

J.F. With everyone I start out with where were you born and when.

I.N. I was born in Johannesburg in 1936.

J.F. What part of Jo'burg.

I.N. It's a (.....) called Doornfontein, which is very central Johannesburg - this was a mixed area, area where so-called Indians, Coloureds, African population and a number of whites lived together - it was an area - a working class area where a tremendous amount of political activities have always taken place in the '30s and the '40s, where the ANC, the Indian Congress, were very active in that field - in that suburb itself - it's a suburb that has since been brought down - it has been declared an industrial area, and many of the houses in that area have been brought down and replaced by factories - the house where I lived in Okie Street (?) is well known in....

J.F. Okie Street?

I.N. Okie Street is well known in the movement - it has been in fact the centre of the movement from the '30s - many ANC meetings, many trade union meetings, many Indian Congress meetings were held there - my family lived in Rockie Street (?) right up to 1981 - in fact they already got notice to leave, to quit the place in the mid-'70s, but managed to fight and remain there right until '81 - I am told today the building is down - the city council intended putting up a parking lot, a parking lot building there, but nothing has been done - it's just lying empty - apparently it is being used as an empty parking space at the moment, but this is Doorfon (?) itself.

Politically it has been one of the centres in Johannesburg, specially in the trade union field - all around my house we had factories, engineering, clothing industry, meat processing plants, and in the '50s and the '60s in fact this is where SACTU had quite a bit of its space working within the factory itself - it was also an area that the - with quite a large Indian population and the Indian Congress in fact was very active there, even in the '30s in this area.

Today I'm told a few houses are still standing, I'm told that politically it is still a hot spot in the country, but of course that is all hearsay.

J.F. Rockie Street, wasn't that in Yeoville, or is there also one in Yeoville?

I.N. No, there are two Rockie Streets - there's a Rockie Street in Yeoville and a Rockie Street in Doornfontein - this is the Rockie Street well known in the movement - if you speak to people like Oliver Tambo, Nelson Mandela, they all still remember Rockie Street, Doornfontein as the centre.

J.F. Is it R o c k y o r e y?

I.N. E y.

J.F. Tell me, what about the relations between the race groups in the area where you were growing up - how did people interact - did you get prejudice between the groups?

I.N. No, there's never been any prejudices between the groups - in fact we were one solid group in the street - in Rockey Street itself my immediate neighbour was a so-called Coloured family.

I.N. Not far, three, four doors away, was an African family called Walters - two blocks away was a flat where many poor Jewish families and Afrikaner families lived - in Doornfontein itself I never remember any form of racial discrimination amongst the residents there - we played soccer - in fact almost every street had a soccer team of its own, and in my team in Rokeby Street we had Indian, African, Coloured, white all playing together - as kids we never experienced any form of discrimination.

However, in terms of schooling all of us schooled in racially segregated schools - the African kids went to school in the African schools - I went to school in - at the Gold Street Indian government school, which is about three kilometers from home - directly opposite was the Coloured school, where the Coloureds went to school, and the white kids all went to the white schools, but when we got back from school we mingled, we played together, and there was never any form of racial discrimination.

When it came to other forms of entertainment, entertainment such as cinema, of course naturally the white kids went to the white cinemas and the black kids all went to the black cinemas - two cinemas in the area which was (?) patronised by all in that area - in the official sporting programmes, there again they were completely segregated - Indian had their own official Indian Sporting Association, the Coloureds had their own, the Africans had their own, and the whites had their own.

It is only in the '50s where the black population started integrating sporting activities - I remember very clearly talking of the South African Indian Football Association, or the South African Indian Football Team versus the South African African Football Team, or (?) annually there used to be a tournament, a tournament of the African Association, Indian Association, the Coloured Association, and they played for a cup annually, and this was our big sporting event, but of course at that time this was regarded as a progressive move, as a move where the various racial groups, although playing as racial units, came together and viewed the soccer matches, but this of course changed in the '50s when the South African Soccer Federation was formed, and the South African Soccer Federation was formed on a non-racial basis, and this was an advancement - it's a new field where all sporting facilities were integrated completely.

Today you'll find of course non-racial sports taking place in a very, very big way - although you find still the government, the regime itself still trying to foster separate sporting facilities for the various black population - the so-called South African Olympic Games, for example, where you still have Indian teams, Coloured teams, African teams and white teams playing, but this effort in the '50s to try and smash this and form non-racial sports took a tremendous stride in the '50s, not only in soccer but in cricket, tennis and other fields.

However, from Doornfontein itself the first group to really be moved from Doornfontein were the African population - already by the '50s, middle '50s, the African population were forcefully moved from there, moved to areas like then Sophiatown and Soweto, which was just coming up then - by the late '50s we had very, very few Africans living there - with the white population, the white population too started moving out - we found the slightly better off Jewish and Afrikaner - Jewish population moving towards the northern suburbs - moving to Upper Doornfontein, which is Beit Street, thereafter moving to Berea, Yeoville, Hillbrow, and going further north, Parktown etc.

I.N. The Indian and Coloured population managed to survive Doornfontein right through the '60s - although our population was being depleted tremendously - the Indian township of Lenasia, which proclaimed Indian area in the '50s, the movement fought the proclamation of Lenasia - we rejected the idea of an Indian - separate Indian area, and tremendous campaigns were launched by the Indian Congress and the movement as a whole to fight the proclamation of Lenasia as an Indian area.

However, for years and years the movement succeeded - although I must point out that the people that lived in Doornfontein, Fordsberg, Vri-dedorp, were living under dreadful conditions - many of our people were living two and three families - four families - in a house - I'll give you an example - not far from my house there was an Indian family- they shared three rooms in a house and there were 13 members in the family - where these people slept, how they slept, nobody knew.

You find other houses again where three, four (?) brothers, married, having their own kids, living in the same house - there was a tremendous housing shortage - even if you had a small room in the back of your house, that room became a little paradise for somebody - and in spite of this tremendous housing shortage, when the movement rejected Lenasia, people did not move to Lenasia.

Of course the government then decided to force the Indian people to moving to Lenasia - the first thing they did was to close down the Indian schools in these areas, areas like Doornfontein, Jeppe, Denver, Fordsber, Vri-dedorp, and opened up schools in Lenasia - at the beginning the government provided free transport for kids from town to move to Lenasia for school - subsequently of course it no longer became free - they had to pay.

It was a question of our kids travelling 25 miles daily to Lens and back again, and it was a tremendous difficult task - this is one of the reasons that forced many of our people to start leaving Doornfontein and other areas - of course, as I said earlier, there was a tremendous accommodation problem as well, so these two reasons was the ones that forced many of our people to move, but in spite of this, up to 1960 very few people had already moved to Lens.

In the meantime of course the houses were being either sold or - they're not privately owned - they were owned either by white individuals or by big estate agents - for example, the house we lived in was the property of Chaitowitz - Chaitowitz, a old Jewish man who had lots of properties all over Johannesburg - he used to come around in a horse and cart every month to collect his rent - when anything goes wrong in the house, if the plumbing is broken down, he'd accuse us of breaking the plumbing - he would stand outside the house and shout : I'm here, I'm here, come bring us your money - and we'll go out to pay him his monthly rent.

He attempted in the late '50s - I beg your pardon, early '50s to try to raise the rent - we paid a very, very small rent - right up to the time we left the house in 1981 our rent was very, very low - he tried to raise the rent and my father fought him - my father in fact took the matter to the Rent Control Board, and eventually from five pounds he got an increase to seven pounds - we paid a rent of seven pounds - he wanted something like 20 pounds.

When I left home in 1977 we were paying something like 30 rand a month rent, and this is because we were able to fight the rent control all the way (?)

I.N. But, as I said, he subsequently died and his family took over the property (.....) property, and they felt that they - they were not - they wouldn't like to demolish what the father gave them, and as a result for many years they refused to sell - while the city council fought it all the way and they wanted to buy it, and eventually in the '70s it was sold - many of these houses, as I said, have subsequently been broken down - factories have been built, and today I would think there is a very, very small population.

When I came out of prison after ten years there was a tremendous change - houses - friends that were there were no longer there - there's hardly a population that one could talk about - in Rockey Street itself it was our house that was still standing, five cottages in a row, and there were another group of cottages there on the one corner - the flat that the whites occupied was still being occupied by whites, but much more poorer white section - this in Doornfontein itself.

The economic activities in Doornfontein - majority of the people in Doornfontein were factory workers, machinists, unskilled work - others again were flower sellers - in fact Doornfontein is well known for being a centre of flower sellers - many of the Indian population - Indians would go to the market itself early morning, five, six in the morning, buy flowers, bring it back to the house and make them into beautiful bunches, adding additional flowers to it and whatnot, and then go either from house to house carrying it and selling it, or stand at certain corners selling flowers, and this was one of the major economic activities.

The other was waiters - many of them were waiters as well - so predominantly the major economic activity was factory workers, flower sellers and waiters....

J.F. And your father, what was he doing?

I.N. Well, I have a very long history in terms of my family (Laugh) - my grandfather himself was one of the founding members of the Transvaal Indian Congress, he was....

J.F. What was his name?

I.N. Thambi - T h a m b i.

J.F. And is Indres with an E or an I....

I.N. I n d r e s - Thambi Naidoo himself was very active in the TIC in the early part of the century, a close colleague of Mahatma Gandhi, worked with him - he was a small time businessman, but lost everything as a result of going to jail 14 times....

J.F. During?

I.N. The early part of the century.

J.F. With Gandhi's....

I.N. Gandhi's (.....) struggle - satyagraha resistance campaigns - as I say, he lost everything at that time - my grandmother herself was also an active person - in fact she gave birth while she was in prison to her last child.

I.N. My father, at a young was sent off with Mahatma Gandhi to India - he and three other brothers, on the basis that my grandfather could not look after them and continue the struggle at home, and my father at the age of seven went to India, studied under Mahatma Gandhi and (... ..)

J.F. And?

I.N. (... ..) the Indian philosopher, Thago.

J.F. Can you spell the whole name?

I.N. Oh, now you're asking me something (Laugh) - I'll find the spelling later - he was an - an Indian philosopher in the '30s, '20s - I think died some time in the '40s - my father and his three brothers returned to South Africa in - at the age of 21, and immediately my father got involved in the political struggle - he was a vehicle (?) - his original - originally he worked in the laundry, dry cleaners, collecting clothing from people, taking it to the big dry cleaners - he was one of the founders of the Laundry Workers Union in the '30s, subsequently worked as a baker van driver, and was also one of the founding members of the Bakers Union with various people like - he was involved in the trade union movement with people like J.B. Marks, Moses Kotane and others.

During the war my dad was very active firstly in the non-participation of - of blacks in the Second World War - also at that time there was a tremendous shortage of food and whatnot, and my father and others organised in fact to go and get food to people - firstly they managed to buy food and sell them to the people at a very, very low rate - secondly one of the big campaigns was - I remember very, very clearly - is they used to go into some of the Indian shops who used to hoard food at the back, and they used to barge into the shop, get into the back, find bags of rice and sugar and whatnot and bring them out, put them out there, and put a notice saying rice available, sugar available, and people would come and buy these things.

He was very closely associated with people like Bram Fischer - during the '30s when the nationalist bloc of the TIC was formed by Dr. Dadoo and others my dad - my father was amongst them, which fought the reactionary leadership of the Indian Congress - in fact in the campaigns of the 1945 when Dr. Dadoo and - in the Transvaal - and Dr. Naicker in Natal who owned (were in) the leadership of the Indian Congress - my dad was very active in this field.

My dad, during defiance campaign in '52, he was elected as welfare officer of the defiance campaign - he was also active in the South African Peace Council - he was the chairman of the South African Peace Council - my dad went to jail first in 1936, went again to jail in 1946 during passive resistance as well....

J.F. '36 was in connection with what?

I.N. Passive resistance - and again in '52 during defiance campaign - he has been altogether about six times in jail - the longest term he served was three months all in all - he died in 1953, and in '54 he was given a peace award posthumous, South African Peace Award.

I.N. He was also very active in the Association of Flower Sellers - he was trying to organise the flower sellers - in fact he was organising all trade union movements at that time - he was also involved in community work - for example, he was the chairperson of the Temple Committee, although he very rarely went to temple - in fact he never went there for a prayer service, but he was the chairperson of it, and of course it was felt in the movement that it is important that progressive people led all these com - community organisations, and therefore my father was involved in it.

He was also the chairperson of the Transvaal Tamil Benefit Society, which was also a community organisation, but the important thing here is that there was a section of the Tamil community that always talked proudly never narrow nationalistic outlook - talked of the Tamil community as being pure and being the first people to read and write and etc., and they were pushing the very narrow Tamil racist line forward.

I must point out to you that this is a very small sector of the population, and the progressive group had to fight them tooth and nail from the beginning, and hence my father played a very important role being a chairperson of it for many, many years in fact, and using also this organisation to bring in people into the movement.

Whether my father was a member of the South African Communist Party or not I cannot tell - however, I do remember that, as a little kid, 1940, '41, going to houses of prominent members of the Communist Party then - people like Bram Fischer - also remember that J.B. Marks, Moses Kotane, Bopa Pela (?) and others, constantly coming home and having discussions.

I also remember going to the Communist Party hall in End Street - I still remember the address very clearly, 47 End Street - this was the Johannesburg centre - central branch of the Communist Party - and as kids I used to go quite often there for meetings, for social events, etc., and Dr. Dadoo himself was a very close friend of the family - I don't know what else you want to know about.

J.F. I've got lots of things - did you tell me his first name, your father?

I.N. Well, people - his name was Naran - N a r a n, but popularly know as Roy - one little incident I must tell you about is that my father was a great organiser in terms of collecting money and food - he would - he was almost stone deaf and he wore a hearing aid - people called him Telephone Naidoo - he was one of the first people at that time to wear a hearing aid, which is very, very efficient - it was a big bulky thing that went over the ear, big microphone here in the shirt pocket and two huge batteries in the side pocket.

He'll go into an Indian merchant and says : Oh, well, Mr. Patel, I want two bags of rice, two bags of this and two bags of - and (..... ..) will start arguing, and the minute he starts arguing my father turn off the hearing aid and my father would not be able to hear a word of what than man says, and then they say to the assistant : Joseph, please take two bags of rice and two - and the man would scream his guts out, but the rice would be going into the car, and this is for the ANC - for the movement itself - you know, big mass conferences or whatever is being organised, and food had to be collected.

He - in this field he was - he excelled really - I mean he collected lots and lots of money - he used to walk into a shop, look at the name of the shop and say : Oh, that shop called Patel's - and walk in and say : Hello, Mr. Patel.

I.N. Of course my father being Tamil speaking, no-one expected him to speak Gujerati, but then when this chap starts complaining in Gujerati my father would answer back in Gujerati, and they'd get the shock of their life that this old man spoke Gujerati, and this is how he used to collect food - that is why during defiance campaign my father was made head of the welfare during defiance campaign.

Also whenever there was natural disasters, disasters like a tornado in Springs, which virtually devastated the black area....

J.F. Tornado where?

I.N. Tornado that devastated a black area in Sp - in Benoni - my father would be one of the leading people to go and collect food, clothing, pots and pans - I remember very clearly in the very early '50s - '40s, I beg your pardon, two truckloads of food and whatnot, and I was sitting in the back of the truck while it was being driven into this tornado-stricken area, and when we got there there was tremendous joy amongst the people - although the Red Cross and other organisations were already there, you know, attending to the needs of the people, but the minute our transport arrived there was tremendous cheers amongst the people.

Of course we wanted it to be known that this is from the movement itself, while the Red Cross would say : No, no, no, give it to us and we will do the distribution - they might have had the infrastructure for the distribution, but we wanted it to be known that this was from the movement - and that was the type of activity that he was involved in.

J.F. When you say the movement at that stage you meant the TIC?

I.N. Well, you see, while the TIC - while we were all members of the TIC, there was very close collaboration already between the ANC and the Communist Party itself - far as I'm concerned in my household (?) you know, we never even really talked in terms of this, because people that came to my home were people like J.B. Marks, etc., you see, and this was the position as a whole - any more questions - I can talk from now till Doomsday - you've got to stop me!

J.F. I'll just intersperse with questions - first of all, was there any sense from your father of Gandhi's class position, of the level of a mass base he had - there's a lot of looking back at Gandhi and looking at his alliance with more of the merchant class, yet your father was one who was organising workers - at the time your grandfather was involved with Gandhi he was more well to do, then lost it because of involvement - did you get a sense that Gandhi was terrific, was unassailable - did your father give a sense of Gandhi as having had any not failings but limitations, shall we say?

I.N. Yes, although - let's put it this way - to mobilise the Indian people in the '40s and the '50s during defiance campaign, during passive resistance struggle of 1946 up to defiance campaign, it was necessary to use the Gandhian philosophy - Gandhi had become a demi-god amongst the Indian people - you'd go to almost any Indian home, without any exception you'd find a photograph of Gandhi in the house - not only would you find a photograph but you also find a garland put over the photograph....

J.F. A what?

I.N. A flower - a garland put over the photograph.

I.N. Gandhi had become a - what's the term - a saintly figure amongst our people, and therefore as a tactic it was necessary to use the Gandhian philosophy to mobilise our people - I remember very clearly first of all my grandfather - I was told my grandfather would go into a house and he would say ; From this house I want four people to defy - and you'd get four people defying in this house - he'd go to the next house and say : I want three people to defy from this house - and you'd get three people defying from this house.

There was a problem of the Tamil speaking and the Gujerati speaking and the merchant class, that is in the '20s and '30s, but my grandfather succeeded in getting so many people to defy at a time.

J.F. What was the problem of Tamil, Gujerati and merchant - are you saying they're all against each other or what do you mean?

I.N. There has been this inter-racial conflict....

J.F. Inter-ethnic....

I.N. Inter-ethnic conflict which has always been there, you see, and the movement always fought against this.

J.F. So tell me a little bit - what's - what was the differences between Tamil - I know there are two languages but are they two religions, are they two....

I.N. No, no - firstly....

J.F. They're both Hindu?

I.N. Firstly we - the Indian population in South Africa could be roughly divided into three - first you have the Hindu section, and then you have the Moslem section - that's the first major division - but within the Hindu section you have the Tamil speaking and you have the Gujerati speaking - the Tamil speaking comes - forefathers come predominantly from south India, what is known as the (.....) people, then you have the north Indians, who are Gujerati speaking.

Of course you could further divide them, you see, but I don't think for our purposes that it's of any importance - at that stage, through the racial policy of the government and through ethnic and other reasons, there was a - they lived separately - there wasn't much love lost between them....

J.F. Between Tamil and Gujerati?

I.N. And the Moslem population - while religiously the Hindu group, Tamil and the Gujerati speaking, would come together, you know, and worship together, but you had what is called the Hindu (.....) which consisted of the Gujerati speaking, you had the Tamil Benefit Society, which consisted of the Tamil people, and there was this antagonism, and then further antagonism with the Moslem people, you see, and the movement fought this right through - and I would think, you know, that Mahatma Gandhi himself positively fought to try and bring about a unity of these people, and the - my grandfather was one of those who positively fought to try and smash any ethnic grouping within the people itself.

That is why when I say to you that my father was the chairman of the Tamil Benfit Society, the reason is to fight any reactionary forces from taking over and using the Tamil Benefit Society for a - a narrow nationalistic position.

I.N. And right up to the time of my arrest, even today, I could safely say that we have succeeded in breaking any ethnic division amongst the people.

J.F. And what about the class divisions?

I.N. Yes, there was quite a class division - you had majority of the working - the Indian people in South Africa come from working class - the area that I came from, as I said to you, majority were in the working class area - of course when you say self-employed, selling flowers - that is self-employed - we did have a - a merchant class population - we still have a merchant class population, but the movement itself, you know, was able to bring about a unity of the merchant class and the working class itself - hence when I say that my father in the '40s would go into a shop and demand so many bags of rice, if this chap was a totally reactionary chap he would grab my father by the collar and kick him out.

But the question again is the Gandhi philosophy played an important role - we used the Gandhian philosophy to bring about unity of the people - on the other hand again in 1948 you had the Dadoo-Xuma Pact being signed - how did this pact come to be signed - I mean surely you must have had lots of opposition to it amongst Indian people - you know, the Indian people still claimed that they were involved in the pol - united political struggle long before anybody else was involved, going back to 1894, and in fact the NIC is, without doubt, the oldest political organisation in the country.

But it is the work that was done by people like Dr. Dadoo, Molvi Cachalia, the Pahads, my father and others, who brought about this unity, you know - from the time when the progressive leadership took over the Indian Congress in 1945, it has been a constant fight to break this, and Dr. Dadoo, without doubt, stands out in South Africa today as one of the greatest contributor towards bringing about this unity.

My personal experience of the - I was there when the Dadoo-Xuma-Naicker Pact was signed, and my little experience then - what I could remember then is it was welcomed tremendously - it was a very, very important occasion - '48 it was?

J.F. '47.

I.N. '47 - '47 - then we had the riots that take place subsequently, '48 in Durban - in my household I remember very clearly discussion taking place, discussion between our leadership - people like J.B. Marks, Moses Kotane, my father, Dadoo - that these riots that take place in Durban is actually the reaction of the government to the Dadoo-Xuma-Naicker Pact, fearing that this pact will mean doom to them, and at all costs they had to try and divide the population again - it's the old story of divide and rule policy - and my father was amongst those that were sent down to Durban to bring peace in Durban during the heat of the - during the height of the riots itself.

And I heard my father talking, of saying that he and the group of people walked down Gray Street, where the heart of the trouble was taking place, and nobody would touch them - people would say : Oh, no, that's Congress - and in fact with my little knowledge of that period, I could very, very safely say that it's the movement that really brought about peace in the end there, while of course the official version is the South African police and the South African government intervened and they brought peace and calm, but it's our people that really went into the area and brought about peace and calm.

- J.F. Was your father involved in the militant faction that overthrew the merchant class leaders of the Indian Congress?
- I.N. Yes - as I said to you, my father was part of what is known as the nationalist bloc of the TIC - in fact there's a beautiful photograph showing 13 of our leaders, my father, Cachalia, Dadoo, and an old man who's still alive in Johannesburg and kicking by the name of Amin Rajee - I'll show you his picture later - here it is - still alive and kicking in.....

END OF SIDE ONE.

- J.F. there was of course prejudice from Champion and Lembede - there was even kind of petty criticism in Natal because of the two to one relationship with Indians and Africans, and there was a headline in Inkundla that said Natal restive at news of doctors pact - was that the kind of thing you were aware of - you speak of it as a great victory and historically it stands out as that, but can you gloss over the kind of currents of resistance on a lower mass level?
- I.N. Firstly, historically it was a victory - I mean that is evident from what you see today - true, there was a tremendous amount of resistance from all levels - I could talk of the resistance among the Indian community....
- J.F. Was there Indian....
- I.N. Oh, yes, there was - in fact the - an organisation called the Natal Indian Organisation and the Transvaal Indian Organisation, which in fact was the organis - a group of people that were ousted by the progressive group in the TIC - they were kicked out, ousted, and they then went and formed their own organisation called the Transvaal Indian Organisation and Natal Indian Organisation, led by people like Nana, Pather in Natal, Rajee - these were - to put them in the right perspective, were the merchant class leadership of the Indian people before the Dadoo-Naicker takeover of the Indian Congress.

These were people that worked even after the takeover, right up to the middle '50s, in opposition to the Indian Congress, and they felt in fact very strongly the Indian nationalism amongst themselves - they talked of the Indian people, the proud tradition etc., etc. - this is one group that totally opposed any form of unity with the ANC at that time, but even in - at a more grassroots level, talking from the Doornfontein clan, Fordsberg clan, yes, from house to house we used to go - we used to work amongst the people.

I used to sell the newspapers of the movement from - from '46 onwards, and I was in dynamic (?) contact in fact with the grassroots level of the people in that I used to go house to house - there was tremendous amount of resistance amongst our people (.....) - the Indian Congress had to work very hard, organising house meetings showing the - that the struggle itself was one....

- J.F. Let me ask you - you can get that out of the history books as to what - that there was resistance, but if you remember - you were a bit young then for the actual signing, but as you tried to build alliance between the Congresses into the '50s and you yourself got involved, what was that resistance about - was it a kind of (.....) thing.

- J.F. Did people - what would they say in a (.....) - would they say : Look, they'll kill us, remember '49 - what would they actually say?
- I.N. Pill - Pill (?) in fact - there was always a fear that the African people will eventually drive us out of the country, will completely, you know - we would disappear as a people - it was the same line which today you'll find amongst the Afrikaaner people taking place, but I must say that the Congress movement itself, you know, were able to fight against this - I used to go from house to house selling newspapers and I got kicked out of many of them - many of the houses, you know - the minute I walk in, knock at the door, some (.....) : Oh, you, Congress, get out, I don't want to see you - and yet during the passive resistance struggle of 1946 you wouldn't have found that.

That time it was an Indian campaign and we had this almost solid backing of the Indian population, but coming now to the Dadoo-Xuma Pact, I was kicked out of many - there was this genuine fear that the Indian people being a minority, will be swallowed up by the African people and that the African people were not organised as a political force, and of course various racial incidents were brought to play immediately, particularly in Natal where we had small racial incidents taking place everywhere - if you remember - if you look at the Indian population, you know, inter-marriage amongst the Indian population is something very new.

J.F. Inter-marriage even among ethnic groups....

I.N. Even bet - even between ethnic gr - even to take it a stage further, you know, within the Tamil community you have virtually the class - a caste system, and inter-marriage between the castes was relatively unknown - I remember seeing pitch battles taking place, particularly in Pretoria, where a Naidoo girl and a Pillay boy would go out together or would get married, and there'd be a pitch battle between the Naidoos and the Pillays, literally pitch battles....

J.F. Just because they're different families?

I.N. The caste system.

J.F. So what caste positions did the Naidoos and the Pillays (.....)?

I.N. That's difficult to say now, you see - no, I really am not too sure - I couldn't give you the real class (caste) position....

J.F. But tell me....

I.N. They all came from the working class all the same.

J.F. I understand that - how did you get beyond it - I guess what I'm trying to ascertain and to get views on and to get experiences on is how people moved beyond those prejudices - what was the formula for victory to get a very narrow Indian family that didn't have experience of Africans - let's face it, the language was a barrier, they seemed different, they - even Coloureds, they lived differently, their culture is different - there was a strong Indian culture and a strong African culture - how could they get to work together - even for you what was that stepping-stone - what made people be able to transcend those gulfs?

I.N. Well, with me I think you can't take me into account really, because already in my family there was total integration.

I.N. From childhood my house was a place where all sectors of the population came in and out, so I wouldn't be a good - my household wouldn't be a good example, or for that matter, even the area where I lived in - but in the Transvaal, although you had areas which were predominantly Indian - for example, let's take Pretoria as a base - we had the Indian, or what was known as the Asiatic Bazaar - right next to it we had the Coloured area called Cape Section, and on the other side again we had the African section, you see, but they mingled quite closely and sport, as I said, played a very important role particularly in this time.

It was, as I said (?) a progressive move when we had the inter-racial soccer matches that time - it was a move that was never heard of in the '30s, but in the '40s you had - late '40s and the '50s we had the inter-racial - it was a step in the right direction - the Indian Congress was quite powerful, and I must say that amongst the Indian population many of the leaders had very, very close contact, if not were members of the South African Communist Party.

During the war days it was very fashionable to become a member of the SACP, and many of them joined the SACP, and the field work done by the Indian Congress, and particularly by the Indian Youth Congress, going from house to house, took a lot of working amongst the Indian people - and of course we always brought (?) about the historical prospect, the Gandhian struggle, to show the need for unity - the first question was unity amongst the Indian people itself, which by 1946, I've got no doubt, was to a very great extent solved.

The next step was the unity amongst the people of South Africa itself, and I think living side by side with the other racial groups helped a great deal to bring about this unity.

J.F. We've spent so much time on the history - tell me about your own involvement - you - did you go to that congress....

I.N. Of the people?

J.F. Even before - did you go to the Indian Central High School?

I.N. No, that was before my time.

J.F. Didn't Aziz....

I.N. Well, Aziz is much younger than me - Aziz is much younger than me.

J.F. So tell me yourself what your involvement was - you saw the takeover of the Indian Congresses and the militant tendency moving in that - you saw the change, you saw the progressives win out through your own father's history - what was your involvement - did you join the youth league of the Indian Congress?

I.N. Oh, well, I wouldn't - I wouldn't say really I joined - I was already there - as I was saying, I already - in '46 I was studying the newspapers of the Indian Congress....

J.F. What were....

I.N. The passive resistance, and subsequently a paper called Spark, and the other newspaper called Guardian....

J.F. The Congress papers?

I.N. And the Congress paper called Guardian - magazines like Fighting Talk, Liberation - already in the '40s I was studying them.

I.N. But my first major political activities really comes when I got to high school - Johannesburg Indian High School - there I was brought into the committee of the Indian Youth Congress and became actively involved - it was during the defiance campaign - before the defiance campaign in fact, but then during the defiance campaign itself we were there, and subsequently the arrest of our leaders for sedition, where we then brought out the school on strike - this was the most incredible strike I remember - we were 1,500 students - our leadership, 13 of them were appearing - charged with sedition - Dr. Dadoo, Moses Kotane, J.B. Marks - it's just what we need (Laugh)

We then called out the school on strike - we worked very hard for two days - we distributed leaflets, but the more important than the distributing of leaflets was how - from mouth to mouth - going to students talking to them, giving them the historical importance of attending this trial - during the boycott itself only 50 kids attended school - the rest assembled outside the school - amongst of course the 50 that attended school was one of my best friends, I'm ashamed to say that (Laugh) and we marched from the school from Fordsberg into town - we met the Wits students coming from Wits, we met the students coming from Soweto and Sophiatown, all in centre of town, and we marched and - en masse to the magistrates court.

This was one of the most successful campaigns, and that school of ours, in fact Ossie - Essop Pahad was the school - people like Mosi Mochla, who is our chief rep now in India, was in that school, and we had that school really tied down politically - I mean it was 100 percent stronghold of the Congress movement - a few days later we were told that - when we went back to school the ringleaders were called - we had an Afrikaaner as a principal - we were called onto the stage or whatever it was and we were given a hell of a dressing down and we were given six strokes for leading the strike - I was the youngest of that group.

However, I heard subsequently - we heard subsequently that one of the teachers by the name of Smith - he was the vice principal of the school, and he was looking after the 50 students that didn't participate, and he said to them : You know, you chaps are traitors to the Indian community, I'll have nothing to do with you - and he walked out - subsequently Smith became the principal of the school, but I don't know what- ever happened to him - I heard he used to be active in the Liberal Party, but he has completely disappeared.

But the school activities we never - in fact we took up every issue - for example, we had a teacher by the - English teacher by the name of Mrs. Goode teaching a class of girls - she asked the class what's the meaning of democracy, and one of the girls got up and after speaking on what democracy is, turned around and said : South Africa is not a democratic country - and this teacher got mad and this teacher went and said : Ah, you koelies are like this, you koelies are like that, you koelies are dirty, you know - and she went at length in this way.

That lunch break we met - we got together, had a meeting, and we decided that we're going to have a protest - next morning we had a demonstration outside the school, an open letter to the teacher - the letter simply stated : Yes, you call us dirty, but while you white you have a nanny to look after the baby, your nanny to do this, your nanny to do that, you know - and giving a historical background, and this woman was so shocked that she gave notice immediately - she quit South Africa immediately - I mean I can go on endlessly like this - but then I first got onto the committee of the Transvaal Indian Con - Youth Congress in 1954, just after my dad passed away, and I was - I've been in the executive right up to the time of my arrest.

J.F. Of the youth?

- I.N. Of the youth movement - in 1960 I was elected onto the senior congress, which I remained right up to the time of my arrest.
- J.F. And to the TIC itself on the executive?
- I.N. On the executive.
- J.F. Was it a particular position or?
- I.N. No, just an exe - on the TIYC I had many positions from secretary, treasurer - at the time of my arrest in '63 I was secretary of the TIYC.
- J.F. And when you left - when did you leave school and what did you do then?
- I.N. My dad passed away in '53 and at that time I was in JC - that is what I suppose is equivalent to O Levels - I was forced to leave school immediately after that, and then I had to work.
- J.F. How many kids in the family?
- I.N. We are four - five altogether.
- J.F. And what were you - were you the oldest, were you the....
- I.N. Second eldest, my sister being the eldest - they're all involved in the movement - I've got two sisters in exile in London - I've got one brother who's at the moment underground.
- J.F. (.....)
- I.N. Mmm - you know of him - and I've got the other brother who's also active but still in the country and fortunately (.....) anything - so really I mean to be frank with you, the whole family, you know, including my mother, by the way - she went to jail in 1936, she went to jail in '46, she went to jail in '52 - she's now vice president of the Transvaal Indian Congress and she's still actively involved, as old as she is - she's now 77.
- J.F. What's her first name again?
- I.N. Her first name is really meaningless - people call her Ama (Laugh) - people call her Ama so - everybody called her Ama, you see.
- J.F. You were saying you had to leave school - what did you do?
- I.N. Oh, well, I worked first in a big wholesale company selling shoes - I had various jobs, the - the shoe company - I worked for a shoe company for four or five years - then I worked for a factory, got into a - you know, a fight involved in the boss himself - I was involved in the trade union, and then after that I worked for Frank and Hirsh, which was my last job - you know Frank and Hirsh - Frank and Hirsh are one of the big multinationals in the country - they import photographic equipment, watches - distributors of fancy goods - I was the chairman of the National Workers of Distributive Union - the National Union of Distributive Workers has got a - quite a history behind it - Morris Kagan was the founding member of it - they had a very powerful white branch, which was one of the richest trade unions in fact in the late '50s and early '60s - we then formed a B (?) branch....
- J.F. A what?
- I.N. The B branch, which is the black branch of the NUDW, and for years and years we fought to try and get NUDW into SACTU.

I.N. They were affili - no, up to - up to the time of my arrest they were not affiliated to TUCSA, but there was always a move to try and get it affiliated to TUCSA, and we always successfully fought it and most cases (?) amongst those who fought to prevent it from getting into TUCSA, but after my arrest they finally did get into TUCSA.

As I say, I worked in a number of places, and in most of them I got fired as a result of my political activities or my trade union activities - my first job at (.....) Shoe Company, I was there for four, five years, and when the stay at home came, the first stay at home - no, during the treason trial I didn't go to work for two days and the boss was quite sympathetic, but then when the stay at home came immediately after that....

J.F. This was which year?

I.N. In 1968 - '58 - and I didn't go to work, but this time I'd already got into trouble with the boss - there was a young white girl who was a typist who happened to be active in the movement, who happened to be Jewish as well, and they didn't like her friendship with me, and when I didn't go to work on the stay at home - when I got back I was given my salary and told to get out immediately - my next job at a factory, I found them ill-treating the workers - conditions were really dreadful - I started standing up for the workers - I had got cushy job working in the office - stood up for the workers and the boss didn't like it, fired me, and I went from job to job in this fashion until I landed up at Frank and Hirsh.

At the time of my arrest in '63 I was employed at Frank and Hirsh - when I came out of prison Hirsh called me and said : Well, you can start work immediately - and I started work immediately - I had no problem - although I was under house arrest, and conditions were very, very good for me - on Fridays I got half a day off, so that I can go to the movies or something like that - subsequently Winnie Mandela got a job there - after Winnie Mandela Mohamed (?) Timol got a job there, and there were quite a few other people that were involved in the movement that got a job there, but I got into trouble there again.

There was lots of theft taking place in the company itself - films were disappearing, and once they called me and they said : Listen, you know there's lots of films being missing here, lots of things are being stolen, we want you to help us to try and track this down - and I said : I'm sorry, if I see anyone stealing I'll stop him from stealing, but I won't report anyone stealing.

Then one day a large sum of polaroid films disappeared and they decided to conduct a lie detector test on all the blacks, and I was the last one to be called, and I said : Oh, fine - I looked at the form and the form said something to the effect that the company or the guy (?) who conducting the test will not be responsible for any after effects of the lie detector test, so I questioned this and they said : No, you must sign the form - I said : No, I'm prepared to go to a lie detector test, but sign this form, no.

I phoned Raymond Tucker - read Tucker the form and Tucker said : You are right, don't sign it - and I refused to sign and they - they of course refused to conduct the lie detector onto me, and there was a hell of a big outcry about it and eventually they called me and said : Well, get out, that's the end of you - that was in 1976 - that's how I lost that job.

J.F. You told me about your working time - were you - was the NUDW a non-racial union?

- I.N. (Laugh) No - as I said, there were two branches....
- J.F. You told me the B branch.
- I.N. We were the B branch....
- J.F. But that was Indian, Coloured and African?
- I.N. the B - that's right, ja.
- J.F. And were you involved - what were you involved with politically then - you've told me about the work part, but were involved with Congress politics specifically?
- I.N. In the '50s - oh, yes, I was involved in all Congress activities - I took an active part in the defiance campaign '52 - what was my role during defiance campaign - I was predominantly giving out leaflets, selling the newspapers, organising little house meetings in the area and so forth, but my real activity really came after '54 - '54 when I got into the TIC exe - TIYC executive - immediately we got into mobilising the Indian people, and there was a constant question of mobilisation - I mean we could - we could never set (?) on that issue, you know - we had to constantly mobilise.

If you look at the history of the Indian people, you know, the question of the separate development was a - has been a total failure right from the beginning - already when the Coloured Representative Council was formed and they were already making headways there was no - the government could not organise any clique of Indians to support them - as I said, even during the removal to Lenasia, it was only by force that they were able to succeed in moving the people from Fordsberg, Doornfontein, Jeppe, to Fordsberg - to Lenasia.

Right up to 1960 - right up to 1963 at the time of my arrest there was no Indian structure that the government could create - they called on so-called Indian leaders to come forward to form Indian structures - they failed - in 1962, or round about there, they very secretly called a meeting of some Indian businessmen and so-called Indian leaders and they promised them that no publicity will be given to this - they were called to a meeting in Pretoria - unfortunately for these fellows, word got out the night before, and we organised a mass demonstration, and our people were there the following morning demonstrating outside the building where these guys were having their meeting, and they got a shock of their life, and some of them actually came up to our people and said : Listen, man, we are not in favour of the whole thing, we've merely come to hear what the government has to offer - but up to the time of my arrest the government were unable to set up any Indian dummy institute - it was only in the mid '60s - late '60s when the Indian Council was formed, and then too on a non-elect basis, which was subsequently rejected.

Then they formed the Electoral College, and this was rejected - the South African Indian Council has been a total failure from the beginning - it had no credibility at all, and this is as a result of the constant work done by our people - we - apart from even going to do political work, we even socialised with the masses - we formed a greater team (?) - very few of us could play cricket, but to use it as a political means we'll go from village to village - we used to go from town to town to play cricket with people there, but the basic idea was not to play cricket - the basic idea was political work amongst the people - we'll go there, get a thrashing in the cricket field, you know - we didn't care two hoots, but after this cricket match we'll gather the Indian population and start politicising them - soccer the same thing.

I.N. We used to go from town to town working amongst the masses - now if you look at the Indian structure in the Transvaal, the bulk of the population are concentrated in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Benoni - these are the major areas - Benoni, Germiston, the East Rand, but the other areas of Witbank, Barberton, Ermeloo, very small Indian population, mostly merchant class, little shopkeepers in all these areas, but another concentration of Indians is Vereeniging and that is the - the Vaal area - the big areas we used to go to regularly to mobilise amongst the people, but even the small areas like Barberton, Witbank, we go there with (?) soccer team and the entire population will come out, and we used this as a means of mobilising the people.

As a result of this, during the congress of the people - in preparation for the congress of the people, our task for mobilising the Indian people was a very simple one - we already had the infrastructure to mobilise - the youth congress - it's fair to say that the youth congress was very powerful in Johannesburg - in the major areas we had, you know, corps of people who are - who were working all the time, but Johannesburg was the real power base of the Indian Congress and - and from (?) this is where we went out to do our work.

When we went to Pretoria, for example, Pretoria had a very large Indian population, roughly divided between the working class and the merchant class in Pretoria - we would inform Pretoria that we are coming and the activists there would be waiting for us, and we'll come there, we'll organise house meetings, putting forward the idea of the congress of the people, putting forward the ideas of (?) the demand of the people - for the congress of the people we worked the whole of '54 mobilising throughout - in '55 was the question of now getting delegations to the - and we very successfully got delegations from all areas in the Transvaal, and the idea of the Freedom Charter took on - we had house meetings from house to house.

You know, I - it will be no exaggeration to say that we (.....) touched the entire Transvaal Indian population.

J.F. Let me ask you what - the crux of what I'm trying to look at - just talk a bit about how it was that you were mobilising the Indian population - why you would talk about a non-racial alliance of the congress movements, but continuously the focus would be on your own community - especially in light of the - for example, when the NIC was re-founded by (.....) Ramgobin in the early '70s - there was criticism from BC when the TIC was re-founded in the late '70s, early '80s - endless debates in the early '80s about ethnicity and four nations, and I got into a thing with Aziz Pahad where he claimed what is this four nations thesis - people are attacking something that doesn't exist and tried to explain what the reasoning, what the ideological basis is, what the practical reasons are - if you could talk about it in terms of - if somebody would say : You're saying you're non-racial - the ANC says its non-racial, why is all of your history about mobilising the Indian community - when do the Indians and the Africans or the Indians and the Coloureds or the Indians and whites come together and how - why was it done in the congress days, in the '50s - why does it still continue to be done to some extent in the '80s?

I.N. I think firstly, from the historical background I've given you, you could see one of the reasons for this, but then the other reason is the African areas were no go areas for other racial groups - you needed permits to enter, and to get a permit would have been very, very difficult, although I mean I got picked up many a times in the African areas, but you needed a permit to get in there.

I.N. And it was very difficult because of the structures of the African population in Soweto completely sealed off - the areas like Alexandra Township, we could enter them - in Alexandra Township there was a large Indian population as well there, mostly merchant class, and we were able to go and work amongst them - Benoni, the African people were also in the township and you needed a permit - this was another reason why it was difficult to enter the African townships, but this was the time in the '50s when we were building unity, and in building unity we - I agree with you, an ideal situation would have been that they should have used the Indian Congress chaps to go into the African areas to start mobilising, but how much impact would we have had, you see.

Yes, there's been many cases where I and other leading members, you know, have gone into the African areas to mobilise with the African comrades - we used this, you know, in our groups when - whenever we went out we brought African comrades into our area - into our groups to go and mobilise in the Indian areas, and this was a building, you know, of a unity - a good example is 1961 - 1960, I beg your pardon, just after Sharpeville - in fact Sharpeville takes place on a Monday morning and Tuesday, Wednesday we were sent off to the north eastern Transvaal - it was myself, it was late Babla Salojee, it was his wife, it was Gert Sibande and one other person - we were five of us in the group, and the movement said we must go and mobilise for the strike for the 28th. March.

We went to both Indian townships and African townships - we left Johannesburg Friday morning - no, Friday evening after work we left Johannesburg - we went to Witbank, we went to Barberton and we covered the whole north eastern Transvaal - we came down in a circle, and by this time, you know - I'll give you two examples - we went to Witbank - Witbank, the minute we walked in there, we went to an Indian shop - shopkeeper by the name of Juma, and the minute they saw Gert Sibande, my God, there was tremendous excitement - they hugged him and they kissed him - this man has been banished from the area - he's not supposed to be in the area, and yet here he was with us and there was tremendous excitement, and immediately he spoke and he said: Listen, I want to speak to the community now, get me the community - you know, in half an hour the brothers - there were about four or five brothers mobilised the Indian community in the area.

They lived together - they live in the Indian area, so it's not difficult to mobilise them - and they were brought together and there we had this meeting, you see - we talked of the strike that's due to take place on the 28th., we talked of the burning of the pass - we were not too sure whether that will take place, but we talked of the Sharpeville shooting - now the question is why did we only mobilise the Indian population - because of our - because the way the country's structured - the Indian population lived in that area and for security reasons you couldn't go beyond that as well, and yet Gert (?) was able to address this group of Indian people.

We left them - we went to the African township, and the same thing was repeated - there was absolute excitement the minute they saw him, and we then called for a meeting, and within an hour or so the leadership were able to mobilise the activist, and a large number of activists came together and the whole policies were put forward - that was the incidents there.

I.N. We then went to Barberton - in Barberton - we got to Barberton at about midnight - this is midnight Sunday - and got in there, woke up, into the reserves - woke up the people and there the people saw - saw Gert and there was tremendous excitement - the women immediately said : Right, you guys sit down and we will mobilise - at midnight they went around getting the activists together - we had a meeting at - now who were the speakers - Babla was the first speaker, Gert was the second speaker, and I was the one to round up the whole meeting - it was then decided that we can't go any further - we must stay in this village, and immediately they cleared up two huts for us and gave us supper - we were put up there.

You know, about four in the morning there was a knock on the door - when I opened the woman said : Listen, the police are coming, they've been seen not far - I'm telling you, we jumped out of bed and within five minutes we were in the car ready, but as we were about to go the women were throwing the food into the car because we didn't have breakfast - the food was being thrown into the car, and we fled from the place - we got report subsequently that not long after we left the police surrounded the area - they were looking for this car - they were looking for the people that were involved in the thing.

From there every other stop we made, we learned subsequently that the police were there - we returned to Johannesburg Monday morning at six - no, before we got to Johannesburg we were at Ermeloo, and at Ermeloo we went to an Indian family, and the same reception, and before the meeting could take place this guy said : Hey, what's this about burning the pass - so we said : I beg your pardon, we - we didn't know about it because we have been on the road, you see, and the guy brought the Sunday Times, said look, and there we saw front page photograph of Chief Lutuli burning the pass....

J.F. Saw what?

I.N. Chief Lutuli burning his pass, and we were quite shocked - it's a decision taken obviously that we didn't know about, and here was the first pass being burned - well, we decided there and there that the next few stops we make we are going to call on people to burn their passes - and finally of course we reached Johannesburg Monday morning, and when we saw bonfires all over Soweto - now why I'm relating this to you, to show you that this type of meeting would have not been possible five or ten years before, where Indian comrades and African comrades were able to go to Indian and African areas, if it wasn't for the field work that was being done in the last ten years or so.

Today you can have it - today you can go into the African townships or the Indian townships with a group of people, but it took us a long time, you see - we were a very big group of people, the youth, and we were an absolute mixed group - Indian comrades, African comrades, white comrades, and very often we went out as a group working - now the Coloured community, on the other hand, we had access to them because of the Group Areas position that was there - I mean you could easily walk in and out of a Coloured home - area - however, in the '40s and '50s it was very difficult to - to mobilise and to organise amongst Coloured people - although we had a strong leadership, but it only had leadership and no grassroot backing, and there was nothing goes (?) quite simple - you know, the Coloured community at that time, particularly in the Transvaal, you know, the leadership quality had failed - we didn't have dynamic leadership to mobilise amongst Coloured people - we had Stanley (.....) who's now at (.....) in London - we had Adam Smith, you know, but there wasn't this real dynamic leadership amongst the Coloured community.

I.N. During the boycott of the Coloured election in the '50s, you know, after the Coloureds were put onto separate voters roll, a number of Indian comrades (?) in the Transvaal were actually sent to the Cape to help mobilise.....

END OF SIDE TWO.

J.F. exactly what do you - what does that mean - does that mean....

I.N. No - no, now we worked amongst the Coloured community - it was a difficult area, and today you find a situation where it's no longer a difficult area - the reason's simple - the reason is because of the way we worked - little house meetings that set up what you have today, but the African areas were very difficult to work with, and among the whites it was virtually impossible - although I mean when selling newspapers we'd try and sell newspapers to them, you see - I remember an incident in the late '40s - I was selling Guardian in Beit Street - you know Beit Street - and I walked past a barber, a white barber, and they said : Hey (?) come here - so I went up to him, he says : What are you selling - I said : I'm selling Guardian - he says : Well, why don't you come and sell me a copy - so I said : Oh, really - he said : Yes, yes, come inside - so I got into his barber shop and he bought a copy and he said : Please come every weekend.

I subsequently enquired as to who this guy is - I was told that he's an old party member who had become inactive after the banning of the party, you see, but in this way we did also make a small break - I don't know if I've made the point - it is the question of how to work - the formation of the NIC - my brother came to us in prison - both of them (.....) while I was in prison....

J.F. Came to you - were sent to prison....

I.N. No, no, they came to visit us, and they both said to us : Listen, the Natal chaps have been to the Transvaal and they are talking of re-organising the TIC and NIC, what is your guys' view on the matter....

J.F. Which year was this?

I.N. Oh, this must have been either late '60s or early '70s - my immediate reaction was : Listen chaps, we are in no position to dictate to you guys - we are locked up, we don't know what the political position is and you just must take the decision - they said : Listen, go and check up with the leadership and come back - our visit was for Saturday and Sunday, so Sunday morning was (?) my second visit - I was able to give the leadership point of view, and the leadership point of view was the same, that we are in no position to tell you what to do, we don't know the position.

Subsequently of course you know the NIC was formed some time - reformed rather some time in the....

J.F. '71.

I.N.'70s, while the Transvaal resisted this - they refused, and all the activists in the Transvaal refused, you see, on the basis that there is no longer a role for racially - racial organisations - we now talk in terms of one mass organisation.

I.N. When I came out of prison in '73 I found a position that I wasn't very happy with - while the ANC underground structures were operational underground, there was very little politics being done on a legal level - BC had become powerful - many of our people were working within the BC, but otherwise there was very little political activity amongst our people, and after discussion with various people I was one of those people that pushed the idea of the revival of the TIC - what is my argument - my argument was that firstly the Indian Congress is not a banned organisation, secondly it's a vehicle to mobilise our people, thirdly it is part of the congress of the people, and therefore the Freedom Charter is part and parcel of their programme, and fourthly we'll be able to mobilise not only amongst the Indians but amongst everybody else, putting forward an ANC politics - ANC policy, which is your policy - however, I had a tough time.

My two brothers, Ahmed Timol and all these guys opposed it - they said no - they rejected it....

J.F. Why did they reject it....

I.N. Well, they - their thinking was that you no longer - you must forget about racial organisations, you've got to organise on a non-racial basis, and what you need is a non-racial organisation - 1973 we formed the Ahmed Timol Memorial Committee - what was the nature of this committee - what we did, we invited a very broad section of the people from the left to middle of the road to come and form this committee - people like Jeanette Curtis, who had just come to welcome me, and NUSAS people and others, and this committee got going immediately to organise a memorial meeting for Timol - this is first anniversary and (.....) was put out and to all intents and purposes a very successful campaign.

Now this was the idea of now well, giving up the idea of reforming the Indian Congress and trying something else - but on the eve the memorial meeting was banned and the whole thing was thrown into chaos - however, one person called Jeanette Curtis and said : Jeanette, what are you doing in this organisation - so Jeanette said : Why, this is a memorial meeting - and this person told Jeanette - You know, this is a communist orientated organisation - they got instructions from Moscow and they are carrying out Moscow's instructions - so Jeanette came up to me and said : Listen Indres, is this true - and I just laughed at her, and I said : Jeanette, do you believe it, do you - I mean you were part and parcel from the beginning, and do you see any evidence of instructions from Moscow - however, that was that.

But then we decided that we must form - we renamed this organisation - we called it the Human Rights Committee, and what was the idea - the idea was to become a little group of people, a pressure group, you see, and try and mobilise on the basis of a pressure group - immediately people like Sheila Weinberg, my two brothers....

J.F. Their names again?

I.N. Murthie and Prema, Ahmed Timol, Sampson Ndou, Tshabangu - Elliot Tshabangu was one of them - they came out (?) with the Bulletin called the HRC Bulletin - they came out with about six issues, one issue on the women in the struggle - in fact I've got all the issues in Maputo - a very, very good issue - one issue on Transkei, in dash pendent - then the Freedom Charter edition, which came out in '75 - this is a very good edition - the front page was divided into two - caption read two historical dates, one independence of Mozambique, quoting Samora and the rest of it, and on the other side - what was it - 20th. anniversary - 20th. anniversary of the Freedom Charter, and we gave a full account of the congress of the people, and the centre page we published the whole Freedom Charter.

I.N. Amongst certain section of the community they were very concerned - they said : No, you are taking a chance, you're getting yourself into trouble, you know, you'll get locked up for the whole thing - but we took legal advice and legal advice said that there's nothing they can do - in fact this is the first time since the banning of the organisation that the Freedom Charter has really been published, you see, and the response of the masses was incredible - I'm telling you, people came from all over demanding copies of the Freedom Charter - we had to then reproduce only the Freedom Charter itself.

However, the Human Rights Committee was merely a pressure group and did play its part - it mobilised the people - Tutu spoke at one of its meetings - quite a few of its meetings were banned - the Human Rights Committee were in fact responsible for mobilising Bram Fischer's funeral from Johannesburg side - the first anniversary of Bram Fischer's death was banned - finally of course with the banning of Sheila, with the Toione being kicked out of South Africa - Toione Eggenhuizen, a guy working at the ANC office, you know, a Dutchman who was a former priest - a Dutch priest who lived for nine years in South Africa and (.....) because of discrimination, then got involved with us, and subsequently got kicked out in '76, and he's now working at the ANC office in London - he's a good friend of - of Horst Kleinschmidt.

J.F. How do you spell it?

I.N. T o i o n e E g g e n h i.... - Toione has been an incredible character - in fact he worked with the Human Rights Committee from the foundation of it - he's one - one of those priests that, after throwing his collar in, started drinking, started swearing, started - well, the only thing he hasn't done is chasing girls (Laugh) but he became part and parcel of our clan, and very active in the u - u - Human Rights Committee - then in 1976 he was picked up, just about October, November and given seven days to get out of South Africa - got back to - to Holland - went on speaking tours all over, putting the ANC position very clear and pointing out what is happening in the country and talked of - by this time he had some idea of what was happening in the underground movement too, because of being friendly with us, and gave quite a good picture of what is happening - they went to Britain and when ICSA (?) was formed - what is ICSA - International Commission - nevertheless when ICSA was formed Toione was employed by ICSA.

Unfortunately ICSA couldn't survive - it went ban - collapsed a couple of years ago - I do understand there's a plan to revive ICSA - it's had financial problems - it's an international anti-apartheid coordinating committee - works very closely with ANC and SWAPO - it was set up after the 1977 Lisbon conference - today Toione is working full time at the ANC office in London.

J.F. I think I'd better make sure I get enough of your own experience - you talked about the '50s - just take me through to your arrest and just really the '50s through the '60s - obviously the question is from passive resistance to armed struggle - what was that step like and because of my focus on non-racialism was it something that on an open legal political movement level you were involved with the Indian community - you've explained why you saw it as necessary as a mobilising tactic - what about in an underground level viz-a-viz MK - was that strictly with Indians - did you get recruited through Indians - just talk a bit about how you moved from passive resistance to armed struggle and whether or not non-racialism was a part of it or was it still something that you came to through the Indian community and stuck with the Indian community?

I.N. Firstly, in the late '50s we worked very, very closely now with the Indian - the African youth congress - we set up what is called the Youth Action Committee, and the Youth Action Committee was represented by the Indian youth congress, the African youth league, the Coloured People's Organisation, the Congress of Democrats, and this Youth Action Committee planned lots of campaigns together - one of the campaigns in the late '50s was to try and organise a massive festival, festival that was due to take place at Mia's Farm - you know Mia's Farm - if you take the old road from Johannesburg to Pretoria, that is via Alexandra township, about ten kilometers from Alexandra township you get Jukskei River - there is a farm called Mia's Farm - M i a.

This festival was organised by the Youth Action - or rather was to - was being organised by the Youth Action Committee, and the idea was to get originally 5,000 youth of all sections of the people, starting Friday night, ending Sunday night - sports, cultural activities, etc., and it was magnificently organised - by the time we got very close to it - we had already sold 8,000 tickets - we were now working at 10,000 people, and it became absolute chaotic in fact - tickets were being demanded all round - cinemas - black cinemas were putting on the worst movies for the weekend, you know - tremendous amount of publicity in the press.

Just to give you a slight idea of what was planned - Friday night was assemble - we'll sit down singing communal songs - freedom songs, international songs - have bonfires all over, set up a long tower which will be the control tower, set up a number of cubics - you know (....
.....)

J.F. What's that?

I.N. (.....) - we've got this little cubics to sell food and what-not, you see, and periodicals - and then around about eleven we were putting up a play, a play - an amateur play of black and white relationship written by - what's this chap's name - he works for EDAF (?) - I've forgotten his name - he wrote the play in London in fact and sent it to us and we were going to put it up, and this would have been one of the very first plays in the country that had black and white cast, and after that we'd have boxing, judo, and at midnight we'd have - we'd choose a beauty queen - this would have been the first non-racial beauty queen contest ever in the country, and this got tremendous publicity - I mean you might scorn (?) at it now but (Laugh) that time it was the thing, you see.

And The Star in fact carried a front page story saying that this will be the first ever beauty contest, non-racial beauty contest in the country - and then Saturday sports - the thing was organised very, very well, but on the Friday morning it wasn't banned, but what they did they went to Mia and they told me : Look, you can have half naked women running around - Mia being an old Moslem, you see, and threatened him and whatnot, and Mia then cancelled his permission to have the festival.

That evening when we were sending our groups down to go and start working they found the place completely surrounded by police - we wouldn't be allowed in - that evening we had a quick emergency meeting and our leadership - we were going to defy but our leadership said : No, call it off - and for very good reasons it was called off - we got into thousands and thousands of rands of debt (?) - the whole thing was called off....

J.F. Thousands of debts?

I.N. Of debts, ja - my God, we lost lots of money buying food, everything, and the whole thing collapsed.

I.N. And this is just one of the activities that we were involved in - we were also involved in the Rand Youth Club - the Rand Youth Club was set up immediately after the banning of the ANC - the idea was to keep the African youth together, and we were very active there, so by this time we had quite a powerful non-racial youth club, but within these circles even before the formation of the Rand Youth Club, the talk of abandoning non-violence was a big thing - it was being discussed all over - 1958 at one of our conferences the matter was raised - it is time now we abandoned Gandhi's policy, you see, and immediately it was brushed down - the special branch were there and we were able to crush it immediately.

But 1960 at the Youth Congress conference in City Hall - not City Hall - Duncan Hall - you know Duncan Hall - it is part of City Hall but a much smaller section in Market Street itself - the hall was packed, packed, packed, packed - this is 1962, I beg your pardon, '62 - no, what am I talking about - '61 - '60 - '60....

J.F. Before the banning?

I.N. Before - just after the banning - one of the chaps got up and moved a resolution that the Indian Congress must abandon the passive resistance struggle and now consider taking up arms against the regime - this is in full view of the special branch and everything, and before we could try and stop it a number of people jumped up, supported the idea, but we were able to eventually quieten it down - by this time there was tremendous talk now and we were all debating, but we stuck - stuck to the movement's policy.

I remember having a discussion with Walter Sisulu, and Walter said he agreed with us that we must remain within the congress policy, but one of the - what I'd like to just quote Chief Lutuli - we also met Chief - he said to us non-violence is a tactic and not a creed, and this gave us tremendous hope, you see - I remember very, very clearly - this was just before the banning of the movement when Chief addressed us, and this set quite a lot of talk, so by this time there was this talk of taking up arms - subsequent the banning of the movement, and the movement now the talk became even bigger - wherever we met at the (.....) Club it became the talk of the day.

Why was I one of those they quoted (?) I don't know (recruited) - but maybe because people heard that I was one of those that said : Yes, to hell now with non-violent struggle - and maybe I was one of those that openly talked of taking up arms, but subsequently I was one of those recruited - who recruited me, how was I recruited - well, that's difficult to say who recruited me - we knew that - or rather Reggie Vandeyar - Reggie, the leader of our group, is also there - called the three of us together and informed us that he has got instructions from the high command - from the regional command, I beg your pardon, of Umkhonto we Sizwe to set up a branch - a unit of Umkhonto and that we have been recruited into Umkhonto.

What was my immediate reaction - my immediate reaction was fantastic, my God, at last Umkhonto had come up - of course by this time the world didn't know about Umkhonto - the world didn't know of the manifesto of Umkhonto....

J.F. This was in 1960?

I.N. '61.

J.F. This was '61 but....

I.N. Before the announcement....

J.F. Approximately when in '61?

I.N. November - round about November - and he gave us our instructions - what was my immediate reaction - well, firstly was - I was a bit scared (Laugh) goes without saying (?) - secondly, we discussed it at length as to where are we going to get our arms, what are we going to do - we are not trained - we had no knowledge at all of it - but an important thing is that we have now become - particularly me - have now become quite respectable leaders of the Indian community - what would the reaction in the Indian community be, you see, and we discussed this at length, and our conclusion was that no, majority of the Indian youth will stand by us - although, to be honest with you, I - we didn't have any concrete evidence - our - within our group itself - our group itself was about 150 strong activist, quite a mixed bag - 50 percent, I would say, felt that we should be - should take up - should abandon the non-violent struggle - the other 50 percent were still having their doubts about it.

So when I say that we felt that majority of the Indian youth will support us, we had no basis to justify our claim - nevertheless, we went into it wholeheartedly - its - we also debated the question of moving from the Gandhian philosophy, which my grandfather and my father were part and parcel of - how would we justify our movement away from the non-violent struggle - but if one looks at the struggle from the turn of the century, you would find there's been a move all the way - there's been a difference from Gandhi to my grandfather and from my grandfather to my father, who was now actively involved in left politics, you see, who were already talking about, you know, I wouldn't say abandoning non-violent, but were talking of more radical action, so it's a development from that, and we justified it on that basis.

Of course nobody other than the four of us in our group had any knowledge of what we were doing - Reggie was the contact with the region - the region was giving him all the information, which he then brought down to us and vice versa - we operated as a MK unit from 1961 right up to 1963, but what - what was the reaction of our people during the sabotage campaign - the debate became even much more hotter this time - people were now looking to join MK - how does one join MK - who does one find - but by this time both Reggie - both myself and Sharish, who were part of this big broad collective of people, started talking less and less about violence - we in fact started - started keeping quiet - when debates amongst our friends were taking place we kept quiet about it - we never got ourselves involved in the discussion, and that was - obvious reason was to keep, you know - to keep our activities to ourselves.

A very good example was at the Rand Youth Club one Saturday evening - we must have been about 50 of us sitting and drinking and talking, and the question, Ann Nicholson, an activist, raised the question, and she in fact openly said : You know, it's time we all joined MK, how does one join MK - and Sharish and I kept very quiet - Ann Nicholson then turned around and said : Hey, you, Indres, you always talk so much, what do you say about it - and I said : Well, I've got no comments to make - and Ann Nicholson started attacking us : Ja, you fellows still believe in your Gandhian philosophy and it's about time you abandoned it, you'll get nowhere....

J.F. Who attacked you?

I.N. Ann Nicholson - we were caught in a trap - absolutely caught in a trap, and there came a time when Sharish and I decided look, we've got something else to do, and we pulled out of the debate and we went away - but this constantly happened - we - I was the assistant (?) secretary of the Indian youth congress, and I was a very active guy - you know, before getting to MK you'd have found me everywhere, working everywhere, but then immediately after getting into MK I started neglecting my work in the Indian youth congress, in the Peace Council, which I was already now on....

J.F. Were you on the exec or....

I.N. I was on the executive of the Peace - South African Peace Council - people like Bram Fischer, Hilda Bernstein, and many others were active, you see - I started neglecting all this work, and I could give no explanation to the people as to why I'm neglecting the work - I would arrange things for the Indian youth congress and then the last minute I'm called away and can't attend to the work, and the Indian youth started attacking me - they started accusing me of all kinds of things, of being lazy, you know, of only interested in good times, always finding excuses - there was just nothing we could do about it.

A classic example was, we had differences with our senior leadership in the Indian Congress, and we were demanding for a meeting with the - joint meeting between the youth and the Indian - youth congress - although I was on both, you see, and after a long time we were granted this meeting and this meeting was supposed to be an underground meeting - it was due to take place on the outskirts of Johannesburg and nobody was told the venue - we were just told meet at such and such a place and you'll be picked up and taken to the meeting - my whole family was going to go to this meeting and transport was supposed to come and pick us up at home on the Sunday morning, but just about an hour before transport was due to arrive Reggie came along and said : Hey chaps (?) come, let's go - I said : No, we can't, we've got this meeting on - he said : No, Umkhonto activities come first, you are wanted.

So the three of us, Sharish, Reggie and myself went off, and my mother and my sisters squealed like hell - they said : You can't - my only thing - I said to them : I'll be back before you leave - which I knew was not possible, and off we went - this meeting took place - people came along, picked up my family and went off to the meeting - I came back about two or three hours later to find everybody at home gone - when my family came back they gave me hells for not being at the meeting - I couldn't give any reason, but one of our girls in the move - in the youth congress the following day attacked me like mad - in fact the two nights before my arrest we were together, and this girl attacked me like mad saying that : Yes, I don't know what's happening to you - you are one of the guy that influenced me to join the movement, but now I find that you are one of the worst guys - you never attend meetings, what is happening to you - and this takes place two days before my arrest, you see, and subsequently I got arrested.

But what was the reaction after our arrest - well, my mother came to see me in prison and said : Indres, lots of young people are coming along and asking me how to join Umkhonto we Sizwe and I don't know, and I said to them you better go and ask Indres - and the reaction apparently was very positive - amongst the senior, the much more senior comrades, many kept quiet, others spoke out against it, but basically amongst the youth it was welcomed - we were amongst the very first to be arrested - in fact we were the first to be arrested in the Transvaal.

J.F. What month - '63?

I.N. Just after Nelson - Nelson was already arrested....

J.F. In '62?

I.N. He was arrested in '62 - we were arrested in April of '63 - nobody else was arrested in the Transvaal up to then, and we were the first MK guys to appear in court, and this had a tremendous influence amongst the Indian youth - all indications was that people were questioning how to get into MK - but an interesting comment was Sharish's father - Sharish is appearing in that book there as well - Sharish's father is an old Gandhiite - he took part in the struggle in Gandhi's time, my father's time, and still continued in the struggle - his father came to see us during waiting trial and said to us : Chaps, I disagree with what you have done, however, I'll stand by you - and this was the reaction of quite a number of the senior people, you know.

Our trial was a good example - thousands and thousands of people of all races filled the court - in fact it was just impossible to move - the streets were crowded, and by this time I would say we had firmly established one, the non-racial aspect of the struggle, two, the need to take up arms....

J.F. And how did you establish the non-racial aspect?

I.N. Well, as I said to you, our works over the years amongst the people, you see, the historical work, and the fact that by the '60s, after the banning of the movement we were now able to work quite broadly with our people with the (?) activities like the festival example I've given you and other activities that we've taken place - our meeting that we organised in Alexandra township, our meeting that we organised in Sophiatown....

J.F. But in connection with the actual arrest and activity - let me go back - was it an Indian - was Reggie an Indian fellow?

I.N. Yes - of the unit - we were four in the unit - three of us members of the Indian youth congress, the fourth, who happened to be an informer, comes from the so-called Coloured - yes, why was our unit - in fact if you looked at all the units at that time, the units were in fact racially comprised, but why - because it's easy to move around - I mean two o'clock in the morning if you find one African in the heart of Johannesburg riding around with three whites, you already become - (.....) become suspicious - oh, there's something going on - but when you find four Indians moving two o'clock in the morning in a car there's less suspicion - or you find four Africans in the township moving around together it's O.K., but if you find one Indian amongst them, already they (.....) - for security reasons it was an ideal situation, you see - we as an Indian unit had much more freedom - we had a much broader scope to work because, you know the pass laws etc. made life more difficult.

J.F. And tell me the four people in the unit?

I.N. Reggie Vandeyar - V a n d e r a r - and Sharish - S h a r - S h a i r h Nanabhai - and the last guy - now the three of us we've worked together for years in fact in the legal movement - Reggie Vanderar joined the Communist Party youth in 1948, and he's a waiter by profession, active in the legal politics right up to the time of his arrest - he was in fact arrested in 1961 immediately after the first explosions of December 16th. - when the police raided the houses they found a test tube of - test tubes - they found a gas pistol and some sulphuric acid in his house, and he was immediately picked up immediately after December 16th.

I.N. He spent Christmas in jail and then came out on bail after that, and he was found guilty of being in possession of the gas pistol and fined 50 rand, but for the test tubes and the sulphuric acid he got off from that because he had a very good alibi, that he had a medical student staying with him and that this is the property of the medical student, so Reggie got away from that, and immediately after that Reggie was suspended from Umkhonto.

J.F. Why?

I.N. Well, it was felt that the police might keep an eye on him, you see, and therefore....

J.F. Not as a discipline....

I.N. No, no, not as a discipline action - he was suspended for a short while, but re (?) brought back again subsequently - then in '82 - I'm sorry, in '62 - '62 one day while he was at home a Coloured chap by the name of Ghamed Jardine came along to him and asked him if he wanted to buy dynamite and Reggie said : Go to hell, what do I want dynamite for - and Reggie chased him out of the house - Reggie however informed the unit of this and the unit took a decision that he should inform the regional command, and informed the regional command, and the regional command promised to investigate our friend Ghamed Jardine.

After some investigation they found that this guy was O.K., that he in fact was a petty crook and that he was very sympathetic to the movement and that he might be of value and use to the movement, you see, and that Reggie should recruit him into MK and get hold of the arms and ammunition - or rather the dynamite that he had - so Reggie contacted the guy and the guy sold a whole box of 100 sticks of dynamite to Reggie, and he in fact joined the unit and he became the fourth member of the unit - we went on - he - we -

He then taught us a great deal about how to use dynamite - he was an absolute expert in the uses of dynamite - little did we know that he was a police agent - we went on one - one campaign together, very successful, and then after that the campaign of April 17th. - he was the one that chose in fact the target - we went and looked at the target, reconnoitred the target, which was in Riverlea - a tool shed and a (?) signal post - we informed the region and the region looked into it and they approved of the target, and we were then on our way to blow up this target when all three of us were arrested on the spot, and that was the fourth member of the unit.

The police denied his existent, they - he wasn't even brought as a witness, and hence the state could not even prove that we were a unit of MK - we were merely charged for the act of sabotage and got ten years for this - our view is that he was probably being used by the police in other cases after that - when my sister was detained in 19 - no, we subsequently heard that the guy was going to Namibia and lived in Namibia - MK issued a statement immediately after our sentence that if they get hold of him they're going to kill him, and he then - he was traced to Cape Town by the newspapers - the Post had a full front page story saying that where he says that he doesn't know where to go to, the police are looking for him the one side and MK is looking for him the other side, but subsequently we heard he was in Namibia - exactly what he was doing in Namibia we don't know, but when my sister was detained in '68, '69, the special branch said to her that he died in a motor accident, but there's been no confirmation of that - he and (?) other two guys.....

END OF SIDE ONE.

- J.F. So in fact all of your MK activities involved mainly the Indian community except for this Jardine?
- I.N. Ja - three of - the three of us were.
- J.F. But the regional command, would that have been different races?
- I.N. No, that would have been different races definitely - I mean we don't know who was in the regional command, but definitely people like Joe Modise, people like Joe Gqabi, people like Wolfie Kodesh.
- J.F. And just - were you trained inside the country then - I don't know how much you want to talk about it....
- I.N. No, no, no - our training, we trained on the job, and we did a lot of reading - we knew nothing about the usage of dynamite or any of these things before that, but we were studying on the job and we were training ourselves on the job, between the three of us and subsequently Ghamed Jardine - we had various books that we had to study - for example, there was an American publication where half the book deals with Mao Tse Tung's guerilla warfare, and the other half deals with Che Guevara's guerilla warfare, the editorial - I'm sorry, the foreword and comment was written by some American guy - it's supposed to have been an anti-terrorist publication, but if you ignored the foreword and the comments by the Americans and read the rest of the book your material's right there - it was freely available in South African book shops until 1964, I think, when it was banned.
- J.F. Is that the War of the Plea (?)
- I.N. No, no, no, not War of the Free, no - that's long before the War of the Free - I'm not too sure now what it is called - but there were other books that we managed to get hold of - Reggie brought books obviously from the region - so our training was basically self-taught - how to use chemicals, what chemicals to use and so forth.
- J.F. And when you were picked up, put into prison - how soon after April was the trial and the conviction?
- I.N. Oh, very soon - we were picked up in this morning of the - or rather night of the 16th., morning of the 17th. April - we were beaten up for the first day, beaten up to a pulp, tortured, second day - oh, by the way, the first day we were beaten up and then taken to John - to Marshal Square, and the next morning we discovered two additional guys who were brought to join us - that was Laloo Chiba and Jassatt - Abdullah Jassatt - they were picked up obviously from their homes - and we were then taken and tortured the whole day, all five of us - the following day we were taken and a medical doctor examined us and he said, oh, I'm all right, nothing wrong with you, give him some aspros - we immediately realised that we would appear in court the following day, and on the - on the 19th. April we appeared in court, all in - looking dreadful - we were looking like what the cat brought in, you know, beaten to a pulp, eyes swollen up and whatnot, and that's when our defence - well, Harold Wolpe represented us and demanded medical attention immediately.
- We were then detained under the 12 day detention clause - the 12 day detention clause at that time - this was long before the detention clause - the 12 day detention clause was called an investigation clause, which meant that we had access to lawyers and to our family and we were locked up at Marsh - at the fort, getting medical treatment and so forth, and then we appeared, and by the 13th. May we were already sentenced - sentenced on the 13th. May.
- J.F. And in....

I.N. You must remember that during that time, between the 17th. April and the 13th. May was when the 90 day law was passed and became law.

J.F. But didn't they have it in 1960 during the emergency?

I.N. No, no.

J.F. But they detained people for months.

I.N. 1960 under the emergency clause the people were detained, but immediately the emergency was lifted people were all released.

J.F. So - I'm just interested in the racial aspects - when you were in prison were you thrown in with all kinds of different race groups?

I.N. Yes - waiting trial we were kept together, just the five of us - they didn't want - we were the only political prisoners - there were no other political prisoners, therefore we were kept together - the day after - the day we were sentenced we were thrown into a cell of about 150 political pris - no, we were thrown into a cell of 150 prisoners, common law prisoners and everything, completely racial - inter-racial, rather - and amongst the group was Selby Ndindane, PAC man - he was the national executive committee of the PAC - he and one other chap was there, one other PAC chap - they were sentenced a few days before us for attempting to leave the country illegally and given four or five years each.

And Selby had already by this time talked to the common law prisoners and had already told the common law prisoners that 1963 was a year of destiny, is the year that South Africa's going to be free and we are going to free South Africa before the end of '63 - and then the three of us - oh, mind you, we appeared in court together, five, and our case was separated - the three of us appeared separately and the other two were remanded for a later time - the three of us were sentenced, and a couple of days later the other two appeared and the charged against them were dropped - they were discharged, but as they were leaving court they were redetained now under the new 90 day detention clause, and they were kept there for 90 days - one subsequently escaped from Marshal Square with Harold Wolpe and others.

J.F. But those were three whites that escaped....

I.N. There were two Indian comrades as well.

J.F. But were they - was a white - Wolpe kept with Indians?

I.N. No, they were all kept separately at Marshal Square and they organised the escape together - it was Harold Wolpe, Goldreich - who was the other one - only Harold Wolpe, Goldreich, Mosie Muller and Jassatt.

J.F. And they escaped together?

I.N. They escaped together.

J.F. But I'm just - how could they organise if they're kept separately?

I.N. They had obviously at Marshal Square, which is a very old police station - they were able to communicate with one another - they were being held under the 90 day clause.

J.F. And that happened while you were there?

I.N. No, no, we were already sentenced, we were already - where were we - we were at Leeuwkop Prison sentenced - long after sentence.

- J.F. But the news kind of....
- I.N. Filtered - filtered through us - to us.
- J.F. And what was the response - was there any racial response of the whites and the Indians got out or....
- I.N. No, we - in fact - no, no - when we got news of the escape there was tremendous amount of joy amongst our people that yes, this is the first escape ever of political prisoners - we already by that time sentenced-long sentenced - let me see - May, June, July, August - ja, we were still at the - at Leeuwkop Prison - it was about three or four months after our sentence and we were already then with a group of ANC political prisoners - all of them were serving two years, about 35 of them, and there was tremendous joy amongst our people, that this was the first, and amongst those who were with us there was Joe Gqabi, Henry Makoti, who knew these people quite intimately, and this was regarded amongst us as a big breakthrough in the struggle because this is the time when everybody was expecting anything to happen, and it was part and parcel of all the campaigns that had taken place.

But now coming back to the fort - when we arrived there we met up with some of the most hardened common law prisoners, and as I said to you, the day before or so Selby had already had long political discussions with these chaps - when we got there the leader of the group called us and asked us for our political views, what we were in for etc., and then after giving, you know, an idea of where we come from and so on, he asked us is it true that we're going to be free before end of this year - we said : Nonsense, as far as we're concerned the struggle has only started and it'll take us a long, long time - and a big debate took place on this in our circle, and we convinced this common law prisoner that our position was the correct one - he then called Selby and said : You know, you talk rubbish - you can never be free by the end of this year - and this is our first clash with PAC in prison itself.

We were then moved to Leeuwkop Prison and we were locked up in isolation cells, each one of us - far as we know, apart from Selby and the other chap, we were the only political prisoners - we didn't know where Selby was - we were already moved to the fort - to Leeuwkop Prison, and we only saw another during exercise time or when we went to collect our food - that is once a day during exercise time and three time a day when we collect our food we saw one another, the three of us - but one day when we came out of the cell to do exercise we found three more comrades had joined us - that was Joe Gqabi, Henry Makjothi and Sampson Fardana.

- J.F. Tell me - I've read the whole book pretty carefully, so I can get some of that material from there, but to focus on the non-racialism aspect - you spoke a bit about what it was like to get special food and that kind of thing....
- I.N. At Leeuwkop we were thrown into the cell eventually with 35 of our comrades - what was the composition of these comrades - there were a few from the Transvaal, bulk from Natal and the Cape - majority of the Natalians didn't speak English and a few from the Cape didn't speak English - we also had situations where the Transvaal chaps didn't speak Zulu and the Zulu chaps didn't speak Sotho, so we had that problem, but within a short space of time - in fact we were totally integrated, you know, and there was no question of we being Indians and they being Africans - we did everything together - we started our classes, political classes every day - we had English classes, Zulu classes - people started learning English and Zulu, you know, and we were completely integrated - there was no racial antagonism whatsoever in the cell of ours.

I.N. Why and how it came about that it was all ANC people in that cell I cannot explain - subsequently a group of PAC guys came and they were kept in the cell adjacent to us - we only saw them when we got to get our food, otherwise we never saw them - but we lived as one community and immediately there, although it cannot be said that we were members of the ANC, these 35 chaps who were all members of the ANC, they attempted to leave the country illegally and they were picked up in then Northern Rhodesia and brought back and sentenced to two years imprisonment, so we were the only ones serving ten years and they were serving two years.

There was tremendous amount of sympathy for us - some of us made jokes about it - one comrade would say : Ah, you bloody buggers, you're serving ten years, you'll die in jail, you see - but there was tremendous unity - we worked together - when we then went out to work we worked with the common law prisoners, 1,000 of us, and three so-called Indians were standing out, especially Sharish who was lighter in complexion, who wore glasses - we were dark in complexion with no hair - you couldn't make the difference out - you couldn't find us amongst the 1,000, but the warders would look for us - wars tha koelies - where's these koelies, you see, and would really beat the daylights out of us, but the comrades protected us - what they did, they formed a group around us, and we were right in the middle doing our work, carrying our bags and so forth, and this was a very good example of how we worked together.

J.F. Why were the warders out for the Indians?

I.N. Well, for the simple reason that they couldn't believe that the Indians were part of MK and were involved in the struggle and that we were the bad eggs probably, and I mean general attitude was we were all terrorists - they went out for the terrorists but the three Indians were picked out - even when we got to Robben Island the same thing happened - now on Robben Island again within the ANC population we never came across any racial tension - PAC, on the other hand, gave talks continuously, open talks of how when they take over they're going to give the Indians rowboats to row back to India without any row - oars - how are they going to send all the communist - black communists onto - to the moon, and how they were going to get rid of all the white population of South Africa, send them back to Europe, you see, and for those Coloured community - so-called Coloured communities, well, that will have to be discussed after liberation because they're an accident of South African history.

J.F. Why was it - the PAC's known to be anti-white, it's known to be anti-communism - how did the anti-Indian get in - do you think they were anti-Indian and Coloured?

I.N. From the begin - from the beginning in fact one of the - when the - within the ANC in the middle '50s, early '50s, there was a tremendous anti-Indian feeling, anti-communist feeling, anti-white feeling - as you said earlier, when the Dadoo-Xuma Pact came about there was also hostility to that, and this grew up (?) with the kicking out of Labalo and others from the ANC youth league and the ANC in 1958 they formed an organisation which is absolute African, Poqo, you see, and they accused - I mean openly they accused the members of the Indian Congress of working for the Indian government - India being itself over-populated - and to colonise South Africa as an Indian colony, or otherwise we were nothing else but communist agents who are infiltrating the movement.

- I,N. One of the things they openly said was that none of us, including Nelson, would be able to stand our jail sentence - we'd give in long before our sentence and ask forgiveness, but we proved our worthy - in fact in all campaigns in the prison, as you'll see from the book, we were amongst those who were in the forefront of the struggle.
- J,F. Did you get any sense of what the motivation was for the anti-Indians - you had a lot of years with PAC people - you got to get past some of the rivalry and the hostility, but was there any insight as to what was the origin of it - did they ever come to accept you as human beings?
- I.N. The origin is a political basis that they've always been anti-Indian - they regarded the Indian as being merchant class, which is not true - at the time of my arrest I could safely say that over 60 percent of the Indians were working class - and that the Indians were not sincere, and they also quoted Gandhi as Gandhi forming the Indian Congress and having nothing to do with the African movement, you see, and this was the basis of it - the PAC were divided into two group in prison - there was the younger generation, mostly from the Transvaal, very, very young chaps, 16, 17, 18, 25 years old - the older generation from the Western Cape - when we got to prison they outnumbered us, very, very big outnumbered - we were 1,500, of which the ANC couldn't be more than 50 - and they had literally the control of the jail, but they accepted meekly the hardships of prison, the tortures, the food, the ja, baas attitude etc.

When we came in we - we refused to accept it, which you find in the book itself - but the ANC, we had our political discussion and all our discussion within the ANC itself - while PAC would have their political discussion open for the whole cell to hear, including us, and there was always anti-Indian, anti-white, anti-communist propoganda being put out - what was our reaction to it - our reaction to it was ag, forget about it, it's meaningless, you know - they just blowing hot and cold - we knew the strength of our movement, we knew what is happening, we had confident in the movement through (though) I mean I might say that I never expected to finish my ten years in prison - I expected to be released before the ten years was over, you know, but there was always that hope that we're on the right side and that the movement and the Freedom Charter was a basis for our political thinking, and we just completely ignored them.

Even when we took our campaigns, the ANC campaigns, we asked them to join us - if they joined us, O.K., well and good, if they didn't, to hell with them, we went ahead - but by our actions and our deeds we proved ourselves in prison - by 1970 even many PAC chaps started looking to us - looking towards us as part and parcel of the movement itself - in the sporting activities we took the leading position - when I say we I mean the ANC itself.

By 1970 we befriended a number of PAC guys - we started talking to them - in the '60s we had nothing to do with them - we just totally ignored them - '63, '64, '65 - it's only by '66 we now started talking to them.

- J.F. Was that just because it was time to get used to them or why did you finally talk to them?
- I.N. Because we - I think we - they now began to accept us, you see - at work of course we worked together, even in '61 - '63 rather - '63, '64 we worked together and so forth, but it's only '66, '67 we really now became friendly and started talking and they started accepting us.

- I.N. But while they were accepting us right up to 1973, they will still continue with the lectures, still their anti-Indian, anti-communist lectures.
- J.F. Let me not dwell too much on that because so many people have read that book and that's the part people know more about - there's one more question about prison - did you get any sense that - you probably got sense that PAC was going down because there weren't PAC people coming in - what about the BC - did you know that BC was going on out there, that there was a bit of a lull in ANC activity, that there - that these kind of BC guys '69, early '70s?
- I.N. BC - BC wasn't there in fact - we got word outside of the rise of the BC, the BC ideas, but we knew very little about it - in fact even the paper that we smuggled in didn't carry much news of the rise of the BC, and up to the time when I left prison there wasn't a single BC prisoner there, so in prison itself they were not even a force.
- J.F. And when you came out how did you find the whole political scene on the question of non-racialism - did you kind of find yourself in the middle of the heavy BC times or what was....
- I.N. Ja, we - when I came out of prison I found the very heavy BC scene - many of the younger chaps came to see me, people like Sipho Buthelezi, who was active in Johannesburg in the BC - a lot of young people came to see us and we started talking to them, but people like Joyce Sikhakhane - when Joyce came up to me we then discussed the BC and what is happening, and Joyce made it very clear to me that she was active in the BC but just putting the ANC line in the BC, and she felt that this is the correct thing to do, you see, and that a lot of young people have - are following her, and many of our younger generation, who are in fact congress people, are working within the BC - she attacked the leadership of the ANC who were still there who completely ignored the BC, you see, saying that it's the wrong attitude - they are keeping aloof from it instead of working within it.

When I came out I found that many of the young chaps came to see me and I found them quite good - many of them today are in Umkhonto - I meet them daily in our activities in Maputo and all over are chaps that I met back at home, but I found the situation a bit disappointing - I find it - I found that our chaps were not doing enough work on the legal political scene, and that is why I had lots of fights with my brothers - in fact I said to my brothers openly - I said : You chaps have failed us - we have been ten years locked up, we expect to come back and see a viable political organisation amongst our people, working amongst our people, and here you chaps have sat on your laurels and done nothing about it - well, they argued that the BC is powerful and that we have got our people there but they themselves never got into it, and their argument was that they were known as congress people, but at the same time on the other hand, the ANC underground was operative - not powerful but it was working - it was doing its work.

By that time Thabo - immediately after independence of Mozambique Thabo and Zuma and Stanley Mahizela were actively involved in Swaziland and they were mainly concentrating on the underground, so I found a situation where the BCM had taken over on the legal political platform with a number of our people actively involved at a different level, while at the underground level our chaps were involved - it is only after - during Soweto itself things went haywire - by this time I was already involved in the ANC underground structures - we now had more dynamic contact with the youth from Soweto and other areas.

I.N. We were running our freedom train from Johannesburg to Swaziland at a hell of a rate, but our underground structures were well organised - although I was under house arrest, although Joe Gqabi was under house arrest, although many of us were restricted, we were able to meet regularly and organise our underground structures, but then what happened - Soweto blew up - true (?) Soweto caught us off guard - immediately our underground structures got to work - we had to now intensify our getting our chaps out of the country - our security was being broken every day - people - I can't mention those back at home, but there are many of our people who were still at home, you know, got actively involved in the whole campaign, and I think this was a bit of a tragedy in many respects in that our underground structure was being daily exposed.

I remember some Soweto guys coming up to me and saying : Indres, I'm wanted, please get me out of the country - I hardly know these chaps - I don't know them - I can't do anything without the underground structure - I went back to the underground structures, said (?) here we - we have these fellows, what do we do - let them wait, let them wait - there was a case of Oupa Mashinini, the elder brother to Tsietzi Mashinini - Oupa Mashinini, whom I had already contacted by this time - we were already having political classes with a group of young people - I had about 20 young Soweto chaps that we were conducting political classes with on a weekly basis - came up to me and said : Indres, I'm wanted, I've got to go into hiding - and I put Oupa into hiding and then arranged with the underground structure to get him out - he left South Africa on Christmas Day, '76, and he cried in fact - he was saying to me : Why don't you come with us, I know that you're going to be the next to be picked up - and I said : No, no, there's work to be done here, fellow, I can't leave - and Oupa Mashinini was subsequently taken out of the country by our underground unit, only to find on New Years Day - on New Years Eve rather Joe Gqabi was picked up - Joe had already left South Africa on two occasions, had consultations in Swaziland with our people, and had returned to the country with instructions - he was picked up one New Years Eve, and that's when I was told to leave the country immediately.

Now the nature of this underground structure was totally a mixed one - I mean here it is where you lived and how you could work and what you could do - it was not taken in terms of racial set-up, you see - our underground structure consisted of all sectors of the population - and immediately I got instructions to leave the country and I left the country in - on the 2nd. January, '77 - when I got to Mozambique the first person I bumped into was Oupa Mashinini and he was so pleased to see me (Laugh) - he hadn't been moved already from there (?) - but this was the nature of our work.

One of the things that we discussed with our leadership here is that we have to do something about the legal political activities - we'll have to reorganise our forces on the legal side, and immediately the political committee was reinforced and the tactic now was to work politically in the country, not only militarily and underground but to also mobilise the masses, and this is the result which you see today - today, without doubt, there is massive political activities taking place - it took a lot of hard work to get to the situation as it is today, and I see you've interviewed lots of UDF people and so forth and I suppose you'd get the whole thing from them.

J.F. So you were '77 till early this year in Mozambique solid?

I.N. That's right, solid.

J.F. What can you say about that - I don't know exactly - what about the non-racial aspect - were you working politically and non-rationally in Mozambique?

I.N. Ja - immediately I got to Mozambique - of course after going abroad and so forth and coming back to be based in Mozambique - I was part and parcel of the ANC structures in Maputo - in Maputo we had some comrades who are employed by the state, people like Alpheus Mangezi, people like Sipho Dlamini (?), people like Albie Sachs, people like Tixie Mabizela, and then we had the ANC full time structures - I was part of the full time in the movement - we formed one big ANC - there's never been any form of racism, any form of racial - racialism coming up.

When the first regional political committee was set up in Maputo in 1979 I was immediately elected the secretary of it, and I've been on the regional political committee right up till the time I left Maputo, holding different positions, secretary - I became chairman in the end - in all activities there's never been any form of racism shown - there was an incident - we were at a party and one comrade came up and said something and we disagreed with what he said, you see, and he then used the word koelie, and my God, the rest of the movement got stuck into him, you know.

The next day he was called by the office and he apologised immediately - he said it was something that just came out of his - and he really meant no harm by it, and in fact he said long before the movement called him he had already made up his mind to come to me and apologise, and he came to me after that and he apologised and I said : Listen, there was no need to apologise, I know it was done in the heat - spur of the moment - but that sort of thing never happened again and never happened before that.

J.F. What about the fact that you were in the non-racial Mozambiquan society - is that what the future South Africa will be to you?

I.N. Talking of the Mozambiquan non-racial society, firstly Hennie Serfontein was in Mozambique some time in the early '80s - I think it was his first visit to Mozambique, and the Rand Daily Mail carried a series of articles by - although I got lots of criticism about the article itself, you see, but one thing that struck me which - he said nowhere in the world is racism being fought positively like that in Mozambique, and this I think is a very true reflection of what is happening in Mozambique.

Yes, I think the Mozambiquan example has also had a great influence on our people, you know - the Angolan - the Mozambiquan example - without doubt, in Mozambique you no longer talk in terms of Indian, Coloured, white - they've positively fought it - Samora, for example - Frelimo, for example, you know, there was a very big anti-Portuguese feeling immediately after independence, and Frelimo came out saying : No, it is not the Portuguese that oppressed us, but it's the Portuguese colonial forces - and today that has seeped in at all levels of Mozambique.

A very good incident is that Samora meets an old Indian guy, a Mozambiquan, you see, and he says to him : What nationality are you - this guy says very proudly : I'm Indian, I'm Indian - and Samora says : What, you are Indian - he says : Yes, I'm Indian - what passport do you carry, what nationality do you carry - and of course the man boasts (?) he says : Hey, I'm a member of Frelimo, I carry a Mozambiquan passport, you see - what do you mean by this - and Samora says to him : You're not Indian, you are Mozambiquan - and this Indian guy says : What do you mean by this - and he's shocked by it - and this is really the position, but the ANC worked in the very same spirit and energy.

I.N. We are fortunate in - we were fortunate in Mozambique - pre-Nkomati we numbered many hundreds - I don't think anybody'll ever tell you the true figure, but put it as many hundreds, and I was amongst those who was in the leadership right through from the beginning, firstly because of my experience in the movement, secondly because of Robben Island, and thirdly because in the work field I've got lots and lots of experience, and hence I was elected right in the beginning of the regional political committee as secretary, and it was un - it was accepted by everybody unconditionally - in fact year after year after year I remained the secretary and elected unanimously, and I worked with this many hundreds - there were a different category of people - there were those employed firstly by the Mozambiquan government, those legally living in Mozambique and openly living in Mozambique, and there were those underground, cadres, and there were those who joined the movement in Mozambique itself, who had come to Mozambique on their own steam before and after independence and who have got some Mozambiquan connection, either one parent or the other being Mozambiquan who had joined the movement as well, so we had this different and we had to work amongst them - our work amongst them is different level.

The underground chaps do not come to a mass meeting to elect the LPC (?) but they have got their say - in certain respects they must know who is being where - and we have to take food to them, we've got to look after them, we've got to see that their plans are implemented, you see, and I worked with all these people - we - people like Albie Sachs is very widely respected amongst the ANC people in Mozambique - Joe Slovo, who lived with us for many years, is unconditionally regarded as one of our top leaders - we were many non-Africans there - Ronnie Kasrils was there, based there, Joe Slovo was based there, Ruth First, Albie Sachs, then myself, Farouk and many other Indian comrades who were based there - their names were meaningless to you because they've changed their names - have worked there and they were completely part, and some of them worked in the underground.

In Motola massacre of 1961 12 were killed, one was an Indian comrade, and what was very beautiful about that whole thing is that his family are progressive politically but conservative Indian family, and they came for the funeral, and they lived with us with - amongst the African comrades and all - they never said : Oh, I don't want to sleep here, you know - we shared everything together, and I took them to my house, where we had a long conversation - I tried to encourage them to show them that their son has been part and parcel - he's our hero, you see - and the day the family left Mozambique they were very, very inspired and in fact they said : You know, we have lost a son but we've gained many more sons.

J.F. What was his name, Krish?

I.N. Krish Ral - I know him by his MK name, you see - but even Nkomati Accord - the Nkomati Accord came and who - who was left behind - Sue Rabin, myself and Bobby, plus the other people, Zuma and the rest of us, and the comrades accepted our leadership - after Nkomati Accord our numbers were drastically reduced - we now number about 150, all types of people, but officially ten in the office, and then we have those like Albie and company, and we have those who are permanently settled in Mozambique, but to all intents and purposes we are part and parcel of the ANC - at all our meetings we have played our full part.

I.N. To give you an example of the last meeting I attended in Mozambique was January 8th. of this year, and the main speaker from the ANC was Cde. Jacob Zuma, our chief rep., and present from Frelimo a central committee member, and I was the person called upon to make the last closing address.....

END OF SIDE TWO.

J.F. The speech - you were saying.

I.N. The ANC decided that I should make the - pass the vote of thanks and also make a speech there, but also what happened was that rumour had already gone - gone out that the six of us were leaving Mozambique, and apparently some journalist from the Citizen alleged that it is either rumoured or I apparently said that the ANC's closing its mission in Maputo, and this came to our attention in Mozambique and the ANC decided that I must use this platform to deny ever making such a statement, and I was one of those main speakers at that particular meeting where I denied I ever made such a statement.

Where they got this from I don't know, but it was obviously part of the dirty tricks to try and create disunity amongst the ANC.

J.F. Let me just ask a few other things - just and more briefly, when you got out - you'd been asked when they came to visit you should the TIC and the NIC be revived - once you got out and you saw the climate politically '73, '74, '75, did you think yes, we should revive the TIC or did you think no, I can see why they don't want to do it or what did you think?

I.N. No, I felt that there was reason to revive....

J.F. You still felt that?

I.N. I did, and in fact I fought for it right up to the time I left the country, and when the TIC was going to be reconstructed I was quite pleased about it - today I still think there is a need for it, you see, although one might argue that look, there is no need for an Indian Congress, there is still debate in the country on this issue, but I think because of the nature of our living in the country we can still continue to mobilise through a legal organisation - what we need is the legal organisation....

J.F. What about those who might say that exists already with the UDF?

I.N. But what is the UDF - the UDF is a collection of many different - different organisations, and even the UDF itself will still find it difficult under the state of emergency, under the present structure, to work, you know, anywhere (any way) they want to - true, I agree that the UDF leaders can go into Lenasia and do a tremendous amount of work - it's an accepted fact, but the creation of the UDF could be seen in fact, you know, as a - in - a step in the right direction of non-racialism, and to show that even the Indian Congress itself is going in the right direction maybe a time will come when they'll say : O.K., we no longer need the Indian Congress.

- I.N. But politically, you know, the Indian Congress has got a tremendous history behind it, and I think this history is very important - if tomorrow the Nats decide to ban a number of organisations, they'll have to think twice before banning an organisation like the Indian Congress because of its recognition throughout the world, you see, as being a non-violent organisation and for what it stands for, and I think it's a great advantage to keep it going - one doesn't know what action the regime is thinking of taking in the next couple of months - there's every possibility they might decide to ban a number of organisations, and if they do what do we then do - if we dissolve the Indian Congress are we not putting ourselves in a vulnerable position - we are taking away a possible means of mobilising the people, and therefore I think it's necessary to keep it going, but to work more within the UDF - the whole of the Indian Congresses to work within the UDF to put forward the non-racial viewpoint.
- J.F. Now one other totally different thing - just to follow that up - when I spoke to Jack Simons he said that he didn't support like JODAC and the separate ethnic organisations at this stage - I wanted to ask him what his view was - have you found that there's a unified view in the ANC that the Indian Congress, the white organisations, JODAC, the Coloured organisations but they are (.....) these days, but those ideas that that's universally accepted, or do you think that you would argue to Jack that the Indian Congress is a different kettle of fish than JODAC and - what would you respond to someone saying....
- I.N. Let's take the question of JODAC - for the UDF to mobilise amongst the white people, you know, on the non-racial basis, I think it's still difficult - we've had experience during the heydays of the Congress of the Democrats - the Congress of Democrats tried to mobilise, or did mobilise within the white population, and I think we still have lots of field, lots of ground to work there, and the formation of JODAC I think is very important to work amongst the white people, to bring them into the movement - now who do they bring them into - into the UDF, which is a non-racial movement, you see, and I think we've got far more to achieve with the existence of UD - JODAC working amongst the white people to bring them into the movement, with the basis that they come into UDF, which is a non-racial body itself.
- Of course it's a slightly different argument from that of the Indian Congress - the Indian Congress has a much more bigger historical background, you see, but I think the idea of UDF - JODAC was a very good one.
- J.F. But how does that hold - why is there no Coloured people's organisation in South Africa, why did it never get that strong, why is - would you argue that there should be an African organisation?
- I.N. No, who is leading the struggle today in the country - it's the African people, and the African people are involved in the UDF - they are in fact the backbone, the vanguard of the struggle.
- J.F. So you're saying they're already there, we....
- I.N. Ja, exactly - of course they need (.....) mobilisation further, but they're already there, you see.
- J.F. And the Coloured, the argument of the Coloured community?

- I.N. That has been a debatable point for many, many years here in Lusaka and everywhere - there has been a trend amongst certain people that we should try and revive the Coloured People's Congress, but internally there is still lots of opposition to it, but today in the Western Cape in particular, I don't think there is a need for it in the Western Cape because the Western Cape is (?) involved in all the communal organisations and through the communal organisation into UDF etc....
- J.F. Community ones?
- I.N. Community ones, and through the trade unions - but in the Transvaal I think lots of work still has to be done, and in Natal itself.
- J.F. But if you started talking about organising a Coloured People's Transvaal congress people....
- I.N. I think you'll have your neck cut off, yes, and that is also another historical thing, process (?) because it has always been difficult to organise there, and I think you are quite correct - there is no hope of forming a Coloured organisation on the same basis and that they'll have to be organised within the framework of the UDF.
- J.F. The last area, which again is pretty brief - there is this argument about non-racialism that was pushed by FOSATU that is continued to be pushed by certain rump of COSATU and academics, which is that the real non-racialism is not in mass organisations because they'd say ja, well, Indres Naidoo can talk about it, but that's because he's a leader and he's been on executives so that in Maputo he was - there are different groups - in the congress alliance - you were at the congress of the people, but you had a position, so you would meet the Walter Sisulus or whatever but what about on the ground, those Indian congress people in Lens or the remnants of Fordsberg never got to know the people in Soweto - there is no real non-racialism at this point in time in South Africa on the ground among the masses, among the rank and file - we in the shop floor have the real non-racialism - when workers come together and work together that's when you've got a non-racialism - non-racial sphere - how do you respond to that?
- I.N. Well, I think it's wrong - firstly I agree that on the shop floor it's one place where non-racialism can or should be - is in fact - you could see it there - but I think also the political movements - the nature of the structures today in the country with the 101 little community projects that have been set up, you know, these organisations are the ones that also fostered non-racialism, and I want to take it back to the '50s as well, of how we tried to organise non-racial activities - I gave an example of the sports, and true, the sporting field has been a tremendous field from the late '50s, you see, in the cultural field.
- I - I believe that non-racialism is present at all levels - at the sporting level, at the education level, at the shop floor level, you see, and the movement has to build it amongst the people - one might talk of what is happening in Natal today - Inkatha (?) is on the rampage - Inkatha tried to form the black allied, which has subsequently collapsed - one can talk of little incidents that have taken place in northern Natal in the last two years, but I think those are isolated incidents and I think the people will have to overcome that - true, you might say at a very, very grassroot level there is still not enough integration taking place, but our job is to get it to be integrated, and this is where the UDF and this is where the political movements and the trade unions have to play their important role, is to get total integration amongst the people.

- J.F. The last closing questions is - do you think this is important for someone to come and spend all this time asking about non-racialism keeping - emphasising and asking you about it - do you think it's just an element that others are just as important as - do you see it as central, do you see it as ideologically rooted and - that you can't discuss the struggle in South Africa without it, or do you think it's just one aspect?
- I.N. No, no, no, I think it's an important aspect - I think firstly we are recording history, secondly we are recording the struggle as it is going on, and it's important to record the struggle as it's making progress - secondly I think it can play a very important role itself in the country and outside the country to show the world what is really meant, what is the ANC programme - the Freedom Charter itself has openly taken of a society of all races, and I think the type of work you are doing could be of tremendous value to our struggle as a whole.
- J.F. And lastly what's the future South Africa going to be like in terms of race or non-racialism - what do you - how do you see it?
- I.N. I think we're going to have a beautiful society based on the Freedom Charter - a non-racial society, and I think we will take lots of experience from what is happening in Mozambique, in Zimbabwe and Angola, and we'll be able to put their experience into play in South Africa itself - of course there's a deeper political question of what type of freedom - how are we going to get the freedom - it's quite clear now that freedom is going to come not entirely through the barrel of the gun, but the boers will have to negotiate a negotiated settlement, but I think the ANC's quite clear as to what type of society the ANC wants and this is what the ANC will be demanding at any negotiation table, and the ANC South Africa that I see will be based on the Freedom Charter and a complete non-racial one.
- J.F. And what - your view of this communism issue that's being used by the West against the ANC - how do you see it fitting in - your father actually had CP affiliation at one stage, did you say?
- I.N. Leanings, ja.
- J.F. What do you see - how do you see that issue yourself?
- I.N. I think it's immaterial to our cause - you know, if one looks at the history of the CP, I think our president put it correctly when he said that the relationship between the ANC and the CP does not come through signing of documents, but comes through years of struggle together - we've worked together over the years, and this is the relationship - and to me, I don't think it matters one bit whether the ANC continues - or rather that the fact that the CP members are part and parcel of the ANC, like we have nationalists within the movement as well, and probably liberals as well, and if there's room for them there's also room for the members of the CP in our movement, and I've been very closely involved with many of the renowned communists in the movement, starting from Bram Fischer, coming right down to Joe Slovo, and they've been dedicated freedom fighters - they have given their life for the struggle - in fact my son is named after a well known communist, Bram Fischer.
- J.F. What's his name?
- I.N. My son's name is Bram - and they have been fully involved in the struggle and many of them have died for the struggle, and I can name many that have died for the struggle.