

The Alan Paton Centre & Struggle Archives



RECORDING THE ANTI-APARTHEID STRUGGLE IN KWAZULU-NATAL

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

† Interview with Stanley Mbambo
conducted by Ruth Lundie
on 15 September 1998
at the Alan Paton Centre
University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg

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KWAZULU-NATAL ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

**Interview with Stanley Mbambo,
conducted by Ruth Lundie on 15 September 1998
at the Alan Paton Centre in Pietermaritzburg**

(‘L’ shall signify the Interviewer and ‘M’ the Interviewee)

L: This is an interview at the Alan Paton Centre on the 15th of September, 1998, with Mr Stanley Mhambo of Sarmcol. Mr Mbambo is from Howick West. Stanley, if I may call you that? Please tell us a little bit about your life, your birth, your schooling at Howick.

M: Yes, I am starting at school in Howick West - they still call it ‘Riversdale’? So I was born myself in 1952, in the same place, Howick West and I’m learning there - at Howick West. I’ve got it - I’m going to learn at Cedara, St Joseph’s, attached by the Roman Catholic Church in that place. After that I’m going to Kwa Ncqaza, to start my schooling, Standard One. After that I do my education still till Standard Seven. After that my father failed to push us further in the school because of him earning less money in the rubber factory.

L: Yes, your father was a Sarmcol worker? So that you have that background, you have the background of coming from Howick where Union activities existed in the 1950s and you have the background of an area where there was strong church influences.

M: Yes. After making ? I looking the work at Sarmcol. I start to - my employment in Sarmcol in 1970. I worked there in 1970, but because of the treatment, deemed by the management to my father - because we were working in one department - that footwork department - as I am working as a counter of the heels. My father was ? demoted to ? tears. The management they treating my father as a boy. To that - not good to make it my father treat by a man like a kid.

L: It was not respectful.

M: Ja, no respect for my father, my father, the boss. I declared a notice in the company and I go back to stage one.

- 1 L: This was in 1973?
- 2 M: Ja, in 19 - in the middle of '70 to 1972. I was at home - I started to do my education in
3 correspondence. I forget that institution was doing the correspondence on that time. This
4 we learning the books, we paying some of money and give us that.
- 5 L: They were quite expensive some of those correspondence colleges.
- 6 M: Yes, yes. We trying to do so but in the middle of the time I fail to continue with the one
7 track of money did ? note of keep? Now and another thing - I forgot to mention in that - my
8 employment, I was earning that R6 a week.
- 9 L: Six Rand a week?
- 10 M: Yes, my father was earning
- 11 L: Even in the 1970s that sounds impossible - that was a rand a day.
- 12 M: Yes, yes..
- 13 L: Or, or you worked a five day week.
- 14 M: Five day week, yes, which my father was earning four rand.
- 15 L: Your father was earning four rands a week?
- 16 M: Yes.
- 17 L: No wonder this firm had a strike.
- 18 M: Yes.
- 19 L: But those are incredibly low figures.
- 20 M: Ja. In Howick the people was living but they didn't even own their own God? to do their
21 life.
- 22 L: But God likes us to eat. And where were they getting the money for bread from?
- 23 M: Yes, made us hungry on that four rand. My elder brother, my elder sister - the eldest sister
24 and myself - Mum was passed away in...
- 25 L: But I mean didn't the firm care that they were paying you so little? They just wanted to make
26 money out of you - was that the idea?
- 27 M: Yes, yes. They make more money with the ...
- 28 L: Of course. cheap labour.
- 29 M: Yes, yes. So when I went back in 1973, I go to seek the job, the employment, you know..

- 1 L: What did they pay you then?
- 2 M: After that I am going to look at mechanical tool - to prepare their factories - to train and ? and
3 then time when we're facing the situation of getting a - thirty rand to fifty rand..
- 4 L: A month?
- 5 M: No, ...
- 6 L: A week?
- 7 M: A week. A week. We tried to strike - not to working and they tell me this is the situation
8 where we look at the people who were working on the dates to recruiting that Union man -
9 members. Go on, go on, go on 'till 1982.
- 10 L: So this was all during your twenties?
- 11 M: Yes.
- 12 L: You were getting about fifty rands a week and working and not paying much attention to the
13 union recruitment?
- 14 M: Yes, yes.
- 15 L: At the gate...
- 16 M: At the gate, yes. We, we're very angry in fact to - to listen to anybody because we know how
17 we treated inside the factory. If anybody come to tell us about the union or the rights or the
18 things you supposed to be dying because of the treatment that the management. We said
19 'No, no it's better to get that - what we get to get nothing.' We ? to say 'no we can't join.'
20 But other people - you know the young people and the old people - they joined the Union.
- 21 L: This is from Sarmcol?
- 22 M: Yes.
- 23 L: So the older people would have remembered the older Union days and the young people
24 didn't feel they were established as men yet - it was more a learning experience for them?
- 25 M: Yes, yes. There are people - Baba Harry Gwala was the first organiser.
- 26 L: Yes.
- 27 M: In 1962. Because my father tell - told me about the union member - Comrade Harry Gwala
28 was organising and Comrade Mandela was part of - the meetings was held in the Howick
29 concerning the union. There I know that other thing that was happening later - that they took

- 1 the two day strike - I was young at that time - you know I was nine years or ten years...
- 2 L: Oh yes?
- 3 M: And people they not going to work and we're not going to school, we stay at home.
- 4 L: It was a two day strike?
- 5 M: Yes, I stay with my father. When I hear a noise - there we still at Sandilela. Our house was
6 near to the road, when we hear the noise my father told me 'get inside - get in the house.' I
7 was getting in the house..
- 8 L: Was it the police?
- 9 M: That - the soldiers...they were coming with their guns - they're holding the houses..
- 10 L: Oh really?
- 11 M: Ja, to all the people must go back to work. Because I was young I didn't understand it.
- 12 L: But you were nine at the time - that would have made it 1961 or 2?
- 13 M: Ja, '61 or 2, yes. When we approached to the trying to fight in the - the people, I'm knowing
14 that in the line our fathers get back to work.
- 15 L: Yes, they really had no alternative.
- 16 M: Yes, yes. They back to work. 'Till we starting to do this because those young people we talk
17 with them.
- 18 L: With the unionists?
- 19 M: Yes, the look at those who in the end of the pile. They know that what was happening.
20 When they are at Sarmcol they join the union - same like that young man Phineas - he was
21 our Chairman of that Union - Shopsteward, ja. He was a part, and the other person was died
22 earlier - he was Sokhela. All those yong people they came to me and approached me because
23 they know that I have an influence to the people because I am a soccer person - I am forcing
24 people to play soccer - all the people they supporting that.
- 25 L: But it does have a big influence. But there is also your family history you see - your reaction
26 to your father's treatment and so on - they would have known about that don't you think?
- 27 M: Yes, yes, yes, I think they - yes ? take it to my father. So the man was having me a win the
28 horses. He's playing the horse with a ? all the time. So after that in 19 - 1982, if I can
29 remember there was a situation where the management was starting to retrench a lot of

1 people and Baba Zulu was approaching me - he felt that retrenching. On the other side the
 2 management used me to appoint the people who would be retrenched. They are writing
 3 down the names. But I am a labourer - I'm nothing in the department - to tell the people
 4 'you're out, you're out.'

5 L: But they were just using you?

6 M: Ja, they're using me...

7 L: And you didn't like that?

8 M: Ja. I think the people they go to tell Baba Zondi that I told the people - I retrenched the
 9 people because Baba Zondi was a community ? they made by the management that nice
 10 committee - they representing the workers. But the other side is a union member - he is
 11 approaching that people will be in that Liaison Committee - with the rights - because you get
 12 the education in the union side. So Baba Zondi all the time come to told me that he made
 13 me to be a part of the Union. One day I was sitting in the canteen and eating - hey Baba
 14 Zondi come and to sitting next to me. Hey I'm not eating well now because Baba Zondi told
 15 me ? I said 'Okay, I must leave to cat - I join that Union, okay?' He said 'Okay. Let me
 16 give you a form.' And he give me the form and I sign the form. I give it to him. Tomorrow
 17 he coming back - a lot of forms - he gave to me ...

18 L: He said 'now you've got to recruit for the Union.'?

19 M: Ja, but remember now ? other people..

20 L: He was a clever man wasn't he?

21 M: Ja, he was a very tactic ? But forms were going to my friends to tell them about the union..

22 L: Yes, and did they all sign?

23 M: Every form I got people may sign it.

24 L: They were ready for it - they were right for it.

25 M: Yes, I take it back to Baba Zondi and bring the other one - I assist him all other comrades and
 26 supported him fully in that department I'm working towards, ja. On that side. But we joined
 27 in 1982. The Union, and they called the meetings, they asking people to choose their leaders
 28 in their department to ? as shopsteward. People they are appointing me - that I will be a
 29 shopsteward. Okay - I agreed that 'well, I'll work within which department like yourself.

- 1 So we have meetings anything like - I relied on the media - they know they take us to give
2 us some - some ideas to work with the people. I look at my Auntie - here - I think I'm clearer
3 if I am sitting but when that people from the Union - they explaining me how to approaching
4 the people - what to think...
- 5 L: They were training you?
- 6 M: Yea, they're training us.
- 7 L: They were training you as shopstewards?
- 8 M: As shopstewards, yes.
- 9 L: And you see they had all the memory of rural work behind them - that they had learnt - that
10 you still had to learn about.
- 11 M: Yes, yes, yes. Well we're going back to the people - we know that 'oh we supposed to be
12 listening carefully to the people and look at the points which is a good point and a bad point
13 and to go back to the union to put a letter once to the union.' Even when there were people
14 proposing that and that and that. The organiser at the time was John Makhathini and
15 Dumisane Mbanjwe.
- 16 L: Yes?
- 17 M: Ja.
- 18 L: Is Dumisane Mbanjwe in Durban now?
- 19 M: In Durban now, yes... They look at on that point they said 'okay, we'll support you, call the
20 meeting for all shopstewards to discussing all those things and going back.' In other words
21 we look at that - the union organised the tbing - used the tactics - or use us in the way to
22 teach us - we don't know whether to take a decision with the workers.
- 23 L: The workers are making the decisions for themselves?
- 24 M: Yes, yes, we were taking their views to the union and coming back and tell them 'okay we
25 must decide on this.' The Union must decide in taking that decision. So as we're having that
26 education with the union, we're having the situation to change the things of the behaviour
27 of the management.
- 28 L: And your own working conditions.
- 29 M: Yes, yes, and the working conditions because that was the main problem in the company -

- 1 that the working conditions was too bad. The Union's coming to change that - that working
2 condition. The problem was made by the - the workforce has to force the things because they
3 looking things are change. To me I was asking the people to see - hey I don't believe we can
4 survive as we're getting the much money - but we can survive this union and how it's
5 working now - that things are cool now, things are quiet now. The management they are
6 respecting everyone now - even ...
- 7 L: Were they?
- 8 M: Yes, yes. If you want to say something...
- 9 L: Yes, they would come to you..
- 10 M: They's come to us. And if the man of the union make a mistake - they try to ? him - they say
11 'no you are wrong.' Because the thing now are come no more. So as we - in fact in 19 - in
12 that time was 1983.
- 13 L: Yes, just a year - you had gone quite a long way in a year hadn't you?
- 14 M: Yes, yes. Ja. In 1984 we starting to negotiating.
- 15 L: Good.
- 16 M: I think end of - end of 19 - in the middle of 1983, we starting that negotiating because we
17 electing the shopsteward aim and we starting to negotiate the wages and the treating the man
18 - the working conditions. We changing the working conditions. But the company they
19 refused to do the increase.
- 20 L: To give you a raise in salaries?
- 21 M: Yes, as we talking the thing was - was talked by Baba, Comrade Harry Gwala to see the
22 people there is striking for two rand a day and getting the old wages. You know that they are
23 achieving that overall, but they - they didn't choose the two rand. We said we are still
24 fighting that two rand. But the company has refused to give us that two rand. If you counting
25 the time from 1960 to 1980, you making nearly twenty years to fighting that two rand. So
26 if we're looking at the company - they're not want to negotiate in the good faith with us. The
27 Union teach us how to deal with the negotiating table - they teach us how to go on strike -
28 just as I know what I must do to applying the strike law.
- 29 L: May I ask you - these instructors in the Union who were educating you - were they Natal

- 1 people or were they from the Transvaal or what?
- 2 M: Ja, the main person was - doing all that? that education was Comrade Geoff Schreiner?
- 3 L: Oh, of course.
- 4 M: He organising the people here in Natal. Some professors were from here - the University
5 staff - Michael ? and ?
- 6 L: Yes, I'll tell you - in that case I think I've probably got it here? Oh no, it isn't on this piece
7 of paper - but it would have been Geoff Schreiner and people like that who could come in
8 and they were teaching you proper union practice?
- 9 M: Yes, yes, yes. He come with the good ideas and a plan - we sign it - we are very much better
10 in the guiding frame?
- 11 L: I'm so glad because he's a local person. I mean his family's from 'Maritzburg and that's a
12 good thing - it wasn't bringing someone from another part. Ja.
- 13 M: Ja. He tried to give us a future memory on what we are during the struggle.
- 14 L: And you see - BTR is British Tyre and Rubber, isn't it?
- 15 M: Yes, yes, yes.
- 16 L: So they were well acquainted with unions and strikes in Britain - I mean they knew what was
17 what - they simply weren't applying it.
- 18 M: Yes, yes. So, as we look at that in 1983, we're applying that - the strike. We did work with
19 the ballots and applying the CB, the Conciliation Board - thirty days - after that we said we'll
20 be giving up - we're not going to go on strike. And we're starting again because we was
21 voting that strike.
- 22 L: Yes, did you have a hundred percent support?
- 23 M: Yes, yes. We had four people they won't vote.
- 24 L: Four abstentions with everyone else voting?
- 25 M: Yes, yes. So we find the department in the shopstewards and we vote and we said the ? team
26 come with the outcome of that ballot papers to told us and we do the ? to the people. So we
27 did apply again that CB. Take another thirty days. After that people they be powerful now.
28 They - the management not move at all. The people they said no they want to go on strike
29 now. We said 'No, no, don't go on strike - we have no money. Let's try to save some of six

1 rand a week 'till we decide whether to go to strike. People then they said 'No we can't do
2 so.' They will pay for one week because they don't - they not trust the shopsteward that they
3 will be issues in their money?

4 L: Did they really think that?

5 M: Yes, yes. We're fighting inside there. I remember in - one night - there was a shopsteward
6 to do a night shift on the shopsteward there would be a day shift - retaining and all? I was
7 at night and we had two on that shift. The other shopsteward, John Ntombela, I was with
8 him. People they're not working they was firing - they're not working the whole night and
9 Mr John Simpson come at ten o' clock - he call me that - explaining what's happening. I
10 said 'No I can't speak - because the workforce picked that - I did nothing. You found me in
11 my work, you can call all the people to talk with them - he tried to talk with the people. The
12 people said 'No you must sign our negotiation.' So, as he said 'No.' The negotiating team
13 they deal with the negotiating of the condition agreement - so we - he end up in the morning.
14 On the Monday I reporting to the shopsteward council what was happening. That people ?
15 call the workforce and talk about that night shift must do the wrong thing - it ? myself as a
16 shopsteward, without consulting the shopsteward or the union organiser, and the main man
17 was called John Makhathini. He came to apologise for what was happening on Friday. Okay
18 we go on that saying that people we can't stop now because we are too angry about the
19 management - they knew the ? Of which we know that our agreement it was very - very hard
20 because we taking ? at home - all the branches that they sign some of the agreements - we
21 took it the point which is to ? for putting our argument. We're putting all with the
22 recognition - because they're not recognising a union - they told us - they call us with
23 response first - and say 'you're not a shopsteward.' After that we saw that they we were -
24 in 1985 - we start in - 1985 - to say to people - we stop regional?

25 L: Was this the famous one day strike?

26 M: Yes.

27 L: I can remember - I was in the old age home in - near East Street and when I woke that
28 morning - the whole town was totally quiet. I have never known 'Maritzburg like it - that
29 was a wonderful strike - I know that one.

- 1 M: Ja, it was a big support in all the townships, in fact the - 'Maritzburg..
- 2 L: Sobantu..
- 3 M: Sobantu..
- 4 L: And people like Yunis Carrim - had been to all the Indian shops in downtown and asked
5 them to keep shut.
- 6 M: Ja I forgot the thing I was very excited with the ? it was a time we're having normally...
- 7 L: But you had one hundred percent support?
- 8 M: Yes, yes. Now the problem starts - they support us..
- 9 L: It was wonderful..
- 10 M: Yes, they're donating some money, from ? from ? to settle we need five thousand, because
11 I'm not - if I can remember what was the money for - we need five thousand rand - we had
12 nothing, nothing and we all must go to - to fundraising...
- 13 L: You needed money for buses for your meetings at the Lay Centre.
- 14 M: I think so, I think so - because that money was very, very needed to be used on that time..
- 15 L: For the strike?
- 16 M: Yes, yes. We are all going to do the donations. We're starting with nine or ten a.m.
17 Afternoon we come back - to the place we feel ? in the Longmarket...
- 18 L: I do remember it - it was where that one Pick and Pay is now..
- 19 M: Yes, yes, yes...
- 20 L: It was in Longmarket Street between Boshoff and Retief..
- 21 M: Retief, yes, yes. We came there to be - to the big point - we're sitting down - everyone
22 putting their - we get more than five thousand..
- 23 L: Wasn't that wonderful? But you see this showed you the power of the workers joining
24 together in a way you hadn't dreamt before?
- 25 M: Yes, yes. We're using that money - as you remember me that he is carrying the other ?
26 games - he was supporting us very much.
- 27 L: That was another good thing for 'Maritzburg.
- 28 M: Yes. So we continued to ? do that
- 29 *END OF FIRST SIDE.*

1 **Second Side.**

2

3 M:Monday, ? the ten buses....and transport - we were forced to near that Lay Centre...

4 L: What ? did you use because I remember that one of the buses broke down in the town and
5 when you first had this sticker that they put on everyone's shoulder...

6 M: ?

7 L: What is it like ?

8 M: Yes, there was a different colour of red and ? that was written that this ? must get out to the
9 Sarmcol, but we are having a big other one - they writing a ? Mapumane Sarameol, ja. ? task
10 we were normally in 'Maritzburg to put in ? and well, as you said we're going to make to
11 some good maybe. In our negotiating in the company agreed on the good side that May Day
12 we will sort of break for half day. And you see those people they working day shift they
13 were working half day. At the lunch time we go to May Day. He was working night shift
14 on the back - five o'clock he get there - company - okay. We go to May Day - we attend
15 there - one o'clock the buses are waiting at the gate there and then we climb in the bus to
16 Mason. When we come back I was working night shift - I remember that. I go with the
17 people - the first thing I do the register - all the people they came back. I am happy about
18 that. People followed the - followed the ...

19 L: Yes, they, they kept their words.

20 M: Yes, yes. So at night we saw the management - they were at the offices there and they drink..

21 L: Oh really.

22 M: I said 'Oh,' to two people that would stay here to look at what happened in that meeting.
23 They were drinking, gambling? at - two o'clock in the morning one guy there - we went to
24 the compound. They find the gate is locked - he came to me and tell me 'the gate is locked.'
25 ? slopping the big guy?

26 L: Headlamp?

27 M: Headlamp, yes. I ? it down to the main bridge - to the security man I had to ask the lock. ?
28 Security and said 'You lock all this ? entrance.' They remaining all the less - but they did
29 not tell anything.

- 1 L: They were locking you out in fact?
- 2 M: Yes.
- 3 L: That was their response?
- 4 M: Yes, yes. I said 'Okay, I know that you are keeping us like animals, we got that big pliers,
5 department of ? I find that it will get ? some other cutting and take it.'
- 6 L: Good for you.
- 7 M: People they're using that bit - 'till we leave at work - we clock off until half past three. I said
8 to the people why we are staying here until the day shift people they came - we are out and
9 then they're in.' People they say 'No, no we are tired, we want to go to sleep.' I know the
10 people they frightened the - the police..
- 11 L: Of course.
- 12 M: And the troops...
- 13 L: Of course..
- 14 M: Because they walk around...
- 15 L: Well, you see those were dangerous times.. 1984...
- 16 M: Yes. Uh, when the - we saw that oh the people they fighting that I said 'okay, I can't stay
17 alone because they will lock the gates and ...'
- 18 L: Of course..
- 19 M: when some people came, I leave.' When the people they came, they locked and then bit and
20 read out that company gate? People they won't come outside - they making a lock-out now -
21 they putting that patrol - all those people who want to be paid - they are dismissed.
- 22 L: I see, yes...
- 23 M: Um - people they call them - the organisers, the main organisers in the morning they came
24 to the committee - I remember on one ? they came to my house and wake up me to tell me
25 people need me at ...
- 26 L: Yes.
- 27 M: Oh, I'm wake up to go to see them - when I come there all the people they are outside -
28 there's your troops...
- 29 L: Soldiers or police?

- 1 M: Ja, and the troops, yes. And the police they was there too but they not too much. ? but John
 2 Makhathini told us that because of the tense situation it's better everyone move to home.
 3 Don't stay here because these people they supposed to treat ...
- 4 L: Yes, trouble could easily have started..
- 5 M: Yes, all the people they leave, now to home and we sort of ? some men to look in the
 6 situation until six o'clock, which then you'd be sort of person ? native -? Comrade and you
 7 pay with a money....?
- 8 L: Pay them off?
- 9 M: Ja, they are dismissed.
- 10 L: Yes, yes.
- 11 M: We wait until to approaching the people. At six o'clock when we leave other people they -
 12 they collecting the money - because they not understand the situation because they came after
 13 we leave. So we organising ourselves now - the shop stewards, to see at which place we will
 14 be come together in ? this.
- 15 L: You had to have a place to work from..
- 16 M: Yes. We starting at Mpophomeni Community Hall.
- 17 L: I suppose most people lived at Mpophomeni?
- 18 M: Yes, yes. We did meet there at Mpophomeni - with the Karkloof ? in 1985. After that the
 19 police they chase us - we moved to the Roman Catholic Church in ? that - ja in Howick, at -
 20 the minister at that time was Val McCartney?
- 21 L: Oh yes, I remember him...
- 22 M: We go to him and he said he had no problem - you can meet here as a shop steward. The
 23 police they follow us - uh - oh, first time we started strategising we were making the area -
 24 areas representative to begin the message - ? taking from ? to ? every time. We get those
 25 people and we're sitting down. Because we're planning with Comrade Geoff Schreiner on
 26 that - we suppose to start these new projects to make us to survive.
- 27 L: This was when you started the gardening and the screen printing?
- 28 M: Yes, yes. That's one of those things. We starting that projects and these people they being
 29 coming to the areas - because the meeting - the - we did at the projects - it's that when the

- 1 people all over - Howick, Mervana. And then they representing these areas which we have
2 ? when we hire the place in Howick West to do the printing and the Roman Catholic people
3 at ? area - they find us the money to buy that farm ..
- 4 L: Oh really? At Maseru you were saying?
- 5 M: Maseru, yes. They giving the money to this - but they're not saying they buy for us - they
6 borrow us the money - the lease, yes, to use the land and then doing other projects that - ?
7 Long march...
- 8 L: Yes, and then at this time if I remember rightly, you were allowing your family four rands
9 a week...
- 10 M: Yes.
- 11 L: But for the whole family? I worked it out in terms of loaves of bread - and I thought it's not
12 support?
- 13 M: Yes, yes.
- 14 L: Yes, yes...
- 15 M: Ja, but we - we alive - we don't know how because that money it's too less.
- 16 L: You're alive and you won!
- 17 M: Yes, yes.
- 18 L: Anyhow I didn't mean to interrupt.
- 19 M: Yes, so as we having put that place - the police they tried to chase us but Saint Joseph...and
20 well Kauffman said to us we're supposed to phone the Bishop - Bishop Hurley and then and
21 Bishop Hurley said 'No, take them to that ...' - at Cedara - the issue? at Cedara..
- 22 L: Is that a ? place, no?
- 23 M: No, no no - I think the Saint Joseph too - that - it was at ...
- 24 L: Saint Joseph's - the Dominicans are there -
- 25 M: Yes, yes no that -the Dominicans that -
- 26 L: They've recently bought a big place ...
- 27 M: Yes, yes...
- 28 L: ?
- 29 M: Yes, yes. They take us to there and when we are there - the police was waiting for us there

- 1 and ? came to their ? the one ? to tell me that 'this place is not for your cover.'
- 2 L: No.
- 3 M: We ? Catholic Church - we know that they are ANC? (He speaks very softly at times and is
4 difficult to hear). even heard about certain people is coming to - to interfere. They said 'No,
5 we'll help - but certain people - the police coming in and interfere ?' And they said 'No,
6 we'll go with - help us ? see that the police must work everywhere.' They said 'okay, let's
7 'phone that Bishop ..' Dodo? It's Bishop - with that - John Ntuli? That ? works in that - I
8 don't know..?
- 9 L: The Archbishop?
- 10 M: Yes, yes, yes. They tell him - John Pope?
- 11 L: John Paul?
- 12 M: Yes. Yes. John Paul - I think it's a big guy of ...
- 13 L: He's the top - he's the very top - you can't go higher.
- 14 M: Yes, yes, he explaining that we have a need to strike and the police harassing and we need
15 to get assistance to ...
- 16 L: Yes, so what did the Church do?
- 17 M: That John Paul said 'Okay, bring the people that they're to stay there - not coming and meet -
18 they stay.'
- 19 L: Yes, so that it's your home?
- 20 M: Yes, yes, yes.
- 21 L: Well that was very clever.
- 22 M: Ja. And then we 'phone the - we 'phone the police to say - because people were fighting for
23 their rights - it's their right to fight their rights - no one can go to harass them - leave them.
24 They come of course to tell us that 'oh, you are - your church tell us that we must leave you
25 we can get you on the road - ?' The problem if you coming to the meeting - we had a
26 problem to go...
- 27 L: But of course....
- 28 M: Everyone stay there now..at Saint Joseph. At night we toil to get on the road to go home -
29 we used to go at home - those people they have no homes to stay. We continue to holding

- 1 a meeting like that. After that - that John Paul said 'Okay, tell those people to Saint Anne
2 in Mpophomeni. We're using that church there - now we meeting on that church so - from
3 1980 - end of 1985 - '86 - because we're starting the place on the Lay Centre.
- 4 L: Now, who decided on the lawyers - did the Union people decide?
- 5 M: Yes, yes, the Union people. Because as we was negotiating with the company as we are still
6 in the company we have the lawyer from the Union side - that Chris Albertyn - he's at
7 Durban. He work with us so long that we starting the strike with him. Afterward he ? there
8 ? people of the university to he studying law - and he left us and then he proposing we ? with
9 John Grant. And John Grant tell him to work with us so we getting starting to going to the
10 court. To the same court. John bring the - proposing the advocate - Martin Best. Who is at
11 present, I see that - in the State Court. So we go there in the same court and in the middle
12 of the year - in 1986. At December - December 5, 1986, we stopped there at the case - to ?
13 When the time that - that Inkatha recommendation there ? arrive at Mpophomeni...
- 14 L: This was a terrible time...
- 15 M: Yes, yes, yes...the peoples in the meeting they felt that we heard in the newspaper that the
16 you know - it is a youth brigade were coming to Mpophomeni about a meeting - they will
17 come on the Friday night to look after the hall till Saturday. But at night - they came on that -
18 with the bus - with a police - they have caught them. It wasn't fooled towards the people,
19 it might but??
- 20 L: The Umgeni?
- 21 M: It was two shop stewards...? you see they came in - they remaining together to see the
22 situation that ?committee will be. The weather was drizzly? they said to me they're going
23 to commit murder - the comrades will coming in to pick me - ? sit together..After that they
24 not come back...
- 25 L: These were the two that were found in the river?
- 26 M: Yes, yes.. We waiting 'till the Monday morning - we ? we hear some - some shot coming
27 from around the area - but we don't know - those people they're shooting at them -you know
28 - that they're shooting the people...when I - go to look after those two chaps - they was my
29 friends. I go with him - ? tired. I didn't find them - I go to the police I ask them 'Please..'

- 1 They said 'No they saw them, they wasn't here.' ..
- 2 L: ...report it...
- 3 M: Doing it at our ?
- 4 L: But that's right.
- 5 M: Because we know this situation here - the Mafia - but we just seeing the saw me and very ?
- 6 dizzy - the situation, he ask me that 'You're looking after the friend?' I said 'Yes.' He said
- 7 'Hey we hear that some car was burnt' 'Which car?' he said he don't know which car but he
- 8 hear that some car was burnt. And that time that ? came to me in the afternoon - in the
- 9 location - other people they're showing them with the ? married some woman that working
- 10 in Durban to me - my home? They saw me and then they came to see Mahau/Noah...? ?
- 11 worried about picketting me and working to this people who kill our brothers. They told me
- 12 that 'Hey we're going to - we're meeting now in order to...' I said 'No I can't go anywhere..'
- 13 L: No you were too distressed.
- 14 M: All this situation is tense...
- 15 L: Yes, of course.
- 16 M: And I want to be around there to see what's happening. They said 'No man' And they pull
- 17 me in the car and they go - just when they driving in the car they call me...
- 18 L: But they were anxious for you?
- 19 M: Yes, yes, they take me to our offices in Howick West. Well, in the offices that comrade
- 20 asked me that 'we hear that the people killing?' I said 'No, no, they can't do so.' Why do
- 21 they kill me? Because...
- 22 L: ? yes why indeed? (They are speaking at once).
- 23 M: They are not frightened any more - they ? these ...
- 24 L: They weren't armed...
- 25 M: They were not yet qualified? Really I believe ? in that situation of killing because I fight with
- 26 the other people - those people - all those who told me twenty-five - twenty-five. So I don't
- 27 believe it. He said 'Okay, get in the car we're going to get Siphon.' I said 'No, no, I don't
- 28 go...?' We can go there if ? going there. He said 'Okay, let's go to the court.' I said 'Okay
- 29 I'll go to the court because the police they said to me those people are in Loteni. We got to

- 1 the police station in Howick. When we are there they take me at the back - to the mortuary.
2 I said 'where we are going now?' We want to talk here..
- 3 L: Yes, quite, yes - what are you doing?
- 4 M: They said 'No, follow us.' They find the car and they say that car - there is a burnt car here -
5 this car is for ? murderers. They get inside the mortuary, there is some trays there - ? open
6 them. They show me that if you ? here?
- 7 L: Your friends?
- 8 M: Yes, in a hurmt mood? Hey I was shocked. If you are looking these things - it's so ? that is
9 finished. It's hurmt like a ?
- 10 L: Oh - like a burnt tyre.
- 11 M: Oh, like a burnt tyre... I won't believe that thing. I said 'No. I have not understood because
12 of I am talk..if I'm going back to try to move it back, I see that they came to me.' Even going
13 for a ? they lying there. That thing is taking more than three minutes - the police they saw
14 that something's happened to me - they pull me - I am screaming if I'm going back because
15 I saw my friend - they coming to me now. We go there at the office to see that situation - it's
16 - why these people they doing this funny thing? Because we know that the case is called off.
- 17 L: Why, why why?
- 18 M: So, we - we're waiting for their funeral.. And too soon the time came then - but the police -
19 they did the funny thing to us...
- 20 L: Oh, what did they do?
- 21 M: They visit us, ...
- 22 L: Between the deaths and the funeral?
- 23 M: Yes, yes... and the funeral was very every terrible situation which I - I haven't even buried
24 those people. They arrest me in the morning - six o'clock - I was washing the hall - the
25 Catholic priests - you know this - they will come to this centre - that maybe ? with the dogs
26 inside here - they fight with the ? we were watching for ourselves, we not want to waste these
27 things. They said 'No, they are ? to come here - to check the hall..and make it sure that I go
28 with them.' I don't give him the chance to go alone - because I don't trust him..
- 29 L: Well of course you wouldn't.

- 1 M: When we look at the - hey they saw that they're having no chance to do anything they go
2 away...you'll worry is it was six o'clock.. Branch... ? doing some ? to get a water - nourishing
3 tea - sort of thing which here a lot of people will get ? kettle and the water. The police
4 followed my house? Well if we're go with it they saw me - they're going outside. I thought
5 to myself ? must ? You see these people they looking after us..
- 6 L: Yes, quite, no ?
- 7 M: I said 'Oh, man - let's go that way..' When you planted my house there's ? at the bottom. I
8 said to him 'No, let's go to my father's house.' Then we're going inside then they call me
9 ? when you parking there - they are coming - they catch us - they caught us in the van - they
10 putting in the cells in Mpophomeni - Police Station.
- 11 L: On what grounds?
- 12 M: We were not told anything.
- 13 L: They didn't say 'We're arresting you because...'
- 14 M: No reason... no reason - it was ? When we was staying there they took Dumisane to the
15 church - they left me here - some people are thought they're fighting in Mpophomeni against
16 us...
- 17 L: But did anyone know they're taken you?
- 18 M: No, no only Dumisane..
- 19 L: Only Dumisane.
- 20 M: ...but they go with him - I don't know where they took him to now. Then I was inside this
21 cell, the police they came with the two people - with - they come to put me in this cell - they
22 open the door - they put in one - the other one he is resisting to come in. They go with him
23 in the charge office - they left the door open - I get my ...
- 24 L: Good for you, good for you...
- 25 M: I ? run ...
- 26 L: How far did you get?
- 27 M: No, I'm going to be chased now... going to crossing the ? the office - that`s when they ? me..
- 28 L: Oh that was excellent.
- 29 M: They corner the other police, they ask him 'Whose that man? Where he came from now?'

- 1 L: Yes, now you see - that was excellent..
- 2 M: Ja, he come to the police station really to ask that 'where will you release that ..?'
- 3 L: Yes, of course...
- 4 M: ... but I am here...as I am here I have no chance to go out the gate now..
- 5 L: No.
- 6 M: And when I'm going out the police they - they want me again. I said 'I really don't get a
7 chance to bury my friends - I was always in the church.' So that situation with me it was
8 angry...
- 9 L: Of course..
- 10 M: 'Till now - we won't forgive that - organisation for Inkatha and the police - who was working
11 on that time - I'm saying the police of this stage - but those police really ...
- 12 L: Oh yes..
- 13 M: Because when ...
- 14 L: And there was no ...
- 15 M: ? before...
- 16 L: It was known all over the place how they were supporting Inkatha...
- 17 M: Yes, yes, yes. They were subdued very much, very much. The one of the police, I remember
18 was died - the - the supporting the Inkatha very much - the policeman he was shot by the
19 other police - he was dead. It's first time to my life to be happy if I hear ...
- 20 L: This one's still ?
- 21 M: Ja, I said to the people - we're supposed to separate in our office and we will stand up and
22 they will get out - the please the God - he meet us today. Because that man was ...
- 23 L: Evil?
- 24 M: Evil to us..
- 25 L: Yes...
- 26 M: A very bad man, all the time he visiting me at my home he want to take that tactics I gave
27 with the Union to use him in the wrong direction because he want to see the people be
28 against me - to kill me as I'm working with them. He take all the plans the Union was giving
29 me that gave me to - from the protection in the area - to advise the people of the terrible

1 situation-the tense situation. They told me that Alec Irwin. That time he took me to Durban
2 to train me - with the military training - how to plan the war - or to stop the war. He do the
3 lot to me and that Terblanche - he - he know that I have those skills to control the people.
4 L: I'm glad you got all this good training.
5 M: Yes.
6 L: It at least was good and solid support for you.
7 M: Yes..
8 L: ... being taught all these things...
9 M: Yes, yes. As I'm saying in my heart - the Unions - it seemed like my father and my mother...
10 L: I can understand that ...
11 M: ... a lot to me... as I'm ? in these days - it's just because of that...
12 L: It was the Union, yes.
13 M: And my family they not allow me to ? only my father happy...
14 L: Oh really, didn't the family like you?
15 M: No, he told me that I'm lying - we want you to be at school as you were the minister ? at
16 school all the time - since you was young...
17
18 End of second side.