

UNIVERSITY OF DURBAN–WESTVILLE
DOCUMENTATION CENTRE
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
“VOICES OF RESISTANCE”

INTERVIEWEE: NUNDILAL RABILALL [BROTHER OF
KRISHNA RABILALL DECEASED]

INTERVIEWER: CHRISTIAN DE VOS

DATE: THURSDAY 23 MAY 2002

PLACE: CHATSWORTH SECONDARY
SCHOOL CHATSWORTH

CV: Good morning. My name is Christian de Vos from the Human Sciences Research Council. I am interviewing, today Nundilal Rabilall, the brother of the late Krish Rabilall. This is part of the “Voices of Resistance” project with the University of Durban-Westville Documentation Centre. I would like to thank you, Mr Rabilall, for speaking with us.

NR: It is a pleasure.

CV: We are just going to begin and would like to hear a little bit about, in your words, your brother Krish, if you would like to speak about what it was like growing up with him when he was younger. When you were – before he left the home. Talk a little bit about him.

NR: Look, Krish was one year younger than me. One and half years younger than me, and we grew up very closely together because we had a very small house. There were ten of us. So we slept together most of the time. And we had a small circle near our house and we used to play football together but he was always in the opposition side and we used to have

frequent fights. Because you know he was a very good defender and I couldn't get through to him, get past him. And we used to get cross at times and fight it out but that is nothing – it was nothing serious as such. But as he grew older he became a bit quieter, more reserved, became more serious about life and we never picked up the reason. Only later in life we realised that he was becoming more politically conscious. I don't know where the source was, but he was becoming very politically conscious.

CV: How old do you think - when did you start noticing a change in him?

NR: At grade eleven, I think that is about standard nine. Ya I that is when he started changing and in matric I think he became quite involved in politics.

CV: And I was reading in your TRC testimony that altogether you had ten siblings. Is that correct?

NR: Yes.

CV: Including yourself?

NR: Yes.

CV: And where did you and Krish fall kind of in the order of?

NR: Well I was the second son and Krish was third. There were three sons and then a daughter.

CV: And then a daughter?

NR: Ya.

CV: Okay.

NR: Well as I said he was growing up and he was very empathetic towards people suffering. That is one thing I noticed very clearly. You know people – he was very compassionate, very humane, and he

seemed to get upset when he saw people suffering. Especially with the pets at home. You know, if he saw them suffering he was very upset about it and the same thing with respect to human beings, you know. He became very, very sad when he heard people suffering.

CV: Now when you say – where were you growing up at this time? You were in the Durban area is that correct?

NR: In Merebank.

CV: In Merebank?

NR: Ya.

CV: And is that where he was born and grew up?

NR: He was born and brought up in Merebank yes.

CV: And did you attend the same school?

NR: Yes we did. That was Merebank High School.

CV: Merebank High School okay. And at that time what did your parents do? What did Krish's parents do?

NR: My Mum was an ordinary housewife. She was totally illiterate. She never even saw the doors of a school. Unfortunately, her parents were very conservative and they didn't believe in educating girls very much. So my mother was totally illiterate. But my father also didn't go to school, to a very high standard. Actually he only went up to standard two I think. So and he was a truck driver.

CV: He was a truck driver?

NR: He used to drive for different companies, but basically it was Freight Services in Maydon Wharf.

CV: And the community of Merebank that you grew up in, how would you describe it, at that time, when you were?

NR: It was a poor community. Ya, very poor and quite politically enlightened though. I think Merebank was one of the few areas that was the NIC stronghold. Natal Indian Congress.

CV: What was – how far did Krish go in terms of his educational background?

NR: He only went up to matric. And he was a brilliant student. You know, he excelled in mathematics and physical science. In fact his mathematics teacher who ended up as a rector of training college, Mr G K Nair, often used to come home – he was our neighbour – to actually discuss problems with him which he couldn't solve himself. And my son presently at the moment has the same qualities as my brother; you know, brilliant in maths. So he was absolutely brilliant in maths and science. But he hated Afrikaans, which he termed the language of the oppressor and refused to study and no matter how much I counselled him, told him you still need it for a job, he wouldn't listen. So he ended up with a G in Afrikaans. So he had a conditional merit pass in matric. And, that is where his studies ended. He didn't bother to study further. Then he went into the work situation straight-away.

CV: And what was he eventually hoping?

NR: He was interested in becoming a doctor, but then with Afrikaans being so badly done he, I think, dropped that ideal. Then I think he got involved in politics but I still don't know up till today what is the – who was the person who actually motivated him to get into politics. I don't know.

CV: Were there other members of your family that got involved in politics as Krish did?

NR: No.

CV: So he was the only one?

NR: Ya. Even I was not totally, I was quite apolitical at that stage.

CV: When do you feel, do you think Krish's politicization had an effect on you?

NR: Just after matric when he started the work situation he used to have meetings in the evenings and he had no transport. And I had just started teaching then. So I had a car, an old car and he used to ask me to take him around for those meetings. So I was like the driver for him. Took him to the meetings, and that is when I got politically conscientised because, you know, the books that he used to bring home, I started reading myself. They were banned books, you know.

CV: What kind of books?

NR: Fidel Castro, Karl Marx, Martin Luther King's books and I can't remember the other ones off hand now, but all banned books he used to bring. And so I started reading them and that is how I got politically conscientised.

CV: When you say that your family was apolitical or that you weren't very political, at that time, can you describe how did you feel about living under apartheid? What was your view of the political situation? Were you hoping for change? Did you feel – was there just a gradual process? What was your relationship – how did you view the liberation struggle, at that point?

NR: Well when I got into the teaching situation then my mind opened up further. But initially I wasn't very politically inclined, but I was aware of the injustices of apartheid and I had the desire that it must be ended, that it must be removed, but I didn't have any idea of violence, at that stage, in my mind.

And I was terrified of white people and we were conditioned by that fear, you know. My parents were terrified of white people, and you know my Mum also when they saw white people coming home for some reason they were scared. My father's boss used to come home now and then, you know, and my mother used to be terrified, scared to go in front of him and speak. She was very shy and unassuming. We were all conditioned by that kind of fear. Even when I went on a lift in town for example I used to stand at one corner of the lift, you know, far away from the white people because we felt unwanted. I really felt unwanted. And I was scared to confront anybody about that. We were terrified.

CV: We will talk about – we will get to this later, but on that note, in your testimony you talk about your incredible feelings of anger. Did you feel angry at that time or was?

NR: When?

CV: At this time when you were younger, you were talking about fear did you also feel anger?

NR: No, the anger wasn't there. Only after his death, the anger became very pronounced.

CV: Now you said you grew up in Merebank, which was a cornerstone of the NIC. Did Krish have any involvement in NIC?

NR: Yes.

CV: Okay, he did. Was that his first bridge into political activity?

NR: No, he was involved with the Merebank Ratepayers' Association. That's where he started.

CV: Okay.

NR: This body is still active in Merebank. Then he joined the Merebank ex-students' Society. Then he got involved in community work in the poorer sections of Merebank, near the oil refinery. Where the SAIC, South African Indian Council. We used to call them South African Idiots Council, at that stage. They sanctioned the building of those mini houses, matchbox houses, and my brother used to do community work there. You know, providing bread and having rallies on bus fare price increases, bread price increases and things like that. So he was galvanizing the community there. I think that is where his political life actually started before he got into NIC. About the NIC I don't know of much when he actually got in but I think that is where he got in after his involvement with the MRA, the Merebank Ratepayers Association and the bus association.

CV: Did you – around this time – did you align yourself with any trade union or political organisation or civil association?

NR: No.

CV: No?

NR: No.

CV: And when do you know did Krish take up the cause of the ANC or did he affiliate himself with the cause of the ANC?

NR: I think it was – I can't remember the date now but it came as a sudden shock to us that he was actually gone into exile when two security branch members came home one day. It was school holiday, it was Eid, and I was in the outbuilding studying, reading at least, when they came in and told us about it. I think it was in 19 – he skipped in 1977. I think it was in 1977. And then they came and told us about that we won't be seeing him again and you know they were very nasty about it. So when I questioned them about it they told me that we will never be able to see him again because he has gone into exile.

CV: Had he been harassed prior to this?

NR: Not that I was aware of. It is only when he sent us a secret note I think some time later from Swaziland where he was in exile that we realised that he was being harassed. Because apparently they have to skip the border and they were nearly caught by the dogs and they just managed to get over the fence. I just know the vague parts of that. But the person to question about that, I think, is Vis Pillay who skipped with him.

CV: I see.

NR: Ya. So they were harassed and they were forced to flee.

CV: And when he was working with the Merebank community association, did he feel that he couldn't act – organise as he wanted to because of being

monitored by security forces or anything like that or was he able to do that work fairly unencumbered?

NR: No I don't think he was able to do that very easily. But he never really talked much. He was a very quiet person. So he never gave me the impression that he was being you know prevented from doing any of those things.

CV: You say he was a very quiet person?

NR: Very quiet.

CV: Did he have a different persona when he was doing this work in the community?

NR: No he was always quiet. He always worked in the background. He never looked for the limelight. Ya, he never did.

CV: And did he ever express to you or could you say in a word what you thought his goal as an activist was? What he was trying to achieve?

NR: He was trying to achieve a non-racial, non-sexist, democratic South Africa, where all people live harmoniously in co-existence with each other. That was his goal.

CV: That was his goal?

NR: Ya.

CV: When he said that, do you think that your memories of your family were supportive of his activism in trying to achieve his goal?

NR: I would be lying if I said they were supportive because he never shared those feelings with my parents.

CV: Really?

NR: Ya. So he was more a loner, you know he did it quietly, in the background. We never knew his

political involvement until the stage – we never knew the extent of his political involvement until the stage he went into exile. We knew he was mildly involved but we never knew he was so deep until he went into exile.

CV: Are you saying it was a conscious choice on his part to perhaps hide it?

NR: Ya, I think so. I think so.

CV: Because he knew that?

NR: I think he knew my mother would be disturbed, she was illiterate. My father was not highly educated. They were all struggling to make a survival and he probably knew that he was embarking on a dangerous course and that would probably send him into exile. So he never gave us any impression that he was ever going into exile or that he was ever going to skip the country.

CV: And your other siblings, at this time, what fields did they pursue?

NR: All of them finished matric. My big brother is in Transvaal. He finished matric, then he started in the work situation straightaway. The other chap, he finished matric. He tried to burn the laboratory of the school down in Merebank because he was being upset by the propaganda that was being spread about my brother, as well in that school. You know they regarded him as a terrorist and so on. And he, out of frustration, tried to burn the lab down one day. He used to sleep with my brother as well. So they were very close. In fact they were closer than I was to Krishna - the chap who tried to burn the lab down. So he was – we had a rough time trying to sort that

problem out with police, they wanted to jail him, but fortunately the members of the NIC intervened.

CV: Pay his bail.

NR: And the other brothers all just finished matric. Ya, that is about all. None of them are really in the teaching profession or any other profession. They all finished matric and they are working or married. The three sisters - they are all married.

CV: I wondered, do you feel that what happened to Krish in terms of how it politicized you, did that have a similar effect on your other brothers and sisters?

NR: Everybody, even my big brother who only finished standard eight, I think – no I think he finished matric. I can't even remember now. He got into – he wasn't politically inclined at all. He used to support the white soccer teams and so on but after my brother's death his transformation was remarkable. In fact he was more politically conscientised than me and he did a lot of work for the ANC in the Phoenix area and he was active, very active in the ANC. And now he is in the Transvaal.

CV: I am going to turn a little bit to the testimony you gave in front of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In which you speak also about growing up with Krish. Specifically you refer to - he ran a community newspaper called The Sentinel, which had a strong political slant, evoking community consciousness on issues such as the bread price, workers problems, etcetera. He also did great a deal of social work with numerous exiles and detainees. I wonder if you could talk just a little bit more in-

depth about The Sentinel. How often it came out? Who it was aimed at? How that began?

NR: To tell you the truth I don't know too much about The Sentinel. It came out, I think, once in every three months I think it was, and I don't have any copies at home as well. But it had a very strong political slant. You know evoking the political consciousness of the people in the Minitown area especially. He'll talk about bread price increases, about the bus fare increases and things like that.

All I did was to take them around to duplicate the paper, duplicate the copies but when the situation was getting rough they told me to take that machine and dump it somewhere. Because I think the Security Branch were beginning to trace where the machine was. So I had to take it all the way to Greytown to my in-laws and it is still there. And nobody knows that it is there. We were so terrified at that stage. You know we were very scared, so I just took it in my car and left it at my in-laws.

CV: This was a free paper?

NR: It was a free paper.

CV: And when you were doing that how did you – would you say you had already been politicized by Krish's involvement in politics when you were assisting in the distribution of The Sentinel?

NR: Yes I was.

CV: So when you were doing – when you were assisting in that, did you, yourself feel like you were politically active, or would you say?

NR: Not very politically active because my profession we were also being watched and we couldn't really

– the Broederbond had a very strong control over Indian education at that stage and teachers were slightly progressive in their thinking. We were targets. Spider Juggernath was one of them. He was picked up at school at Westcliff a couple of times. So we all had that fear. So I never shared that political consciousness with the teachers around me because most of the teachers themselves up till today, many of them are not politically conscientized, and we were scared to speak to them about it.

CV: Was this newspaper, The Sentinel, was that solely Krish's responsibility or did he work, to your knowledge, with other people?

NR: No I think he worked with other people. I think Satish Juggernath was one of them. He is in Sbu Ndabele's Transport Department, at the moment. I think he was one of them. Ya, Vis was there as well. As I said my brother never – I used to just take them around. He never really shared all that knowledge with me. So I don't know too much about that part of his life, you know.

CV: When you were doing all that did you feel like you were doing something that was helping your brother or did you feel like you were doing something that was a part of...?

NR: I should be very honest. I felt at that stage that I was helping my brother. The reason I told Spider, I don't know if you know Spider Juggernath as well – once that look our community is struggling to make ends meet here. And you know they are more worried about bread and butter issues and we are

becoming so politically involved we are going to get into trouble. That was my thinking at that stage. I was still very conservative at that level. And so I wasn't doing much for the struggle at that stage myself. That is the truth.

CV: Did you find that you argued with Krish about politics at this time? Did you feel like he was taking things too far?

NR: No I didn't.

CV: No?

NR: No. I respected his individuality in that respect.

CV: Alright. Now, in your testimony you talk about how he fled with Vis Pillay in 1977, that is when the security forces came to your house. Had you had prior run-ins with Security Branch before they came to your house that night?

NR: No, no - [interruption]

CV: And that - I am sorry.

NR: That was the first time they came, after he had fled.

CV: And how did you feel, if you can talk about it? How your parents felt after they told you this?

NR: Ya, actually I was devastated you know. I was in the outbuilding and I tried to gather some courage to go and tell them but I only told them towards the evening. I was, you know, in a turmoil because I didn't know how to break the news to them. I was the only one at home at that time. My big brother wasn't politically conscientised as well. So I didn't know what to do but I had to tell them. And I waited for evening – that is when my brother used to come home from work – Krish that is. And I told my mother that he won't be coming home today and that

he has already left the country and – well, she broke into tears. She burst out crying and you know, when people die you get that kind of expression. She was crying as if it was a funeral. And when my dad came home, it was even worse. Both of them were devastated to hear that they would never see him again. And I was a bit angry at that stage too, and I told them, you know, I can't understand why he had to leave the country and so all those things started coming out of my mouth as well. You know we were all devastated and he was working at that stage. He was supporting the family as well.

CV: Did your mother know, when you explained to her that he had left, did she know and understand that it was because of his political activity?

NR: No she was not aware of that.

CV: And your father as well?

NR: Even my dad. You know, as I said my brother did things very quietly, unassumingly and never really spoke about his life outside, you know. So none of us were really aware of the kind of involvement he had. So it really came as a shock to them. So that is when I had to start the process of education of my parents.

CV: And when you learnt that he had left, how did you feel towards him?

NR: It was mixed feelings actually. I was a bit angry as well, because he didn't tell us that he was going to do something like that or that he had some notion in the future that he would probably be forced to do something like that. He never gave us any intention whatsoever and that he was supporting the family as

well and we felt kind of desertion as well at that stage you know. But it wasn't a strong feeling of antagonism towards him no. No it is just that we felt a bit let down that he had to do it in this way but we didn't know at that stage the circumstances in which he had to do it.

CV: How would you describe the financial impact on your family after he left?

NR: It was quite severe because I was married a year later, 1978. And the house where we were living was very small. I had a single room with my wife and all the furniture was stuffed in there so I had to look for another place. So I had to support myself as well but I was supporting my family as well. So there was a lot of – what shall I say? I can't find the right word now – it made a huge impact on my finances but I never deserted my parents.

CV: Never.

NR: Ah yes, never. In fact if I can recall my wife if she was here would tell you the same. By the middle of the month we had about R4 in my pocket to buy bread and milk. The rest I had to give at home. I felt obligated to give my parents the money. I think my dad was just about – I don't know if he was unemployed at that stage, because in the trucking business the jobs are not there all the time, and his health was not very good too. And my big brother wasn't earning. He was married. He was living separately as well. So basically the burden fell on me financially but I did what I could.

CV: What was the family like? What was the flavour of family life like after Krish's departure?

NR: It was very, very sad actually. You know, when I shifted out to Kharwastan and I went home, my Mum used to look forward to me coming home. If I didn't go there at least once a month she would be very upset. She kind of looked at me, as you know, substituting for Krish, that I had to visit her every month, although I was living separately from her. And my dad too. She would sit outside there waiting for me. So I used to take groceries there. You know go shopping, come back. Not once a month, sorry, once a week. I used to go there every week. Every Saturday they used to wait for me. So, it was very lonely for them after my brother passed away. Because my mother was very attached to him, because he was such a quiet person and he had an arthritic knee, you know, he used to have problems with his knee, and whenever he came from work she used to bandage it, massage it. You know she missed that kind of thing. You know mothers are special, or if it's something that they are forced to do, or it's a chore, but they love doing that. And she missed that. And every birthday subsequently, after his death she remembered the date. Although she was highly uneducated, but that day she never failed to remember.

CV: You talk a little bit in your testimony about the impact on your parents' health. I don't know if you could touch on that a bit?

NR: Yes my – well you can see they were beginning to age very visibly. Especially my dad. You know he – my dad was a special kind of person. Although he had ten children he was a different kind of person.

We had to kiss him before we go to work, I mean to school. Although we were quite old, big enough. We used to feel embarrassed but he made sure we had to kiss him before we go to work. He used to buy one Kitkat [chocolate] and the whole family used to share that and on Fridays he used to buy cakes for us. So he felt my brother's death very badly, and he started smoking a lot and drinking a lot too. You know so his health went really downhill.

CV: Was this – this was after his exile or after his – after he had known that he had died?

NR: After he died, especially. When he was in exile at least we had the chance of seeing him and a few times we did see him, he was thrilled you know. And he knew that the cause he was fighting for and he went on certain platforms, rallies and so and so it had pepped him up. So he was quite happy about that but after he died he just went downhill. And my mother as well you know she used to suffer from blackouts quite often. At the funeral itself she had a blackout. She had a sugar problem. All those were aggravated after his death. So she used to go for treatment to Clairwood Hospital almost every month. Once a month, she had to go.

CV: Once a month?

NR: Ya, she had to go.

CV: Do you feel – did you feel that your family was, did you feel threatened after Krish had gone into exile and you had the Security Branch come to you that night? That you say here he told the white officer that it would be a good idea to put the entire

Rabilall family along the front wall to face the firing squad?

NR: Yes.

CV: Were you harassed after that and even if you weren't did you feel a constant threat?

NR: No we never felt a constant threat. After his death they didn't really harass us very much because I think they had achieved what they wanted to. You know they wanted him put away and that is what they had achieved. Well I was as I said not very actively involved so they didn't target me so much. I don't know about my brother in Phoenix, but at that time the ANC had been unbanned, so we became more brave. So we began to speak out at every platform that we found. But prior to that we were scared.

CV: I want to talk a little bit about the time period your brother fled in 1977 and between 1981 when he was killed. You said that you received several months later a secret note from Krish. Was that the first communication you had?

NR: First communication.

CV: And what were you thinking in not having had any communication? Were you afraid of what might have happened to him?

NR: Yes we were totally unaware of what was going on, on the other side. So my parents were all anxious. We never had any information about him. So we were all in the dark. So this letter came, as you know, a blessing because it gave us an idea that he was alive and that he wanted us to meet him at some time.

CV: Now you mentioned he wanted to meet you in Swaziland?

NR: Yes.

CV: What was that reunion like?

NR: You know it is difficult to describe because my parents were so upbeat about going on that trip. You know getting up early in the morning, preparing food for him, buying clothes for him. We, you know - they went out of their way just to get there. And they were impatient to just to see him. So when they met him it was - I don't know, they just hugged him and they just burst into tears. And the meeting place was actually a roadside. That was more distressing at that stage because we never knew where he stayed in Swaziland. He never even took us there. In fact he had booked at Timbali Caravan Park for us to stay there. And that is the few days we spent with him at that park.

CV: And how - did you have any trouble getting over the border at that time?

NR: Yes, we had a lot of problems. The people at the border, I don't know, for some reason, they seemed to have known us - known that we were coming that way. I don't know whether they had any access to information that we coming that way and they didn't want to allow us in. It could have been coincidence it may not have been politically motivated but they didn't allow my son. I had my first son at that stage. He was a small baby, still being carried, and because he didn't have a passport, they didn't allow us in. They used that as an excuse

to send us out. So they refused to allow us in but we all – all of us had passports except my son. So my wife decided to, you know, find the nearest town and leave her there, she wanted us to leave her there and then we could go and see my brother at least. And that is when we drove to Piet Retief and managed to - we were circling that small town looking for a place and you know, it was very difficult to find a place. There was a lady who, when we asked her, she said no problem but her brother was there and when he heard that we were going to stay there, leave my wife there for a few nights, he refused point blank. And so we carried on circling the town. I eventually ended up at the same place. I didn't know at the same intersection. You know we got lost and this girl stopped me again and she said "no, you must stay here." She had spoken to her brother. So we stayed there. It was a Moslem home and quite a conservative one. So I think the brother was – because we were Hindus I think he didn't want us to stay there. That is a reality I think. It wasn't for any other reason why he refused.

CV: When you were staying that time with Krish those few days – was it the entire family or just you and your parents?

NR: No just me, my fourth brother and my parents.

CV: I see.

NR: Ya.

CV: And did you find – did you think Krish had changed in that time from before he fled to when you spent

those few days with him in Swaziland or was he the same person?

NR: He was the same person.

CV: He was?

NR: Ya.

CV: Did he talk about what he was doing at that time?

NR: No he didn't.

CV: Did you ask or?

NR: No I didn't really ask. I knew because I didn't really want to discuss in front of my parents.

CV: After that time you said you met in a clandestine fashion. In this period security – am quoting:

"Security Branch police would often come home and harass my family, especially my mother, who was alone and the rest of us had gone to work. They would want to know if we received any communications from my brother."

NR: Yes they would ask her whether he had communicated with her, know where he was. Things like that. They just wanted to know where he was, his whereabouts.

CV: And how did she handle that?

NR: She told them she doesn't know. She was getting a bit brave at that stage because she had realised that my brother won't be coming back for a while.

CV: And did you feel threatened as well or during that or when you knew that they were coming to talk to your mother or?

NR: No, they didn't really actually – they just harassed her, but they never really threatened her. You know maybe I used the word threaten there but I am not

sure. I don't think they threatened her as such. They just wanted to find out each time whether he had communicated and where he was but they never really threatened her physically in any way.

CV: When was the last time you saw Krish before his death?

NR: I think it was just before he died, 1980 I think it was. You know I have got a bad memory.

CV: The date - [unclear].

NR: I have a very bad memory. I think it was the beginning of 1981.

CV: And you had gone for another visit with your parents?

NR: Yes.

CV: But were they always connected in Swaziland?

NR: Swaziland, yes.

CV: And did you – how long did you spend with him that time, do you recall?

NR: It was about three or four days.

CV: And each time, did he seem like the same person to you, or were you noticing changes with - [unclear].

NR: He seemed the same person to us all the time, in his relationship with us, in his mannerisms, everything was the same. He hadn't changed in that respect.

His mind had probably changed you know he had become politically a giant at that stage but he never showed that.

CV: When he was gone, those years, was his name in the news? Was the ANC speaking about him?

NR: Yes.

CV: They were?

NR: In fact the 10th anniversary was held at the St. Michael's Church in Merebank. So they had a function for him there, a memorial service.

CV: This is in 1991?

NR: In 1991.

CV: And did people from the ANC stay in touch with your family about his well-being, or was your only knowledge of him through the communication that he sent?

NR: No we didn't really receive much communication from the ANC, no.

CV: I want to talk a little bit about when you heard the news that he had been killed. Can you describe in your own words the details that you were told at that time and how you felt?

NR: Ya actually it was late night. I was in bed I think and I heard a knock on my window. I think I just moved into my home at that stage. It was 1981 I moved into Kharwastan, ya. And I heard a knock on the window and two of my brother's friends had come there. I think it was Satish Juggernath. I can't remember who the other one was. I don't know if it was Raymond Lalla or Vis. It couldn't have been Vis, Vis was gone. I think it was Raymond Lalla had come and told me that my brother was killed. I was devastated. I was frozen with shock. I didn't even cry because I was expecting something like that. I knew at some time because of the way that Security Police were harassing my parents trying to find out his whereabouts. I knew that something like that would happen because the Defence Force was, you know, doing their raids and things like that, in the

surrounding black states. So we were expecting something – I was expecting something like this.

CV: You were?

NR: The shock came afterwards. I only cried after that. You know but at that moment I didn't. I was just frozen with shock.

CV: And you said you were expecting it. Had that ever been a conversation that you would have with Krish when you saw him those times or was it just a...?

NR: No it was just a feeling that I had in me.

CV: And it fell on you again to inform your parents of this to give them the news.

NR: Ya. I can't recall how I did it. I just can't recall that. No I didn't tell them that he was killed.

CV: Oh you didn't?

NR: No I told them that he was injured. I spoke to my bigger brother and I told him you know that I don't think that we could tell them straightaway. Because they won't be able to go on the trip you know.

CV: For the funeral.

NR: For the funeral. And so he suggested that we just tell them that he is injured, and gradually I think we will try and break the news to them on that side. And that is what we did.

CV: And how long a time – how long a period of time passed before your parents knew the truth would you say?

NR: Look they probably sensed it, but on the trip to Swaziland they were very, very quiet but when we reached the Mozambican border there was a very long delay there. I don't know what was the cause of the delay. We just had to sit in the car and wait

and wait and wait. And then the other comrades began to pass through the border and they were also delayed there. And I think while they were discussing or in conversation with them they probably learned that he was killed because from that point onwards you could see that the tears were rolling down their faces. And I don't know, but I never told them directly that he had died. Even there - although that was my intention to do it on that side. They just got the knowledge themselves.

CV: So from what you had told them when you were driving into Mozambique they...[interruption]

NR: At the border I think they - [interruption]

CV: It was just that he had been injured and they knew the truth?

NR: Yes, yes.

CV: You talk in your testimony about thanking the ANC for the support that they provided at the funeral.

NR: Yes.

CV: What was that like? What happened? What kind of support did they offer?

NR: Well, when we went there, first of all they took us out to a place where all the other comrades were housed, their parents were housed. They had a place for us to sleep and there were well-wishers coming there, you know, offering condolences. Oliver Tambo himself came there. Offered his condolences and then they arranged the funeral, everything about the funeral. They took us to the mortuary where we had to see the bodies and then the funeral itself was arranged by them. It was a huge funeral. There was a huge crowd there and they allowed us to do the

funeral according to Hindu tradition. They provided the meals and everything else. They took us on a tour of the building that was bombed. So, and all along, right till the time they released us, they put us on the bus to get back to Swaziland they did all the arrangements.

CV: When they took you to see the building that was bombed, can you describe it?

NR: The shock! it was very difficult to express the shock. There were holes in the walls. It was mortar-bombed. There were teargas canisters all over. There were bullet holes in the buildings and blood on the floors. Furniture strewn about. It was, you know, a real huge raid it seemed by the South African Defence Force soldiers, I think, who were painted black, apparently. I think the faces, that is what we heard there – they had painted their faces black, but they were white soldiers.

CV: Okay I am going to pause here and I will turn the tape over and we are going to talk a bit more about that in a minute.

END OF TAPE 1A

RESUMPTION OF INTERVIEW ON TAPE 1B

CV: Okay we are back. You talked about going to see the building that was bombed where your brother was. When they took you was it just you or did your?

NR: No the entire family.

CV: The entire family.

NR: Ya.

CV: And how did your parents react to that?

NR: Ya, they were shocked. I had to support my Mum most of the way you know through the building

because she was getting faint. And my dad was okay, he managed but my other brother was holding him as well. But they were devastated when they saw that. They couldn't believe the savagery of the attack.

CV: Could you?

NR: I couldn't either. I couldn't.

CV: Did they know what they were going to see when they went there?

NR: No we had no idea what we were going to see.

CV: Now I want to turn to just after his death. You spoke already about how your parents changed after that. Your father died six years later is that correct?

NR: 1987.

CV: And you say in your testimony that you think that Krish's death contributed to his premature death.

NR: Yes most definitely.

CV: And what about your mother? Did she suffer more blackouts? Did her health deteriorate as well?

NR: Ya, her health began to deteriorate very badly. And every week all members of the family used to come there. All my brothers-in-law, and so every week there was somebody at home to make sure that she was looked after, because she was alone at home.

There was nobody else.

CV: And how about your brothers and sisters?

NR: Sorry?

CV: Your brothers and sisters did you feel that – did their health deteriorate in other ways or did?

NR: No. In fact they were proud of what my brother did and so they were sustained by that fact. And all the rallies and so on they used to attend after that. They

used to speak proudly of him. I don't think they were ANC members before but all of them changed to ANC members. They all voted for ANC in every election thereafter.

CV: Really?

NR: Ya.

CV: Speaking of that you say:

"We later learned that it was my brother's friend and ex-teacher from Pietermaritzburg named Siphon who actually turned traitor and led the SADF soldiers to the houses where the twelve comrades were staying."

NR: That information was given to me on the day of the testimony or a day before the testimony by Vis Pillay himself.

CV: Okay this was the day before testifying in front of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission?

NR: Yes.

CV: How did you feel when you heard that news?

NR: I didn't feel anything negative about Siphon because I could understand why he would have done something like that under extreme torture probably he would have done that. And from what I heard, subsequently, he had become an alcoholic living in Pietermaritzburg, because I think his conscience would have troubled him. I don't think he did it willfully. He must have done that under extreme torture and pressure from the authorities.

CV: You said that when you at home your brother was labelled "the Terrorist" by the white press but also from the largely conservative Indian community.

NR: Yes.

CV: How did that feel?

NR: I felt bad about it because my own relatives, my aunt actually – I wouldn't want to mention her name here – who were really not educated people you see. So when they read the word terrorist for, then it means one thing only. And that what they read in the press they feel is the gospel truth and so they began to refer to him as the "Terrorist" and so on in their conversation with other people. And it comes to our ears as well: "This is what your aunt was saying about him that he was a terrorist and he was fighting against the State and ", things like that. So you get people like that. I don't think they do it out of any ill feeling or jealousy or anything of that sort. I think it is just that ignorance that causes them to speak like that. So I don't hold anything against them.

CV: Despite that do you feel that you had the support of the community members after your brother's death?

NR: Yes generally there was moral support ya.

CV: And in the testimony you describe holding a prayer vigil in 1982, a one year memorial service.

NR: Was it '82? Oh yes I think it was '82.

CV: Ya this is the -

NR: That is the one at St. Michael's Church.

CV: Okay that you were speaking of and this was attended by Victoria Mxenge who was the – who later died herself, but this is after the death of Griffiths, her husband. Could you tell me a bit about what happened at the vigil?

NR: The church was prepared for a memorial service. You know we had posters on the walls and we had

placards and things like that and we had candles, you know, the clay lamps to observe things like this for Hindu ceremonies. And while the service was on we suddenly got information from outside that the riot police were there and they had surrounded the buildings. And they had given us a warning that we must disperse but Victoria insisted that we carry on. And while we were carrying on they burst in and they capsized all the lamps and candles and ripped the posters off the walls and things like that. And they had to send for reinforcements, as well. I think a Caspir had arrived, as well. And so these guys just put the guns, they pointed the guns towards us and told us: "If you don't disperse we are going to open fire." And you could see the steel in their eyes, and you know, it is a terrifying sight. You know it is really frightening when you encounter something like this. So we all had to disperse. We had to cancel that memorial service from that point onwards.

CV: Was anyone injured?

NR: No, nobody was injured.

CV: Do you think you would have wanted to carry on if Victoria for example had not insisted that it continue?

NR: Yes I would have wanted to carry on.

CV: And how did you feel when you saw them?

NR: That is when I became even more angry you know. I mean, the man is dead, we can't even have a decent memorial service. And that is when the anger really started boiling in me, you know, as to a point that I

was becoming a bit irrational against the Afrikaner especially.

CV: I am going to just read this, it is part of the testimony you gave:

"I became bitter towards white people and the fact that the majority of them voted for the National Party election after election. I could never understand how they could sleep easy with an easy conscience at night knowing that black children were dying in the homelands. When black people were given the most menial jobs and that the government they voted for used every conceivable kind of dirty trick and brutality to suppress the legitimate resistance of black people against the oppression of apartheid."

NR: Ya, you know, being a geography teacher we used to study a section called the migrant labour system and the text books don't give you the real story. Now I did a lot of research on that. I had quotations of Joe Slovo's books and from political speeches at rallies by COSATU and things like that. I presented a workshop at a teachers' forum when I was the president of the Geography Society of the Teachers Association of South Africa. And I exposed the migrant labour system for the cancer that it was. You know it and that is why I was so upset you know that the National Party could vote for something like this. Creating homelands for black people. Pushing them in 13% of the land. And I have been to some of these homelands because my brother-in-law drives buses, he

runs buses in the Greytown area and during the holidays I used to go with him. It is frightening, what is there. You know there is nothing there. You can't make a survival. There is only rocks and boulders and stones and there is nothing you can do. And there is no watering place even. You may find one watering place and lots of women are coming from far, far away carrying water on their heads. And all this you know it got to me you know that it is such a sin that this kind of system was prevailing. And every year the National Party was voted in. So the majority of whites were for the system. And you know that really upset me.

CV: When I read that to you now, how do you feel it describes your present condition? Does it still speak to you? Do you still feel this way?

NR: Ya, I still feel that way because the homelands are still there. I mean it will take a long time before it alters its character. Most of those areas are totally unproductive. But it will take a long time before the land redistribution process sorts itself out and everybody is given an equal chance. At the moment most of the blacks are still living under very difficult conditions.

CV: When you said you realised that you felt this way a kind of anger how did – when you recognised you felt that how did you feel?

NR: You know, I was becoming more and more violently inclined after my brother's death you know. Not violence against people as such, but violence that my brother stood for. Violence against institutions, against symbols of oppression, you know, like beer

halls and government buildings and things like that. I used to have those feelings in me. You know I could just try and do some damage to bring down the morale of the ruling party. Often I thought of burning buildings or farms in the Free State. You know when you drive past the Free State you will see thousands of hectares lying vacant which could have been given to people to farm and make money but that was just lying there because whites were owning them, so much of land. So I used to dream of actually doing those things you know but, of course, alone you are scared to do something like that. You had a family to support. You got the children now but those thoughts were there at the back of my mind.

CV: How many children did you have at this point?

NR: Just one.

CV: Just one?

NR: Which point are you talking about?

CV: When you were feeling this way, when you had this, after your brother's death and you were struggling with that still?

NR: Ya.

CV: Did you – do you think there was a turning point?

NR: Ja definitely there was a turning point. I think the turning point came when I read Martin Luther King's book "To strength with Love." It was a thin book but I read it a few times and it made me think that you can hate the sin but you cannot hate the sinner. And you know there was – I think I quoted in that script as well – you know where he says there that hatred cannot destroy hatred, only love

can do that just as darkness cannot destroy darkness, only light can do that. And I read another of his books. I got so interested in his book I borrowed another one. I can't remember what the name of that book was in which he described his house being bombed I think by the Ku Klux Klan, I think it was. And he emerged from the rubble of his house and he told his followers there not to go out on a vengeful killing spree of white people. And he told them to love the white people as well. And then in that period also I learned to respect people like you know, Beyers Naudé, Joe Slovo, Neil Aggett, Ric Turner, and I realised then that, you know, I don't think I was doing justice. My anger was becoming irrational. I was directing it on colour, you know, and that is unjustifiable. You direct anger at a cause – I mean at an evil but not at the person doing the evil. You know you hate the sin not the sinner because the sinner probably is just as brainwashed, as the people who are trying to fight for justice, you know.

CV: Do you ever think about what if you hadn't had a turning point when you were thinking that way?

NR: I didn't think about that.

CV: You didn't think that?

NR: No. Fortunately that turning point came. I don't think I would have become irrational. I don't think, because my wife and my child was very dear to me and they're always behind my mind. I couldn't do something like that at this stage. If I wasn't married I think I would have done what I, you know – if I hadn't have any responsibility and my parents

weren't living I probably would have gone that route. Because the anger was really very deep.

CV: Do you feel that your brothers and sisters, did they experience similar emotions?

NR: Pardon?

CV: That [emotion] you described for yourself, personally?

NR: I don't think that they experienced the depth of emotion that I felt, except for my big brother. He was becoming quite, very strongly, you know, rebellious about these. You know afterwards things that were happening; the train massacres in Soweto and all the things that De Klerk and his henchmen were doing; those things were still behind our minds. But we were not going to resort to violence. I had – we had reached that stage of changing. Even my religion. I became more religious after the age of about thirty-four. I started going to temple and things like that. Prior to that I wasn't a very religious person. So I began to change my whole philosophy of life after that.

CV: Do you feel – did you experience more harassment from the Security Police after this?

NR: No, nothing at all.

CV: But you said that everyone voted for the ANC.

NR: Yes.

CV: And political consciousness changed, not just for you, but for your family as well.

NR: For everyone.

CV: I just wonder if you can describe in a few words how that felt the difference of what your life was

like in your politics before Krish's death and afterwards?

NR: Before his death we felt sort of restrained, caged up. We were not – we lived in a state of anxiety and fear. The fear that our dignity, I mean the idea that our dignity was not being respected in this country. That we were sub-human in some way. Especially the black people. But when I went to Swaziland I felt a sense of freedom there. I could walk openly, freely. Just getting out of the country I felt a whole lot of load lifting off my shoulders. I felt free. When I came back, after seeing my brother, I felt that heaviness coming back. But now after the elections, I feel totally free. I feel elated and I am proud that he [Krish] contributed to what we are going through today and the transition that is taking place. The birth pangs we are all going to experience, but I am very positive about this country. So I feel much lighter now and more motivated.

CV: How do you think now of your brother?

NR: I regard him as a martyr. I think he had a kind of genius beyond his age. You know, only now I feel that way. Prior to that it wasn't like that. You know, I felt he had been letting us down in the early stages but now I realise that he had such a depth of character that I can only you know admire and which I can only strive for but I can never reach.

CV: Do you think of him as a soldier?

NR: Yes.

CV: You do?

NR: Yes.

CV: I find it interesting when I read your testimony that you do not speak much about that and that when I was doing some research, Ronny Kasrils, who has written a book, speaks in several points about your brother, as he was his commander in the MK.

NR: Ya, those things I would like to know more about. I am not sure about them. So that is why I didn't allude to them in my testimony.

CV: But you would like to know more?

NR: But yes, definitely. The rumour has it that he was also involved in the SASOL blast. I am not sure. I am not sure.

CV: Do you find that what you speak about when you read Gandhi and Martin Luther King, do you find that hard to reconcile with the fact that Umkhonto we Sizwe advocating an armed struggle?

NR: No I don't find it hard to reconcile because, you know - let me just refer to Bishop Tutu. He believes in a holy war, as well. When you reach a point of no return and you find that all avenues for peaceful change have been exhausted and the oppressor has no intention whatsoever to make any change. Then you sometimes have to use drastic means, but the ANC did not direct – this is my belief – its violence to human beings. It was more against institutions, against symbols of oppression of apartheid, things like that. That I subscribe to. And so maybe Gandhi would have thought differently but it didn't affect me in that. Neither did Martin Luther King. That kind of violence I was prepared to accept.

CV: I am going to turn now a little bit more directly to when you testified in front of the Truth and

Reconciliation Commission and your thoughts on that process. I wonder if you could just explain to me in a few words what that day was like when you went to give testimony? Who went with you and how did you feel and how were you prepared for it?

NR: Well we were quite prepared. That is why I prepared that testimony. I had a few weeks I think, to write something out. They didn't ask me to write anything out, but I did that on my own. I felt I needed to be prepared because, you know, speaking for the first time in front of cameras and in front of a huge crowd was a bit unnerving. So I did some research on it. And we went; my Mum, my brother, my sister-in-law, two sisters-in-law. Ya, just about five of us. We were in one car, ya. And the atmosphere was really fascinating, because we heard a few of the testimonies before us and, you know, we were given earphones and the translator was coming across. So we were horrified to hear some of the other atrocities carried out by the South African regime. So it gave me a bit more courage. I said no this is something that I need to contribute to. You know a quest for a truly non-racial democratic country. I need to do my share. I willed myself to be brave. I willed myself mentally to go on out there to speak and I think I did reasonably well but I never saw the tape. So I don't know.

CV: How did it come to pass that you were going to be the person who spoke. Did you want to or were you asked?

NR: I can't remember who it was that asked me to go to the offices in Smith Street, I think it was, to give

the information first. And I don't know whether it was Spider or Satish Juggernath or whether I saw the advert – was it advertised in the paper? I can't – I asked my wife last night who asked me to go there, and she said she can't remember as well. So as I said, I've got a very bad memory. I don't know whether I went on my own accord. It is strange but I can't remember.

CV: It's actually going back quite a way. When I was looking in the newspaper about the Truth Commission hearings and this article that was run on both your brother and Lenny Naidu. And your mother is quoted as saying at that time that she wanted to know why her son had died and who had ordered his death.

"That will help me and the rest of the family to accept his death."

And you said that you wanted to know who issued the order from the Special Branch in Durban and that you were willing to forgive but you wanted to know that. Were those questions answered for you?

NR: At the TRC?

CV: At the TRC?

NR: Yes.

CV: They were?

NR: I think towards the end of the testimony I think Richard Lister did say I think it was Colonel Buchner from the Natal Command, who issued the instructions.

CV: He is the former Commissioner of the Police here?

NR: Yes.

CV: And knowing that, that was he that gave the order did it change how you felt?

NR: My attitude towards reconciliation?

CV: Ya towards reconciliation?

NR: No, in fact I wanted to meet him and speak to him but I don't think he would have come there. No I don't have that hatred anymore. It is definitely out of my system completely. I cannot hate.

CV: Do you think it was out of your mother's system as well? Did she feel satisfied by the?

NR: Ya, I think so. She was not a person who would have hated anybody. And we gradually educated her that all of us were victims of apartheid – the perpetrators and the freedom fighters. We were basically products of the same doctrine. You know one shapes the freedom fighters, the other shapes the people who upheld the system. So all of us were victims, and we needed to understand each other.

CV: Earlier – this is just going back to when Krish first died – the government at that time wouldn't allow you to bring the body back to South Africa which is why you had to go to Mozambique. I am just wondering if you could say how that felt to not have to?

NR: Ya, we were very upset and angry about that. You know, even now, we feel to some extent unhappy because my brother is lying on foreign soil. None of us have the means to get there at the moment. We felt that the symbolic transfer of his body here in some way, tangible way, would have helped but it didn't take place. So we still feel a kind of nostalgia about him not being here. He is in a

foreign soil and he was a product of this place. He fought for the freedom of this place and he needs to be here. I still have that idea in my mind that he should be here in some way.

CV: And going back to that moment as well. You were with the twelve other families of the thirteen that were killed. Did they have a similar feeling as well, to your knowledge?

NR: Yes.

CV: They did?

NR: Yes, but unfortunately they didn't come to testify. I don't know what happened to – or did they?

CV: No, I am asking.

NR: Not on the day that we were there. I don't know if they had but I never read anything about them in any of the papers. I don't think any of them has testified.

CV: Do you keep in contact with them or?

NR: No we never had contact after that.

CV: You also mentioned in this article I quote you saying:

"I would like to appeal for financial assistance as a way of reparation so that the families could go visit the graves in Mozambique or be brought back."

You just mentioned that yourself. And that hasn't happened, correct?

NR: No there was a pension pay out for about 32 000 to my Mum, when she was alive ja. That is about it. But we were not concerned about the money so much.

CV: Just the transfer?

NR: The transfer of the body – not the body – I don't know where the remains are, or some monument created for all the heroes in the struggle. Some peace garden where people could go and reflect, you know that kind of thing would be very nice. Not just the twelve who died there. I am talking about all the freedom fighters. You know they need to be recognised.

CV: How do you feel about what is now perceived as the ANC's retreat on the issue of reparations, the money that was recommended by the Commission and what has been allocated thus far as quite substantially less? And there doesn't seem to be a lot of movement at this point. I am wondering how you feel about that?

NR: Look I am very sympathetic towards the ANC government. They inherited such a bad debt, over R260-billion rand. I don't think we can expect any miracles from them in terms of financial reparations. So I am not very upset about that but there are families that really deserve it. Otherwise it would appear that the perpetrators who were granted amnesty are getting a generous allowance you know in terms of their freedom and nothing happening to them. And the people who suffered, the victims are not getting much in return. You know on that basis I feel badly for those people. But for myself financially I don't – I am not upset about it. If nothing comes our way. No.

CV: Do you think it damages the credibility of what the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was meant to do?

NR: I think to a certain extent it does especially in the eyes of the victims.

CV: In the paper there has also been recent mention of the possibility of a blanket amnesty how [inaudible]?

NR: I am totally opposed to a blanket amnesty. There are people who went so far overboard with their crime. Even while negotiations were taking place you know they were still killing. How can we give them total blanket amnesty? They need to suffer some kind of punishment. Like Janus Wallus and people like that. I can't see how there should be a total blanket amnesty.

CV: Have you read the final report that the TRC...

NR: No.

CV: Would you like to?

NR: Yes I would like to.

CV: We could probably make a copy of that because your brother is mentioned in a chapter.

NR: Is it?

CV: In chapter two.

NR: No I would love to. As I said I don't mind purchasing those things.

CV: I want to talk a bit about the question of forgiveness. Do you feel that, that was possible when you went in front of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission?

NR: Yes most definitely. Categorically I tell you that is the only reason I decided to testify in front of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I wanted to get rid of the – purge myself of whatever vestiges of hatred, anger I had in me. And I don't think there

was much left in me. I had reached a stage at this part of my life to forgive and I felt that was the only way I could reconcile myself with my religion as well or with any religion. You know basically that is what we are here for. To promote harmony. If I hated somebody and that is totally a sign of spiritual bankruptcy you know. So it was a huge learning curve for me but I am proud of being able to say that forgiveness is part of my system now. It is embedded in me. No matter what anybody tries to re-activate in terms of the past will not alter my stance.

CV: So do you think that the TRC offered to you what you needed to have in order to have freedom?

NR: Yes I think so. A lot of people felt it was a waste of money. But for me it didn't. You know if people out there didn't see what was happening on TV and if they didn't change in some way then you can say the TRC has failed. But I think everybody was touched to some extent and the psychological healing it offered to the victims and to the perpetrators no money can buy that. So that is not money wasted. But there was talk. You know people talk in the staff rooms in our schools. They felt that the money was being wasted and I differed very strongly about that. The TRC had every justification for being there.

CV: Do you have any criticisms in your own words as far as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of how it worked, its operations?

NR: No. In fact on that day there were counsellors there. They kept comforting my Mum while I was

testifying and they gave us all moral support. I didn't find anything really. Except that I had made a request for the tape and I didn't get it – from SABC. I don't know whether I was applying through the right channels. But that was the only disappointment I felt. That you know I wanted to see that tape. I wanted a copy of it. Otherwise I was quite happy with the TRC.

CV: Let me just pause for a moment. A few more questions for you. When you speak about if you never receive any reparations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and that is not what you are looking for but other families do. Do you think that changes the mandate of trying to forgive for those families that are in need of financial assistance or have suffered?

NR: I think it will to some extent. From a few things I read in the Truth Talk, the paper published by the TRC. There were some victims there who did complain about that, that the perpetrators are getting away virtually scot-free and the victims are being victimised by not being given reparations. Some of them are in desperate financial trouble. Some of them were breadwinners. Now how do we speak to people like that? I mean their concerns are justified and valid. So it is very hard mentally to say no it won't affect them. It will I think. You got to be very spiritually advanced and highly educated to think any differently. So I think it will affect them negatively to some extent.

CV: Do you think you could talk a little bit in your own words what the years have been like for you since

the testimony that you gave in front of the Commission?

NR: Look I am very happy that I did testify and the country is going through a period of transition. I am excited about it and I feel that I have made a contribution in some tangible way by testifying at the TRC to the formation of a really non-racial, non-sexist democratic country. Where everybody can live in harmony, where all religions will be respected. Where the individual rights are respected and the culture of human rights emerges. I feel I have made a contribution. So I feel positive about it. Despite the crime and the high food prices and things like that, that is nothing to do with the ANC. I think any ruling party would have had the same problems. So I am very positive about the future. I think the country is going the right way. I am really quite positive.

CV: And you said earlier that your mother passed away in 1997. Is that correct?

NR: As I told you my memory is so bad. I think it is '98.

CV: '98.

NR: Ya.

CV: And do you feel that she made peace with the history of the country and of Krish's death?

NR: Yes because she was very glowing about him and that was the latter years. Whenever anybody talked about him she was very happy about it and she was a very strong person. I mean to have given birth to ten children. She was physically very strong and she was able to take a lot of strain. My brother's death, my father's death and all that she took. And she in

the end I think reconciled herself to the fact that my brother made a significant contribution to this country and I think she had a peaceful death.

CV: What do you think apartheid robbed you of the most?

NR: Probably of my dignity as a human being. It made me feel less than a person and that I can't stand. I think I have learnt that the dignity of the person is the uppermost, it must be respected at all costs whether you are dealing with friend or foe. The dignity of the human being is uppermost.

CV: Okay I am going to stop at that point.

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RESUMPTION OF INTERVIEW

CV: Okay we are back. You sound very positive about the future for the country. And I wonder if you could just say in your own words if you feel that what you were hoping for and achieving negotiated settlement in South Africa in a non-racial, non-sexist country that your brother was fighting for – do you think that has been achieved in this country?

NR: Not entirely. I think that the whites still have a long way to go. I don't think many of them have changed or transformed sufficiently for me to say that we have achieved that goal. It is a long process but many of them are getting there. And you can see when you meet people that there is a different mood in the country. Most of them seem positive. You know so I think we are going there, we are getting there but it is going to take some time.

CV: And when you look back of the changes that have happened in the country what are the things that you remember the most and that are the most dear to you?

NR: Well we have a constitution that the whole world can be proud of. We have a judicial system that the whole world can be proud of. And the fact that every, almost every law pertaining to apartheid has now been put into the scrapheap means that we have transformed in that respect. Attitudes will take some time. So sorry can you ask the question again? What was the?

CV: The moments in the transition looking back in the history of South Africa that had been personally for you the most memorable and important and dear?

NR: Well the constitutional changes as I said. There are changes in the schooling system now the fact that our children can go to any school without fear of favour. The sports fields have changed. You know you can see the transformation taking place quite a lot in the sporting arena. So it is all positive. I can't see negative except the crime rate which is a problem everywhere throughout the world. So I don't see any other problem. It's mostly positive.

CV: And what were, when you look back the darkest moments for you?

NR: The darkest moments were you know were I felt if that CODESA talks failed then we would have had a bloodbath. If Nelson Mandela wasn't released our streets would have been flowing with blood. I think that was the darkest moment is when that if the CODESA talks, if they failed I would have dreaded

what would have happened in this country. If there was no Mandela around I don't know if anybody else would have achieved that kind of negotiated settlement. I don't know. So the darkest moment stopped then.

CV: You showed us earlier that you have your brother's watch.

NR: Yes.

CV: Now who gave this to you?

NR: It was given to me by a person at the funeral in Mozambique. I think it was one of the ANC officials on that side. I can't remember his name. I can't remember his face at the moment because we were all distressed at that stage and we were about to come home and he just told me: "Take this envelope and keep it in memory of your brother, who was a real comrade." And he just put it in my hand and clasped my hands and he disappeared from the crowd. So I don't know who he actually was.

CV: What does that mean to you to have his watch?

NR: It means a lot to me. That is why I haven't cleaned the stains off it. I want it preserved as it is to show my grandchildren, you know what this watch means, the symbolism behind it. So it touches every corner of my heart.

CV: If you could say one thing to your brother, what would that be?

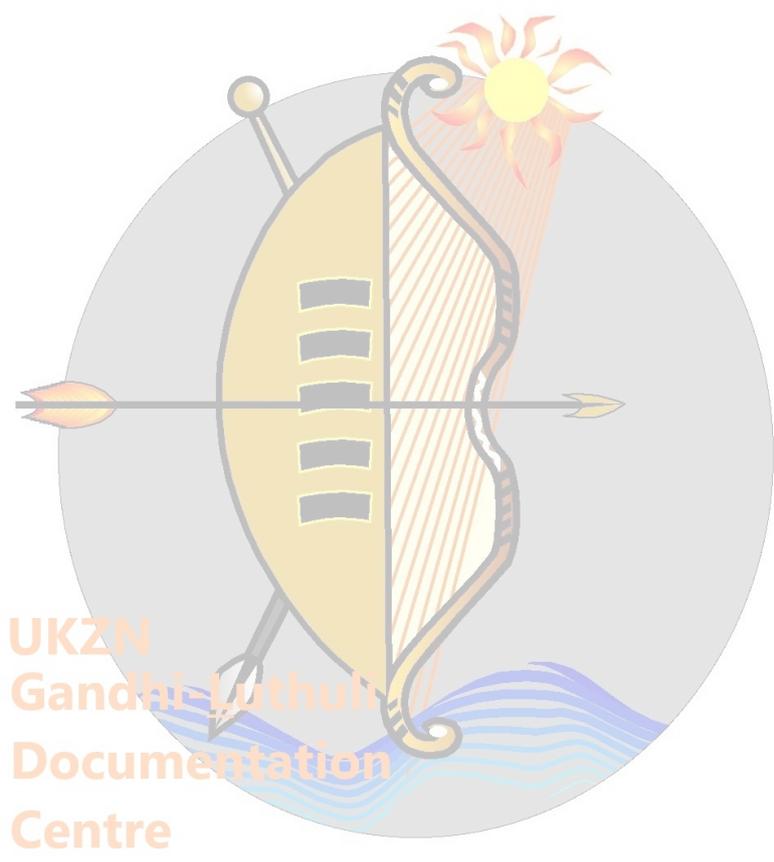
NR: I love you.

CV: Thank you very much

NR: It is a pleasure.

CV: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW



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