

NDABA

The following is our second in a series of interviews with revolutionaries, leaders, and scholars concerning black liberation. For this issue, the Editors of UFAHAMU interviewed Bernard Magubane, exiled South African who is currently teaching sociology at the University of Connecticut. His writings include: "Crisis in African Sociology", East Africa Journal, 5, 12 (1968) and "Pluralism and Conflict Situations in Africa: A New Look", African Social Research, 7 (1969).

QUESTION: Which of your South African experiences do you feel most influenced your political awareness?

ANSWER: It's very difficult to say. First of all, I was educated in a mission school, a Catholic school; and I think that was influential in a lot of ways. At about standard seven, I couldn't reconcile the image that was presented of God with my own reality. I could never identify with his whiteness in the first place. I could never identify with the whole ritual in the church which emphasized the Roman and Judaic myths, as opposed to African myths. I remember we were having scriptures, which were taught by a priest who was very popular, and I asked him the simple question: "Since there are so many nationalities and ethnic groups in the world, Black, Chinese, etc., why doesn't God have various patches so that we could all identify with him?" Instead of this priest answering my question, the next thing that he did was to clap me. Well, I ran away from school and went home and told my grandmother; then I picked up a stick to go and beat this priest who had slapped me. But then of course, that passed.

At my home, my uncle was very political; my father was sort of indifferent. It was my uncle who put into my head various types of questions. My grandmother was very, very religious. I mean she prayed in the morning when she woke up, and she prayed at night before she went to sleep; but she never tried to impose religion on us.

Later, I trained as a teacher for two years. I did it only because there was nothing else to do. Then I taught for two years and didn't like it, so decided I should go to the University of Natal. I wasn't quite sure what I wanted to do because when I was in high school, I thought the best thing to study was medicine. But because I had trained for two years in order to work and support my younger sisters, I had missed two years of mathematics, which was very crucial for entering medical school. I also missed two years of Latin which was very crucial for law school. So the only thing that was open was a B.A.

degree, which is what I chose.

I went to the university after the Nationalists came to power, and there was a lot of political action at the time, including the University. Then came the passage of the Bantu Education Act which caused African people to leave teaching; this was at the very time when the idea of going to the university was considered imperative for getting the relatively secure, high-salaried job of teaching. But with the Bantu Education Act, the question was whether you were going to be a party to its philosophy. The only alternative open was to go to the university.

The Bantu Education Act meant an inferior education for the African at the time; it was intended to enslave his mind. Only Africans were allowed to teach Africans. The African National Congress asked for a boycott of the schools; and if one continued to teach, of course, one suffered the stigma of having sold out. A lot of young people at the time found themselves in this quandary, i.e. whether to go on and earn their bread under this Act, or to do something else. There were a lot of us at that time who decided to go to the university. This was the time when political activity among the Africans was at its highest, with the Defiance Campaign of 1952. Almost every weekend we went to political meetings and listened to various speakers. Besides, there was a very strong Youth League (A.N.C.). At the time, one wasn't quite sure ideologically what was happening, but one had a sort of vague interest in what went on at these meetings.

I finished my degree in 1958, and then again I was faced with the problem of what to do. It was now possible to go to law school, but then I got a research assistantship from Leo Kuper for his book, *An African Bourgeoisie*. Another African fellow and I worked for Leo Kuper for two years, and that's when I did my Master's. I had never really intended to do a Master's degree. But since I was doing this research anyway, and the subject was too broad for Kuper to cover all aspects in the book, I organized and wrote up the material for the Master's. The last chapter of his book was part of my thesis, "Sport and Politics in an Urban African Community". After my thesis was finished, Leo Kuper came to the States and got me a fellowship. One thing led to another until I came here, where I stayed from 1962 to 1966. I left in March, 1967 for Zambia.

QUESTION: *What was the thrust of your early political activities? You say that this was the era of intense African activity; was this similar to the American problems of integration, segregation, etc.?*

ANSWER: The political thrust was for integration basically.

It was passive, non-violent. I think we have to make a distinction between passive resistance and non-violence. Africans are not passive, as their whole background would indicate. It was non-violent - defying unjust laws. Leo Kuper's book, *Passive Resistance in South Africa*, is an analysis of this earlier campaign. The campaign was very significant in a lot of ways. It affected various sections of the South African community. For instance, for the first time I saw my mother being interested in politics. When there was a meeting at the Bantu Social Center on Sunday, she would go to the meeting instead of to church. So it was this type of interest which everybody had. We just couldn't stand on the sidelines. And it was the African National Congress, of course, which was active, with the younger people belonging to the Youth League.

QUESTION: Was this activity in response to the new white regime that had taken power, or was this just within the evolution of the Black political awareness?

ANSWER: It was within the evolution of the political awareness of the African, and a result of the Nationalists coming to power in 1948, but also because of the consciousness aroused by the Second World War. During this war, more and more Africans came into the towns to take jobs in industry, in turn expanding the South African industry a great deal. Of course, some people have traced the radicalisation of the African to the Atlantic Charter which had promised that all hitherto subject people were going to get their independence.

In 1946, the African National Congress, which was radicalized by the Youth League, produced a document called *The African Claims* which demanded full participation in all political activities of the country. Everyone expected that things were going to get better after World War II. But, in fact, they didn't get better; there was a great deal of disillusionment which culminated in 1946 when African miners in Johannesburg went out on strike, the biggest strike ever staged by black miners in South Africa. Several of them were shot. That meant the end of all cooperative efforts with the government. Black people looked back to 1922 when white miners went on strike; a lot of them were shot, but there were improvements in their condition. Africans suffered deaths, but there was no improvement in their condition. Furthermore, in 1948, the so-called liberal government of Smuts was defeated; the succeeding Nationalists had promised to suppress whatever advances the Africans had made. This meant that the white voter, instead of opening avenues to so-called "qualified" Africans, in fact, shut the door. But the African leaders considered this stance as a challenge to them, and they met it with a platform in 1948 which was to culminate in the Defiance Campaign. The Campaign had a number of highlights in the sense that it involved not only the educated African, who, up to now, had been the spearhead of African

nationalism, but it involved the ordinary man in the street. In fact, it was the ordinary people who volunteered to go to prison for defying unjust laws. I think this touched a chord in almost everyone to the point where you just couldn't afford to remain on the sidelines. Secondly, it also effected the white community. This was the beginning of the Liberal Party, to which Leo Kuper and Alan Paton belonged. But some whites found the Liberal Party a bit conservative and formed the Progressive Party; the Communist Party had been banned. Then there was a further fragmentation of the parliamentary opposition to the United Party at this particular time. At the same time, Africans began to assert their leadership. Everyone - white, Indians, and coloureds - had, first of all, to concede that Africans were going to bear the brunt of the struggle. If they were going to cooperate, they were going to do so on the terms laid down by the Africans. This meant the end of an era of liberal politics, where the liberal politicians spoke for the African and negotiated for the African. This made a very great appeal to the young African whose politics were much more radical than what is called the "old guard". The distinction between the younger fellows and the old guard was that the latter were those who believed in appealing to the conscience of the whites, as if they had any conscience.

*QUESTION: Do you feel the kind of experiences you had were representative of most Black South Africans?*

*ANSWER:* I think they were really quite representative. But it could depend on where someone grows up. I happen to have been born in the countryside, and my father was working for a Boer farmer as a tenant farmer. He worked for six months for the farmer, and then he worked for six months for himself. While I was growing up, my older uncle died, and my father had to look after his two sons. My father's employer demanded the sons' labor too. My father told him that they were still of school age and that they couldn't work. And in any case, he had served his six months for the year. My father left and went to Durban as a migrant laborer. The Boer farmer issued a summons for his arrest, so my father came back and worked for him. Then one morning in winter, my father was milking cows; and as you know, the way to milk is to sit on your haunches and put a bucket between your knees. This fellow came with a *shambok* (a very painful thing), and hit my father on the back of his head, obviously still annoyed at being defied earlier by my father. There was a state of confusion: my father dropped the bucket of milk and started struggling with this white fellow until he had taken away from him the piece of rubber that he had used to hit him. This, of course, is not permissible in the South African context, so he ran home and gave my mother money and told her that he would be in Durban, running away from the police. So that's how we left the countryside and got settled in Durban. I was about six at the time. At least

this is the story I heard from my father.

I started mission school at the age of ten in Durban. There were very few government schools at the time, and since my parents had married in a Catholic church, they were Catholic; that meant Catholic school for me.

*QUESTION: What percentage of the Black urban population went to school at that time?*

*ANSWER:* Most kids went to school - those who could get in. A shortage of space was the problem, rather than the unwillingness of the parents to send their children to school. But very few of them went on to high school or to the university. All that the parents could afford was to push the child on to high school, and after high school he was on his own. One did it either by private studies or by correspondence; if one were lucky, one could get to the university on a scholarship.

*QUESTION: Was life more difficult for your family in Durban as opposed to the country?*

*ANSWER:* No, it was much easier because my mother could work as well as my father. There were various ways of making money; we don't have to go into *all* of them. My mother worked as a washerwoman, and we kids collected the laundry for her. She washed and ironed for about ten Europeans in our home; then we made the deliveries. One could brew beer and sell it to people. European liquor was forbidden, but one got it through various ways and sold it too. If you had some money and worked in a factory, people would come to you and borrow a pound on Wednesday, and then on Saturday, return it to you with twenty-five cents on top of it. That type of thing. In this way, you could make your way. And also, when we were kids, on weekends we would work on the gardens of Europeans. On Saturday, market day, elderly white ladies couldn't carry their baskets. So, we little boys went to the market and cried, "Carry misses". So one would carry their baskets while they were doing their shopping; then they would give one a tip. Those were the various ways of making money to buy little things or go to the movies or other places.

*QUESTION: Do you have any type of tribal affiliation, and how much of a role did this play in your political development?*

*ANSWER:* Well I'm conscious of the fact that I'm Zulu. Don't forget that the Zulu State was destroyed by the English. If one speaks Zulu, one just takes it for granted like any other thing. It's really not uppermost in one's mind, but it does become a factor. I don't know if one would call it tribalism or not. At marriage time, parents are always anxious that you marry someone who speaks the same tongue as you do. Also, if

you are a Protestant, your parents will expect you to marry a Protestant, etc. The rationale is that this way there will be a great deal in common between you, and that if you cross these artificially-made boundaries, you may have difficulties. Except on this intermarriage score, it really wasn't important. For instance, most teachers at the school where I worked came from the eastern Cape, where missionary education began. In the church, people met, not as belonging to Sotho, Zulu or Xhosa, but as members of a particular church. My grandmother affiliated with the African Methodist Episcopal Church, and my father was a Catholic. There was this division also within the family; it was a very important one.

*QUESTION: Within the various activities of the ANC, was there any identity or division between various ethnic groups?*

*ANSWER:* That's one of the things we made sure did not exist in the ANC. You see, the leadership was elected at a national conference which was held at Bloemfontein, a central point in South Africa. Delegates came from the Cape, the Transvaal and so forth, and the best qualified person was elected. There was never rangling along what people call tribal lines. Any split was provincial. Delegates of the Transvaal always wanted to elect somebody from the Transvaal, etc. Some say that these provinces correspond to certain linguistic divisions, but this is not true. When Shaka rose to power and tried to unify the Zulu Nation, he caused a lot of upheaval. People moved from Natal to the eastern Cape, from Natal to the Orange Free State; and they moved even as far north as Malawi. So you have, for instance, Dan Kunene [now professor at Wisconsin] whose last name is very Zulu, and I was amazed to find that he didn't speak a word of Zulu. He was brought up as a Sotho, and he has always considered himself as Sotho. Similarly, part of our family went to live in the Transvaal - in Johannesburg, in fact; most of our relatives in Johannesburg hardly ever speak Zulu; they speak either Afrikaans or Sotho. It becomes very difficult under these circumstances to be conscious of the fact that you are Zulu and to want to live as a Zulu. In any case, white hegemony subjugated everybody to a common position. And given this disruption prior to the formation of the Congress [ANC], ethnic differentiation and identification were minimized.

The African National Congress was formed by a man from Natal, a Zulu, who had been educated at Columbia, by the Chieftainess of Swaziland, and by a few people from the Transvaal and so forth. But its presidents come from the four provinces. There is not one particular group which has monopolized the presidency of the ANC.

*QUESTION: Is the same true of the Pan-Africanist Congress?*

ANSWER: You see that is another indication of the absence of ethnic division. When, the PAC broke away, its executive was formed by people from all the various provinces. It wasn't one linguistic group breaking away, as for instance, in Nigeria with the Ibos. The executive of the PAC, if you want to use that label, is multilingual, Xhosa-speaking, Zulu-speaking and Sotho-speaking. At no time could one say that this was a tribal split. And it confounded the anthropologists in that sense. The only accusation that could be leveled against the PAC was that it was anti-white, while the ANC preached a philosophy of multi-racialism.

QUESTION: *Do you then feel that so-called "tribalism" is a factor in the private domain only, and that "tribal" cleavages in the public domain have been exaggerated?*

ANSWER: You see, in the first place I don't know what one means by "tribalism". You have similar feelings amongst the Welsh and Scots in England. And in the States there are such feelings among the Italians. Recently they demonstrated against Edgar Hoover, because people identified them with the Mafia. And this is a natural feeling. I mean, if you have certain common institutions and speak the same language and have similar traditions, you don't want to bury them or to forget them. It's all right as long as a group doesn't raise these sentiments to a point of demanding a separate national state. Such sentiments are unity in diversity. For instance, everybody in South Africa appreciated the Zulu dancers. Every Sunday, they performed at the sports ground in Durban, in Johannesburg, and so forth. And then you had dancers from Pondoland coming to compete, etc. This added to the variety and the clash of cultures which has really been responsible for the high quality of music that you have in South Africa. Even though they were proud of being what they were, they never elevated ethnic affiliation to a point where they would want to organize political parties based on this one factor. The word "tribalism" is really a swear word when you come to think about it. Once you describe a people's activity as being "tribal", you remove it from the realm of decency, and then you can say, "Oh, of course, it's African. What else is there to take note of here?" Others express ethnicity or nationalism, but Africans merely express tribalism. It's in that sense that I find the word objectionable. On another level, of course, why should I give up my language for any other language? Why should I give up my customs for other customs?

QUESTION: *As a sociologist, what types of terms do you find suitable to describe African groupings?*

ANSWER: Well, some of the differences are linguistic; some of them are ethnic. Some Africans are very parochial about these things; we must face the fact. I know, for instance,

that with a lot of people, once you mention the word Zulu people identify you as being proud, arrogant, etc. These are some of the stereotypes which go hand in hand with such differences. I think that in South Africa, people have been able to transfer these into abstract joking relationships. We say that if you want a good policeman, you should look in Zululand; if you want a good spy or a pimp, you look amongst the Xhosa; if you want a sell-out, you look among the Sotho. These are the types of ethnic jokes which one often hears.

*QUESTION: Would you comment on internal developments in South Africa? How do you see the conflicts and cleavages?*

*ANSWER:* Things changed from 1960 with the banning of the ANC and the Sharpeville Massacre, for instance, which took everybody by surprise. People had to come to the realisation that these things had happened. The non-violent, anti-pass campaign was called by the PAC which had broken away from the ANC in 1958. But the sequence of events leading up to Sharpeville is what is very interesting to me, because from 1956 to 1960, everybody expected that there was going to be a blow-up in South Africa in one way or another. The political consciousness among the Africans was at its highest point. I don't think that that point can be reached again. Traditional women in the countryside were up in arms; women in the urban areas were up in arms! Youth was active! In the reserves of Pondoland there had been numerous uprisings against the government. And all of these things had created an atmosphere where you just needed a small spark to start a confrontation. Realizing this, the ANC was planning an anti-pass campaign in May, 1960. It was going to culminate on June 26th, after which further campaigns to augment African consciousness were going to be prepared. But in the meantime, there was the realization that non-violent methods of struggle were not bearing any fruit, and new methods had to be adopted. And there was a great deal of argument between the executive as to whether or not protests should take the form of armed struggle - whether or not Africans should call a general strike in order to bring about a general struggle, etc. Because most of the members of the PAC were in the secondary positions in the ANC - district secretaries, district chairmen, etc. - they were aware of all these plans. They decided to jump the gun and call the stay-at-home much sooner than the day that had been set aside by the ANC. On that day [March 21, 1960] we woke up and looked around; a lot of people went to work; some stayed home. There was a great deal of frustration at that particular time, so that anybody could call a strike and some people would stay at home. Some people went to the police station at Capetown, a few in Johannesburg, a few in Durban, and a few in Port Elizabeth. It was only in the afternoon with the shooting that people became aware of what had happened. There was a gloomy mood after the shooting; people just didn't know what to do. They expected direction from the

ANC. At the time, Chief Luthuli was in Pretoria at the treason trial which was going on. So the executive of the ANC met and they decided that they were going to call a day of mourning; and Chief Luthuli burned his pass in front of the Union Building. This sort of electrified the people. Spontaneously, some people took their passes and went to where there was a pile of them, threw them there and said, "To hell with it!" The burial was to take place on Monday, so Chief Luthuli said this would be observed as a day of mourning and that everybody should stay home. On that particular Monday, the police, the army, and every security officer were called out to surround the African areas. Where we lived was under military occupation, so to speak, because at the bus stops and everywhere one saw police cars and arms. Still people stayed at home. But staying at home was just not enough. What do you do when you stay at home? How do you make your voice heard? So around 12 o'clock, people began to gather in various places. In the meantime, a lot of the leadership had been arrested, so people just gathered and decided to walk to the police station. Between Chesterville where I lived, and the central police station was a distance of about six miles. People gathered at the sports ground, and then this thing gained momentum. We started marching to the police station. By the time we got to the central jail, it was a mass of humanity. It has been estimated that the number of people who marched to Parliament House in Cape Town was between 35,000 and 50,000. And the estimate for Durban was between 10,000 and 20,000. It happened in Johannesburg; it happened everywhere - indicative of the mood. So, for a brief moment, there was this feeling of complete liberation in the sense that you could walk the town without caring; you could walk the streets without a pass; you could do almost anything that you wanted.

There were many people who claimed to be African leaders, but who were not seen in the demonstration during the day; in the evening following that demonstration, the people in Chesterville went and knocked at their houses. They knocked at the houses of the religious leaders who preached to them every Sunday; and they knocked at the doors of members of the Advisory Board which is a government-sponsored institution; and they woke up these people and marched them to the police station in order to attempt the release of political prisoners. Unfortunately, we did not have in South Africa at that particular time a revolutionary organization which could take advantage of this atmosphere of revolt. And it was only then that the leadership of the ANC decided that they had better send some people out for training. This is another disadvantage which we suffered in South Africa: of all the colonized people, whether in Latin America or anywhere else, we are the only ones who were never armed during the two World Wars. After our wars which lasted for over a hundred years, I think the whites in South Africa realized that to arm these people would be very

dangerous. So, during the First World War, Africans joined the war effort, but they could only work as drivers and as cleaners. We were never allowed to hold a gun or to be trained militarily. So when this revolutionary moment arrived, we had to start from scratch and train people; and to train people for military action after such a period of being unarmed needs a certain psychology; it needs preparation. A lot of people left, friends of mine who were at the university. Everybody wanted to leave, but then of course, the problem was that if you left you could not be sure that you would even reach the places where you were supposed to be trained because you had to pass through Botswana which was a British protectorate. You had to pass through Rhodesia which was also a British possession; and you had to pass through Portuguese Mozambique. But still, some people *did* find their way to the north, and from there to Tanzania, Algeria, and even to China. Then the main body of the ANC, those who were not in prison and those who had not gone out, remained underground. Among these were Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, and so forth. Under difficult conditions they went on making preparations for those people who had gone out to train. Mandela left the country to tour Africa, went back and stayed underground and organized. Unfortunately, one day when he was driving to a meeting, he was arrested. So the Mandela case went on trial. The organization was deprived of its foremost underground organizer, the man who was in charge of the various cells. It was a severe blow, because the ANC had to then try to find another man of the stature of Mandela. Then in 1963, an event which was absolutely devastating took place with the arrest of the people at Rivonia (a farm outside Johannesburg) with all the documents of the underground of the African National Congress. I was in the States at the time, and when the news came, all of us here were gripped by a spirit of defeatism, a feeling that there was nothing that could be done - everything had come to an end. Now it was the people outside who had to reorganize the party. All the plans had been discovered; all the various cells had been revealed; people were just picked up right and left. The police took care not to disclose those who had been arrested until they had arrested everybody. Oliver Tambo, vice-president of ANC, was outside at the time. He had to leave what he was doing - training with the boys - and get back to try to pull together whatever was left of the organization. Between 1963 and 1966 the organization was merely trying to put itself back together. Nobody expected it to revive. The speeches of the South African cabinet ministers sounded quite jubilant. They proclaimed the death of the ANC. But this notion was shattered, of course, in 1967 with the first armed onslaught.

QUESTION: *Would you tell us a bit about that?*

ANSWER: There had been a few attempts to infiltrate people into South Africa; but this, of course, had been unsuccessful;

people were usually apprehended. Besides, the police had learned a lot from the files that had been taken. The problem was - what do you do with trained men in a foreign country? No country wants to keep within its borders men who are trained and who are frustrated with nothing to do. Such men are very dangerous. The organization was faced with this particular problem. Most of these people had left home when they were very young. They wanted to get back and there was no way. Rhodesia was very vigilant. South African police were present in Botswana, in Swaziland, in Lesotho; they were present in Mozambique and everywhere. It was not until ZAPU (Zimbabwe) decided that their appeals to Britain were not going to work and that they would have to engage in armed struggle that the ANC decided to join its men with ZAPU people. While the ZAPU people fought in Zimbabwe, the ANC cadres would try to find their way into South Africa. Then, of course, they were found; the first contingent of really serious people were discovered near Bulawayo. There were several clashes between the security forces and the guerillas. This was the first event that was to lift the spirits of the South Africans in exile and those in South Africa. The ability of these ANC people who had penetrated into South Africa was even recognized by the South African press and by the government itself. They called them a new breed of young men who were prepared to fight and die - unlike the ones before them who had put down their arms the moment the security forces flushed them out. But these guerillas had been prepared. It is also interesting that out of all those who went over the border, we lost very few people; the rest came back. This was very significant. To show the damage that had been done to the security forces, some ANC people returned with sweaters of the South African police.

*QUESTION: You have given the impression of a great deal of unity among the Black people of South Africa. What about the other non-white factions of the South African community? How involved are they?*

*ANSWER: I don't want to give the impression that there is complete unity among even the Black South African people. There is the type of unity that one would expect from people experiencing a common fate. This same spirit extends particularly to those South Africans of Asian extraction, that is the Indians and also to the Coloureds. But you must understand the peculiar position of these groups. They occupy the sort of intermediary position between the mass of the Blacks and the whites. And some of them have visible and identifiable stakes in the status quo. Therefore, they would refuse to identify with everything that the Africans are doing. But given these circumstances, I think that there has been a great deal of cooperation. The ANC recognized a need for cooperation at their last conference in Tanzania in 1969 when they decided*

that the Congress Alliance which was formed by Africans, Indians, Coloureds, and some whites, was to be abandoned in favor of one organization, the African National Congress. The rationale for this was that membership now was not just going to be paying dues, but it was paying with your own life. We had entered a phase in which one is called on to take arms. Anyone who is willing to lose his life cannot be denied membership in an organization purely on the basis of color, not when he has decided to pay the supreme price. Quite a few Coloureds, and quite a few Indians were very jubilant about this, and they will augment the forces of the guerillas in South Africa. Another thing - once the organization entered this particular phase, it became clear that it would be easier for a white person to go into South Africa undetected than it would be for an African. And whites could be more effective underground. Since the Morogoro Conference, the results of this have shown themselves.

The ANC at the moment is involved in bolstering African consciousness and self-confidence after the shattering blow of 1963. It is doing this through a propaganda campaign, involving the distribution of leaflets and tape-recorded messages from the ANC. The most significant and successful campaign of this sort was carried out in 1969. At 5:30, which is the peak hour when Africans are rushing to the trains, bus stops, and so forth, at every conceivable place where Africans are at this particular time, was tied a tape-recorded message with leaflets. I don't know how they did it, but the leaflets just exploded at the railway station, and then a message came through. It is said that people picked up the leaflets and put them in their pockets. Now it has become a criminal offense to be found in possession of those leaflets. At Park Station, which is the biggest station in Johannesburg, a loudspeaker was tied on a pole and it blew down its message to the railway station. It played over and over again while the authorities brought in demolition experts; they were afraid that a time bomb had been tied to it. It wasn't so much the message which was significant; it was the fact that this thing happened in Pretoria, Durban, Johannesburg, Cape Town, etc. It shows the presence of the skeleton organization in all these places. Then in the African press and in the English press, people began to ask questions - "But you said that this organization was dead; how can we have these things taking place?" Then just before I left in 1970, a 45 rpm record was distributed in the same way; and again it has become a criminal offense to be found in possession of it. The police could not recover any of these records because the people just picked them up and hid them.

QUESTION: *What language was the record in?*

ANSWER: It's in all the languages. This is another thing, going back to this whole question of "tribalism", if I may

use that word here. The national flag of the African National Congress is gold, green, and black. The national anthem of the organization is sung at almost every organizational meeting without people even thinking about it, both in Nguni (which is Zulu and Xhosa) and in Sotho. Nobody has really ever raised this question: why should you have a national anthem sung in only one language? Even overseas, at the end or at the beginning of an ANC meeting, people begin singing the national anthem in both languages, one after another. Have you heard the Czech national anthem? It is sung in both Czech and in Slovak.

At any rate, as you can see, the ANC is *not* dead; but the PAC is - or rather let me say that it's inactive. Since 1967, there have been several splits within the PAC involving the mismanagement of funds and also involving the lack of trained personnel. Even the minister of justice of South Africa said that they could release some of the PAC people now because the organization has shown itself to be ineffective. One would gather, then, that the organization is dead. The OAU also recognized this particular fact in the sense that they withdrew support from the PAC, and they are offering all their support to the ANC. One can determine the presence of the ANC and the fact that it is alive in terms of what is going on in South Africa.

*QUESTION: Can you speak a bit about the life of the South African exile and your own personal position; for instance, can you go back to South Africa?*

*ANSWER: No, I can't go back. I left with a passport; that's quite true. But my passport was withdrawn a year after I left. I've been negotiating for its renewal ever since, and they just refuse.*

How I got this passport is rather interesting, because at the time there was an exchange program between the United States and South Africa, but the selection was mainly of white students. There was a protest from the Liberal Party and the ANC about this discrimination practiced by USIS in Johannesburg in terms of the selection of the students. I applied at this particular time, and they gave me one of those International Institute of Education scholarships; then I applied for a passport which took a long, long time, but it eventually came. You know when you undertake a Ph.D program, you don't finish it in one year; it takes you four or five years. But my passport was good for only one year; and when it came time to renew it, they refused. The Foreign Student Office wrote many letters to San Francisco and to the South African embassy in Washington, etc.

Then, of course, as a member of an organization, even the

fact that you got this passport by these means doesn't stop you from continuing to belong to the organization and doing its work. And I think it's partly this that would make it difficult for me to go back. Even if one went back, under the present circumstances what would one do?

*QUESTION: You even had difficulty getting into this country, isn't that right?*

*ANSWER: I wouldn't say that I had difficulty. It's just that when I approached the U.S. Embassy in Lusaka, they didn't anticipate any problem; it was just red tape which delayed the process.*

*QUESTION: Doesn't the loss of your passport effectively inhibit your travel?*

*ANSWER: Oh, it does a great deal. For instance, each time that I want to travel in Zambia, I have to start way ahead applying for a Zambian Travel Document. I tried to apply for a United Nations Convention Document; it was very difficult to get one. For this reason, lots of us South Africans got tired of having to beg just for a mere piece of paper just to travel. You just feel like telling off those bureaucrats who refuse you your documents and who create a lot of difficulties for almost all South Africans. But then, even if I had a South African passport it would be difficult.*

A South African fellow from UCLA, for instance, has been in this country seven years, and he still can't go to Mexico. He's completely confined! And for others it's the same thing - if they want to go to Canada, it involves a whole lot of red tape because the visa is one-way, not a multiple-entry visa. It's really frustrating. There have been several conferences we had to miss purely because we were invited too late to complete the bureaucratic procedures. Some African governments such as Algeria, are beginning to issue South African passports. The government of Senegal, if it is properly approached, will sometimes do likewise. Several of these African governments could give passports; the trouble is that the people who can apply for these things are usually seriously involved in much more important things than getting passports.

*QUESTION: Does the South African abroad have any effective role to play in the revolutionary struggle, or is it a situation where in order to really matter, you have got to be physically present where the fighting is actually taking place?*

*ANSWER: Well, he can play an effective role anywhere. The moment they leave South Africa, some people give up; but some carry on. For instance, I could play several roles. As a student here, I used to collect clothes and send them to Dar*

es Salaam or to Lusaka. And since I came here to teach this term, I have collected and sent off seventeen boxes of clothes weighing fifteen pounds each, goods collected at Santa Barbara and Los Angeles. We still have about twenty boxes which have not been sent because we temporarily ran short of funds to send them. These goods are going to be very important.

One can talk to groups, just to keep the South African issue burning. Still, I think the organization is encouraging every South African who is a member of the ANC to go back at one time or another to Zambia or to Dar es Salaam for a familiarization there, even if it's for a short time. That is why it helped me a great deal to go back to Zambia for three years because then I was directly involved. But short of physically going to the battlefield, these other projects can be very vital to the movement. I mean that's all one can do; what else can one do? The struggle has entered a phase where the most important thing is fighting. And if you are not there and you don't want to feel useless, you have to do something.

*QUESTION: How regular and well-established are the channels of communication between the areas where the struggle is going on and the South Africans abroad?*

*ANSWER:* Those who are members of the ANC get regular bulletins and so forth; there are channels of communication set up within the structure of the ANC.

*QUESTION: What kind of financing does the ANC have?*

*ANSWER:* They receive some financing from the OAU and from interested organizations such as Christian Action. People are also sent into this country on fund-raising tours. Various interested governments, for instance, India and the Soviet Union, and some others, offer all sorts of help.

*QUESTION: Do individual members of the ANC have heavy dues?*

*ANSWER:* You give whatever you can. There are very few South Africans who have stable jobs. This is the problem. Even in England, people have jobs on and off. In Lusaka, it was much better; there is a very big South African community there, and lots of people contribute every month. There, the ANC has organized various types of fund-raising affairs.

*QUESTION: Would you comment on the effects of neo-colonialism.*

*ANSWER:* It's operation is very subtle, but you can see it in a lot of places; the presence of the former colonial people pursuing the interests of their own country rather than the interests of the country which they are supposed to be serving.

QUESTION: *What do you think can be done?*

ANSWER: It depends on what the African government wants to do. I think there are solutions. Let me give you an example of subtle neo-colonialism. The University of Zambia, for example, could get all the staff it requires from any place. But due to certain agreements which were written by certain individuals in the past, Zambia still recruits from England. They continue to pay the English expatriate teacher much more than they pay a Zambian. There are certain countries in Africa, in the West Indies, and even in this country, who have supernumerary intellectuals who would be quite happy to teach at the University of Zambia at salaries similar to what Africans are getting. But the government hasn't pursued this avenue. However, perhaps it will begin to. In Trinidad and Jamaica, they have an excess of intellectuals: doctors, lawyers, and so forth. Most of them are going to Canada. Why should they be wasted in Canada when they could go to places like Zambia? And take what's happening to Southern Africa. One wonders who is really deciding the issues behind the scenes. People are selected with an ideological bent which is not pro-African and anti-imperialist. Before somebody is approved for teaching in these former colonies, his dossier must be looked at very thoroughly, because governments don't want to send people who are going to plant wrong ideas in the minds of the poor Africans. These are the kinds of influences which are lingering.

QUESTION: *You spoke earlier in terms of educating the people of South Africa in the political sense. Does this education program include an ideological plan for running South Africa following the revolution? What kind of direction is the ANC taking, and does it differ from your own direction, for instance, in terms of Marxist interpretation?*

ANSWER: I think one arrives at a political position out of sheer force of circumstances. For instance, I have looked at all positions, trying to analyze the South African situation, and I found them all completely unsatisfactory. I was brought up with a very liberal type of education. But if you're a South African, you can't become anything but radical. The situation needs radical solutions, and you have to prepare yourself for these radical solutions. I never read any Marxist literature in my whole undergraduate years, and neither did those fellows with whom I was going to school. But you would find that, one way or another, each of us has arrived at the Marxist view of the South African situation. It's the only tool which enables you to have an inkling of what is happening. It's not a moral question. South Africa doesn't involve morality at all. If you think it's a moral issue, then you are wrong. The situation cannot be resolved, given the present institutions in South Africa. Africans, whether

they wanted to or not, could not be incorporated into the present system, if the system remains the same. What you would have would be the incorporation of a few, leaving the mass of the people in squalor and poverty. And this is no solution to the problem. It's merely postponing the day of reckoning. If you really want to effect a genuine change, there must be a complete restructuring of the society; the oppression of the African is *structural*. Somebody can love you as much as they like, but it's not going to solve your problem; it's going to mock you rather than solve your problem.

*QUESTION: You would, then, like to see South African society develop along Marxist lines?*

*ANSWER: Not along Marxist lines. Marxism only offers a tool of analysis. It's a framework within which you analyze. For example, Christianity is a world view which allows people to solve their problems in a particular way. Marxism is also a world view, and it allows you to look at your problems in a particular way. But the structural arrangement, if you were going to have a good society for everyone, would have to be some form or other of Socialism. And then, of course, there are various degrees of Socialism which one can think about. What is interesting to me is that even in this country, people have come to realize that you can't incorporate the Blacks into the society as it is; some type of restructuring must go on. This is all that is meant. But what kind of restructuring? You cannot resuscitate capitalism. Therefore, one has to ask himself what the next phase in human development is. And quite obviously, given the present tension of development, it must be a Socialist kind of solution. People mistake this particular understanding of reality as a commitment to some kind of alien ideology, which I think is nonsense.*

*QUESTION: Has the ANC made any kind of formal declaration of its position on this?*

*ANSWER: It has a written charter you know, which states specifically that the land and the mines shall be worked for the benefit of the people, and that education shall be free, and that those who work must be given commensurate salaries. Some people have described it as a Communist document, and others have described it as a liberal document. The whole issue surrounding the Treason Trials was whether or not the Freedom Charter was a Communist document. But the State failed to build a convincing case and lost. The Charter is merely a statement of the hopes and the wishes of the ANC. But one thing is sure, after people have died, you don't want to create another exploitative system. They would have died in vain. When defining itself, these are the issues which an organization must deal with. I think the documents of the Morogoro Conference indicate the search which was going on*

in people's consciences about the type of society they were going to create. The question was always asked: how can you ask someone to die merely to set up a system of advantage to some and disadvantage to others? This is the basic issue. When independence is negotiated, it becomes a different issue. You will have various types of African Socialism. And at that moment, the decision will be made.

*QUESTION: This seems to be one of the basic questions for African revolution - whether you are going to decide your ideology prior to or following victory.*

*ANSWER: The history of African nationalism in South Africa has been one of increasing radicalization. The history of Black people in this country has been one of radicalization. There are two trends - conservatism and radicalization. The more there is confrontation between these two elements, the more the conservative element is discredited and the more the radical element wins. This is the history of any organization, particularly an organization which is involved with the day to day struggle of the people. You find that those African leaders who have tried to effect meaningful change have become radicalized in the process of trying to solve their problems - Nkrumah, Nyerere, Kaunda, Sekou Toure, and various others. Those who have merely achieved independence and have then sat back and said, "let us divide the spoils", have become more conservative. They have left the inherited colonial structure intact, and they have tried to work within that. They didn't want to rock the boat, so they said, "let's leave things as they are."*

*QUESTION: Within a Marxist framework, what kind of forces do you think are working in South Africa?*

*ANSWER: I will give you an example in Zambia. There is not a single industry in African hands - perhaps only a few secondary ones. But the major ones are not in African hands even after independence. It is like working for a salary and having someone write your budget for you; there's no independence in that. The African can change any time he wants to. The African has got to have shares in the major companies; he's got to have control. And, on the international scene, the African has no control over the prices of commodities on the world market. These prices are subject to fluctuations and demands that are beyond his control. This is our understanding of neo-colonialism. Can you imagine, for example, the economy of the U.S. being controlled from the outside?*

*QUESTION: You've presented the picture in economic terms. Does that mean that you see the situation in South Africa, and perhaps in the United States, as strictly an economic class struggle? And you said earlier that it is not a*

moral question. I interpolated from that that you were saying it is also not a racial question. Is that right?

ANSWER: It is not a racial question. Yes, race is a significant factor, but let us go back. Why did the whites go to Africa? To take slaves. It was not a feeling of moral responsibility to uplift the African. No, Africa was a resource base. And to exploit these resources they needed manpower. That was the starting point and then it was necessary to build up a case for exploiting these people: white man's burden, the moral responsibility to bring civilization to the uncivilized. But you civilize them by extracting as much as possible of their raw materials and exploiting them as much as possible. And even the Church always emphasized the one point that people must labor. So, this was one way of introducing people to civilization. Labor and obedience became the catchwords. These are the things we were taught, but these were also the things which capitalism demanded. Could that have been just a coincidence: the demands of the Church coinciding with the demands of capitalism? These are the questions which you must ask yourself when you begin to ask if it is a moral question. These are the kinds of very difficult questions which you will have to ask yourselves. And these are the kinds of questions which cause one to arrive at a particular framework of analysis.

QUESTION: You mentioned radicalization. Do you think that the masses of people in South Africa are radicalized?

ANSWER: I think so, yes. Of course, there are Black people who have no political involvement. But what has amazed me is the numbers of people who have become involved, for example, in Lusaka. You must not judge South Africa in terms of the students whom you meet.

COMMENT: No, I am talking about the Black South Africans who are in South Africa.

ANSWER: Well, one doesn't know whether or not they have been radicalized, but one hopes that they have been.

QUESTION: But can the struggle succeed without their radicalization/politicization?

ANSWER: When the conditions are ripe, they are bound to be radicalized.

QUESTION: That is still not my question: Can what is going on in Zambia, i.e. guerilla warfare, etc., succeed without the radicalisation of the masses within South Africa?

ANSWER: The movement cannot succeed, of course, and that is

why political education becomes so important. The leadership must know exactly what it wants and be able to articulate it.

QUESTION: *Are you speaking now of ideology?*

ANSWER: The leaders must be able to articulate their ideology in such a way that it can touch the sentiments of the masses. Otherwise, there will be a lot of fumbling and confusion. But if the organization has a clear perception of its goals and objectives, then it has won half the battle with itself. And then it can try to radicalize the masses and educate them as to its particular program.

QUESTION: *And you think the ANC has such a program?*

ANSWER: The ANC has been trying hard to build up this type of radicalization, this type of ideology. Now don't forget that it is not a monolithic structure; it is a national organization which means that it involves within itself Christians, Communists, Socialists, radical Marxists, etc. It is because it is a national effort that you have to have this combination. Of course, one hopes that the radical point of view is going to be the one to succeed.

QUESTION: *But no faction has won yet. Therefore, the definition of the goals has not yet evolved and the education of the masses has not reached its full momentum. Is that right?*

ANSWER: Yes, but there is agreement about the policy which has been pursued. We might refer to it as strongly nationalistic with strong Socialist persuasion.

QUESTION: *Meanwhile, what specific function does the armed struggle serve, since it can't succeed until the population is radicalized?*

ANSWER: It is trying to act as a catalyst. Take Castro, for example, the band which accompanied him into the mountains acted as a catalyst - but after a long period of educating the masses. And one is hoping that the same thing will happen for South Africa. You see, one of the problems which Africans are confronting in South Africa is that their country does not share any common boundaries with any liberated zone. There is a lot of debate about which one of these non-liberated zones will give way first: Mozambique, Angola or Rhodesia. A lot of people seem to feel that it will be Rhodesia, so, for the first time, we will share a border with a liberated country. It is quite obvious that there is a lot of frustration among many young men in South Africa who want to go abroad for military training. The opening of this Rhodesian border will be like the opening of the Suez gates; there will be floods of young men going across. Therefore, the whole force of the

military structure in South Africa is geared toward maintaining this border with Rhodesia, thereby frustrating the free flow of manpower between the liberated zones and South Africa. And white South Africans admit themselves that once a guerilla force takes hold in South Africa, it will be very difficult to control. South Africa is a highly industrialized country with many installations which are very important to the functioning of the country. The whites cannot afford to remove their manpower from these industries. After all, that would leave only Africans to replace them. Can they rely on the Africans? These are the strategic considerations which people who talk about the invulnerability of the South African regime never take into account. That is, the high industrialization of the country and the fact that for one guerilla you need ten security officers. And given the ratio of whites to Blacks, this becomes impossible for the whites. For example, for less than 200 guerillas who went to Rhodesia, South Africa had to mobilize a force of something like 5,000 men! That is indicative of the problem which is faced by the regime. And nobody can say that Blacks in South Africa have any affection for the present regime. Even a foremost stooge like Mathanzima knows deep down in his heart that he hates the regime, that he does what he does for the immediate selfish gains.

QUESTION: *Therefore, one of the aims of the ANC is to work for the liberation of some of the other southern African countries?*

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION: *What do you consider the most significant contribution Afro-Americans can make?*

ANSWER: There are several. For instance, let's take the people of Jewish extraction in this country - they have been a significant force in getting the administration to adopt a particular stance in relation to the Arab countries and Israel. Similarly, the Black people in this country could, if they were properly organized, play the same role in approaching the administration to adopt pro-liberation policies in regard to South Africa. The fact that American corporations are so active in South Africa, that they are reaping benefits which are the result of the exploitation of the African I think should be an issue which the Blacks could raise with the major corporations. The Jews, of course, are in a better economic position to do this sort of thing. But in terms of numbers, Blacks are not as helpless as all that; they could play an important role.

QUESTION: *Do you think Blacks here are aware of what is going on in South Africa?*

ANSWER: I think the leadership is, except that they have never really made it a burning issue within their programs. I would imagine that all the organizations: NAACP, CORE, Urban League, etc., do know what is happening in South Africa, and they could use it as part of their own struggle. But then the question is, what have Africans done to help the position here? This is an issue. The independent African states, except to listen to occasional speakers like Malcolm X and so forth, haven't given this U.S. situation much time at all.

QUESTION: *Do you feel that Africans feel any kind of affinity with what is happening here among Afro-Americans?*

ANSWER: I think they should, given the fact that many of the Leaders, Nkrumah and so forth, were educated in this country and have lots of connections with Afro-Americans here. But the lines of communication have been very limited. An unfortunate aspect of it is that the two communities are poor. Let's face the fact. We don't own the means of communication. We have to communicate through somebody else's medium. This is a basic problem, and until we solve our problems and are able to establish our own means of communication, we shall always have to speak through an intermediary. For instance, this African Leadership Conference in Africa - nobody knows where its finances come from. AMSAC, for example, people have said receives money from the CIA, which makes it very suspicious to a lot of people. This is a fatal weakness when you depend for your livelihood on somebody else's finances. It makes it very difficult to articulate your true sentiments. You have to mute whatever you say.

QUESTION: *Apparently there is no real belief in the possibility of an alliance of Black people around the world. African leaders seem to feel that they have to get their own situation together before they can concern themselves with Black people elsewhere.*

ANSWER: No, I don't think so. I have been talking about the weaknesses, but I think efforts are being made. For instance, the ANC has just opened an office in Washington. They are trying to mobilize whatever support they can get. Until they had a permanent office, whatever support they were able to build up dissipated the moment that individual who had obtained that support left the country. If you have a permanent representative, you can talk to Whitney Young, etc., and try to give them directions as to what they could do. You are more effective. For instance, the South African government and the Rhodesian government have permanent representatives whom they finance to carry out their propaganda. That is why it is so effective. We are not in the same position as these people. We should be present at the NAACP meetings or at Urban League meetings where we can talk to people and make them put us on the agenda.

Since Ghana became independent, there have been more channels of communication open between Blacks in the States and in Africa, more than at any other time. I think it is quite significant that Eldridge Cleaver is in Algeria which is an African country rather than being in England. It shows the importance of Africa as a base of preparation. Similarly, the ANC, ZAPU, the MPLA, and other organizations have their main offices in African countries. It shows the building up of a consciousness that there is a certain brotherhood, no matter how tenuous. I think this is quite hopeful. The very fact that people are beginning to use the word "Afro-American" is indicative of the consciousness that they belonged at one time or another to the African continent with which they identify. This was not the case until quite recently. One cannot be too harsh about the weaknesses. One must take cognizance of them, but one must be able to build from there.

I come here from far

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From the east of green  
From the west of white... and  
From the north that don't go with  
With people and things far

I come here from far  
Down into the earth  
From the bottom of earth  
From the salt  
From the body when surprised

I come here from far  
Down into the dust  
Down... ..light  
To living signs  
To advertising signs

For matter  
The things  
And a stream of balls  
is from a kind of stone

I come here from far  
Down into the ocean that  
where life finds rhythm  
of water motion  
the islands are abundant