

J.F. So can I start by asking you where you were born and when?

Nicandla
J.Z. I was born in Natal in the area called Mapumolo area - it's my uncle's place, where my mother was born - in 1942 - born of very simple family - my father of course was born and came from an area in Zululand called Nicandla area - that is what would be my actual home - my father died in the middle - middle '40s when I was still very young, so I didn't see much of my father. I saw parts of my mother, who started working shortly after my father's death as a domestic worker and continued, and I was therefore deprived an opportunity really to stay with my parents continuously.

As I grew up that tended to bring an element of my being from place to place - part of my life I was at Durban, where she was working, in the Cato Manor area - at times I was at Mapumolo area - and at a certain stage, I think when I was around 12, 13 or so I then spent some time also at Nicandla for the first time, and later I had to spend a bit of time there, so I kept on moving from area to area.

J.F. And was this all very rural - I don't have a picture....

J.Z. The Mapumolo area not very rural - it is a small town at the Mkomopumolo (?) district in Natal sort of semi urban - life different from the life at Nicandla, which is where my father came from, which was very rural. I could not therefore have a very continuous kind of life in one area - I had to move from one area to the other for - for various - I mean for one simple reason of course that my mother had to put me where I was supposed to be.

She had fears to stay with me in - in - in Durban permanently because she - she was of a peasant background, as you know, and felt if I stayed there perhaps I may be influenced by what the old people call town kind of life or township life, but that was not the basic reason - the other reason was that as a domestic worker she was not allowed to stay with us, the children, at work, where she was staying - the only house provided was for her and - and therefore that influenced her at first to take us to her own mother at Mapumolo area and keep on visiting us, or at times making it possible that I come to her.

Clearly she wanted to be with me, but the circumstances did not permit. Around 1948 I was still very young, for the first time I would say I - I - I remember very vividly because we were singing this song - there was a song which was sung throughout South Africa - particularly in Natal we were singing this song, young people, which says the song was saying Umthetho ka Malan usiphethenzima, the laws of Malan are oppressing us - what was very clear in front of me was that much as I saw other children with their fathers and mothers, it was clear I did not have my mother and father near me and I there - I therefore could feel this gap - so when this song was being sung, or as you grew up you - you - you had an impression that somebody was doing something, so when people were saying Malan's laws are oppressing us I - I remember I - I - I specifically asked a question - I can't remember whether it was from my uncle or from my grandmother or from one of my aunts, but I asked a question - who is this Malan - and I was told Malan is the government.

I had an impression then that this government must be a very huge man (Laugh) who's powerful to, you know, oppress everybody - but that's the first time I - I - I got to know that there's somebody who is actually making everybody not feel happy.

J.Z. I did not make the impression I - I had to - I was to make later on, but by that time that was my understanding - I would say that's where my first sort of - I think I asked a few questions again - where does he stay - and they were saying, pointing at some direction and mentioning places I didn't know then.

However, it went on and on and because of my continuous coming to stay with my mother in Cato Manor, so at my early age I had contact firstly with the white people - I'm forgetting to say that the first place where my - I remember the first place I saw my mother working was at Mapumolo area - she was a domestic worker of a magistrate, and there were problems - I couldn't enter - nobody was allowed to enter the place.

So when she - when she worked in town, whenever I got to town I - I could not stay with her - so my first impression of, or contact was rather a strange one because it didn't look as if we belonged together with those (?) people - they had to be so feared - my mother would make it a point that not even by mistake that they - they - they realise I was around - so that was a kind of - the experience that one came across.

But when I made contact with the - the - the Indian community in Cato Manor - the areas are just adjacent - it was a different situation - the Indian community live in that area in particular is the community that is not rich at all, which did not differ very much from us in the Cato Manor and in (?) the Kumbane (?) Township, as we called it - I also had my other cousins who were staying in town - in the what we called the backyards of the Indian places or flats - I later also used that kind of accommodation and - and when I visited them I played around with the Indian kids as a kid also - we did not find any problem, unlike with the white people - it was not easy to get closer in what - in whatever way - after all the only relation was that my mother was working, and so you have to - you had to relate in that kind of way.

But with the Indian community the relationship was different as - as I saw it, so my first actually closer contact was first and foremost before I actually became a politician with the Indian community at the level when we were children - again it was not a continuous uninterrupted process, so this would happen whenever I was in Durban, I actually had my friends.

At the Kamapumolo (?) area where I stayed again funny, the - the town has whites only, not many - it's not a big town - but we could not at all play with the white children who were there, so there was in fact a continuous war between us and them, because we played - because who played (?) came to the - to - to town, playing, and they chased us away and - and - and it was generally some clashes - when we see them we - we - we - we chased after them, and when they saw us they chased after us, so the relation was never really good, and later when I looked at it I realised that they were actually being told not to play with us, because from time to time there were some occasions where we would play, but they were always either the servants or the mother come, and then later I'll find the attitude has changed.

J.Z. So I'm trying to say the relation from that early age, at my very beginning when I was beginning to look around, to open my eyes, that was a kind of first experience that one got across, but of course life went on - it looked normal - it looked what it is supposed to be - until in the '50s when I began, as I was coming from time to time to Durban area I began to - to - to hear meetings, a lot of meetings, political people - I mean these were now the congress people - it somehow had some impression - I - I took it that it was basically because of my way of growing - I grew up with a feeling that there was a gap somewhere.

I couldn't go to school and - and so I had these kind of problems, and I felt I needed something to - to resolve those (?) problems - as I grew up I felt that my mother was working hard, and therefore I - I - my mind was in a way (?) searching and any way (anywhere) for some solution, unconsciously of course at a young age. I remember at one time I thought perhaps God will help, because my grandmother was a very big Christian - she used to go with me to church - so thinking that this mighty fellow will help (Laugh) but of course there was no help.

So when I - I heard this message it actually stuck on me - I then briefly thereafter when I was in Zululand my cousin - of course in our language we call it the elder brother - he was a - the - the - the - the first son of my father from my other mother - he was in the - in the ANC already - this is in the '50s - he was a volunteer already, and he - he preached continuously congress, and continuously indeed.

And I had another cousin of mine who was of my same age - I think just eight months older than me - we wanted to - to join the movement, and we felt - I felt this was a thing that (?) I influenced the - my other brother that : Look, let us - let us join - but we - we were of course in the countryside at that point in time, so my brother came to Durban - he was starting to work, and I think he - he joined.

I came at some stage and I listened again to these big meetings - I remember I wanted to join and I talked to somebody who said : You are still too young - but around late '50s - I think about '58 I was able to join - the main thing of course at the time I - I joined the youth league - the main thing was to listen to the public meetings, speeches, and I always looked forward to this kind of thing - but not long after that because I - I - the - the other thing - what happened to me because of my mother's position - what I have been forgetting is that at a later stage as - as I was coming to town, so I will used to do some part time jobs as a small boy - to a point that I can't even remember when I started working, because I remember just working when I'm there and going, but I can't say at this time I then started working formally, unless at the point when I - I went to look for papers, as it were (?) - so there is no meeting that missed me after that.

But I shortly again joined SACTU, and that made an important contribution to my consciousness, because SACTU had an arrangement where there were political discussions discussing about trade unionism, so instead of just attending meetings in general but I got involved in political discussions.

J.Z. It was a (?) kind of labour theory discussion discussing about trade unionism, what trade unionism was - so that's when I got my real (.....) as it is now of politics - what it's all about, the exploitation etc. - I thought I've discovered the solution to my problems - here were people who were talking something that I thought was actually a solution, because after all the problems I had were the problems of many people - I mean I was - I observed.

So I - I went on and the commitment grew very deep and very quick - we also had discussions of the youth on the - on the ANC - they were so - we even had days of the youth where we'd discuss some politics and SACTU at that date (?) - of course in Natal we had a specific way of dealing with the politic (?) (Faulty tape or mike too near.) And as I entered the movement, in both ANC and SACTU, here there were white comrades and Indian comrades, and I'd never - I can't remember a single moment where there was a problem.

I took it that because of my earlier period I did not have a - a new situation as such, and because of my understanding it was clear that the people who are here were the people who were looking for something common - there was a bit of actually realising that indeed we have got the whites around and these are the good ones - this was - was my first impression - different from the others - but of course the practical work that was being done made it even more not an issue, because they were quite active - we were busy with the - with the comrades.

In fact later we had a lot of - in the political discussion we got involved quite a lot with the comrades, so we did not have problems that made us to feel perhaps these were strange people as such - as I say, my impression was these are the good ones, different from the ones that are actually oppressing us - so we had that kind of a period - I was part, for an example, then of the volunteer - in the volunteers of the ANC - did a lot of general mobilisation in our (?) attended - I mean there was no meeting that I failed to attend - to me this became the thing.

So if, for an example, Luthuli was to speak I mean I wouldn't miss that one because it was so important for us to listen to our leaders what they had to say, and there was a lot very clear that he had to say, our - his - his speeches even on the question of non-racialism were very, very clear and - and there was no question - you couldn't question it because it was so clear and correct - and preaching how we were actually being - I remember one time listening to him - we are (?) actually being above the understanding of the white person, whom I thought was very superior - because he was tracing a bit of history, how they came, how they then played tricks in order to take away the country, how we were ready to be with them and to handle the country together.

It was a bit of a history kind of speech indicating how even the struggle began and why can't they understand, and of course I didn't understand why couldn't they understand the truth because it was (?) the plain truth - so that kind of politics, politicisation was in a way key at the first kind of conduct in a way, so it never had a problem - of course there were more Indian comrades that we worked with, particularly in Natal - it never just occurred that these were different people - I always felt it was because of my background, that I grew up playing with them and I was always with the Indian community from time to time.

J.Z. But with the deepening of the struggle you - you began to realise how serious and how committed some of these comrades were - and of course with the beginning of understanding the policies our own position in terms of the Freedom Charter, how we kept on discussing it, what it meant, helped to further root our policies to me very, very, very, very deeply - I don't think I never (ever) had a problem.

We - we'd discuss racialism as - as seen, for an example, in - in SACTU, because the - the workers were not allowed to be together, whites, Indians and Africans - these kind of problems were general problems that were discussed continuously - how you'd have one meeting but have two minutes in order to justify that this was not one meeting - that kind of thing - and of course we worked together - we did not have a problem, but the problem was the law, and these kind of things were, fortunately, ably explained at an early age by comrades in - in - in SACTU, for an example, so that this did not become an issue at all.

Of course when the ANC got banned you - you then had immediately this secret organisation that emerged, MK, and what you found in MK that there was then no problem of colour at all, no problem - I mean the law that would have prevented us to be together in the same union, or to be together in the ANC, was no longer operative (?) because here we were now in conditions of underground. It was unlike when you looked at the congress alliance - the ANC ought to be there - the Indian Congress, Congress of Democrats, the - the people's - Coloured People's Congress - there was a political explanation you could not be together, so we (.....) to have a congress alliance - but when we got underground MK membership was not on the basis of any colour - it was the organisation of everybody, so where we had control of everything and no longer respecting any law, we were together and there was no problem.

And what was important in my own mind was this organisation had taken a decision, or this organisation was pursuing the armed struggle in the - in the - in practical terms, so the kind of work done at MK level was in fact the work in terms of the - the phase of our struggle - whoever was arrested then, whether white or black, would face the consequences of his or her activities - now a commitment, therefore, there was seen even more realistically than above when we were still just having meetings - here we are now acting in a - in a - in a different (.....) and - and these comrades there was no difference - no-one was saying : Do it - do this amount (Laugh) because you are - you are African, do this amount because you are an Indian - we were all doing it equally.

So again at another level which was becoming very serious we - we - we worked together further in - in implementing our own policy - so we didn't have a problem. However, as you know, the - the period before this had seen - that is in the early '50s - I'm talking about, for an example, the defiance campaign of 1952 - what had happened here is that the people who defied the law were not only Africans, but it was whites, Indians, Coloureds together facing the unjust laws.

That period was very important in the practical implementation of the ideas that we - we - we always had leading up to the congress of the people - up to the congress of the people and the adoption of the Freedom Charter.

J.Z. In fact that struggle became the best teacher to even the ANC people and everybody in terms of understanding the dynamics of working together - and therefore by the time you come to the period that I've been talking about where we all get involved, and this, as I'm saying, as we join (?) then you are taught and explained so this becomes part of your knowledge in the process of the struggle, is - is what the ANC can talk about - what the ANC became more effective about - and it was very clear that these policies were - were - were - were feared by the enemy, and of course you - as you move along the struggle there is this perpetual charge about ANC being communistic in that kind of way, which is another dimension in a way because it makes you to be keen to know but why, what is this, who are these communists.

Now the enemy of course always commits a mistake by thinking, if it says the communists are bad people then people are going to scare away - but to the oppressed people the effects of that is - is the opposite, because then the people think the communists must be the right people who are so hated, who therefore want to kill the enemy, so you - you begin to be - and actually the enemy ends up recruiting (Laugh) people in the sense that everybody wants the one who is more determined to deal with the enemy, and they always say the communists are the most dangerous ones.

And people are saying : We actually would like to - to see those who are - who are - who are the most dangerous - that is another element of course, which is not the main issue at the - at this point in time - but my experience, for an example, when we got arrested - that is in 19 - (.....) after the activities of the early '60s - of course the - the white comrades were not allowed - there were not very many, but they were not allowed to go with us to Robben Island, but the Indian comrades, the Coloured comrades, we went with.

Now by law in South Africa even in prison you have got to be treated somehow differently on some aspects - one of these, for an example, was that they had (.....) to long pants, trousers - we did not have a right (Laugh) Indians and Coloureds - classification - they had shoes when we had sandals.....

END OF SIDE ONE.

J.Z. they ate what was called D Diet whilst we ate F Diet - D Diet meant they had their meat in a small tin, piece of bread, some (... ..) and we were not allowed to have that because we were not, you know - so that this classification continued to be there (?) but this did not make any - any - any serious thing in our mind because we - we - we knew the system - this did not become an issue - I'm just mentioning it to indicate how the enemy tries all the time to differentiate the communities - but I don't even remember one having any problem.

J.Z. Even if you were freezing you didn't feel the other comrade has a long (.....) because we knew that's how the enemy deals with us, and that did not become an issue to us. I mean one of my best friend comrade that I stayed with, that I was always with at all - all the material (?) times, was actually an Indian comrade - we had been together in Durban - we went together - I - I - I think in the majority of time up to - up to - I mean at that time up to today, I don't even remember as (he's) an Indian - I mean it's not an issue.

I've respected at the time comrades like Cde. Billy Nair - as I say our senior comrades then and - and never had any problem that this was a - a - a comrade which was not an African - it never occurred - it doesn't - I mean at that time it was no longer an issue in my mind. What again is important is that we - in South Africa because of the experiences of the '50s - I think late '50s - actually a question began to be asked in general as to whether - was it not the - the right time now that ANC was actually open - membership was open to everybody - so the issue arose in the '50s, late '50s, and this was as a result of the practical experiences that our people had faced in terms of struggling together in the '50s, working on important documents like the Freedom Charter.

The - the great leaders like Dadoo had - had won the Isitwalane^{dw} together with Chief Luthuli, greatly respected like Dr. - Dr. Naicker, that (?) we respected with no - no thinking that there was any difference between Dr. Naicker and Luthuli - we sang about Dr. Naicker - had songs that (we) sang in Natal in particular, sang about Chief Luthuli and Dr. Naicker, calling upon them to lead us - we did not have any problem .

So it has been the question of practical work besides the policy as put down of the ANC that working with these comrades has gradually so much undermined the prejudices that the enemy tries to preach all the time, that the preachings of the enemy become a joke more than anything then - when then perhaps is important to indicate is that when we - we - some of us came out of prison, found again almost the same thing continuing - we came out in prison at the end of '73, for an example - I did - as you know at that - during that year it is the time that the trade union movement was beginning to show its - its - its organisation in the country - perhaps one did not see the period between '63 to - to '72 or - or middle of '73, because as we came out I remember in Durban trade union movements were very busy and I got involved again, and the same situation.

Indian comrades were busy, Coloured comrades were busy in the trade unions - in fact it is important to mention the fact that even from prison comrades like Cde. Phyllis Naidoo related to - to - to - to us and never thought that this comrade was - was different at all - she actually served as almost a reception point to us - as we came out of prison she was receiving us - she was seeing to everything - she - we came out with nothing - she was seeing to whatever she eats we - we - we ate together with her - that kind of very deep kind of comradeship and working together and understanding one another's problems in that kind of way.

I had no problem to - to go to her if I had nothing and say : Look, I had nothing to eat today - and - and she would see to it - if she says : I've got nothing, let us eat together - that kind of comradeship, sharing the - the - the problems of the struggle - and therefore in the trade union movement there was still -

J.Z. Of course by that time even the BC movement had come, and BC movement insofar as the Indian and Coloured communities had also found it not an issue - I think the only issue they found was - it was the white (?) community, so again it had played a positive role in that regard - I mean when they talked of black it was black including three communities mainly, so that - that was no longer an issue - we - we were moving forward.

But again what is important is that during the period that we were in - in prison, and we had other comrades coming out of South Africa and operating outside South Africa, you - you had a situation where the involvement of other nationalities in the ANC as different from the one which was in the '50s through the Congress Alliance - I mean once we were outside South African borders you had no - no - no law to be considered in a way, so the - the - the involvement of the - of all comrades in general equally in the structures of the ANC became something that was being undertaken.

You - you - you had, for an example, by (Interruption) - this was of course finally discussed at the Morogoro conference, where in the - in the structures, as senior as the revolutionary council of the ANC, all comrades were to serve - so you had a situation where in these comrades everywhere in the structures of the movement were participating at all levels - they were respected in the - in terms of leadership etc.

Again what is important here is the practical reality because when, for an example, we - we talk of the law in South Africa preventing us from doing something because if you are seen together you will be arrested, but - but as soon as that law is not there we always work together - there is no problem - the example of MK, that when the law was no longer a problem we had no problem to work together - so again when we are no longer inside South Africa, we are outside, there was no problem of working together.

So you can see that the - the - the separation, even that what made the Congress Alliance to be there, it was because of - of - of the law as such - not that we could not have worked together - all those people in the Congress Alliance could have been in one organisation in any way - but the boers have always tried to see to it that there is no link - they tried this - in fact if you looked at the nationalities in that kind of way you may think the issue is merely the issue between the whites, Coloureds, Indian and Africans, but if you look at it much deeper you will realise that in fact even among the - the African communities this separation is there exactly the same.

They, for an example, the Nationalist Party, when it felt that the congress was making such advances, the congress which was founded on an important principle of unity, it had united first and foremost the African people and it - it was moving - it had moved to unite the African people and the Indian people and the Coloured people, and it was consciously uniting the white people and all other communities, because there was a conscious effort to do that, and - and - and the enemy then began to fall back and to see the danger.

One of the dangers was that the policies of the congress were so correct that even the white people if they were allowed to be exposed to the preachings of the congress they would be converted, so it was important to cut this.

J.Z. And they of course in a - in an attempt to find some solution of their own they then began to introduce the homeland policy - now the homeland policy's not different from the actual apartheid in a sense - it is an apartheid of its own, because what are they saying in the homeland policy - they are saying the Xhosas should be together away from the Zulus, away from the Swazi speaking, away from the Vendas, away from the Botswanas, away from the Ndabeles - so you have this apartheid policy at one level being between the nationalities in terms of Indian, Coloureds and whites, but you have it also within the - the - the African groupings.

So you have a situation where it is - it is seen in that regard in a different - but it's the same thing - same, same thing - no difference - you know, they apply the same - they would like to have people separated different - if for an example, according to them, if they had promoted tribalism to a degree where then either the - the - the - the Pedis would feel the Vendas are wrong, they must be - there must be animosity - they will thrive out - out of that too (?)

If for an example, they - they see what has been happening recently, the clashes which they have been always - one of the areas they've concentrated on has been the mines - if they see people fighting there, to them that is a better thing because they can then better control the people - if they see Gatsha's people fighting with Matanzima's people, they feel this is an important thing because they can better control these people - it - this is (?) the whole kind of thing, and therefore to try to say : This group is bad and that group is bad - so it is a whole thing.

And this is what we - our basic policy that we - we preach for unity and - and - and our unity goes total - it does not go half way - this is what the enemy fears mostly - but of course the other question, or the other point that is important to be noted is that the policy of the ANC, as it were, has been moving with time - at a certain time because of the - the historical development of our struggle, the ANC has been moving all the time, taking into consideration the important factor that we have got to move with the people - we have got to, whatever you do, all we do, we do it on behalf of our people - we have got -

They have got to understand reality - now what is important is that our policies are very correct - they cannot be misunderstood by our people - it is only the wrong policies that get misunderstood and that cause problems - the correct policies cannot be misunderstood, because you cannot fail to explain the correct thing, but the wrong thing you - you - you will fail because you will try (?) many ways of explaining it, because it is wrong - you are not going to convince people - you may convince people for a short period, but there cannot be an everlasting kind of an explanation, because with time people get to understand things themselves throughout their own experience.

What has happened, for an example, you have had groupings emerging - one of these was the PAC at the beginning, which felt the struggle was going to be, or was being hijacked by the whites, the communists etc. - but what is important is that the PAC never made any mark in the struggle absolutely - perhaps it existed for a year or so, in name even then - but ever since then PAC could not - when the repression came PAC was crushed - the name has remained.

J.Z. There is a long history about it. One of the reasons that the PAC failed was because it used policies that were not correct policies in terms of the South African set-up. You have had, for an example, other groupings emerging - one of the current one is AZAPO at the moment - I don't think AZAPO exist in a serious way as an organisation - I - I don't know the - the - the - the total number, but you will always hear statements more than practical work and political campaigns being carried out against the boers.

It is either the - just the statements which have been made or you'll only hear AZAPO when there's a clash between individuals of AZAPO and the UDF - but what they do really against the system I've never heard unfortunately, except just statements, as I said - a statement - anybody can make a statement - it's not a big issue to - to - to talk to (Laugh) - to the press people - but you - you - you - you see attempts to - to criticise our policy - it has never worked out.

What again is important is that when the ANC moves with the people, if you took into consideration the 1985 consultative conference, there has been discussions - even in 1959 the ANC discussed the issue of membership - it took a certain position then because the situation was at that level - in 1969, ten years after 1959, it discussed the issue at Morogoro and took specific decisions, and in 1985 - 1985 it took a decision, which decision opened even the national executive committee to all nationalities in South Africa.

At that time no question could be raised, and this is how the ANC understands its policy and its people, because at that time no question - perhaps if in 1959 the - the 1985 decision was taken, there could have been questions - but because of understanding the mood and clarity and depth of politicisation of the masses it is - it always took the correct decision at the correct time - it has never - it has never raised any issue now - I think there is a total support of our people of the - the decision related to this question in 1985.

But what is important at this point in time is that this proves that the policy of the ANC of non-racial policy is not just a slogan - the ANC believes in this policy and it practices it - it - it's not a slogan to say - even to say after the - the - the - the liberation we'll then work together - it is actually the - the policy that the ANC is practicing now when we are fighting for our liberation - also to prove the point that in fact all South Africans of all racial groupings or nationalities have a role to play in the struggle to liberate that country.

You cannot say some will play the role at a different time - that is why we - we get in fact annoyed and disgusted by the kind of suggestions from other people that you - you need to consider the position of the whites - in fact from the ANC point of view we feel that kind of politics is a backward politics - it is actually taking us back to - to the primitive political arguments - why should we when we don't look into the South African situation and solutions in terms of colour - why should we be brought back to the mentality of the backward boers to think in terms of colour - we - we can't understand, and this is what we are refusing to do.

That is why we - we do not even want to - to listen to suggestions that if the South African situation is resolved there could be some provisions of some whites - what for?

J.Z. That is why we can't understand this question of groups sharing of power - what is this group rights - why - we are all South Africans and we believe in it, and we are prepared for this to discuss the issue with the South Africans, and that's the reason why the ANC has - has never had problems to discuss with people who have found an opportunity to discuss the ANC, how the ANC looks at the situation - be black, be white - because we don't fear and we - we - we - we are very committed to our policy and - and - and we don't have problems to discuss our policy.

We want a united non-divided South Africa, and South Africa belongs to all who live in it of all colours, so we - we - we - we therefore say in - in our own experience of the movement and practical as individuals, we have gone through a process, a process which makes us to feel in fact insulted if people are saying we - we must talk in terms of colour - why - we are therefore in - in - in - in a situation where in resolving our problems in South Africa we - we - we - we - doesn't cross our mind in any way that the white person, you know, is somebody else - we are all South Africans.

We are very much aware of the fact that the regime has used the colour and used the colour in terms of dominating, and it has a history of its own - that's why we try to dissolve that kind of mentality in our political work, and we think we have succeeded to a large extent, and that's why we don't want this to be preached because it is harming our people - it is making our people to live in compartments in the country of their own and - and therefore we are clear we don't want it.

We want one South Africa where everybody participates equally (interruption)

J.F. Just to go way back - just to make sure that I've got it, did you - you didn't mention about school - you went to school?

J.Z. I said I didn't go to school.

J.F. At all?

J.Z. Ja (Laugh)

J.F. So because of your mother's situation and being moving around you never were able to get any formal schooling?

J.Z. Yes.

J.F. And then when you said you joined SACTU, was that - what specific union or at what level did you join?

J.Z. General Workers Union.

J.F. Which job were you doing?

J.Z. By then I think I was working in some grocery shop, the first time - and I think we did not have one union for that, so I joined General Workers Union - in fact until later - in fact some strange (?) because even some factories I worked to in some places I always worked from the General Workers Union - always find that that kind of factory have not yet managed to have a union, unlike, for an example, we had unions like Railway Workers Union very specifically.

J.Z. I work at - I worked at Robson Matting....

J.F. At where?

J.Z. Robson Matting, another factory - still I was - we were still trying to organise that (Laugh) - that factory - I got actually sacked because of my SACTU work there, so I - I - I generally went through this - I was very clear of my aims then because I understood trade unionism very well and that the best was to have workers under a specific union, so we always worked towards where (?) then the possibilities emerged we will do so, but I - I - I also had that kind of working in different places and therefore served more the General Workers Union, and I was there for more - I even tried to organise - to organise at a certain stage.

I remember at one time I was helping to organise domestic workers, but never as a - as an official organiser - as part of my own enthusiasm - and I remember I was also sacked in one place I'd organised workers - it was a small little company - I organised workers there - I can't remember its name now unfortunately - I remember one Friday the pay - paymaster saying : We give you all your money, we don't need your services any more - so I tried to find out why (Laugh) what's wrong - he said I must stand aside - then later he said no, the fellow, the induna fellow had told them that I'd organised workers from, and I've introduced worker to SACTU officers and the workers they were getting spoiled (Laugh)

So it was one most enjoyable thing to be in SACTU - I think that helped me a great deal in terms of my political understanding and - and understanding of the problems from the trade union movement point of view.

J.F. Did you have any particular office - were you an organiser, were you just a worker....

J.Z. Just a worker - just a worker, not - I did not have a specific office duties in SACTU.

J.F. When did you join the youth league - do you remember what year it was that you joined youth league?

J.Z. I think it was about '58.

J.F. And when - who was the president in Natal then of the youth league?

J.Z. Of Natal - I can't remember (.....) - it has faded away, those kind of (.....) (Laugh)

J.F. But when - I guess what I'm really interested in having you discuss - maybe you might remember any anecdotes or anything that would help clarify how you saw it at the time, but.....

END OF SIDE TWO.

J.F. in that they had had views which subsequently changed, but when you joined in '58 - that was right before the PAC breakaway - there was a whole - there was almost ten years before - you were quite young then, but do you remember other people putting forth an Africanist point of view and you disagreeing, or do you have any recollections of this being a talking point - I guess what I'm worried about is the way you explain it it seems almost flat, like it was so clear, you moved on, and I understand it, but I just would like to know the real circumstances.

J.Z. The advantage was that by the time - by the late '50s debates had gone on - this is - this is what - that's what had happened - debates about the Africanist - for an example, in the middle '50s we had the Africanist grouping, which had been dealt with - we had the dissatisfactions of the PAC, which were being dealt with - so the arguments within the ANC - I mean to those who were not sharing the views of the PAC, the things were very clear, and because of that experience the - the politicisation was aimed in fact at correcting that - and of course you - you also depends on - on the kind of people, I would imagine - in my case you had people like Stephen Dlamini, who were leaders of the working class who were responsible from a political development - people like Harry Gwala.

So there was no - no room for - for any wrong politics really to - to - so to put it - you - you - you got into a political area which had been travelled because the problems, for an example, that was there at the beginning of the youth league of the ANC had been resolved by that time, and no longer any problems, and when you are talking of the - of the '50s when the founders of the ANC youth league, they themselves had been - had actually changed their views, so we - we had no problems by that time.

The only problem that emerged was the PAC, which we thought these were mad people, and of course in Natal PAC could not - could not even - even - even begin the process, partly I would (?) - I would say in my own view, you - you - you were dealing with an area that had had such a - a kind of influence from Luthuli that congress was congress - if you came with any other thing people wouldn't understand you.

The PAC leadership attempted to have a meeting in Durban, and that meeting could not complete - they couldn't complete the meeting because firstly they could not answer the questions, and secondly they were told please, they must just move off.

J.F. Were you there at that meeting?

J.Z. Yes.

J.F. What year was that?

J.Z. Can't remember whether it was '59 or - '59 or '60 - can't remember - because they - they came to Natal because they knew in Natal there was nothing moving in terms of (Laugh) the PAC, so they came to this meeting - I just can't remember whether it was '59 or - or.

J.F. So for you when you say we saw them as mad people, were they mad people of the Transvaal, we don't have them here, or did you have a few people who were PAC leaning but you thought they were not very clear....

J.Z. No, no, no, we - we did not have the problem at all - for example, the people I'm talking about had to come from Johannesburg to try and explain the PAC - we did not have comrades like it was the case, for example, in the Transvaal like the Madzunyas - we did not have the comrades who turned (?) by the leadership and - and began to - and began to organise for the PAC.

J.F. I guess - if you're talking about the '70s you would admit probably that BC had some substance, that it was actually - you even said just now that it helped people understand black - as black they're not going to get into the categories - did you have any sense - did you have any sympathy for some reason why they would - PAC people or Africanist people would have that point of view, that the idea of Africans sticking together - did that ever - was that ever part of your experience - or why wasn't it if you think....

J.Z. It wasn't - to us it was a - it was a very narrow kind of political tendency - we actually called it a narrow kind of nationalism as they expressed it - as a - as a - as a SACTU person, for an example, I remember very well because there - they - they emerged a trade union which sort of aligned itself with the PAC - even that trade union was - was - its main leader (?) was there called Nyaose, who was the PAC - what was it called - FOFATUSA - we - in - in SACTU discussed this kind of problems - we didn't understand what - what are these people trying to do, but it was clear this trade - they were trying to get the workers from this point of view.

So political work, even to further analyse this, was being done - as I say, there was that kind of habit in Natal of political discussions, particularly in our generation, so we - we - we were able to talk about these things and understand them and I - I - the only thing I can say was - was the problem was our anger, because we were very angry - we wanted to fight the boers - that was what I could say could - I could remember being youthful indeed - we thought we could even take the bush knives and fight, but not - not from the point of view of the PAC - it was just that we - we understood the boers don't understand, they need to be beaten up - so this revolutionary thing, this is what I could under - remember in - in my youth that I think would have meant actually thinking extreme in that kind of way, not in terms of political, you know - in terms of policy we didn't have a problem at all.

J.F. But with you - that's interesting what you've just said that when (?) you sang the song The Laws of Malan are Oppressing us, and you said who was this Malan, did that not plant an understanding on your part at such an early age - surely they must have said to you he's a white man - do you remember that....

J.Z. Of course - of course they had said so.

J.F. But - and when you said fight the boers, was that fighting the whites and killing the whites or was - I'm just interested that that didn't transfer itself to being an anti-white feeling - are you saying to me you never had an anti-white feeling?

J.Z. No, only - only - only before I got into politics - when that Malan - that Malan it was before I was ten, so I grew up with an understanding knowing I mean not only - not only in politics.

J.Z. It was a general talk that our country was taken by the whites, so before politics you had that teaching from - even from - even when I was in the rural area - the Nicandla area, for an example, where I come from, where my father comes from, is an area where the Bambatha War ended - there is - when I grew up I remember very distinctly from my mother's - my father's uncle's place there was an old man who was a young man during the Bambatha War - he was still living.

There was again another woman at another Ndlovu (?) area who was also a young girl during the Bambatha War - they actually saw it - they used to tell us stories - that was the battle between the Africans and the whites, and you - you grow up with that kind of hatred - it - it's what you get - it's what you get to know - you get to know about Dingaan's wars, so that one - I'm not saying before getting into politics we don't get - this is how the - the South African Africans are - are actually - if they do get to know about oppression, that's how it is explained as you - as you - as you grow up.

When, for an example, I asked who is this Malan, there was no problem to put the kind of political context, whether by my granny or whoever - they understood there is some Malan who has taken - who is oppressing us clear - that was clear from the white kind of (.....) - but I'm talking about the period when I enter into formal politics, that immediately correct politics is then taught, so whatever you might have heard (had) even when you are growing up is - is - is put into shape - you begin to understand things properly.

So not as to say you never thought of it at the - I mean thought of it prior to getting into politics - but having been politicised, then finding people firstly who disagree with the policies of the ANC, this is where the problem is with the PAC, because they did not start by disagreeing with it earlier on - they disagree with the organisation, so they become a disruptive force within the movement, and in their disruptiveness they begin to articulate policies which are new policies - we - we never had that kind of - of - of madness.

We - we took it as madness because they were saying they want to drive the whites to the sea, they want to butcher them - and we couldn't - couldn't settle in our minds - now - now I think what we should appreciate is that this is a tendency that suddenly develops within a policy that has been understood by generations, and then you suddenly say : But why, what's happening - and you don't understand this.

As I say, because of that you - you have the - the Luthulis, the leaders of the ANC, taking advantage of the situation in explaining further - in actual fact their explanations being made in order to prevent any damage or harm done by this mad kind of policy, so you have that kind of a situation.

J.F. I think that's a good - I understand that - I don't mean to focus too much on the PAC as much as the idea - I don't want to belabour this because (.....) discuss it, but just the last thing is to say the idea that you would grow up with this clear anti-white - Bambatha up to Malan, and then one day you get clear politics and you can suddenly see the difference between a boer and Denis Goldberg - now how did that happen - do you - maybe that was just when you were so young - it seems like you were politicised at quite a young age, but if you can tell me anything about how that changed.

J.F. How one day you were a young guy who had - when you said the rural area perceptions about whites to then getting clear?

J.Z. I - I actually explained at the beginning that my first period that I can remember is when my mother was working, when I was not allowed even to enter, and I had that kind of relationship - it's - in addition to that you - you - you then have a situation where you - you know you don't belong together because that is a kind of thing which has been preached - but of course when I talk of the whites that you meet in the movement - I say I attended some of the meetings even when I was still a small boy, and I will be seeing the white people speaking and - and talking about oppression, right - and around that time in fact the speeches were very, very, very, very hot - people were swearing at the (Laugh) - at the government, and they were also swearing at the government, so you realise the difference - because here is a white person articulating the problems that we (you) have, talking about the misery, the suffering of the Africans, and you realise this one is a different one from the ones that I know.

It did not cause a problem seriously in my own mind - I - I don't remember it causing a problem - I just remember myself saying this one is not like others, he's different - because the very message that was delivered by the comrades was a different one.

J.F. Were there any specific non-African people that helped you because of their - what they said or their involvement that helped you kind of move faster just by seeing them who impressed you a lot?

J.Z. Well, not - not basically - I - I - I - people who impressed me a lot are the names I have mentioned, like Stephen Dlamini, Harry Gwalas, because they had politics that dissolved many things, that cleared many things and made the world to look very clearly - we do - we did have white comrades who were participating in - in - in - in Natal, for example, like Rowley Arensteins at - at the time (.....) at the time - quite a number of other quite I mean - I mean white comrades who were there part of, but not that they - I mean in - in - in - in the sense of a specific thing.

Rowley Arenstein, for an example, as a lawyer - he was very loved at the time by the African because he defended a lot of political cases - he was a good lawyer - in fact he was nicknamed by - by Africans - they were calling - with his beards they were calling him Ujebe, beards - now this was a kind of a man who - who from his own at the time general conduct had no problems and - and people understood him, and this was (is) one thing in South Africa, that once even if a person is white, once he operates with the people, people don't have a problem.

I think the example of Joe Slovo today, that every person in South Africa sings about, is - is a classic one - that once the - the actions of a comrade are seen by people they recognise it as - for - for his contribution - they - they don't look at the colour - so you had that kind of a problem - I mean this is what I can say.

J.F. Do you think that the lack of any base for the PAC in Natal or any Africanist sentiment had anything to do with the fact that the PAC seems to have been very not only anti-white and anti-communist but anti-Indian?

J.Z. Of course yes.

J.F. Was that a factor....

J.Z. There was that kind of a - of a problem - they were anti everything, anti-whites, anti-Indians, anti-ANC and - and - and these were problems because here you - we were in the place where the Indian community was concentrated - we had worked with them for many years - and you couldn't be anti-ANC because they emerge as anti-ANC and - and - and in Natal it was - it was impossible to - to have the - that is why they did not have a case to present, and they did not even have a chance to whisper to people to try to win people quietly - it was just impossible.

J.F. Do you remember - again you're so much younger than some of the things I'm talking about, but it would be interesting to see how it filtered down - when the rest of Africa was getting its independence - Ghana's and Kenya's, do you remember people talking about Mau Mau, people talking about independent Africa and - is that (.....) for you?

J.Z. Yes, I remember it very well - very well. I remember that Mau Mau had a serious impact at my early age - in fact I remember when I was already in politics when we were still preaching non-violence, some of us young people we were thinking we needed to hit them, and why can't we imitate Mau Mau (Laugh) and - and we were taken up by Mau Mau - I must say I was taken up by Mau Mau - the - the Ghana what you call incident, for an example, when Ghana got free, one of the person who made this is - it's brother of a man I was talking about, whom I said was preaching a lot.

I remember I was - I was - I was in - in Zululand at - at that point in time - he came and he was over the moon about Ghana - congress was just over the moon and - and - and one began to see this was one advantage because my - my - my brother used to talk a lot in general terms - I mean he was not necessarily that he was a depolitician - I mean he was the man who'll talk about things in general and - and - and how strong congress was - a lot of songs he used to sing for us, so he - he - he made me aware.

I remember him specifically - he's the one who (we) used to love because if he had an opportunity he used to - to take a little bit - if it was nice and cut (?) he will talk very nice, and I used to like - to love listening to him talking about the liberation of Africa - so when I got into - into - into - into the thing the question of Congo, for an example, the Lumumba incident had serious indelible kind of writings in my mind.

The - the - the - the speeches by the - the MacMillans about the wind of change, I mean those were big things as they were happening at - at - at that time as we were moving on, and we believed - we believed at the time that that wind of change was actually coming - I mean liberation was being seen coming down - why not affect South Africa - and I think that in a way also helped to propel the militancy of the - of the time.

J.F. But why didn't it propel you into the Africanist area, because a lot of the kind of conventional history explains the PAC or the Africanism as being a response to that, that (.....) would be in response to Mau Mau - when you were getting all enchanted with Mau Mau did anyone older or more experienced from the ANC say : Look, no, we're not going to do it that way - or did you ever try to say : Look, we must do it - why didn't it translate itself into more of an Africanist feeling for you?

*if means,
"picked" in
slang factory
talk*

J.Z. I - it couldn't do so because the influence of the South African politics were different....

J.F. You felt South Africa was different?

J.Z. No, no, no, I'm saying because the situation was different we couldn't get that - for an example, with Mau Mau we did not have the details - we heard Mau Mau had been fighting - Kenyatta was leading the people who were fighting there - you did not have all the details of how the things was being done, so you - you - you got impressed with these people who - who go to the bush and fight - the question of Africanist thing would not emerge as a serious problem.

Now you see, the key to this is how the PAC emerges - if perhaps one - when one came into politics you had these two historic tendencies it would be a different thing - the problem with the PAC is that it tries to cut across a tradition of politics - it tries to cut across a deliberate politicisation of our people to be more progressive - it takes them backwards and - and that's where the problem becomes because you - you - you try to look at - and it - and - and - and - and it was very crude - very crude.

They were saying : We want to kill all the whites and send them to sea - that (they) couldn't appeal in any way, absolutely.

J.F. And what about the idea that if you looked at the rest of Africa they weren't mentioning Indians or whites or Coloureds - they were just talking about Africans - and yet in congress you always had a sense of the other race groups or nations - why did you think that was, or did you just feel well, South Africa is just not like Ghana - we have our white people are here to stay - did you ever....

J.Z. I don't think to me it ever occurred seriously that they were not even talking about Indians - I don't think - I don't think - I don't remember - I can't remember thinking about it - it just did not occur as a big issue - I just saw liberation there, and it really did not occur that this is supposed to be fought by specific people, because even in terms of the - our own development I never had a problem that we are fighting the struggle thà the - the Africans had to be liberated - I mean that did not cause a problem that therefore I must begin to differentiate.

Of course you should remember that as - as early as in the '40s this unity thing between the - the - the South African Indian Congress and the ANC they had come together (.....) - so we had had a long thing and a lot of political work done in - in explaining and - and - and even arriving at that, you know, so we didn't have problems.

J.F. Do you - did you remember people talking about '49, the race riot of...

J.Z. I saw it - not only talking about it, I saw it - I saw the fires burning.

J.F. In Cato Manor or....

J.Z. I was at Stanger at the time - I - I was - I was at Cato Manor and moved to Stanger immediately.

J.F. So what do you remember of it?

J.Z. Really what I remember it was just confusion, and all I remember is when I was at Mapumolo you could still see the fires burning - I mean the - the sort of the reflection of the big fires - and of course at that time I mean I was very small - very, very small - I don't know what happened - but later after that I - I - one got the stories what happened - but funny enough people have never wanted to talk about it very open - I mean in the sense that anybody can just start talking about it.

People seem to have - to be very conscious that this - that was - this has been my impression - it was not a good thing - and I think it's likely (?) to be the - because of the political work that was done thereafter, because I've never found people sitting and talking about it in a - in a - what you call - people don't like talking - they - they think it was a - an unfortunate - you - you get that feeling it was an unfortunate incident.

J.F. But it didn't take on a life of its own to you of this - you see this as what the Indians do to the Africans or this is the - they can't live together, they (.....) these riots - a lot of Indian people grew up with their reactionary or non-political relatives saying: Remember '49, the Africans will want to kill you in your bed kind of thing.

J.Z. Yes, I'm sure they have got a point to feel like that, because I think that incident had a lot damage on the Indian side, I think so - a lot - property, everything - I - I think there is - there is a reason why they should remember it all the time - I remember in 1961 when we had a meeting coinciding with the celebration of the Tanzanian independence, and also on the same day I think Chief Luthuli was just receiving his Nobel Peace Prize, and we had a - a meeting in Durban, and I remember in the middle of some speech somebody who was an Indian raising a hand, listening to this nice speech and saying: As we are talking here, what about 1959 - and nobody could pay attention to him, and people said: No, no, forget, it's - it's - he may - he may not be very normal - and nobody could just like to be listening to that and - and people said: Look, if you don't want to be in the meeting you can go out. 4?

So nobody has politically - nobody has - has - has been wanting to be discussing that kind of an issue - I think my impression is that people feel it was an - an unfortunate incident.

J.F. Just what you were saying, you were in SACTU and you were still in the ANC - first the youth league and then the ANC proper - and then it was banned - and you were arrested in '63?

J.Z. Mmm.

J.F. And what exactly were you charged and sentenced for?

J.Z. Well, the - the broad thing was conspiracy, but of course I was arrested - I couldn't deny my MK involvement because I was arrested on my way out of South Africa - we were actually coming out for military training - so I was arrested, charged for conspiracy, conspiring to overthrow the government by violent means, and also charged for furthering the aims of the banned organisation - there were a number of kind of - of - of counts, but that was basically the thing - leaving the country - attempting to leave the country without the proper documents - that was one of the counts.

- J.Z. So that was the kind of case and - and therefore it was more MK and ANC kind of activities.
- J.F. And that decision to commit yourself to joining MK - what did you have - what idea did you have that you were going to do - did that in any way - I guess what I'm trying to establish is there'd be a lot of people who'd think your idea was to get a gun and come back and kill the whites - by then in your recruitment and in your involvement were you clear that you were working with other races or was it there any element of anger and bitterness, especially given the events up till '63?
- J.Z. I had my seniors who were - who were not only Africans, who were - who were Indians and whites in the MK, so I did not have a problem, and as you know, MK was very careful in terms of targets - a very deliberate policy to sabotage government installations avoiding life - so it was not again going to be a total war that we don't understand just killing whites, but we were going out - at the point of going out for military training to come back and conduct a revolution to take power, so the main thing was to take power really rather than to kill whites.
- J.F. And did you ever figure out if getting caught had to do with an informer or.....

END OF SIDE ONE.

- J.F. stage?
- J.Z. Well, it's difficult to tell that, but certainly we - we were arrested - we did not want to be arrested and we would like to - to try different reason (?) whatever, whatever, whatever it means - it was very difficult, but of course there were quite a number of people who were involved and who are leaving who ended up giving evidence, but no-one had ever admitted that he was responsible for our arrest, but we are - we are - we are still trying to - to - to - to - to discover really what went wrong that led to our arrest.
- J.F. I guess....
- J.Z. There had been rumours - I mean these rumours are always there - I wouldn't like to discuss the rumours (Laugh)
- J.F. The reason I ask it is because it seems that possibly one aspect, kind of the flip side of me asking all these questions about whites or Indians or non-Africans is to see that an African could just as easily be a collaborator - that it isn't that if you're white you're a system and if you're black you're going to be on the right side - if that had anything to do with understanding non-racialism in a more negative way - I've interviewed people who've said Matanzima taught us about non-racialism - he was on the wrong side and he was black, that kind of thing, so that was the reason I asked that.

- J.Z. Ja, unfortunately in my arrest nothing could be pinned to any white person or Indian really.
- J.F. I meant the other way, that if it was a black who had sold you out that that shows that you can't be racialistic about it.
- J.Z. I - I mean - I mean one of the things, for an example, is that people who - who gave evidence in - in my case was not a (Laugh) - a single white or Indian I mean except the - the people who were driving (?) who knew nothing were merely the drivers of the cars that we were arrested in, but generally it were the Africans who gave evidence and - and - and some of them who had been in the ANC, so there was nothing in terms of racial thing that emerged in - in our case absolutely.
- J.F. And had you - do you think you'd come to grips with the idea of going to prison before that - had that been something you'd worked through, that getting caught....
- J.Z. Oh, yes, definitely - when - when sabotage started, and in South Africa the sabotage laws were piloted, we who were in MK we knew it was a question of either torture to death or going to prison or dying in the process of the revolution - I think we were ready - we were ready for what we - we might - that is why even when we were given ten years we did not - we did not regret - we knew we - this was coming in any way, and I think that's partly the reason why ten years did not demoralise some of us - immediately after prison we continued - I think it was because we were clear what was happening.
- We were politically clear - we had been prepared for it - and I think also the very recruitment, which was very selective at the time, other words (?) looking at the people who were - who were involved politically, helped a great deal in terms of getting the - that kind of the first layer, which was quite determined and very clear.
- J.F. Were you going to Swaziland when you were picked up?
- J.Z. You mean '63?
- J.F. Ja.
- J.Z. No, not Swazi - Swaziland was more of a problem - there was no Mozambique by then (Laugh) so you'd have gone to the Portuguese - you'd be skinned alive there - not at all - I was arrested not very far from the Botswana borders in the area called Zeerust.
- J.F. And at that time were they giving ten years for just recruitment or was that - was your case standing out or were people routinely getting such heavy sentences for just leaving the country?
- J.Z. Not - it was not leaving the country only - we are leaving - attempting to leave the country, conspiring to overthrow the government by violent means - it meant a lot - they then detailed what they meant by that, so it was a big case - I mean we - we had in other areas, for an example, like in P.E. people got ten years just by membership or futhering the aims of the banned organisation - the regime was attempting to frighten people, which (?) was the main thing.
- J.F. And who was your lawyer?

- J.Z. We were defended by two advocates, Mr. Herr and Mr. Kerr (?) - we couldn't get the best we'd have wanted to, big names, because at the same time Rivonia trial was on whilst I was also on (Laugh) - but they were good.
- J.F. What month were you picked up?
- J.Z. June.
- J.F. So did you hear about Rivonia when you were inside?
- J.Z. When - we only heard when we were inside that Rivonia has been arrested - that they've been arrested.
- J.F. Was that quite demoralising?
- J.Z. It was a serious blow to us - we felt it - we did not want our leadership to be arrested, so we felt the blow - but we knew that is not the end of the story.
- J.F. And how many were there in your case - how many were you picked up with?
- J.Z. No, when we were picked up we were 50 plus - I can't remember whether there were 52 or whatever in number, but when we were being tried the big bulk of the 50 in fact was not charged because in some areas some were just recruits - we were sifted and those who had been in the movement, in Mk a long time, they had to be charged - quite a number of young people who were innocent were made to be witnesses with evidence which was nothing because they knew nothing - but we were put together with other comrades who were not caught on the way - as you remember, there was a mass arrest of 1963 - so the enemy attempted to put us together with other old comrades who were then brought into our case, who had been recruiting other people, who were also part of some underground structures, so it - our - in our case it became a mixture of those who were attempting to leave, but (?) old ANC - and who had been active, and those who were inside but had been active.
- So it was no longer the group that was leaving only - we were combined with other comrades.
- J.F. So are there any other names that you could mention at the trial was with (?) - or were there any of the older people that....
- J.Z. Oh, ja, there were - there were people like Lombard Mbatha, who was in fact, I think, the main person in our case - he actually got 20 years, but he's out now - we had people like Phillip Matthews - those were older comrades - quite a number of - Caleb Mosabe from - these I'm counting were from Johannesburg - quite a number from Johannesburg - and then we had Caleb Mosabe from Bloemfontein, Orange Free State - we had people like Wuna - I can't remember the case from Western Cape - Wuna - and Matthew Mdaba....
- J.F. Wuna, how do you spell that?
- J.Z. Wuna - I know there is W is this Xhosa - Wuna, it could be W - his son has been active in the trade unions in the Western Cape in fact - but he got discharged.

- J.Z. People like John Nkadimeng, the one who's general secretary of SACTU in (?) the same case, but he got discharged in our case - he got charged for something else (Laugh) which was (.....) ja - John Nkadimeng was in our case too.
- J.F. Were there any non-Africans?
- J.Z. No - in that one, no, we were all Africans there - when we were finishing our 90 days - in fact (?) when we were charged we were a big number just to be charged now to be out of 90 days - when we appeared for the first time in the magistrate before we were sifted in different cases, we actually appeared with Andrew Mlangenis and Motsoaledis were in the same big group of - of course later were sifted - they were taken to Rivonia - Lombard Mbatha was - the judges said was - he was supposed to have gone with them to Rivonia, but he remained with us.
- J.F. So you were actually picked up as you were crossing the border?
- J.Z. No, no, before.
- J.F. As you were going....
- J.Z. Ja, towards the border - that's why we had to question why.
- J.F. And then you went right to Robben Island?
- J.Z. Yes - sentenced in 1963, December, and then same December, I think around between Christmas and New Year, if not Christmas Day, or New Year's Day - I can't remember - we were - 29 or Chris - New Year's Day we were actually transported to a prison near Johannesburg, near Alexander, called Leeuwkop, so in March - in March we were then transferred to Robben Island.
- J.F. So by the time you got there the Rivonia people were there?
- J.Z. No, they were - they were - they were - they remained - they - they were only sentenced or convicted in 1964, so they found us already on Robben Island.
- J.F. So was that the first time that you met Mandela and Sisulu or had you heard them speak before?
- J.Z. I'd heard them speak, for an example, in Pietermaritzburg Nelson Mandela.
- J.F. At the All-in - at the All-in conference?
- J.Z. Ja, in Pietermaritzburg....
- J.F. Did you hear him speak then....
- J.Z. Yes....
- J.F. At that famous speech?
- J.Z. Yes (Laugh) - yes - we were doing the singing down there (Laugh)
- J.F. So had you seen him before that?
- J.Z. Not before that.

- J.F. So did he come across as some incredible - apparently it was quite dramatic how he came out.
- J.Z. Oh, yes - oh, yes - oh, yes, it was - it was - it was - it was a big thing for us because we knew he was underground, so when he emerged it was a big thing - very serious - oh, it was a big thing.
- J.F. And then when you came to the Island and you....
- J.Z. We met them first in Pretoria in the prison where we were detained - we - we actually mixed with them, except Mandela - we only saw him and we met him in the corridors etc., but the whole group even before Sisulu was given his six years, because he was hiding from six years - before he was removed from us we were doing exercises together with them - and then he was separated, then became a prisoner, now he will exercise at the time with Nelson and would we'd be - Nelson would come at times and (.....) talk to the warders there, of course trying to - to see us, but with others we were exercising with them, all of them - Mlangeni, Motsoaledi, those, we were with them - we were staying with them in our cells all the time until they were shifted to Rivonia, those two.
- But the other group that was arrested, because Mlangeni and Motsoaledi were not arrested at Rivonia - they were detained separately, but they then joined the Rivonia group, but Mhlaba, Sisulu, Mbeki, Kathrada, we all - even their disguise - their disguises had not yet gone off (Laugh) some of them - so we exercised with them a number of - for - for some time at the same hall twice a day, and were able to converse and - and discuss with them, so by the time they came to Island we had been with them in Pretoria,
- J.F. I'm wondering when you came to the Island in '64, it seems there were masses of (.....) people....
- J.Z. Oh, yes - oh, yes - oh, yes, a lot of them.
- J.F. So did you get exposed to them and speak to them?
- J.Z. Oh, yes.
- J.F. And what was that like - did you since - did you try to discuss politically with them - did you try to persuade....
- J.Z. At first - at first - at first we couldn't because they were just - they were doing funny thing - I mean they were discussing us and trying to discuss their politics by discussing us and swearing at our leaders and all - we had to exercise a lot of patience for almost two years until we decided to reply and then silenced them, for - for a long time, because we thought it more of a provocation than anything, because they were - they would - when Rivonia was still on they would discuss it, and they had their own - some of them - their own wishes about them, which were very negative, and we decided we did not want to discuss with them because they were merely provoking us and we did - we were not ready to get into unnecessary conflicts with them.
- J.F. So you didn't see any - did you feel that any of them you persuaded to your point of view, or did you have any serious discussions about Africa....

J.Z. Later on we did have discussions - I mean when we replied to them and then told them they were telling lies to those who did not know their followers - thereafter they - there were actually those who - who appreciated our plight (?) and there were those who were keen to join, and they were beaten up (Laugh) by some of them, so we - we - we - we - we discussed with them later very seriously and - and had serious - and - and - and after reality became reality.

J.F. How did they deal with Mandela - did they ever have - I guess he was maybe separated, but the leader, the big leaders - there were the Rivonia people, did they have any chance to put their view across to the PAC people or Peko people, or was there not much interaction?

J.Z. No, there wasn't much interaction, and again I mean there wasn't much - I mean we - we did more of that later in - in - in the main section of - of - of having some discussions with them, and - and - and - and some of them realised and saw the point, and some became good friends and I - I have good friends in the PAC which developed thereafter (Laugh) - if we meet we are just excited - just in this country when I was here recently, you know, I met someone in the airport who was there - oh, he jumped and the comrades were wondering who is this one - he jumped for me - quite a number of them have been jumping for me here.

One thing which was clear after a (?) time, we faced hardships together with them - we went through, and they got to know us better, and how determined we were because we - we carried out other struggles in prison and - and again the struggle in prison was interpreted differently at the beginning - they did not want to fight conditions in prison - their point was being that they are arrested to fighting the country, for the country, to liberate the country, not to - to - to fight the struggle about food.

But we persisted and later they had to join us and the - so we - they always realised things afterwards - we - we - we related socially as friends and - and then later started talking a bit about politics, and of course they wouldn't have any argument - just adamant on their things, and many of them, in any case, had gone there as very young people, so they were depending on a few of them - it's an issue which we generally don't want to provoke discussions with - we have been in the past and we don't - we did not want to be discussing them - to be quarrelling with them - what for?

That's why we - we - we allowed them for something like two years and afterwards we decided to - to reply, because they were mixing things - talking about things they don't know - our history they didn't know - the relations between the ANC and the party which they loved, that propaganda from the enemy it was just their thing.

J.F. Why do you think that oppressed black people get into anti-communism - did you get any insight from them as to what - why they would be....

J.Z. Propaganda from the enemy - it's important to know the - the - how the PAC came about - what was strange was one of the meeting that discussed the formation of the PAC was actually at the USA information centre - we don't know why - what was the connection - it is again strange that when our - our leaders were being arrested for treason and charged by the enemy that the Freedom Charter was a communist document, the PAC was saying exactly the same thing in - in the '50s.

J.Z. It was charging the Freedom Charter as a communistic document - they were saying one and exactly the same thing with the - with the - with the - with the Nationalist Party regimes - we don't know who - who is who with there (?) - who is the friend of who, and - and why should they say exactly one and the same thing, particularly when it comes to this thing of communism.

They wouldn't use the word comrade - I'm sure they are using it here in Zimbabwe because (Laugh) ZANU use the word com - they didn't use it - they hated it - it was a communistic thing - they use the word mmumzane, which means mister in our language - that's how they - they address one another (Laugh) because they are avoiding comrade.

J.F. And then did you ever know Eddie Daniels - Eddie Daniels that....

J.Z. Unity Movement?

J.F. Yes.

J.Z. Yes, we saw....

J.F. ARM he was - wasn't he ARM?

J.Z. This....

J.F. African Resistance Movement - did you see - did you know....

J.Z. Not - no, no, no, not Abdusa?

J.F. No, he was the only Coloured member of the Liberal Party....

J.Z. Oh, yes - he came, but he was in the other section - ja, ja, I remember now.

J.F. So did you know Abdusa and Unity Movement people also?

J.Z. Yes, the Neville Alexanders found us there, his group.

J.F. Did you ever dialogue with them?

J.Z. We had some discussions with them - not serious dialogue - some discussions with them - some stayed with us in our section for a long time - they would discuss here and there - Alexander, but didn't stay much - he went to the isolation section after some time, to the - Mandela's side.

J.F. Then you were released in '73?

J.Z. '73, December.

J.F. And were you - did you have any restrictions on where you could go?

J.Z. No, no restrictions at all.

J.F. So where - you went to Durban?

J.Z. I went to Durban, but they did not want to release me in Durban - they diverted me from another - from the whole group in Pietermaritzburg and released me in the area I mentioned earlier on, Nicandla, and said to me I will see to myself how I reach Durban (Laugh)

J.Z. So I - I took a bus to where my father area is, and I was there, and then I went back to Durban on my own - this was - this was already - I then spent New Year in Zululand, so it was early January - then I came, I think it was after a week or so I then came to Durban and then I started trying to adjust myself to the society (Laugh) and immediately made contact with other comrades and said aluta continua (Laugh) and we started in 198 - 1974 and regrouped and started operating again - that was what was the reason I had to leave the country.

We - we - we - we operated '7 - I mean '74, '75 - it was the time '75, I think, after our working - as I said, it was around the time I worked at Bolton Hall with some trade unions - again I belonged in the underground SACTU structure attempting to deal with the trade unions above - also ANC operated quite seriously with people like Mduli, Joseph Mduli - the one who was killed later by the boers - so in 19 - in 1975 then the arrests started - the Harry Gwalas - he was arrested in Pietermaritzburg, and other comrades like John Nene, Anthony Gwaba, and Makubane - can't remember his first name - from Pietermaritzburg, and from Hammersdale comrades like Matthew Sumayiwa and (.....) -

So when those comrades got arrested I then escaped that arrest and left the country for Swaziland - but what I was - I would like to say is that in 1975 we actually, as an underground ANC structure inside, analysed the situation and realised that there was a political explosion coming, and we thought it will come in 1975, and our thinking was that it will come from the workers' front - I think we analysed that, even put it on paper, and indeed as we saw the situation developing there were a lot of resistance at different places.

One of the places, for an example, was the - and actions were the bus boycotts that in - in - in - in late, and I think entering '76 - '75 in Natal, in the upperlands of Natal at (.....) (He's turned into a chipmunk.) - it was a very big bus boycott there - and then I think in early '86 - if not early '86 it was Kwathema in the Transvaal - to me by the time the Kwathema the - the - the bus boycott took place - to me it was proving our analysis because people were just ready to - to - to challenge the enemy, and it moved until to the students, so with the students then it bursted out.

Now of course in terms of (.....) I must say we - we did not think it will - the explosion will - will - will - will occur on the student front, but this is what we missed - we missed just the - we missed the - the front or the sector where it was going to occur in the end (?) - but I think we were pretty almost on the ball because we - we sensed the situation as we were operating underground at the time - and it was quite interesting because we were - we were sensing it as an ANC unit operating on - on the spot and therefore reading the dynamics of the situation.

J.F. When you came out it was kind of - it was really the high point of BC - it was the time of the lull when there was supposed to be nothing going on - how did you feel when you came out - it's interesting that by '75 you'd had this analysis together, seeing that there was action coming and that there was this building (?) - but when you first got out December, '73 did it feel - how did it feel politically - it was so different from when you went in when the ANC was on everyone's lips - did you feel demoralised that people weren't discussing it more or - I guess in your sphere they were (weren't) - I'm just wondering if you can comment on the little scene that you found (?)

J.Z. Firstly the - the BC emerged very strongly whilst I was in prison, so by the time I came out we were fully aware of the BC's presence, and we had done our own analysis about the BC at the time - we view - we viewed it as an important development - we always felt it was necessary to have political life (?) - this was bringing into before (?) the political life, and therefore looking at it from the - the broad point of view, it was an important development, and we were clear that there was new political - serious political activity that would take place in South Africa and fail to be influenced by the ANC - even if the ANC had failed to have not been talked about in - in - in some period - we - we saw our influence as being clear.....

END OF SIDE TWO.

J.Z. The other important factor was that to say in fact there had been a complete lull may not be a very correct indication of the situation - you know, if you take from 1963 you - you - you - you had in 1964 - between 1964 and '65 there were actually ANC cases in - inside the country, so perhaps you could have 1986 as a quiet year - but in 1967, much as it was not inside South Africa, you had MK fighting in the then Rhodesia, and a very big impact - it was the most dramatic happening, and from 1967, '68 to '69 - it was in '69 that the - the clashes in Rhodesia died down, so our people were aware of the ANC - and you are talking of then the period, about 1969 I think as you end up at early '69 or - or so the activities in Wankie - those comrades who were arrested here, and others who got arrested inside the country, actually emerged with a big case of the - of the Pietermaritzburg trial of the former Wankie or Rhodesia what you call fight.

So there was a very big case of a big number of guerillas of the ANC tried in South Africa - I think in 1971 there was one guerilla was tried, was part of those who get - who got arrested later - so there was not a complete lull for ten years really - there had been incidences that always indic - I mean indicated to the ANC - I mean it was that case of 1969 that Dorothy Nyembe, for an example, was involved - and therefore all these kind of - the very fact that from the - the battles in Rhodesia from 1967, '68 - by '69 we have the case of the same fellows who are reported in the newspapers as the same people who are fighting Rhod - now charged in South Africa - many of them arrested in South Africa having already arrived and penetrated in South Africa - that had something.

And - and this is around the same time that the BC movement is - is beginning to emerge, so how could we claim that it was just out of nowhere - though the BC movement said there was a lull of course (?) politically there was no organisation, but there had been political happenings - I don't think there was any stretch of two to three years ever since the three (?) that there was no ANC trial there was nothing happening, or there was no fight in Rhodesia - I think some of these things need to be put into proper perspectives so that people shouldn't think that there were then people who just emerged out of no influence at all.

J.Z. After all, you had had a lot of ANC people who remained, who were not arrested or sent to prison who were lying low - many of them were the fathers of these comrades who were emerging, who had been whispering and talking to them about the old good days, so when the - the - the BC movement emerged insofar as our analysis was concerned it could not be - it could not escape the influence of the deep rooting of the ANC - we were clear - we - we analysed this when (?) we were in prison - I was part of the comrades who were thinking about it there - we are about to come out.

We actually therefore looked at it as a positive development for political consciousness of the people, and we - we also appreciated the kind of arguments, how they were emphasising on the black - much as I mean we did not agree, we knew that this would be - be coming and going because it cannot exist - it cannot remain because it is a narrow thing - but insofar as - as they explained it later - I mean we came out, we met someone - they explained it later that they were actually trying to fight against the inferiority kind of complex and - ad - and fear.

But of course you had had other comrades who had come out earlier on who were doing short sentences, right - now nobody could guarantee that they were not involved - of course if they were to be involved they were not going to shout their involvement - as a person who came out in 1974 and operated around '74 and '76, had an occasion to know of the - of the - of the BC people who became - who came into contact with - with our own comrades in the Transvaal - I came into contact with them in Natal, both from the African and the Indian community, and as we came they actually received us with enthusiasm - they wanted help politically - they had a lot of discussions.

In fact the ANC underground structures, they started again to - recruiting for - for outside in 1975 - we were part of the process - and many of the people who were recruited were from the BCM who actually left the country at the time and - and therefore the - the - the - the question of us and - and - and working with the - the - the BCM of course could not be done in an obvious way, or perhaps it could not be seen even by some of the BCM people - we (who) were perhaps linking up those that were - were - were ready to be - to be linked up and those that were able to link up - but many of them - or some of them began to belong to the ANC underground inside South Africa whilst they were in the BCM - they were actually in the ANC units in - inside the country.

I think the cases later revealed this - and some who left the country who did not leave the country by being recruited to go for military training, who had to leave the country because the police were looking for them because they - they'd come to find out that they were in actual fact ANC what you call people - it is an open secret now that in some meetings of the BCM some of the people actually produce the Freedom Charter and said : Here are the solutions of this country.

It is therefore important to see that dynamic connection and - and that people therefore who had contact in one sense were the people who came out of prison, the old ANC, and whenever they came out it was well published and - and - and the BCM people would always be - be inclined to make contact with those people because they wanted the political input from these people and their experiences and everything, so contact began to be made in that kind of way.

J.Z. That's the reason why in fact it is not a correct assertion to say 1976 just happened on its own and that you could exclude the ANC from 1976 - certainly the - the students were demonstrating, but the students had had contact and they - they in fact - the 1976 was being discussed by the - the students who were acting - they always went back to the ANC to say : What do we do with the ANC people - people like Joe Gqabi at the time were there, who were actually playing a key role in - in - in - in - in that struggle - as you know that '76 stretched and stretched and stretched - there were the political back-up of the situation, actually participated in - in that kind of sense - advice etc.

It is partly the reason why - and - and again it is important to say just before 1976 you had had a situation that in 1975, December in Pietermaritzburg and Durban big announcement by the enemy that Harry Gwalas and all have been arrested, ANC trial - and when - and those people arrested and this was publicised - three months later Joseph Mhluli (?) was arrested again and killed, and the South African press actually boasted to have broken the back of the ANC underground network in South Africa - they even published the routes leading from Swaziland into South Africa in an attempt to justify their killing Joseph Mhluli, and this is before '76 - I mean June '76.

And it is no secret that the youth, particularly up to Johannesburg and - and that was one of the biggest funeral of the ANC that was attended by - by - by thousands of people - Mhluli's what you call funeral in Natal - and the youth right in Johannesburg, which was operating underground, which had been part of the - the - the - the open what you call organisation, actually came to ANC underground quietly in the forward areas demanding guns - they were very angry - so that kind of a situation could not have just happened, and you can imagine the - the situation was so charged at the time that anything that happened immediately influenced, so people knew for the first time that the ANC is operating inside the country because it was exposed by the enemy - so they were not merely acting from nowhere.

In fact the hopes, and some have said so, when they were acting and so they were hoping that MK because it's said to be here is going to be with us in dealing with the boers - this is apart from the very contact that the - the youth had with our comrades, even in Johannesburg where the thing sparked off - you had then at that time in Johannesburg people like John Nkadime (?) who had had contact - like Joe Gqabi, Robert Manci, Ramohades (?) and all - old ANC people who were - who had come from prison.

In fact some of the people who were involved immediately came out, who had been working with these comrades - these comrades, the Joe Gqabis, the - the Mangas and Nkadime (?) have actually started recruiting people as from early '76, who were already coming out for - for military training - so there was ANC underground operating in full force - so it is not correct to say the ANC was not on the scene and - and there was nothing happening from the ANC position.

I mean we - we - we - we may not claim that we - we - we - we let (?) Peterson to - to be shot, because that was a peaceful kind of thing, but the political motive behind which was being even - even if the demonstration, like for an example, like say, the - the Mdadeni (?) thing, the Kawthema (?) thing, there was an - a - a recurring of activities in South Africa at the time, basically from the BC kind of influence.

J.Z. But I'm saying the deep influence now in terms of saying we could confront the boers from the ANC, right, and - and - and as soon as this thing happened - as soon as it happened, in fact students were running to the Gqabis and saying : What must we do now - so they were actually participating in advising as the situation was - was going on.

So I - I - I - I would - I would find it difficult to say the ANC did not have influence again in this - in this kind of case - not that it - it - it planned to launch the - the - the - the day and say : You go and march - this was a - a students deciding on the issue that was affecting students, as adult people had decided on the bus boycott, on other things, but this one, the enemy misread the situation by attacking a peaceful demonstration, and because they knew it was so charged that then sparked off the thing - it is - it is a fact that it sparked off from that point of view - not that somebody sat down and said : If - if - if - if - even the BC they can't tell you they sat down to plan June 16 that this will be the day - nobody can claim that - but insofar as the political influence of the thinking at the time, we had had a student organisation which was before COSAS - I can't just remember the name now - I'm sure I'll get the name - which had members which were directly dealing with the ANC people absolutely, some - many, many of those leaders who had actually formed it are (?) with the ANC - so you - it's -

I'm just mentioning this because I think it is an important thing for people not to - unless somebody wants to prove a point that : Look, the ANC can't claim everything (?) - and we are not claiming it in any way, but we are saying when it came into being and we were part of the influencing factor because we were working underground then - we were the only ones working underground and - and we - we - we participated from underground as it was going on, and we couldn't write letters about it and say now we are then doing the thing, and we are saying even before that there had been political happenings affecting the ANC that had influenced some people to know that the ANC was actually living and there underground in the country.

J.F. Just let me ask you (Tape off) - just in line with everything you've just said, what kind of advice were they looking for, these young people who were in touch with the ANC - what kind of questions were they asking - did they seem to be quite ignorant in terms - some of them in terms of not having had much exposure to ANC, or was there a lot kept alive - were some of them talking about Azania, and what kind of debates did you have with them - I'm thinking more theoretical debates or anything about non-racialism - did they come with BC - did you try to come with non-racialism?

J.Z. Certainly the ones I discussed with - it was actually the question of them trying to raise general political questions, and they were not coming as if they were coming from a foreign body - they were actually keen to learn on the issues that they did not understand - I had some, for an example, who were studying at Ngoye, and there were problems at Ngoye between them and Gatsha, and there were other problems in relation to what they were trying to do, and I - I - I - I had general discussions with them, and there were other comrades, for an example, younger, who were in the - in the Indian community, discussing also even the questions of the politics there - how the - the - the only living NIC - what were my views about what the NIC was doing - that kind of thing - because we had quite a number of other comrades, young comrades from the BCM who were Indian and who were trying to say which we (?) had to go.

J.Z. They were ready also to participate in - in - in - in the underground things and I had something to do with a number (Laugh) of them for the underground of the ANC, so some were actually recruited into the ANC underground - you - you then had, I think, the comrades in the - in the Transvaal who also participated in the similar way - some of them began to be harassed by the police, and they wanted to leave the country - they did not know how, and the ANC structures helped out to take them out - that was the kind of thing in general.

J.F. And did - in terms of my interest in non-racialism, do you remember ever specifically addressing that issue - there was a....

J.Z. We specifically - we specifically wanted to find out what - how do they see the - the - their (they're) black as - as - as - as they put it - the emphasis on the black - the - they explained - I don't think they explained in the - in the same level - you - you - it differed from the some were articulate, some understood, but the - the - the - the final explanation was that much as the - they - they emphasise the BC kind of tendency at the time, it was necessary for them to liberate themselves first as - as - as Africans because they were - there has been centuries of this superiority by the white people, so it was very necessary, and they - and many of them understood it as - as - as - as - as something necessary for a period - not that they were being racial, but they wanted to - to liberate their humans (?) in order to be ready to fight, and it was a necessary thing for them to do, that in the final analysis some of them articulated the thing - not all - and they find this is the policies of the ANC were the correct ones - but before you reach that you have got to make the black man liberated first - that's how they argued.

I must say to a number of that I discussed with I didn't find big problems because they didn't seem not to be understanding what they were trying to say - it was different, for an example, from what the PAC was saying, because the PAC was saying drive all the white man to the sea - we want to manage and we must (?) manage our country - we don't want any interference - they were not saying that - they were merely worried about the psychological liberation and political liberation so that you are able to fight - they said: Before we are able to take a gun and fight you need first to be liberated in our own mind (?) - that's how they - they - they argued for their point.

J.F. But they also didn't want any whites to participate?

J.Z. Yes, they didn't want because at - at that point in time they - they were talking about this liberation, that if they can (came) to participate they are going to - they are going to mess up the - that - that part of it, that issue.

J.F. So you accepted that?

J.Z. It - well, it - from our point of view, from if - if I could speak of my - my own, I understood their - I understood their own problem and I mean their - their own aspect, and through that they had been able to mobilise the people - I mean it was not - to them it was not the permanent policy - it was a specific policy aimed for a specific area of work.

J.F. And did they come with Azania - how did you deal with that when everything was being called Azania?

J.Z. I - I didn't have much problems (Laugh) really the - the - with the Azania - to me the name - the name has never been (.....) - I mean this is now my personal feeling - it has never been such a big problem - of course it - as you know, this was fashionable - you had Rhodesia becoming Zimbabwe, you had South West Africa becoming Namibia, so it - it was fashionable that we must have something like that - it - in fact until I left the country this had never occurred to me as a big problem, that the - the naming of - I mean if the people call themselves Azania - but of course later it became a problem in the sense that people were - were using it to try to differentiate to - to - to - to do something different.

I - I - I think when I was inside - in fact it was not even so pronounced in fact when I was still inside before I left this - you - you still had BCM mainly - the Azanian thing was not (.....) - I think it - it got more sharpened with time - at the early stages of BCM it was not the main thing - I don't think it was the main thing - it got sharpened with time as - as - as - as it developed later - so that time it was not a subject of discussion at the - at the early stages.

J.F. And what prompted this resurgence of - you're saying it never - there never was as much of a lull as the history books say, and I understand the point you made, but it wasn't the fact that Mozambique was free they'd picked up in terms of guerilla activity - was that mainly it?

J.Z. Partly it was - there was a struggle going on in the region, and you wouldn't find South Africa dormant - it was - it was one of the elements - as you know, the - the - the - the fighting of Frelimo the Tete province and Cabo del Gardo was highly publicised in South Africa and Angola because the enemy wanted to - to recruit and influence the whites to participate in helping out the Portuguese colonies, and therefore they were aware of this kind of happening.

It was clear from anybody else that the fight in Rhodesia, in Mozambique, in Angola, was the continuation of the liberation of the continent, and this must have influenced the people inside that we need to do something and - and - and therefore it could have been one of the very important elements to influence the situation at early '70s.

J.F. Then you left in '75?

J.Z. Yes.

J.F. What part of the year - the beginning or the end?

J.Z. At the end, December 5th.

J.F. And do you want to tell me what you did after that?

J.Z. Well, I was in Swaziland and continued with my work (Laugh) - continued with my work from Swaziland - in fact it was December, January, February, March, April - I think it was April - it was the fifth month or so that (.....) died - Joseph Mhlili was killed by the boers - it - this (?) man I - I mean I - I worked with I mean among many - so I worked in Swaziland and I got detained in Swaziland because of - this was connected with his death - and I was then sent out of Swaziland by the Swazi authorities - and then I went to Mozambique and I've been in Mozambique until recently (Laugh)

J.Z. Yes, I have been in Mozambique all the time.

J.F. So when did you arrive in Mozambique?

J.Z. June - June I arrived in Mozambique, '76.

J.F. leaving South Africa is, or ask was - you spoke about how the ANC was alive, but did you find non-racialism alive - did you find that - the support for non-racialism to be strong?

J.Z. You mean after prison?

J.F. Ja, when you came out in '73 did you find that the kind of - when you left there was Kathrada and Goldberg on trial along with everyone else and that was the kind of the height of the congress movement, and then....

J.Z. What was clear at the - when we came out was that the - the - the BCM - what the BCM had done - the BCM had moved to embrace the Indian and Coloured communities - in other words, when they - they speak they - they spoke of black - it was no longer like the - the - the - this is another difference with the PAC, because they were not discriminating the Indian community or the Indians - they were part of the BC movement - so people who were put away were the - only the whites - this was the situation as we came out - so the - the - the dynamics in terms of that kind of thing was being spoken - I mean here you were not having the ANC speaking - you were having the BCM speaking and saying : We want the blacks to liberate themselves from the white supremacy - this was the thing that was talked about, and that is why people like us were asking : But what do we mean - what do you mean by this - and they had the explanation to make - so that is what one found when - when he left prison in terms of the dominating political talks around.

END OF SIDE ONE.

J.F. in Mozambique, was that important in that for all the talk of non-racialism, did you find it to be a non-racial society in practice?

J.Z. Yes, in practice I found Mozambique to be very non-racial - I think Frelimo is very clear on this question and I think it practiced it very - if you are in Mozambique you - you don't feel - that's one place where you don't feel there are different people - in - in - in - in the very serious sense you - you - you feel you are in Mozambique, you are with Mozambicans - whether people are white or Coloured or Indian you - you don't feel it at all - there is nothing that makes you to - to think about it - very, very non-racial in - in the true sense of the word.

J.F. And from June, '76 were you chief rep?

J.Z. No, I was deputy chief there.

J.F. Under who?

J.Z. Under Lennox Lagu.

J.F. And then when did you become chief rep?

J.Z. I became chief rep in 1984 - he left at some point and I was - I also was just there, not even deputy - I remained there (Laugh) - not deputy for a long time, but I was just there in the office - I mean in Mozambique, let me perhaps say, not in the offices as such - I was there - but in 1984 I became the chief rep after - after the - after March, 1984 (Laugh)

J.F. I just wanted to ask a few questions about more the theoretical aspect of things - when - maybe you could talk a bit about the movement from the '50s and '60s through Morogoro to the consultative conference on the non-racialism issue - you were inside at the time, but did people talk about Morogoro and the decisions being made there when you were still inside?

J.Z. Well, when - it is important to say that in terms of the ANC, ANC has a tradition of involving the people in the decision making - that tradition is very important - the way ANC was structured before it was banned you had the president general, for an example, who was the national president - you had provincial presidents - so if you were to have conferences conferences would take decisions - but what became more important was that in - in - in the '50s the experience of the Congress of the People, where the ANC decided with the congress - congresses to consult the people - this proved to be a very important thing because the kind of views that you find at the end, they are very rich in the sense because people have participated.

That is why the Freedom Charter became an everlasting document and a document that in terms of the basic positions of the ANC, no grouping ever since has been able to articulate anything beyond that one, and I don't think there's going to be - so that kind of tendency has been kept all the time, and of course with the banning of the ANC the new situation arise because we had to operate underground, so the consultation was now being done underground - but it is important to say this consultation business has been a tradition.

For an example, in 1962 there was a Lobatsi conference of the ANC wherein the - the - the leadership inside and the leadership outside managed to - to meet and consult on - on - on basic serious questions - that was one historic consultation that took place, and you - you - you then had the - from 1962 - so for '63, '64, '65, '66, '67, '68 - the seventh year, '69, there was then the Morogoro conference - again there was a necessity for the - for the consultation here.

Now of course we were in prison then but the - the - the - the - the consultation that took place became very much important in articulating the strategy and tactics of the ANC, taking into consideration the time, the conditions etc. - it became a historic kind of consultation - the elaboration and the elucidation (?) of our policy and strategy was very important at the time, and it was a process of this tradition of consulting.

So you - you - you have had, for an example, the NEC at times having extended meetings - at times it - inviting its sub-committees to consult generally - there have been a lot of such which are not published, and such (.....) the kind of consultations - but of course you had a situation wherein (?) the ANC felt it was necessary to have another consultative conference many years after - after Morogoro.

J.Z. It had wanted to do it in 1979 - not '79, '89 - '79 - 1979, but of course I think they were - it - it - it - it only took place in 1985. Now what is important, I think, in this regard was - is the question that the consultation was quite extensive within the membership of the ANC, so that by the time the conference came people had discussed, had deliberated on a number of issues - and of course the 1985 consultative conference looked at a number of other issues and - and - and in a way discussed the current situation and how the - the movement was to deal with the current situation.

So it became very important to - to - to - to ensure that both leadership and the membership was together in - in - in - in this situation that was beginning to emerge to be a very complex situation in our struggle - it has been therefore a - a - a sort of a traditional process that ANC always gets into, that we have been engaged in - we - we always believe as - as - as rank and file, as the leadership, that having consulted you move knowing that you are moving with the whole movement and understanding, and it also helps to identify the ideas as - the current ideas as they come as to how to deal with the situation.

And we always found it very useful to do so because it - it brings harmony between the ANC and the people because we are able to identify the issues, and also between the leadership and the membership - it's an important thing that the ANC cannot do without.

J.F. And the aspect of the non-racialism where the movement up to '85 where anyone of any race can be on the NEC - why was it that initially it was African National Congress then it was - there was a change at Morogoro said (?) that there was some participation but it wasn't until '85 that Coloureds and Indians and whites could actually be on the central decision making body of the ANC - and also maybe you could also tell how that was different for MK - but first on the ANC - why did it take so long - what was the position in '69 when you guys were sitting in prison knowing - you knew they were meeting in Morogoro?

J.Z. Mmm.

J.F. Did you feel that there should be movement on the - this colour issue or did you feel the people aren't ready, or were you surprised when the decision came like that (?) - how did you feel about it - you're just saying that the ANC is so strong on non-racialism - why has it taken....

J.Z. Much as - much as the ANC has been very strong on this question and it has practiced it, but you - if you lead the people you don't want to be so much ahead of the people - you have wanted to move with the people, and this is what the ANC has tried to do all the time - in - in - in - in 1959, for an example, the issue arises and the ANC's clear on the policy, but the question was tactically is it correct to implement this now - as you know, the - the - the situation by 1959 - so you - you have a situation that had (?) a lot of mass arrest and - and - and - and situation up to a point where people talk of a lull - that from 1963 just when the ANC's banned and goes underground you don't actually have the ANC as before communicating with the people, as it were, in public meetings and rallies, so you - you have a situation where the ANC's doing work from underground, right.

Now you don't want then the ANC to be misunderstood at a point when they (?) cannot be in a position to clarify whatever misunderstanding that could be there.

J.Z. So by 1969 as - as - as you'd recall, the - inside South Africa the political mood, the pol - debates and everything had been suppressed by the enemy, so there was no communication that was going on at that level between the ANC and the people, because there has been that bannings and everything, right - you could not then at that time without any consultation jump on the kind of decision, and therefore - because that will mean you are so much with your correct policies so much ahead of the masses that it - then you may - you may begin to lose touch with the masses.

But the ANC outside the - the confines of the South African law outside then decides at least in all other structures of the ANC the tendency which has - which was there from the beginning with MK should now be there because there are no legal confines - we are outside, and it's our policy and - and we do everything together in any way - so the involvement of all nationalities at all other structures except the NEC, because the NEC is not a small thing - you can't take a - a decision without proper consultations at that level, because we must know the implications.

So between '69 and '85 you had a situation that the ANC begins to operate inside the country from underground, first and foremost early '70s, that by late '70s the ANC had organised communication with people - it was distributing leaflets - it was pushing the line across - so by the early '80s the question of the ANC has become something again in South Africa, so the ANC has managed once again to be in contact with people, firstly from underground and - and therefore articulating itself quite obviously any issue that could have arisen, the ANC would make a leaflet and distribute it throughout the country and clarify the question therefore - and therefore you were now moving with the people, and it was among the people - it was now in a position to know how the people think - so that's the reason why -

And - and this issue was consulted not only outside with the 1985 - even with the people in the country - the ANC made it a point to get the views of the people and everybody - so when it took the decision it was not taking the decision on its own but it - of course it had worked for it and it - it was therefore time that this decision had - had to be taken because people who (?) were with the ANC - it was marching with the people.

So that's the reason why by 1980 - because it has been very clear with it - it was just a question of the tactical - I mean it was a tactical question that it could not be implemented at - at other times - but not that it had problems in terms of policy, so it - when it begins to say now the membership is everyone - that is why it has never caused any problem, even with the people inside, the democratic, they've got no problem absolutely, even - even - I don't know if even (?) AZAPO talks about it because it - it looks ridiculous (Laugh) if they talked about it.

So it - it's a question of timing and tactics and when to act in this and when to do this one (?)

J.F. And how do you feel about the organisations inside the country that tend to be still along one race group, like JODAC in Johannesburg, NIC, TIC - release Mandela committee is just African - what's the view of that?

- J.Z. No, the - the problem is when you are in South Africa you have got these confines of - of - of legality - I mean of - of the laws there - the people are forced to operate in that kind of way against their will, and of course because the communities are so separated people feel there is a necessity to be able to mobilise these communities and - and - and if - if you had to make the communities and just force them and take somebody black to go and organise in the suburb in Johannesburg you - you may not reach the - you may not reap the - the results you want to reap - so it's a question of operating within the realities of the situation in - in - in that sense.
- J.F. And was that different - you were speaking about the ANC - why was it that MK from the beginning - even in 1969 Joe Slovo was on the revolutionary council, was he?
- J.Z. Ja, he got onto the revolutionary council then.
- J.F. Why is it that with MK it seems it's the most non-racial body?
- J.Z. I - I - I thought I explained that at the beginning by saying when MK was formed it was a secret organisation operating underground, so it had no business to - to - to - even to - to try to take into reality the law, because it was operating outside the confines of the law.
- J.F. And how did you - just the last few questions - how did you find, over the years, the response, especially of young people who were getting involved with MK or were speaking about it or speaking about the ANC, to someone like Slovo - now since the '80s his name is along with Mandela and many leaders - not in any way specially to single him out, but it seems there's such an acceptance - when you came out in '73, '74, '75 when you were talking to those BC people they wouldn't have wanted to know about Joe Slovo being a key person in MK, would they?
- J.Z. Well, at that time this was never an issue - it - it was never raised as an issue with the BC people when we - when we came out - I think Joe Slovo's name was - was raised by the PAC earlier on - people who knew him - I don't think at - at the time when we came out of prison, because there wasn't high (?) activity by the ANC - I think perhaps we were - we were to begin the process of going underground, and therefore the - the - the name then did not really arise as an - as an issue as such.
- J.F. I'm just thinking because....
- J.Z. Because (?) I think when Herb (?) Septembers got involved I'm sure early - early '8 - he got involved what?
- J.F. He was sentenced '75, so he was involved - he got recruited in '72 in Lourenco Marques, as it was then, because he was on the Island '75 to '80.
- J.Z. No, no, no, no, wasn't - wasn't he among the group that went in because of celebrating Frelimo thing?
- J.F. Themba (.....)?
- J.Z. Mmm.
- J.F. No, he wasn't with Terror Lakota - he was just involved with MK, or the ANC.

J.Z. '75?

J.F. '75 to '80, he got five years - anyway....

J.Z. I'm just trying to think.

J.F. The only other thing I wanted to ask - I forgot to ask before - was - I just thought it was interesting that you went into SACTU - that you said you went to talk, to deal with SACTU underground, that you went into the trade unions - why did you go into the field when you came out - did it - was it because of the Durban strikes that you had seen labour as important?

J.Z. No, that has - that had been my field - I had been (.....) on this even before I went to prison (Laugh) and - and it's because of my - my understanding of the role of the - of the workers as - as you know as understood by the ANC itself, and therefore inevitably, even if there was no trade union activities I would have actually initiated it because it was an important - an important thing to - to be involved in.

J.F. So how do you feel about this debate of African leadership and working class leadership and the - you can talk about non-racialism, but people will say it's still important to have African leadership - some people say that - there's another school that feels very strongly that you've got to have a working class representation - kind of the workerist point of view.

J.Z. Well, I - I - I don't know - I mean I'm not so much involved in those kind of debates in that kind of way - I think there are very clear issues here - I mean people are trying to make non-issues to be issues - you - you have the struggle that is going on in South Africa - it - it is an understood thing - I mean our struggle is understood that I mean the Africans play an important role in that revolution because we cannot rub that one off because it is a reality of the situation - they've got to play an important role - and we have recognised the role of the workers, that the workers in our struggle they've got a key role to play - this is not only theory, it's practice.

If you call a stay-at-home - even if Mandela calls it in 1961 who - who are you saying must stay at home in reality - I mean we are not saying to people who are at the (?) present stay-at-home - we are talking about the workers, we are actually addressing the workers - that's the reason why Luthuli talked of the workers as a spear, and the ANC as a shield of the nation - so it's an understood theoretical and practical kind of thing - and when we say therefore the - the - the workers are the pillar in our own revolution in South Africa, we say it because we know it from experience.

It's - you see, the question of the workers and (?) must lead, then that is a confusion that people bring - what are you talking about if - if you say now the workers must lead from nowhere, what is it - I don't know - perhaps that's why people are saying these are workerist - because you - you - you - we are fighting the - the revolution that the ANC is fighting at the moment is - is - is to liberate ourselves in South Africa - we are talking about the national democratic liberation, the liberation of the what you call and - and wherein the workers play an important role also, right - so the question of the leadership has never come as a - as an issue - we don't have an issue on - on - on that one.

J.Z. If you say the workers must lead, what are we trying to say - are you trying to say we are now fighting the - the - the trade union struggle - I don't think that's the case - the trade union, the workers have a part to play in this broad national liberation struggle that we are fighting, so I - I - I never understood the argument that the workers must lead - the workers must play an important role - they have been playing an important role - they have played it.

J.F. When did you get onto the NEC?

J.Z. 1977.

END OF INTERVIEW.