you have to sit in a train for three hours from Leipzig to Berlin, surrounded by white people - all of them white - it's a terrible thought.

J.F. What do you mean? A terrible thought before you experienced it? Or as you experienced it?

F.M. You can't even cough, I mean, you just sit there like a statue - you don't know what they're going to think when you cough. Ja, ja, ja.

J.F. So it took a lot of getting used to?

F.M. Oh ja. You get used to it after some time. In South Africa there are no such things - you are there as blacks in your ghettos - when you travel you travel as blacks in your coaches - as blacks. And you see whites as people who are serving you - if they run shops and you go and buy sweets and go away - talking about town now. Oh you meet them in the streets and never think of them as people as such. I mean, it's a totally different thing when you are that young.

J.F. So did it take you a long time to get used to it?

F.M. No, no, it didn't it didn't - I'm just talking about the few first days - or perhaps the few first weeks. Ja. No, I overcame that.

J.F. Is there any experience that will illustrate how you overcame it?

F.M. No, no. It's just getting used to people: working with them in the classroom and teachers and everybody - friendly all over.

J.F. So where did you go? You went to Berlin and then to Leipzig?

F.M. No, no. I studied in Leipzig. I used to go to Berlin when there were ANC meetings or something like that - or when there's something important. But I was based in Leipzig.

J.F. And you did what degrees?

F.M. History.

- J.F. You did BA-then?
- F.M. No, there's no BA there. You do one course - five years - well, one year German and five years - something that which would be equivalent to a MA.. Then I did a PhD afterwards. That's why I was ten years there.
- J.F. So you did - you got a PhD in history?
- F.M. Ja, ja.
- J.F. And the first year was learning German?
- F.M. Ja.
- J.F. And where - why did you choose history? Was that a long process to decide, or...?
- F.M. No, no. I'd long thought about it - even at high school I was always against the writing of South African history - history we're taught. Shaka was a villain and Xhosa were thieves and this was that and that and that. The Africans are now occupying their traditional areas and what not. The whites came at the same time as the Africans - or perhaps the whites came earlier because they come from Cape Town and the Africans were still crossing the Limpopo and all those other things. These were some of the things I just never wouldn't accept, I mean - but I didn't know what the truth was so I felt it necessary to do a bit of reading. And when I do have time I'll write about these things - I've started writing.
- J.F. The history degree you did was in what area (....)?
- F.M. It was the inter-war period, 19...
- J.F. The what?
- F.M. Inter-war period - 1919 to 1939; that is, struggle of African people against colonialism and the contacts it had - specifically with the Comintern. That is something one would call international solidarity in the - in the '30s - '20s and '30s.
- J.F. And did that - and that's what you did your PhD?
- F.M. Ja.
- J.F. Did that form you more as a non-racialist on a theoretical level? I mean, if we can talk about that a bit.
- F.M. Ja, well, it gave me an insight into what people were thinking about Africa - What was discussed in Comintern congresses and conferences - the International Socialists - what they were saying and what the Africans were doing and saying themselves - about all problems - struggle against colonialism - about racism - about the international working class movement and so forth.

J.F. And - when I asked before about the perception of communism among African or black South African people - did that shed any light on that?

F.M. Ja, well, I had to do a bit on the history of the Communist party of South Africa and of course a bit on the ANC - and then the rest of sub-Saharan Africa; West Africa especially - and so forth - and their contacts - that was now in the '30s.

And of course, ja, I did get an insight on what is internationalism and that is looked at from the point of view of the whites because the early socialist in South Africa up to '24 - they were whites, because the party emerged from the white working class and this because Marxism emerged in Europe and spread to all parts of the world from Europe. It's not racial or anything like that.

Anyway, there was the other side of it, the internationalism of the Africans - groping towards solidarity and contacts with the other racial groups. And there were the early views of the Communist party which are now no longer accepted - that the immediate goal in South Africa is socialism - and that somehow undermined a very important aspect of the struggle - and that is the question of national emancipation of the blacks and Africans. And this whole debate converged on the what was called the Black Republic slogan - '28 - where the national liberation of the Africans and the blacks became the immediate goal which will lead to socialist transformation. Those are some of the problems I'm dealing with.

J.F. What about the...?

F.M. Emphasis.

J.F. I'd like to ask you the theoretical points - but just to start out with - on not really a theoretical point - more the experience - just - when you first read that material - I found in reading it - just, I mean, having no background at all - having read it for the first time - it was quite interesting to me to think about how a person like Moses Kotane would have interacted with the white leadership that was initially in CPSA. I mean, later he obviously asserted not only the black republic using his, his own influence - but just in the early days - the idea that a black peasant such as there still exists in his background, come come in to a CP night school and interact with all those whites, you know, in that era. I'm just wondering, you know, how it struck you just when you first began your work on that to kind of find out that that part of as an African student he wouldn't have read any of that in South Africa.

F.M. No, no, no I hadn't read that but, of course, I mean, I was reading the African Communist and Sechaba and other documents of the movement, trying to get to understand the movement.

J.F. In South Africa?

F.M. No, in the GDR - and I used to meet leaders of the ANC - Dr Dadoo, J.B. Marks, Gorton(?) I met, not in the GDR but in Moscow and in Africa. And I used to have discussions with these people about all these other things - Michael Harme was one of them. And it was through these discussions with them and of course my reading that I came to understand that early period. Of course, I went through the newspapers of the time and the documents which were available and so forth. And I got an insight into the history of the movement - and the roots of socialist ideas which are very deep in South Africa - deeper than in any part of Africa.

J.F. Did you speak to Kotane about those early years? I mean, I don't know, maybe it's not as fascinating to you as it is to me - but I just found to understand the personal interaction which laid the groundwork for the theoretical contributions and later maybe - it just seemed quite fascinating to think of of of those interactions.

F.M. No I didn't have real - no I had the time but Kotane was ill when I met him - so it was not good to disturb him and all those things. But I, I could get glimpses asking him questions about this - some of the things he had forgotten and some he could remember well and so forth. But as I said, he was in bed and couldn't go deeper into those questions. Suspect Brian of course knows more about such questions because he has written a book on them.

J.F. (...?)

(End Side 1 Tape 2)

- J.F. Well, maybe maybe I should ask whether that that that was a factor to you. I mean, I'm taking it from a point of view of somebody who doesn't know very much and is a white outsider and to me that was quite interesting - especially the kind of influence of Doug Wilton era - where you had whites who were actually over-riding a view and ...
- F.M. More educated.
- J.F. Ja.
- F.M. Ja, no, it impressed me very much - Kotane, Albert Nzula, and that generation which joined the Communist party in late '20s - J B Marks - they're inspiring, I mean - and in a sense you feel you want to be a J B Marks, a Moses Kotane - you know, that type of thing - but of course, can't happen overnight - years and years of struggle which will bring you to that. But their commitment to the struggle, to the principles of proletarian internationalism, to socialism and to African identity - and that is fighting for the aspirations of the Africans - that is in being internationalists: They didn't forget their African roots and their commitment to the cause of the African people and the whole concept of fighting with everybody - Christians and peasants, you know, that type of thing.
- And the ANC was such a platform and besides that there were other organisations which were being formed - civic organisations and such things. And Kotane and others were elected by the people perhaps not because they were communists but because they saw in them people who are actually expressing their wishes and ideals and aspirations. I think that is important, people had confidence in them because of their commitment to the struggle and this was reinforced by their Communist convictions.
- J.F. How how did you studying all those years and what you were learning and thinking about, relate to that African worker who stood up at that meeting and impressed you years before? I mean, Moses Kotane didn't go to university but you were going to university. I mean, how did you square that? How did you did you relate to that?
- F.M. No I didn't see it as a contradiction because I mean I came from a very poor family myself and that worker was reflecting my thinking and my environment - and Kotane was also continuing that tradition, so to say, not my tradition but the tradition of that worker. Now I'm thinking of Kotane when I started getting involved reading about him - so I saw a progression not so much from that worker but from Kotane to this worker and ... To me, it convinced me that the question of working-class leadership and the role of the working class - it's not an abstract theory from university libraries where I was, but it is a concrete political question which can be resolved in this struggle for day-to-day aspirations of the people, that is, fighting for bread and butter issues; that is where working class leadership comes in.
- J.F. How how does that relate to the belief in non-racialism? I mean, did it - was that something that was important to you in your studies? In the kind of things you were learning? I mean, you're you're stressing working class leadership which is African leadership - and how does how does that relate to non-racialism or was that a big issue for you?

- F.M. No, I mean, it was not a big issue because the workers are fighting for the restructuring of the economy, of the society - and there can't be any non-racialism in South Africa - practical - real-sense - unless all these evils are done away with - there's no national oppression; class exploitation is done away with and the questions of improvement of the social conditions of everybody - especially the blacks - uplifting the cultural and living conditions to that of the whites - that is the essence of non-racialism in South Africa - grappling with the day-to-day problems which are facing the people and bridging the gap between the blacks and the whites.
- J.F. You kept in touch with the people you were mentioning - are are older generation people - so you studied from '63 to '73. In the late '60s did you keep in touch in terms of what was going on in South Africa? Or were you reading about the Black Consciousness people were writing?
- F.M. Ja, ja. I was reading and writing about that, ja.
- J.F. Were there any people of that movement that you knew personally or ...?
- F.M. No, not really. This was a younger generation - when I left in '63 perhaps they were fifteen years old.
- J.F. And how did you feel about what they were writing? - What did, what did - when Bika led the walkout from (....?) and when he began writing the stuff he wrote in Fighting Talk(?)? Were you reading that at the same time?
- F.M. Ja, but I was not reading it constantly. I wouldn't get all the copies but I would get some copies of of Fighting Talk. Actually it brought me back to the early '60s - I felt perhaps this is what we're saying in ASA but perhaps we were not articulating it in this form - because ASA was interested in mobilising African students; and how many African students were at university at that time? Of course, very few. So it went beyond universities to high schools and all these things; conscientizing them to use the modern term.

But at the same time, because the ANC was not visibly there, they were in a sense, if I may put it crudely, surrogates to the ANC. They were representing the ANC in the sense that there was no public voice of the ANC, and the ANC was crippled because of arrests and killings and all the other things. But I was convinced that as the ANC emerges out of that situation the two will have to have a common platform, common ground - if not coming together at a later stage - with the ANC emerging as leader in that situation.

This, I think, was proved correct when a large number of students left the country in '76, after the Soweto uprising, and they joined the ANC - coming to the ANC with new experiences, with new backgrounds, different backgrounds, and with new militancy. And in that sense they contributed to the strengthening of the ANC and they also learned a lot from the ANC. And some of them, quite a number, most of them, rejected their former positions for the positions of the ANC. What I'm saying, there was a mutual fruitification - is that the right word? - fruition. Anyway the two organisations, or the two streams, strengthened each other and they were coming closer and closer to the ANC positions. That's why I can't accept the theories of Gail Gerhart when she says that the younger generation in South Africa is more closer to PAC than ANC - that's definitely not true, at least not now.

J.F. Do you think it ever was?

F.M. Perhaps at the initial stage when they saw the question as black versus white. But even there it was not a question of coming closer to the ANC - it was a question of stages in the development - and African Nationalism - because if you look at the leaders of the ANC, I mean they all start there whether it's Mandela or whoever. First consciousness is being anti-white and then they develop through practical political involvement in the struggle to this broad non-racial outlook of the ANC which they have brought from their own experiences, from the ghettos. It's not something which is imposed on them - it's something which comes out of the ghettos but undergoes transformation to a certain higher level.

J.F. So can you make a statement about how you saw non-racialism - I mean the South African struggle at that stage? I don't know if during your years studying in GDR you would have been at a different phase from where you are now of whether it's exactly how you feel now. I'm just wondering if through the kind of historical awakening and exploration that you were getting - just seeing, being able to have access to history which you didn't have, you know, in South Africa - and through those years of studying, you know, where - how you would have articulated non-racialism as an aspect of the South African struggle?

F.M. Well, I mean, when I was in the GDR I was a student involved in studies and not really involved in the practical political work as such - involved in ANC political work as far as our student community was involved in the GDR. But now of course I've been travelling a lot to many countries: Jamaica and perhaps almost all Caribbean countries, Vietnam, Kampuchea, India, Western Europe, Africa - meeting people, discussing with them - seeing their conditions and all those other things.

I've become more and more convinced that all of us throughout the world have a common aspiration - identity - that is the struggle against imperialism, colonialism, racism, threat to peace or world war, and all the other evils that are confronting us in South Africa. Apartheid may be a threat to world peace but in the context of South Africa, Namibia, Angola - it's a violation of peace and even Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana - they have been attacked. They are not that threatened - their people have died - economy damaged and so forth - so apartheid is more than a threat to peace - it is a violation of peace in that part of the world.

So we are fighting for peace like all the other people are fighting against nuclear weapons. Reagan is talking about militarist superiority over the Soviet Union - and to get this militarist superiority Reagan must get minerals which are very important for his military industrial complex and South Africa is rich in those minerals. So in fighting against apartheid we are in a sense also fighting for world peace because peace is violated in South Africa; because Reagan is strengthening his military industrial complex at our own expense.

- J.F. And that came out of those years in GDR? Is that - that's when you came to that point of view?
- F.M. Partly through that and partly through my practical involvement in direct politics in the ANC.
- J.F. Was there any aspect of that articulated theory that came through just dealing with people and not having racism be a factor? I mean, was racism not a factor in GDR? Was it just less of one - I mean, was that was that an issue that you could be in a train with all white people and not worry about anything?
- F.M. Well, as an African you are always conscious of your Africaness, that is one thing. But in the GDR, because of their past, with Hitler, struggle against fascism, racism in Germany during Second World War - the people and the government are very sensitive to race, racial issues, - also to racial remarks and all those other things. So there it was not a problem from that angle. But when you start thinking about South Africa, how to resolve those problems; how can we make our people have high standards of living when people start getting shot in Soweto and all those things. So those problems emerge very, very sharply in your mind and you look for solutions.
- J.F. And then you went - I guess, I guess I just should have asked you also - I mean, was there a lack of racism totally? Or did that - does that not ever cease to be an issue? I mean, did you ever encounter racism in GDR?
- F.M. Oh yes, you did meet one or two odd fellows who might say something to you - perhaps when they're drunk. But no, I don't think it was an issue - not on a national scale or anything like that. I suppose in any society there are those - people are out of the way.
- J.F. Was there a difference between that and in Britain now? I mean is there, was there more or less racism in Britain than in GDR?
- F.M. Oh well, in Britain, I mean, you get those racist remarks in the press or in television. You go to a pub - people start asking you: When are you boxing next? Said I'm boxing because I'm black I'm supposed to be a boxer - you know, that type of thing. So you get all these remarks and all those things and there is an organized racist group here - the National Front - and all these things. Times I see some fights here - the Chapel market - between the National Front who are not only racists but fascists with some radical groups - physical fights. So racism is endemic - I mean in this country - they feel they are threatened by the blacks and all this things. Blacks are being killed in Brixton and other places - I'm not talking about the police but even by ordinary thugs and racists. These are some of the things you would never see in the GDR.
- J.F. And when when you got your PhD you left GDR and went to ...?
- F.M. To Dar-Es-Salaam - Morogoro actually.
- J.F. And you were working?
- F.M. I was working locally there in Morogoro. But later on I had to go to Tanza- to Zambia which was becoming the headquarters of the ANC. I got involved in some publicity work there - producing Mayibuye and all these things.

J.F. What's that?

F.M. Mayibuye - it's a small journal of the ANC. Then it looked differently from what it is today. I'm sure you have seen it. And in October '65, I think, I went to Angola.

J.F. '75?

F.M. '75, '75.

J.F. And you talked about what it was like to come to a country like Tanganyika, Tanzania - which was achieving, achieved an independence through, with no violence really. What was it like to come to Angola which had had a bloody armed struggle which had led to its independence and then still having attacks; being (....?) under attack - was that an experience?

F.M. Ja, well, it was because, I mean, '75 Angola was still in a war situation. It is still now, I mean, but they had just succeeded to drive the Boers out of the country and they could come back at any time. It was not safe - UNITA - FLNA - were a threat and all those things. Talking about Luanda itself and - but you felt you are in a friendly country - in the true sense of the word - committed to the same ideals and people know what armed struggle is. It - were discussing, chatting, language was a problem - I don't know Portuguese, I don't know it now - and English was not very useful in that situation. But there were some comrades we knew - Portuguese or Spanish - so would get involved in some discussions and so forth. But you would feel and see the total commitment of the people and the government to our cause and our struggle.

J.F. But did you did you pick up any kind of lessons that you think would be useful in South Africa in terms of dealing, you know, understanding the independence, the struggle; the first level is not an easy road - that there's a continuing struggle?

F.M. Ja, ja. The need for a strong organisation which is leading the struggle and MPLA proved to be that. And that there will always be some forces even within the black community who are supported and abetted - nurtured by forces which are against the the cause of the revolution. The need for a strong army to defend the revolution and I mean these are obvious lessons one gets from the Angolan situation. And the need to balance the various - the relations between the ethnic groups and specially black and white in a community like that - at least like ours. That is very, very important and for the party organisation to develop theoretically - assess the situation and implement the decisions which are useful for the furtherance of the struggle.

And of course the significance of international solidarity - because without the Cuban troops - without international solidarity - the Angolan revolution would have been in trouble. In South Africa, I'm not saying we'll have Cuban troops or anything like that - but international solidarity is something we can't underestimate - and that comes in the question of non-racialism and all those other things. I'm talking now about the relationship between non-racialism and international solidarity.

- J.F. And when you mentioned that that big groups even form within the African population - the kind of UNITA elements - I mean, that's kind of the other side of non-racialism. I mean, you accept that there are whites that can be on the right side - you also understand that there are blacks that can be on the wrong side.
- F.M. Ja, ja - Gatscha Buthelezi or the Vigilantes, Croasroads.
- J.F. But do you see that as fitting into a non-racial analysis?
- F.M. No, what I'm saying, non-racialism means fighting against all the enemies of the people - whether they are black or white - and finding what is common; what is central; what is actually striking a common chord to unite the democratic and revolutionary forces - whether they are black, brown or white. Because we have the Rajbansis and the the coloured members of Parliament and Indian and so forth - they are definitely not on our side - they are on the enemy camp.
- J.F. O.K. I don't have that much more but I feel that I
- (End of side 2, tape 2)