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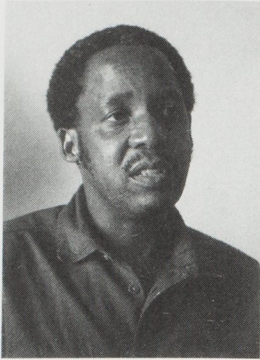


Photo: Colin Urquhart

DECEMBER 1990

- INTERVIEWS** : CHRIS HANI
TERTIUS DELPORT
JOE SLOVO
- RIGHTS** : ANC BILL OF RIGHTS
- ECONOMY** : SIMON BRAND





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THE GREAT BLACK SHARK

An interview with Chris Hani

If Nelson Mandela were to be run over by the proverbial Soweto Zola Budd, the wise money is on 'Chris' Martin Thembisile Hani to succeed him in the ANC leadership.

Who is Chris Hani?

Sure, we know he is a long-serving member of the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress. And that he has had a long career with Umkhonto we Sizwe, becoming Army Political Commissioner and Deputy Commander in 1982, and Chief of Staff in 1987. And we know that he is a member of the leadership of the South African Communist Party. And that he and Thabo Mbeki and Pallo Jordan were all born within three months of each other.

But what makes Chris Hani the rising star of the ANC? His militancy? His military career?

When we reach about we realise how little we know about the man and his years in the ANC. To fill a few gaps, Rory Riordan interviewed Chris Hani at some length about his life in the ANC and, in particular, in Umkhonto we Sizwe.

MONITOR: Where were you born?

CHRIS HANI: I was born on 28 June 1942, in a small place called Cofimvaba near Queenstown. It's about 60 km from Queenstown, but the other side, in the Transkei. That's where I grew up. I went to school there up to what was called Junior Certificate. Then I proceeded to the Eastern Cape, to Lovedale and Fort Hare. I joined the ANC Youth League in 1957 - that must have been at the age of 15.

You are about the same age as Thabo Mbeki?

The same as as he is, we went to the same school. He was a year or two years my junior.

We were members of the Youth League at the same time, from school on. Then he went up to Johannesburg. I think he was expelled from Lovedale - I had already left Lovedale then. The next time I met him I think I met him outside, and we have been together ever since then.

You went to university at Fort Hare?

Yes. Fort Hare was not an autonomous university then, it was a university college affiliated to Rhodes University. So the degrees awarded were Rhodes University degrees, and I graduated with a BA in Latin and English, after my final year in 1961.

I joined Umkhonto we Sizwe inside the country in 1962.

At the time it was just a small group of determined people feeling that there was a need to change the methods of struggle we had been using. At the time the regime had just banned the African National Congress (ANC), and we were seeing growing violence on the part of the regime. At the time, also, we had no skills whatsoever.

Then in 1963, I was on trial under the Suppression of Communism Act for distributing leaflets. I had been sentenced to 18 months. Then I remember well, Comrade Govan Mbeki came down to Cape Town where I was articled to a firm of lawyers, and he gave me instructions that I shouldn't wait for the outcome of the case, and

that I should leave. I left South Africa in 1963.

In 1967/68 I fought in Zimbabwe, as Commissioner of the Luthuli Detachment of Umkhonto we Sizwe. We were working very closely with the armed wing of Zapu, and we were operating in the north-western part of Zimbabwe, around the Wankie Game Reserve, down towards Plumtree.

The strategic thinking on the part of the ANC was that the ANC had trained an army, and the conditions for the return of that army direct to South Africa were not good then. Botswana, I think had just become independent. Zimbabwe was still Rhodesia under Smith, and there was a strong feeling amongst soldiers that we needed to acquire experience, combat experience, and consolidate our position in Zimbabwe, so that even an unliberated Zimbabwe should serve as a rear base for Umkhonto we Sizwe.

We felt that once we had a foothold in Zimbabwe, it would be easy to push through both men and supplies into the northern part of South Africa and ultimately deep inside. That was the thinking but it never really worked.

The political situation in Zimbabwe itself was difficult. Smith's counter-insurgency tactics had worked quite effectively at the time. The villages had been consolidated, there was a good network of spies and informers, and survival was very difficult. The Zimbabwe armed struggle only started to really gain momentum in the late seventies, and then mostly from the Mozambique side. Once Mozambique got its independence it was easier - the terrain in the north-western part of Zimbabwe is not ideal for guerrilla warfare,

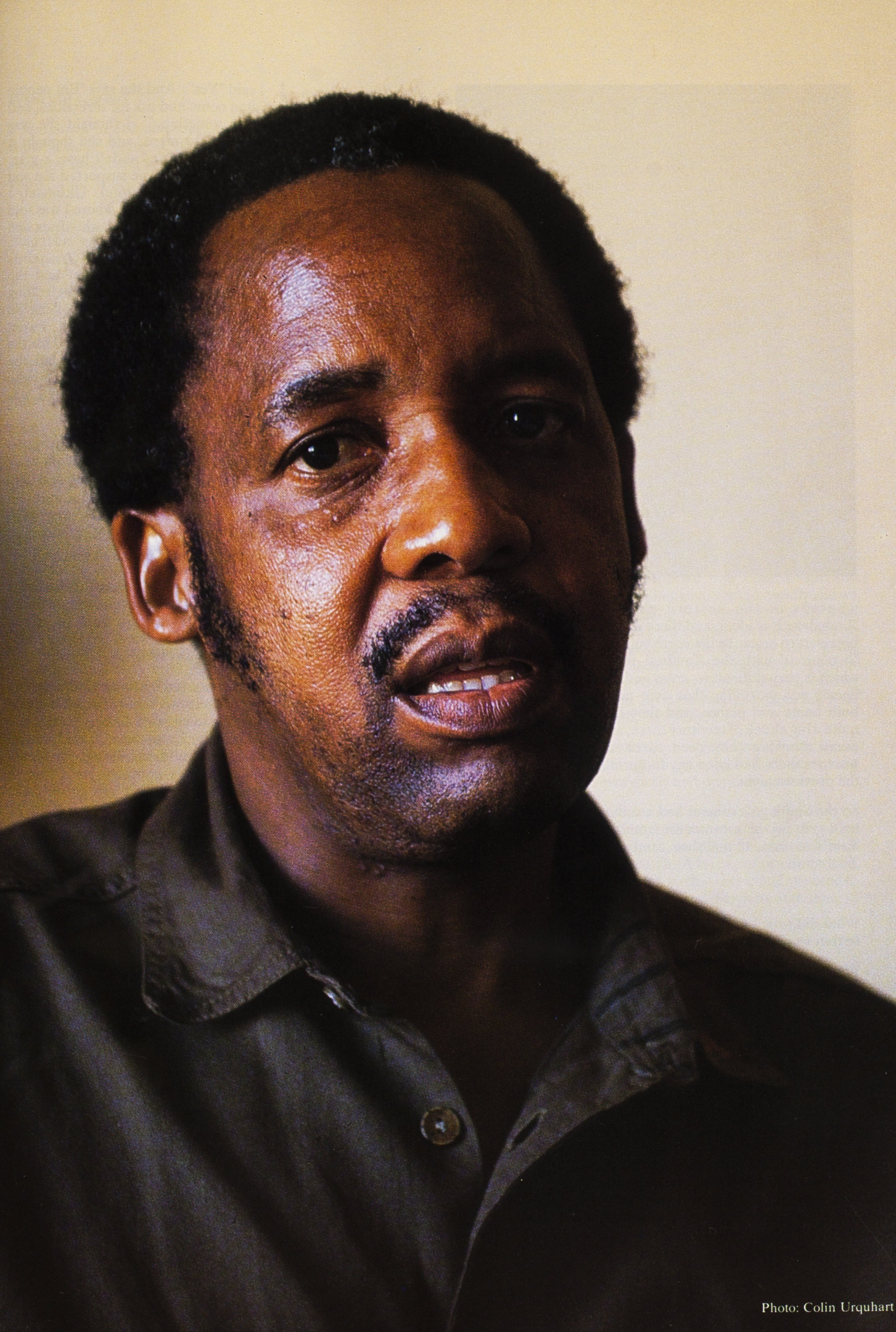


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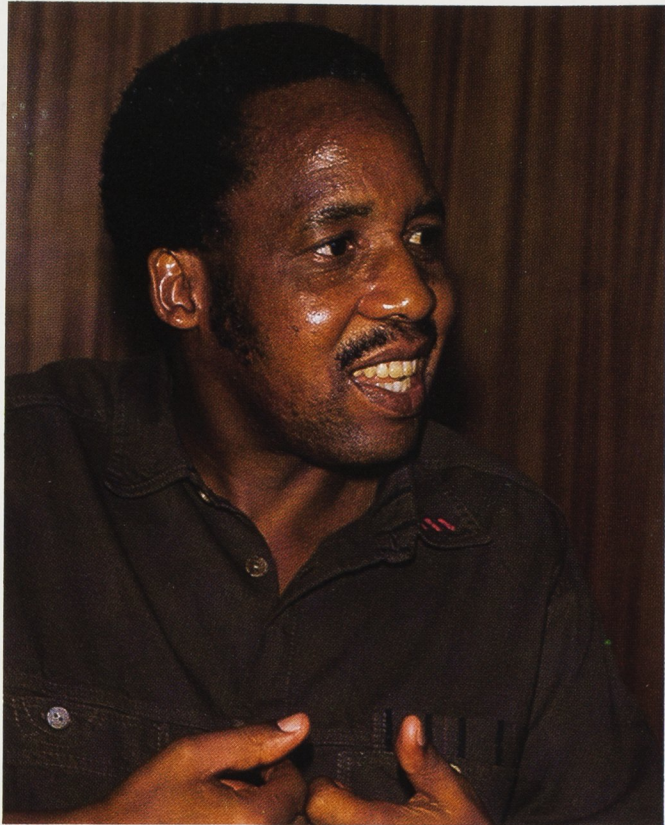


Photo: Colin Urquhart

that there was a bigger group - our group was about 50 people. Then we were engaged in a number of battles, three or four, before we eventually crossed into Botswana, as the situation was really untenable.

We were arrested in Botswana because we had weapons of war, and I served a short sentence of about a year and a half there. Then I went to Zambia.

You became a member of the NEC in 1974?

No, in 1975.

Then in 1974 you infiltrated back into South Africa. That must have been an exciting experience, coming back into South Africa.

It was. I remember I crossed from Botswana, I was alone, round about 18:00 hours in the evening, and there was that thrilling experience as I jumped the fence, and I landed on the other side, in South Africa. Then I walked through the evening.

I made no contact with anyone, I was just walking alone in the evening. I remember I was not quite sure of my position as I was only using a compass in terms of general direction. I had never been to that part of the country. All I knew was that I had to move in a certain direction, I was using stars to guide me deeper and deeper into the country.

The following morning I was not quite sure whether I was in Botswana or still in South Africa, as I had had to change my course because of dogs. That part of the country is full of farms, white farms.

I went to one kraal to inquire, in my broken Tswana (there was also the language problem). And a lady there said to me "You say you want to go to Zeerust, you are saying in Tswana", and

I said "Yes". And she says "But people often come and ask for directions, and carry something". I thought she was referring to maps, and she thought it was strange that I didn't have a map. She seemed to have suspected me and she was not very helpful. Ultimately I went to a small village where I was told that actually I was in South Africa and on my way towards Zeerust.

I walked through the night and the following day until 15:00 hours, resting for 30 minutes and then trudging on until I got to this town, Zeerust. I went to the station to buy a ticket and for the first time in my life I went through the experience of calling the fellow who was selling tickets "Baas". He was excited about that!

I told him that I was going to Johannesburg and he was very co-operative. I think he thought that this was a good kaffir!

Did you speak English to him?

No, broken Afrikaans. Because I thought he would rather accept a Bantu who was trying his best to speak Afrikaans, than someone who looks smart and was speaking English.

I was very uncomfortable during the day. There were railway police going up and down, and coming to me and asking why I was there. I told them I was going to Johannesburg. They said, "But there is going to be a bus to Mafeking, why don't you get into the bus?" One really was helpful, he thought there was no point my remaining in Zeerust, I could as well go to Mafeking and connect there but I said that I would prefer a train in the evening.

This fellow was a Tswana policeman, and he then began to discuss bantustans, what did I think? I became very nervous, and I was talking as if I was a fervent supporter of the system of bantustans!! I went along with him because he was full of praises for the bantustans!

Eventually I got into that train and the following morning I was in Johannesburg!

And you spent four months in South Africa?

Yes, before I crossed over to Lesotho.

whereas in the eastern part of Zimbabwe it is ideal, and there are no big rivers to cross. In the north you had to contend with the Zambesi River which is very difficult to cross and the enemy was patrolling that river using both boats and planes, and they had quite a big chunk of territory there, and every morning they used to check whether there had been any footprints the previous night.

So the Smith government had a rather tight grip on the movements from the Zambian side of the river, and into Zimbabwe.

What did your Luthuli Detachment do in that war?

We penetrated deep into Zimbabwe without being detected, and I think Smith began to be aware of our presence after we had been inside for a month. In the process we had split into two groups, one moving down on the north-western part towards the northern border of Botswana, the second moving eastwards. What caused problems for my group is that the enemy made contact with those that had moved to the east - there were two skirmishes there and a few comrades were captured. Then in the course of interrogation they gave information

What did you do?

I remained in Johannesburg. I had some friends there. I discussed the situation inside and contacted a few of them.

Had the underground structures collapsed?

They had collapsed. There was just nothing in 1974!

You stayed four months here and then did it get too dangerous, were they on your trail?

It was very dangerous, even the people who were keeping me were very uncomfortable. You got a feeling that they felt they had a duty to look after me, but at the same time you sensed that you were endangering their position and the position of their family. To compound the problem some people had come back and when arrested had broken down and had implicated quite a number of people.

And then I think confidence in us, in our capability to remain strong under interrogation, that confidence had become dampened. The police were very ruthless, very, very ruthless. At that time people had been tortured, a few had died, not only guerrillas but also those who had harboured them.

There was a feeling of hopelessness, of surrender.

This was the period of the growth of the Black Consciousness movement and that was confined to students and intellectuals. The mass movement, even in terms of workers, was just beginning to shape up. This was the time of the strikes of some workers in Durban, but on the whole one would characterise this period as one of a relative lull in terms of mass political activity.

So really you didn't feel, even if you were in a train, that you were with people who had confidence. You had a feeling that you had to look over your shoulder whenever you uttered anything political.

How did you get the structures reinvigorated?

We started by making individual contacts. We had undergone a course in the Soviet Union on the principles of forming an underground movement, that was our training. The formation of the underground movement, then the building of guerrilla detachments. The Soviets put a lot of emphasis on the building of these underground structures, comprising at the beginning very few people.

We went through the laborious processes of studying the background of the people we had approached, and building these units of twos and threes. Then we established an intricate system of communications. After that we sent a few trained comrades to stay with these structures inside the country, and then we began to spread our networks. I remember within a network there would be only three comrades, what we call the team leader and two others, and the communication was vertical, we never allowed any horizontal communication. We wanted to avoid a chain reaction in case there was a capture, and they were all scattered and tightly and centrally controlled from Maseru. We didn't allow for a co-ordinated system of structures inside the country.

You got the Eastern Cape going at the time?

Yes. We opened up a good system of routes through the Transkei and then from there we were able to move into the Border, into the Eastern Cape and into the Western Cape. Then we opened up a route to the Free State across the Caledon River, and we began to build a few structures around Bloemfontein as well.

To what extent do you think those structures played their part in the events of 1976 and 1977?

We were not responsible for those events. They were a spontaneous outbreak of anger and resentment, which had been building up in African schools against the system of Bantu education, and against the compulsory use of Afrikaans and the inferior facilities generally. This anger had welled up and had reached a point where the students in a number of schools, especially in the Transvaal, decided that enough was enough and they were going to demonstrate.

CHRIS HANI

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As usual in our country if the police had not overreacted that revolt would not have shaken the world, but the response of the police to, really a peaceful demonstration by students, the violent response spread to other parts of the country and impacted on the world. This was a turning point in terms of the militant struggle in our country.

From then there was no looking back. We latched on. For the first time we had conditions where the young people were angry, and where they had experienced the brutality and atrocities that had been perpetrated against them by the police, and they were ready to join Umkhonto we Sizwe. Recruiting began to spread at a real pace now and we received more recruits in that year than we had received in all the years when I had been there. Then the structures we had built inside the country began to spread rapidly and we stepped up recruiting, especially from the Eastern Cape. There had been no cadres from the Eastern Cape going out because of the distances, but now they began to flood Lesotho, coming from the Eastern Cape, from the Free State, everywhere.

For us those were the most hectic times, taking biographies and screening everybody and opening up routes.

I remember how at the beginning we had actually to try to get Lesotho passports, and then to send them back to South Africa using Lesotho passports so that they could proceed to Swaziland, and Maputo and then to Angola and Tanzania.

Is that how they had to get out? You couldn't fly them out?

No, we couldn't fly them out. There were no flights from Lesotho at that time. They had to go back to South Africa!

How were you getting in and out of Lesotho?

By crossing the river! From Lesotho I would cross the Caledon or the Orange or the Tela river and then into South Africa. By then we had built a network

of couriers, people who knew the border. We had recruited people from the Herschel area, from Matatiele, from Mount Fletcher and these people were now guiding us through the mountains into South Africa illegally. That's rugged territory and there was no way South Africa could stop us because it's mountainous.

When you got into the Transkei you could travel by road, by rail ...

Then we could travel! Although the regime was repressive in the Transkei, the security situation in the Transkei was not as tight as in other parts of the country. Generally the ordinary black policeman in the Transkei was not really interested. At a roadblock he would check whether the driver had a licence, and all that. Then the people would pass through. We were at an advantage, as most of us either came from the Transkei or parts of the Eastern Cape, so we had no language and no cultural problems.

So to a certain degree the Transkei claiming independence was in fact a help to you.

It was a great help, it was a great boost to the building of the underground!

Now, you were in Lesotho for seven years?

Yes. I was in charge of the building of the network of the movement from Lesotho.

In 1981 your car was blown up.

No, the aim was not to blow the car, but they trained a fellow in a hurry. He was just trained to go and place that mine. It was a pressure type mine so that when I drove the car in the morning, the pressure of the car should trigger the mine.

I had a fixed home then. Where I was staying there were no lights, it was on the outskirts of Maseru. So as he was fixing the mine I think there was an accidental contact, I think his system of insulating was not good, and then there was an explosion. In fact I captured that guy because he was injured. He

had been trained by the SA Police in Bloemfontein, and I handed him over to the Lesotho police.

There had been an earlier attempt to kill me. This was the second one.

When was the first?

The first one must have been in 1980, a small device put under the bonnet of my car. As I was switching on, there was an explosion, but they had put it in a place far from me, so that it just blew the bonnet and it did not affect me.

It's a touch and go life.

I think that in those early days if they had really made a move to eliminate me they would have succeeded. I think in their own way they had not decided, as they later did, in 1981-82 with the formation of the CCBs and other death squads, to really take me out.

You were going in and out of South Africa all the time?

Now and again, but not frequently. Most of the time unless there was a need, I was using comrades who had been trained and who were not as well-known as I was, to go and penetrate, but in terms of the broad planning of our work, this was done by a very tight collective of about four comrades, based in Maseru. And some of them actually spent lots of times inside the country.

When were you called back to Lusaka?

After that car bomb, I was asked to come out for consultation and I went back to Lusaka. Round about 1982 the government of Lesotho under Jonathan advised us that it was no longer safe for me to stay in Lesotho, so I left Lesotho in 1982.

Had the Lesotho government been aware of your activities?

I had been arrested by them a few times. I was very unhappy about it but our operations had to be clandestine even from the Lesotho authorities, because, within the Lesotho police force, there was an element which was pro South Africa, and was actually monitoring our

activities and reporting to South Africa quite frequently. So we had to try to cover up our operations from the Lesotho authorities. But my own experience is that the Lesotho people were very supportive, and I found them more supportive than the people in Swaziland and Botswana.

I think there's a history to this. I think because of the big numbers of Lesotho workers working in South Africa, the Basotho tend to be more affected by political developments here. They have a lot of sympathy for our struggle.

The events from 1984 onwards have really been constant mass action in South Africa. To what degree were the structures you set up responsible for that?

1984-85, we were stronger inside the country. Our underground structures were more widespread than they were in 1976. Now we had fully fledged units operating inside the country, in virtually all the major centres of our country. Around the PWV, Durban, Cape Town, Eastern Cape, and Border. Now we were able to carry out military operations within the country, placing bombs, limpet mines and assaulting police stations and small army garrisons. By 1984 we were able to respond much more positively than we did in 1976, and also the political climate was more favourable. People were ready to accept us, to shelter us and to give us every form of assistance. Our survival rate after 1984 improved gradually.

From then on there was a period of unprecedented growth of Umkhonto we Sizwe inside the country, and we began to adopt a new element in our operations. We were able to train people inside the country. There was no longer any need for people to go out of the country, especially comrades to be trained for what we'd call sabotage groups, and for the use of small weapons. We were gradually and increasingly training them inside the country.

We had a very good reason for this - the South African security was quite effective in terms of monitoring those who had left the country. Exiles would be photographed and fingerprinted in the neighbouring countries especially in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, and we were convinced that these reports were made available to the



Photo: Anna Zieminski. Alrapix



Photo: Colin Urquhart

drive of the early 70s resulted in the build-up of MK from 1975 until just before the eruptions in Soweto.

Were you ready for the 1976 youngsters when they came out of the country?

We were ready for them, we had established military camps in Tanzania. The Soviet Republic, the German Democratic Republic, Cuba - they were all ready to receive and train us, so we were in a better position than the PAC and other organisations to receive the new recruits from home. And then Umkhonto began to grow very rapidly, and the quality of training

improved at the same time.

In 1975 what did you have, a couple of hundred Umkhonto operatives?

Yes, but in no time we grew to thousands. From 1976 onwards there has been a steady build up. Between 1983 and 1984 was the biggest year of growth, and from 1984 onwards.

The campaigns against the tricameral parliament helped Umkhonto to grow?

The struggle against the elections to the coloured and Indian chambers and the boycott campaigns generated a lot of interest in Umkhonto we Sizwe. And when we began to act against police stations, against installations and against collaborators, that boosted Umkhonto we Sizwe, especially in the eyes of young people. There was a growing willingness on the part of the youth in our country to participate in Umkhonto activities, and since then there has been a real build-up. Today we can't cope with the interest that young people are showing in Umkhonto we Sizwe. Now because we want quality recruiting, we are saying - first of all finish your matric and then you come and discuss the question of Umkhonto with us.

But in rural areas, I have been struck by the interest shown in Umkhonto we Sizwe. People in the Transkei, in the Ciskei, in Natal and other places. I'm not even referring to the urban areas, there the interest is just phenomenal.

Have you moved your camps from Angola now?

Yes, we just maintain a political presence there, an office. Our camps are now in Tanzania, in Uganda and we are also going to other places. One thing I have left out in the course of the growth of Umkhonto we Sizwe - we have now produced our own instructors. Our initial training is handled 100% by MK instructors, and then on the basis of performance we select outstanding comrades for advanced training in countries like the Soviet Union.

Are your instructors still trained in the Soviet Union?

Yes. We have got some groups training in the Soviet Union as regular army soldiers.

What are the numbers in MK now, outside of South Africa?

We are not allowed by the movement to disclose numbers.

Do you favour incorporation of your people with the SADF and the SA Police?

No, we really want to avoid the term 'absorption'. We don't think we should be absorbed in the SADF for a number of reasons.

We have got our own perceptions of the South African Defence Force. Crudely speaking we see it as a military wing of the National Party government, and it has got a racist orientation, it has been used against us and against our people as a brutal loyal army to suppress the aspirations of the people.

We feel that there should be a new army in our country and now since there are negotiations, and everybody is optimistic that negotiations will lead to democracy, we think the task of the new South African government would actually be to build a new South African army.

Nevertheless we are realists. The SADF has not been defeated, it's still strong and powerful, a well organised army, and we are sure that some elements in the SADF will play a role in the building of that new South African army.

South African police. In fact we all know that the South African police have got bulky albums of everybody who left the country.

The advantage of training people inside the country lay in the fact that they had no knowledge of who we were training, he could be in work or he could be a student at a high school or at a university. The police had no record of him, so he could go to work during the day but in the evening he would go out and carry out operations, and the police would have no clue.

It was an important change, and there are many guerrillas in prison who never left the country for military training, they underwent their military training inside South Africa.

What has been the growth of MK over the years?

In the beginning we were motivated by the hatred of the system and by the need to bring about a new society, and our attacks were more symbolic than effective.

When I left the country that was a very difficult time. After the 1967-68 operation in Zimbabwe there was a period of serious re-thinking on the part of the movement. Our campaigns, while brilliant and heroic in Zimbabwe, I don't think succeeded militarily to achieve anything concrete. So there was a lot of strategising after that.

Hence we came out in the 70s feeling that we should recruit. The recruiting

A new South African democratic government should conduct a programme of reorientation for the SADF where a new South African army would be an army which is not political, in other words, it's not loyal or attached to any political party. It is there to uphold the democratic norms of the country and to protect the country, and we feel that in the process of building that army, Umkhonto we Sizwe has got a role to play.

The PAC army and the armies in the bantustans should all be brought together but under a strict military code that never again should the army be used as a political tool to entrench, if you like, the hegemony of a particular political party, and that includes the African National Congress.

You plainly believe the South African government was involved with death squads.

Oh, I am convinced.

You have no doubt about that?

They were involved with death squads. We captured people who made these disclosures, it was not just Dirk Coetzee. Some of the guerrillas the regime had captured and kept at Vlakplaas. More than eight of them escaped from there, and they brought to our attention all the activities they had carried out against the ANC as well as against the Mass Democratic Movement. They were kept there and they were under the command of the South African Police, of the Security Police - even names were mentioned.

Even Olivia Forsyth, who was sent to infiltrate us and was intercepted by us, provided lots of useful information.

You must have had a great problem with infiltrators over the years?

Oh, very serious problems. As you will recall, some of our comrades were killed by agents of the regime. I can recall immediately how cruelly and brutally Comrade Gabwe was assassinated in Zimbabwe by agents sent by the South African regime. A number of representatives like Dulcie

September were also killed. Some of our comrades were poisoned, there was mass poisoning in one of our camps in Angola, back in 1977-1978. Had it not been for the timely intervention of Cuban doctors we could have lost many people.

How many people were poisoned there?

About 500.

By who? Did you ...

We found out. By a fellow trained and sent and provided with poison by the regime.

What sort of poison was it?

I can't remember exactly now because I was still in Lesotho, but there are many comrades who are still around who would be able to say.

They were sending so many agents, sometimes out of 15 people, 5 would be agents. Part of the reason why we had a security organ was to cope with the systematic and regular infiltration of agents by the government. The government itself knows about this. We are still keeping some of those agents. Others we have released.

And your internment camps like Quatro. What went on there?

Yes, we had a camp for the rehabilitation of those we had captured. We had a problem where to keep agents of the South African police. Some of them were extremely dangerous and desperate, and some of them had committed crimes against the organisation, and against the Mass Democratic Movement. You should recall that from 1983 or 1984 inside the country, the CCBs had started operating as well as death squads. In fact some of our activists had mysteriously disappeared, and now we know from some of the disclosures by Dirk Coetzee and Tshipalanga and Nofemela that people like Mxenge were eliminated inside the country.

So there was no way except to build a camp for rehabilitation of state agents

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in some part of Angola, and this was handled by our security organ.

I want to hasten to say that because we are a liberation movement conditions were not of the best, even our own conditions as soldiers were not good enough. We were staying in underground tunnels to avoid being bombed and our comrades were victims of serious diseases like malaria and typhoid because of the war situation in Angola.

I think the movement tried its best to provide what it could for those it had detained. We established a system of justice, and now and again their cases would be reviewed, and some were released by the organisation, to Tanzania. From Tanzania of course they made their way to Kenya amidst all that sensation and they came back. But those were the people we had detained.

And also in 1983 we had a mini-mutiny in our camps.

What I am saying is that we had this camp, and we are not deriving any joy from that, but the realities of a war situation are very difficult. We were at war with the regime and the regime had done everything to crush us. The regime had decided to ignore boundaries, it not only sent agents but it also sent units of soldiers to cross borders and eliminate us - you remember Lesotho, Matole and Gaberone. This was a reaction of the movement in terms of self-defence and a right to survive.

There might have been excesses. I was not handling this situation. The only one that they referred to me was when I was sent to deal with the mutiny in 1983. People have been interned in a number of countries when there is war, and this was a system of internment by the ANC. This regime has interned and detained and imprisoned us, because it considered itself at war with us.

How many people were left there?

I think that the figure probably fluctuated around 180 because now and again people would be released. Some of those fellows are studying, others

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have been reintegrated into ANC activities.

Could MK have won the war?

Well I believe that we could objectively speaking, have continued to cause serious problems for the regime over a long period - the war would have been protracted. MK alone without the Mass Democratic Movement would not have caused problems, but the combination of military operations and the mass struggle would have actually led, ultimately, to a situation where the will of the government to continue with apartheid would have been destroyed.

In addition of course there was also the growing impact of sanctions and the solidarity of the international community.

But it would have taken a very, very long time. Those who are oppressing us were fellow South Africans - they knew this country very well, they had established themselves, they had an industrial base to provide armaments, they had a big population compared with other colonial powers, based inside the country, and every year they were able to recruit thousands of people to fight us. So the war would have been protracted and very difficult. I can't say it would have been a military victory, but there was no way the government, after some years, would have had the capacity to continue with this racist repression.

We're now into the suspension of the armed struggle. What does that mean?

It means that the ANC takes the process of negotiations seriously. It wants it to be explored and it wants momentum to pick up, so that there is a peaceful solution to the problems of the country. We think that the suspension of armed activities, which has not been really appreciated by most of our people, puts the ANC on high moral ground, and contributes to a positive climate.

This government has always said the ANC is not serious - why is the ANC continuing with armed actions when it

says it wants to negotiate? The ANC is saying - we won't carry out military actions for some time because we don't want anybody to have excuses. Let us sit down and talk so that there is a democratic transformation in this country.

My own view is that this government has not reciprocated, the security laws are still in place. I'm totally against Section 29 and other laws. No democracy can function and no negotiations can take place with those security laws around. They hang like the Sword of Damocles over people's necks, and I think the glaring example is the detention of Comrade Maharaj and others. Now they have been released on bail, but we feel that this government should scrap those laws and other security laws, and I think the government is dragging its feet on this.

And again the police are over-reacting whenever there are marches. Elements in the police force still use violence, even in instances where the people have not been violent.

But we initiated negotiations and we are serious about negotiations. Just because they are dragging their feet, we will not say "no, you guys are not behaving, we are resuming armed action".

I think we need to have a lot of what I call revolutionary patience. But of course there is a limit to patience. If these things continue and we don't see this government firmly handling this situation, it is going to be very difficult for the ANC to maintain the suspension of the armed struggle, because the ANC has got a constituency, the majority of oppressed people. They are watching these negotiations and they see that their lives are not changing. They are still living in the old way, the police are still brutal, whenever they are detained they are tortured and they are going to say to the ANC - why are you continuing with the suspension of armed struggle?

Are you continuing to recruit and mobilise?

Yes, the recruiting is continuing and we are public here because we don't want to have a secret agenda. The government is annoyed at this. We are recruiting precisely because the situation has not changed, and secondly because we are preparing for the

future. The future cannot be in the hands of De Klerk and his government. We want to make an input as Umkhonto we Sizwe to the building of the security forces in this country, because we want a new type of security force. Our young people who want military training, can only get this from the ANC. They wouldn't want to go to the SADF because they associate the SADF with repression, with their own repression.

So we cannot close doors to the recruiting of our young people who have done so much for our struggle, who have sacrificed their own young lives, and we cannot frustrate them by saying, no, no we can't recruit you. We are saying to them of course we want to recruit you, but we want you to go to school as well, because you have to play an important role in a future democratic South Africa. At the same time we have enough guerrillas for a regular army, so we would like to have people with certain qualifications.

Are you continuing to infiltrate arms?

No, no! As part of the Pretoria Minute, we are not allowed to infiltrate new personnel and new arms, we keep what is inside.

Operation Vula.

Operation Vula actually was planned long before the Pretoria Minute. It was part of the projects handled by the President of the ANC, Comrade Tambo, assisted by Slovo, to prepare conditions for the basing inside South Africa of senior members of the movement so as to provide internal leadership for the organisation. This was before the unbanning of the ANC, so it was a natural development of a build-up of years.

Whereas in the past we tended to send medium level cadres in, we wanted now to send in very senior comrades so that they could provide guidance to our struggle, in terms of our strategies and tactics, to the growing Mass Democratic Movement, to the spreading and expanding underground as well as the co-ordination of the MK units which were already on the ground, and others which were already lined up to get into the country.

So Operation Vula actually was part, as I say, of the natural development of our

concept of a people's war and the development of a leadership to lead that people's war. With the unprecedented growth of our movement, we could no longer provide adequate and effective leadership from outside. We felt that that leadership should be inside the country, and comrades like Maharaj, Ronnie Kasrils and Nyanda were part of the first echelon of leaders to go inside the country. They were going to be followed by others. I think we were all being lined up to come and join them.

What do you see happening in 1991? What is the agenda?

We have reached a crucial point in our struggle. The ANC and the liberation movement have become central in the political chemistry of our country. I think the ruling class, led by the National Party government, is convinced that there's no way except a negotiated settlement, but they want to negotiate with a weak and dismembered ANC. That's why you see a big offensive against us in the press and the media in general, and that's why there are all these stories about in-fighting within the ANC, about the ANC being so woolly and confused.

But for me the growth of the ANC in the last few months has been phenomenal. You know those who criticise us forget that we only started in the last three or four months really building the ANC. Although we were unbanned in February the responses from the people of the country, including the rural areas, to the calls to join the ANC, have been marvellous. We are seeing a growing confidence on the part of the people that they are within reach of their victory.

In 1991 we are going to see, I think, the process of negotiations taking place. This process will have its own hiccups. De Klerk does not want to call another whites only general election, because he would have problems from his tribe. His tribe is in revolt, and divided.

Now the international community won't allow South Africa to go back either, and I think De Klerk has made serious commitments to the international community, especially the Americans and the British. So there is

going to be a lot of tough negotiation between the ANC and the government - other groups are going to join the negotiation process, and there is going to be a serious battle between us and the government in terms of winning allies. The government will be trying to influence the homeland leaders, people like Gatsha Buthelezi and the tricamerals, onto its side. Equally the ANC is going to want to broaden its own alliance by bringing in homeland leaders, by even bringing in the PAC because the PAC began as an anti-apartheid movement. Despite our differences my view is that we should go and tell them that you cannot have alliances with Inkatha and other organisations which have no record of positions against apartheid and racism.

I think ultimately there will be some fully fledged negotiations some time in 1991, but of course the government must know that it can't negotiate with us as long as it keeps political prisoners and impedes the process of people returning from exile. The ANC must be allowed to have a representative national conference where it can discuss the way forward, with all those people who have been involved in the struggle, those who are in exile and those who are in prison, so that together we should have the same position as the National Party enjoys in this country.

A lot of the focus of the anger towards the ANC has been directed at you, Chris Hani. You had your passport withdrawn, you were not allowed to come back into South Africa, etc. Why do you think that you have been the focus of this?

Well, I think the government wrongly singles me out for a number of reasons. I think I have become a symbol because I have been with Umkhonto we Sizwe for a very long time and my real work in the ANC has been on the side of the armed struggle. So I am associated with bombs, with raids against police stations. And I have been very open in my remarks about this government. I have attacked the government and the security forces. As the African National Congress we have reached the position, in the eyes of young people, where we are a symbol of radicalism and militancy, and I've expressed this radicalism very, very frankly, in frank terms. I don't want the ANC to lose

that image, because once it loses that image it will lose the support of young people, a force which I believe is very important in what we have achieved and what we shall achieve in future.

Because I have not minced my words the government wants to use me as an example to force everybody to behave. They will not succeed because I have never stepped out of line. What I say reflects the broad policy positions of the movement.

The government has been trying some feelers, "arrest Maharaj" - what will the ANC do? "Hunt Ronnie Kasrils and check and find out" ... "refuse to renew Chris' indemnity and check", ... but in all of this our leadership has been united in demanding that the government should stop these practices. Our Deputy President, whenever he met De Klerk, has told him in open terms that, these moves against individual members of the leadership are impermissible, and in fact if the government continues to do this ... we shall step up mass action, because that is the form of struggle which is accessible to us. We don't have a parliament to express our dissatisfaction, it's not just packing our bags or taking our briefcases and rushing to their offices in Pretoria away from the people. It is the people who must get out into the streets and march and make their demands so that as we sit there and talk to the regime, those voices of anger, of bitterness, of impatience must be heard by those who are sitting there because negotiations are about democracy for the people, not just for a few of us. The government doesn't like this, but there's no way we shall not engage in mass action. We have suspended armed actions, that is an important contribution to the process, but we are not going to immobilise our people. That's the source of our strength.

We are adversaries - the government and the ANC. The government sometimes acts as if we are part of that government, and yet we are not part of that government. They have got all the powers in their own hands, parliament, the administration, the police. We have got the people - we are not going to deprive ourselves of an important weapon to bring about changes in this country.