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RECORDING THE ANTI-APARTHEID STRUGGLE IN KWAZULU-NATAL

Oral History Project of the Alan Paton Centre,
University of KwaZulu-Natal,
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Interview with Pauline Stanford
conducted by Ruth Lundie
on 6 August 1998 in the Malherbe Library,
University of Natal, Durban

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**KWAZULU-NATAL ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

**INTERVIEW WITH PAULINE STANFORD, CONDUCTED BY RUTH LUNDIE ON 6
AUGUST 1998 AT THE MALHERBE LIBRARY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NATAL,
DURBAN.**

(‘S’ SHALL SIGNIFY THE INTERVIEWEE AND ‘R’ THE INTERVIEWER)

R. This is a tape with the Pauline Stanford, at the Library of the University of Natal, in Durban, on the 6th of August, 1998. Pauline, when did you leave the University? Let us start on your political career, from there I think.

S. Okay, well I think I should state that while I was at University, in Cape Town, the University of Cape Town, there, during my years as a student, starting in 1975, I became involved with some work with the ‘Wages Commission’ and also in some work on issues around Removals and Squatters and Housing. I became quite familiar with some of the older students, who at that time were establishing what became the Western Cape - what was it? I can’t remember the name of the Union, but it was one of the first independent Black Unions - it was the General Workers’ Union. It was known as the General Workers’ Union, which was the equivalent of what became FOSATU in Natal. But, FOSATU then was separated into various industrial unions, and this remained as the General Workers’ Union, recruiting workers from all sectors. I helped them with translations, because I can speak Xhosa, I used to go out and help them with interviewing workers for Wages Commissions and I ended up doing that for the security industry and talking to Xhosa-speaking workers from the Transkei, who worked as security guards, along various parts of the Eastern Cape. And at the same time I was involved in some work with students who were assisting people whose shacks had been bashed down, brutally. Especially in the muddy, cold winters. They seemed to always choose that time to do it. So I became somewhat familiar with the Union, but then also there was activity on the University of Cape Town campus around rural development and work in the Transkei and I worked with people such as Rick Dusacher? And Nico Claasens.

1 R Oh yes, I remember her.

2 S Yes, who were becoming involved in what was at that time the Student Voluntary Service,
3 and they started working in the Transkei, particularly in Herschel. So there were a number
4 of things that I was exposed to at that time that showed - finally resulted in a complete career
5 change, because I had been studying Botany

6 R Oh, my goodness. I didn't know that.

7 S Then I never ever really got, never ever really worked in that field aside from a stint at the
8 University of Natal as a technician. So when I completed university in 1978, no it wasn't '78,
9 end of '78. In 1979 I became involved in what was then a White Trade Union, it was part of
10 one of these tripartite, sort of apartheid arrangements, called the Distributive Workers'
11 Union which now is SACAWU. The promotion of the Allied Workers' Union? They had a
12 sister union, organising coloured workers, and COWUSA ? at that time was also beginning
13 to organise, as a part of this tripartite arrangement. I didn't spend very long there - because
14 generally the people that I was working with were pretty conservative and it didn't seem that
15 they were ever really going to merge with the other unions, which was what we had hoped
16 at the time. So I spent about six months there before moving to Natal. Towards the middle
17 of 1979. And I spent six months in Durban, looking for work, and I was doing a computer
18 course at the time. I then moved to the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, where I
19 worked in the Agriculture Faculty - as a technician in Crop Science. While I was there I met
20 quite a lot of people who were working in the COSATU Unions, I also met people in what
21 became the UDF. And duly became quite familiar with the sort of political - the anti-
22 apartheid environment of that era. I worked at the University of Natal, in that job from the
23 beginning of 1980 to mid '81, when I moved to a job with the Environmental Development
24 Agency. And my main brief was to work with their project in Herschel, in the Transkei and
25 with other new projects that were developing also in the Transkei: I was coordinating
26 between these various projects, doing field work, assisting with a range of projects from
27 primary health care, water, sanitation, and in particular, setting up cooperative farmers'
28 organisations. Transkei at that stage of course was under Matanzima, and the conditions for
29 working there were rather tough. If you weren't cooperating with the Transkeian

1 Government and we found ourselves at times having meetings banned and things like that.

2 R Any personal harassment?

3 S I can't recall exactly when - oh, there were -not. I wouldn't call it personal, but travelling in
4 the Transkei was quite hazardous because the Transkei Defence Force used to set up these
5 road blocks at night and one never felt very sure whether they were going to sort of slip their
6 fingers on the trigger or not - they were always heavily armed and they were not averse to
7 pointing their guns at one ? So quite often we were stopped in the night and searched and
8 allowed to move on - I don't remember any particular sort of personally directed harassment
9 at that time. I worked - so I became quite familiar with the COSATU Union movement and
10 the people in the COSATU offices while I was there, because while I was working for EDA
11 - also on a voluntary basis, I assisted with some work producing media and things like that -
12 for particular wage campaigns, or recruitment campaigns for the unions and I got to know
13 people like Moses ? and John Makhathini, Geoff Schreiner, and so on. I remained in
14 Maritzburg until mid - 'till the end of 1984. '83, and continued working for EDA from
15 Johannesburg, for six months, 'till mid '84, when I went away for a year. I came - I was out
16 of the country for a year, I came back to South Africa in ..

17 R Can't you tell us a bit about your year in South America, because I think your knowledge of
18 Spanish must have come in useful

19 S Yes, well, I'd sort of been planning this for a while, so I started learning a bit of Spanish
20 Grammar when I was working for EDA, and then I - I decided to take a year off and to travel
21 around and I was particularly interested in rural movements in Latin America. So the route
22 I took was - I spent a week or two in Zimbabwe - I went to the UK, to visit some friends for
23 about three weeks; I then went to New York, where I had a friend living - a South African,
24 who was in exile, and from there began to make contact with various people who were
25 involved with ? in parts of Latin America. And the first stint I did was to make contact with
26 the Nicaraguan Network, which was a solidarity movement at the time, and is still a
27 movement? And they organised solidarity brigades to go and work in Nicaragua. I spent a
28 month picking coffee in the north of Nicaragua, on a farm and that was probably mid-
29 November to mid-December, roughly, of '84 - Just after the American elections which were

- 1 ?? They were depressing ?? The month in Nicaragua was extremely interesting, it helped me
2 ...
- 3 R: ...and very? ...
- 4 S: ... first hand Spanish? and I found that I learnt it quite quickly ? It was quite tense working
5 there - we were under armed guard all the time we were working because there had been
6 attacks on people who were working on farms in the area. The situation had been that
7 previously they had had a lot of migrant workers coming into Nicaragua from neighbouring
8 countries and that was no longer the case because of hostilities with them. It was also at the
9 height of the missile crisis with the United States and the United States was particularly
10 sensitive about having citizens working there...
- 11 R: ... from other countries who would
- 12 S: No. American citizens, because most of the people in this brigade that I worked with were
13 Americans. And the United States was in this role, the key position? That they were actually
14 supporting quite a lot of the activity in the contra-rebels and there was always a chance that
15 some of these volunteers would be massacred in the process. There was a massacre on the
16 farm just a few kilometers from where we worked, a couple of days before we arrived there
17 to start our work. And that actually, I think there were about twenty-two people who were
18 killed in it and they were all local Nicaraguans who had volunteered from the city to come out
19 and work during the harvest because there was a shortage of seasonal labour for harvesting
20 the coffee
- 21 R: What a terrible thing.
- 22 S: And they needed foreign exchange. So they had - there were local workers, mainly from their
23 telecommunications company, State-owned communications ?. I think it's called Telkom,
24 funnily enough. Anyhow, so things were quite tense there and we - as I say - we worked
25 under armed guard of the local cooperative farm workers - members of the local farm
26 cooperative. But it was a very interesting time, there were other brigades, helping from other
27 countries working there - there were people from Argentina, there were people from
28 Guatemala and ?
- 29 R: Were you the only South African?

- 1 S: Yes. I was a little worried that I might have some trouble coming back home, with a
2 Nicaragua stamp in my passport, but they didn't seem to notice when I came home
- 3 R: Oh, what a good thing
- 4 S: So I spoke - I had quite a lot of interesting discussions with the people who were involved
5 in setting up these cooperative farms and so on and I also met some very interesting United
6 States citizens who didn't represent the sort of image one normally gets of the United States
7 from outside. And people - some of whom I still try to keep in touch with.
- 8 R: Oh that's a good idea
- 9 S: Mmm. And they ranged from people who were sort of - might have voted for the Democratic
10 Party through to the US Communist Party Members. And the Communist Party there was
11 still and I imagine is still a Movement. People are still extremely secretive about belonging
12 to it and they feel very uncomfortable about the sort of perception that communism, I think
13 communism is still fairly?? Left a strong mark on the public perception of what communism
14 is and Communist Party members are. One particularly interesting person was a woman in
15 her eighties who came on this brigade to pick coffee
- 16 R: How very good - for her age!
- 17 S: And she was a medical doctor who had also done some work in one of the other Latin
18 American countries, assisting at refugee camps and so on, amongst people who were fighting
19 against these dictatorial regimes. But she was a real goer, she was amazing
- 20 R: Wonderful that someone should do that at that age.
- 21 S: And as soon as she got back to the States, she took a bus trip around the country to go and
22 lecture and give people an idea of what was going on in Nicaragua.
- 23 R: And she had first-hand information and .
- 24 S: And just to try and give people an understanding of the sort of politics that was driving the
25 American policy towards Nicaragua and some of ?? Her name was Regina Puston? I
26 remember. Anyhow, she was one of the colourful characters.
- 27 R: Yes, you must be glad you met her
- 28 S: And it was also remarkable how she dealt with the physical sort of challenges of it because
29 we were picking coffee on hills that were so steep you almost had to hold onto the tree not

1 to slide down.

2 R: And you see it's going up hills when you're getting older that you realise your age.

3 S: She used to sort of lie down and put her legs right up against the wall at the end of the day
4 to relax.

5 R: Yes, to recover

6 S: Anyhow, that was - it was a very interesting...

7 R: It was an invaluable year I think.

8 S: ...interesting exposure I went back to the States and then in January of '85 I headed for
9 Ecuador and I spent until late, or mid-May I think it was, travelling in Ecuador, finally Peru
10 and a brief few days in Bolivia

11 R: I had no idea you did all this...

12 S: And I spent time - I was lucky, through various contacts I had made in the States, some of
13 them through the Lutheran World Service, was put in touch with people who working in rural
14 areas and I stayed - when I was in Ecuador, I stayed with a Black family, just outside of
15 Quito? Who then introduced me to people who lived up in the mountains who were part of
16 a Church project of - building up a carpentry co-op and various other activities. And I went
17 out and stayed out and it was rather a high, steep, thin air, mountains.

18 R: Yes, what would it be? Ten thousand feet? More?

19 S: I can't remember exactly what the altitude was - but I remember when I arrived there, the first
20 day I found I could barely pick up my suitcase, the air was so thin. It took me a few days to
21 recover from it. Anyhow, when I stayed with these people - they were peasant farmers but
22 it was - I stayed with this family of - with two children. ? and the man was involved in a
23 carpentry cooperative, but at the same time they were also farming in a sort of communal
24 basis up in the higher reaches of the mountains, and I remember puffing my way up to the top
25 of the mountains and helping to hoe the sweet potatoes for the day and things like that. So
26 I had - it was very interesting These people were Quito? Speaking, which is one of - which
27 is - it's the Inca language

28 R: Spell the name.

29 S: QUECHUA. But they also spoke Spanish So they taught me a little bit of Quechua, but

- 1 Spanish was obviously the way that we were able to communicate.
- 2 R: You wouldn't have been able to have done all of this if you had no knowledge of Spanish.
- 3 S: No, it wouldn't be possible? So I was able to spend a bit of time inland in ? which was very
4 interesting and the people were extremely accommodating and happy to ..
- 5 R: Happy to have you and ? you
- 6 S: ..be there and I just acted like normal family - did what had to be done I remember being
7 taken to a wedding and one of the specialities of the wedding was a guinea pig You know
8 people eat guinea pigs and these poor little things, they're so small, they're barely a mouthful,
9 but anyhow, I had? (They laugh) And then I went up into Columbia by bus and that was an
10 interesting trip as well because there was a lot of fighting still going on and there still is now
11 Over the sort of political future of Columbia. So going into Columbia, not far into the
12 country, across the border, the bus in which I was travelling in stopped and we were all
13 searched by armed guards and had to put our arms up against the bus and be ..
- 14 R: .. patted down?
- 15 S: Patted down, and then we - when I went up there we were kind of - we weren't to go to
16 certain areas and stuff like that. Anyhow, I spent about three months? in Columbia, went
17 over as far as Bogata. And then I also went to an incredible historical an ancient site at a
18 place called Sana Custine? Where they had these quite sort of Gargoyle-like stone carvings
19 which originate from some religious rituals of people of a sort of pre-Inca time in Columbia.
20 I've got some wonderful slides of it - it's quite - ...
- 21 R: Oh, I think that must have been a wonderful experience..
- 22 S: ..interesting. And again I was - you know - what I was doing there was trying to get some
23 sort of sense? of what things go on and what sort of politics there is and also I was always
24 interested in the development in rural areas - both politically and in terms of economic
25 development. So I tried to make touch with people who worked in rural areas and just visit
26 places where I could see...in a sense that
- 27 R: And you know at least ? from ? the sort of wildness and sort of - away from western
28 civilisation. (They speak at once)...clarity. I mean I've always felt there was ...
- 29 S: .. when I wanted to travel, I was very - for some reason I took a fixed my ..

- 1 R Yes, I could have fixed my sights on South America too.
- 2 S: Then the beautiful archeological sites are something which also made it fairly worthwhile, but
3 my original reasons for going there - were not to do with that - they were to do with
4 understanding the politics and the sort of rural development struggle
- 5 R But it's interesting that theologically speaking, the centre of theology has moved from
6 Europe, down south, to South America and where there is some agreement with many of us
7 in this country
- 8 S Yes, no I think there are many parallels in Liberation Theology and all this kind of thing?
9 Anyhow, I had various sort of interesting sort of adventures and visits around South America
10 In Peru I was able to stay in Lima with someone - the mother of someone I'd met in New
11 York She was a Peruvian woman and she'd left Peru and was studying - she was working
12 as a seamstress in New York. Anyhow, I stayed with her mother in a place which was called
13 San La Tinda Poyas? It was a bit like Soweto in a lot of ways, but also very different because
14 apartheid meant, you know apartheid meant something very different, but there was this large
15 sort of Glantery township? for the working poor and I stayed there for quite a long time and
16 she had her guinea pigs on top of this flat roof and she used to go up every day and feed them
17 and if you went up there in the early morning, you'd hear everyone's guinea pigs squeaking
18 around the . I also experienced a little earthquake there - or a tremor at least. I suppose
19 something people there get quite used to
- 20 R. Did you expect it? Did you know that they had them??
- 21 S: Yes, I knew they had them, but there had been no warning about this and it wasn't a very
22 severe one, but just introduced you to the sort of feeling of something like that. The other
23 thing about being in Lima is - that really struck me was the terrible poverty of people who
24 come in from rural areas to live in the city. Because a lot of rural to urban migration going
25 on after that massive drought of the early '80s. So there were many peasant people who had
26 come into the city and who were living in what would here be known as squatter settlements.
27 These huge informal settlements - but because of the climate in Lima - there's no rain - you
28 get a heavy cold fog at night sometimes, but there's no rain. People would have something
29 which is like woven mats around their house and no roof.

1 R: No roof?

2 S: No roof, so these settlements were provided - in a lot of places they looked - you know -
3 were like grass huts and that here ? Woven green mats in a sort of enclosure. and that was
4 known to people as home

5 R: Astonishing.

6 S: Plus I connected up with some people who were involved with the Lutheran Church again
7 and were working in some of these settlements and one of the interesting projects that they
8 were working on were communal kitchens. where people living in severe poverty, particularly
9 people who had recently migrated to the city. were buying vegetables collectively and they
10 would serve one hot meal a day to all the people who were members of these communal
11 kitchens and they'd set up one sort of concrete building where they had gas stoves and stuff
12 like that and it enabled people to have a somewhat better diet that they would have had if they
13 had .

14 R: And did ?? (They speak at once)

15 S: It was quite effective, the political authorities and local government were quite hostile to it
16 because they saw it as a low political organisation and they sometimes actually interfered with
17 these activities. But they certainly were quite effective and I always wondered a lot about
18 how useful something like that would be in the ?? Anyhow. I mean - that - I mean - there are
19 lots of little bits and pieces about living in South America that are quite fascinating, but I am
20 thinking - the state of that??

21 R: Perhaps we better not stay with that, but I'm glad you told me

22 S: When I returned to South Africa. I'm in .

23 R: 1985, 1986?

24 S: The middle of 1985, July '85, I made contact with various people that I'd been working with
25 in parts both in this rural development field and in the Trade Unions and I looked at both -
26 I looked into working both in rural development and in Trade Unions and was persuaded,
27 pressurised into working with the Union Movement and I was recruited to work for what was
28 then the Metal and Allied Workers Unions, which has become NUMSA, the National Union
29 of Metal Workers of South Africa. in Pietermaritzburg. Then I worked with John Makhathini

1 as my mentor, Dumisane ? was also one of my colleagues there.

2 R: And John Makhathini would have had memories of the earlier union.

3 S: Yes .

4 R: There's a real???

5 S: Dumisane should also have good - and he's here in Durban...

6 R: Dumisane?

7 S: Mbanjwa.

8 R: Okay, thank you.

9 S: He works with Geoff Schreiner, here in Durban. My work - my tasks with the Union was to
10 act as the organiser with the Sarmcol workers. The Sarmcol strike had happened while I was
11 away, and the workers were on strike and dismissed at the time when I started the job. It was
12 about October '85. They - at that stage, I'm not sure if there was - if the movements to
13 brought to court? hadn't already been done, but very soon after I started with the Union, the
14 matter was on its way to the Industrial Court. But the hearings only started at the end of '96
15 - so that would be the hearing after the strike. The strike had been on '86, sorry, the strike
16 had been on Monday, or the day after May Day. No it would have been on May Day because
17 then it was not a public holiday. It had begun on the 1st of May '85, and the hearing began
18 in the October or November, '86. So it was a full eighteen months later. With the closing
19 those people actually ?? And that - that struggle is not over yet.

20 R: By no means.

21 S: There are negotiations going on right now...between the company and the Union in an
22 attempt to come to some sort of final settlement. So one of the first things I was thrown into
23 with the Union, obviously, was this very, very difficult struggle with the workers of
24 Mpophomeni.

25 R: A thousand people. .

26 S: A thousand people who had been dismissed from the Sarmcol factory and the company had
27 already started recruiting scabs and they took up the assistance of Inkatha and the Inkatha
28 Trade Union in recruiting the work force, which immediately set up an even more serious
29 hostility between the scabs and the older work force. One remarkable thing about the

1 workers from Sarmcol was that many of them had twenty-five, thirty years service. I can't
 2 remember exactly what the average service was, but it was in excess of fifteen years, of all
 3 those people who had been dismissed. So they belonged to workers, they weren't a young,
 4 inexperienced work force. So it was even more of a blow and a shock to those very elderly
 5 people to lose their jobs at a time when there was very little prospect of them ever getting re-
 6 employment again. A large number of them came from Mpophomeni but there were many
 7 others from Elandskop and Sweetwaters and surrounding rural areas, within commuting
 8 distance - either weekly, or daily, of Howick. I was also, part of my job was to work in the
 9 Ladysmith area where the Peters' Industrial Area was one of these decentralisation zones
 10 where the normal industrial legislation didn't apply, and people were working there for
 11 miserable wages, I mean getting five and ten rand a week.

12 R: Good heavens, yes.

13 S: And a number of COSATU Unions were working in that area at the time. They were the
 14 textile union was organising the paper, wood and allied workers' union, were working - but
 15 there wasn't a very well established union office. We, after some time, MAWU employed a
 16 full-time employee, based in Ladysmith and then Bunty and I would be commuting up there
 17 regularly; we didn't have to go up quite so often. But I do remember that Ladysmith was -
 18 and particularly that Peters area was a very difficult area to organise in partly because of the
 19 lack of industrial protection for union organisation. And also because people - the workers
 20 there didn't have much experience of the unions.

21 R: No, the people round about Howick would have - there was an ? of knowledge there.

22 S: It was quite ? in that area - in the days of - there was quite a well-established union presence
 23 in the Dunlop factory, at Ladysmith, but that was not in this Peters area - it was in an area
 24 which was part of normal existing legislation and that was quite a powerful sort of core from
 25 which the rest of the Union organisation happened. But we found very definitely that people
 26 just went off wild cat strikes and that it was very difficult to establish a kind of a strong union
 27 presence in factories where workers would strike readily and management would dismiss as
 28 readily. And it was extremely difficult to have much leverage in terms of demands because
 29 there was so little protection from the Unions and of course we needed to still develop

1 strategies for organising anything like that? I mean I remember as training units, or trying train
2 new shop stewards and then having them dismissed and victimised and being unable to find
3 any sort of industrial legislation to support us or any kind of hopeful rapport? And the result
4 of that kind of environment is that people were quite ready to turn to violence during strikes

5 R: I see, yes, of course

6 S: And I remember quite a number of times with Makhathini, going, spending long evenings that
7 went into late at night with groups of workers from factories trying to debate what sort of
8 tactics to employ to try and get back jobs for people and quite often there were - there would
9 be a number of people who would be saying 'Look all we can do is burn the factory, or attack
10 the scabs' and stuff like that. And also because of faction fighting, I don't whether you can
11 call it faction fighting, but let's use that for simplicity in the era. There were always weapons
12 around as well so people were quite ready to use their

13 R: Their weapons ...

14 S: their quashas? - you know those homemade guns

15 R: Really? Would you like five minutes break?

16 S: Ja, we need to have a drink of water

17 R: So you were in Ladysmith and then?

18 S: Oh, and as I was saying I think you know things were pretty volatile in terms of the strikes
19 in the Peters industrial area there and it was difficult to organise and this led also to the
20 presence of weapons and guns in the area. And I always remember Makhathini was incredibly
21 scared managing these very tense situations - even if it took hours and hours through the
22 night. The other problem of working there was that we always battled for venues to meet
23 workers for most people in Natal were very hostile to trade unions or else were afraid of
24 allowing it to? We used to sometimes meet in an old cinema in the - what was it? I can't
25 remember the name of the cinema it was in what's known as the sort of Indian area at that
26 time and at some stage we also were allowed access to one of the Church halls, I think it was
27 the Anglican Church Hall

28 R: I should hope so

29 S: I don't think that that lasted very long, I think that was a bit - I can't quite remember, but we

1 did always battle for venues to meet and that always meant - you know it was a bit ? thing on
2 the part of both the authorities who tried to make things difficult for us, but also on the part
3 of the industrialists, to prevent us having meetings because it always made things just that
4 much less coordinated and it made negotiations more difficult. So that was the situation in
5 Ladysmith and another thing that I remember about it is that a lot of the workers in the
6 industries there were incredibly young, very young women and men in their first jobs and with
7 such high hopes about working - where things could go - but also rather volatile sometimes.
8 They were ready to fight for their rights and strike just like that, but the question was how we
9 get their jobs back when it happened.

10 R But they got some good trade union instruction?

11 S: Yes, I mean I think that certainly the base of the unions began to build up there but it took
12 a long time and there was this - you know, you were losing more factories with dismissals and
13 you'd have to start from scratch again

14 R: And you didn't have the sort of programme we have today on TV, education and .

15 S Absolutely not! No, I mean we had the hostility of the police and so on. There were times
16 when we would be blocked from going into the township where our members were living and
17 stuff - in Ezakheni and so on. We would have to sneak into the township by back means and
18 so on and so forth. I also remember one time when the route into the township had been
19 blocked during one of the States of Emergencies and our - the Administrator for our Union
20 in Ladysmith and I were working together and so we were going to go back to her house in
21 the township and we couldn't . So we had to find somewhere to sleep in Ladysmith - I think
22 it was quite a cold winter night and there were no sort of places where we could go together
23 so I went to this sort of boarding house and hired a room, and then she sneaked in the back
24 and the two of us then had to share this tiny little narrow bed, and she's actually the identical
25 age, she and I were born on the same date.

26 R But she was a little larger than you?

27 S She's twice my size - she just squashed me in the bed and . . . (They laugh) So there were some
28 funny things about that - but, ja I mean the other thing I haven't mentioned is that a large part
29 of the time I was working in this Union, we were under a State of Emergency

- 1 R: Well, of course, but this was the mid 1980s. I mean it was by no means an easy passage
2 S: And one sort of got - you know, sort of became part of - part of the scene obviously and you
3 kind of forgot this was a State of Emergency, when you look back on it now, it seems
4 absolutely insane that sort of contortions we had to go through in order to get anything done.
5 to get anywhere - to communicate with people, you know we had to find secret venues to
6 have meetings when we weren't allowed to have meetings and stuff like that. I do remember
7 some May days up in Ladysmith and Newcastle that were quite interesting as well. I
8 remember going from Mpophomeni with a group of shop stewards up to Ladysmith and
9 having to weather a number of road blocks on the way to a May day meeting, but still getting
10 there and having the meeting. I also remember one May day going home - it had been
11 rumoured that the police were going to search everyone's houses because of May day
12 publicity and pamphlets and stuff, so I had removed a whole lot of books that I thought they
13 might want to confiscate from me and I put them into my car. I hadn't had time to drop them
14 off anywhere else, and I certainly wasn't prepared to dump them, so on the way to this May
15 day meeting in Ladysmith, we stopped in a sort of place in the veld and I had the books in
16 plastic bag, to make it waterproof, and I left them under a thorn bush and picked them up
17 about three weeks later.
- 18 R: They were there?
- 19 S: Oh, yes, they were there. I was hoping that a cow wouldn't eat them or something
- 20 R: I was hoping that you'd recognise the thorn bush!
- 21 S: Well, I carefully marked the place so that I knew that I had to make a very careful note of
22 where they were, but when I drive past that spot, I always remember - when I see that thorn
23 bush, I remember I had put my books under that tree. And in fact we'd been searched - the
24 car had been searched in Mpophomeni - on the way through and I had simply sort of sat in
25 the seat with the books under the seat while they were searching - I just sat there.
- 26 R: Looking like a lady and pretending...
- 27 S: And of course, you know, they picked on one of the Black guys in the car and they sort of
28 pushed them out of the car and searched them, pushed them around and I just sat in the car,
29 pretending to be bored, but I was worried about my books, and my colleagues?

- 1 R Well, Mpophomeni was a fairly risky place at that stage .
- 2 S: Well, this was such a security police focus there - I mean there's such - I mean military
3 presence during funerals and things like that, it was so
- 4 R: Heavy?
- 5 S: It was so heavy and also there just seemed so - the situation so volatile, it seemed that it
6 would be very easy for one small incident to spark massive, massive violence by the police?
7 One always had this feeling that if, you know, just one more stone thrown on one more
8 confrontation between some? (they speak at once)..
- 9 R: The guns would be out?
- 10 S: ...some youth and the gun at the policeman? that they were cap guns, they would just a huge
11 fight ? that Phineas and Simon's funeral, the police and armed guys, there was massive and
12 they prohibited us from singing in the Church, they prohibited us from - they (they speak at
13 once again)
- 14 R: ... it's a natural human activity.
- 15 S: Ja, they prohibited us from carrying coffins collectively to the cemetery from the Church,
16 from the Catholic Church, we had to take them individually, each funeral had to be conducted
17 separately and individually. And - which just made - it made the procedure much more drawn
18 out and much more difficult to contain people's anger and (they speak at once) and
19 frustration .
- 20 R: And much more area for risk..
- 21 S: Ja, and - but I just remember the tension of that funeral being incredible, I mean it was such
22 a sad funeral because of how they had been killed and they were getting a lot of people with
23 young families and so on? but on top of it they just imposed restrictions which actually made
24 much more likely to turn into a real confrontation. I remember being absolutely exhausted
25 at the end of it because we had had an all night vigil the night before, in the Church, partly
26 because one of the concerns we'd had was that, that the security police and their henchmen
27 might do something in the Church, you know they might sort of set up something in the
28 Church while we weren't there so we had - we were in the Church all night and they kept
29 coming and harassing us there during the night, but it was a really difficult, difficult time and

1 and there were some young people - some of the young Mpophomeni residents who had been
 2 there who had injured in that attack, and seen that attack which had killed - which you know
 3 had followed the abduction of Phineas and Simon and then - those young people, were you
 4 know, they were so angry and upset that they weren't really seeing reasons all the time - so
 5 there were times when they were ready to just ? and face the guns. They were ready to just
 6 go and attack the police and the army who were sitting on top of us throughout the day. And
 7 I remember Doctor Ferguson, physically shaking them by the shoulders and just telling them
 8 to pull themselves together.

9 R: They had to - I mean, you probably stabilised them and that was what had to happen

10 S: Ja, people were - you know how people get when they are in mourning and they certainly had
 11 good reason for anger...

12 R: And they whip up their ...

13 S: And their anger was being sort of goaded on by the security police and the army sort of - they
 14 were dealing with the situation. It would have been perfectly understandable for one of them
 15 to take a huge boulder and hurl it at the police ?, and that would have resulted in ...

16 R: Of course..

17 S: It would have been no problem.

18 R: I remember meeting you when on the way to Jabu Ndlovu's funeral at St Mary's - now how
 19 would the timing of that have matched in my dates in October - would that have been around
 20 the same time.

21 S: No, the incident in Mpophomeni had been - it was the 6th or the 9th of December, '96

22 R: '86?

23 S: '86, sorry and Jabu was killed in '88

24 R: Oh, later. It was just that I remembered a similar.

25 S: It was '88 or '89.

26 R: Yes, much later

27 S: It was quite a long time afterwards

28 R: Yes, but there was still a fair bit of ..

29 S: But for from the time - in fact before - before Phineas ? and Simon were killed, the first killing

1 that I remember was someone out on the outskirts of Edendale, it was the first Union member
2 that I sort of - whose funeral I went to, and the incidents that I remember and that was
3 probably mid-'86. And Peter Kirchoff will remember that as well because I remember going
4 with Peter to the house to recall what had happened - that he wanted to use it - get evidence
5 about what had occurred and when we went there we met a man who people had alleged as
6 one of the - one of the attackers and it was a very tense and uncomfortable situation, you
7 know. And at that time, quite - I can't remember exactly when it was - but quite early on
8 when I had started working for MAWU, one of the things, one of the problems that people
9 faced all the time was that they were always unarmed facing these situations and nobody
10 could get a licence to own one. So I said 'Okay I'll get a licenced weapon.' And I had to go
11 to the police station and they gave me a licence to my great surprise and I bought a revolver.
12 And when we had to go out to these places where we knew that there had been an incident
13 and there'd been fighting and there were armed people around, I used to carry it with me.
14 I always felt extremely uncomfortable about it, but it was one of those things where I thought
15 'Well, I'm the only one whose allowed to legally carry a weapon.'

16 R: So?? (they speak at once)..

17 S: My colleagues can't - I mean they might have had illegal ones but they couldn't legally carry
18 one - I was the one who could legally carry one by - I used to carry it around with me in those
19 situations. Fortunately I never had to use it, but it was one of those very uncomfortable
20 things about being in a situation where you have to decide whether you were prepared to just
21 face the guns or defend yourself. And...

22 R: Probably it had to be done.

23 S: The result of that was that was that quite often where there was a sort of tough place to go
24 to they would ask me to go - which was quite unusual. They'd call me and ask me to go and
25 I remember a number of times having to go out to places, quite often after a sort of major
26 incident had happened and people wanted to go out and talk to people in these areas where
27 there had been an attack, houses had been burnt, people had been killed. And I would go out
28 with one or two colleagues and maybe fetch some people and talk to them, sort of quite often
29 then people were still ? - help them out of the area. I must say I got rid of it - I got rid of this

1 weapon as soon as I could. Once the sort period? had passed, but it was a ...

2 R: Well, it worked when you needed it to work

3 S: Well, it was, I mean, it was just that thing that we felt that if we were in a car somewhere and
4 people were firing on us we didn't feel that we were going to just take it lying down

5 R: Just say you'd come and shoot us.

6 S: The other side of it was that one didn't want other people to know that you had a weapon
7 because then you would become a target to steal it from you and to test you. ja But I
8 remember that time when I went with Peter. I had the gun...

9

10 End of the first side

11

12 Second side.

13

14 R: ...aimed at the Unions?

15 S: Not necessarily. I think - well, obviously the part of it was that the Union members tended to
16 also be more likely to also to be UDF and ANC, than they would have been to Inkatha. And
17 they were obviously also quite often, because of their activity in Unions, more experienced
18 at organising - tended to often be high profile people in community organisations as well
19 and that was of course that they got targeted? and as I say if I had my diaries here, I would
20 have been able to give you an almost blow by blow account of a number of those incidents
21 ?

22 R: But there were plenty during that period?

23 S: Well, I mean we ended up having to organise funerals very often because, you know, one saw
24 this was something where the Union had to support members.

25 R: Of course, and families..

26 S: And their families and we spent a lot of time on weekends, organising funerals, attending
27 funerals and if not attending, at least helping getting some arrangements going. And often
28 assisting people with finance 'cause very often it would be a matter of someone whose house
29 had been burnt down - with nothing - then the family had to have a dignified burial?

- 1 R Yes they would like that, and you had to honour that (they speak at once) and one had to
2 honour that wish.
- 3 S So I can't tell you more because it's on tape?
- 4 ? Can I ask a few questions - this is mostly on the Midlands and the Natal area?
- 5 S This is specifically around ?
- 6 ? And do any particular incidents stand out in the Midlands.
- 7 S Of funerals?
- 8 ? Mmm
- 9 S Well, there were the big funerals like the funerals for the Mpophomeni shop stewards - that
10 was a huge funeral at the end of '86; there was a huge funeral for Jabu ? - then others that
11 were in contrast, which were often very small and people would be too scared to attend. I
12 remember attending one out in - beyond Edendale - I can't remember... in Gezibuso, I think
13 it's the - I remember attending one there for people who had been killed in one of these
14 attacks just outside the city? There were just family members, there couldn't have been more
15 than thirty, forty people and that's very small for a funeral and there were many of those
16 where people were just too scared and it was only immediate family .
- 17 R. Who felt they could go..
- 18 S: And a couple of Church people and so on would go and often it was those funerals where we
19 felt at least the Union sort of, one Union Official, or two officials should be there - just to
20 provide their comfort and support
- 21 R. Yes, which would have been recognised and accepted very much by the families, don't you
22 think?
- 23 S. I expect so, yes. I mean I think if Makhathini attended a funeral, people felt very reassured
24 by something like that. So quite often we would be invited to funerals in those sort of
25 situations. But I'm talking very much about sort of the close surrounds of Maritzburg - you
26 know - up the Edendale valleys, towards Elandskop, Howick and towards Wartburg and so
27 on Sweetwaters, 'cause there were a lot of people that had been killed in Sweetwaters.?
- 28 R. Well that was of course the IFP presence ? further up there.
- 29 S: There were quite a lot of the Sarmcol workers who lived in Sweetwaters rural area and there

1 were areas that tended to be IFP controlled. And a couple of their houses were burnt and
2 houses of relatives, and people that they knew, and they were attacked and killed. And often
3 the people who were killed would very ? loudly when they were told to?

4 R: Was it just killing them because ...

5 S: Well, a house would be attacked and people ran out - they were shot - if they stayed in the
6 house they would be burnt so whoever happened to be in the house at the time was a target
7 and it didn't seem to matter whoever after that - once the house had been targeted. And you
8 know that was all sort of - we were trying to build up a strong, kind of professional industrial
9 union and at the same time there was all this. The sort of major Union campaigns were kind
10 of overlaid against this background - major wage campaigns, special campaigns about
11 maternity leave and all that sort of - campaigns for the retribution of May day and kind of
12 things like that. Campaigns around establishing Industrial Councils and particularly
13 negotiating forums and so on. And we always found ourselves sort of - the - moving onto a
14 campaign and having our energies being dissipated in all kinds of other directions. And there
15 was all these debates amongst people in the Unions about far the Union?

16 R: How far you would speak?

17 S: How far the involvement would be the ? in the politics of the community, and how much you
18 must simply focus on all of these organisations and different unions, different people took
19 their positions on this and in fact NUMSA and MAWU were seen as - the sort of metal union
20 hasn't changed. It was seen as a union that had quite a strong line of focusing on the Union
21 rather than community, but you couldn't focus on the Union as - because the members were
22 out there - they lived in these situations. So in fact in spite of having a reputation for being
23 a Union - with quite a strong line about the sort of importance of building the organisation
24 as a union, we spent a huge amount of our time and energy dealing with the problems faced
25 particularly ? communities??to some extent in Ladysmith .. Now what shall I tell you??

26 R: And the Table Mountain area, was there any...?

27 S: Well, the Table Mountain area was an interesting one - you remember the floods of August
28 '87, was it '87, it was about this time of year, very unexpected time of the year, and they had
29 one of those cut-off low meteorological systems one that just sat there and rained on and on.

1 When that flood started Makhathini and Dumisane and I were all in Durban at a meeting and
2 the reports started coming through that this was ? so we left and we went back home because
3 we thought we might not be able to get across the bridges, and then we had a whole campaign
4 to assist people out in all the areas that had been affected, and all the Union shop stewards
5 were involved and we got some cooperation for that from management in some of the
6 companies. Where all the shop stewards were drafted in basically to go and do some sort of
7 survey of what had happened. Because there were people who were cut off entirely and we
8 needed to try and get to them ? in those areas - and also to try and get assistance to them and
9 the really ? blankets and food and ? There were two things about that - the one was that a lot
10 of violence had been going on shortly before this flood and people felt that it was important
11 to pull communities together in some sort of sense that in a crisis they shouldn't sort of feel
12 completely abandoned and there was a need to get people to move together and to campaign
13 for peace because it was also around the time when did they have that big Peace Rally at
14 Wadley Stadium?. No that was about a year later

15 R: Yes. I think it was nearer to 1998.

16 S: I also know it was after Jabu was killed

17 R: Yes and she was killed '88.

18 S: Anyhow, during, after, the floods had only just sort of subsided, and people were still cut off,
19 we all went out to different areas to go and see what had happened. I went with one of the
20 Sarmcol workers to Wartburg and they were completely cut off, the buses weren't going, the
21 taxis weren't going and I remember we had to build a piece of road to get there. I had this
22 very reliable old car which seemed to go through mud and rain and everything it was offered.
23 And we stopped, and there was a place where the road had caved in - there was only a thin
24 narrow piece of road ? any vehicle. We stopped and asked some people who were from there
25 - living nearby. Then we just paid to borrow their spade to rebuild the roads. Anyhow we
26 came with some supplies and there was a small group of Sarmcol workers who were out in
27 that area and obviously they didn't have much in the way of reserves because they were on
28 strike and they were - they were really on their beam ends as far as resources went and we
29 knew that they needed to get food and blankets and stuff like that, but there were also a lot

1 of other people ? So we had to build this piece of road and then get in there, and we went to
 2 the home of one of the Sarmcol workers who was sort of coordinating for that area and spoke
 3 to people - just to find out what the sort of damage had been and whether they needed
 4 medical help? and stuff like that. And in the meantime having looked at the roads some people
 5 with bakkies with shops in the area started using that piece of road we had fixed and started
 6 roaring in.

7 R: You did say you didn't charge them didn't you?

8 S: It started caving in again, so we had to re-build it on our way back and this guy I was with
 9 was quite an old guy, from Sarmcol. He and I had to do this work together - building this
 10 piece of road, anyhow we managed to do it and managed to come back, but that was an
 11 interesting kind of campaign because it was around the sort of peace issue and it was saying
 12 here's an incident that we can use to help people bring people together rather than split apart
 13 and also to try and heal some of these political rifts which were being exploited by particular
 14 interests. But, unfortunately I don't think we really managed to follow-up on something like
 15 that? You know, it kind of fizzled after the initial kind of help to people ? and so on - it kind
 16 of went into a kind of welfare ? with the Red Cross providing for those systems? and ?
 17 identifying houses that had been burnt down and getting people, particular sort of assistance.

18 R: Pauline, you've talked for quite a long time, you must be getting tired. Wouldn't you like just
 19 to talk a little about Jabu and her death and that dramatic funeral. Have you the energy for
 20 it?

21 S: Mmm, okay. Sure. You mustn't forget that there's that book about Jabu.

22 R: I know there is, John told me (they speak at once)

23 S: So I hope - I mean my .

24 R: But you have the first knowledge .

25 S: So I hope, I mean, my figures, dates etcetera might not be accurate ? was one of the
 26 stalwarts in the shop steward council, both of the ? and of COSATU for a long time and what
 27 was interesting about her and the factory which she worked in was that there's been a lot of
 28 women there and there were strong women shop stewards from the factory where in the
 29 Union it was dominated mainly by men and she was a very respected person. Sort of? in the

1 Union. not just in her factory, but in Maritzburg. And in fact she had just come back from
2 Johannesburg, from a major Union conference or meeting and I remember her coming back
3 with Makhathini and one other person and they came across to my house I think to collect
4 a car or something - on their way to drop Jabu at home that evening - which was I think, it
5 was June, was it June?

6 R: Yes.

7 S: It was June and the first thing I knew of her death, it wasn't her death then, it was of this
8 attack on her house was in the early hours of that morning when someone phoned? and told
9 me that she was in hospital. And it was, it was a nasty ? attack because it seems that with ?
10 that there seems to this municipal policeman? involved in it and Jabu and her husband, and
11 her oldest daughter were all killed in the end - Jabu died later and her husband. And her
12 youngest daughter was in the house at the time and was injured, and I think has been
13 psychologically badly?

14 R: I'm sure yes..

15 S: ..badly damaged. Her middle daughter was away at school and her middle son was away at
16 boarding school, so the one daughter and one son were at boarding school. Her youngest
17 child stayed with his grandmother out in Elandskop area, not at Elandskop, beyond that. .

18 R: Impendle?

19 S: Impendle. And her oldest son was quite involved in the sort of ? movement, the kind of
20 politics of Imbali and it seemed when people sort of looked at the kind of build up towards
21 it, it seemed to have been targeted at him, but you know, not necessarily. I mean there seemed
22 to be some ambiguity about who was being targeted, whether it was Jabu or whether it was
23 her son. Nevertheless, I mean she, she had been a stalwart of her community as well as her
24 factory.

25 R: Indeed she was.

26 S: And a lot of people had looked to her as someone who was fearless, who was quite prepared
27 to sort of deal with the problems of the community and I also think someone who was
28 prepared to speak with the young people, the young people who would sometimes be quite
29 hot-headed about things, and was prepared to confront them. Although a lot of people, I

1 think at that time were very afraid of the young ?, what do you call them - the young
2 comrades because they tended to ? quite often to not ? tended to sort of act in this way
3 There were not many people who were prepared to say to them 'Look these are the rules,
4 you've got to be more disciplined and so on'. And she was one of those people who - I think
5 she had a good rapport with all of them, and ? sort of - obviously and I think that that ? her
6 willingness to stand up in those sort of situations and deal with what was quite uncomfortable
7 issues. What more can I say about her, she was ...

8 R: No, it's, it's ...

9 S: She was a really strong person really without being a very domineering character at all - she
10 wasn't - you know - she was quite quiet in some ways. You know, she'd ? say and that was
11 that. And cared for ?

12 R: Well, the police obviously regarded her..

13 S: I definitely think that she was certainly regarded as a political threat to anyone who was
14 threatened by the sort of - by an organisation which was going somewhere in a kind of
15 systematic way and - ja, she was one of those sort of people

16 R: Yes, she was, indeed.

17 S: And I think, you know, that's, also after her death, I think it shook a lot of people. I think
18 it made a lot of people quite afraid because she had been prepared to stand up on those kind
19 of issues, both in ? to the anti-apartheid sort of debates, mostly, as well as (they speak at
20 once). I know that people's biggest fears were more about those internal things, they were
21 scared of being labeled, they were scared of being labeled as a scab or a traitor or a stooge
22 or whatever. And because it was so easy for that to happen and then when that did happen,
23 quite often there's be these incidents that would just you know - be ? on the accusation of
24 being traitor and often ? I think part of what was powerful about her was that she would
25 confront those internal debates. Not in a kind of - you know not necessarily in a big public
26 forum, but much more in dealing with individual incidents about you know - ? acceptable
27 practices and reasonable principles.

28 R?: So who ? in that area ?

29 S: Well I think so - I mean you would have to speak to people from Imbali about that because

- 1 You know, I think she was in Imbali, she was an important person.
- 2 R. Certainly the reactions one heard and overheard, she was deeply grieved
- 3 S And also then she brought that into the Unions, and into ? COSATU
- 4 R. It's so valuable for the Unions to have someone like that.
- 5 S. And I mean the tragedy is that her families continue to face problems ever since
- 6 R. Have they?
- 7 S. Her oldest son was killed not long after her
- 8 R. Yes, I remember seeing that in the paper
- 9 S: And her second, the oldest daughter was killed in ? when her house was attacked Her second
- 10 daughter, I think she had cancer or something like that - she was about twenty and she was
- 11 hoping to go and study overseas, she completed her high school in Jo'burg afterwards and
- 12 just out of the blue she had some terminal disease and she died.
- 13 R: Oh, Pauline'
- 14 S So there's the middle son, the youngest son, and then the daughter who was at the house
- 15 when this incident happened, so there are the three children out of six who are still living now
- 16 R. That is terrible
- 17 S: I know, It's really tragic.
- 18 R. It is tragic, and as you say, the Mpophomeni people are still not ? stint one way and another
- 19 S: Well, one has to see what's going to come of these ? negotiations, but I think whatever
- 20 settlement comes out of this. You know the max? has been sent back for industrial ?
- 21 settlement and they're trying to reach an agreement without having to go to court. But I think
- 22 any, whatever financial amount are involved in the settlement it can never compensate what
- 23 it did to that community.
- 24 R No, not at all, not at all.
- 25 S: And also it didn't just do it to that community - it did it - it became the whole of Maritzburg
- 26 was caught up with the intensity of that struggle and it really heightened the hostility between
- 27 Inkatha and UDF
- 28 R. I think so, I think so.
- 29 S: And I think that quite a lot of the deaths and those sort of attacks and ? probably wouldn't

- 1 have happened without that having been the spark to much greater sort of levels and levels
2 of violence and so on.
- 3 R: It brought things into the open and..
- 4 S: Ja, it was horrific.
- 5 R: Yes it was
- 6 S: I remember, talking about that. I remember that at the peace rally we held, I think it was
7 mid'89, but I couldn't be certain, maybe it was 1990, at Wadley Stadium.
- 8 R: Was it at Qumbu?? Oh the one at Wadley Stadium, yes.
- 9 S: I think there was a State of Emergency on again - during that Peace Rally and it was
10 organised - it might have been in August '89, I'm not sure. I think it was on Womens' day,
11 or around Womens' Day. It was organised specifically by the women of 'Maritzburg - you
12 must remember it?
- 13 R: Yes, I do remember it
- 14 S: And it was very important because the Union women, it was the UDF women, it was the
15 Church women who were involved and we specifically organised it as a rally set up by women
16 in a way, kind of highlighting the fact that women are not necessarily involved in violence,
17 they were people who were picking up the pieces on both sides, on either side. And people
18 wanted to invite anyone to come - it wasn't to be seen as a UDF rally or a COSATU rally,
19 it was to be seen as a rally of women, uniting against the violence and - but there was a lot
20 of support for the rally from COSATU. ? I mean COSATU sort of ? the buses and ? During
21 that rally we had Sister Bradley Ngeobe? Coming to speak
- 22 R: And didn't Mrs Madhiba speak at that rally?
- 23 S: I don't recall her speaking, she might have. But what happened - just as Sister Ngube arrived
24 and she was about to make her speech was that some youth identified by one of the Sarmcol
25 scab? in the stadium and they wanted to kill her and they, someone - one of the group and a
26 whole team of - marshals, one of the marshals, most people were marshals, also we had the
27 Sarmcol, we had a team of Sarmcol guys I used to work with - about nine or ten of them who
28 were also marshals that were always at all of these big events. They were really amazing ?
29 team, anyhow they took this guy and they brought him onto the field, because the spectators

1 were all off the field and the speakers were on the platform. They brought this guy onto the
2 field and we had him sitting there and he had a small child with him ? about six or seven. At
3 this stage and some very foolish Union Official, whom I won't even name decided that he was
4 going to ? this man out of the stadium in a car, and he got in the car and he roared up to the
5 sort of podium and put this man and his son, together with one of the women marshals into
6 this bakkie. ? bakkie and started roaring out of the stadium and of course these students saw
7 this and they just ? like ants on top of a piece of meat and ? and killed him ? and we had the
8 most horrific sort of battle and it seems it went on for an hour but it was probably only twenty
9 minutes where the marshals had to go and try and control the situation. And I remember sort
10 of all of us around this vehicle, they began to smash the windscreen and then someone started
11 ? mortars, and linked arms, with our backs to the vehicle around it and we were trying to sort
12 of prevent them getting at this guy. The whole purpose of the rally would have been totally
13 destroyed, the whole principle in setting the thing up would have been destroyed. But it was
14 a very horrible incident, but I think, I mean it didn't get noticed by a all of the people - you
15 say you remembered it - but it was such a moment of tension, of trying to defend what we had
16 been doing. Anyhow, I think Sister Ngube was actually addressing the crowd while we in the
17 background, were on the field were having this mighty battle with these youth who had
18 decided they just got ? and they wanted to get at this guy. Anyhow, and eventually we
19 couldn't - I mean we just didn't have the means to prevent them, or move them ? they were
20 in a wild state of mind, but I remember Fiona Dove taking one those young guys and she
21 didn't - she just hugged him like a bear until he just ? on the floor - it just shocked him so
22 much.

23 R. Yes quite.

24 S: Anyhow, we weren't able to sustain this long sort of battle

25 R: So what happened?

26 S. But the police had been harassing us with the rally all the way through - they'd been coming
27 looking at us through their sites and we tried to keep telling them to keep their distance but
28 someone went to them and said 'Look we just ?' And they actually escorted the guy out of
29 the stadium.

- 1 R: Oh, you changed your purpose??
- 2 S: I as bruised afterwards
- 3 R: And it's the not knowing what's going to happen next - it's all very well looking back on it. .
- 4 S: But also you see, a big rally like that - it's something that could have happened, it could have
- 5 just sparked a whole - well, first of all the police - if these kids had got hold of that guy and
- 6 started doing something to him the police and army would have then let fly and it would have
- 7 just blown up. So it was one of those - it was like a small incident that maybe other people
- 8 were totally unaware of but it could have been again, a spark for a ...
- 9 R: .confrontation?
- 10 S: a huge, a huge battle. But then there was newspaper coverage of that rally, you would be
- 11 able to get the dates and the details.
- 12 R: Yes, '89, '88?
- 13 S: I think it's '89, but anyway it was around that August. And as I say it was politically
- 14 interesting because it - the attempt was to involve people from a wide range of organisations
- 15 and ?
- 16 R: Oh, yes and having Church women with them..
- 17 S: And to try and make it a politically useful thing - I mean it couldn't be totally a political
- 18 movement, but you know, the ? cried, peace - I remember the t-shirt - we had the t-shirt.
- 19 Justin had a copy of it.
- 20 R: 'Peace in our time'?
- 21 S: No, 'Women make history: Fight for Peace ' It had a sort of round, logo.
- 22 R: It was a wonderful effort.
- 23 S: Do you keep t-shirts in your archive, you do?
- 24 R: You might like.
- 25 S: I'm sure ...
- 26 R: Before the ants get it.
- 27 S: No, this is in my cupboard, I still wear it - but I'm sure that I've got quite a lot of
- 28 ? : We take posters, pamphlets..?
- 29 S: Have you got the poster that was made for the funeral of the Mpophomeni shop stewards

- 1 who were killed?
- 2 ? No
- 3 S: I'm sure that I've got a copy of that poster. Because that incident in Mpophomeni - I'm sure
- 4 you've got records of this?
- 5 R: Yes
- 6 S: Four people were killed. There were three people were killed, the three people who were
- 7 killed, the three people who were killed in ? car - they'd been abducted. The fourth one was
- 8 a youth who was shot in the morning when the township was attacked. And I've actually,
- 9 just yesterday, saw some photographs that I had of the headstones of the graves that were
- 10 taken by ? people.
- 11 R: Indeed, I think we'd be very grateful. I'm going to end here ... Pauline, tell us a bit about the
- 12 Edendale War in 1990.
- 13 S Okay, as I say, other than the Unions, I had been away from ? Maritzburg and I came back
- 14 on I think it was the Tuesday morning. The fighting had begun that night - with houses being
- 15 attacked and so on. And so in the morning I went to the Union office not knowing about this
- 16 incident and one of the shop stewards from Scottish Cables - no, he wasn't a shop steward,
- 17 one of the Union members from the Scottish Cables was in the office, extremely worried
- 18 because he'd been working on night shift and his family were up - I forget the names of areas
- 19 - it's terrible - but in that area and ? he was concerned about what had happened to them and
- 20 their safety and so on. So I said I would go with him that day and we went through Edendale,
- 21 we went through quite a lot of road blocks which had been set up by Edendale residents - not
- 22 by the police. There were, I remember school desks across the road in one place, stones and
- 23 things in other places. But we spoke to people that ? officials were quite well known in the
- 24 area? coming and going - so we went up out there. We met quite a number of military
- 25 vehicles coming back into Edendale, despite the fact that it seemed that the fighting was still
- 26 going on. But I think at the time Radley Keys must have been in a helicopter above the area,
- 27 he'd flown up there
- 28 R: Yes, I think he's flown up with Thabo Mkhize, ja.
- 29 S Anyhow, I went with this man, up to the top of the hill, above Edendale and as we got up

1 there we met lots of people sort of streaming down towards - into Edendale - some of them
2 were very disorientated, and quite panic stricken. A lot of them were sort of pleading with
3 us to take them back. But we wanted to go on and see where the ? was - somebody??And he
4 kept asking people - because there were a lot of people he knew from the area - who were
5 streaming out and he kept asking people - because there were a lot of people he knew from
6 the area who were streaming out because they had seen ? and so on and so on. And we met -
7 as we were going along, we met some of the young men - one UDF men, from the area who
8 were sort of patrolling ? was going on. And one of them was ? he seemed to have been shot
9 in the lung, and they pleaded with us to take him into town. And we said 'Look, just wait
10 here on the side of the road, we'll collect him on the way back. Anyhow we went as far as
11 we could on the tar road and then we realised that they were still - it looked as if they were
12 still quite a lot of fighting going on and we saw a huge group of men and there was one
13 person, who amongst the sort of people were screaming out but half a binocular which we
14 trained on this group of men and it was a big group of men, armed with sort of traditional
15 gear, spears and stuff, and we saw a lot of movement with other sort of vehicles which
16 seemed to be carrying armed men around. Anyhow, we eventually came to a term, an
17 agreement, that it was unlikely that his family were down below, off the main road and it
18 wouldn't be sensible to try and go there. So we turned back and we collected this young man
19 whose surname was Zondi, I can't remember his first name. Anyhow he was in pretty bad
20 shape and he seemed to be ? so we rushed him off to Edendale, to hospital and dropped him
21 off and asked them to attend to his ? Things were pretty chaotic there because there were
22 many other injured people who had come into hospital who were coming to the hospital and
23 I left him there and with sort of thinking that 'I don't know if he'll survive.' And about I think
24 two weeks later there was a mass funeral for all the people who had been killed in whichever
25 way, at the Ecumenical Centre - do you remember that funeral?

26 R. Yes

27 S. Amongst them was a child with ? a grandchild who was ? Anyhow, I arrived at the
28 Ecumenical Lay Centre, somebody sort of walked up to my car and opened the door, like he
29 was a chauffeur, and it was this young man.

- 1 R: Oh, how very nice
- 2 S: It was the most..
- 3 R: And he recognised you and he was well?
- 4 S: Well, he probably recognised the car, and there he was, so that was a?
- 5 R: So that was satisfaction..
- 6 S: (They speak at once)...one of the really nice things, ja.
- 7 R: It really was.
- 8 S: But the shop steward, whose surname was Janu? Had - his family had survived, we went back
- 9 that evening and they were at home, at least they been in the bushes and they had come home
- 10 and they were busy plucking chickens for supper. It was so terrifying down there because I
- 11 just thought I'm going to be ? this man to his home and find his family massacred. And we
- 12 went down to the house and sort of - it looked quiet and there were a lot of people who still
- 13 hadn't returned to their home and we went down to the house and there was this mealie field
- 14 next to the house, and his son came running out of the mealie field and I thought 'Oh God,
- 15 he's going to tell us something terrible.' And I remember ? glad to see his Dad home, he was
- 16 a little boy
- 17 R: Oh, good. I'm glad these two stories. ?
- 18 S: ? But a week later, he was killed, driving along the Edendale Road
- 19 R: Just shot at?
- 20 S: No, I'm not sure what the sort of point ? he was killed, and it was very sad? (The tape has
- 21 been very fuzzy and Pauline seems to tail off at the end of each sentence) It was awful
- 22 because ? the family had survived in tact, and then they didn't and then after that ? gave us
- 23 the whole ? as we had many times, the names to accommodate a? hundreds and hundreds of
- 24 people who were displaced, whose homes had been burnt down.
- 25 R: Yea, I mean all the churches in town..packed and..
- 26 S: And all the churches became ... and then they all - you know, all the kind of problems related
- 27 to that and it was similar to things - there was a huge big series of attacks in Wartburg and
- 28 our offices actually became accommodation, because we had those offices; what was the
- 29 name of the street where we had the offices, at the top of town? It was a big, huge, sort of

1 first floor warehouse ? and all the Unions were in this one big room? Office. It was on one
2 of the smaller side streets?

3 R: Oh, no I don't remember

4 S: Anyhow, it was a pretty shabby old sort of warehouse when we moved in and we had ?
5 Wartburg in the office, until they set up a camp at the old - that old railway siding, out -
6 opposite Imbali, what's that old railway siding? And that remained a camp for quite a long
7 time for refugees, especially from the Wartburg area.

8 R: Gezibuso? No?

9 S: Yes, the Plessislaer ? Ja. I can't remember when those incidents happened out in Wartburg
10 but there was a huge - there was a period of a number of attacks on ? There was initially a
11 refugee camp in the area - in the Wartburg - near the sort of Table Mountain area there were
12 tents and they were attacked in their tents and that was when the people would come in and
13 had stayed in our offices?

14 R: Yes, there was a lot of tension out there - from the Table Mountain area - towards let's say
15 UDF aligned people.

16

17 The tape is switched off.