Project name:	Zenzo Nkobi Photographic Archive
Date of interview:	16 November, 2011
Location of interview:	Bulawayo
Language/s of interview:	English
Length of interview:	40:31
Name of Interviewer:	Mary Ndlovu (MN) and Zephaniah Nkomo (ZN)
Name of interviewee/s:	Christopher Moyo (CM)
Name of translator:	
Name of transcriber:	Mary Ndlovu
Notes on access and	africanion
use:	5 % N 0
Audio file name/s of	2 7 7
interview:	os di

TRANSCRIPTION

Speaker	Dialogue 2 H A
MN	This is an interview with Christopher Moyo, who has agreed to be interviewed as part of the Zenzo Nkobi Photographic Archive Project. It's being conducted by Mary Ndlovu and Zephaniah Nkomo on behalf of SAHA and Mafela Trust. This interview is being conducted on 16 November, 2010, at Bulawayo
MN	Christopher, can you tell us a little bit first about yourself, how you came to be in Zambia with ZAPU and ZPRA, and what role you played in the struggle.
СМ	Right. I am Christopher Moyo, I'm from Filabusi. Well, In 1976, together with my friend, after completing my education, there in Filabusi, together with my cousin, we decided to go to the liberation struggle, because the ZAPU thing this revolution thing was all over. Even my parents were talking about ZAPU, Nkomo, things like that. Then in 1976 with that friend we boarded a bus, well I was the one who who sourced money for transport and food, because my friend didn't have any money. Then we boarded a bus to West Nicholson, where we stayed for some for a week. Then we stayed there, and then we were employed temporarily to offload. There was a train carrying goods from Bulawayo which were meant for West Nicholson. Then we were given a little money for doing that,

Speaker	Dialogue
---------	----------

then we added that money to what we ... we came with. Then from there, the second week, we decided to board the bus to Gwanda, with that friend of mine. When we were in Gwanda there ... on our way to Gwanda, there is another friend of ours who came in and said "Let's go together, gentlemen, I also want to go to Zambia". Then we were three. We met this friend on our way to Gwanda. Then when we were in Gwanda, this guy, my cousin, decided to go back home. He said, "No I cannot leave my parents; I cannot leave my mother behind there and you gentlemen ... I'm still young, I cannot go to the liberation struggle". So he decided to go back home. Then we took another bus from Bulawayo, going down there somewhere ... Gwanda next to Shashi ... I cannot remember the place now. Then there were two of us there, then we went straight there, dropped somewhere in the reserve there. We were told exactly where to drop. The place is called Ntepe.

Then ... there we went around and talked to other people trying to find out how we can go to Botswana; and then they told us to go to the chief, the chief would tell us how to go about this. Well we went to the chief's place, we stayed there for a .. for a night. Then that particular night, there were guerrillas, ZPRA guerrillas around. Then the chief told us to go there, maybe those guys will take us to Botswana. Well we went there, we spent the day with those guys there, they were given food and other stuff like that. Then late hours they told us to go back to the chief and they told us the direction ... the direction to Botswana, how we are supposed to to to ... to go about on our way to Botswana. Well we went back and slept to where we came from, the chief's kraal, then the following day, early in the morning then we woke up, together with my ...we were two, two of us. Then we started our journey. We walked a long journey and the place was so very very tiresome ... the whole day, then we were asking water here and there, there were villagers somewhere on our way. Then after we finished that ... where the villagers are, then there were just a bush, bushy up to .. up to Shashi. Then we travelled all the way at night. Then there were animals, wild animals, like hyenas, making noise here and there ... we walked the whole night together .. the other one was carrying the stone on front, then the other one behind. There were small strips [?] which we were using, thinking that maybe we might be attacked by these wild animals. So we went straight to Shashi, ah, when we reached that place then we started seeing some fires across there. Then we crossed the border after ... just from Shashi River there, we crossed the border, then a few kilometres then we reached a certain village, then we asked for food. Well, those people they gave us food, what do you call this ... amasi¹, this sour, sour thing, plenty of amasi and little sadza. Then we ate that food ... we enjoyed actually amasi but the food was too little. We asked for more and they said "No gentlemen this is what we've got now, and if you needed more amasi we can give you more". Then they gave us more amasi, then we ate, because we were so hungry the whole day. So then the following day they told us the route to Bobonong. Well we didn't know Bobonong, then we were just told you have to go like this, like this, then up to Bobonong.

_

¹ Curdled sour milk, commonly eaten with maize meal stiff porridge

Speaker Dialogue

We woke up early in the morning, then we travelled all the day, then around 3 then we reached this place; then when we reached this place there were some people from ... from Rhodesia, going to Zambia, also they were part of us. Then around 3 o'clock there was a big truck; then we ... we went to the police station there...there was a little police station there, then we were told "No, around 4 somewhere there there'll be a truck coming to collect you". Then that truck came, then we were taken by that truck to to Francistown. Then Francistown there, we stayed for some hours there, we were taken to a police station in Francistown, then from Francistown they took us to this camp, the refugee camp, Phikwe. Then we stayed for quite ... for some months there, let's say it was more than four months staying there in Phikwe, as refugees; then we were taken ... a certain group ... taken by stages to to Lusaka.

We were taken by a plane to Lusaka. Well we stayed there, then our our ... our time came, then we were taken to the airport, to the airport, then we were taken by by the I think it was Zambian Air, Botswana Airways, no it was Zambian Airways to Botswana, to to Lusaka. Then we dropped there, Lusaka airport, then from Lusaka we were taken to Nampundwe by a big truck which they called Kras. Then that truck took us to Nampundwe; it was late night, I think it was around 9...10, somewhere there; then we were taken there, then they told us to strip all the clothes, we just were left naked. They checked us right round, feel here, feel there ... anything whatsoever, even watches, they were suspicious. There were those watches which were using batteries which were just indicating ... let's say, just like that, then those watches were taken away. Then we were given our clothes back and blankets; then we ... we were just told to go and sleep there on the open air. Then we slept there for some weeks because they were using very few *lokuzeni* [trans: how do you say it] barracks ... there were very few barracks of some sort, or houses, thatched houses. Then after stripping us, searching us around, then they were giving us ... there was another person there writing names down, your name, and where you come from, and then and there you were given pseudonyms. Everybody coming there we were told, as from today, your name is this. Those were pseudonyms which we were given there. Then from there we were told to go to to ... to sleep after they have given us blankets and other things like that. We didn't eat that day because it was at night, you see there. Then we slept there outside, then the following day they gave us tea and buns which we used to cook there in the morning. Then in the afternoon we were given sadza with beans. You see now ... actually that's our sadza we were eating as a group of eleven people ... you see now. So we were given that sadza, then you round that thing there and we will be eating like this, exchanging, because I think we were about 9 or 11; so for us to eat you have to go in and then you take out whatsoever, then you come back, then the other one comes in. That's how the situation was, you see there².

_

² He is describing how a large number of people had to eat a meal sharing one plate

Speaker	Dialogue
	Then we stayed there for quite some time and we do we were doing exercises in the morning, running, going down for let's say five up to ten kilometers in the morning we were doing exercises. Well then we stayed there for let's say about three months, then now we were recruited to go to Angola. Then we were told that "You'll be going to Angola", so the first thing, then we were told "you'll pass by FC". Then they took us by trucks to Angola to FC Camp, Freedom Camp. Then we stayed there. In that camp there were Cubans and Angolans. Then we were given treatment, certain drug. I can't remember the name of that drug. That drug was so powerful, so powerful that if whether you are asthmatic or something, then it will come out. If you are mentally not proper or if you are mentally disturbed then you will stop doing that because we were seeing things moving like this after taking that drug ³
MN	What were you being treated for?
CM	They they were just checking around our bodies are you fit for training or not. They wanted people who are fit to go to Angola. So that that's how we were given that kind of drug, because some of us were taken back to Nampundwe because they failed to pass that that examination. Then we stayed there for quite some time in in FC and then after I think it was two two months, this Madala, Joshua Nkomo came to our camp, then he addressed us. They called a parade and then he addressed. He told us then you'll be going to Lusaka Mboma, for military training sorry Angola for military training. He told us it's a long journey and by then they first decided that we'd better use trucks to to go to Angola. I don't know what changed then. Then they decided to use air instead of instead of those trucks. Well, they were takingOtherwise, after two weeks they were taking two companies or one company then after two weeks then it was a delayingI don't know what was delaying exactly, because sometimes we would stay for three or one month staying there waiting for us to be picked to go to Angola. Then well, others were already gone to Angola. Then before especially this our group, we were still waiting to go to AngolaI can't remember the day, but it was on October 1978, October 1978. In the morning we were called for for a parade. That was around 8 9, we were called for a parade, then we went for that parade there; we didn't know that our army commander would be coming. He was the one who came there and addressed us about the situation and the discipline around the camp and how we are supposed to behave. He was talking a lot of things about himself and about the camp.
MN CM	That was Mangena That was Mangena, Nikita Mangena. He was well guarded and everything was I think, his bodyguards were very much armed. So after that one then be left, while we were still
	his bodyguards were very much armed. So after that one, then he left, while we were still in the parade.
MN	But up to this time you hadn't done any military training.

³ It wasn't clear what exactly was being referred to here.

Speaker	Dialogue
СМ	Yes, we were still waiting to to go to Angola. Then our time was to come just like that. Then Mangena decided to go back to Lusaka. Then we waited there, at the parade for some minutes, I think it was twenty minutes or so after Mangena had left the camp. Then within a short period of time, then we saw a spotter plane hovering around. We thought that it was something Zambians, because it went just like that and came back and came again. That was for the second time. Then it was followed by jet jet fighters from Rhodesiathose Canberra and Mirage and things like that. Within some minutes there were about six or so planes were hovering over our head before going back to our base because that place is too big. There were people who were doing farming there and we were in an open placeactually so for a playing ground, something for football or something, that's where we were paraded. So to reach the bush where we were staying it was far from us. It was just empty, very few trees you see. Then within a short time then airforce just started bombing, bombing the the the whole camp, bombing the people were crowded like thisit was a horrible thing.
MN	But when you first saw the planes you didn't manage to disperse enough.
СМ	No, we were trying to run away when already the enemy was over us, so then you couldn't run all the way to where we were based, you see there. Then within minutes, that spotter plane we started to hear the word from the certain white man calling himself Green Leader.
MN	He was shouting while you were on the ground.
СМ	He was commanding the airforce and he was playing a record I still remember it it was "Dancing in the City". He was playing a record there
MN	In the airplane
CM	Yes, that spotter plane
MN	OK was that a sort of code of some sort, that song. Was it meant to be a signal?
СМ	It was a sort of a signal it was sort of something "Dancing on the City". I don't know, maybe somebody somewhere might be having that record maybe you can start playing that record then I think because there was suddenly a lot of things which were like bombs ku ku ku "Dancing on the City" I don't know maybe you know the song.
MN	I don't know it
СМ	You don't know the song. That's what was happening there. He was commanding the whole the airforce. Then people started running here and there and they couldn't reach that place. So those people were just squeezed in the place and many of them were killed, because they were dropping napalm, even their bombs were reinforced with metal
MN	What kind of bombswhat kind of bombs were they dropping?
CM	I can't know very well what really kind of bombs were being used, but those were heavy bombs which were used for anti-personnel. Then they reinforced those bombs with a

Speaker	Dialogue
	metal thing. Let's say if it's a bomb like this, then they would put metal around here, anything that's a metal, so that when that bomb come down, that metal would slash people.
MN	Like a cluster bomb
CM	Cluster slashing people just like that.
MN	So these people, obviously have been killed that are seen in this photograph. What would theywhat would have actually killed them those cluster bombs? [3B-04-14]
CM	Those cluster bombs, napalm and those cluster bombs.
MN	Ok and were they were they also shooting from the airplanes?
CM	Yes, they were shooting because when it comes down those planes were going around, when they come down the first thing they will open machines and sub-machines, something like that, then when they go up they will start dropping drums dropping napalm over these people. As I have said before, that we were in the parade, so people were just in that in that manner, so they started dropping dropping napalms, dropping everything that they can do.
MN	So this this gruesome picture here. Is this the effect of napalm?[3B-04-10]
CM	This thing's napalm which was used to there were many people who were killed there by this chemical, napalm
MN	It just touches how does it workit just touches
CM	As you can see the skin there everything, even clothes were worn out and burnt, something like that, and your body So this is napalm which was used, because they were dropping drums of napalms
MN	Drums?
CM	Drums of napalms, where people were crowded, just imagine. He was not the only one, there were many around who were killed and those who were trying to run away from this sector, you see the idea.
MN	So when the napalm does it catch fire, the napalm, or it just burns as a chemical.
СМ	It burns as a chemical. You see these people most of them they were not trained If they were trained then maybe were going to roll, because it helped, that one toobut now these people they were not trained, most of them. They were still going to Zambia to Angola as I've said
MN	But you hadn't been trained in any defensive measures, what to do if there was an attack?
СМ	We were trained as I've said in Nampundwe, there was little training there. We were not only running, we were told how to to to crawl how to do this and that. But even though there were no weapons used there; we used to carry heavy sticks whichwhen running as if you were carrying a gun. You see now, even in in FC there we were still doing that

Speaker	Dialogue
	training before going to to Angola
MN	I see, it wasn't obviously enough for that type of attack.
CM	No, no, we were stillI think we were not all that trained to
MN	And there was no anti-aircraft unit there at Freedom Camp?
СМ	No, there there were only light weapons like AKs. There were guerrillas who were guarding thethe gate there and there were some guarding the whole, but carrying light weapons like AK's, very few weapons
MN	But did you feel that there wasn't a good very good preparation then, in case of air attack.
СМ	I don't know with our commanders there, but maybe they thought we were not we were not going to stay for a long time, as it were; that was a transit camp so then they thought no, that place mustn't be guarded because there are no <i>lokuzeni</i> there were just were us.
MN	There were no trained people
СМ	There were no trained people there. There were just farmers there, who were doing farming, this old man and tractors there and they were doing a lot of farming. Those were the people who were there
MN	OK So they looked on it as a farm, but they used it sort of for a temporary waiting place.
CM	A temporary waiting place and transit camp to somewhere. It wasn't for ex-ZPRA there, it wasn't guarded, that camp, you see now.
MN	Whathow many people do you think died in that attack?
СМ	Because here, the people who were left, those people were supposed to go to Angola, I think somewhere around 800 to 1.3 [thousand]
MN	Died?
CM	Died there, yes. It was a terrible thinghorrible somewhere there.
MN	And they were all buried there like this, were they, on the spot? [3B-03-16]
СМ	Yes they were taken, then those caterpillars from Zambia they came here and then they were buried in a mass gravejust together, then just throwing in, throwing in, and then just using a caterpillar to bury them.
MN	But they identified them first?
СМ	They were already identified because we had our names there, they were identified this is who, this is who, with our pseudonyms. As I have said there we were given pseudonyms, those were names which we used, but your name your name was known against that name. If I was Christopher Moyo, then they say "Mr Nleya", then they keep those names together.

Speaker	Dialogue
MN	Right, so they knew who was killed, and were there a lot of people who were also injured.
СМ	A lot ofI'm one of those who was injured. Before actually those planes as I have talked about airplanes there were helicopters again which came after some minutes after those airplanes they have done their job. Then the helicopters about 6 to 96-9 yes, helicopters, start hovering again, shooting people now, using heavy machine guns. So people, those people who were trying to run away from the sector, then they were killed by helicopters Because they were just going like this ,just going around around the camparound the whoever is trying to run away was killed. Trying to run away, was killed just like that.
MN	But they didn`t actually land; nobody landed.
СМ	No, they didn't land in that <i>lokuzeni</i> . I understand they were camping somewhere nearer, I don't know where exactly. They were somewhere nearer there where maybe they were fuelling their their their planes, yes
MN	OK so thenit`s amazing that people survived, but some people survived obviously.
CM	Yes, some people survived as I have said and I survived there and then I was injured here by this this place.
MN	By the helicopter attack, or from the original?
CM	No not from the helicopters, but from thethese jet fighters.
MN	OK. How did you get away from them then?
СМ	We started running just like that, using zigzags, sleeping down when the planes are coming, then you have to sleep down, because if you are running when they are bombing, then you are a target now, so now when they come back, because those planes they have to go out and then they come around again, then they bomb, then they go, then they comejust like I'm going and coming just like that, so when they come then we slept down.
MN	So these buildings, there were also some buildings there at FC that were attacked it seems.[3B-20-01]
СМ	These buildings they were attacked the whole farm house was attacked. This was our HQ where our commanders were staying and our logistics as I have said that it was a farming place, so we used to keep every our grains there in those in these houses, and there was a clinic there, then all those houses were bombed by this airforce. These are one of those houses which were bombed. There there there was plenty of these bags of whatsoever from the farms which were burnt by the farmers by the Rhodesian forces.
MN	So after you were injured then after the attack was over, what happened, they came to collect the injured?
СМ	Yes, it was after some hours when the planes have gone and helicopters, you see now. Then after some hours then Zambian forces came as if they they they were ready to fight Smith. Already Smith Smith's planes were gone, I don't know how many kilometers

Speaker	Dialogue
эреакег	
	then those MIG fighters started about two of themstarted going round. Then we started running again now, we didn't know whether this was the enemy coming again because it was after some hours. We thought maybe those were the same people. Then we decided to run going outside the camp by that time I was sleeping here, and there was blood all over here, you see, because they I think they removed a splinter which was lodged here. [in his side] Then after some hours it was so quiet, quiet, then we started seeing ambulances from Lusaka coming to collect those people who were injured. Then we were collected to Lusaka for treatment.
MN	You were taken to the hospital
CM	Yes that was that hospital was named UBH
MN	UTH. [University Teaching Hospital]
СМ	UTH, yes, you are right. But we stayed there, with me it was a small thing, they just treated me and then they took me back after, I think it was after 2 – 3 days, to FC but we were staying far away from the campain
MN	So the Zambians didn't play any role in protecting the camps either then.
CM	No, there were no Zambians there, the only Zambians as I've said, who came there are those two MIGS in the airforce. We thought maybe they were chasing those planes but anyhow, that wasn't like that
ZN	How was the mood after this combardment?
CM	People were just wonderingwe really didn't know what was happening and the people were scared; we were scared of anything, even those ambulances which came to pick there were villagers around, Zambians, who helped us "No no please come come" People were just running away from whatsoever was making noise around, even it's a car, or whatsoever. They thought maybe now they are using what trucks, those forces, they are coming in to finish up
MN	You thought they might be Rhodesians
CM	Yes, coming to finish thefinish us off. So those villagers they didn't want us to stay to stay in that camp any more, because they were also affected by this bombardment. Some of them wereSmith was just bombing the whole area. Maybe he was thinking that we are staying there with those villagers. Those villagers started saying "No, we don't want these people to stay here" because now we are just being killed for no apparent reasons. So they reported to the Zambian government whereby Kaunda was the President of that country by then. And then, I don't know what happened after, but they were saying, "These people they must go or else we'll take over the government if Kaunda is failing to to to work"
MN	Who was saying this, the villagers?
CM	The villagers around.

Speaker	Dialogue
MN	They were blaming their own government?
CM	You see some of them were killed some of them were injured.
MN	They also had casualties
CM	So now they didn't know, because there was no protection. The government failed to protect them. They were also not protected
MN	And you yourselves, who were you blaming? Were you blaming the Zambians or were you blaming your own ZPRA?
СМ	No you see, especially to my side I I I did not not blame the Zambians, but I can say within us, as ZPRA I think there was something wrong, because why did they call us in the morning for a parade after some hours then this Smith regime forces came to bombard us there as if there was a connection.
MN	A connection, yes, but why were you still in a parade, since the leaders had left, why were you still there collected together?
СМ	Normally we have to wait for long because we respect that person as a as our commander, because that was a senior man within ZPRA forces, so we have to wait until they move out. We cannot just start moving out when he was just because first he went around checking around in the camp, so we have to wait until he moves out.
MN	So somehow you felt that the enemy knew that he was coming there
СМ	That's what I feel, but I'm not saying that but according to the connection now, I'd say something was connected. Maybe they wanted to kill our our commander or something else, because within I can say within twenty or thirty minutes after he has left, then those people came
MN	Oh, it was that soon
CM	So something wasI that much I think something happened there there was somebody who was communicating with the Rhodesian forces.
MN	OK, there's one more photograph here that This obviously there's Nkomo inspecting the damage.[3B-25-03]
CM	This damage, then that was after some I think it was 2 it was after a day or two. Then he came here to check around what really transpired, and people were they were buried and things like that after we had sorted out
MN	Who do you think was with him here? Who would this be?
CM	This was Nkomo and some of these guys, this white man, I think is somewhere from Germany, East Germany and these are officials who came with Nkomo, some commanders of ours who were in that camp.
MN	OK. Were you back at Freedom Camp by then? After they discharged you from hospital, did you go back to?

Speaker	Dialogue
СМ	Yes, we were taken back, we were taken back, but now far outside the camp. We were staying in the bush by then you see now. While all this thing was still happening, arranging how to to bury those people, things like that, we were staying outside the camp.
MN	You weren't participating in the burials.
CM	I didn't participate actually because I was still in the hospital
MN	And then what happened to you after that? Did you eventually go for training?
CM	Yes, eventually then I was taken for for training. After that, because this was small thing, then I was taken for a training.
MN	OK Maybe to conclude you could just sum up how this experience how did you carry this experience now of being attacked, as you went forward to be trained? Did it make you more fearful, or did it make you more determined or angry or
CM	Yah actually I was worried because I wanted to be trained and then we shoot down those airplanesI wanted those airplanes to come down even that guy Green Leader, I wanted him dead, because he was the one person who was menacing around, especially Zambia even in Mozambique somewhere there. And then we completed our training, I was posted to somewhere in Zambia there, a base there, SGT 3 where we were making some finalization in SGT 3 and then that was our way to war. Then before going home then we were taken to Mulungushi, it's a ZPRA training camp. We stayed there for for three weeks and there, daily there was bombardment, in the morning when we were about to drink tea, there the planes were coming; there's a dam somewhere nearer the camp. Then in the afternoon, but the time when you are going for the lunch, then the bombardment is coming. Around 5 somewhere the bombardment is coming and we were collecting fish, dead fish from the from the dam after after the bombardment. We were just collecting dead fish from around there and we used the we had those fish.
MN	So by this time you had got used to being attacked.
CM	I was used I think by then they were taking me to be more experienced because Mulungushi was attacked almost daily.
MN	So this made you into a very determined somebody
CM	Now I know it is part of life and I was not scared about it
MN	Did you eventually get to the front, inside?
CM	After that one then we were taken to front, as a group. We just came, I think we were about twenty, twenty of us, then we stayed there for three as I have said, three weeks, then we were taken for front.
MN	OK. This was what, 79 now.
СМ	That was 79 now there were ANC these Umkhonto we Sizwe guerrillas we were together with them, I think they were about six

Speaker	Dialogue
MN	OK and which area were you operating in?
CM	That's around Wankie, Wankie, Dete there that's where wewe operated
ZN	And this was towards the ceasefire?
CM	That was towards the ceasefire.
ZN	And where did you go to the assembly point?
CM	Then from there we were told to go to St Paul's
ZN	That's my Assembly Point
CM	St Pauls,. That's where we were stationed
MN	Just one last questionthe training you got in Angola, was it guerrilla training or was it conventional?
CM	It was conventional training then from there we were taken to Zambia, because we did military engineering. We were taken further for military engineering in Zambia; then we did training in that one, then we were sent home to go and do military engineering things.
MN	What would that include?
CM	Mines, things like that.
MN	So when you were deployed it was more as guerrillas
CM	We were guerrillas, because we were about 6 10, so that was a small group we were guerrillas. By the time, then let's say from the day when we were posted to Rhodesia, then you crossed using about 9 they call them dinghy which we were using to cross the river
MN	The small boat
CM	Normal boat
MN	Those rubber
CM	Yah those rubber things. Then on our way before we crossed the river, then the other dinghy which we had started losing air thenon the middle of the river, but we were just about to almost more than half coming this side. Then this dinghy was supposed to this man who crossed us was supposed to take the same dinghy back home. Then he said "No I will drop here by the island, then from here you will cross by your own". You see now so then he crossed, it was around 9 10. 910 p.m., but there was no problem. He crossed.
MN	OK I think that gives us a pretty very good understanding of what happened at this attack on Freedom Camp, and also your whole experience, so thank you very much

Speaker	Dialogue

strican history archive