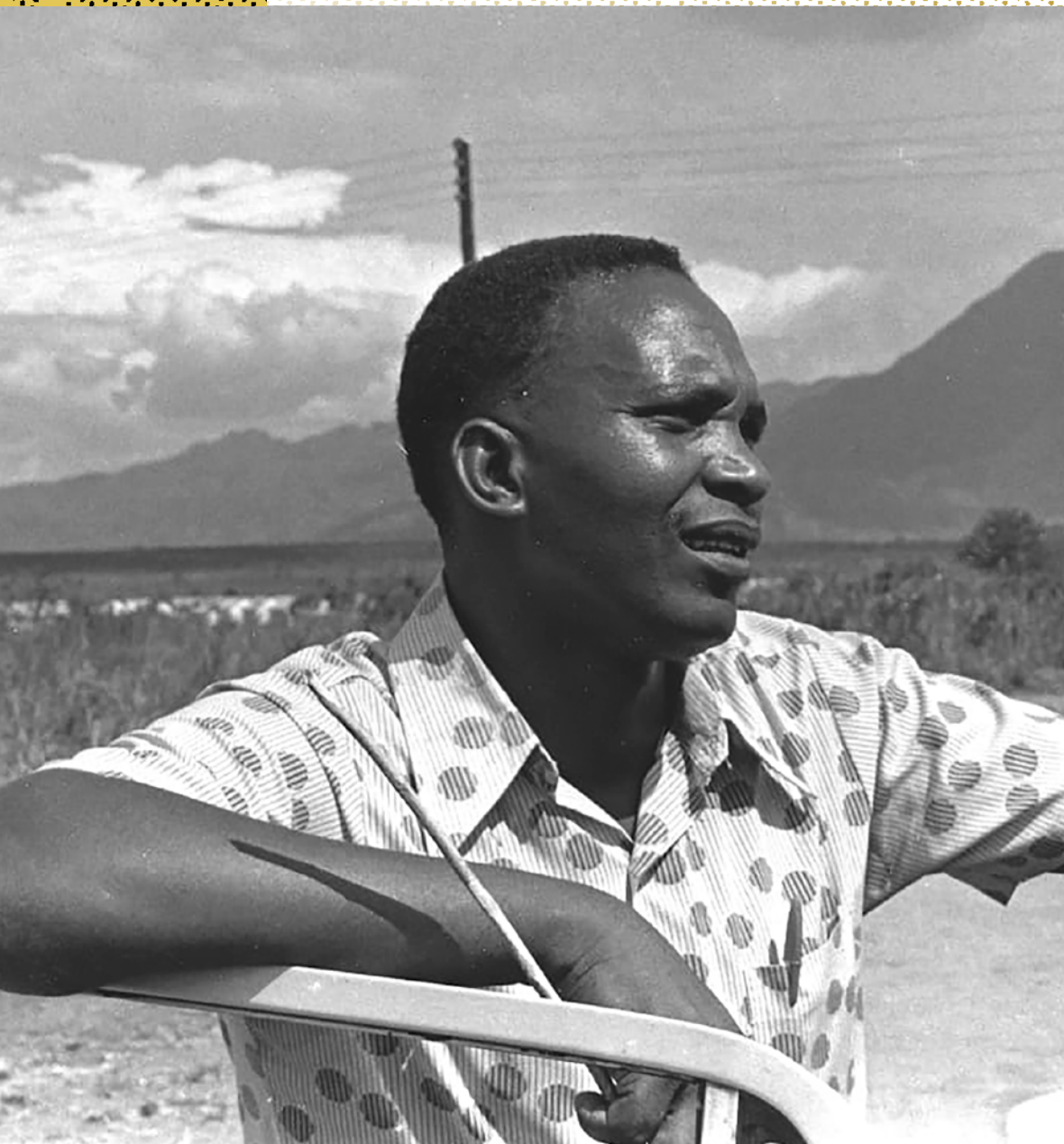


**FROM RURAL HERD
BOY TO MK SOLDIER
AND THEN AMBASSADOR**

The autobiography of
Mabuse Mampane



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Mabuse Mampane

(aka Reddy Mazimba)

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CHAPTER 1

Birth and early years

My birthdate is recorded as 15 May 1945, but I was probably born two years before that because there was no official record of my birth. I was born in Mahwelereng Village, Sekhukuniland, in the former Transvaal province and current Limpopo province. Sekhukuniland is also known as Bopedi (the land of the Bapedi). The district is named after Bapedi King Sekhukhune I. After the passing of the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951, which provided for the formation of bantustans in different parts of the country, the area was scheduled to be part of the Lebowa bantustan. My parents were living at the time in the village of my paternal grandparents. The birth of a child in the village was remembered as taking place either in the year of the heavy rains or in the year of the drought, or some other significant natural occurrence. In the year I was born, villagers recall that there were unusually harsh thunderstorms, as well as an outbreak of polio and '*lekkerkrap*' (infectious itching) in the village in which I was born.

I am my father's firstborn child, and four brothers and a sister were born after me. My brothers' names are Shupulu, who was born sometime between 1947 and 1951, Morwape, who was born between 1953 and 1955, Chipane, who was born between 1957 and 1960, and Seipati whom I never met because he was born after I left for exile and died at a young age. My sister Mashinyane was born in 1962 when I was working in Pretoria and was unable to meet before I had to depart unexpectedly for exile in early 1963. My father, James 'Jim' Modige Mampane, worked at the time for the Department of Native Affairs¹ in Pretoria, about 280 kilometres from Sekhukuniland, and only came

home at Christmastime every year. This was a common practice at the time for migrant workers from the bantustans, who normally spent a very short part of the year with their families. My father stopped coming home not long after my third brother was born, and he stopped supporting us from that time. Our family experienced harsh economic times from then on.

When I was about two years old we moved to Mehlabane village, where my maternal grandparents had a few goats and some cattle which my mother's brother used to tend. When I was about four or five years of age, I joined my uncle at my grandparents' fields to look after the animals. During the ploughing season in December and January, I helped with the ploughing of a small field that my grandparents had given to my mother. One year we experienced a drought and lost most of our animals, leaving us with no animals to use for the ploughing.

Mahlatse

In the year of the drought my paternal grandfather, after whom I was named, came to my mother to ask if I would be able to help an old man, Mamodiyane, who lived in the Mahlatse area. Mamodiyane had a number of cattle and nobody to look after them. He had asked my grandfather if there was someone who could look after the cattle. My grandfather had recommended to my mother that I do it and that at the end of the year I would receive a calf as payment, which would help with our economic situation at home.

So, I went to Mahlatse to look after Mamodiyane's cattle. He had two wives, and I stayed with the first wife, who had experienced a stroke. They had a son who worked in Pretoria and came home only a few times a year. The son was married, and his wife stayed in Mahlatse to look after his mother. During the ploughing season I went home to my mother's place to help my family with this task and thereafter returned to Mahlatse. At the end of the first year, I received a female calf. I continued herding for Mamodiyane for another year.

In Mahlatse, I made friends with the other herd boys in the area. We were a group of five herders who would work together to look after the animals in the fields. We had to ensure that the cattle did not go into other people's fields, using a *knobkierie* as our aid. There was a game we played with the *knobkieries* to choose who would go and herd the cows the furthest away from where we gathered, or those that had strayed into

other fields. The one with the longest *knobkierie* would throw it and we would race to get our hands on it. The one who was last to get his hands on the *knobkierie* was given the task of herding the straying cattle. The *knobkieries* were also used to defend ourselves against snakes and other wild animals.

I became homesick during my second year of herding in Mahlatse and just went back home. My mother tried to persuade me to go back to the herding job, but I did not want to return. It soon became clear that this was affecting my family's economic situation.

Working in Marble Hall

In 1953, when I was about ten years old, my friend Dikholong and I went to the nearby town of Marble Hall, a town which had been established after the discovery of marble deposits in the area about a decade earlier, to look for work. We were able to get employment at a Mr van Zyl's farm. Dikholong worked as the 'kitchen boy', and his duties included all the cleaning, washing-up and polishing work. I was put in charge of a very large herd of pigs. I had to check that they were fed during the day and that they went back to the pigsty in the late afternoon. It was a strenuous job because pigs are very difficult to herd and run all over the place, keeping me on my feet all day.

Van Zyl had an only son to assist him on the farm. The son had a friend who used to spend weekends on the farm. During the day the two of them would practise target shooting, and they would often hunt animals at night. Just off the main road of the farm, there was a huge tree on the corner where they used to position themselves to shoot at targets they had set up at the side of the house. This firing line was the same line that the workers had to pass by to get from the main house to the farmworkers' living compound.

I was often called upon to work extra hours over the weekend if the family had guests coming over. This work was in addition to my normal hours, and without extra pay. One weekend, as I was returning to the compound after work, I called out to the shooters that I was going to walk by to get to the compound. The shooters said that they would stop firing. But as I passed by, they continued shooting, hitting me with one shot just above my left ankle.

The boys only realised the gravity of the situation when I screamed out in pain. Van Zyl's wife came running out when she heard the

shouting and screaming. The youngsters carried me to the house and tried to clean up the wound, which was bleeding quite profusely. They later went and got medicine to treat the wound, but did not take me to a doctor. During those days it was not a serious matter when a black person was shot by a white person, and there was no need for the incident to be reported to the police. My leg was swollen and very painful for a number of weeks. After my leg healed, I went back home for a while.

In January 1954, my mother and I returned to the Van Zyls, and she was able to get employment from Van Zyl as a domestic worker. My mother worked there for about four or five months, until the Van Zyls decided to move to the area near Thabazimbi, an iron-mining town about 241 kilometres from Marble Hall. I went to Thabazimbi with them, while my mother went back home. In Thabazimbi the Van Zyls managed a huge farm owned by another farmer. I worked in the house as the 'kitchen boy'.

Initiation

At the beginning of May 1954, I went home for my traditional initiation ceremony. The initiation ceremony refers to the circumcision of young males and performance of certain cultural rituals during the ceremony that signal a boy's 'rite of passage into manhood'. For a period of four to six weeks during which the initiation ceremony takes place, usually in nearby mountainous areas, initiates are secluded from society, especially women.²

Van Zyl drove me from Thabazimbi to Marble Hall where I got on a bus that took me to my home village. The initiation ceremony takes place during the winter months of May to July. The ceremony took place in the mountains, and the initiates were not allowed to have any clothes. We had to wear loincloths. A fire was provided as a source of heat, but no water could be heated on the fire. The ice cold water that was available to us was used for drinking. The harsh physical conditions during the six weeks spent in the mountains were designed to toughen a boy physically and mentally so that by the time it was completed he would have become a young man.

In January 1955, I returned to Marble Hall and found that Van Zyl had moved to another farm in the area that was next to a river. Another friend of mine, Tamadisana, whose real name was Mabowe Boshielo, and I were hired by Van Zyl. Tamadisana worked as the 'kitchen boy',

and I worked with Van Zyl's wife in the large vegetable garden. When the vegetables were harvested, Van Zyl's wife and I used to travel to Marble Hall and Groblersdal to sell the vegetables. We would sell the vegetables to the hotels in the towns first, before setting up on a roadside to sell the remaining vegetables to the housewives of the town.

After we had set out the vegetables, the women would come out to buy and some would talk to Van Zyl's wife about me. They would do this as if I was not present and the property of the Van Zyls. They would ask questions like '*Waar kry jy die kaffertjie?*' (Where did you get this little kaffir³ from?) and '*Werk die kaffertjie goed?*' (Does this little kaffir work well?).

Around the middle of the year Tamadisana and I asked for an increase in our wages, which were just under £2 a month. Van Zyl refused. We then decided that after receiving our wages at the end of the month we would leave without saying goodbye. At the end of the month, we left and went to look for work in another area of Marble Hall. We got work on the farm of an old man who lived with his wife, their son and their daughter-in-law. Tamadisana worked as the 'kitchen boy' for the older couple, while I did the same work for the younger couple.

Not long after we began working, the father of the daughter-in-law asked the younger couple to join him on his farm near Loskop Dam, about 304 kilometres from Thabazimbi and 165 kilometres from Pretoria. When the young couple moved to Loskop, I went with them.

I worked as the 'kitchen boy' and had to sleep in the kitchen instead of in the farmworkers' compound. I could only make up my mattress and blanket after the eating and cleaning was all done in the evening, and had to be up very early in the morning before any other work in the kitchen began. This meant that I had no privacy or a place to rest during the day.

The farmer had a '*dik wiel*' (broad wheel) bicycle hanging in the storeroom on the farm. Since I knew how to ride one, I was offered the use of the bicycle. I used to ride the bicycle to the nearby Loskop Dam every afternoon after work. Loskop Dam is a huge dam, between two mountains, where many of the white people used to drive their boats for recreation. This outing gave me a place to relax and have some private space after all my cleaning work was done at the house.

In May 1955, I had to go back home for the second phase of my initiation ceremony. After the initiation was completed, I returned to my home village, where I stayed until Christmas.

Pretoria

In January 1956, I left home to look for work in Pretoria. I acquired a job at a Mr Webber's house in Brooklyn, not far from where the Brooklyn Mall is now situated. I was employed as a 'kitchen boy' once again. Before I started working, I had to get a passbook or '*dompas*' (literal meaning, dumb pass),⁴ as it was known.

The pass laws were introduced into South Africa in 1923. These laws were designed to segregate the population along racial lines and regulate movement of black South Africans in urban areas. Outside designated 'homelands', black people had to carry the '*dompas*' at all times. Even with a '*dompas*', black people could not be in a city or a 'white' area without a permit for more than 72 hours. For a black person to be allowed to live and work in the city, two further endorsements were required on the '*dompas*'. The pass office would endorse the '*dompas*' upon presentation of a letter from the employer stating that such and such a person is employed by him or her. Thereafter, the regional district commissioner from the person's place of origin had to endorse the '*dompas*' after the pass office had endorsed it.⁵

While living and working in the city with the correctly endorsed '*dompas*', a black person was not allowed to have visitors in his or her living quarters. Black workers living in the city had to endure constant night raids by the police, who would bang on the doors of the servants' quarters and barge in to check if a person was sleeping alone. The policemen would do a thorough search of the room and toilet and would only leave when they were assured that there was no one else in the room.

This system was designed to make black people into a reserve pool of cheap labour for white people and business interests. The only value of a black man was his ability to provide cheap and plentiful labour. The system also perpetuated the separation of blacks from areas where whites lived, worked and socialised.

When I went to the pass office to apply for the '*dompas*', the clerk asked me how old I was. I said I was 15 years old. He refused to issue me with a passbook because at the time the pass office did not issue the '*dompas*' to anyone under 16 years of age.

I went back to the pass office a week later, knowing that with the large volume of people going in and out of the office I would not be remembered. When I was asked how old I was on this occasion, I said I was 16 years old. When asked for my birthdate, I said 15 May 1945.

I had no knowledge of my birthdate because it had not been recorded. But I remembered people talking about this date as the time when my mother's uncle had returned after serving in the Second World War.

I was then asked for my Christian name, which I did not have. The clerk then told me: '*Van vandag af, jou naam is Jan*' (From today onwards, your name is Jan).⁶ That is how I acquired the first name Jan.

After receiving the '*dompas*' with a letter from the pass office and my employer, I travelled to the regional district commissioner near my village to have the '*dompas*' endorsed. I had to leave from Pretoria Train Station and travel overnight by train, arriving in Marble Hall at about six in the morning. From there I took a bus to my village. The following day I went to the district commissioner's office, where my '*dompas*' was endorsed. This endorsement gave me the legal right to live and work in Pretoria. I was only permitted to work at Webber's place, where I worked until the end of 1956.

The pay I was receiving from Mr Webber was low, and through the friends I had met on the street I acquired another job at the home of an old man, Japie van Zyl, on Nicholson Street in Brooklyn. I worked as the 'kitchen boy', and when I was done with the work in the house, I worked in the garden. I stayed in the servants' quarters on the property, while working for the Van Zyls.

Van Zyl was good to me, but his wife was very cruel and was always shouting and screaming at me. At the end of 1957 I told the old man that I was leaving because of the old woman. He pleaded with me to stay.

Meanwhile, I had been looking for another job and found one at the Garforth Hotel on the corner of Skinner and Prinsloo streets in Pretoria. The hotel is no longer there and a car park now stands on the spot. After I got the job at the Garforth Hotel, I needed Mr van Zyl to sign off on my '*dompas*'. He refused to do so and took my '*dompas*' away from me. When I went back to the hotel and they asked for my pass, I told them what the old man had done. They employed me anyway.

Night school

While working for Japie van Zyl I had enrolled at a night school off Duncan Street. The night school I attended was managed by whites and a few Africans and ran from nine to eleven in the evenings. Every evening I had to take a '*nag pas*' (night pass) from my employer, allowing me to walk in the city at night. Curfew was only intended for black people,

who were not allowed to walk in the city at night without a '*nag pas*', even if you had a correctly endorsed '*dompas*'. If stopped by the police at night, a black person found without a '*nag pas*' would immediately be arrested and imprisoned. Once, I was arrested and locked up because I did not have the pass on me. The next morning, Mr van Zyl had to pay two pounds to bail me out.

The night school was my first schooling experience. I completed my Sub A and Sub B there. When I got to the Standard One level, the government began clamping down on blacks, particularly black men, living and working in the urban areas. Many of the night schools were raided and closed down, with the government announcing that blacks should live and school in the locations, or black townships. Only female domestic workers with the correctly endorsed '*dompas*' were permitted to stay in the city area.

When the Nationalist government assumed power in 1948 it determined, as part of its apartheid policy, to develop an education system specifically for black people. To that end, it passed the Bantu Education Act of 1953 which led to the implementation of an education system which sought to teach apartheid ideologies of racial inferiority and subservience to the black population and produce relatively low-skilled labourers.⁷ The introduction of Bantu Education meant the closure of mission schools which were believed to have promoted Christian values of equality and fairness, which were contrary to those held by the apartheid regime. Moreover, the apartheid regime provided less funding for Bantu Education compared to white education, and that consequently resulted in poor quality education for black people.⁸ This also brought the night schools, which were estimated to have an enrolment of about 12 000 countrywide in 1953–54, under state control. In the following years, virtually all the night schools were closed.⁹

At the Garforth Hotel I worked as the telephonist. The hotel was owned by Mr Bill Collins, and his son and two other ladies also worked there. Mrs Abington was the manager who was in charge of running the hotel, and Mrs Harvey was in charge of maintenance. The hotel had one public phone located on the ground floor. I had to know and keep track of all the hotel guests to be able to get hold of a person if a call came through for him or her. Often this would entail my running up and down four flights to locate a guest. The hotel had a lift, but this was too slow for me to be able to do my job quickly. This job kept me on my feet all the time. I worked from very early in the morning until very late

at night. In addition to my work as a telephonist I had asked to work as a waiter so that I could acquire a new work skill.

In 1960, the Congo was experiencing turmoil. Upon gaining independence on 30 June 1960, the newly independent Congolese government attempted to gain control of the nation's mineral resources which had been seized by its former colonisers. However, the Belgian colonisers who controlled these national assets resisted the takeover of areas that had abundant mineral resources and instead revolted against the government of the Congo. Consequently, an internal conflict ensued over the control of mineral resources in the country. During the conflict, the American intelligence services supported one of Prime Minister Lumumba's chief of staff who attempted to stage a coup against his government. The Soviet Union intervened, and provided support to Lumumba's government, leading to an intensification of the conflict in the Congo.¹⁰

A large number of French-speaking Flemish people that had been based in the Congo came to South Africa to escape the war. Many of these Flemish people stayed at the Garforth Hotel, and I had frequent interactions with them as the hotel telephonist and part-time waiter. I was determined to learn French and went to Van Schaik bookshop to buy a book on how to learn French, as well as an English-French dictionary. I used to work through the books at night and practise the language on the hotel guests during the day.

Mr Collins wanted me to learn to become a waiter so that I could help in the dining room. Mrs Abington was politically conscious, and she would often update me on new political developments. After work, she would sometimes invite me to her apartment to listen to Radio Moscow. I have no clear memory about why I was listening to that radio. One day she told me that her sister was a member of the Black Sash.¹¹ This took place in 1959 when I joined the ANC after being recruited by Jafftha 'Jeff' Masemola.¹² I also joined the Domestic Workers' Trade Union. The trade union office was in Marabastad, where meetings were held on Wednesdays from 21:00 to 23:00. Again, night passes were required.

CHAPTER 2

The politicisation of a rural youngster

While growing up in Sekhukhuniland I had not questioned the way black people lived or the way we were treated by white people. When one grows up in a system, one does not question the cruelty and oppression; one accepts this as normal. It was only when I was living in Pretoria that I began talking to politically aware people and going to listen to speakers from different black organisations at the many marches and rallies taking place at the time. I began to question many things, such as the harsh conditions which we black people had to endure, the many restrictions we faced, as well as the endless bureaucracy we had to go through to be able to live and work in the city. I started to recognise the utter disrespect and often cruel ways in which many white people treated blacks.

During 1956, there were several significant political activities happening in and around the country's townships, and especially in Pretoria. In townships such as Lady Selborne, people were being forcibly removed to Pelindaba, Vlaktefontein (now Mamelodi) and Eersterust townships. The apartheid government did not allow black people to buy and own land in most parts of the country. However, Lady Selborne, a township community in Pretoria founded in 1905, was one of the few areas where black people were allowed to buy land. Unsurprisingly, given the limited number of areas where Africans were permitted to buy land, the township was quickly over-populated by 1960.¹³ The African National Congress (ANC) had established its branch in Lady Selborne in the 1950s. The Lady Selborne ANC branch organised and led a series of protests, including those against pass laws and bus fare

price increases. The increase in political activity eventually resulted in the branch being banned from picketing. However, residents of Lady Selborne were forcefully dispossessed of their land and removed.¹⁴ In August 1956, the Women's League of the ANC initiated a march of over 20 000 women to the Union Buildings in protest against the pass laws. Everywhere you went, people were talking politics.

The mood of the fifties had been set by the Defiance Campaign that the ANC had launched in 1952. These were non-violent protests against a select number of racist, separatist and oppressive laws that the apartheid regime, led by the National Party that had been elected to power in 1948, had begun implementing. Four years after the Nationalist government came into power in 1948, various political and activist organisations collaborated to plan a massive defiance campaign against repressive apartheid laws in June 1952. These organisations included the ANC, the South African Indian Congress (SAIC) and the Franchise Action Council (FrAC).¹⁵ Civil society organisations, including religious, cultural, trade union and professional organisations also supported the campaign and took part in it.¹⁶ At least 170 000 people participated in protest marches and defiance activities. The campaign gained momentum as the number of volunteers grew. However, after four months of protesting and breaking unjust apartheid laws, some 8 000 protesters were arrested by the apartheid regime. Subsequently, the campaign lost momentum and was eventually cancelled. Nevertheless, its organisers believed it had raised political consciousness throughout the nation and was therefore a success.

In 1954, the ANC and its allies launched the Freedom Charter Campaign to determine the demands of the South African population who wanted to bring about the abolition of apartheid. Throughout South Africa, people were asked to submit their demands to volunteers. A conference was organised, the Congress of the People, which took place at Kliptown in Johannesburg from 25 to 26 June 1955. The conference incorporated the demands that had been collected during the campaign into what became known as the 'Freedom Charter'. This was followed by the arrest of leaders of the various organisations that had participated in this campaign, and the onset of the Treason Trial in 1956.

By December 1956, 156 leading activists had been arrested allegedly for being part of a secret organisation that was planning the violent overthrow of the apartheid regime.¹⁷ All the accused were charged with

high treason. In addition to the arrests, the apartheid government, because it suspected a planned coup, did not allow any political meeting or gathering to be held without a police officer present to monitor it.¹⁸

Unfortunately, the ANC was split into two because of the Freedom Charter: those who supported the multiracial ideals of the Charter and those who believed that some of the clauses of the Charter guaranteed minority rights in a post-apartheid South Africa. Some elements within the ANC broke away, alleging that the Freedom Charter was a communist document and that they were not willing to cooperate with white democrats in the liberation struggle. They argued that the wealth of the country could not be shared with whites but belonged to the indigenous population. As a consequence, the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) was formed in April 1959 at the DOCC Hall in Orlando, Soweto.

It was also during this time that people were not allowed to congregate in groups of more than four. Restrictions like these were the build up to the banning of black political organisations. When the ANC and PAC were banned in 1960, the trade unions were not banned. The ANC would use the trade unions as a front under which its members could meet and operate.

The chairman of the local ANC branch and member of the trade union for domestic workers, Tseleng Mosupye, was a very good orator and one of the first leaders to influence my thinking at the time. Another ANC leader, Chief Albert Luthuli, also impacted strongly on my growing politicisation. I was influenced by the speeches he made as president of the ANC. Radio was the only public medium available at the time, and the topics on the radio were mostly about the political situation in the country.

It was during the time when I started working at Garforth that I first met with members of the ANC. In 1958 I met the local ANC organiser, James Masemola. Masemola moved around from place to place to talk to and conscientise black workers. I was recruited into the ANC at the beginning of 1959 and started attending ANC meetings regularly thereafter.

In addition to the ANC, I also joined a trade union for domestic workers that had an office in Marabastad in Pretoria. The union was an affiliate of the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), which was aligned to the ANC in the Congress Alliance. The Congress Alliance was a coalition of organisations with membership drawn from people of all races, social classes, political affiliations, ideologies,

religious groups and educational backgrounds who were united under the banner of liberation, democracy and the protection of human rights in South Africa.¹⁹

The union offices were located in the cinema building up the road from the police station. Weekly discussions were held at the domestic workers' trade union offices in Marabastad every Wednesday evening. I attended these weekly meetings, where I met several people who were able to increase my political education. I became more vocal in the meetings as my understanding of the political situation improved. On some occasions we attended ANC meetings in Rosebank in Johannesburg. At one stage I was nominated for the position of deputy secretary-general of my local union branch. I had to decline this position because my reading and writing were not very good at that stage.

Banning of black political organisations

In 1960, the apartheid regime banned the ANC and PAC, and stepped up its repression of any resistance to its racist practices. The ANC planned to implement a campaign against the pass laws in early 1960, but the PAC hijacked the campaign and embarked on its own anti-pass campaign on 21 March. The result was the Sharpeville Massacre, when the police shot at protesters during a mass demonstration at the Sharpeville Police Station. Altogether 69 people were shot dead and many more wounded. Soon thereafter, the ANC continued with its campaign against the passes by calling for the burning of passbooks. Chief Albert Luthuli, the ANC president, was the first person to burn his book. The situation in the country deteriorated and several political organisations were banned on 8 April 1960.

I attended the final court hearing of the Treason Trial, in which Nelson Mandela appeared as one of the 156 activists arrested and charged with treason in 1956, at the Old Synagogue in Pretoria in 1961. Passport-sized photographs of Mandela were handed out to people entering the courthouse. I wore mine openly on my jacket in the court. I did not care if a policeman saw me with this open display of support for Mandela. The mood at the time was such that many people felt that the political situation could change at any moment. When the Treason Trial ended in March 1961, the remaining defendants that were still on trial were all found not guilty.

When the ANC was banned, underground ANC meetings were held at the union offices since most of its members were also ANC

members. Over the course of time, the police got to know that the ANC was holding illegal meetings at the union offices. One evening when I opened the door to the office, the police were already inside, waiting for us. I was arrested with a group of people, and we were taken to the police station. But the police could not charge us with anything because we were all members of the union, which was a legal organisation. Since they had broken into the union offices before any meeting had taken place, they had no evidence that it was an ANC meeting and thus could not charge any of us. In the morning I asked the charge officer to call the Garforth Hotel to send someone to get me released after paying a £1 fine.

The ANC announced the birth of its armed wing, Umkhonto weSizwe (MK – The Spear of the Nation), on 16 December 1961 with the sabotage of electric power stations and government offices in Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Durban. The increasing violence that black people were facing in the face of oppression had forced the ANC to take up arms against the South African regime.

After the December sabotage, the ANC began recruiting members for MK. The first cadres of MK were drawn from experienced members of ANC branches around the country. Mandela was appointed as the commander-in-chief of MK with the directive to organise the armed struggle against the apartheid regime. I was recruited into a Pretoria MK unit in early 1962. At the time, the Pretoria regional command was led by Peter Mogano, and his second-in-command was Tseleng Mosupye,²⁰ whom I knew from the trade union we both belonged to. Mosupye led the unit I was recruited into.

In January 1962, Mandela, using the pseudonym David Motsamai, slipped out of South Africa to attend a conference of the Pan-African Freedom Movement for East and Central African (PAFMEC) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. At the conference he delivered an address on behalf of the ANC and afterwards met with some of the African leaders present in Addis Ababa. Part of his mission was to tour Africa and make direct contact with African leaders on the continent. His trip was to solicit support for the ANC, as well as find countries which would make places available for MK training camps. Mandela travelled to Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Mali, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana and Senegal. Another part of his trip out of South Africa was spent soliciting support for the ANC in Britain.²¹

Not long after Mandela returned to South Africa in August of 1962, he was arrested. He was convicted on 7 November in the same year and

sentenced to three years' imprisonment on the charge of incitement and an additional two years for leaving the country without valid documents; a total of five years. At the time of his arrest, he had already made arrangements for a number of groups of cadres to leave South Africa for military training in Tanganyika and Algeria.

The Mandela trial, which I attended, was held at the Old Synagogue in Pretoria. I did not tell anyone that I was going to attend the trial, and the day after I had attended, Mr Collins wanted to know where I had been the previous day. I told him that I had attended the Nelson Mandela court proceedings. All he said was that I had to inform him beforehand so that the next time he would know where I was. Mrs Abington warned me to be careful. I only attended the court case again on 7 November 1962, which was the day Mr Mandela was sentenced to five years' imprisonment. A year later he joined Govan Mbeki, Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada and others in the Rivonia Trial after the arrest of the leadership of the ANC, South African Communist Party (SACP) and MK at Lilliesleaf Farm, Rivonia, on 11 July 1963.

Leaving South Africa

Towards the end of 1962, a Pretoria unit of MK that I had joined was planning to sabotage the Pretoria Old Synagogue where the Treason Trial of Mandela, Walter Sisulu and 26 others had been concluded in 1961. The 1962 trial against Mandela had also been held in the Old Synagogue. I was part of the reconnaissance group that gathered the intelligence for this operation. The primary task given to the Pretoria MK unit was to identify and evaluate possible places for sabotage. I helped to conduct reconnaissance at the cultural offices on Church Street and the Old Synagogue where Mandela was sentenced.

Early in 1963, before the operation on the Old Synagogue could take place, Comrade Mamogoba, who had earlier worked at the ANC headquarters at Makhosa House in Johannesburg before the banning, came to talk to me at the Garforth Hotel. Up to that point, I was under orders to be ready to leave the country at any time to receive military training abroad as an MK cadre. Comrade Mamogoba introduced himself and said that Uriah Maleka had told him to come and fetch me. He said that I was to take nothing with me except for a jacket. I left my white work jacket in the telephone booth at the Garforth Hotel and got into a car with Mamogoba. He drove us to Johannesburg. I did not get a chance to tell anyone about my departure.

When we got to Johannesburg, Mamogoba parked the car at a predetermined spot. He left me waiting in the car for a few hours until he came back with Maleka. Maleka then took me to Elias Motsoaledi's house in Soweto. Comrade Motsoaledi was the head of the Johannesburg regional command of MK at the time, and was also originally from Sekhukuniland. Motsoaledi began his political activism in 1945 when he joined the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA) and later the ANC in 1948. He held various leadership positions in the CPSA and Council of Non-European Trade Unions (CNETU), and played a crucial role in the formation of SACTU in 1955 after the dissolution of the CNETU.²²

When we arrived at the house, Maleka introduced me to Motsoaledi's wife and left. Not long after Maleka left, a tall, dark man came into the sitting room where I was and introduced himself by showing me a police identification card. He wanted to know why I was at Motsoaledi's house and where I was working and demanded that I produce my passbook. I said that these were my relatives, that I worked in Pretoria and, at first, I hesitated to give him my passbook. When he threatened to take me to the police station, I handed over my '*dompas*'. He took down all my details and left as soon as he was done. I later learnt that Motsoaledi's house was under constant police surveillance. As soon as the policeman left, Motsoaledi's wife took me to another house near the railway line, where I stayed for a few days awaiting further instructions.

One morning when I was reading the *Rand Daily Mail* newspaper I came across an article about my MK unit in Pretoria. The article stated that an MK unit had placed explosives in the Old Synagogue in an attempt to destroy it. Only one part of the synagogue had been affected by the bombing. The article said that while some arrests had been made, other members of the unit were still at large. I sat there wondering who these other members were. It did not enter my mind that I might have been one of the people that the South African security branch were looking for. Mosupye was one of those arrested for this sabotage attempt. While in detention, Mosupye was brutally beaten by the South African police.²³

After a few days in the house, I was joined by two other cadres. Even though we lived together for a few days, we did not give each other our real names. Motsoaledi came over one evening with news that we would be leaving immediately. The three of us readied ourselves and went with Motsoaledi to another house in Soweto. At this house were two old kombis, an old Volkswagen and 34 other cadres who were to

join us on our trip out of the country. Later that evening, we all got into these vehicles and drove out towards the Botswana (then Bechuanaland) border. A short distance from the border post we got out of the vehicles and walked for about an hour through the bush up to the border fence. We broke through the border fencing, entering Botswana during the dark of night.

Leaving family behind

Before I had left for Pretoria to look for work, my mother had gone to Pretoria to look for my father. She had located him in Eersterust township, and the two of them had reconciled. I had gone to visit my mother while they were in Eersterust, and when I arrived at the house, I had been reticent to meet with my father. When he saw me he was not able to recognise me. He asked my mother who this young boy standing outside the house was. My mother told him that he should go and ask me himself. I told him I was his son. This was our first meeting since he had left when I was very young. While I was working in Brooklyn, I used to visit my parents on weekends. This did not last long, however, because they soon returned to Mehlabane.

At the end of 1962, I received news that my mother had given birth to a baby girl. Because I was under instructions to be ready to leave the country at any time for training, which was supposed to take six months, I did not go home. I thought that I would visit my family when I came back after receiving my military training. I did not think that it would be a lot longer than six months before I would get to meet my family members again.

Outside South Africa

Once inside Botswana, we walked for about an hour in the bush until we found a Bedford truck that we had been told to look out for. The back of the truck, where most of us had to sit, was covered with a canvas. The only supplies we were given for the journey were a drum of water, some goat meat, a bag of mielie meal and pots that had been packed onto the truck for us.

At that point we all took out our '*dompasses*' and burned them. We then gave ourselves MK names, which became the names we would be known by from then on. None of us knew each other's real identity.

I used the surname of an Indian family I had been close to in Marabastad, Reddy, as my first name. For my surname, the name Mazimba popped into my head, and I became Reddy Mazimba, the name I would use for the next 27 years.

We continued driving through Botswana for another day and night. Whenever we came across areas we thought would be a security risk we used the canvas to cover the back of the truck and those inside would keep very quiet.

On one evening during the journey through Botswana, as we were cooking over a fire in the open veld, two San men came out of the darkness into our camp. This was the first time I met a member of the San people. We thought that they wanted food, but through sign language they were able to make us understand that they wanted cigarettes. After we gave them some cigarettes, the men disappeared into the Botswana night as quietly as they had appeared.

We had been instructed to drive through to Kazungula, a southern border town of Zambia (then Northern Rhodesia) that now lies at a point where four countries – Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia – meet. At Kazungula we got out of the Bedford truck and had to walk in the bushes next to the road, following the route of the road. As we walked along, we had been told to look out for UNIP (United International Independence Party) Land Rovers with drivers. UNIP was the Zambian liberation organisation led by Kenneth Kaunda fighting for political independence from British colonialism. UNIP and the ANC had good relations and the organisation had provided several forms of support during the period, which they would continue to do after Zambia became independent from Britain in October 1964.

Once in the Land Rovers, we were driven to the town of Livingstone. In Livingstone we were driven directly to the railway station where we were met by the ANC's regional representative, Sam Masemola. Masemola had already purchased the train tickets for the group to travel to Lusaka.

That evening we left on the train to Lusaka. Upon arrival in Lusaka the next morning, we were taken to the UNIP Freedom House. Arrangements had been made for all the groups that arrived there to travel on to Tanganyika (which became Tanzania the following year).

All the different groups of cadres who had travelled from South Africa that were in Lusaka at the time then got onto the regular buses that drove between Lusaka and the Tanganyikan border. The trip took a couple of

nights, with us sleeping in small huts along the way. The many mosquitoes that attacked us in every hut we stayed in tormented us on those nights.

As we neared the border post between Northern Rhodesia and Tanganyika, we got off the buses and crossed the fence into Tanganyika on foot. None of us had any kind of documentation with us. On the Tanganyikan side we walked to the emigration office at the border post. Here Comrade Masemola was waiting for us with the necessary documentation for entry into Tanganyika. On the entry forms we filled in our status as refugees. Some of the cadres had forgotten the names that they had given themselves in the Botswanan bush and had to think of new names while filling in the forms. I had chosen a simple name, which was easy to remember.

Warm welcome in Tanganyika

The same buses we had taken from Lusaka were waiting on the Tanganyikan side to take us to the first town after the border post, Mbeya. In Mbeya we were warmly received by a South African nurse, Edith Tunyiswa, who received incoming ANC exiles and facilitated their travel to Dar es Salaam, the capital of Tanganyika.

In 1961, when Tanganyika achieved its independence from Britain, President Julius Nyerere asked the ANC leader, Oliver Tambo, to provide medical personnel for the Tanganyikan ministry of health. The ANC mobilised 20 nurses from South Africa to answer this call. These nurses were appointed in different places by the Tanganyikan government, and Nurse Edith was one of this group of 20. The nurses had been recruited from the Eastern Cape, Natal and Transvaal by Govan Mbeki, Johnny Makatini and Walter Sisulu. The 20 women left South Africa in December 1961.²⁴

We spent the night at Nurse Edith's house, and the next morning took a bus to Itigi. At Itigi railway station we boarded the train that came down from the Congo on its way to Dar es Salaam.

The ANC had opened its office in Dar es Salaam, on Nkrumah Street, immediately after Tanganyika's independence in 1961. When we arrived at the city's main railway station, we were met by ANC comrades from the local office. We were all interviewed at the ANC offices and then taken to Luthuli House in Buguruni district.

The ANC had two houses in Dar es Salaam at the time. Mandela House accommodated the organisation's academic students in transit,

while Luthuli House was the transit and debriefing residence through which all MK members passed.

At Luthuli House, we were welcomed and briefed by the comrades who ran the office. We then settled into a routine. Every morning we did physical training, some road running and then we cooked breakfast for ourselves. We had political discussions about the struggle during the course of the day. At Luthuli House there was a place we called '*pereng*', a Sotho word for horse, where we would relax and play football. The grounds were given this name because there was a large coconut tree that was bent over such that the top of the tree touched the ground with the roots still in the ground, resembling a horse. On weekends we were taken on trips to the seaside for recreation.

Nimrod Sejake, who was in charge of Luthuli House, and other leaders of the ANC present in Tanzania, such as Moses Kotane,²⁵ JB Marks and Yusuf Dadoo,²⁶ used to come and speak to us on various topics about our liberation struggle. Discussions would focus on communism, socialism, non-racialism and apartheid, with the South African national democratic revolution as the main focus.

The ANC's deputy president-general, OR Tambo, was supposed to live in an ANC residence in Kurasini suburb, which was problematic for 'OR', or 'Chief', as he was affectionately called. The ANC house in Kurasini housed the medical facilities and a chicken den. OR was asthmatic and the chicken feathers from the fowl run on the property at Kurasini affected his health. Because of this, he came to live with us at Luthuli House in Buguruni. This was the first time I met with the 'Chief'.

There were two rooms and a large, open lounge, with very sparse furnishing at Luthuli House. Initially we did not have beds to sleep on. We used grass mats and small blankets and bundled up with each other at night in the middle of the floor. Mosquitoes were a big problem. There were many of us, and mattresses were set up in most of the available spaces. OR would set out his mattress at nighttime in the centre of the lounge, and we would set up our mattresses around his. It was during this time that I got to know him. OR would be the first person to get up in the morning and have a shower. He would go out to work at the office during the day, then return and have supper with us in the evening. OR would often talk to us about politics and our liberation struggle in the evenings.

In Dar es Salaam, I was surprised to see so many women wearing long black dresses. I thought that they were in mourning. Coffee sellers used to sell their wares in the street. They would carry copper kettles

in which they kept hot coffee and rang bells to get the attention of potential customers. At first, I was not aware that I had to pay for the coffee, I thought that it was just a friendly fellow giving me coffee. After the coffee had been served to me the first time, I had to go and borrow money from the office to pay for it. At Luthuli House, when you got sick, you were given a small sum of money for transport to the doctor. It was a fairly substantial amount of money at that time. We stayed at Luthuli House for some time, before leaving for Algeria.

CHAPTER 3

Travelling across Africa

The time came for us, a group of 35, to leave for military training in Algeria. Leonard Pitso, Teddy Ncapayi, Martin Skosana, Alfred Willie and Christopher Mrabalala were part of this group that left Tanganyika in early 1964. The group left Dar es Salaam on a bus headed for Kenya. As soon as we crossed the Kenyan side of the border, the driver stopped, and we got off the bus. We followed our leaders into the trees, where eight Mercedes-Benzes and a minibus, with drivers, were waiting for us. We got into the cars and were driven off to the Uganda border post.

When we arrived at the Ugandan immigration office, the border control officers asked us for our passports. When we had left Luthuli House, each one of us had been given an A4 page with our names handwritten on it and an attached portrait photograph. When we presented these A4 pages instead of passports, the officials were not impressed. They were looking for officially printed passports, which none of us possessed. 'We want passports, not pieces of paper. These you can take to the toilet,' they shouted at us.

Finally, the Ugandan Head of Immigration came to the border post. The ANC leadership had informed the Ugandan authorities that a group of ANC cadres would be passing through the border post. However, none of the officials at the border post had been made aware of the situation and had therefore been giving us a hard time. After the head of immigration took over, he just asked how many of us were going through, and without any further fuss we were allowed to travel through Uganda to South Sudan. We had no further problems exiting Uganda or entering Sudan with our 'A4 documents'.

The next stage in the journey was to get to Juba in South Sudan from where we would travel by ferry to North Sudan. This ferry left only once a week, on a Sunday. On the way to Juba the minibus we were travelling in had a puncture, delaying our journey by a week. In Juba we were accommodated at a secondary school for another week. We told the locals that we were a group of students from Dar es Salaam University on our way to Cairo University in Egypt.

The Saturday before we left for Egypt, a local cultural group organised a soccer match between us and their members. This posed a serious problem because most of us had never kicked a soccer ball in our lives, and the only clothing we had was what we were wearing at the time. We had all left South Africa with only the clothes on our backs.

So, on that Saturday, the Dar es Salaam 11 (the name we gave our team) played against the Juba 11. The match was hilarious, with none of the Dar es Salaam 11 managing to keep the ball or to pass it around. The other team ran circles around us. By half-time we had all managed to pick up injuries, but we had to continue. When the match was finally over, we all looked like war casualties and had been beaten 11-nil.

In Juba, I witnessed the practice of slavery of Africans by other Africans for the first time, and for me it was worse than the oppression we were experiencing in South Africa. What made it appear even worse was that those who were enslaved did not recognise that they were being oppressed and accepted their status as normal. When the boats manned by Arabs arrived at the shore of the Nile River (known as the Bahr al Jabal in South Sudan), people used to rush to the boats and the Arabs would beat them mercilessly. I could not understand why the locals would just rush to the boats when they knew they would get beaten.

In 1956, Sudan had gained its independence from its dual colonisers, Britain and Egypt. The southern part of the country was colonised by Britain and the northern part by Egypt. In 1962, six years after independence, a civil war broke out in the country. The war had been started by a rebel group called Anya Nya that was at the forefront of the liberation struggle of the people of the south against the ruling northern Sudanese. The conflict ceased ten years later in 1972, through an agreement reached in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.²⁷ It was during the period of conflict that we passed through Sudan, and what we saw of the slavery practised there appalled us. There is a long history of slavery in Sudan, with evidence of it still being practised decades after England had declared the slave trade illegal in 1806, yet it persisted even after

independence from Britain and Egypt in 1956. In large part, the slaves were southern Sudanese and the slavers northern Sudanese.²⁸

On the Sunday morning we boarded the ferry in Juba and travelled to Kosti, a northern Sudanese town where the water routes stopped. At Kosti we boarded a train that travelled through Khartoum to Wadi Shal. At midday on the train trip before reaching Wadi Shal, the train just stopped, leaving us to wonder what had happened. Here, in the middle of nowhere, the Arabs who were Muslim, got off the train with some water and a small mat. The Arabs used the water to wash themselves and performed their noon prayers on the small mats. For most of us this was the first experience of the Muslim culture, and this made many of us realise just how far we had travelled from home. We also felt that they had taken too long to pray because it was very hot. After the prayers we continued to Wadi Shal.

At Wadi Shal we got off the train and boarded a boat on the White Nile, which took us to a place just before the Aswan Dam. Here we got off the boat and boarded another train that took us to Cairo's main railway station. This train was so full that people were sitting on top of the train. There were goats, chickens, sugar cane and just about anything the people needed to transport, all sharing the same space as the passengers. At Cairo railway station our group was met by the ANC's chief representative to Egypt, Piliso Mazwai.²⁹ He took us to a hotel where we managed to clean ourselves for the first time since leaving Tanganyika.

In Cairo, the streets are very narrow, and buildings almost touch each other across the street. Our hotel rooms were on the second and third floors. After having had a good shower, I paid my colleagues a visit. All of them were in one room, leaning out of the window, scandalously attracted to a young lady in a room in the building across the street, naked and unaware of us. We could not believe our eyes.

Training in Algeria

The following morning, Mazwai put our group on a plane headed for Algiers, Algeria. Although we had cleaned up and had a rest, we still looked very bad because we were still wearing the same clothes we had been wearing when we left South Africa. It was the first time I flew in an aeroplane, and this was really an adventure! At Algiers airport, military trucks and soldiers were waiting to greet us. We got onto the trucks

and were taken to a camp in the city, where we had a good wash. In the Algerian capital city, our reception was a low-key affair so that our presence there would not become publicly known. We spent one night in Algiers.

The following morning, we were driven in a military coach to the military camp where our training was to take place. The camp was situated in a small town near the Algerian-Moroccan border. This was around the beginning of February 1963.

When we arrived at the camp, we were given a military reception with a military band playing. This had been organised by the camp commander to welcome us, the first group of South African freedom fighters to receive military training in Algeria. After we had been received by the camp commander we were taken to the dormitories where we were to sleep.

Our first activity was to clean the camp, which was very dirty, and then to paint it. The camp had last been used during the Algerian revolution, which had ended in March 1962. The storerooms were full of dirty and bloodied uniforms that had to be washed and cleaned. There was a range of uniforms, including officers', camouflage and combat uniforms, which we used after they had been thoroughly cleaned. Some of the uniforms were so badly bloodied and damaged that they could not be used.

After this had gone on for some time, it got to the point that we had to complain that we had not come to Algeria to work, but to train. The Algerian camp commander said there was no alternative and that if we wanted to use the place for training we would have to clean it up. After two weeks the camp was ready, and our military training began. We had two types of uniforms: one was made of silk-like material and the other was our official uniform for going out. On weekends, we would wash them. We did not have an iron, so we had to put wet uniforms under our mattresses. An Algerian called Lemy was in charge of us. He always said that we looked like bourgeoisie.

The Algerians spoke Arabic and French, and an interpreter was required for us to understand one another. I tried out my French and did some translation work before an interpreter, Luis Cabral from Guinea-Bissau, arrived. He would translate the commander's Arabic and French into English for us. Cabral's translation was excellent, and even though many of us had a limited understanding of English, we understood what he was saying.

We were trained in different disciplines, beginning with theoretical training in the classrooms, after which we would move onto the fields for practical training. Live ammunition was used in all the practical training. In one of the fire training exercises, a trench was dug between the shooters and the target. As one group fired at the target, the other group would lie in the trench with bullets flying overhead. This was done to accustom the cadres to the sound of bullets passing overhead.

We were given training in the use of weapons such as AK-47s, M1s and pistols. For tactical training, which covered guerrilla warfare techniques, we were taken into the desert and into the mountains of the surrounding areas. In explosives training, we were provided training in the use of explosives such as TNT and plastic explosives, as well as the use of detonators and the use of the accompanying detonator cord. All the cadres underwent the same basic military training.

Members of other African liberation movements also came for military training in Mariniya. This included members of Frelimo (Front for the Liberation of Mozambique), who were accompanied by their leader, Samora Machel, members of the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), and freedom fighters from Guinea-Bissau. These groups of cadres were accommodated and trained in different parts of the camp in Mariniya.

On one occasion during our training in Mariniya, the president of Algeria, Ahmed Ben Bella, came to pay us a visit, and as we neared the end of our training, Joe Modise and Raymond Mhlaba came to Algeria to watch over the training. Mhlaba had been appointed commander-in-chief of MK after the arrest and imprisonment of Mandela. When our training in Algeria came to an end in October 1963, Mhlaba went back to South Africa where he was later arrested. Modise had been instructed to go to Tanzania, where he remained in exile. In Tanzania, after Mhlaba's arrest, Modise, as MK commander-in-chief, oversaw the training of MK cadres at ANC camps, as well as coordinating the influx of new trainees.

Most of the cadres were flown from Mariniya to Algiers, then via Kenya to Tanganyika. In Algiers, some members of the group were instructed to stay behind and wait for further orders. Upon arrival in Dar es Salaam, the leadership had informed us that it would not be safe to go back to South Africa. While Mandela had been serving his sentence in prison, other MK High Command members had been arrested in a raid on Lilliesleaf Farm in Rivonia on 11 July that year.

Many other key ANC members had also been arrested in police raids and a large number had been forced into exile. Following the apartheid regime's violent crackdown on the movement, the machinery to receive infiltrated cadres in South Africa had been destroyed, making it very difficult for us to go back home. All MK cadres had been advised to wait for communication about the further steps that would be taken. We spent November and December of 1963 at Luthuli House in Dar es Salaam. Not much had changed during our absence; Mr Sejake was still in charge. The daily programme remained the same.

Training in the Soviet Union

In late December 1963, my group, which had been joined by a number of new recruits, left for further military training in the Soviet Union. There were about 128 cadres that left from Dar es Salaam, including Joe Slovo,³⁰ the old man Mpepe, Ronnie Kasrils,³¹ Moses Madiba and Chris Hani.³² Included in the group were two women, Gertrude Nzimande and Poppy Maluleka; they were from the group of twenty nurses who had been recruited by the ANC to support the Tanganyikan government.

From Dar es Salaam we were flown in a Soviet airline Aeroflot flight to Cairo, then on to the Ukraine. The second leg of the journey to the Ukraine was a very long flight. Finally, we landed in Odessa, the provincial capital of the Ukraine, where we began our training at the Odessa Military Academy.

The academy was on the shores of the Black Sea and was selected because the weather was mild by Soviet standards.³³ It was snowing and very cold when we landed in Odessa. We were all still wearing the clothes we had been wearing in Dar es Salaam, which had been very hot at the time. After landing at the airstrip, we were taken straight from the plane onto a bus, where large, thick overcoats were given to all of us. It was very dark when we arrived at the camp. We later realised that this was normal weather in the Ukraine; but for us it seemed like we had landed in another world. Most of us had never experienced snow before. We were housed in dormitories whose windows were closed and covered with newspapers. During the first ten days that we spent in isolation we underwent medical check-ups.

The military academy was large and divided into three areas. We were stationed in one area. A second area was for military trainees

from several African states that had just become independent, while a third area was being used by Cubans.

At the academy, a panel was constituted by the Russian generals and the MK leaders, Joe Slovo and Mpepe. This panel determined which MK cadres would go into the different areas of specialisation, as well as who the instructors for these areas would be. General training was conducted simultaneously with specialised training.

I was chosen to specialise in artillery. When it was explained to me what this training entailed, I told the commander that I did not believe that I would be able to carry it off. I did not have a good formal education and did not have the background in algebra, trigonometry, and geometry which was required for artillery training. The Russian general on the panel posed a few simple arithmetic questions to me, and when I answered correctly, he said that I would be able to cope with the training. I then agreed to try my hand at it.

Artillery training was divided into two main branches. One branch was barrel groove artillery, which is training on a barrel cannon that has grooves in it. The other branch is smooth barrel bore artillery, which includes training in the use of mortar and rockets. These weapons do not have grooves as they are mounted weaponry. Mortar is placed in a smooth barrel, using boost chargers for discharge. Instruction at the academy was conducted in two phases. First, the theory was taught in the classroom by one instructor. Thereafter, another instructor conducted the practical training out in the field.

We were also provided with political education. We were taught Marxism and the history of the liberation struggle and the position of whites in South Africa. These discussions helped us understand that our struggle was not against individual whites, but against the apartheid political system. We had lessons about the structure and development of the family from matriarchal to patriarchal systems. We were taught that women were not inferior and that such notions were manmade and had nothing to do with God. South Africa received a lot of attention in the political education classes, where we were taught that all people were important, irrespective of their race, colour or creed.

Training at the Odessa Military Academy in the Soviet Union was conducted over ten months, from January to October 1964. Upon completion we were flown back to Tanganyika, which had now joined with the island of Zanzibar and become Tanzania.

Learning to ride a motorbike

After being banned in South Africa by the apartheid government in April 1960, the ANC set up its headquarters in Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. After the Rivonia Trial and wave of arrests of MK and ANC leaders in the wake of the trial, the Tanzanian government gave the ANC land in a town called Kongwa, located about 400 kilometres west of Dar es Salaam, to establish its first military training camp. Living conditions at the military camp were as tough as those of life in prison; cadres had an insufficient supply of essential necessities such as food, clothes, health services and proper accommodation.³⁴ The only building was a dilapidated railway station, while the MK cadres spent up to three years living in tents. Separate camps were established at Kongwa for cadres of three other African liberation movements: the MPLA, the African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde (PAIGC) and the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO). All the military training camps of the various liberation movements at Kongwa were coordinated by the Tanzanian prime minister's office.

The group I was with went straight to Kongwa when we returned from the Soviet Union. I stayed a few weeks at Luthuli House in Dar es Salaam because I was suffering from constant nose bleeds. It was still not possible for any of us to go back to South Africa largely because the ANC was in the process of restructuring; the raid on Rivonia and the subsequent arrests had dealt a severe blow to the leadership and structure of the organisation. At this point it was becoming clear to most of us that getting back to South Africa would not happen in the short-term.

The time we spent in the Soviet Union had given the liberation movement some space to recover its destroyed infiltration machinery, but this was proving to be a long and difficult task. The infiltration routes back to South Africa were through Southern Rhodesia, Bechuanaland (Botswana) and Mozambique. Southern Rhodesia was still controlled by the British, while Bechuanaland was a British protectorate and Mozambique was under Portuguese rule. The ANC leadership was working hard to open viable infiltration routes for trained military personnel to get back home.

We were joined at Luthuli House by a few women who had recently arrived from South Africa. One of these was Jacqueline Molefe, who often cooked meals with me. But we always quarrelled when she complained that I was not a good cook. There were ten motorbikes at Mandela House

that had been donated by the government of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) to the ANC. The students would use these motorbikes for their evening escapades. OR Tambo told me to go to Mandela House to bring the motorbikes over to Luthuli House before the students damaged them. I told OR that I did not know how to ride a motorbike. He told me that I should just go over and ask someone to show me how to do so.

When I got to Mandela House, I said that I was there to fetch the motorbikes and was given the keys. I then asked someone to show me how to start the bike, change the gears and use the clutch. I rode the first motorbike to Luthuli House and then walked back to Mandela House to get the next bike. I did this until all ten bikes were at Luthuli House. At the end of that exercise, I was a very good motorbike rider.

Frustration and leadership tussles

At Kongwa, the trained MK cadres were growing frustrated while waiting to get back to South Africa. We spent our time on agricultural activities and improving our military knowledge. We also had political discussions with cadres from the other liberation movements, and Kongwa became a university for many of us. There were daily exercises and training to keep us busy, but at the back of the cadres' minds was the thought of getting back home to carry out the armed struggle against the apartheid regime. Food and medicine had become a problem. On one occasion, Comrade JB Marks visited Kongwa to brief us. He said he knew that we were angry.

Ambrose Makiwane had been appointed as Kongwa camp commander, under the leadership of Joe Modise. Makiwane saw the opportunity to become the commander-in-chief of MK during these difficult times for the ANC, and a huge tussle for power flared up between Makiwane and Modise.

The NEC of the ANC, based in Morogoro, tried to resolve this power struggle, without any success. Makiwane created a number of problems in the Kongwa camp because of his management approach and the disciplining of trainees. This conflict created an unhealthy situation, dividing the camp. Several comrades left the liberation movement because of the harsh treatment that was experienced under Makiwane's leadership. The conflict between Makiwane and Modise also diverted the leadership from the real challenge of creating mechanisms to get us back to South Africa.

At Kongwa, each cadre had different duties, as well as an occasional full day of coordinating camp activities as 'man on duty'. One of my first duties at camp was as a medical officer. One day when I was the man on duty, I rushed around to make sure that everyone was awake, even though we had a bugle wake-up call. As I went into the dormitory, a hand came out from behind the door, hitting me hard in the face. I did not see who had hit me. I then realised that no one was coming out for the formation before breakfast that morning and that the cadres were staging a mutiny. Fortunately, none of the personnel were allowed to carry arms in the camp, so there was no chance of a bloody confrontation. It was a very serious situation, but it was somehow settled, and the cadres finally came out to eat their breakfast. However, the cause of the discontent was not resolved. On one occasion, a group of cadres from the then Natal province stole a truck with the intention of either making their way home or going to confront the leadership in Morogoro. They were intercepted by the Tanzanian authorities shortly after they had left Kongwa and later charged with desertion and theft.³⁵

I believe that the problems at Kongwa camp were one of the main reasons why the ANC leadership embarked upon joint military operations with ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People's Union) in Rhodesia in 1967. Apart from helping to open viable infiltration routes to South Africa, these ventures also helped to ease the frustrations of cadres from the military camps.

Christmas of 1965

In Kongwa, cadres from the same region in South Africa were placed in groups. I was part of a group of 25 in the Sekhukhuniland group. This was part of the ANC strategy to bring together trained militants who spoke the same language and were from the same area who could infiltrate the areas they were most familiar with. At the time the ANC was infiltrating small groups of two to three people through Bechuanaland. It was decided that I would be a part of a group that would go back home to engage the enemy. The Sekhukhuniland group left Kongwa for Zambia in December 1965, led by Eric Mtshali. Zambia had gained its independence from British colonial rule the year before, and the newly independent government had offered its assistance to the ANC liberation movement. When we left Tanzania, the ANC administration

gave us travel papers, which were once again just A4 note paper. Our names were written at the top, with some other details and a photo stapled onto it.

We first drove in a Land Rover to Morogoro, where we stayed in a big house with a huge yard. After some time, we left for the Zambian border in a Land Rover on Christmas Eve. Two cadres who had their South African driver's licences with them were our drivers. The group experienced no problems exiting Tanzania.

On the Zambian side of the border post, the Zambian officials looked at our travel papers and pointed out that they were not passports. Our commander, Eric Mtshali, spent a long time explaining to the Zambian officials about the liberation struggle in South Africa and the reason why we did not have official passports. The border officials were not interested in what he had to say, telling us that they did not want to hear about politics. They were adamant that our papers were inadequate for entry into Zambia and that we would have to produce passports to enter the country.

The officials then asked who had been driving the Land Rover. One of the comrades produced a South African driving licence. This caused a further problem, because the name on the licence and the name on the A4 page did not match. This was because of our practice of using pseudonyms. The officials were unrelenting. We sat there at the Zambian border post from Christmas Eve into Christmas morning, begging the British-trained border officials to let us into Zambia. The atmosphere in Zambia at the time was not very friendly towards the ANC.

The border authorities finally let us go through the border post early on Christmas morning. We continued on our drive to Kabwe in Zambia, but the Land Rover suddenly had engine problems and could only travel on four-wheel drive, which was very, very slow. As we approached Kapiri Mposhi, we encountered a large police roadblock. The police were very unfriendly and uninformed about liberation struggles, and we were promptly arrested and placed in jail. We ended up spending Christmas day and night in the Kapiri Mposhi jail and could only listen to the festivities going on outside.

Eric Mtshali negotiated for a long time with the police for our release and eventually managed to call the ANC treasurer-general, Thomas Nkobi, in Lusaka. Nkobi explained our situation to the Kapiri Mposhi police chief. At around ten the next morning, a comrade from Lusaka arrived to fetch us in a minibus. He came with letters from the

ANC leadership requesting our release. We were finally released and driven to Lusaka.

We were taken to an ANC house in the Lilanda suburb of Lusaka. Two men who went out to work during the day lived in the three-bedroomed house. For security reasons, we had to take precautions to conceal the presence of the 25 people in our group, which was a challenging and frustrating time for us. People in the area were aware that two men lived in the house, and that they would leave for work in the morning and only come back in the late afternoon. None of us was allowed to go out, make a noise, switch on the radio, open windows or curtains or do our washing. It would be immediately noticeable if 25 men's shirts were found hanging on the washing line. If we required anything, we had to wait for the two men to bring it to us after work. Although by this time Zambia had already acquired its independence from Britain, there were still many British officials in Lusaka. We could not take the chance of revealing our presence to them because we were not sure how they would react to the presence of so many trained guerrillas in the area.

We waited for three months in the Lilanda house, until the ANC decided to build two additional rooms next to the house. The two rooms helped to ease the pressure and frustration we were experiencing. After another three months we were finally allowed to go out in groups of two or three. But we still had to be very cautious. The apartheid regime had long tentacles, and was constantly looking for ways to sabotage the ANC.

The group could not stay in Lusaka for much longer without being exposed, and we were taken to a farm in Livingstone, about 474 kilometres from Lusaka. The farmhouse had much more living space than the house in Lilanda, and we could go outside to cook and take walks in the bush. The farm was situated on a hill and was only accessible from one side. Anyone approaching the farm could be seen from a distance. It was a welcome change for us.

When the Zambian immigration department was eventually made aware of our presence on the farm, they wanted to know who we were and what we were up to. At that time, the Zambian police were under the leadership of a man named Botha who had worked with the British. It soon became clear that Botha was determined to place all of us under arrest.

One day we saw a group of immigration officials, distinctly visible in their black pants and caps and white shirts, approaching the farm.

The group immediately went into the nearby bush and spread out in a formation that kept the officials under constant observation. When the officials arrived at the farmhouse, they found it empty. They left behind the police who had accompanied them to occupy the house, waiting for us to return. While occupying the house, these security men helped themselves to our supply of food. For the next few days we had to stay in the bush without food.

A plan was devised to assess the situation, and two cadres, dressed up as immigration officials, went to the farmhouse. The police at the farmhouse accepted the cadres as immigration officials and stood to attention while they were allowed to go through the place. The two cadres reported back to us that all our food had been eaten and that the police were sleeping in our beds.

After three days we managed to send a message to the ANC office in Lusaka. The Zambian authorities were informed that the house in Livingstone was being used by members of the ANC. However, the Zambians wanted to question us, which the ANC could not allow to happen. After some time spent in negotiations with the Zambians, we were told that we could go back to the farmhouse while the matter was being sorted out with the Zambian authorities.

The group went back to the farmhouse, and as soon as we entered, the house was surrounded by the police. We were arrested and taken to the Livingstone police station for extensive questioning. They wanted to know who we were and what we were up to. It appeared that they wanted to send us back to South Africa. But Zambia was now officially a member of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). At its inaugural conference in Addis Ababa on 24 May 1963, the OAU established the OAU Liberation Committee, thereby registering its full support for the liberation of territories still under colonial rule. This included South Africa, still under minority rule, and committed the independent African states' support for the liberation movements. As such, OAU member states could not send guerrillas of the liberation movement they captured in their territories to face imprisonment in the countries under colonial rule. After questioning us, the police took us back to the farmhouse. A short while later we received a directive to leave Livingstone and return to Lusaka.

Our primary aim was to return to South Africa. While we were on the farm in Livingstone, ten cadres from our group had been selected to carry out reconnaissance for a route to South Africa from Zambia.

This route would entail crossing the Zambezi River into Botswana and then going through Botswana before entering South Africa. The reconnaissance unit did their work and recommended that the remaining fifteen at Livingstone would be able to use the route to get back to South Africa.

But, just before we were arrested by the Zambian police in Livingstone, the reconnaissance unit had been arrested by the Botswana police while trying to cross the border into South Africa. Botswana was also a member of the OAU and could not send those arrested to South Africa. So, Botswana sent the unit back to Zambia. This led to a change in the plans for us. We were then deployed into different areas of Lusaka.

I was part of a group of four that was sent to a former colonial farm outside Lusaka. We stayed in the small, four-roomed house that had been built for the farm labourers. There were corrugated iron doors between the rooms. One room was used for cooking and the others for sleeping and living areas. On 8 January 1966, we received a goat from the treasurer-general of the ANC. The goat was to be used to celebrate the anniversary of the ANC. We tied the goat to a tree and went for a walk. Morodi Mashigo (Graham Gadimphelele Morodi) was the only cadre who did not go with us. When we came back, he told us that the goat had disappeared. He said that he tried to catch it, but he could not. We searched for the goat all over, but never found it. A cadre whom I recall only as Ntsele got very annoyed because it had been his turn to cook. Not long thereafter, he broke our radio, which became a huge problem for us.

We stayed at this farm awaiting further instructions. In the meantime, the ANC and ZAPU were finalising preparations for joint military operations in Rhodesia, which would begin the following year, 1967. Meetings between the two parties and the training of cadres to cross the Zambezi River into Rhodesia were conducted at the farm where I was stationed.

These operations were known as the Wankie (1967) and Sipolilo (1968) campaigns and were undertaken by joint MK-ZIPRA (Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army, the military wing of ZAPU) units. The Standing Committee on Defence of the OAU Liberation Committee had suggested such operations to the ANC and the other liberation movements of southern Africa. The primary objective of the joint ANC-ZAPU operations for the ANC was to clear a path for trained militants to go back to South Africa through Rhodesia. It had been clear to both

organisations that there had been close links between the two regimes of Rhodesia and South Africa. Their security forces conducted joint raids into neighbouring African countries such as Zambia and Botswana in search of cadres of the liberation movements, which included the ANC and ZAPU.

In military terms, these campaigns helped to heighten the political propaganda of both organisations and their military wings. I was not chosen to go on this mission. Many cadres I knew were able to cross the Zambezi River in August 1967 and enter Rhodesia and continue until they reached the Wankie Game Reserve. There were several skirmishes between the opposing forces in this area and a high number of deaths and casualties on both sides.

The main mission of opening a route to South Africa through Zimbabwe failed. Some of the cadres were arrested and jailed in Rhodesia while others managed to evade arrest in Rhodesia and escaped to Botswana where they were arrested by the authorities.

In Botswana, ANC cadres could not engage militarily with members of the Botswana security forces when they were confronted, because Botswana was a member of the OAU. All the ANC cadres could do was surrender, submit to arrest, and then wait in prison until they were sent back to Zambia. By contrast, in Rhodesia, ZAPU and ANC cadres confronted by members of the Rhodesian and South African security forces were allowed to engage with them militarily.

The joint military operations took place until the middle of 1968 and facilitated the infiltration of a small number of MK soldiers into South Africa. At the end of 1968, all the MK soldiers still based in Rhodesia were recalled to Lusaka when the joint operations ceased.

Formation of the Security Section of the ANC

While I was on the farm outside Lusaka the ANC had formed a section to provide security for the organisation's leaders. Comrade JD (John Dube, whose real name was Boy Adolphus Mvemve) and I received instructions to go back to Lilanda and report for duty as OR's personal bodyguards. The Lilanda house where we had previously stayed was close to the house where OR was staying. JD and I went to live there after a telephone had been installed in the house. JD and I served as OR's bodyguards for the next two years, until the end of 1969. During this time, Ruth Mompoti was OR's personal secretary.³⁶

OR Tambo, who was a very fast driver, was still driving himself around. JD and I performed different tasks on alternate days. On the day when one of us was not providing security to OR, we had to man the telephone. When a call came through for OR, whoever was on duty would have to run down the road to his house to inform him about the call. He would then get into the car and drive very fast to the house to take the call. JD and I were worried that OR's driving would end up in an accident. We devised a plan to stop him from driving. We approached OR and JD said: 'Chief, there is something we would like to discuss with you.' JD explained that it would save time if we had the car with us at the house where the telephone had been installed. This way, when a phone call came for OR, we could immediately drive to his house to bring him over, which would be much more efficient.

After listening, OR said: 'Oh, I see. The main thing is you don't want me to drive?' JD protested, saying: 'No, it's not that. We just think that it is important to make things easier for you.' OR agreed to our plan, repeating: 'Oh, I understand, you don't want me to drive. That's okay.' He then wanted to know which one of us would be his driver. Since neither JD nor I knew how to drive, we told him that there was a Comrade Khumalo who was a licensed driver. We told OR that we would bring the driver over the next day to meet with him. Comrade Khumalo was a soft-spoken, calm man who came over to be introduced to OR. OR said to Khumalo: 'It is good that you will be my driver because I don't really like driving around.'

OR then told us of an incident that had occurred years before when he was still living in Bizana in the then Transkei. He used to drive an old English Model '48, and on one occasion he had driven into a person riding on a bicycle. The memory of that incident had stayed with him ever since. Fortunately, the person was only lightly injured and OR had managed to drive him to a hospital. In spite of this incident, he proceeded to tell Khumalo how to be a careful driver. OR would challenge Khumalo when he was in a hurry and threaten to take over at the wheel when he felt that Khumalo was not driving fast enough, especially on long trips. OR would take off his spectacles and then ask Khumalo why he was crawling. When Khumalo told us these stories, we would just say that he needed to find a way to manage 'the old man'.

I got to know OR quite well during the two years that I worked with him. He was a very respectful person, who was always offering advice to us youngsters. He spoke to us with respect and treated us as though we

were his own children. He was a likeable man who was easy to talk to, and whose presence commanded our respect.

Back to the Soviet Union

In 1970, the ANC leadership decided to send its MK members, in groups, for refreshment training in different areas of the Soviet Union. This occurred a year after the Tanzanian government expelled both the PAC and the ANC from its territory. In 1969, ANC and PAC camps in Tanzania were closed down.³⁷ This followed a coup attempt by a group of politicians and a few army officers led by Oscar Kambona that were apparently supported by various factions of the southern African liberation movements.³⁸ The ANC had to withdraw all its military personnel from Kongwa camp within fourteen days of receiving a notice to vacate in July 1969. Most members of MK were sent to the Soviet Union at short notice.³⁹

I was part of the group that was sent to Simferopol in the Crimea, Ukraine. During the time we spent at this military base we were not allowed to go out of the camp, except when we were training. The camp was surrounded by a high fence with a footpath on the outside which was used by many villagers. It was easy for cadres to ask villagers to buy them vodka using money handed over to them. At first when money was handed over to some villagers to buy the vodka, they would not return with either the vodka or the money. Some of the guards would also buy vodka for the MK cadres. On Fridays, some instructors would bring us vodka that they had purchased for us. In winter we used to throw the empty bottles of vodka into the snow. However, when the snow started melting, these bottles would be clearly seen in large numbers. This frustrated the camp authorities because they had never caught us with any vodka.

Russian officials would often visit us while we were relaxing in the sitting room. But on one occasion one of the officials decided to taste the contents of one cadre's flask. It was vodka. He had discovered where the cadres were keeping their alcohol. On another occasion, one of our comrades, Hlakia, was walking with the flask of vodka tucked under his armpit. When one of the Russian officials went past him, Hlakia was unable to salute him. This appeared suspicious to the official, who wanted to know what the problem was. He then ordered other cadres to search Hlakia. Hlakia started running, and during his race to get

himself out of danger he drank all the vodka. When he was eventually caught, the flask was empty.

On another occasion, the police came to report that two South Africans from the camp had been arrested in town. It was known that the South Africans would often leave the camp and go to town. Prior to this occasion, none had been caught by the police. The police were delighted that they had had an opportunity to prove a point. We denied that any of the South Africans had gone into town, and to justify our argument we requested a roll call. Every one of us was present, and the police were embarrassed. Then we accompanied the police sergeants to the police station, where we discovered that the individuals who had been arrested were from Guinea-Bissau. We stayed in Simferopol from 1970 to 1972. When the time came for us to leave, everyone was sad. The locals had come to love us and must have realised that we were in all likelihood going back to the battlefield.

About ten of us were sent to the Odessa Military Academy where we had undergone training in 1964. Three of us from this group were sent to an area about 12 kilometres outside Moscow called Skhodnya (or Shodnya), which we knew as the Northern Training Centre. Here we met with other comrades that we joined in a survival course, which included underground combat work or politico-military training. We also did communication training including morse code. While I was in Skhodnya I was recruited into the Communist Party by Moses Mabhida and Chris Hani.

A part of the survival training was conducted at Baku, in Azerbaijan, next to the Caspian Sea. Our dormitories were on a boat at sea, and our tactical training field was the sea. On some occasions we would do tactical manoeuvres training on land. We trained in the Caspian Sea for three months, learning how to operate and navigate sea vessels. In addition, we were taught how to swim and how to survive for long periods of time in the choppy, rough sea, in full uniform. We later learnt that we were being prepared to be sent to South Africa via sea. That explained why we were taught how to use rubber boats, how to read coordinates at night and daytime, and the signals which were to be deployed when we arrived in South Africa.

When this training was completed, we went back to Skhodnya near Moscow. Here we met with our leaders, Yusuf Dadoo, OR Tambo and Joe Slovo. The leaders were there to bid us, a group of 35, farewell, as we boarded a plane back to Cairo, Egypt. The plane refuelled in

Cairo and flew on to Mogadishu, Somalia. When our plane took off from Cairo airport it was announced that the flight was leaving Cairo for Moscow. This was done to deceive anyone who would be listening in on the flight plans.

Failed mission – Operation ‘J’

Upon landing in Mogadishu, we were taken by military trucks directly to the Mogadishu port and onto a ship, *The Aventura*. *The Aventura* was a beautiful, white, holiday cruiseliner. The ship was piloted by an English commander and a Greek crew. On board the ship were weapons, ammunition and other material required for the armed struggle back in South Africa. There was a good relationship between the Somali government and the ANC that facilitated the transportation of weapons out of the country.

The idea of infiltrating South Africa by sea had first been proposed by Arthur Goldreich in 1963, and the plan was reintroduced by Joe Slovo in 1967. The plan was eventually brought to fruition in 1972, with the Soviet Union providing funding for the purchase of the ship as well as training of the cadres selected for the operation and arms and ammunition. A large group of trained cadres were to land at Port St Johns in the Eastern Cape, from where they would move to different parts of the country and begin operating as guerrilla units. Mfanyela Mbali served as commander while the unit was at sea, while Lennox Tshali was to assume command once the unit had entered South Africa.⁴⁰

I was appointed as the political commissar of the MK soldiers on board *The Aventura*. An MK political commissar was a person with full knowledge of the ANC’s policies and was tasked with educating MK soldiers about these policies, as well as national and international politics. In addition, a commissar was charged with overseeing that soldiers conform to the organisation’s rules.⁴¹ At a later stage I received information that the crew of *The Aventura* had been told that no matter what happened, they were not to return to Mogadishu port. Mogadishu was a city with many international spies that were constantly on the lookout for any kind of military activities.

OR Tambo and Joe Slovo addressed us on the seriousness of the mission before we departed. However, not long after getting underway on the way south, the ship experienced problems with the rudder. The crew, despite their orders to the contrary, returned to Mogadishu port.

Slovo flew out to London to acquire a new rudder for the ship. As soon as the ship was fixed, we went back to sea. As we were passing southern Somalia, two engines failed. The Somali sea authorities realised that the ship was in trouble when it noticed that the ship was straying off its course at an unusually slow pace. The authorities sent a large towboat to pull the ship back to shore. The ship was pulled onto the shore of a small, southern Somalian town, Kismayo, where we set up camp. The Somalis searched the ship, and found it loaded with weapons and ammunition, and proceeded to arrest the ship's crew and keep the rest of us under surveillance in a separate camp. At this point we realised that the ship had been sabotaged on both occasions: when problems were experienced with the rudder and the engine failure. Arrangements were made to bring in a new crew for the ship, but we were unable to continue with the mission because only one engine had been repaired. *The Aventura* mission, which we later learnt was known within the ANC as Operation 'J', had failed.

The MK group was then divided into two units. Alexander Moubarris, who was a French national assisting the ANC, came to assist the first group on a mission to infiltrate South Africa.⁴² My group, which was the smaller of the two, was taken away in ones and twos until I was left alone in the camp in Kismayo. I then received instructions that I was to go to the Party School in Moscow. This had been facilitated by the Communist Party. Before leaving Somalia for Moscow, I had to buy civilian clothes. The Somali government issued me with a Somali passport.

I was reunited with Comrade JD, Boy Adolphus Mvemve, whom I had worked with in Lusaka, at the Party School. The course we were taken through included the history and philosophy of Marxism and Leninism, historical materialism and several other subjects. I also did a course in photography and on how to run a newspaper. These courses were designed to enable us to run a newspaper even if we were forced underground and had limited space and supplies. I spent six months undergoing this training course.

The secretarial office in Dar es Salaam

I flew back to Tanzania when I had completed the courses at the Party School in the early part of 1973. In Dar es Salaam, I worked in the ANC office as the administrative secretary from May that year. I had effectively been retired from the army. Our chief representative in Tanzania was Eric

Mtshali. My first task was to organise the filing system of the office, and I worked on this task with a lady by the name of Maud. I was also responsible for the procurement of travel documents required by ANC members. At the time, the majority of ANC members in exile were using Tanzanian passports when they travelled. Tickets for travel by air were obtained from Sykes Travel Agency, which is still in existence today. I used the shop called Commish, where we took photographs of ANC members for use on their travel documents. In addition to all the documentation and travel arrangements, another duty of mine was to welcome ANC members arriving by air in Tanzania and ensure that ANC travellers departed from Tanzania safely. Applying for Tanzanian national passports for NEC members of the ANC was another of my responsibilities.

On one occasion I received a phone call from the post office to collect a parcel that was too large for the post box. When I collected the parcel, I noticed that it did not have the name of the sender on it, which made me wary. I took the parcel to security at the Tanzanian prime minister's office. I told them that the parcel appeared to be a book, and that I did not know of anyone who would be sending me a book. When security checked the parcel, they found that it was full of explosives. After the explosives were disassembled, the security officials called me over to have a look at what they had found inside. This was the first attempt on my life, and it was most likely the apartheid regime that had sent me the parcel.

At this time, I was still unable to drive. I relied on comrades who did the driving for the office to drive me around. As my workload increased I needed to be more mobile between the different offices and between the offices and the airport. I became quite frustrated. The comrades from the office would often find a way to avoid driving me around. Some of them, knowing that I could not drive, would just hand me the car keys, and say: 'You drive.'

I complained to OR, saying: 'Chief, I am busy. But I cannot drive and I am finding it difficult to get someone to drive me around.' OR called the office treasurer, Comrade Madlokovu, and told him that from today this comrade (me) must learn how to drive. Comrade Madlokovu drove me to the immigration office the following day. When we got there, he gave me the car keys and told me that I must drive the car back to the office and promptly left the immigration office. I had no option but to take the car and drive completely on my own. I got into the car, a small Russian Simca, and with a lot of grinding of gears, managed to get the

car into first gear. I did not know how to change the gears, so I stayed in first gear all the way through stop signs, intersections and traffic lights, finally making it back to the office.

From that day, I was determined to teach myself to drive. Through some very intense work in the heat and a lot of impatient traffic, I taught myself how to drive. I drove around alone without a learner's sign, which would have meant that I had to have a licenced driver with me. I used to drive around stuttering and stalling in the traffic and getting sworn at by the other drivers. Thankfully, I was never stopped by the police and asked for a licence, which I did not have as yet.

I eventually booked an appointment for the test for a driver's licence. Before I went, I noticed a new traffic sign that was not in the learner's book. I asked around and nobody knew exactly what the sign was. I later found out that the new sign indicated the new highway that was being built between the airport and the town. When I went for my driver's test, that was the only question that they asked me, and I failed the test.

The next week I went for the test again. This time I was not asked any questions. The testing officer just asked me whether I was Reddy, and then told me to take him to the high court. I drove him there and he told me to park outside and wait for him. When he came out, he told me to drive back to the police station. When we got to the police station, he got out and went in without speaking to me. I just sat in the car wondering what was happening. Finally, someone came to call me, and I went into the office, and was told: 'You are a good driver.' And that was how I got my licence. As a licenced driver my work improved because I was fully mobile. I was a regular at the airport, and many people thought that I worked there.

In 1974, while I was working as the administrative secretary in Tanzania, I received the news that Comrade John Dube (JD, whose real name was Boy Adolphus Mvemve) had been killed by a parcel bomb. He had been on duty as the ANC's deputy chief representative in the Lusaka office. Comrade JD and Comrade Max Sisulu had been busy sorting out the mail during their lunchtime at the ANC office in Lusaka. JD opened what looked like a book parcel, and seconds later his hands and face were blown off, killing him instantly.⁴³

CHAPTER 4

Chief representative to Tanzania

Early in 1975, I was appointed as the chief representative of the ANC to Tanzania. Before taking up this position, I had to find someone to take over my position as administrative secretary. I drove to the ANC camp in Kongwa.

One of my first tasks as chief representative was to set up an office administration committee. I thought that it was important that there be an administrative body dealing solely with the office's administrative matters. The office administration committee would consolidate the heads of the various departments of the ANC and include representatives of the ANC's allied liberation movements based in Tanzania so that all relevant stakeholders were included in discussions on issues and decision-making.

I asked headquarters in Lusaka to send an appointee to serve on the office administration committee. Lusaka sent Comrade Kingsley Xaba, who was appointed as the committee's deputy chairperson. I was the chairperson, Doris Ndaba was secretary, Kay Moonsamy was treasurer, Mandy Msimang was head of the scholarship committee and Dr Manto Tshabalala-Msimang was appointed by the ANC Medical Committee as head of the medical department. The SACTU chairman and appointees from the youth and the women's sections were also included in the office committee.

There was a publicity department in the ANC office as well, which dealt with the organisation's publicity, as well as the ANC's slot on Radio Freedom. The publicity department, headed by Max Mlonyeni, coordinated the ANC's rallies, newspaper and other propaganda

material and matters. The Radio Freedom desk prepared inputs for the ANC's slot on the African radio stations that provided a platform for radio broadcasts to the different African liberation movements. The head of the Radio Freedom desk was Patrick Lethalo, with notable ANC members who worked in this unit including Baleka Mbete⁴⁴ and Jeff Radebe.⁴⁵ Mlonyeni and Lethalo were also part of the office administration committee.

Clearance documents

As members of a liberation movement, *bona fide* ANC members did not require visas when entering Tanzania but received clearance documents from the immigration office upon arrival. This was done to accommodate the large number of South Africans who belonged to the liberation movement that came over without passports or any other official documents. I was usually notified that a certain number of people would be coming into Tanzania, without any notification of their names or any other information. I would then sit down and compose a list of fictitious names, one for the males and another for the females.

Round about this time in 1976, the Soweto Uprising occurred in South Africa. On 16 June that year, students from townships in Soweto organised and participated in a massive student march against the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction at some schools. In a clash between students and apartheid police on the day of the protest, Hector Pieterse was one of the first students to be gunned down by the police. The violent reaction of the police to the march led to a countrywide uprising that drew in tens of thousands of students. The combination of massive state repression during the period, and a wave of militancy flowing from the ranks of the student activists, led to the departure of thousands of young people into exile in neighbouring countries where many joined the ANC and its military wing.

For me in Tanzania, the workload in our office in Dar es Salaam increased dramatically as large numbers of South Africans arrived in Tanzania without documents and at very short notice. The same procedure of creating official documents had to be followed. During the time I was in charge of this task, I must have created hundreds of names in this manner. I took the list of names to the OAU Liberation Committee, with the cover letter stating that these were *bona fide* members of the ANC.

The Liberation Committee, which had been set up in May 1963 at the inaugural meeting of OAU member states in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, acted as the facilitator. The Liberation Committee was tasked with planning and coordinating support for the liberation of all the African countries that were still under colonial and minority rule. In the case of South Africa, OAU member states put in place sanctions against the apartheid regime which negatively affected the country's trade and, consequently, the economy. This helped put political pressure on the apartheid state to end its tyrannical rule. The OAU Liberation Committee organised international campaigns to mobilise the support of the international community in its fight for Africa's liberty, and provided material and other support to the liberation movements. Members of the Liberation Committee were made up of the following countries: Algeria, Guinea, Ethiopia, Congo, Nigeria, Uganda, Senegal, United Arab Republic and Tanganyika.⁴⁶

By this time, the different liberation movements in Tanzania were being supported and managed by the OAU Liberation Committee. This was done to help the Tanzanian government cope with the large number of people belonging to the different organisations based in Tanzania, who would pass through the country. The OAU Liberation Committee, after going through the list, would then draw up a cover letter for the Tanzanian prime minister's office. The prime minister's office would then write a cover letter for the immigration office. The immigration office would then send a copy to their office at the airport, where the list of names would be kept.

After ascertaining that a newly arrived group of people entering the country were ANC members, the immigration officials would send them to an upstairs room to wait for me. When I arrived at the airport, immigration would inform me about the number of youngsters waiting for me. We would take the immigration entry cards and fill in the names from the list I had already drawn up, then take the cards upstairs and assign each of the waiting youngsters with a name from the list. I would ask if they would be joining MK or continuing with their education. If the new recruits were too young, they were not allowed to join MK and would be sent to further their education. The ANC recognised that as much as an armed struggle was required for our liberation, there was a need for educated people to be ready to take over the government when liberation was achieved.

The large number of students and MK recruits meant that Mandela and Luthuli Houses lacked capacity to accommodate them. While

waiting to be sent off to study, the scholars were accommodated in guesthouses and hotels in town. The MK cadres were accommodated in houses hired by the ANC in the Temeke suburb, before being sent out to Angola.

The Angolan government had by late 1976 made military camps in that country available to the ANC. The MK recruits were flown out to Angola from Tanzania. I had been instructed, by Comrade Thomas Nkobi on three occasions, to charter flights from Dar es Salaam to Angola to transport MK recruits. Zambian Airways was used for all three of these flights. The flight path from Dar es Salaam to Luanda was fairly straight, but the flight had to be routed past Ndola in Zambia, and then on to Luanda, to avoid the conflict zone in the Shaba Province of Zaire.

There were times when huge groups of new recruits came through Dar es Salaam. During these times I made arrangements with the immigration office to be there at 11:00, when it was closed to the public. I would go there with all the applications, sit with the chief of immigration and one or two officials. One official would write in the details, another would stick the photos onto the clearance documents, which would then be signed by the chief of immigration. It got to the stage where the immigration office staff would carry out these tasks before I arrived.

I was such a frequent visitor to the immigration office that many people used to think that I worked there, and I was often asked to help people who needed something done at the office. I was young at the time and worked hard and fast, which meant that any ANC members coming through did not wait long to be taken through the Dar es Salaam Airport.

Once, I facilitated the travel of a group of about 150 students directly to Nigeria through Dar es Salaam. The Nigerian government had given the ANC scholarships for its young members. When the students arrived at Dar es Salaam Airport, the officials simply asked me how many people there were and let them in without any fuss. I had the travel documents arranged, and the students were sent out on the next flight to Nigeria.

There were challenging times when people would arrive in Dar es Salaam without sending the office any prior notification. I would then receive a call asking for a clearance document and had to scurry around to get the documentation while the person or group waited at the airport.

Growing concern with student influx

The 1976 Soweto student uprising and the harsh clampdown on activists back in South Africa resulted in a huge influx of youngsters arriving in Tanzania. Many crossed over the border to Botswana by whatever means and were then flown to Tanzania. This influx kept me very busy.

While the new recruits were still in Dar es Salaam, my deputy, my secretary and I constituted ourselves into a security vetting unit. No one else was available to do this work in Dar es Salaam, and the three of us had done training for this type of work in the Soviet Union. During the day we did our regular office work, and when the office closed for the day we would go over to where the MK recruits were housed. We formulated a questionnaire that we used to screen the recruits. The questionnaire had to be filled in by the recruits and included questions about their life histories. We then based the interviews which followed, on some of the answers which they had provided.

What we thought would be a simple exercise turned out to be a far more complicated challenge than we had anticipated. One surprising result from the exercise was that it revealed that a large number of the new ANC recruits had been recruited by the apartheid regime to infiltrate the movement. We were already aware that the student bodies in South Africa had been infiltrated by apartheid spies, but the extent of infiltration only became evident when we interviewed the new recruits; it was overwhelming.

When these recruits filled in the questionnaire and we read the answers afterwards, many of the answers raised a lot of questions about the students' experiences. The regime always chose the most brilliant students. When these students were recruited by the apartheid state, a legend or false story was prepared for their use when they joined the liberation movement. These stories were always too perfectly outlined and never matched the reality on the ground. We were able to verify their stories by sending messages back to South Africa to check if persons, places or events the students referred to were real. Most of the time we would receive the intelligence that a person or a place referred to did not exist. In the follow-up interview we would refer to this false information and many of the recruits would break down and confess to being recruited by the apartheid regime to infiltrate the ANC. We then realised that we had a real problem with the new

recruits, and that there was a need for a thorough screening process before accepting the youngsters into the organisation.

The office administration committee made an appeal to the MK for a full team to conduct the screening and vetting of new recruits. The MK sent Comrade Mashego and his assistant, Comrade Julius, to carry out the vetting of the new recruits. The growing student body presented a serious problem and challenge to the ANC.

Not long after we started the vetting and screening procedures, Comrade Mtu Jwili (real name Daniel Oliphant) reported to my office. He had just completed his military training in the Soviet Union and was on his way to Lusaka through Dar es Salaam. When I reported his presence to Lusaka, I also requested that he remain in Dar es Salaam to assist with the screening and vetting of the students who were pouring in. I wanted him to stay and organise the vetting unit. Lusaka agreed that he should lead and coordinate this section of the security required for the incoming students. The office administration committee then handed over the work we had been busy with to Comrade Mtu and briefed him on what we had been encountering. Comrade Mtu later got more personnel from Angola to build the security division of the ANC in Dar es Salaam.

Undisciplined students

An additional problem that the growing student body posed to the ANC was that they were largely undisciplined and unruly. They would roam all over the city causing problems. On one occasion, Kibasa, the liaison official between the liberation movements and the Tanzanian prime minister's office, approached the ANC, saying that the students were disrupting the everyday life and security of the local population.

When I reported to Lusaka that the problem was growing and that the students were getting out of control, Comrade Nzo asked me to approach the Tanzanian government. I was to ask the government for a piece of land outside the city where the students could be accommodated, and a school could be built for them.⁴⁷

I went to the office of the Tanzanian minister of home affairs. I discussed the problem the ANC was having and put forward Lusaka's request for land. I was told that they might have a place near Morogoro, about 200 kilometres west of Dar es Salaam.

I drove to Morogoro with an official of the home affairs ministry by the name of Hombe, where we met with the regional commissioner or

governor of the Morogoro region, Anna Abdallah, or Mama Anna as she was known. I put forward the ANC's case to Mama Anna. She said that there was a 200 hectare abandoned sisal estate in an area called Mazimbu just outside Morogoro which might be suitable. Hombe and I, with an assistant from the ANC regional office, took a drive to Mazimbu, which is about 7 kilometres from Morogoro. The area was wildly overgrown, with the big, dilapidated colonial house and the tiny workers' hovels still standing on the estate.

Even though the area was small, I realised the potential of the land. I wrote up a report for the Lusaka office about the sisal estate that the Tanzanian government was offering the ANC. Accompanying the report was a letter from the Tanzanian ministry outlining its offer. The Lusaka office replied that the offer should be taken up and that I should go ahead with plans to build a school in the area.

Mazimbu was probably written in my destiny long before these plans came about. Mazimba was the MK name I had chosen for myself in the Botswana bush when I left South Africa. Over the years that I worked with the school in Mazimbu, people would often call me Comrade Mazimbu instead of Mazimba.

The Morogoro region was familiar territory for the ANC. There was a substantial ANC community in the area, and the organisation had an active office that was headed by Ted Bahoyu. The ANC also owned some houses in the area. Not far from the ANC offices in Morogoro, the ANC owned a house in an area called Magadu, a large, double-storey house with a big yard. This was the house where the organisation accommodated members or guests visiting the region. On my second visit to Mazimbu, I took Bahoyu and Boy Nzima, the Morogoro office treasurer, to brief them on the plans for the area.

Recruiting graduates

The ANC had members who were graduates working in the German Democratic Republic (GDR). The organisation enlisted a civil engineering graduate, Oswald Dennis, to help with the planning and building of the school in Mazimbu. When Dennis arrived from the GDR, we drove out together to Morogoro and I briefed him on the project during the journey.

When the planning of the school and accommodation had begun, we moved many of the students from the city to the ANC's Magadu

camp in Morogoro. There were so many students that several of them had to sleep on the roof of the building. The Magadu camp was next to a Tanzanian military base. The leadership of the base were very excited to meet with young freedom fighters from South Africa. The Tanzanians identified with the struggle against apartheid, and the leadership wanted to do a lot for the youngsters. The officials of the military base organised the screening of movies on the base for them. However, this gesture ended up creating several social problems, particularly the number of young female students who entered into relationships with soldiers on the base. I went to discuss these problems with the camp commander. He agreed that the solution was to screen the movies at Magadu instead of at the base because he also wanted the young female students to cut off their ties with the soldiers. As soon as this change was implemented, matters went a lot more smoothly with the student body.

The need for political education

At Magadu, it became apparent that the students needed to be given political education while waiting for the school to be built. Many needed to learn about liberation and revolutionary struggles, and in particular the need for commitment and discipline required in these struggles. The youngsters had to be made aware that they had joined a liberation movement that had rules and objectives. Furthermore, they had to learn that to achieve its objectives, the movement had to move in specific directions.

A teacher experienced in political teachings was required at Magadu, and I appointed Comrade Maruping Sperepere for this duty. I discussed the situation with him and the need for a political education course to direct the youngsters. Before Comrade Sperepere came to Tanzania, he and his wife were based in Botswana and were helping ANC exiles living there. However, Comrade Sperepere turned out to be the wrong choice for the students. At his first meeting with the students, he came in dressed very formally. His manner of speaking and teaching made it difficult for him to establish a bond with the students. They called him 'the bourgeoisie'. The students were not happy with him and staged a hunger strike in protest.

I went down to Morogoro to find out what the problem was. The students said that they were not happy with Sperepere as their political teacher. They said: 'Chief, he is too bourgeois, and we are not happy

with his presence and his teaching methods.' They said he was very antagonistic to the students and did not identify with them. The students wanted a teacher who was open, approachable and with whom they could identify.

I called Comrade Sperepere aside and discussed the situation with him. I asked for him to be more open with the students, dress less formally and to be more approachable. Unfortunately, he was an old man who was set in his ways and was unable to change. The students then staged a second hunger strike and I had to go down to Morogoro again. At the time I was driving a solid, reliable, Volvo station wagon. When I got to Magadu, I spoke to the students in Comrade Sperepere's presence, as well as in the presence of the administration of the ANC's regional office. The students put forward their ongoing objection to having him as their teacher and that the situation was getting worse. They were clear that they did not want him and were quite vociferous, stating that if he was not removed they would make the situation untenable. I asked Comrade Sperepere if he had been listening to the students and if he had anything to say in his defence. He did not have anything to say, but agreed that it would be best for him to withdraw from the position.

I subsequently approached a younger, mild-mannered man, Comrade Ndilashe, to take over as the students' political teacher. The students were happy with Ndilashe from the beginning, and I asked myself why I had not done this in the first instance? I had appointed Sperepere on the basis of his age and experience, which was the wrong decision. After Ndilashe's appointment, the situation at Magadu normalised. The students respected him and were eager to learn from him.

Another challenge in Morogoro was the young women in the ANC, many of whom were still teenagers, who had become pregnant. These women had been sent to Tanzania to be accommodated and cared for. A number of houses in the town were rented by the ANC for the young women and their children, and they were kept separate from the other ANC houses and offices. These young women had to be cared for medically as well as emotionally. Many had left home after the 1976 uprising and had no family to help them care for their children. Most of these young women had no idea how to look after a young baby. An older woman, Ma Maisie, lived with them as their matron, teaching them how to care for their children. The ANC had to ensure that the women and children had access to medical care, as well as to provide a constant supply of food to ensure that the mothers and children were well-

nourished. Morogoro was a rural town, and the provision of adequate medical and nutritional care was a challenge for the organisation.

School strategy

While the students and young mothers were a challenge for the ANC in Morogoro, Dennis was busy working out a strategy on how to proceed with the building of a school at Mazimbu. He had decided to start with the renovation of the large colonial house on the estate. He mapped out a plan to renovate the old servants' quarters into more habitable living quarters. Dennis recruited the students from Magadu to help with the renovation and building of the school. This helped ease the boredom of the students, as well as equipping them with the skills acquired from working on the project. The students did everything, from clearing the land and the breaking of walls to the mixing of building material. The students were happy to do this work, as they did not have much else to do at Magadu.

The Ngerengere River, which ran near the school, was polluted. Water for cooking, drinking and washing was brought to Mazimbu from Morogoro in big drums. While the renovation work was in progress, Dennis began work on a chemical water filtration and purification system in the Ngerengere. He installed pipes and taps so that the purified water could be tapped to the school. When these were completed and turned on, the water situation at the school complex eased considerably. The purification system was not a perfect system and had to be cleaned out when there were excessive rainfalls, but it helped provide a supply of water to Mazimbu.

After the renovations were completed, the students from Magadu were moved into the school complex. New recruits arriving in Dar es Salaam were also sent immediately to Mazimbu. In the beginning, there was no electricity at the school. Wood for cooking was gathered from the forests at the foot of the nearby mountains. Small paraffin lamps were used for lighting. There were no beds in the school, and the students slept on mattresses that were covered only by blankets.

The Morogoro regional director began to realise the importance of the school development and made more land available for the school complex. The available land was extended up to the mountains, which added more than 1 000 hectares to the school complex. Mama Abdallah was clear that in giving this land to the ANC for development the

Tanzanians were aware that when the ANC returned to South Africa, all the investment and development of the school remained behind for the benefit of the Morogoro area. Mama Abdallah was an outspoken advocate for the development of the school and attracted a lot of attention when she went out of the country and spoke about its development in Tanzania.

Meanwhile, the ANC scholarship committee in Dar es Salaam had been negotiating scholarships for its students from countries friendly to the ANC. Through these negotiations, the ANC leadership secured a large number of scholarships for students to study in socialist countries. This helped ease the number of students coming to Morogoro, as well as providing an alternative opportunity for the large number of students that were coming into the ANC. Many of the students who went out to study eventually returned to Mazimbu as teachers and doctors.

Plans were put in place for the building of the larger school complex. Lars Larsen, a volunteer with DanChurchAid, a Danish non-governmental organisation, was helping to build a church in Morogoro for the Tanzanian government at the time. Dennis identified him as a potential volunteer for the school project. Larsen's term in Tanzania was coming to an end and Dennis asked me to approach the Tanzanian prime minister's office to acquire the necessary documentation so that Larsen could stay and help with the building of the school. The Tanzanian government was reluctant to interfere with an agreement that was already in place. I put forward the case that it would not be convenient to send him back to Denmark and then bring him back to Tanzania. Crucial time would be lost, and there was no guarantee that he would be able to return. I was pushing for arrangements to be made for him to work for the ANC without going back to Denmark. Finally, we got the necessary paperwork done, and when his term with the Tanzanian government came to an end, he moved over to the ANC to help with the planning and building of the school.

The ANC identified another comrade, Spencer Hodgson, who was studying architecture in the GDR, who could help with the project. Hodgson's parents were ANC members who had been forced into exile and were staying in London. His father, Jack Hodgson, was born in Roodepoort, South Africa, in 1910. He worked in the mines from the age of 16, and later joined the South African Armoured Car Regiment after being laid off. He fought in the Second World War, serving in the South African Army in Libya in 1941. While he was in the army, he joined

the Communist Party of South Africa. However, his political activism started in the mines where he became a union member. He returned to South Africa in March 1942 after becoming ill as a result of duodenal ulcers and internal bleeding. Jack married Rica Hodgson in 1945. Jack Hodgson played a major role in MKs' first sabotage campaign in the early 1960s, during which time he provided training in the use of arms and explosives to MK recruits throughout the country.⁴⁸

Spencer Hodgson was approached to assist Dennis with the design, planning and building of the school. When Hodgson accepted the position, the design team was ready to begin work on the school project.

Dennis explained many of the intricacies of design to me whilst the school's design was being worked out. He explained to me that the local climate and terrain of the land were taken into consideration in the design process, and the intention was to use locally available material during the building process. Finally, we ended up planning a primary school, a secondary school consisting of six self-contained units up to Form 5, living units, a crèche and nursery area, and a medical unit. Within the self-contained units there were classrooms, dormitories and teachers' quarters. An amphitheatre and an area for farming animals had also been included in the design. The farming area was an important aspect, aimed at making the school self-sufficient.

In 1978, the foundation for the first unit of the school was laid and the main works for the project were subcontracted to local Tanzanian builders. Dennis was the only architect on site for the construction of the first and second units. Larsen came in during the middle of the year, and Hodgson joined the team towards the end of the year. Work was carried out in teams. When a layout was completed, the layout team moved on to the next area for another layout and then the diggers and bricklayers would move in to do their job; and so on. The entire building site was constantly busy with various stages of construction work being done at the same time.

Unannounced arrivals and establishment of protocols

The Medical Committee Angola (MKA), a Dutch NGO, was the first group that came to Tanzania when news of the building of the school was released. The NGO arrived at the Dar es Salaam office with an offer to finance the building of a medical facility for the school. I arranged for the group to be driven out to the site to have a look at the area.

The delegates walked around the area, taking a number of photographs as they went. Not long after they had left Mazimbu, I received a call in which I was informed that the Dutch delegation had been arrested. I immediately went over to the prime minister's office and let them know that the delegation was with me and that they were taking pictures of the site and were not a threat to Tanzania.

There was a military airbase not far from the site for the school, which was a restricted area. The school project was still new, and the ANC office was not yet fully aware of the protocols that had to be followed to allow visitors to have access to the area. I informed Kaihule, the Tanzanian official who was the liberation movements' liaison officer in Tanzania, about the delegation. He called the police in Mazimbu and arranged for the delegation to be released without any delay. Thankfully, none of their cameras had been tampered with. Thereafter, whenever a delegation visited the school I would inform the region's police in advance to avoid any unpleasantness.

The medical facility was named the ANC-Holland Solidarity Hospital after it was built. The treatment at the hospital was professional and free. In addition, the hospital staff took full responsibility for the medical and sanitary conditions of the crèche, nursery, and the young children and their mothers, ensuring that the children and mothers had access to good nutrition. The hospital was fully equipped and eventually serviced the entire local population of Morogoro.

The area which accommodated the crèche, nursery, the mothers and expectant mothers was the last area to be inhabited. This area, called The Tabora, was run by the expectant and new mothers under the supervision of the medical staff at the school complex. The mothers' involvement was essential in order for them to have a sense of ownership and for them to take responsibility for looking after the place. The children were regarded as belonging to all and were brought up by the mothers and the larger school community.

A carpentry workshop was established as another part of the school. It was Dennis's idea to set up a workshop to make the doors, window frames and other wooden materials required for the school. This was essential, as the ANC had a tight budget and had to find ways to become self-sufficient. Peter Masemola from the Lusaka office was sent to set up the workshop with machinery that had been sent from the GDR. When it was completed, Masemola stayed on as the head of the carpentry workshop. Work in the carpentry workshop began towards the end

of 1978. Their first order was the students' bunk beds, chairs and the kitchen units for the buildings.

In 1979, Sida (the Swedish International Development Agency) donated sewing machines for the establishment of a garment factory at the school. Dennis's wife, Emily Dennis, became the head of the garment factory. Emily was a very active and hardworking woman. In the same year, the Indian government donated a large amount of fabric for school uniforms and other clothing.

A leather works to manufacture shoes and other leather products was also established. The agriculture section, which included land for growing crops as well as land for grazing animals for food and milk, began operating in 1979. The farm, the carpentry workshop, the garment factory and the cobblery all contributed to making the school self-sufficient. When construction was completed, the complex looked good with its tarred roads and flushing toilets that had been included in the construction.

Meanwhile, the ANC in Zambia had been contacting Zambian nationals married to South African women while the school was under construction. Many Zambian men had been working for years in South Africa until 1969, mainly on the mines. When the Zambian government made it illegal for Zambian nationals to work in South Africa in 1966, a large number of men working as migrants in South Africa and their families were forced to return to Zambia. The ANC recognised these parents and their children as South Africans and extended an offer to the parents to send their children to school at Mazimbu. Many took up this offer and sent their children to the school.

Naming the school

MK cadre Solomon Mahlangu was hanged by the South African regime on 6 April 1979 while the school was being built. Mahlangu had gone into exile after the students' uprisings in 1976. He joined MK and had undergone military training in Angola and Europe, after which he infiltrated South Africa on an MK mission. He and two other comrades were involved in a shootout with the South African Police, which led to their arrest. In the shootout with the police two white people were killed, for which he was held responsible. There was an international outcry against the death sentence imposed on him, which was in vain.

The school was named the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College, or Somafo, in honour of Mahlangu's sacrifices in the fight for the liberation of South Africa. When Mahlangu went to the gallows, his last words to his mother were: 'Tell my people that I love them and that they must continue the struggle. My blood will nourish the tree that will bear the fruits of freedom. *Aluta continua!*' These words still adorn the wall at the entrance of the Solomon Mahlangu Mazimbu campus that was handed back to the Tanzanians after South Africa achieved its liberation from apartheid.

Need for structure

As the school was growing, it became necessary for the Somafo administration to become structured and organised. There was a need for an administrative body or directorate to look after the entire complex. The head of the directorate was the school principal, with a few teachers as his deputies. The formation of the Somafo directorate was aimed at assisting the principal with the running of the school. Each unit on the school complex, such as the carpentry workshop, the cobblery, the garment factory, the agriculture and animals unit had a head overseeing its administration, with Tshabalala-Msimang appointed as the head of the Medical Directorate. These heads served as directorate heads on the school directorate.

In addition, there was an elected chairman and a secretary who served as executive officers of the Zonal Political Committee (ZPC) for the school directorate. As ANC representatives in the Dar es Salaam office, my deputy and I served as executive officers on the school directorate as well. All school directorate meetings were held under the chairmanship of the school principal.

Communication links and streams were built up among the different heads of the directorate. The meetings were called by the head of the school directorate, who would prepare an agenda, which would then be distributed to all directorate heads before meetings. My duties on the school directorate added responsibility to my work as chief representative, requiring me to commute to Somafo often for meetings.

Initially, we also had several houses in town. One of these was a crèche run by the head of the ANC's Women Section, Gertrude Shope. However, it was not long before the young women started leaving their young babies of three months at the crèche. They were reprimanded

several times for being irresponsible and advised to become more responsible for their children. Unfortunately, many failed to heed this advice. On one occasion I asked the culprits to come to my office. I told them that I was going to punish them because they were not behaving like mothers, and because they did not have the slightest respect for the advice they had been given about caring for their children. They laughed at me and did not believe that I would punish them. I gave each one of them a thorough hiding. Subsequently, these young women changed and began to take care of their babies.

School focus and human settlements

It was important that Somafo retain its focus as an educational institution. When students completed their schooling, many went overseas to study. As qualified adults they returned to Somafo, which, for many of them, had become their home away from South Africa. But their presence interfered with the school as an educational institution. Added to this were the students who had completed their schooling and now had partners and were starting families and had no other place to live. In addition, there were other family members of the students who also were not part of the school community. This growth in the community created a need for a settlement separate from the school.

The ANC leadership recognised that there was a need for another place for its growing Tanzanian community. At the beginning of 1980, the leadership once again asked me to approach the Tanzanian government to make land available for this growing exile community. I approached the ministry of home affairs once again, and was sent back to the regional commissioner in Morogoro, Mama Abdallah. On this occasion we explained to Mama Anna that we needed a piece of land to develop a human settlement area for the exiled community. She sent Hombe and me to an area about 190 kilometres north of Morogoro, to the village of Dakawa. When we reached the area she had specified, we found that a group of South Koreans were growing rice on that piece of land.

We then went over to the local police station, which was run by the head of the Tanzanian Agriculture Police. The head took us to another area in Dakawa, which was an old farm that had belonged to British colonialists. The land was on the edge of the main road from Morogoro to Dodoma. In addition, the Wami River was adjacent to this land. It was well located and seemed suitable for a settlement.

I submitted a report on the area to the ANC secretary-general in Lusaka, who approved the plan. I took Dennis, Larsen and Hodgson to inspect the newly acquired land. We drove over and walked almost every square kilometre of the place to assess its suitability, until they declared that they were satisfied with the area. Dennis was then instructed by Lusaka to begin work in Dakawa.

A team of MK veterans experienced in building work were taken to Dakawa with clearing equipment to prepare the area for building. This group set up a camp of tents, which they lived in until more permanent structures were built. The first task was the building of conventional buildings which would serve as offices for the project. While the offices were being constructed, the GDR set up a team and funded the building of a factory to manufacture fully prefabricated homes for the settlement. A team prepared the ground and foundation for these prefabricated houses, which were then placed on the prepared site. Well-laid out streets were planned and built for the settlement. This system ensured that the work was rapidly done, and within a few months the settlement took shape with well-marked houses ready for our people to move in.

The carpentry workshop in Somafo was kept very busy with the demands from the Dakawa settlement. Beds, chairs, tables and other furniture requirements were all made at the workshop. The quality of work from the Somafo carpentry workshop was excellent and was exhibited at an agricultural show in Dar es Salaam. The furniture, as well as a complete prefabricated house, was displayed. President Nyerere came over one day and was impressed by the quality of the Somafo exhibit, which won a prize at the show.

Regional political committees and zonal political committees

After I had established the office administration committee when I was appointed chief representative in 1975, there was a realisation that this was not sufficient to look after the needs of the growing ANC exile community in Tanzania. The political direction and social life of the organisation's members in East Africa had to be looked after, and coordinated as well.

There were many ANC members living in Dar es Salaam, Morogoro, Mbeya and Iringa, which were all under the responsibility of the office of the chief representative. The office committee decided that a Regional

Political Committee (RPC), which would oversee the political needs of the East African ANC community, had to be set up. The same model as the office administration committee would be used, with me as the chairperson, a deputy chair and a secretary.

A report was prepared on the setting up of the RPCs and sent to Lusaka. The ANC secretary-general, Comrade Alfred Nzo, replied and pointed out that a political committee could not be appointed and that it had to be an elected office. I put this message from Lusaka to the office administration committee. Since there was no infrastructure to accommodate an election process, the committee had to start by creating electoral regions. As chief representative, I then appointed six people onto an electoral committee, with Sperepere as the chairperson.

The electoral committee was directed to create electoral units so that no member of the ANC would be far from a regional centre where the meetings and elections would be held. Each of these units compiled a full list of ANC members in its area and then elected its own chairman and a secretary, which would then become a ZPC. The list of all elected ZPCs would then be consolidated and sent back to each region, with the directive for members to nominate candidates for a national RPC. At the time, Somafo accommodated a large number of people and was included in the Morogoro zone.

The election committee created the electoral units with member lists, which were sent to my office. At the office, Kay Moonsamy, Manto Tshabalala-Msimang and the chairman of SACTU were constituted as an electoral commission for the national RPC elections.

The ZPC lists were then consolidated for the national RPC nominations. From this list, a secret ballot election was carried out in the area of each electoral unit to choose the representatives on the national RPC. It was agreed that the national RPC committee would consist of seven members, including a chairperson, a secretary, a welfare officer, a health officer, a representative from the Youth Section and another from the Women's Section.

At the same time as the national RPC elections were scheduled to take place, a memorial service for the SACP secretary-general, Moses Kotane, who had died on 19 May 1978 in Moscow, was being held at the school in Morogoro. The chairman of the area, Sperepere, was the master of ceremonies and used the memorial service as a platform for the RPC elections. He asked for the vote by a show of hands, knowing that as an older person and eloquent speaker, people would elect him in

this manner. When the Morogoro report reached me, I called an office administration committee meeting, and it was agreed that this was an unacceptable situation. The Morogoro office knew that a secret ballot had to be conducted for the RPC elections.

I sent a memo to the Morogoro office stating that its election was null and void. I said that I would be travelling to Morogoro the next weekend to oversee an election by secret ballot. I was accompanied by the electoral committee when I went to Morogoro on the following weekend, and we oversaw the election. Sperepere lost the election through the secret ballot, and he was not happy with the results.

In national elections, Eli Weinberg⁴⁹ was elected as chairman of the national RPC. Weinberg was from the Dar es Salaam office. After the elections I was approached by Weinberg. He was uncomfortable with his position as leader of an ANC office. He said that it would appear that, even in exile, white South Africans were leading black South Africans. I convened the office committee and put the issue before them. The committee decided to hold a referendum to resolve the situation.

An invitation was sent to every ANC member in Tanzania to participate in a referendum to be held at Somafo. I addressed the meeting in the school's amphitheatre before the referendum. I explained that Comrade Weinberg did not feel it was right that a white man should lead an ANC office, even though he had been elected by secret ballot. The consensus was that people were not blind and were aware that Weinberg was white. The people present expressed the view that they appreciated the concerns of the newly elected ANC leader but felt that Weinberg was elected because the people had faith in him. He had been voted in because the people believed that he would carry out the ANC's programmes and should accept his elected office. The referendum results showed an overwhelming support for the original results.

A report on all the elections and events surrounding it, including the Morogoro events, was then drafted and sent to Lusaka. The ANC secretary-general was happy with the report and declared the elections as free and fair. However, having Weinberg in the ANC leadership position in the country opened the ANC up to criticism by other liberation struggle movements, in particular the PAC. This was problematic for the secretary-general in Lusaka. Whenever the ANC went to political rallies in Tanzania, Weinberg represented the ANC. The PAC would argue that the ANC was not a liberation movement, and that while blacks were fighting against whites in South Africa,

here in exile the ANC was still under the leadership of whites. The PAC argued that this was a contradiction. For the ANC, which was fighting for a non-racial society, this was no contradiction, since Weinberg had been elected on merit.

There was a strong anti-white sentiment in Tanzania at the time that was linked to colonialism. The ANC had always maintained that it was not fighting against oppressive white people, but rather that its struggle was to remove an oppressive system. Its fight was for equal rights for people of all colours and that people of any skin colour could be part of the liberation struggle. The issues raised around the 'white leadership' of Weinberg revolutionised racial thinking in Tanzania, and many people came to realise that non-racialism was the way forward for all liberation struggles. The people in many African countries did not understand that South Africa was a unique colonial state. In South Africa the colonisers and the colonised were both inhabitants within the same borders, and there was no remote colonial leader in some European state. This meant that there had to be a place for all racial and ethnic groups living in a free South Africa. Many Tanzanians saw this non-racialism working in ANC offices, where everyone who was fighting against the apartheid system, whether they were black, white, coloured or Indian, was included in the ANC.

The ANC policies, even when in exile, were based on the Freedom Charter put forward and accepted at the Congress of the People in Kliptown in 1955.⁵⁰ The PAC had broken away from the unity established at the Congress of the People because it did not agree with several of the clauses of the Freedom Charter, such as equal sharing of the country's wealth, as well as its non-racial policies.

Suitcases upon suitcases

While I was still in Dar es Salaam, I received instructions from Lusaka to meet with what we called a Section Eight unit led by Comrade Jacob Masondo. This unit was responsible for the couriering of arms between countries. I met with them, and they said that Lusaka had said I would be able to help them resolve their problem. I had acquired a reputation as a 'Mr Fix-It' who was able to solve any problem. Masondo told me about the weapons that had been on *The Adventura*, which I had last seen and heard of years before in southern Somalia. Masondo told me that the weapons had been retrieved and stored in Somalia after the ship had

been pulled ashore. He said that it was now necessary to transport the weapons to Angola, and my help was required to get this done. I said that it would be possible to get the weapons into Tanzania, but added that I had no idea how it could be done.

I approached the Tanzanian chief of immigration, who was a close friend of OR. I told him about the instructions that I had received and that the weapons were required to intensify the struggle back home. He spoke to the custom officials and told them that I was a member of the Section Eight unit. He said that when members of this unit arrived at the airport, the members and their luggage were to be kept aside until I arrived to facilitate their entry into the country.

From then on, whenever members of the Section Eight unit arrived at the airport their papers would be cleared quickly, and their suitcases would be placed on trolleys directly from the plane and taken to a specially designated room. The suitcases were normally heavy because they were loaded with fully assembled weapons. I would take the suitcases and have them placed on the next flight to Angola via Lusaka.

Two to three members of the team would bring the suitcases about once or twice a month. The team staggered the routine to be unpredictable and ensure that no one in the enemy camp was made aware of the operation. The team members would then travel on to Angola with hand luggage only. This continued for just over a year, until the last of the weapons from Somalia were delivered to Angola. During the course of this operation, Comrade Masondo died in Angola from malaria. He was replaced by a woman, Comrade Mary, who had been a team member of Section Eight. The unit did an excellent job of moving the weapons from Somalia to Angola, but was disbanded when the task was completed.

CHAPTER 5

Further training in security and intelligence

Towards the end of 1981, I was sent back to the Soviet Union for six months to undergo further training in security and intelligence work. I spent those six months in Moscow. When I returned to Tanzania in 1982, I was transferred to the Lusaka office where I was appointed as the ANC's head of security, a division which was in dire need of a major overhaul. There were several issues that had to be tackled to ensure the safety of the ANC, its members and its installations.

A starting point for the ANC's reorganisation of the security division was to make its leadership aware of the need for increasing security measures. All security and intelligence personnel had to be trained on security awareness. Security plans for the ANC offices, as well as access control, had to be drawn up and implemented. There was a need for personal bodyguards for members of the NEC. The security division also created a system of checks to counter economic fraud that the organisation was experiencing.

Another requirement of the security division was to provide 24-hour security at all ANC installations. A special security section dealing with sabotage attempts on the organisation, the frequency of which was increasing rapidly, was also set up. This required personnel who were properly vetted and trained. The vetting of new members was very important for the organisation. Once again, the questionnaire and interview method was used to screen and vet personnel. The questionnaires were structured to help create a profile on the person in question. These members' backgrounds had to be checked with the ANC's intelligence networks, including those in South Africa.

Surveillance was an important aspect of the security division's work, and that was one of its more dangerous aspects. If a new member was suspected of being a spy, he or she would be installed in a hotel that was bugged and kept under surveillance by the security division. It was not only the security division that kept this hotel under surveillance, but also the enemies of the ANC. I lost a comrade during one of these surveillance operations. This comrade had booked into the hotel a new recruit to the security division who was suspected of being a spy. When he returned to his car and started it, the car blew up, killing him. The car bomb had been installed while he was in the hotel.

The ANC was under constant threat of attack by the apartheid regime. In Lusaka, the ANC was experiencing a serious problem with infiltrators working to sabotage the organisation. Any new members found to be working for the apartheid state were sent to detention centres in Angola.⁵¹

The problem was not confined to Lusaka. I encountered a similar problem with infiltrators when I was still in Morogoro. The local clinic there had an ambulance, and the driver was a good mechanic who used to service the ambulance on his own. Every time he visited me, he would ask to wash my car, even though it had already been washed. This made me suspicious. I became very worried and alerted the head of security in Morogoro. On one occasion the driver made a serious mistake by putting oil in the radiator of my car. This gave the security team a chance to question him. He soon admitted that he was an agent of the South African government and that he was waiting for more agents to arrive.

Moving to Zimbabwe

I was in Lusaka until the end of 1984. In February 1985 I was appointed as the chief representative of the ANC to Zimbabwe. I was posted to the Harare office, but still linked to the Lusaka office as the ANC's chief of security. I faced several challenges when I arrived in Harare. The ruling ZANU leadership viewed me with suspicion because of the historical ties the ANC had with ZAPU, and the ties ZANU had with the PAC. I knew several of the leaders of ZAPU, but only a few ZANU leaders. I was instructed by the Zimbabwean authorities to always invite the PAC to the rallies organised by the ANC. The Zimbabwean government believed that the PAC was not performing as well as it should, and therefore used every opportunity to broaden awareness about them in

Zimbabwe. I initially protested, but eventually agreed to invite PAC representatives to ANC rallies. However, I tried to get around this by requesting organisations in Zimbabwe to organise rallies for us. The Zimbabwean government soon realised what I was doing, and it forced these organisations to also invite the PAC to the rallies they organised on our behalf. This was a difficult time for me.

However, after some time, I befriended Mr Witness Mangwende, the minister of foreign affairs. I also became good friends with the chief of the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), Mr Chibanga, and the minister for security, Mr Emmerson Mnangagwa, as well as the latter's successor, Mr Sydney Sekeramayi. These gentlemen always helped me. The PAC eventually lost their support in Zimbabwe because they could not organise rallies and did not know what to tell the people. It was also becoming clear that the PAC's armed wing, the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA), was not doing much to win the war in South Africa, and that all the fighting inside the country was the work of MK. Eventually, it became very difficult for the PAC representatives to appear at the ANC rallies.

An example of a rally that really turned out very badly for the PAC was the 16 June celebration in 1985. President Robert Mugabe instructed ZANU to organise the rally in commemoration of the Soweto Uprising. The PAC was also invited, and its representative was given the opportunity to speak first, as was usual at the time, while I was scheduled to speak last. I realised that it offered me the opportunity to react to any speech made by the PAC representative. On that day, I got a standing ovation after my speech.

On another occasion, the PAC representative was again given the opportunity to speak first. A journalist attending the event asked the PAC representative the following question: "The press in South Africa is quite liberal. But why is it that it is only in Zimbabwe that everyone talks about the PAC, but not in South Africa, where only the ANC is popular?" What followed this question clearly indicated the attitude of the Zimbabwean people present at the rally towards the two South African liberation movements. The PAC distributed T-shirts at the rally. Our T-shirts arrived late. But when they arrived, the people in the crowd took them and put them over the PAC's T-shirts. This was scandalous for the PAC. At some stage, some organisations, in particular the religious organisations, started refusing to organise rallies where it was required to have a PAC presence. They openly stated that they were supporting

the ANC. The Lutheran World Federation and the Zimbabwe Council of Churches were among the religious groups that supported the ANC.

During my term as ANC chief representative, the ANC began to engage with several people based in South Africa. I had to organise several of these events, including visits by student groups from the University of South Africa (UNISA), the University of Natal and the University of Cape Town. During this time, delegations from South Africa included the two meetings between Stellenbosch University's Centre for Contextual Hermeneutics and the ANC in 1985 and 1987, the single meeting between the Executive of the United Congregational Church and the ANC in 1987, and the single meeting between a delegation of women from South Africa and the ANC in 1989. I was also made responsible for logistics and security at other important meetings, including the Dakar meeting between an IDASA delegation and the ANC in July 1987, and several other meetings between South African delegations and the ANC such as those attended by Dennis Worrall and Wynand Malan. Many such meetings in Zimbabwe took place at the Ghanaian High Commission in Harare. The South African government soon labelled the Ghanaians as terrorists and threatened to bomb the residence.

When I first arrived at the Harare office, one of the courtesy calls I received was from the secretary-general of the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), Didymus Noel Edwin Mutasa. Mutasa was the speaker of the Zimbabwean parliament at the time. In those days, the ANC had good relations with ZAPU, and the PAC had good relations with ZANU-PF.⁵² I was looking to normalise the relations between the ANC and ZANU-PF, and during my discussions with Mutasa we agreed to work on this together.

I reported on my discussion with Mutasa to the ANC headquarters in Lusaka. Lusaka sent me a note to say that this was a very important step to work towards and directed me to set up a meeting between the ANC and ZANU-PF leadership. I set up the meeting, and ANC President OR Tambo led the ANC delegation. The meeting was successful and relations between the two organisations were normalised. These good relations led to several positive developments for the ANC.

The first was that weapons consignments from Zambia that were taken to South Africa through Zimbabwe were collected by ZANU-PF security personnel at the Chirundu border with Zambia. These security officials would transport the weapons to my residence in

Mount Pleasant in Harare. The weapons were then stored in a room in the residence that had been converted into an armoury. A second room was used for the cleaning and packing of the weapons. Another positive outcome from the normalising of relations between ZANU-PF and the ANC was that all ANC residences were guarded by members of the Zimbabwean paramilitary.

The ANC had wide support among the people of Zimbabwe. As the ANC's chief representative, I once addressed a student rally in Harare. At the rally I mentioned that it would be a strong show of solidarity with the ANC if the government of Zimbabwe named Harare's longest street after Nelson Mandela. A few weeks after the rally, I was called to President Banana's office. He gave me a letter and said to me that the letter had to be taken to Mandela on Robben Island. He said that a handwritten personal response from Mandela was required. He explained that the University of Zimbabwe was planning to confer an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws on Mandela, in absentia.

Thabo Mbeki was in Harare to meet with a group of South Africans at the time. I met with Mbeki and briefed him on the matter, and we decided that a copy of the letter was to be made and sent to Lusaka. The original would be sent with the group of South Africans who were visiting Harare at the time, who would ensure that the letter reached Mandela. A few weeks later I received an envelope with Mandela's response inside. I took the envelope to President Banana, who opened it in front of me. Inside was a handwritten response from Mandela accepting the honour. President Banana was very excited and said that he had been confident that his letter would reach Mandela.

The University of Zimbabwe then began organising the ceremony to confer an honorary Doctor of Laws degree upon Mandela scheduled for 7 June 1986. The university also planned to confer an honorary Doctor of Laws degree upon Julius K Nyerere at the same ceremony. The vice-chancellor, Professor WJ Kamba, who was behind the move to confer the degree on Mandela, asked me to collect all available documents or letters mentioning and/or written by Mandela to help him prepare his speech for the ceremony. I called Lusaka and discussed Kamba's request with Comrade Nzo. The Lusaka office gathered the information and sent it to Harare, which I presented to Vice-Chancellor Kamba. The university hosted the ceremony, which was attended by a large number of people. The ANC was represented by Comrade Nzo, and one of Mandela's daughters received the award on behalf of her father.

On another occasion, I was invited to speak to a huge congregation of Catholic nuns in Harare. The nun in charge of the congregation was a firm believer in the South African liberation struggle and invited me to speak to her congregation. It was an opportunity for me to talk about the ANC's efforts in the liberation struggle, as well as ask for their support. I am not a very religious person, and she gave me a Bible and showed me a few verses which I could read out to the congregation. I read the verses during my address to the congregation and then talked about the struggle and the need to support it. I said that it was a moral obligation for the nuns to support the struggle. My speech was convincing because the nuns subsequently gave a cheque to the ANC.

Under threat in Harare

There were a large number of apartheid agents in Harare who were working to destroy the ANC while I was chief representative there. The Harare office and residences experienced several security threats. We would often receive intelligence from various sources that an ANC residence or the office was going to be attacked. The office was in Angwa Street and the chief representative's residence was in Mount Pleasant. The ANC had several other residences in Harare. One of these was the ANC official residence in Ashdown Park, which was where my predecessor, Comrade Joe Gqabi, the first ANC Chief Representative to Zimbabwe, had been assassinated. Gqabi was an ANC member, journalist and a former Robben Island prisoner who is credited for the role he played in the first MK campaign in the early 1960s and for reviving the ANC in Soweto in late 1975.⁵³ He was first arrested in the early 1960s under the Suppression of Communism Act and sentenced to ten years in prison. After his release from prison in 1975, he was again arrested in December 1976 under the Terrorism Act and later acquitted in 1977. In 1978, he left South Africa after months of persecution by the apartheid regime. He was ultimately assassinated by gunfire in Zimbabwe, while driving out of the gates of his home on 1 August 1981.⁵⁴

All the ANC leaders, including me, were targets of the apartheid state wherever we were based. We had to constantly be on the alert for booby traps and plots to infiltrate the organisation's offices, our homes and vehicles. It was vital for security that I moved around a lot

and never stayed in one place or had a set routine. One of the places I used as a safehouse was the home of Judith Todd, the daughter of a former prime minister of Rhodesia. Judith was a member of ZAPU, which was how I got to know her.

On 19 May 1986, intelligence of an impending attack by the South African Security Forces on one of the ANC properties was verified by the Zimbabwean CIO, the security division of the independent state. The CIO told the ANC office to ensure that no one was present in either the office or any of the ANC residences that evening. I asked Xaba, my deputy in Tanzania who had transferred with me to Zimbabwe, to ensure that no one else was present in any of the ANC's residences that evening.

Comrade Nzo was visiting Harare that day. After receiving the news, we decided to leave my official residence and go to a secret ANC flat. I gave the Zimbabwean security the number of the flat to let them know where I was in the event that I needed to be contacted. We did not sleep that night, and at one o'clock that morning we heard the bomb blasts. The Zimbabwean security called immediately to let me know that the ANC offices and the Ashdown Park residence had been destroyed by bomb blasts. Shortly after the blasts we went to the office and Ashdown Park to assess the extent of the damage.

The next morning, the South African Defence Force (SADF) announced in the media that the ANC offices in Harare and the Ashdown Park residence had been bombed. *The Citizen* newspaper quoted a source saying that three ANC members resisting the attack had been killed; but this was not true. Because of the prior intelligence, there was no one present in either office or house at the time of the blasts. Robert Mugabe went on TV the next day to announce that no one had been killed in the blasts. The attack had been carried out by SADF commandos wielding automatic weapons.

The newspaper mentioned my name as 'the official representative (of the ANC) – Mabuse Jan Mampane, also known as Reddy Mazimba'. This meant that the South African regime was aware of my real identity, even though there were very few people who knew it.

When we had received the information that the ANC residences were going to be attacked, Xaba had gone personally to inform all the people who were staying in ANC residences to vacate them. The last house that Xaba went to was Trafalgar House residence. Within a few moments of all the people leaving this residence, the South African

Security Forces opened fire on it. Fortunately, no one was injured because everyone had been evacuated just in time.

Before the hit on Trafalgar House, there was an incident with a woman who arrived at a Harare refugee camp. The refugee camp contacted us, saying that there was a South African woman who wanted to see the ANC chief representative, Mr Reddy Mazimba, to declare herself a refugee. I sent Jabu Moleketi to go and get more information on the woman. He returned with a short biography of the woman. We read through the biography and did not notice anything out of the ordinary. We requested that the authorities of the refugee camp release the woman into the care of the ANC.

There were only men stationed at Trafalgar House. But there was a separate room where a woman could be accommodated and this is where we put her. The next evening, I was called over by the guards stationed outside Trafalgar House. The woman had asked the guards to post an envelope for her. Instead of posting the letter, they had opened it and then called me over to come and inspect the contents. Inside the envelope was a photograph of JG, the man we had moved out of the room to make place for her. It was apparent that she had searched through the room the night before and found JG's photograph among some of his belongings. She had placed the photograph in an envelope and asked the guards at the entrance to Trafalgar House to get a stamp and post the letter for her the next morning. At the time we had in place a security measure to ensure that no one brought into Trafalgar House could send out information about the location or layout of the house. People stationed there were not allowed out until they were transported to Lusaka.

After I had checked the contents of the envelope, I instructed the guards not to say anything and to continue to allow the woman to move about freely on the property. The next day she gave the guards another envelope to post, and again I was called to check it out. This time the envelope contained drawings of the layout of the property and house, with the names of all the men who were living in the house. I took all this information to the Zimbabwean CIO, who then called her into their offices. At the CIO offices she was questioned about the letters, and it became clear that she was an apartheid agent. She was arrested, convicted, and sentenced to imprisonment in Harare.

Unravelling a spy

One Friday, while we were still at the Angwa Street office, my secretary called to let me know that there was a young, white lady asking to see Mr Reddy Mazimba. My secretary went down to meet the lady and brought her up to our first-floor office. The woman introduced herself and gave me a card that said that she was working for Fitzgerald Media.⁵⁵ I said that Mr Mazimba was not here and asked if I could help her. She seemed hesitant to talk to me, and I then told her that I was Reddy Mazimba.

She was young and attractive. But her stories did not fit well together, and I became suspicious of her. She told me that her name was Olivia Forsyth and that she was a journalist working for an overseas media company that had an office in Johannesburg. She said that she had been told that the ANC was organising a fundraising conference at Somafco and she would like to cover the story of the conference. She asked me how she would be able to do that. She added that it would be very important to cover this fundraising event, as well as the story of the ANC school.

I asked her when she had arrived in Zimbabwe. She said that she had arrived on that Wednesday. I then asked her for an update on the political situation in South Africa. She said that she was not sure because she has been on the move for a while. This made me more suspicious of her because she had told me that she was a journalist and a researcher. It did not make sense that she was not aware of current politics. I asked her who had shown her where the ANC offices were. She declined to give me a name and said that she would get the people who gave her the information to come and see me. I told her that I was not aware of a conference that was going to take place at Somafco, and that if she returned in a week, I would be able to tell her more about the conference and whether she would be able to attend it.

That evening I phoned Garth Strachan,⁵⁶ who was in charge of the ANC underground political structures in Zimbabwe. I told Strachan about Forsyth and her visit to my office. He said that he knew her and that he had been using her to send messages to South Africa. I told him that I did not trust her and was very suspicious of her. Not long after Strachan and I spoke, Forsyth went to see him and confessed that she was a lieutenant in the South African Security Forces and thus an agent for the apartheid state. She said that she wanted to make this confession

to the highest authority in the ANC in Harare, which she knew was me. Forsyth's confession really rattled Strachan because he had never suspected her of being a South African agent. He was visibly troubled when he came to tell me about her visit.

I said we should agree to meet with her to hear her full confession. I asked Strachan for a tape recorder so that we could record her story. We drove to fetch her from where she was staying, blindfolded her and took her to an ANC secret flat. At the flat we took off the blindfold. I told her that I had heard that she wanted to make a confession. She said yes, and I asked her if it would be okay if we taped her confession. She agreed and told us a very long story. But it was clear to me that her story was well-rehearsed, and she only conveyed what she thought we wanted to hear. She avoided crucial bits of information and there were many gaps in her story.

She said that her main mission for the South African security services was to infiltrate the ANC. She said that she had really been wanting to join the ANC and serve as a double agent for it. This was the reason why she was making her confession. But there were many crucial questions that she could not answer. We asked her who her trainer was, and she said that she could not remember. Strachan asked her if there was a lift in the security force building in South Africa where she worked. She said yes, but could not remember the floor she worked on. This was all crucial information that she should have readily known. This made us more suspicious of her.

Strachan and I strung her along, giving her the impression that we believed her story. I said that it was important to have someone like her in the ANC's security department who would be able to provide information about the South African security service. We told her that she was going to be sent to Lusaka along with her taped confession.

I then booked two return tickets to Lusaka; one for Forsyth and the other for Jabu Moleketi who was to accompany her to Lusaka. I took them to the airport, and when they got to Lusaka Moleketi handed her over to the Lusaka office and returned to Harare. After a few days I received a telex from the chief representative in Lusaka stating that the office had decided that she must be sent back to South Africa immediately. We were not given the reason for this decision. She was to arrive in Harare the next day, and I was to make arrangements for her to get back to South Africa as soon as possible. Moleketi and I ensured that Forsyth was on the earliest flight back to South Africa. After two weeks she was back in Lusaka again. Lusaka informed me that she was back, claiming that the South Africans wanted

to arrest her.

Lusaka called me to ask me what was happening with this woman. She was telling people that she had run away because she was about to be arrested in South Africa. She was then detained and sent to Angola for intensive questioning. After the questioning, she was released and stayed in an ANC house we called 'The First Res' in Luanda. A few days after she was installed at The First Res, Forsyth went over to the British Embassy alleging that the ANC was planning to kill her. The British gave her asylum, a British passport and flew her to London. The British believed her story and made a huge issue about it, painting her as a victim of ANC 'terror' in their media. Not long after that, she was flown back to South Africa.

In South Africa, she was interviewed by the media and spread a false story that she had infiltrated the ANC. Her objective in talking to the media was to show that the ANC was vulnerable to infiltration. A crucial mistake in her mission was when she approached me at the office in Harare. I saw through her cover and from then onwards her mission was a failure.⁵⁷

Moving to Avondale

After the Angwa Street office was destroyed by the bomb blasts, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), a close ally of the ANC, offered the organisation the use of two rooms on its premises as an interim measure. Often, the LWC and the ANC used to organise and address meetings from the same platform. The LWC were not fazed that the temporary ANC office was a potential bombing target.

A short while later, the ANC acquired new offices in the Avondale area. We were there for only a week when apartheid commandos targeted this office in the early hours of 17 May 1987. The South African commandos positioned themselves far from the office and launched bombs at it. Their objective was to destroy the offices because it was known that no one would be present in the office at that time. However, the bombs that were launched missed the ANC office and blew up the building next-door instead. This was the home of an Air Zimbabwe employee. No one was injured in the attack.

That same morning, *The Citizen* newspaper in South Africa carried the story of the blast and some propaganda material on the ANC office bearers in Harare. Given the technology available at that time, the timing of the report was only possible if the story had been prepared in advance of the attack on the ANC office.

The apartheid regime then presented the newspaper story to the Swedish Embassy in Pretoria and told the Swedish officials that their country was supporting terrorists and not freedom fighters. The South African regime was constantly looking for (or creating) reasons to alienate the organisation from countries who were sympathetic to our liberation struggle. The apartheid state alleged in their article that Jan Mampane, the head of the ANC office in Harare, was the terrorist who had planted landmines in the Northern Transvaal. Many South African soldiers had been injured by stepping on these landmines. This had been an MK operation carried out by a commando that had infiltrated the South African border through Zimbabwe.

The Swedish Ambassador in Zimbabwe called me to his office to discuss the allegations in the newspaper. I said to him that it would have been impossible for me to carry out these operations when I was in Harare during the times alleged.

On another occasion during my time in Harare, we received information that a South African woman by the name of Lillian would be coming to Harare to visit the ANC. Not long after receiving the information, a woman calling herself Lillian came to the ANC office wanting to join the organisation and to meet with Reddy Mazimba. I sent Comrade Thandi Rankoe to speak to the woman with the message that if she wanted to join the ANC she would have to go to Lusaka because there were no facilities in Harare for her to join the organisation. We sent her to Lusaka, briefing them on the situation. From Lusaka she was taken to the detention centre in Angola for questioning on suspicion of wanting to infiltrate the ANC. After some time, a man and a woman came looking for Lillian. We told them that we did not know any Lillian and that perhaps they should go to Lusaka to find out if she was there.

These failed attempted infiltrations by apartheid agents made the South African regime realise that the ANC security in Zimbabwe was tight. But it did not stop the apartheid security agencies from trying to infiltrate the organisation, or from further attempts on the lives of ANC members living in the country.

Victim of the apartheid state

Comrade Mahlope Masondo, the wife of my administrative secretary at the time, was a victim of the apartheid state's offensive while I was chief representative in Zimbabwe. When I was appointed to Zimbabwe,

I had requested that Lusaka send Vusumuzi Masondo from the Maputo, Mozambique, office to Zimbabwe because he was a good worker.

When a child passed away at Somafco, the ANC used to arrange for his or her parents to travel from South Africa to Tanzania to bury the deceased. A few weeks before Masondo came to Zimbabwe, a young boy passed away at Somafco. The South African Council of Churches arranged a ticket for a flight for the mother to travel to Zimbabwe for the funeral. The boy's mother travelled to Tanzania through Mozambique. Masondo was the person in the Maputo office who facilitated the travel arrangements of people moving through Mozambique. The mother arrived in Maputo with a man who she introduced to Masondo as her brother Lesley from Kimberley. They stayed overnight with Masondo, before flying out to Tanzania through Lusaka.

On the way back from the funeral the mother and her brother stayed with Masondo again. Lesley promised that he would give Masondo a colour television set and told him that he wanted to join the ANC. Not long after that, Masondo joined me in the Harare office. A few months later a comrade of ours passed away in Maputo. I sent Masondo to represent the Harare office at the funeral. While Masondo was there he called Lesley about the promised TV. Masondo told him that he was in Mozambique for a few days and if it was possible could Lesley bring the TV while he was in Maputo. Lesley agreed to drive from Kimberley to Maputo, where he gave the TV to Masondo. The TV was in a box, and Lesley showed Masondo how to open the box and showed him the knobs to use to switch the TV on.

Masondo flew back to Harare with the television set, but had to leave it at the customs office at the airport until I could write a letter stating that the TV should be released to him. The next morning at the office, he told me about the television set and how he came to possess it. I wrote a letter stating that the TV was a gift to Masondo, and customs then released it to him. Masondo set the TV up in the bedroom in his flat. When he tried to switch it on, there was no picture, even after he tried all the buttons and dials. When he got back to the office, he told me that the TV set was not working. I said that I would go to the Embassy of the GDR and ask them if they had a technician who could check it out for him.

Later that afternoon when his wife came home from work, she tried to switch the TV on. It exploded and her body was blown to pieces. Masondo and I were notified immediately that an explosion had taken place at his apartment. By the time I got there, the police were already

cleaning up the body parts of Masondo's wife. Masondo's children and their nanny, who were in the kitchen, were unharmed. The police took him and his children to another location before he could see how badly his wife's body had been blown apart.

The head of the Zimbabwean CIO and I went to speak to Masondo. He said that the bomb had to have been inside the television set, which was triggered when the TV was switched on. This correlated with the investigations of the CIO at the house. I asked if he still had the phone number of the man who had given him the TV. He said he did not, but he said that someone at the Maputo office might know the number. While we were sitting together, I called the Mozambique office to ask if they could find Lesley's phone number. Maputo did not have the number but knew someone who would be able to get it.

I asked them to get the phone number and to call Lesley. I instructed them to tell him that we understood that he wanted to join the ANC. He was to be told that the ANC wanted him to travel to Lusaka to interview him about his wishes to join the organisation. The Maputo office had already heard of what happened in Harare, but I told them that there was no truth to the rumour. I also instructed them that no one was to talk about any rumours or speak to Lesley about any news or events from Harare.

After Lesley was contacted, he drove to Maputo in a very nice car, wearing a large, attractive ring on his finger. We later found out that the ring was a communication device, linked to a transmitter hidden in the car. The ring picked up sound from around it and transmitted the sound to the device in the car, which was then transmitted to Pretoria. The Maputo office informed me when Lesley arrived at the office, and also told me about a flight with new recruits leaving for Lusaka the next day. I instructed them to put Lesley on this flight and to ask that those travelling with him keep their office informed of his movements at all times. I spoke to Lusaka and asked for him to be sent to Harare as soon as he arrived.

When Lesley landed in Lusaka, he was welcomed by the Lusaka office and kept separate from the other new recruits. Lusaka informed me of his arrival, and I told them that they should drive Lesley to the Chirundu Bridge crossing where I would meet them the next morning. Tim Dennis, the son of Oscar Dennis, was one of the ANC officials who escorted Lesley from Lusaka to Chirundu Bridge. That night, I drove with two Zimbabwean CIO officials through most of the evening

before sleeping at a motel near Chirundu Bridge. At six o'clock the next morning, we met with the team accompanying Lesley and went to the local police station. I began asking Lesley a number of questions, and it was only at this point that he began to realise that he was not being initiated into the ANC. I said to him: 'Welcome to Zimbabwe. You are now under arrest.'

We prepared to drive back to Harare. When I stopped at a filling station, I noticed that a hubcap from my car was on the ground and that a tyre pin had been shifted in an attempt to remove it. I realised that my car was a marked vehicle. I fixed the loose pin quietly and we continued on our drive to Harare.

Under questioning in the Zimbabwean CIO office, Lesley admitted to working for the apartheid regime. He said that the message to the mother whose child had died at Somafco had been intercepted by the South Africa security services. He told us that she had been forced to take him with her and to lie to the ANC that he was her brother. He also told us the story of the ring and the transmission unit in the car and that he had left the ring in his jacket in Maputo. We asked the Zimbabwean government to contact the Mozambican government to arrange to have the car, with the jacket and the ring, brought to Harare. These were all brought over to Zimbabwe, where the CIO stripped the car completely and verified his story. In addition, a pistol with a silencer was found hidden behind the cubby compartment. Lesley was arrested for the murder of Masondo's wife, convicted, and sentenced to imprisonment in Harare.

On another occasion, the Mount Pleasant residence where I was living was targeted. I normally parked my car under a simple corrugated iron roof carport that was situated at the back of the property. One night I heard loud shooting and realised that the sound was coming from my yard. I ran out and saw that the car windows had been shattered by bullets. The only way that the shooters could have targeted the garage was from the neighbouring properties, indicating a marked shooting attempt.

At the end of 1988 I was recalled to Lusaka to continue in my position as the ANC chief of security to help with the security challenges that the apartheid regime was posing to the organisation. I was kept busy in Lusaka until the beginning of 1990.

CHAPTER 6

Changing times

In 1990, talks about negotiation between the South African National Party and the ANC were initiated. In September 1990, I was instructed, together with two colleagues from the ANC security division, to travel to South Africa to discuss the security arrangements for the ANC leadership during the negotiations. Our first discussions were with our security division counterparts from the South African regime. This was the very same agency that just a short while before had been engaged in activities to destroy the ANC and its members. Before discussions about the security negotiations could begin, we discussed with each other for the first time, the activities we had been engaged in up to that point in time, why and what we were hoping to achieve.

The day I left Lusaka for South Africa, using a Ghanaian national passport, I was very apprehensive. This was the first time that I was returning to South Africa since I had left in 1963. I boarded a South African Airways flight and flew to Jan Smuts Airport, now OR Tambo International. At passport control, our passports were taken away by the white official and after fifteen minutes he came back with our passports and said to us: 'Welcome home.' It felt very strange.

We had a small reception committee waiting for us outside the airport and I was driven to Hillbrow, where I was accommodated on the 15th floor of the Ponte building. My two colleagues were taken to a hotel on Pretorius Street.

The ANC chief of intelligence in Johannesburg, Joe Nhlanhla,⁵⁸ came to me the next morning to brief me before the meeting with our South African counterparts. At the meeting in Pretoria there was silence

at first, with everyone assessing each other before the meeting began. At this meeting we discussed the general programme of what was to follow and decided to draw up a plan of action for our role during the forthcoming negotiations. We spent a week in South Africa, after which time I flew back to Lusaka.

I returned to South Africa for the second time about a month later to begin the security arrangements for the discussions between the ANC and the National Party. This time I applied for a South African passport. An arrangement had earlier been made for two legal persons from the ANC, Penuell Maduna and Matthews Phosa, to enter the country in order to facilitate the 'talks about talks' with the Nationalist government. Maduna, Phosa and Jacob Zuma had been allowed to re-enter the country legally on 21 February 1990 to participate in this process. They participated in a joint Steering Committee with members of the apartheid regime charged with undertaking this process.⁵⁹ They also facilitated for those of us who were not on the South African system to have our driver's licences exchanged for South African ones. When I later applied to have my driver's licence changed, they already had me on the South African system since I had applied for a passport earlier. This meant that I could not exchange my driver's licence for a South African one and had to go through the driver's test again. Fortunately, the white man who tested me was fair towards me. He made me drive around the area of the Pretoria Testing Station, said that I was a '*goeie*' driver and I was given my driver's licence.

But in all this time that I was busy applying for my passport and driver's licence, I had missed my deadline to leave the country. At that time there was an interim arrangement which had been gazetted, that ANC members brought into the country for the negotiations had to be out of the country by a certain date. When I got to the airport to return to Lusaka, the white official told me that I was supposed to have left the country three days before. I had been so busy that I had not looked at my passport. The official then said I could not leave. I said: 'Fine, if you don't want me to leave, then that is your problem.' He was in a dilemma. If he let me stay in the country, it would be a problem because he would have had to find a way to deal with my presence in the country; and if he let me go, it would also be a problem because he would have allowed me to leave the country illegally – just a smaller one. I told him to just let me go and that would help us both. So, he released me, and I proceeded into the airport departure lounge.

While waiting to board the plane, I just kept wishing that I was already on the plane flying out. I was worried that the immigration official might come back and tell me that he had changed his mind. When I arrived in Lusaka, I called Maduna and told him that I had almost been arrested. He asked me why, and I told him that I had missed the deadline to leave South Africa. He was very apologetic, but there was not much that could have been done.

Returning home

In December 1991, I returned to South Africa permanently. I travelled with my daughter Lerato, who was nine years old. I left my son in Lusaka because he was busy completing his matriculation examinations. I rented a house in Turffontein, Johannesburg, which we shared with another family. My wife, Gloria, was studying in New Zealand through an ANC scholarship. This meant that I was looking after our family on my own. On my return, I was immediately deployed to Shell House, the ANC's new headquarters inside the country, as the ANC's chief of security.

At the time, preparations were underway for the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) talks between the apartheid regime and its allies on the one hand, and the ANC and other organisations on the other, that were to take place at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park. In 1990, the apartheid regime had started showing signs of gravitating towards a democracy when it unbanned the ANC and started to release political and anti-apartheid activists from prisons. The CODESA talks began in 1991. The convention included discussions about the drafting of a new constitution and forming a democratic South Africa at its first plenary session on 20 December 1991.⁶⁰

I was appointed the ANC's head of security for the CODESA talks. I was co-commander of the security unit with Colonel Koos Venter of the apartheid security forces. I brought in MK security personnel, and he brought in personnel from the apartheid police force. The security unit's directive was to protect CODESA. The ANC and the National Party each had deputies and the security unit had to work in pairs; one ANC member was paired with a member of the apartheid security forces. It was one of the most difficult things I have done in my life. Not too long before, the apartheid security forces had been enemies of the ANC who had been working hard to destroy us.

Colonel Venter and I had plenty of work to do to make the unit work smoothly. Members of the security unit would speak a lot, debating many of the issues of our histories, oftentimes until very late into the night. I too spoke a lot during these discussions. We knew that our leaders had instructed us to protect the negotiations for all our futures. There were many difficulties, in particular the members of the unit from the apartheid security forces refusing to take orders from the MK personnel and vice versa. Venter and I would each to our unit's personnel, letting them know that they had to resolve their differences and find a way to work together.

Uniforms were arranged for the security unit and a decent pay was negotiated for the unit's personnel. I was appalled at the low wages that the members of the police force were being paid. Security could not be placed in the hands of personnel who were not being adequately looked after. Low pay would have made the security officers susceptible to bribery and therefore possibly compromise CODESA. With decent pay, a uniform and a lot of hard talking, the security unit took shape and was ready to provide the security for CODESA.

Barging armoured vehicles

In May 1993, an armoured vehicle was driven through the glass front of the World Trade Centre while the negotiations were underway.⁶¹ Eugène Terre'Blanche and some of his supporters in the right-wing Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) barged in on horseback behind the armoured vehicle. These white right-wingers were opposed to the negotiations and were insisting that South Africa was their land. No one opposed them, and they occupied the World Trade Centre for about half an hour and then left. Not long after the incident at the World Trade Centre, some of these men went to Bophuthatswana where they were shot and killed by the local military.⁶² It was only then that the right-wing realised that the changes taking place in the country at the time were irreversible.

When the CODESA negotiations came to an end, the security unit had to organise security for the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) offices being set up around the country. The IEC had been established in 1993 to facilitate the country's first democratic and successive elections.⁶³ These offices would play an important role in heralding in the first democratic elections of the country. I did a lot of travelling

during this time. I would park my car at the airport in the morning and fly around to the different offices nationally and then return home in the evening. During the day, I would work out a structure at an office, where there was a security commander and a deputy as well, who were then empowered to carry out their work. This work around the country made many South Africans realise that there was unusual work taking place and that things were changing in South Africa.

Hani's assassination

The transition period was a difficult time in South Africa. The violence in the townships, especially Thokoza and Soweto, was very bad. The ANC was working very hard during this period to harness all its people and bring them back home to work towards the establishment of a new democratic state. This meant a lot of work for the security division.

The ANC encountered a serious security problem with what we called the 'cabal'. This was a group of people who were working from within the organisation to undermine it. The security division had to find out who these people were. A list of suspects was drawn up after a major effort and presented to the ANC leadership. Mandela said that there was not much that could be done with the information. He said people were required for the new government and that the ANC would have to go forward to democracy with people it did not entirely trust.

I had moved to Boksburg, near Chris Hani's home in Dawn Park, by the time CODESA had concluded. On 10 April 1993, Joe Nhlanhla telephoned me and informed me that he had heard that there was a problem at Chris Hani's home, and he was on his way there. I rushed over as well. When I arrived, the police and several people had already gathered. Hani's body was lying on the ground and his wife was crying. Chris Hani was the former chief of staff of uMkhonto weSizwe (MK) and general-secretary of the SACP at the time. After several assassination attempts on his life, he was shot to death by two white supporters of the apartheid government.⁶⁴ Chris Hani's assassination happened at the time when the Multiparty Negotiating Forum negotiations were underway and threatened to disrupt them and lead to violence in the country.⁶⁵

Hani's murder occurred during a very precarious time in the history of South Africa's transition to democracy. It was a difficult time to control people's emotions and to ensure that there was no retaliatory

violence, which would have seen the country spiral into chaos. Hani's funeral was held at the FNB Stadium in Soweto. Many of the leaders who addressed the people at the funeral made passionate pleas for calm. Mandela went on national television to appeal for calm and called on people to avoid letting the event be a trigger for further violence. The people had to realise that retaliatory violence would seriously compromise the process leading to a new democratic state. Hani's body was taken back to Boksburg, where he was buried. Not long after Hani's assassination, the situation calmed down nationally.

Post-elections

After South Africa's first democratic election in 1994, I formed a security and cleaning company called Pangolin Investigation and Security. The Pangolin is a rare, small, scaly animal that lives underground. I saw this creature for the first time when I was in Zimbabwe. I was still with the ANC and hoping to retire from the organisation and continue with my business. I was exhausted from my many years as chief of security. But business was not easy and Pangolin was not a success. I then joined some of my colleagues and formed another business, the African Development Corporation (ADC), a business development agency. We persisted with the ADC for a year before we had to close its doors as well.

The ANC in the meanwhile was continuing its process of integrating the large number of MK members into civil society. Many had returned from exile and were looking for a place in this new democracy. The first phase of the integration process took place at Wallmansthal. Here, returning MK cadres were assessed by a panel to determine their abilities so that a suitable position could be found for them in the new, integrated South African National Defence Force. An important challenge was the level of education and the age of the MK veterans. The majority of the veterans had no, or very little formal educational background, and many of them were past the age where they could be suitably integrated into the defence force. These obstacles had to be overcome in order to accommodate them. I could not be part of this process because it would have meant staying in the military camp at Wallmansthal. My wife was still studying in New Zealand, and I had to look after our children. I remained with the ANC, working in Shell House.

My diplomatic life

In 1996, Comrade Alfred Nzo, who was now the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, approached me and said that the government required ambassadors in Angola and the Netherlands. Nzo suggested that since I had experience with the Angolan government and had been there on a number of occasions I should take the Angolan post. I accepted the Angolan appointment, and Carl Niehaus was appointed ambassador to the Netherlands.

I reported to the offices of the Department of Foreign Affairs in Pretoria and began my study of Angola. At the beginning of 1997 I took up my appointment in Angola, where I stayed for the next four years. Before I left for Angola, the Angolan government had approached Mandela to mediate between the MPLA-led government and rebel leader Jonas Savimbi to form a government of national unity. Just before my departure for Angola, I was informed that Savimbi, at Mandela's invitation, was coming to South Africa for a meeting to discuss the possibility of an Angolan government of national unity. I was requested to take part in this meeting as part of my preparation for my forthcoming term as ambassador in Angola. The meeting, at the Holiday Inn in Umtata, was chaired by Mandela. The other members of the new democratic government present included Comrades Nzo and Thabo Mbeki. This was my initial introduction to the negotiations between the Angolan government and Savimbi and the challenges facing Angola. Not long after the meeting, I left for Angola with Mbeki who was on his way to report to President Dos Santos about the meeting with Savimbi.

One of the first things I did when I took up the post in Angola was to organise a team-building exercise for my office staff. Soon after taking up my post, I found that there was a lot of mistrust and divisions among the office staff. I arranged a braai for the staff and their families to take place at my official residence. I asked one of my staff members, a young man who was coming to the end of his term in the office, to use the minibus parked in the garage to transport the staff to the official residence for the braai. He told me that he did not know where the official residence was, and that none of the office staff had been allowed to go there. I called my first secretary, Antoinette, and asked her if this was true. She said it was. She added that the previous ambassador had allowed only a few staff members to go to the official residence. I wondered why this had been the practice of my predecessor.

When the staff came over with their families for the braai, most told me that this was the first time that they had been to the official residence. We had a lovely braai, and the children enjoyed the swimming pool thoroughly. After the braai, the atmosphere in the office changed. The staff realised that I had a very different and open approach to running the office.

Angola was one of the countries that provided significant support for the South African liberation struggle and had opened its country by providing military training camps for the ANC. When I took up my ambassadorship, the Angolan government officials would repeatedly tell me that after South Africa had achieved its liberation it had forgotten its old ally. The Angolans wanted to know why Mandela had not paid an official state visit to Angola since becoming president of the new South Africa.

Once a year, all the heads of South Africa's diplomatic mission come together for the Heads of Missions Conference in Pretoria to discuss the programme for the year ahead. When I went to Pretoria during my first year as the ambassador to Angola, I telephoned Mandela's home in Houghton and requested a meeting with him. Mandela accepted my request, and scheduled a meeting on a Saturday afternoon. At this meeting, I stressed the necessity of Mandela making an official visit to Angola. Mandela said to me that the problem was that he was not in charge of his programme and that it was the responsibility of other people. I stressed that it was important for him to speak to the people who drew up his programme and let them know that visiting Angola was a very important issue that had to be attended to. I reminded him that Angola was one of the ANC's staunchest supporters and was often attacked by the apartheid regime because of this support. Mandela joked that he had some staff that thought he would be bitten by mosquitoes in Angola that would threaten his life. He said that he would take up this matter. He added that I was correct that he should visit Angola.

Mandela asked me how the Angolans felt about him. I said that the Angolans felt that South Africa had forgotten its old ally. When I left his house, Mandela set in motion a process that would lead to a visit to Angola. There were many in his office who were opposed to the trip, but I pushed for him to come and visit. I believed that it was essential that Mandela make the trip to acknowledge the ANC's old ally. Mandela was a hero to the Angolan people, and his visit would be a token of the appreciation South Africans have for that country's contribution to the

liberation struggle. Eventually, Mandela made the trip to Angola, and this made the people and government of that country very happy. Soon thereafter, our office in Angola got involved in the building of a clinic in the Malanje Province. When the clinic was completed, it was named the Nelson Mandela Health Centre after Mandela had given permission for the use of his name.

Throughout the period I was in Angola, Savimbi continued with his bush warfare and refused to negotiate for the establishment of a government of national unity.

I completed my term in Angola in 2000 and returned to South Africa. In 2001 I was deployed as Ambassador to Zambia. It was good to go back to Zambia and meet with old comrades, friends and family there. I had a good term in Zambia. The comrades in the office were hard working and we achieved much in Zambia. In my business plan for Zambia, I included poverty alleviation plans that tackled the building of boreholes and clinics, as well as the supply of medicine for clinics.

My term in Zambia ended in 2004, after which I was posted to Sudan. Sudan was a difficult term for me. The country was under much strife and the unstable security conditions were not conducive to having my family there with me. The civil war which had broken out again in 1983 was still taking its toll on the country. In addition, Sudanese society was characterised by significant gender segregation and without many public recreational facilities, making it very difficult for my family to stay with me. I stayed alone in Sudan, while my wife and children stayed in South Africa. Sudan is very hot, with many desert storms. My health deteriorated, and I became ill in Sudan. I stayed in Sudan for three and a half years and returned to South Africa six months before the end of my term there.

One of my main achievements in Sudan was an initiative to establish a joint bilateral commission between that country and South Africa. This commission was a platform from which the two governments could facilitate cooperation in political, economic, business and other issues. While I was in Sudan, the Peace Accord between the North and South of Sudan was signed in 2005, making it possible to travel to the North. In 1994, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGAD), an organisation which Sudan was a part of together with other countries such as Uganda, Somalia, Kenya, Eritrea and Ethiopia, intervened in the country by beginning peace negotiations between the Sudanese government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

Nelson Mandela joined the negotiations in 1997. A Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was ultimately reached in 2005, ending more than 22 years of war which cost an estimated 2 million lives.⁶⁶

After my term in Sudan, I was sent on my fourth diplomatic mission to Swaziland during the third quarter of 2008. Swaziland is a relaxed country, and it was an easy place for me to work. It was convenient for me to drive to my family home in Limpopo province from the capital of the country. I was also able to live in Swaziland with my wife of 21 years, Gloria, and our youngest daughter.

CHAPTER 7

Six months turned into twenty-seven years

I had left South Africa in 1963 with the expectation that I would be seeing my family again in another six months or so. From the first time I had left home to work away from home, I was able to return home once a year to spend Christmastime with my family. In 1962 I was heavily involved with work for the ANC and did not go home for Christmas that year. I could also not go home because I was under orders to be ready to cross the border for military training at any time. My family was not aware of my growing politicisation, and I could not tell anyone that I would be leaving the country.

I really wanted to go home when I heard that my mother had given birth to my sister, who was the first girl in our family. The thought that consoled me was that I was going to be back in about six months and would be able to visit my family and meet my baby sister.

But things had changed dramatically in South Africa after I had completed my military training in Algeria. With the crackdown on the ANC and the effect this had on the machinery that supported infiltration of cadres from abroad, six months turned into twenty-seven years.

When I left South Africa in 1963, I was a young man. When I returned I was a much older person. My twenty-seven years in exile, and a large part of my youth, had been spent deeply committed to the liberation struggle. I did not have much space for a personal life and spent most of my waking moments during that time working for the struggle. This is also what kept me alive: the commitment and the work within the organisation.

I often thought of my mother, my brothers and other family members and what was happening at home during my period in exile. I hoped that 'Freedom in my Lifetime' would be achieved, and that I would get a chance to see them again.

I was given serious responsibilities in the ANC from a young age, and I had to live up to the expectations attached to these positions within the organisation. The more effectively and efficiently I carried out my responsibilities, the more I was assigned to more senior and demanding responsibilities. I did not have the carefree life that a young person should have had because of my responsibilities in the organisation. I was on call for the organisation around the clock.

My social life was very difficult in exile. The influx of young students in 1976 made me wish for a life where I could have a girlfriend and take her out when I could. But as a responsible office bearer of the ANC I could not have a casual relationship with any woman. If I was interested in a woman, I would have to make it formal so that it would not interfere with my work. But at the time I was not yet ready to make a formal commitment to a woman, which meant that I was quite lonely most of the time.

On the other hand, my life within the liberation struggle gave me the opportunity to learn many things that I would not otherwise have been exposed to or learnt. I have a much wider experience of different cultures and places than I could have imagined when I first left South Africa. When we went to Russia in the early 1960s, it was the first time that many Russians had seen a black person. They would come up to us and touch our skin to see if we felt the same as they did. They would touch our hair because our hair was so very different from theirs.

I have a much broader knowledge and appreciation of the world and life. My life in exile also gave me the experience of meeting people with different African cultures and languages for the first time. Before I left Pretoria for exile, the people in my home village and those I met in Pretoria were the only fellow Africans I had encountered.

When I left South Africa, I met with other black people who did not understand my language and whose language I did not understand. This exposure to the many people of Africa has made me respect people from cultures different to my own. This also made me very aware that as South Africans we do not exist on our own and that we need all the different people of Africa and other parts of the world as much as they need us. While being away from my family for twenty-seven years was

painful, the experiences that I had through my commitment to the liberation struggle were invaluable.

My family

None of my family members had known that I had left the country in early 1963. While I was in exile, I had no communication and no news from my family until the mid-eighties. The ANC had told me that they had informed my parents that I had left the country. When I eventually returned to South Africa, my mother told me that the police used to often harass her at our home. They would invade our home and ask where Reddy was. The police told her that I had died a long time ago, but would still turn up on her doorstep to look for me. On one occasion she got angry with the police and asked them why they troubled her all the time if I was dead. She said to them that she did not know where I was, and that they had killed her son and were now just harassing her all the time. The chief of our village would also tell my mother that I had died a long time ago. This was a scare tactic used to keep families of freedom fighters in constant fear and stress.

The South African apartheid regime used many of the village chiefs in their attack on our liberation struggle. Those chiefs who did not comply with the regime were dethroned and replaced by lackeys – who often had very distant or no claim to chieftom – and who then worked with the apartheid state to undermine the liberation struggle. These chiefs would be used by the apartheid state to expose anyone who was working in opposition to the state. At one village meeting, the chief of our village called my mother out at the meeting. He made her stand in front of the entire village and then he pointed to her, saying that she was a woman who had given birth to a terrorist, a communist and someone who kills people. He went on to say that if anyone saw me in the village he should tell the chief or the police. He also told people that I wanted the chieftainship, which was a serious allegation, because I am related to the chief and this would have been viewed as disrespect and a serious challenge to his position.

It was a feeling of relief to discover that my mother was still alive when I came back to South Africa. When I sat down and spoke to my mother, she told me that she had been very proud of me during all the time I was away. She was never sure if I was dead or alive, but she was proud of the fact that I was involved in the struggle for the liberation of the people.

I was one of very few people from Sekhukhuniland who had joined the liberation struggle and had spent so many years in exile. Many people from the area now know me and look up to me because of my involvement in the struggle.

Family news – 1986

It was difficult for people to leave South Africa during the apartheid era. During the eighties, it was only possible to leave the country as part of a church or student group. In 1986, while I was chief representative in Zimbabwe, a group of women came to Harare to attend a church meeting. I met with all the women, asking each one of them where they were from to find out if there was anyone who came from the area where my family had originally lived.

A woman named Estha Maleka from White City in Soweto told me that her parents were originally from Nebo, a village neighbouring Mehlabane. I told her who I was and where I came from. She said she knew the family, but that they had been forcibly removed from Mehlabane in 1964.⁶⁷ I told her that I was aware that my family had been forcibly removed from their village in 1964. Throughout my years in exile, I would search for people coming from South Africa to ask them about my family. But there was very little news about of my family obtained in this manner because it was always third hand, from someone who knew someone who knew the family.

Estha Maleka was the first person who directly knew my family and who was able to give me some news. When Maleka went back to South Africa, she traced my family and went to visit them. She took photographs of my mother, my sister and brothers. My sister was now a grown woman, who had children and was now a widow. Maleka returned to Harare about three months later with the photographs. When she told me the news of my family and showed me the photographs, I just sat there with tears rolling down my cheeks. She told me that my mother had cried when Maleka had told her about me.

When I came back to South Africa for the first round of meetings in September 1990, I took a comrade of mine and we went to look for my family. Maleka had found my family in the village of Serageng, which was next to Marble Hall. My comrade and I drove to Marble Hall from Pretoria.

In Marble Hall we asked people for directions to Serageng. When we reached the village, we asked: “*Ga Mampane ki mokai?*” (Where is the

home of the Mampanes?). When we got directions to a Mampane house, we drove over and knocked on the door. We were invited in by a woman I did not recognise. As we walked in, I saw a man standing a little away from us. I recognised him as my younger brother, Shupulu. He was now a grown man. I went towards him, and he had a look on his face that said that he recognised me from somewhere but that he was unsure where. I went up to him and said I was Mabuse. My brother and I hugged, and we both cried. There was a lot of excitement when the women and children realised who I was.

I asked where my mother was. My brother told me that she had gone to Pretoria to collect her pension. I was very anxious to leave for Pretoria to meet with my mother and was filled with a sense of urgency to meet her. A huge thunderstorm broke out as we were leaving Serageng. The nearby river became flooded, and we had to take a long detour to get to a safe bridge to cross, increasing my anxiety. We drove through the storm, and finally got to Mamelodi and located the address that my brother had given us. When we arrived at the house it was close to seven in the evening and getting dark.

Two youngsters were sitting outside the house. I asked them: '*eMampane mokadiye?*' (Is the old lady Mampane here?). They said that they did not know anyone by that name. I said that I had just come from my village, and they had informed me that the woman was living there. I said that this woman was my mother and I wanted to see her. The youngsters still insisted that there was no one there by that name. I said that I was Mabuse and that she was my mother. They then chatted to each other, and one of them went into the house. He came back and said that I should go inside and maybe the people there would be able to help me.

When I went into the house, the first person I saw sitting there was my mother. My mother recognised me, and we hugged and cried in each other's arms. She looked at me and said: yes, I was her son. We did not sleep that night. We sat up all night and spoke. We were trying to catch up on twenty-seven years.

My mother and I were very happy to meet each other again. She told me of the painful treatment she received from the police and the village chief after the police had discovered that I had left the country and joined the ANC. My mother told me that she had been worried that I was dead, with the many visits that the police had paid her looking for me. She said she had been confused when the police still came to her

house looking for me after they had told her that I was dead. She had not received any news about me until the time that Maleka had visited her. She could not tell whether I was in fact dead or alive all that time. It felt great to be back with my mother. She told me of my father's death. I was sad that I had missed my father's death in 1985, a year before I received the first news of my family while I was in exile.

I had still not met my young sister. In Serageng, I had been directed to a Mampane house, which was my brother's house. I later learnt that if I had gone to my mother's house I would have met my sister there. I was to meet my twenty-seven-year-old sister for the first time on my second visit to South Africa a month later.

[Editors' note: Unfortunately, Ambassador Mampane became ill before he could complete his recollection about the first meeting with his only sister who was born just before he went into exile in 1963. We felt that this would nevertheless be an appropriate ending of his life story because it brings into sharp focus what many exiled South Africans experienced when they returned to families they had left several decades before.]

Acronyms and abbreviations

ADC	African Development Corporation
ANC	African National Congress
CIO	Central Intelligence Office
CNETU	Council of Non-European Trade Unions
CODESA	Convention for a Democratic South Africa
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CPSA	Communist Party of South Africa
DTWU	Domestic Workers' Trade Union
Frelimo	Front for the Liberation of Mozambique
GDR	German Democratic Republic
LWC	Lutheran World Council
MK	uMkhonto weSizwe
MPLA	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
NEC	National Executive Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PAC	Pan-Africanist Congress
PAFMEC	Pan-African Freedom Movement for East and Central African
PAIGC	African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde
RPC	Regional Political Committee
SACP	South African Communist Party
SACTU	South African Congress of Trade Unions
SADF	South African Defence Force
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SWAPO	South-West African Peoples Organisation
UNIP	United International Independence Party
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army
ZPC	Zonal Political Committee

Endnotes

- 1 The Department of Native Affairs was a department of the apartheid government responsible for the administration of all matters relating to black African people at the time. The department was responsible for applying legislation such as the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 and the Bantu Education Act of 1953, among others.
- 2 Doyle, D., 2005. Ritual male circumcision: A brief history. *Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh*, 35(3), p. 279.
- 3 A derogatory term applied to black African people by racists. Originally an Arabic term for a non-believer, it came into popular parlance of racists during the period of white minority rule.
- 4 Dlamini, J., 2020. Nine. The Dompas. In *The Terrorist Album*. Cambridge, MA Harvard University Press, pp. 215–233.
- 5 Welsh, D., 2009. *The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*, Johannesburg and Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers.
- 6 This was a practice common during the period of white minority rule in which many black African people were given Afrikaans or English names by white officials or employers who were unable to pronounce their African names. It was a dehumanising exercise that undermined the humanity of the people named in this manner.
- 7 Christie, P. & Collins, C., 1982. Bantu education: Apartheid Ideology or Labour reproduction? *Comparative Education*, 18(1), pp. 59–75.
- 8 Giliomee, H., 2012. Bantu Education: Destructive intervention or part reform? *New Contree*, 26, p. 68.
- 9 Christie, P. & Collins, C., (1982) Bantu Education: Apartheid Ideology or Labour Reproduction? *Comparative Education* 18(1), p. 67.
- 10 Scarnecchia, T., 2011. The Congo crisis, the United Nations, and Zimbabwean nationalism, 1960–1963. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 11(1), pp. 64–65].
- 11 The Black Sash was an organisation established by a small group of English-speaking white women in 1955 in protest against a proposal to remove coloured voters from the common voters' roll. The organisation, initially named the Women's Defence of the Constitution League, became known as the Black Sash because of the black sash worn over one shoulder by its members during protest actions. Refer to Benjamin, E. 2004. An historical analysis of aspects of the Black Sash, 1955–2001. MA thesis, University of Stellenbosch, pp. 9ff.
- 12 Jaftha Masemola later joined the PAC and is known as South Africa's longest serving political prisoner.
- 13 Lodge, T., 1988. Political organisations in Pretoria's African townships 1940–1963. In *Collected Seminar Papers. Institute of Commonwealth Studies* (Vol. 37, pp. 75–87). Institute of Commonwealth Studies.
- 14 Kgari-Masondo, M.C., 2008. 'A home makes one Motho' – the idea of 'Humanness', 'Home' and History in Lady Selborne's forced removals, circa 1905 to 1977. *Historia*, 53(2), pp. 70–97.
- 15 Hirson, B., 1988. The defiance campaign, 1952: Social struggle or party stratagem. *Searchlight South Africa*, 1(1), pp. 70–102.
- 16 Carrim, Y., 1989. The defiance campaign: Protest politics on the march. *Indicator South Africa*, 6(4), pp. 49–52.

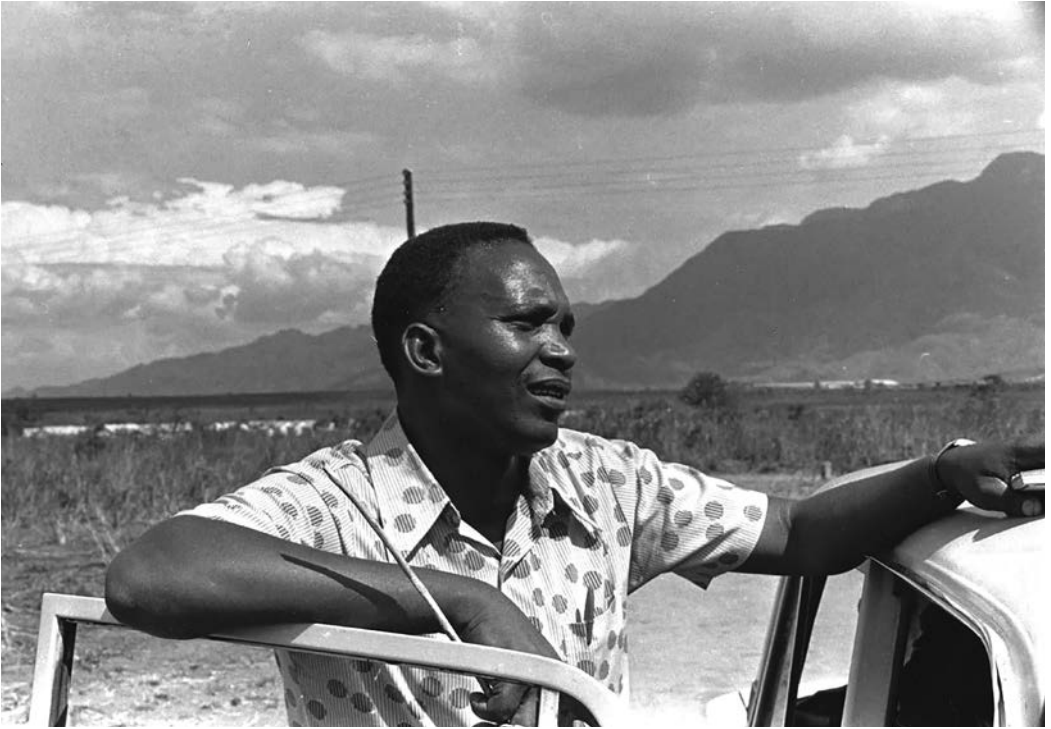
- 17 Karis, T.G., 1961. The South African Treason Trial. *Political Science Quarterly*, 76(2), pp. 217–240.
- 18 Clingman, S., 2010. Writing the South African treason trial. *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa*, 22(2), pp. 37–59.
- 19 Haines, C.G., 1981. *A Political History of the Congress Alliance in South Africa 1947–1956* (Doctoral dissertation, SOAS, University of London).
- 20 Houston, G., The Post-Rivonia ANC/SACP underground. In: The South African Democracy Education Trust (eds) *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 1, 1960-1970*. Cape Town: Zebra Press, p. 610.
- 21 See Benneyworth, G. (2011) Armed and Trained: Nelson Mandela’s 1962 Military Mission as Commander in Chief of uMkhonto weSizwe and Provenance for his Buried Makarov Pistol. *South African Historical Journal* 63(1), pp. 78–101
- 22 Motsoaledi was later banned from union participation and subsequently detained and sentenced to life imprisonment in 1963. He spent 26 years in Robben Island prison. Upon his release from prison, he was elected to the ANC’s national executive in 1991. He ultimately passed on, at the dawn of democracy in South Africa, in 1994.
- 23 The ten members of MK from Pretoria that were brought to trial in 1964 had carried out one successful attack, detonation of an explosive at the Brooklyn telephone exchange on 17 December 1963. See G Houston (2004) The Post-Rivonia ANC/SACP underground. In: The South African Democracy Education Trust (eds) *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 1, 1960-1970*. Cape Town: Zebra Press, p. 611.
- 24 Refer to Clarence Kwinana, The Untold Story of the 20 Nightingales: A Contribution Never To Be Forgotten, unpublished mimeo; Ndlovu S., 2007. A group of twenty nurses and the Pan African struggle for liberation. In: T. Falola and N Afolabi (eds) *The human cost of migration*. New York and Adingdon: Routledge.
- 25 Moses Kotane was elected secretary-general of the CPSA in 1939 and held the position until 1978. He was also a member of the National Executive Committee of the ANC. Kotane went to Russia to be treated after he had a stroke in 1968 and later died there in 1978. His remains were brought back to South Africa in 2015. See <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/2015-03-02-zuma-welcomes-kotane-and-marks-home/>.
- 26 Yusuf Dadoo was born in Krugersdorp on 5 September 1909. He moved to Edinburgh, Scotland, to study to become a medical doctor in 1929. While in Britain, Dadoo became politically active. He partook in the Indian national struggle in Britain and joined the Indian National Congress (INC) and the Independent Labour Party. He returned to South Africa in 1936 and joined the CPSA in 1939. In the mid-1940s he rose to the presidency of the Transvaal Indian Congress (TIC). Dadoo played a crucial role in creating political awareness among Indian South Africans and moving them from a conservative political approach to a radical one. He served as chairperson of the CPSA from 1953. Refer to Lissoni, A., 2019. Yusuf Dadoo, India and South Africa’s Liberation Struggle. In: insert colon In: A. Konieczna and R. Skinner (eds) *A Global History of Anti-Apartheid* (pp. 203–238). London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- 27 Brosché, J., 2009. *Sharing Power-Enabling Peace?: Evaluating Sudan’s Comprehensive Peace Agreement 2005*. Uppsala University & Mediation Support Unit, Department of Political Affairs, United Nations.
- 28 See Jo, J.M., 2001. *War and Slavery in Sudan*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- 29 Mzwandile Piliso was from the former Transkei, in the Eastern Cape. He went to the United Kingdom to study to become a pharmacist. After graduating, he worked in the UK for a while before planning to return to South Africa to open his own

- pharmacy. However, while in the UK, he met Oliver Tambo who recruited him into the ANC's external mission. Piliso played a crucial role in the founding of the South African United Front (SAUF) which was comprised of the ANC, PAC, SAIC and SWANU. He was elected to the ANC's National Executive Committee (NEC) at the Morogoro conference. In 1965, he was head of the ANC's Cairo offices. In 1981, he was head of national intelligence and security department of the ANC. Mzwandile eventually passed away in 1996, aged 72, due to diabetes. Refer to Shubin, V., 2012. Comrade Mzwai. In: A. Lissoni, J. Soske, N. Erlank, N. Nieftagodien and A. Badsha (eds) *One Hundred Years of the ANC: Debating liberation histories today* (pp. 255–274). Johannesburg: Wits University Press..
- 30 Joe Slovo grew up in Doornfontein, Johannesburg. He joined the CPSA in 1942. Slovo was part of the legal defence team of the accused in the Treason Trial. He also played a paramount role in the formation of MK and served as the secretary-general of the CPSA. Slovo served as Chief of Staff of MK and was the first white to be elected to the ANC's leadership. He was diagnosed with multiple myeloma and later died in January 1995. Refer to Adams, S., 1998. Slovo: The Unfinished Autobiography; and Makobe, D.H., 1996. Slovo: The unfinished autobiography. *Scientia Militaria: South African Journal of Military Studies*, 26(2).
- 31 Ronnie Kasrils was brought up in Yeoville, Johannesburg, and joined the CPSA in 1961. He is credited for creating a relationship between the CPSA and the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB), and other communist organisations in London. While he was studying at the London School of Economics, he was also intensely involved in the recruitment of what came to be known as 'London recruits' for the ANC's external missions. In 1963, he left for the Soviet Union to get military training. In 1983, he was made the MK's chief of intelligence and went to Moscow to enrol for a six-month intelligence course. Post 1994, Kasrils held various high positions in the intelligence department within the ANC and later in government , pp. 129–130.
- 32 Chris Hani was born in Cofimvaba in the former Transkei in the Eastern Cape, in 1942. He joined the ANC Youth League in 1957, the SACP in 1961, and MK in 1962. The following year after joining MK, in 1963, Hani went to the Soviet Union for military training. He returned to Tanzania in 1964. By 1967, Hani become a political commissar in MK and fought with Zimbabwe guerrillas at Wankie. In 1974, Hani was appointed onto the ANC's NEC. In 1990, political parties were unbanned, and Hani returned to South Africa in August that year. He became Joe Slovo's successor as secretary-general of the SACP in December 1991. After several assassination attempts on his life in exile and in South Africa, Hani was assassinated at his home in Dawn Park in 1993. Refer to Drew, A., 2009. Hani, 'Chris' (1942–1993). *The International Encyclopaedia of Revolution and Protest*, pp. 1–2.
- 33 Replace: Shubin, V., 2008. *ANC: A view from Moscow*, second revised edition, Auckland Park: Jacana Media, p. 48.
- 34 Houston, G., 2013. Oliver Tambo and the challenges of the ANC's military camps. *The Thinker*, 58, pp. 20–23.
- 35 Ralinala, R.M., Sithole, J., Houston, G. and Magubane, B., 'The Wankie and Sipolilo Campaigns', in South African Democracy Education Trust (ed.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 1, 1960-1970*, p. 483; A Lissoni, Transformations in the ANC External Mission and Umkhonto we Sizwe, c. 1960–1969, *Journal of Southern African Studies* (35:2), p. 297.
- 36 Born on 14 September 1925 in Ganyesa village in the current North-West Province, Ruth Mompati started her professional career as a teacher in 1944 at a tender age of 19. However, she lost her job in 1952. In that same year she moved to Johannesburg and joined the ANC. Ruth was part of the women who organised and led the historic women's march, which was attended by more

- than 20 000 women, to the Union Buildings on 9 August 1956. She was one of the first women to undergo MK's military training in 1963. Between 1966 and 1973, she worked in the ANC's offices in Tanzania and Zambia. Refer to https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/speech_docs/Profile%20of%20Dr%20Ruth%20Segomotsi%20Mompoti%20.pdf.
- 37 For a discussion of the reasons for the expulsion refer to S. Ndlovu, 'The ANC's diplomacy and international relations', in South African Democracy Education Trust (eds.), *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 2, 1970–1980*, Pretoria, UNISA Press, 2006, p. 662; Ka Plaatjie, 'The PAC in exile', p. 732.
- 38 Brennan, JR (2006) Youth, the TANU Youth League and Managed Vigilantism in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 1925–73. 240.
- 39 Ndlovu, 'The ANC's diplomacy and international relations', pp. 662–663.
- 40 Houston, G. (2006), The ANC's armed struggle in the 1970s. In The South African Democracy Education Trust (eds.) *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 2, 1970-1980*. Pretoria: UNISA Press, p. 457.
- 41 Refer to <http://www.nhc.org.za/tambos-safe-house-lusaka-given-national-stature/>.
- 42 Moumbaris was born in Egypt but began his political activeness in Britain. He was a London recruit, member of the Communist Party of Great Britain, CPSA, and MK veteran. Moumbaris is perhaps famously known for escaping from a Pretoria prison after he was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment under the Terrorism Act in 1973. Moumbaris escaped together with Tim Jenkins and Stephen Lee in 1979. After his escape he moved to France and established an ANC office. Refer to <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/national-orders/recipient/alexander-moumbaris-france?page=49#!slide>.
- 43 Born in 1931, Boy Adolphus Mvemve joined the ANC in the early 1950s. He also became a member of the ANC Youth League, of which he was the Alexandra township branch secretary. He was among the dedicated foot soldiers of the 1957 Alexandra Bus Boycott, a role he had also played two years before, during the campaign that was to lead to the historic adoption of the Freedom Charter in Kliptown. He participated in the 1959 Potato Boycott and the 1960 anti-pass campaign. Mvemve was assassinated in 1974 when he opened a parcel bomb while working in an office with Max Sisulu in Lusaka. He was posthumously awarded the Order of Ikhamanga in Silver in 2006.
- 44 Baleka Mbete was born on 24 September 1949. She joined the ANC in May 1976. Thereafter, she worked for the ANC in exile in Dar es Salaam, Nairobi, Gaborone, Harare and Lusaka. From 1991 to 1993, she was the secretary-general of the ANC Women's League. She has held powerful positions in democratic South Africa; these include: Deputy President of RSA, Speaker of the National Assembly, Deputy Speaker and National Chairperson of ANC. Refer to <https://www.gov.za/about-government/contact-directory/baleka-mbete-honourable>.
- 45 Jeff Radebe joined the ANC in 1976. He worked for the ANC in exile Mozambique, Zambia, Lesotho, and Tanzania. He had also gone through military training with MK and was arrested and sentenced to 10 years in prison under the Terrorism Act. The sentence was later reduced, on appeal, to 6 years in 1986. Radebe held various positions in the ANC and SACP. He has also held a number of offices in government, including Minister of Public Works, Minister of Justice and Constitutional developments and Minister in The Presidency. Refer to <http://www.thepresidency.gov.za/profiles/former-minister-jeff-radebe%3A-profile>.
- 46 E Tarimo & N Reuben (2013) The role of the OAU Liberation Committee in the South African liberation struggle. In South African Democracy Education Trust (eds.) *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 5, African Solidarity*. Pretoria: UNISA Press.
- 47 For a detailed account of the establishment of the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College in Tanzania refer to Morrow, S., Maaba, B. & Pulumani L (2004)

- Education in exile: SOMAFSCO, the African National Congress school in Tanzania, 1978 to 1992*, Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council.
- 48 Money, D., 2020. *Underground Struggles: The Early Life of Jack Hodgson*. In *The Individual in African History* (pp. 170–193). Brill.
- 49 Eli Weinberg was a senior member of the SACP who had been among the key movers behind the revival of the Communist Party of South Africa after its banning in 1950.
- 50 In the 1950s, during the peak of the struggle, the ANC deemed it necessary to have a policy document that encapsulated the demands and aspirations of all oppressed South African. To that effect, South Africans were requested to send their demands or aspirations to Congress of the People, giving rise to the Freedom Charter. The charter was then adopted on 26 June 1955 in Kliptown, Soweto. Refer to Alliance, S.A.C., 1955, June. *The Freedom Charter*. In *As adopted by the Congress of the People, Kliptown, on* (Vol. 26).
- 51 The most renowned of these was Quatro, or Site 32, which was later named the Morris Seabelo Rehabilitation Centre.
- 52 This was largely a consequence of a decision taken by the Soviet Union, following a suggestion put forward by the Algerians in the early 1960s, to select a number of the Southern African liberation movements as ‘authentic liberation movements’ to which they provided political, military and moral support. These included the ANC, ZAPU, FRELIMO, and SWAPO. The PAC and ZANU were excluded from this list.
- 53 Lodge, T., 2003. How the South African electoral system was negotiated. *Journal of African elections*, 2(1), pp. 71–76.
- 54 Hope, C., 1982. Visible jailers: A South African writer casts a humorous eye over the bannings by his country’s censors between 1979 and 1981. *Index on Censorship*, 11(4), pp. 8–10.
- 55 John Fitzgerald and Company was actually a front company of the South African security branch.
- 56 Garth Strachan had worked in student organisations before being forced to depart from the country in 1975 when he was conscripted into the SADF. He immediately became involved with the ANC in exile.
- 57 Olivia Forsyth provided her side of the story as follows. She had worked as a spy for the apartheid government. She was first sent to spy on student activists at Rhodes University in the Eastern Cape in 1982. After her successful execution of that task, she was then sent by the apartheid government to spy on the ANC in exile. However, members of the ANC in exile in Angola quickly suspected that she was a spy and she also confessed to being one. Consequently, she was detained in an ANC prison in Angola and later put under house arrest with the intention of releasing her in exchange for the release of a political prisoner arrested by the apartheid government. However, the intended trade did not occur as she escaped, while under house arrest, and went to the British embassy and later returned to South Africa in 1988. The information supplied by Forsyth to the apartheid government led to the torture, imprisonment, murder, firebombing and assassination of many anti-apartheid activists and politicians. Refer to Forsyth, O., 2015. *Agent 407: A South African Spy Breaks Her Silence*. Jonathan Ball Publishers; and Bloch, R.C., 2019. *Violence, betrayal, complicity: a study of apartheid perpetrator narratives* (Doctoral dissertation).
- 58 Joe Nhlanhla was born in Johannesburg in 1936. He started his political involvement in the ANC Youth League and rose to be a prominent leader within the organisation by the 1950s. The ANC sent him to Moscow to study economics in 1964. He was the ANC’s representative in Egypt and Middle East in 1973 and played an important role in managing conflicts and tensions during the CODESA talks. He served as Deputy Minister of Intelligence service in 1995 and as Minister of Intelligence Services in 1999. Refer to <http://www.thepresidency>.

- gov.za/national-orders/recipient/joseph-joe-mbuku-nhlanhla-1936; and Ahmed, S., 1999. Being intelligent about intelligence: SA parliamentary oversight. *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 6(2), pp. 191–198.
- 59 Houston, G. (2013) The re-establishment of the ANC inside the country, 1990-1994. In South African Democracy Education Trust (eds.) *The Road to Democracy in South Africa, Volume 6, 1990-1996*. Pretoria: UNISA Press, p. 166.
- 60 CODESA experienced a number of obstacles and interruptions from resistant groups and violent events that took place in the country. These included: the Boipatong massacre, which happened on 17 June 1992, where 46 people died as result of political violence between Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the ANC. The apartheid government was accused of playing a role in the violence as it did not intervene to quell the tensions. The assassination of Chris Hanu in April 1993 also threatened to lead to violence in the country and disrupt negotiations. The attack of the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB), a white supremacist group led by Eugène Terre'Blanche, on the World Trade Centre in an attempt to stop Multiparty Negotiating Forum (MPNF) negotiations and thus the transition to a democracy was another threat. As a result of those events, MPNF negotiations were interrupted for a period of 4 months. Eventually, negotiations resumed and an interim constitution, interim government and a date for democratic elections were agreed upon on 18 November 1993. Refer to Katzenstein, M., 2010. Valuable lessons from two different situations: CODESA versus Oslo, could techniques from South Africa assist conflict resolution in Israel/Palestine (Doctoral dissertation).
- 61 On the 25 June 1993 about 3,000 members of the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB), Afrikaner Volksfront (AVF) and other extreme right-wing formations stormed the venue of the negotiations, the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park, Johannesburg, while the negotiations were underway. This right-wing protest against the MPNF negotiations turned into an invasion when an armoured vehicle was used to crash through the glass windows at the centre, allowing protestors carrying firearms to enter the premises. The delegates to the negotiations were forced to flee and take cover.
- 62 On 11 March 1994, a force of about 600 armed AWB supporters invaded Bophuthatswana with the intention of propping up the homeland administration led by Chief Lucas Mangope. A number of AWB supporters were killed by members of the Bophuthatswana security forces instead.
- 63 See Ndletyana, M. ed., 2015. *Institutionalising Democracy: The Story of the Electoral Commission of South Africa: 1993–2014*. Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa.
- 64 Brittain, V., 2006. They had to die: Assassination against liberation. *Race & class*, 48(1), pp. 60–74.
- 65 Katzenstein, M., 2010. *Valuable lessons from two different situations: CODESA versus Oslo, could techniques from South Africa assist conflict resolution in Israel/Palestine* (Doctoral dissertation).
- 66 Refer to <https://ancarchive.org/morogoro-office/>.
- 67 The practice of forced removals in South Africa dates back to 1652 when the first colonialists arrived in the country and began dispossessing the natives of their land. In 1913, the Union government legislated the Native Land Act, an act which denied African ownership or renting of land in most areas of the country. The National Party continued the unjust practice of forced removals when it came to power in 1948. Those who already bought or occupied black spots were forcefully removed through the demolishing of their houses and persecution by the police. The apartheid regime defined black spots as areas occupied by blacks but 'belonged' or were 'owned' by whites. Forced removals were also a way of dividing Africans so that they can easily control them. Refer to Henrard, K., 1996. The internally displaced in South Africa: The strategy of forced removals and apartheid. *Jura Falconis*, 32(4), pp. 491–522.



Mabuse Mampane at SOMAFCO in Mazimbu, Morogoro, Tanzania.



L to R: Mabuse Mampane, GGG HHH, President OR Tambo and DDD EEE, at SOMAFCO in Mazimbu, Morogoro, Tanzania.



In the embassy office in Angola.



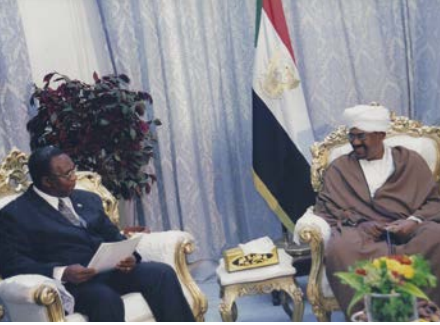
L to R: President José Eduardo dos Santos of Angola, President Mandela shaking hands with the South Africa ambassador to Angola, Ambassador Mampane, Gloria Mampane (the wife to Ambassador Mampane in a pink dress).



Ambassador Mampane presenting his credentials to President Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir of Sudan.



The High Commissioner to Zambia, Mabase Mampane, shaking hands with President Levy Patrick Mwanawasa of Zambia at the Africa Freedom Day (25/05/2003) in Lusaka, Zambia.



Ambassador Mampane after presenting his credentials to President Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir of Sudan.



Army Day 19th March 2010
L to R: The High Commissioner to Swaziland, Mabase Mampane, His Majesty King Mswati III, Alfrida Mampane (daughter of High Commissioner) and Melizwe King of Nhlanguwini.



Mokadi Mampane, mother to Ambassador Mabuse Mampane.



Mokadi Mampane, mother to Ambassador Mabuse Mampane with her sister holding a can of Castle Lager.



L to R: Shupulu Mampane, brother to Ambassador Mabuse Mampane with Mokadi Mampane, their mother.



L to R: Gloria Mampane, wife to Ambassador Mabuse Mampane, his mother, Mokadi Mampane, and the Ambassador's sister, Mashinyane.



Ambassador Mabuse Mampane and his wife Gloria Mampane.



Alfrida, daughter to Gloria and Ambassador Mampane.



Ambassador Mampane and Thulisile Nomkhosi "Thuli" Madonsela, the Public Protector.

Mabuse Mampane, also known as Reddy Mazimba, left his rural home in Sekhukuniland at the tender age of eight in 1951 to begin work as a herd boy in a neighbouring village, before leaving South Africa to undergo military training abroad as a member of uMkhonto weSizwe in 1963. He spent the next 27 years in exile. This is the story of his early life, political conscientisation and illegal departure from the country; his military training abroad and life in MK camps in Africa; his work in OR Tambo's security detail in Zambia; his role as ANC Chief Representative in Tanzania and in the establishment of SOMAFSCO; his experiences as Chief Representative in Zimbabwe and recollections of the Olivia Forsyth spy saga; his leadership of the ANC security section in the CODESA talks; his experiences as South African Ambassador to Angola, Sudan and Swaziland; and re-connecting with a family he had last seen decades before, and a sister he had not met until his return to the country in the 1990s.



military veterans

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Military Veterans
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