

An interview used in "Attacking the Heart of Apartheid: The ANC's MK Special Operations Unit" (Penguin, 2025), Yunus Carrim

MK Special Operations Unit Project

Interviews

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6 February 2017 and 15 March 2018

Tshwane and Johannesburg

Let's start with some details about your personal and political background. Perhaps you can explain what made you politically aware, how you were drawn to the ANC and the armed struggle in particular?

I was born on 18 March 1956 in Kroonstad. My mother was a domestic worker and my father was at Metalbox, which was producing tins, cans. It's now Nampak. I have two sisters.

My political awareness came about through my practical experiences in Kroonstad. That's where I used to go to work with my granny during the school holidays. I was a child, and I used to play with a small child of an Afrikaner family in Kroonstad, where my grandmother worked. Now, you know, being a child you're not conscious of all these things, but I once picked up the baby at that house, and if you are playing with the baby, you tend to kiss the baby.

But I was chided by the mother of the baby like you won't believe it. So, I realised that something is wrong here. I kissed the babies in the township when I played with them, but this one I can't play with, I can't kiss and so on. That's when, somehow, I realised there's something wrong. So, I grew up with that thing.

And then we also used to go with my father's sister to work; and she'd ask us to come and escort her from work when she's coming back. But we would be chased by other white boys on their bicycles. And so, I grew with all those images. And then later I came back from my grandmother's place in Kroonstadt to join my parents. They were already in Sebokeng in the Vaal Triangle.

That was in 1967 and I was still in lower primary school. Later on, I went to a higher primary school in Sebokeng. And later on, I started travelling by bus to school in Evaton, in an area called Residensia. That's where I did my Junior Certificate. I then went to Orlando High in Soweto because there was no mathematics and science offered at matric level in the Vaal schools.

So, I had to travel by train to Orlando. Little did I realise that a rude shock was awaiting me in the form of the student uprisings in Soweto in 1976. And then in June I

was part of the students who were protesting against Afrikaans being imposed as a medium of instruction. Fortunately, I'm fluent in Afrikaans, but as a medium of instruction, we just felt that it would be rather too much.

And then I saw how the racist regime started shooting at the school kids in Soweto.

So, you were in the original students' march in Soweto, where Hector Peterson was killed?

I was. There were several marches. But when the uprisings started, it was towards lunch, and a guy from Evaton and I were busy eating, but we saw a military helicopter and we went out. We looked into what we referred to as the Wild West then, that's deep Soweto, and we saw the fires burning. And on one side of Orlando, the people from the Bantu Administration were beginning to dash off and run away, especially the white people. There was so much violence. And what struck me most was an old lady, who was a teacher, who was shouting that we must go for military training. She was saying this outright, she was mad, mad, mad...

Did she motivate you to think of joining the armed struggle?

Well, not just what she said. That wasn't the main reason. I saw for myself the police baton-charging the students and letting the dogs bite them. And then the old lady had seen a girl who was trying to run away from the baton charge and the dogs – and the girl was shot in the head from right up as she was trying to escape. So, for me, I think that was the last straw.

But to crown it all, I had friends, one comrade Oupa Mokhobo who had just been released from detention after six months in terms of the Terrorism Act. So, he used to tell me I must just be fit, he was a fit guy, because he said if the police come, he can't go to detention again because they really torture you.

He said he was going to run so I must just be prepared to dash off. But the important thing is that he linked me up with other comrades in the South African Students Movement (SASM) like Comrade Mothibi Tansa.

Strangely enough, there was a reference made by Professor Renfrew Christie to this guy. They met somewhere in detention. It's a bit of a mixed-up story here because we had been sentenced to death, and as we were staying there in Death Row, Professor Christie had his trial as a member of the ANC as well.

You communicated with him though he was in a separate cell?

Yes. But most importantly, I also communicated with Jeremy Cronin. He even wrote a poem about this. The title is Death Row, I think. It's because we used to shout Amandla and sing. In Death Row what carries the story are the sounds. The sounds might have been unacceptable because they reflect the warders swearing and beating the prisoners and all that, but what really conveys your message in Death Row would be the sounds that you hear. So, he's captured those very well in his poem. Anyway...

So, what happens after you're connected to Motlana?

Well, while we were still at Orlando High, we went to Steve Biko's funeral in Ginsberg in the Eastern Cape. We stayed in a rural area called Izinyoka, it's supposed to mean snakes. There were some offices of Zanempilo Clinic, we stayed there.

And we'd been there for a week to help with preparations for the funeral. That helped us because later there were roadblocks throughout. You couldn't move from Johannesburg to Ginsberg. The first thing that Dr. Nthato Motlana did when he arrived at the funeral was to recount what the police were doing to frustrate people who were trying to come to the funeral. Besides Dr Motlana, Desmond Tutu and the Secretary General of SWAPO, the internal wing, called Mokganedi Tlhabanello, spoke at the funeral. He articulated the struggle of the Namibians and how it links up with the struggle of South Africa.

So, all those inputs contributed to increasing my political consciousness. And all the atrocities continued. And so, all this led me to join the armed struggle. When I decided to leave the country, I told my mother I'm leaving. She knew my perceptions of the political situation and what I thought could be the possible solution. So, she said to me, you mustn't go to the army, you must go to school. I just agreed, but in my heart of hearts I knew I'll be joining the armed struggle. When we left the country, I was with another guy called Allen Budeli, who was the then President of SASM. He was from Limpopo. He eventually became one of our very good propagandists at Radio Freedom in Lusaka.

The teacher who said people should join the armed struggle, was she an underground ANC activist?

No, she was just very emotional because of what was happening.

So, she wasn't a political activist as such?

No. She was so shocked by the schoolgirl just killed like that.

How did you connect with the ANC?

This Comrade Maputo, Oupa Mokhobo was his name, who I'm talking about, was actually already working for the ANC, with Joe Gqabi. This was around '76. There was another comrade called Shadrack at that time working with Oupa. But we used to call him Joe. He was also in the same group with me in the German Democratic Republic.

Anyway, I went out with Comrade Maputo. It was December 1977. I went by train from Johannesburg to Piet Retief, then to Swaziland. Joe Gqabi gave us the money to go. He did a lot of work recruiting for MK. Comrade (John) Nkadimeng used to give them money as well – he was based in Swaziland.

Anyway, so the train stops somewhere before you arrive at the station in Piet Retief, so that's where we jumped off the train and walked. I think it was about fifteen kilometres or so to the Swazi border. We managed to cross. The other side we couldn't meet the old man we were supposed to meet so we went looking for the ANC. Gee, we walked!

These people, when you ask them where's Manzini, they say it's a bit of a distance. But it really was a much, much bigger distance. Eventually it became very dark at night. We tried to sleep in the bushes only to find out where we're trying to sleep is a swampy area. We just decided to wake up and go to the police station near the border and report ourselves.

So, they then took us to detain us in Manzini Police Station, and then later on in the day, they released us.

Did you trust the Swazi Police or you were just desperate?

We didn't, it was out of desperation.

But they just said after taking statements and photos of us that we can go. But another policeman came in and whispered to us to go to Stan Mabizela, the ANC representative in Swaziland, and where we could find him. We go to Stan's place and we took a bath there. Later on, JZ (Jacob Zuma) and Lindiwe Sisulu came. They were taking comrades from the border in Namaacha in Mozambique into Lomahasha in Swaziland. They actually helped us go through. We went and met them on the other side with the FRELIMO guys with the AK's and stuff. We had a comrade called David, a tall, very fit comrade. Finally, they took us through to Maputo. And in Maputo we went to the ANC safe-houses. We stayed there, and then we were getting a bit frustrated there...

How many of you were there at the time?

Maybe around thirty or so.

Were you mostly the post-76 group of comrades?

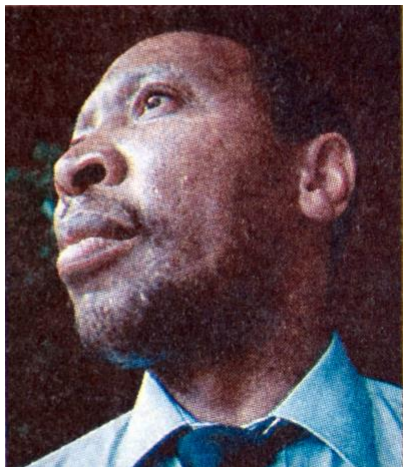
Yes.

Did you know any of the others?

No, except that I became friendly with them. We established that type of rapport with the comrades there; it was really more about discussing township stuff. But initially I didn't know anybody. I didn't even know Allen Budeli except that he was a SASM President.

So, what happens in that safe-house?

We stayed for about two weeks. And then we were getting frustrated because we're having these interviews, sitting underneath the tree, to find out if you're a genuine comrade, how you left the country, how did you know about the ANC and all that. And then eventually we were taken to Zambia by plane from Maputo. Remember, at the time the ANC was using Al Italia Airlines to get into Angola. And then sitting nervously there in the plane for the first time. I didn't want to take the food on the plane (laughter) because I didn't have money. I thought (laughter) we'd have to pay for those things. But I sat strategically to observe what happens...then I realised you don't have to pay.



David Moisi, Independent Media

So, who did the interviews on behalf of the ANC?

An old man. He later died.

When do you get to Lusaka and what happens?

February 1978. The ANC said do you want to go to school or do you want to join the military. So, I chose the military option. I stuck to what I knew I wanted.

Did most of the thirty or so comrades go for the same option?

Yes, because you are actually viewed as a coward (laughter) if you chose to go to school.

You go to Lusaka, and then?

Lusaka was basically a transit. So, in Lusaka we slept a night, we arrived on a Saturday, took the connecting flight on a Sunday to Luanda.

Because there was no direct flight at the time between Maputo and Luanda? It came later?

Yes.

What happens in Luanda?

We went to stay at ANC residences 1 and 2, but both were full. Some of our guys slept at those two, but I slept at a ZAPU (Zimbabwe African People's Union) residence.

I think Barney Molokoane was already in Novo Catengue; he must have been in the camps already because I remember he came from the front. Jaguar Jacob Molefe is the guy he knows, they grew up together, I think. He stays here in Kempton Park but we haven't met, we've just been threatening each other with a meeting.

Finally, we were taken to Benguela in the south by plane. As the plane was about to land, that is when the reality of war dawns, I mean, because you know all the romantic ideas about guerilla warfare, they were sort of off now. You meet the reality of this guerilla option that you've always been after. You see the buildings that have been destroyed and so on. In fact, even in Luanda you could see and you hear the planes flown by Cubans patrolling the Angolan airspace.

And then we went to the residence – well, I'll call it a residence – in Benguela but you could see, that's where I say the reality of war begins to dawn because it's where the fighting with Savimbi is taking place now.

Soon some of you will be fighting there, we were told. We met a comrade - he used to insist I'm not a comrade, I'm your father – who used to say: Guys, hit the road. They took us in a truck to Novo Catengue. The next morning you were given your uniform, your boots, everything. And then we were in our barracks and allocated to a platoon.

For me the platoon Commander was Norman Yengeni, Toni Yengeni's brother. We used to stay in the barracks and started basic training under the Cuban and South African instructors. But largely it was Cubans with all the detail regarding basic training, explosives, firearms, tactics, engineering and so on.

And we also had political education, because the ANC never arms you before you get political education. You also saw young women comrades with their AKs. We only wished that we'd reach that stage, but you must get political education first. It was only thereafter that we got basic training. Then every time they add a weapon, you go into another course. As the ANC says, it's a course that gets completed, not the training.

I remember a guy called Jesus, very good with an AK, he was Cuban. And there was Comrade Marero and Comrade Boris, who could speak English. He did intelligence work on America because he could speak fluent English. And then I remember on 14 March 1979 we were attacked by the South African Airforce in Novo Catengue. I remember this Comrade Khumalo who used to drag you out of bed with your foot because we were cooking for comrades who were going out to their posts. Initially, these Boers could have decimated us and taken the struggle back, years back, because the best leaders of MK were in Novo Catengue and in the south.

So, we used to have defence inside the camp, anti-air weaponry – this was deployed next to the administration and the instructors' block. We used to ring a bell during the course of preparing for this type of attack. The comrades would not be armed. When we ring that bell, it's to say if it's an air attack it will be Avion, in English it's aviation. And then if it was a ground forces attack, they would have another way of ringing the bell to signal it's a ground attack. There would be almost no time to do all the alerts.

Comrade Gwen, she was from Sharpeville, was a medic. I can't remember her full name. We used to call her Medico because she was from our medical team. After an attack, she went to help – ZAPU comrades had been killed. Over 180 were killed, more

than 500 were injured. When she came back, she just said Comrades, you are wasting time, this is not realistic. You can't run more than twelve metres once those guys get in. And, indeed, when those guys attacked, there wouldn't be any time for that.

Also, another Cuban, a big General, a black guy, he holds an AK like a pistol, said we must remove the anti-airgun defence from inside the camp, we must create a circular defence outside the camp, which is what we did. And that worked wonders. The enemy had information where the anti-air weaponry had been deployed. They destroyed that part. Comrade Jack Simons had only left that morning to Luanda. If you could see the place, he never used to go out, he used to stay in the offices and continue working there in the administration block...I'm telling you he'd have been dead.

One Cuban was killed in the administration block. In fact, three of our comrades were killed. When the Angolans came, they thought it was much more than that - but three were killed. A Cuban, Comrade Guerrilla from Orlando and Comrade Champion, a firearm instructor.

So how did your camp get away lightly compared to the ZAPU camp?

It's more of what you call in physical science, the rule of thumb. It's really more experience based on what others have gone through. And also what that Cuban General said - I think it helped us a lot because we moved our defence from inside the camp to outside and created a circular defence.

So that's what helped you escape the full impact?

Yes, and also partly because Comrade Gwen showed us that, no comrades, this is not going to work, you have to prepare better against an attack.

But could it maybe be because they were targeting ZAPU more than the ANC at the time?

It's because of the level of the struggle. The ZAPU comrades were more prepared to escalate the armed struggle; they were going to Zimbabwe and they were targeted specifically because they were going to leave the camp that Friday...

So the Rhodesian and South African security agencies had information?

Yes, the ZAPU comrades were going to be picked up by helicopters, hence the enemy used helicopters to attack, which they had painted in Angolan colours.

How many people were in the ANC camp there?

I don't think I'll be exaggerating when I say there were about five hundred at that time. The biggest camp that we had in Angola was maybe Novo Katengue. Remember, those guys could give us uniforms, which is what they had. You could drive, by the way, in Angola for about a 150 kms without meeting a single soul. The

country's big, so the Angolan government told us we can provide you with tents, uniforms, guns, everything but we can't provide you with security. We don't have personnel to secure you. So we had to secure ourselves.

They were fighting UNITA a lot of the time anyway. They were under siege.

Yes, which is what actually eventually led to the ANC comrades dying and getting injured in those counter-raids that the MPLA launched. We have this approach that the best way of defence is offence. So MK comrades were dying there, but the question we were asking themselves is when are we going to die in our country for our own direct cause other than trying to defend the Angolans. And this is what caused some of the dissatisfactions which happened in our absence in 1983, when we were already detained inside the country.

So, what happens after this attack? This was in March 1979?

We had to move from that camp. Comrade Mzwai (Piliso) came. He was at that time from Personnel and Training. So, they came and took us in trucks at night, and no one knew where we were going. Normally, the best way was to find out from the women comrades because some male comrades relayed information to the women when they were with them in a personal situation. But this time, not even they knew where we were going, only Comrade Mzwai knew in his vest (laughter) where we were going. So we took all the logistical supplies, food, guns, explosives, everything into these trucks.

Can you remember when this was?

Towards the end of March 1979, I think. I remember the attack took place on 14 March. Why I recall it is because next day there was supposed to be a ceasefire in Namibia, which the racist regime wasn't serious about. So they just did that, they thought we would be relaxed if we think there's going to be a ceasefire in Namibia on the 15th – then they attacked on the 14th!

Most comrades were falling victim to malaria because we were sleeping outside. Anyway, we finally ended up in Lobito in those trucks. We took all the stuff that we had onto a ship. You know, I almost accidentally pressed the trigger of an urban bazooka. I was just checking. It was loaded. I was seeing this for the first time, but you can see if you're dealing with guns, you see the trigger. Yes, I almost did that, it would have been a disastrous blunder.

So we got into that ship, packed these things, the arms and ammunition inside, then sat on the deck for departure with Comrade Mzwai only wearing his vest. It was very hot! It reminded me of our fathers back home, you could see now he's in the mode of a father. But we left for Lobito, we were not told anything. We arrived in Luanda at night, moved the stuff from the ship into the trucks. Then we drove to a new camp that we opened in the north of Angola near Quibaxe.

From there, we moved, I went to join the Group of Forty. Remember the Group of Forty were the comrades who were trained in East Germany. So, I went to join the

Group of Forty in Quibaxe. We had to get used to each other, go and fetch water, go and chop the logs. And in the new camp we chopped a lot because we're beginning now to build underground dugouts based on our experience in Novo Katengue.

The ANC would take us in groups of about ten to Luanda for vaccination when we were going to leave for the GDR or wherever. And then, when the whole group is vaccinated, we leave for the airport together. When our Group of Forty tried to leave, they were ambushed by FNLA (National Liberation Front of Angola), not very far from the camp. We then were under the coffee trees, those coffee bushes, busy with the camp activities. We were like mice. Then suddenly you see comrades like Norman from Pretoria being carried in, Sihle from KZN. They were all injured. A comrade from the early 1960s was helping with my General, he was just accompanying the comrades to Luanda, he died in that ambush. Bushi got very seriously injured. The comrades were brought to camp and assisted, first aid and everything else.

But after a few days all of us were taken, the Group of Forty, to the airport safely.

Is it possible that the apartheid regime's intelligence section gave FNLA the information about your comrades going to East Germany for training?

No, I don't think so. Comrade Eddie Khumalo and them explained that one of our comrades had a tiff with an FNLA guy, and then he said okay I'll get you. Then this guy went and got his friends and waylaid our comrades. The FNLA was operating from the North and Savimbi and UNITA from the South. The CIA might have been sharing information with FNLA, but I don't think in this case...

Anyway, the ANC decided to take the whole Group of Forty to Luanda. It was Comrade Mike Sandlana who was responsible for defending the groups. We used to call him Sandlana because he didn't have a hand. So, he accompanied us to the Luanda Airport, and then we left.

We went to the GDR to specialise in urban guerilla warfare. I think it was maybe June or July 1979, we stayed there until December because the course was six months. But the ambush and other things somehow disrupted our dates of departure. Each group had to first finish the ammunition course. When we finish our ammunition course, we continue going to the shooting range until we finish the ammunition. You know it's winter now, it's snowing there, and we really had to finish our course. We specialised in urban guerilla warfare. And then we were addressed by Comrade Mzwai and told that we would be taken to one of the most undisciplined camps in Angola – comrades were very frustrated in that Fazenda camp.

Can you give me some sense of what it was like in East Germany? Where were you trained? Besides what you've just said, what else where you trained in? Was the training directed at any specific goals?

It was tough training – climbing buildings using a rope and attacking from buildings; also shooting targets, including moving targets; shooting when you are moving and

the target is static; and then shooting when you and the target are moving. These were done from different angles.

What about the weather? This was your first experience of significant snow, probably?...

Yes. You just can't stand in one place, you have to jump around, and we were wearing boots, but they were not very useful. Especially when you go out for the shooting range training, there you're actually exposed to the real hardships of that harsh weather. As a result, some of the comrades came home with sores and coughs. Even those ladies cooking for you in the camp, they know that, eish, these guys, they'll come back from East Germany very sick. So they used to be very sympathetic towards us, but being a soldier you have to take all this...

But Comrade Moisi, I'm sure even Che Guevara must have also wondered at times what he was doing in the Congo or Bolivia. You, yourself, just said when you got to the south in Angolan and saw the effects of the civil war you were stripped of your romanticism about guerilla warfare....

Yes, that's what I'm saying. We had to do it, but it wasn't easy, and as you say, it wasn't romantic.

Well, did you ever, when you were there in the severe cold of East Germany or in the camps in Angola, wonder whether you did the right thing by leaving the country? Also, of course, the post-1976 generation was quite frustrated being stuck in the camps instead of going into the country...

In East Germany, besides the harsh weather, it was good that we had a very tough type of training. Our bush here in Africa is dry, hot, gorgeous. Europe is extremely cold, snow. But if you look at their bush you see it's ideal for guerillas to hide in. But how we survived is because the ANC succeeded in inculcating this acute sense of political consciousness in us that we have got a duty to the struggle and we have a responsibility to prepare.

But at some stage I think you begin to question what's happening to you – I mean you could never have hit the nail so right on the head – especially after training, where you feel now we are ready, but we are not going home. Then when we were in East Germany, you watch these things about June 16th and see South Africans speaking on German TV – and that makes you mad! That makes you think I'm ready to fight, why is the ANC still keeping me here when I'm so ready to fight? You really feel it's time to go.

Yes, understandably. What about other aspects of your stay in East Germany? What were your leisure activities?

It was mainly strict discipline and training. They gave us nice food. Much better than in the camps.

We did go out. For example, I sat on Bach's bed, he had a house in East Germany, which is now a museum. We also went on an excursion to places like Mühlhausen, a farm, and for educational reasons, we went to a concentration camp. That was horrible.

Your trainers, they were all Germans, but you must have had political education from the senior leaders of the ANC?...

We did.

Was it Pallo Jordan? Who else?

Pallo and National Commissar (Andrew) Masondo.

And your instructors spoke to you in English obviously?

Yes, they taught us in English. Those who didn't speak English, they used a translator.

Did you see them as comrades or just as trainers?

You know what, you could see the dedication of these guys. These guys could be sleeping with their families, but they are out there with you on a snowy night. And they were under threat from West Germany. They took us to the border area as well. You could see the threat. West Germany was violating East Germany's airspace and so on. I think what motivated these guys was not only dedication to our struggle, but also this security threat from the West. Those guys can work hard, they have really got a work ethic. You could see that for them it's more from the cause that they believed in, more than just helping us as Africans. They saw our struggle as part of the anti-imperialist chain in which they were also a part.

Could that also have inspired you in some way, that there were these comrades far away from our country so committed to training you to ensure the victory of our National Liberation Struggle? Even maybe not as a conscious effect on you, but, well, unconsciously?

Yes. You know they would say it themselves, guys please be serious, we're preparing you to go and confront your enemy down there. And they had intelligence about how the South African Government worked. Some of these guys were from the field. Who knows, they were gathering information in South Africa? They were very inspiring. You know the effort they put into the training! And there, if it meant punishing you for wrongdoing, they would do it. But for me, most simply, I think those guys made me feel again why I should be prepared to die for the ANC.

I was also so inspired by comrades like Joe Slovo. When Joe Slovo sits down and speaks to you, it is so good! Sometimes he comes, and we think he's going to make a long speech, but he just comes and tells you, you must inculcate the spirit of war psychosis in the minds of the people of South Africa – and then he's finished, he goes. But one important thing that Joe Slovo said to me, because we used to read a lot

about countries like Nicaragua and Chile, was that in Chile these security guys really tortured the comrades there. He said these guys trained the Boers to do all these things. The Boers also tortured to get information from people. Now Joe Slovo says if the security in Chile can do this to people of their country and these people can still be prepared to give their lives for their struggle, what debar you as a South African from giving your life if, you have to, to liberate our country? That stuck in me forever because even during torture, I used to remember Joe Slovo's words.

Now for me I realised the value of the ANC leadership and that it was up to the task of liberating this country, and I must say I'm still very grateful to have played a part in that...

You who almost got sentenced to death?...

I just found myself there...

You were there on Death Row, and you're still saying you are thankful to the ANC for giving you an opportunity to serve. I hope the young people of our country know this about you and others like you. Do your own children know your story, about your commitment and willingness to give your life and what it cost to get our freedom?

My children do, but you know I think where your question becomes too unfair to me is when you say did they really know (laughter), your emphasis on this – maybe then you are right, they don't know the whole story and what it really was like...

Do you want to say anything about the youth generally not knowing how much you and others were prepared to sacrifice?...

It's not about me. Many died. I'm still here. I do think the youth need to know more about the efforts of those who brought about this freedom. You know the Jewish people are good about their history of oppression, for example there's this book by Primo Levi 'The Drowned and the Saved'; it's very detailed about how the Jewish people survived under the jackboot of the Nazis. So our youth also need to know about those who sacrificed, especially those who gave up their lives.

A bit more on East Germany. How did you get along with other comrades there? Do you know how they felt about being in East Germany? Were they all as committed as you? Were comrades very disciplined like you, or were there some lapses?

There was an incident that made me mad, hey. You're asking questions like you were there (laughter). I had to beat up a comrade. I was prepared to be taken back to Africa. What this guy does, when we arrive, the Germans go with us to the shops and they buy us clothes. One of our guys steals a nice white polo neck. Now it was so embarrassing because the Germans found it and they put it in the armoury, so every time we go to collect guns and other things, we are confronted with this mess of a stolen polo. This guy also does a wee in the boots of the comrade that he's sleeping

next to. Then this same guy - I don't know why - he called me one day to his room. The other comrades say what do you want to talk with this guy about? Leave him alone. He's not worth it. But I say let me go and see what he wants to say. So I go. He closes the door, locks it, and then he says I can see you think you can be arrogant with me, explain why you were arguing with me. And as I explain, he starts attacking me. He made a mistake because I could also be violent.

Now when I hit him to the floor, the guys came knocking on the door and they think I'm the one who locked him in and beat him up. It was only after my explanation that they understood. When Commissar Andrew Masondo listened to the story, he decided I should not be sent to Africa. I think he asked other comrades also. He never uttered a syllable.

That guy was a real troublemaker, he would even wake up at night, he would go switch off the light of the bar so that they wouldn't realise that there's someone sitting there and starts drinking.

So, there were a few problems. But in East Germany, to a large extent, we didn't have many discipline problems.

Isn't some of this understandable? Comrades are far away from home. They are alienated and frustrated. They're in camps, they want to go home to fight or even just go home. But then also, I suppose, this Group of 40 in East Germany was made up of senior comrades of a higher calibre and so greater discipline was expected of them...

That's what the leadership tried to do, send better comrades there, so you are right. But remember there's this attitude of being constructive. The ANC, even if you see a guy is not competent in terms of intellect and literacy and experience, you just try to lift him up and send him for those courses.

Now while you were in East Germany how did you manage some of your personal needs? Where you given an allowance?

No, our needs were catered for.

And in the camps in Angola?

No. We didn't know what money is (laughter), we knew what food is.

If you wanted to smoke you had access to cigarettes? What about liquor?

Cuban, yarre (laughter) – that thing you can't smoke it. It's difficult. You know it doesn't burn properly even when you light it. I remember comrades used to try. Mozambicans don't give you their cigarettes to light yours with theirs (laughter). No, they light it for you. A Mozambican holds his cigarette for you to light yours while he is still smoking his. But now you end up making him drop his cigarette on the ground because it's difficult to light yours from his.

You were a smoker then?

Yes. I stopped smoking on Death Row in 1981 when I realised that, you know, this thing is controlling me. I'm a slave. During the course of the hunger strike, we would only be smoking BB. So I used to make my zols smaller and smaller as the hunger strike proceeded, but you could feel that this thing is getting to my health now. So I stopped in 1981. I thought whether they hang me or they don't, I'm going to stop smoking. I kept the cigarettes in my cell but resisted them, to show discipline, and weeks later I just gave up smoking.

It was very disciplined, I must say, especially in the circumstances...

It's something next to miraculous when you come to think about it (laughter).

Yes, there you were on Death Row so vulnerable, and the one pleasure you could have had is smoking, but you are worried about your health in what could be your last days...

Well, anyway (laughter), I stayed with not smoking after the death sentence was removed.

So what happens when you get back to Angola?

In Angola we came to a place called Fazenda, which means a farm. It's in the north of Angola. I stayed with the comrades there. I remember we used to wash in the river while some comrades are on guard because of the presence of the FNLA. And the only thing that we had that other camps didn't have was tsetse flies, yarre, those tsetse flies during the day and mosquitoes at night (laughter). They were on shifts (laughter). It was a very frustrating place to be in, but we didn't stay there for too long. And then we were taken from there to Funda.

When you are in Funda, remember that your training is now to prepare you for combat. That's where I met Barney. I think we were somewhere together before in the camps but we didn't notice each other, but where I knew Barney for the first time was in Funda because we were preparing to come down to South Africa. But most of that Sasol unit I was part of I met on the plane from Angola to Lusaka, from Lusaka to Maputo

After you'd got your training and been selected?

Yes.

When do you get told you must go to Funda?

We used to call it *umChina*. Do you know why we called it *umChina*? Because when we play this game, it's betting, gambling... you don't know the number before, it's more like pulling the number out of a hat. So, what made us call it

umChina is because that's how you're chosen. The ANC leadership might have known we want these guys, looked at your profile, looked at your biography and all that, but you only know when they come to pick you out for a mission.

Who came to pick you up, who was it that told you?

Obadi.

Now this was after you had specialised training in Funda?

Yes.

So when do you get to Funda?

It must be in 1980. I think January.

How long were you there?

About 2 weeks.

Then Obadi tells you you're going to Maputo?

Yes.

Were you surprised?

No, I wasn't because Funda already gives you the sense you are going home.

So how did you feel about that?

Excited about going back home to fight, what I've always wanted to do

No concern that maybe I won't come out alive?

No, no, no. That I knew. But the thing is I wanted to do away this regime.

Even if that meant giving your life?

It's tough, yes, but for me it may be the quotation that I like from Vietnamese struggle which says something like 'I belong to that generation of young people who had been driven - because really it was not out of our own choice - to the point of going far away from their homes with a promise of no reward, but a harsh, difficult and dangerous existence that might have led them to lay down their lives at any given time'. So I was at that level, being ready to give my life, if it means that, but the main thing is we fight; we fight to liberate the people of South Africa from this misery and humiliation.

When you get to Maputo, what happens?

They sent me to Gebuza (Siphiwe Nyanda). He was not in Special Ops. Gebuza was Commander of the Transvaal Urban Missionery. Special Ops was new. It was OR (Tambo), JS (Joe Slovo), Obadi. It was Barney and us in Special Ops. We started as a squad, meaning ten people.

When you're in Funda did you meet Rashid (Aboobaker Ismail) or did you meet him in Maputo?

I didn't know Rashid much in the camps. I think I knew he was there. But I didn't do any training with him. I did meet him in Funda, which is usually the camp where people go before leaving for home. My name in Angola became Lots and Rashid still calls me Lots. But we actually interacted in Maputo, we stayed together in Matola.

Initially in Angola I'm Shadrack, that's what most comrades actually still call me – Shad. Others call me Shadow, but I was Shadrack. And in the country I'm known as Speech.

Why 'Speech'?

Speech is my nickname from home before I left the country. You know township life, it just came about, I don't really know why.

Rashid said he did train some of the comrades who took part in the Sasol operation?

Yes, but not me. I think he trained those who had not gone to East Germany. He was good at explosives.

So then, in Maputo, you met him there at Matola?

Yes.

He was going to Durban?

Yes. I remember Comrade Rashid had to return three times at the border, comrades felt that now we'll get compromised because he can be seen as different and not belonging in those areas near the border - and, remember, the apartheid police were using Swazis to spy on their enemies and watch these movements. But Joe Slovo realised that Rashid could do other things other than getting into the country, because he did get into the country, actually, and he came back very quickly. I think he might have been noticed by some other guys that he didn't trust.

How long are you in Maputo before you cross into South Africa?

We were first in Matola. We didn't stay long, we were moved to another residence. We were in Maputo in all three weeks or so.

What did you do in that time?

We got briefings, for example JS would come to us. We would discuss the plan to hit Sasol and we would come up with ideas that we thought could work. The ANC leadership had good listening skills. JS came one time after listening to us, he showed us a limpet mine, and we realised we could even improvise with this. Put thermite into a limpet, combine iron with oxide and with aluminium foil and put it in the open air. Put thermite on top of the TNT and then close the limpet mine again and use it. You know, normally an explosive causes fire, but with thermite, it guarantees that the fire is big. So that's what we did. Joe Slovo showed us those plates on which you attach the limpet mine. You wear your overalls, it's winter, you're going to wear your coat as well. Nobody will see you're carrying it. We had two options – either infiltrate through the gate or cut the fence at a convenient spot, which is what we did at Sasol.

When you had these exchanges with Comrade JS, was Obadi present?

He was present, but not all the time.

There were three Special Ops units going into the country at the same time. When you had these meetings did each unit meet separately or all of you did together?

Remember, there were Sasol 1 and 2 and the operation at those Sasol offices. There was a factory in Springs supplying the parts. Yes, it was Zandi and other guys. Zandi later died when he was on a mission in Upington. Slovo met us as those groups. He met each of us separately, but at some stage he met all of us because these were co-ordinated operations.

So you knew the operation was co-ordinated?

Yes.

And Zandi was coming to Springs. The factory used to supply parts to Sasol. We wanted to stop the production.

When did you know that you're going to attack Sasol in Secunda?

I was taken from Sasol 1 group into Sasol 2 because I went with Barney for reconnaissance on Sasol 1 but I couldn't move freely. Somebody who lived about three streets away from me saw me. I had to run away from Kwaggastroom train station. I had to keep on stopping and tying my shoe laces to avoid being seen by this person and others who might recognise me.

Because you were known there?

Yes. It was difficult to move during the day. And besides, even the place, you know, it's a very old image of the place I had. You can't stay there as guerillas. We could not. You could hide arms, but staying there was not possible.

So you were removed because you were a known face and you could be spotted. So you were put in the Secunda team...

Yes.

Let me put this to you – another comrade said to me that each unit did not know what the other unit was going to do. All they were told was to carry out the operation on 31 May, and as close to a particular time as possible.

Yes.

But you're saying you knew about the other operations. Was that simply because you were moved from the one team to the other? Or was it also because of other reasons?

No, that was not the only reason. We were all brought together in Maputo. But also when we went into the country we were driving in a Chev Firenza. We infiltrated from the border, the cars had already been brought by Victor (Khayiyana) and Faku (Senzangakhona). Faku was driving a deep blue Ranchero and Victor was driving the Chev Firenza. There were four of us – Victor, Mochudi, Mabena and me. The rest of the comrades, Faku, Solly Mayona, Mochudi, Scorpio and Barney were in that Ranchero.

Could a Ranchero take six people?

Yes. So we came in following each other.

Some clarity on how the different units related to each other? The theory was that no unit would know what the other unit is doing. But you're saying that all of you were brought together by JS, and you obviously knew not only what you were going to do, but what the other unit was going to do? Do you think that was wise?

It wasn't.

Because if your unit got caught it's not in your interest to have information about the other unit, because you'd be tortured, and the less you know about the other units, the better...

I'll tell you where that principle was strictly put into practise. It's when I got arrested, when I came into the country for the second time - and you could see that this helps. Norman Yengeni and I knew we were going to Cape Town to reconnoitre the oil refinery.

When did you know that you were going to hit Sasol? Was it when you got to Maputo? Or did you know in Funda?

In Maputo.

You said to me that you were part of the reconnaissance.

Yes, with Barney.

Between say late January and when you hit them at the end of May?

Yes.

So you did go once into the country before you hit Sasol?

Yes.

How did you get into the country?

We preferred using Piet Retief. We jumped over the fence.

Did somebody receive you on the South African side or you made your own way through public transport, by train or whatever?

We made our own way. It was through Shongwe, which is in Malelane.

How many days did you spend in the country doing the reconnaissance?

I think we spent two days. We realised all the ideas I had in my mind were very childish because we couldn't stay in that forest, so you needed somewhere else. You could put arms there, which is what we suggested, and we could take them on the night of the attack to the target. But Barney and I experienced a problem – there was someone who recognised Barney. Barney had to run like you won't believe it. And then he went on a train. Because we were supposed to meet up...

Was it a security policeman or a comrade who spotted him?

A Security Policeman – a comrade who had become a spy. We met later in Springs and Barney was mad, but we caught the same train to the border.

But the policeman didn't recognise you obviously?

No, he didn't.

So where did you sleep when you were here for the reconnaissance?

We slept at his aunty's place in Orlando West.

That didn't make you vulnerable?

No, it didn't because the police used to go to his place, where his mother stays, not his aunty's.

Did his aunty have any sense why you were inside the country or suspect anything?

She didn't, we lied to her. His aunt went to fetch his mother and brother. His brother cried when he saw Barney, because the police were always saying they killed him. But his mother was cool and dignified.

His mother was political?

No. She was just a mother, it's my son.

She accepted that Barney was a political activist on the run?

Yes. She'd seen the things that happen in Soweto. Most of the people even if you're not political, you would have seen what happens and you can't agree with that.

She knew he was going out of the country again?

No. We lied. We said we are just busy. They realised somehow that our story wasn't connected.

But they were not going to question you.

Yes.

So after the reconnaissance what happens when you get back to Maputo?

Barney came back again for reconnaissance.

Without you?

Alone. And then after that we came into the country for the mission.

After you crossed into the country for the mission one of the two cars the three units came in with had an accident. What happened?

It was a Ranchero. We infiltrated around three o'clock in the afternoon. We were the first car. We told the comrades in the Ranchero to keep the correct distance from us. But it's getting a little bit dark as we drive on. Now we keep on signalling to the comrades, by stopping now and then, please don't follow us at this long distance, because the conditions have changed. Close the distance a little bit.

So Faku was driving that car and Victor the one you were in?

Yes. Victor. He knew all sorts of routes (laughter), he was very good. We had a very close relationship. He told me how he grew up. He was with the circus. You must find a way to sleep in these areas, he said. Now it was Faku driving the Ranchero, and we realised that these guys are out of sight again. We stopped for them twice. The third time we said no, now we're doing it for the last time. We drive back, and we see there's a car capsized!

So, we thought immediately where are we going to hide the corpses of those who died in the other car? Only to find out no one had died. The car is alone, the radio still on, they are on the side in the bushes. And then they realised it's us. They came, all ten, then got into the car that is meant for five people

Are we going back? We had to decide on the spot. The decision was, comrades, we cannot afford to go back, we have to go and hit those targets. So we clubbed into one car.

What if a traffic policeman saw you?

Yes, my fear was getting arrested for overloading and then eventually they find out why we are in the country. No, but Victor knows the routes, like I said. He knows the side roads like you won't believe it.

So you were never really vulnerable to a traffic policeman stopping you?

No, but at some stage Victor dropped us off to be able to go on and drop these guys at different stations. Man, it was so cold waiting for him to come back.

When Faku's car toppled over, it had no limpet mines or any explosives or arms? That had been brought in by Siphwe Nyanda's unit?

Yes. I don't know who brought the stuff in.

Now with the accident, didn't people driving by stop to help?

No.

It was not a major road?

It wasn't.

So then?

We were dropped off and we were in the bush, in the grass, we had to lie down, it was, as I said, very cold, and we had to wait until the other guys were left at the train stations. The stations are miles apart. We had to patiently wait. But even if it was at night, you had to lie down because the grass was not long and you could see a power station.

Now who was your unit Commander?

Victor.

And the Sasol 1 unit? Barney?

Yes.

Did you do any reconnaissance of Secunda before you went to carry out the operation?

For Secunda it was on-the-spot reconnaissance. We slept nearby in a rural area. And you realise, no, but this place we can hit. Those floodlights they don't cover everything. You can see that if you go through certain places, they can't see you; there are blind spots between two of those flood lights.

At Secunda we went to a farming area nearby to stay there with a family. And then we bought some blankets during the day. That was a very poor family. We left the blankets there when we left.

How did you know that family?

We didn't know the family.

Just went there and checked?

We went there and checked and see if we could stay there. Victor knows the area.

The people you stayed with, they were obviously not aware of what you were there for?

No.

What did they think? You were looking for jobs?

Yes, we gave the impression that we're looking for jobs, but we're some guys with a little bit of money because we left them with those blankets and stuff. We left them with food. Jarre it was...I don't know how to call that type of poverty, it was a very humiliating type of poverty.

And yet they put you up?

Yes.

What happens? You go to Secunda and then?

We went to Secunda and realised that it's a bit of a distance, so we have to take those arms from that remote area closer to the target, which we did. And then the next day

we just took up the weapons. And went to the target. We check the prospects of the target. And we had settled on cutting the fence and going in, we also had those access cards. And we were wearing the workers' clothes and those helmets, but normally in winter, they don't just wear a helmet on the head. They wear that woolen type of hat, and then you put what you call a *makarapa*, which is the helmet.

We dug out the weapons and we checked the target, because there's a patrol outside and inside, in the interior perimeter, and then there are those posts. So we had identified the best spot at which, as soon as the patrol has gone past, to run and start crawling on the grass. You crawl for a long distance, but at least your safety's guaranteed.

It's not easy to detect people crawling in the grass when you are in between those security towers, even though the place is lit up. But you go there and you get a brave guy like Victor, where he will start cutting the fence. You say that's it, we're in. I'm there with you. And you go in, but then again I think Mabena got scared. He wanted the key to the car. We said no, you can go and wait for us. He said he wants the key to warm up the car. We say no, because he was going to leave us there on the scene. So we said no, no problem you can wait outside the car. So we went, conducted the mission.

So three of you went in?

Yes. Victor, Mochudi and I.

And Mabena stayed behind?

Yes. We said he must go to the car, it's fine. And then as we were going in we met this guy working for Sasol, but he didn't see us infiltrating. He saw us just walking, it was an awkward spot to walk. But he came closer in a 1400 Nissan bakkie, and he realised that we've got those access cards. So, they saw us, we've got those hats, those makarapas, and he left us.

But the main target was the fractionating tower. We could have used coal. You see, there are grenades which look like coal, so we could have put those grenades in with the coal on the conveyor belts.

But the disadvantage with that is if you use those grenades, the conveyor belt is at the early stages of the refinery process, so the Sasol security can put out the fire in that early stage. Why we used limpet mines instead of the grenades is because we wanted the fractionating tower – because the gas there is highly inflammable, like butane and so on, and they are beginning to get separated into different products. That is why we wanted to hit the fractionating tower. Once the fire breaks out there, it's difficult to put it out.

So, we went with an approach – it's what the Cubans call Group Lapoyo - which means the supporting group. So, we divide ourselves into two – you put a limpet mine first, then I'm covering you in case anything unexpected happens. Then after that we

switch places. You become the Group Lapoya and I go on the offence. That's what we did.

Hey, but there was a point there inside in the area of the fractionating tower, as we walk there, you realise that, no, this is a mistake. You know why you realise it's a mistake – the noise! I can't hear you even if you are very close. So you realise, hey, it's a mistake because maybe we should've had some gadgets to be able to hear each other there but you can't talk to a person at that point, which is what made us look suspicious - because we saw some other Boers driving around, and they were actually looking at us.

Anyway, we retreated and went back through the hole, checked out for patrols before we crossed that road, then went down and out.

We found Mabena at the car.

Weren't you all mad at Mabena?

I was mad (laughter), I wanted to kill him. What angered me is that later he'd lied to Joe Slovo about his participation.

And all of you didn't correct this?

No, not there. No, we were quiet. I just felt like hitting him, but you know I was just listening – and thereafter that made us pick a big fight.

In doing the operation can you recall how you felt? Did you have any fears, any anxieties?

You know, for me, I really want to make this distinction. Basically, I'm a fearless person, first thing, but I want to say to you it's not really out of fearlessness. How I define bravery, for me, it is the ability to control fear. Not that you don't have fear at some stage, but what you should bear in mind, the person that you find at the target is equally scared of being injured or being killed. So for you to survive, you have to be in control of your nerves, complete control of your nerves. And this can only imply one thing, not lack of fear, but control of fear. You must prevail over fear. Be able to control yourself, your actions at every moment must overcome your fear.

It's a very interesting definition. Bravery is not a lack of fear, it's the ability to control fear. And maybe this is easier if, as you said earlier, you are driven? You have a moral cause?

Yes.

So what other feelings did you have when you were inside the country?

For me, you know, I was very inspired because I got everything that I wanted from MK. I used to think about my granny, she was shot in Sharpeville. One leg was amputated.

So she was one of the victims of Sharpeville?

Yes. She loved me to bits. She's not sophisticated.

Is she still alive?

No.

Was she around when you were freed from prison? And the 1994 elections?

Yes. I used to visit her in the village. She would just laugh, her eyes were fading, but she would pick me up with my voice. They used to call me Motshwane. She died after the 1994 elections.

Let's come back to the Secunda operation. What else went through your head apart from thinking of your granny?

I used as my inspiration also those people who died in Sharpeville, the students in the June 16th events. I was determined that we cannot afford to have this apartheid system, it must be eradicated completely. Those are the things I focused on.

Apart from Mabena, how did you get along with the other comrades on your mission?

We got along well.

Did things go according to plan? Apart from the overwhelming noise, were there any other unforeseen happenings?

The appearance of those Boers, but it was neither here nor there because we just carried on. But because we came from an awkward direction, later it was easy for them to locate that we came from the fence, that we cut the fence on this side. The patrol guy remembered that these guys were coming from this direction. But we went straight to him and then he realised we had the access cards.

Was it a White person?

Yes.

Weren't you worried that you were now exposed, you could get caught?

No, we knew he'll be scared, if anything, which is why we went straight to him.

Apart from the limpet mines you were also armed?

Yes, I had a pistol and a German knife for close combat and chloroform. But it was for use in close combat. But on top of this, Victor had a grenade. Victor doesn't leave a grenade behind. I felt I didn't need a grenade really.

Were you fine with how Victor co-ordinated your unit?

He did well. We worked to the best of our ability.



Sasol operation, 31 May 1980, Beeld

You leave the Secunda plant through the fence through which you came in?

Yes.

Did you use all the limpet mines? Did you put them exactly where you planned to?

No, we didn't because the alternative, which is what the

comrades in Sasol 1 did, they went for the farm tank, not for the fractionating towers. If there's an explosion at the farm tank, obviously there's fire there.

Why is it called a farm tank?

I think it's a way of referring to something that's remote, it's on the far side of the complex, so in the farm.

Now couldn't you reach the farm tank in Secunda?'

We could have reached the farm tank. We didn't go there because, remember the main target, the main instruction, was the fractionating tower.

Wouldn't the explosion be of greater effect if you also targeted the farm tank, why go only for the fractionating tower?

The fractionating tower stops production.

But it doesn't have that explosive effect that you had in Sasol 1?

Yes, it didn't have the explosion of the farm tank, but there's no way you can then quickly proceed with production once the fractionating tower is actually hit.

Why did they not also hit the fractionating tower in Sasol 1?

I think it was relatively easier for them to attack the farm tank. The farm tank was near the edges of the refinery. The design of Sasol 1 was such that they wanted to reduce the impact that any explosion would have on the whole refinery. Hence you construct the farm tank in a much more isolated place.

Why didn't your unit do both?

We should have. That's from hindsight. There were only three of us. At Sasol 2 the farm tank is deeper inside. The fractionating tower was easier to target.

You were instructed to do just the fractionating tower?

No, not just the tower. So ambitious as we were, we wanted the farm tank because we know it's a big ace once we get that.

So you didn't hit the farm tank because it was too deep in the case of the Secunda Sasol? It was it a security consideration?

Yes.

A practical one that you couldn't do it, you were very vulnerable to getting caught?

Remember the main objective, at all costs, is the fractionating tower. With the farm tank, once they put out the fire it's fine. They can continue with other activities on the plant.

So in other words, attacking the farm tank means a huge explosion and communicates to the masses the ANC's presence and capabilities far more effectively, while hitting the fractionating tower brings production to a halt but is not so spectacular?

Yes, that's correct.

So the Sasol 2 operation was less spectacular than Sasol 1...

Yes, that's correct. The reason is we didn't have the flames that they had. Remember, those comrades went for the farm tank outright. For them the location of the farm tank was much closer to the area of infiltration.

What was their target in terms of the plan?

Exactly the same two things. Get the farm tanks as an alternative, but the main objective is the fractionating towers.

But they couldn't do it because it was deep inside the Sasol 1 plant in Sasolburg unlike in the Secunda Sasol 2 plant?

Yes.

So, you exit the plant, then what?

We find Mabena outside the car waiting. We drive off, basically flying to safety. But on the road Victor says we didn't use the grenades, so we should attack a police station (laughter). We say, but Victor we didn't come for that (laughter). That will leave a trail, and the police will follow this, and it could cause problems for us.

How many grenades did you have, do you remember?

No, I don't.

So, you and the others persuaded Victor?

Every time he sees a police station, he says, Guys, let's finish off the material! But as we were retreating we saw these commandos, and there was this guy who was driving like nonsense, and I said to Victor be patient until you go past the military camp. Once we pass the military camp, you can go for the guy. Victor wanted to kill that guy. But after that military camp, that guy retreated, he drove away because I think he realised we might do something to him.

How did you do cross the border?

We drive until the fence, and drove through it.

How did you do that?

You cut the fence at the right lines, then you are able to lift the fence up and drive the car through. And then we met Obadi and Rashid and off we drove to Maputo. We were listening to the news, of course, on the way and when we arrived at the Swaziland-Mozambique border, we heard on the BBC that ANC nationalist guerillas just bombed Sasol and all of that. And when we arrived at the border, it was about half six and it was cold but we had to wait in the car.

As soon as they opened we went to Maputo. So when more news about the bombings came through, including the roadblocks in South Africa, we were already in Maputo. The guy who had a problem was Faku who stayed at his mother's place and she held him up. She said, Oh, my child you can't go now, just lie low. His mother reconnoitred the place, saw the roadblocks and told Faku he can't leave then.

What did you feel when you heard the news over the radio?

I almost felt like singing (laughter). We met JS when we came back. He says I was standing in the balcony hoping to see the Sasol flames (laughter). And then we met OR a few days later.

Were the other two units back then?

When we met OR, I think everyone else was there, the guy who delayed coming in because he went out of South Africa through Lesotho is Faku. We only celebrated when Faku came back. But we had to go and explain this whole thing to OR, and I think we met him at the house of the Swedish Ambassador in Maputo. In Zambia we also met the Soviet ambassador, Solodovnikov.



David Moisi, SABC

What did Tambo say?

He just wanted to know how things went. OR prefers listening, especially to people who were from the front. Obadi tried to explain, but Tambo said, No, let them explain.

So we explained and Jacky showed OR how he shot that guy in Sasol, the white security guard. This guard says, 'Hey, kaffir' – so Jacky shot him.

OR wanted us to know how important what we did was. We did not know why we were chosen for such an important and historical mission. But on his side, it was that we want to turn you into jacks of all trades and masters of all. So, both on the military and the political side as well he said you should be good because what we wanted was a weapon called a Malyutka. It's used by guerillas but it means a guided missile. But OR's speech was more inspirational than anything, and he was in a celebratory but dignified, mood. You know OR, he's not overwhelmed by excitement.

Did OR raise anything about the need for back-up vehicles in case of accidents like you had or the need for comprehensive safe return plans?

Not with us, but maybe with Obadi and Rashid....

I understand it was raised with them...

Probably.

What was the response of other comrades from the other two units that went in? What did they report back?

It was great, it was just a feeling of celebration that these missions were an overwhelming success, because the target worked out. It had that impact because many people started leaving the country to join MK. There's a number of levels at which you wanted the operation. Let me remind you that the operation took place on 31 May, which was the apartheid Republic Day celebrations.

You'd chosen that specific day to make a political point.

Specifically. When the SADF guys, SA Airforce were relaxing, watching the military parades on TV and when they think they've got military strength, we just target the underbelly, one of their supposedly most secure areas. But most importantly, it was to warn the investors outside that should you invest your money in that enterprise, South Africa, then it will go up in flames. And to the people of South Africa we were signalling the new era, because if you remember when you say the armed struggle is going to the next level, you have to show the people of South Africa you're getting there.

You have to intensify the armed struggle. JS and the ANC leadership actually went in 1978 to Vietnam and they learned lessons. With the Vietnamese, it was the Tet offensive and with us the Sasol operations were signifying a similar type of offensive.

About Mabena, when he said he'd played a role in your attack on Sasol 2 and you knew he hadn't, you didn't raise it with him or in front of JS, yet you could've seen him as a sellout, as a coward? It could be said that you were quite generous to him?

Yes. With me, you know, you have to have political maturity, that's how I see it. At that stage, I think it was respect to JS as well. But also, we were hoping that Mabena is going to tell the truth. He didn't. We didn't want to pick an issue.

And embarrass him.

Yes, especially in front of the very constructive leadership that was there. We did not take kindly to what Mabena did; it was a danger; it was a serious risk to our lives. But we wouldn't take it up with him there in front of the leadership for the fact that we respect the leadership who are in command. But I did feel very much aggrieved. What made it worse was that he speaks as though he was part of the group that attacked, when he actually listened to us in the car as we were speaking.

Did you confront him subsequently?

I did.

And?

Almost shot him because we were keeping guns at that stage. But then I thought let sleeping dogs lie.

And Victor didn't confront him either?

No, he didn't feel that need, he was annoyed, but he was, remember, much more mature than us.

And did Mabena remain in Special Ops or did he participate in another MK unit after that?

He remained in Special Ops, that's where he got injured in the raid on Matola, but he managed to kill the enemy.

Where is he now?

I think he's somewhere in Pretoria but we hardly ever meet.

You were not there when the Matola massacre occurred because you were in detention in South Africa. You could have been killed there. So in a strange way – even though you were sentenced to death – your arrest may well have saved your life...

Yes...

Of course, you were in detention at the time, but did you get to know later how the regime found out who was behind the Sasol bombings and that many of those comrades were in Matola? Anyway, what is your response to the view that partly the regime found out because the comrades who carried out the attacks were talking too freely about their role in it?

I think that was partly the reason. But you must remember if you live in the same area in Mozambique you meet in the parks and elsewhere, but then people notice some comrades are not around and then when an operation takes place you can pin it down to certain comrades who were away from Maputo around the time a certain time attack takes place, so they can work it out. But it's true people talk too much.

So after the Secunda attack, you remain in Maputo? What then?

We came for another reconnaissance on 26 October 1980 for those targets that I've already mentioned, Caltex and others in Cape Town.

We wanted Mandela and Sisulu to see the flames from Robben Island or Pollsmoor.

That was such a wonderful idea!...

Yes, we honestly wanted to do it, but amongst other targets were some offices of the Tricameral parliament in the city centre of Cape Town, not far from Parliament, where this guy died, Youngusband. I think he was a journalist. He was a bystander. His father just took it in stride, he understood it. It's the people fighting for liberation, he said. He issued a very encouraging statement of understanding of how he lost his son. He wasn't bitter. His son just happened to die because he was in the vicinity. But he's not bitter because these people are attacking apartheid targets, he said. Hey, it hurt me so much.

We had already been arrested when the attack took place. What made the mission possible is the fact that Whitey didn't talk about it, I didn't talk about it either. It's when we planned to attack those offices of the Tricameral Parliament. It's not us, but

other comrades who were going to attack. That was one of our targets and I was happy that Tony Yengeni's brother did not reveal that during the torture sessions.

This happened in 1980?

No, it happened the following year, I think.

When you come in to do reconnaissance for the Cape Town Oil Refineries, you come through which point of entry?

Oh, it is Malelane.

And then you get arrested shortly after that? What happened? How did you get exposed?

There's a guy called Magakula he's a taxi driver. This guy was driving a Kombi then. Now he used to work with the Security Police to give away those he suspected to be ANC guerillas. We go to his place. He probably tried to ring the security police up, but I don't think he got hold of them. Now in the rural areas, even if you are a madman and you can wear three overalls at the same time, they realise, no, this guy is mad, but he's not a madman from our area. They know each other. Now this guy is picking up people in a taxi. Now we want his taxi to go to the interior where we can melt, at least from Witbank onwards. You melt much more easily in urban areas. But those people in the rural areas can see that these guys don't belong here.

So this taxi driver, that's how he identifies us. And then he says he's going to his home to ask his father to change the car from a Kombi to a Valliant or something. We got into this car.

How many of you were there?

Four. Edward Mbundu, Edward Khumalo, Norman Yengeni and me. The other three are entering the country for the first time, which was why they separated us and put me together with Johannes Shabangu, who was involved in the Transvaal Urban machinery. They attacked police stations like Booyens.

Johannes Shabangu attacked a policeman. I remember this. He threw a grenade at his house, but he never injured anyone, it just exploded, but didn't do anything. And it was in what was called the Eastern Transvaal. And then it was me. I was arrested with the other comrades who came with me. They are all three coming for the first time, I'm not coming in for the first time, which is why they charged me for high treason. For the other three comrades, the charges were training and membership of an illegal organisation. They got ten years each. But I got clubbed together with Comrade Shabangu because we were involved in armed action before, so we were charged with high treason. And the mandatory sentence was death.

Some clarity. Was Magakula your MK-linked contact or was he chosen as your taxi driver at random, just by chance?

No, any taxi could take us. It just happened to be him.

So he became suspicious about you, thought maybe you are ANC operatives because of the way you dressed and felt... like you didn't belong there?

The way we were dressed, what we were wearing.

But didn't you dress like the rural people in those border areas so you are less conspicuous?

Overalls and stuff. The idea, remember, is to get into the interior. If we clear the border area as soon as possible, that's what we're hoping for.

But Magakula spotted you out and he suspected you?

Yes.

He didn't know for sure, but he suspected?

Yes, he didn't know for sure.

But could he have been informed beforehand to expect you? Maybe there were leaks in MK or the police were monitoring effectively?

No, he wasn't.

It was just his instinct that guided him?

Yes.

He said to you I'm going to collect the car and then he takes you to his rural village.

Yes, because we are going inside, into the interior.

So he changes the car? And then what happens?

When we get to Malelane, he says he has to inform his father he's leaving the area...but his father turned out to be the police. He parked the car by a tree that is actually overshadowing the police station. You can see the station flag from there. But as the driver came back Eddie went 'oh, yarre!' he said, 'guys, that's it!'

We got arrested! They searched us. They could have left us because we were very cool, but the cash that we had on us made them suspicious. We said, no. we're here for a funeral, it's the money that we have, it's fine. They almost released us but they said let's confirm with the Security Police from Komatipoort. We had to wait for them.

Once these guys from Security came, they started beating us up. I was on the front page of the 'Wanted List' so they kept on saying to me, well they see there are four, but I'm the one who's in the most trouble. Then I thought, no, it's a game that they're playing with all of us. These security guys they tell each one the other is talking, so it's no use you not talking.

And then later on they separated us in the trials – those who got into the country for the first time and those who had come in before.

When Magakula parked there opposite the police station did you comrades not get suspicious, feel that something may be wrong?

Well, when he delayed.

How long did he delay before you got suspicious?

I'm not able to say, but it's this type of delay that would cause discomfort. Going there to tell your dad that you're going out of the area.

Yes, that wouldn't normally take long?

It should at most take you a minute.

So why didn't you just leave the taxi and disappear? Couldn't you instinctively feel that there's something wrong there?

Eddie went to see, to go and check at the police station. So as he came back to the car, the police in plain clothes were coming out with him.

Were they armed?

They were armed.

Did they ask you for your ID documents, your dompas?

Yes, they got us out of the car. One thing strangething strange is that I see that these guys are real security policemen, they are trained. There's a guy – of all those IDs that were there, he pointed mine out. I'm not seeing this ID for the first time, he said. And it was true. He had once asked me for my ID, it was on a train in the Piet Retief area in 1980. How do you recall from a train full of people one face?

That's remarkable.

Yes.

How did the police have your photograph? You carried out only the 1980 Sasol operation?

Victor Khayiyana was with Johannes Shabangu. Victor joined us because of his bravery and knowledge of places. Victor had done some missions inside like attacking, starting with trying to kill Ngubane, the policeman, very new to us boys...

Now Victor was not in Special Ops initially, but he came in because of his experiences in South Africa. He was in the same assassination machinery with Johannes Shabangu. They were underground, and used to meet each other in the streets of Maputo as machineries. But if people in your machinery disappear and we don't see them in the streets anymore and then something happens in South Africa, and in Maputo we know about it, somehow we assume it must be those comrades involved.

Now Victor still went on assassinations after our mission and you know how comrades can boast, he told (name withheld) then because they were in assassinations together. Then (name withheld) came into the country, he got arrested and then tortured. He reveals all the stories, including about all the comrades who are there. I'm still called Shadow. Now the police show you photos of people – because comrades change names – until you are tired. I was Lots, then Shadow. Now I'm identified by (name withheld).

But there are things that he said, which is why I'm not on good terms with him these days, just on greeting terms, but somehow not very well disposed to him. Because my contention is that he revealed the main thing that I was involved in, Sasol. But this level of detail is not the detail of a person who's been tortured. It's the detail of a person sitting on a sofa like me and you, relating what happened.

So, for me it's no one else but (name withheld) he's the first guy in the firing line, the first guy to get arrested. I don't blame him, you can't all withstand torture to the same extent. But what I just really disliked, was the level of detail that he revealed to the police about me. He said he was buying targets, but, no, you can't do that. You've already bought time with exposing my involvement. But this unnecessary detail, that's what really, up to today, I'm not happy about. Now how does my photo come in? It's precisely because of the information that he provided. They knew the guy they were looking for, who's in Special Ops. So that's how I came to be identified.

Now Victor gets exposed by (name withheld) well, is that correct?

They were looking for Victor anyway for the Ngubane matter because Ngubane himself being a Security Policeman was mad. He went with the police, his colleagues in Swaziland wanted to kill Victor. Looked for him and said they couldn't find him. So Victor used to say in his language we are the outlaws, ek sê ons is die outlaws, which is why he did not only carry a pistol, he carried a grenade. So when he dies, he dies with his grenade.

How did he die?

They were trying to retreat to Swaziland with Faku and Barney. Faku retreated safely. There was an argument about the route. They fixed a mielie field as the point. Faku said we came through here, let's go back through it. Then I heard Barney just said to

take a turn off which takes them more into the interior. Faku retreated safely. So there's that shootout, with helicopters and stuff. That's where Victor died.

How do you now feel about (name withheld)?

You know some comrades, there's this opportunistic thing that you're sitting with the police, and then they want to find out other stuff about other people. And then you feel like you're revealing things that won't have any consequences, you don't know that in future you'll be exposed for having revealed unnecessary stuff about them.

It irritates me because, look, I was trying to reconcile with him. I'm the one always calling him. And then he's not calling back.

Do you think it's a feeling of guilt on his part?

No, he doesn't want a relationship with me.

About getting arrested, what were your feelings? Especially about the way you got caught, even before you could start with the operation?

Yes, I felt bad about getting caught like that! But then it happened - so we couldn't do anything about it. Other comrades died. Like a guy I trained with, I felt so bad, he was infiltrating from Botswana, Comrade Marx. We trained with him in the GDR. They killed him. After that they kept on destroying his body, so that he could not be identified. They exploded his body into pieces. So I take solace that I didn't go through that and I still have my life. Some comrades like Marcus Thabo Motaung, Simon Mogoerane and Jerry Mosololi and others were hanged. We were referred to as the ANC 6. But the three of us were left, and we survived. But the three other comrades were hanged. And it was ANC 6 in two different ways. We had the Silverton Siege guys, then we became the ANC 6, then their sentence was commuted to life in prison. Then later, we were joined by Motaung, Mogoerane and Mosololi. So we were the ANC 6 again - but with 3 new comrades. The campaigns were saying the ANC 6.

So after the Security Police come from Komatipoort and they identify who you are, what happens?

They torture me. They ask me about all the details that (name withheld) gave them and about how I almost killed Mabena...

They even knew that?

Yes. Now those are the unnecessary details (name withheld) gave them. Then this guy says to me Comrade Mabena *gebeur het* (What happened with Mabena?). Then I realised just out of the blue these guys have got information on me. All along I'd just been denying what the Security Policemen were saying. Then he asked me '*hoekom het dit gebeur, hoekom het Mabena gebeur?*' It was their way, you know, of revealing that, oh, you think we don't know anything about you? Because that was a humdinger, I realised that, and it just took control of my nerves, I realised they know

a lot. Because you play the same game like they're playing with you. They want to know how much information you have. You also want to know the extent of information they have.

But over and above, you want to know the source of the information so that you know exactly how much they know. That was my game, but once I realised they know about Mabena, I wasn't demoralised, but I knew what I was up against. One thing that I did was keep being consistent, because once you break from your legend, then that's the end of the story. They'll torture you until you die because they're hoping to get more information. So I just say, because we're doing underground I don't know what the other guys are doing. So I stuck to that story.

Were you were interrogated all the time in that police station or were you moved to Johannesburg?

They interrogated us at the police station in Malelane, then they moved us to Komatipoort at the border gates. The security police have offices there and they torture people there, but you can see the movement of cars going to Maputo, the trucks, big trucks and so on. But it's through the closed blinds.

How many security policemen? Did this include Black security police?

There were about five Whites, some Blacks too. There's a guy they called Otto, hey, he beats you up and he goes out and drinks brandy and then he comes when he's drunk. Yarre, he beats you up like you won't believe it. And then you also had this Black guy, a young guy, once, when he kept beating me, I stopped blocking him, and I just left him to beat me. Then he got sacred and stopped.

Did they electrocute you?

No electrocution, it was burning with fire underneath my feet. Ooof! And then after that you develop blisters. They put you on a wire mesh. That causes bleeding. Burnt me on my feet and then put me upside down. It's more like hanging you with your feet on something like rugby posts. You're upside down. And then they put a sack on your head, it's like that material called shammie, you can't breathe. And then threatening – I didn't know if they meant it but they kept saying – that they would throw you into Komati River so the crocodiles could eat you.

How long were you interrogated before they put you on trial?

Once they felt that they've got enough information. I was arrested on 26 October 1980 and I went on trial in April 1981, I think.

Where are you in that six month period?

Between Komatipoort and Malelane. Komatipoort, we go for torture, Malelane we get locked up each night. And then after all that torture, they took us to a prison in

Barberton. In prison, they have to account for your health to the prison authorities so they can't come and torture you. Once they take you to prison then that's it.

But then they want to cajole you into spying on the comrades, working with them and testifying against your comrades. That's the only thing that they can try and do. But we stayed there for quite a while and then we went to Modderbee. And then from there we went to Pretoria, until we were in court in April 1981.

During the interrogation, what did the police want to know from you?

Who the other comrades were who were involved in Sasol and other operations, how we hit the target and so on. Because they were so shocked that they couldn't believe we were involved. They thought, they still believed, that Solodovnikov and the Russians were involved.

So Black people are incapable of doing something as sophisticated as the Sasol operation?

Yes. But they wanted sketches of Matola and so on. We wanted to warn the comrades that there was an imminent attack on them. So we kept on sending messages

Coming now to your trial, who are your defence attorneys?

It was Ratha Mokgoatlheng and Jack Unterhalter, the father of David, who's also a lawyer now.

How long does the trial take?

From April until 18 August 1981, when we were sentenced to death.

Did you expect the death sentence?

You know, sort of – because although Jack Unterhalter tried to console us by saying they might not, it's more like a see-saw type of thing, we realised that the death sentence is coming.

You were anticipating it?

I don't know what you mean by anticipating, but we knew the death sentence was coming.

So when it came, when the judge announced it, how did you feel?

This judge said you'll be detained in prison 'until' – and once he said you'll be detained in prison, you thought it's detention, you thought it's not the death sentence! I felt relieved in my heart – but then he said until a date is announced when you are going to hang by your necks until you die. Then you realise this is the death sentence! I just felt condemned, condemned to death. That was the 18 of August 1981. And then the

prison warders came for us, put on the handcuffs, made sure that they are stiff and took us off to Death Row. In Death Row they battled with the handcuffs, but eventually they were able to unlock them. Then we get into the processing, and then get put into the death cells. You continue in there fighting for better conditions. And you couldn't talk during the day – but we would talk because the place was so eerily quiet.

You were in Pretoria Prison?

Yes. It's next to local prison, it's called the maximum security prison.

So what do you do in detention? Did you appeal your sentence?

Yes, we did make an appeal, which gives you a temporary sense of security. But once it fails, that's it, they come for you, they don't even phone you, you hear them coming with the keys.

It's baadjie and address. Take your jacket, which is that khaki jacket we were wearing, and address meant because then they were only able to tell your parents through a telegram. Bring your jacket, bring your address. Then that's the end of the story. You're going to be there for seven days. On the seventh day, they execute you.

Unfortunately, our sentence was commuted on 6 June – and 9 June 1983 they executed Marcus Motaung and others. Three days later. It was this international campaign. I remember that time there was the elections in England on the 9th. It was the day in which the comrades were executed. I remember it well because that was the date when Margaret Thatcher won the elections.

But our own appeal had failed. After failing, then it was between us and the State President because he's the only guy who could give clemency.

So you applied for that?

Yes. On 6 June 1983, the Sheriff came with the message from the State President. They called us to the front administration offices. The Sheriff said the State President has decided to – I heard him say 'ex' – and immediately I thought it was going to be 'execute' ! I just felt, oof, there you are – but he said 'extend' clemency to you. The guy dragged the whole thing unnecessarily. But then once he said 'extend,' we comrades hugged each other. They had to separate us.

So they processed our stuff whilst we're still waiting and then transferred us to the local prison. We stayed for some time before the transfer to Robben Island. In the local prison, we were fighting with the prison warders until they took us to Robben Island in early August. They transferred us to Robben Island by road in handcuffs and chains. We

Why would the President have given you clemency? After all, Sasol was a really big operation?

Yes, I thought they would make an example of us. We had prison cards. I noticed that our cards said the sentence was commuted on a Sunday. They don't do that – and they took us out of Death Row on a Monday morning. The reason for this was that there was an emergency meeting between the lawyers and the judges on a Sunday. And then they came to the conclusion that in our case no one died.

They decided to executed Marcus Motaung and the other comrades because in the Transvaal Urban machinery they were attacking police stations, like Moroko and Orlando police stations. And in both instances policemen died and so the state put its foot down, that because of this they can't give those comrades clemency. That was the argument.

Can you remember how you felt when you went to the front administration office to hear from the Sheriff about the outcome of your appeal for clemency?

A little bit of trepidation...

What do you mean a little bit of trepidation? Surely it was more than that, I mean, your life was literally at stake, David? Never mind your commitment, you're human, and must have wanted to live? Surely it was more than that?...

(Laughter). Ya, you right. But you must remember your presence there is more like a see-saw. Sometimes you hope, but the way you see how they don't value a Black life, you just think they're going to hang you. So you expect the worst. We didn't go to those administration offices with any particular expectations. That's why we suddenly began hugging each other. It was a sense of relief.

While you were facing trial, was your family able to attend the trial?

Yes.

Now between the time you left the country and then, did you have any contact with your family?

No, not at all. We're that generation that was not allowed to have contact with the family, which is why in Barney's case it was a bit risky when we slept at his aunt's place. We're not allowed to have contact with families.

While you are facing trial did the ANC give support to your family?

Yes, through the International Aid and Defence Fund.

When you were given the death sentence what was the response of your family?

The response of my family was that they were worried but, remember, we stayed in Death Row for two years. My mother was just so fed up at some point, not knowing what's going to happen to her son. She used to come to see me regularly.

Turning now to broader issues, Overall, what do you feel about Special Ops and its role in MK and the National Liberation Struggle? How would you now, reflecting on the role of Special Ops, see its significance?

I think it was, for reasons I've already told you, important because, firstly, it was aimed at weakening the economy of the enemy and therefore reducing the mobility of their army. We were dealing with strategic targets. And number two, raising the morale of our people and heralding the new era of armed action. From that point of view, I think the establishment of Special Ops was very crucial and not only for our people in the country, but also the comrades back in the camps. There was a detachment that came into the country as a result of a lot of people flocking out of the country. After Sasol many young comrades left the country to join MK, they realised that no, the ANC is really fighting. Even SWAPO began realising that these guys are fighting because they felt we wanted them to kill the Boers for us. There was a meeting in Tanzania with lots of people which OR was attending – it was after Sasol – and Julius Nyerere saw him, he said 'Oh Oliver you are here, just come up and sit with us.' Remember, those were leaders of countries, we were only a liberation movement. But OR qualified to go and sit there, we were so excited about that.

So for me, really, I think it was significant from those points of view. But most importantly the fact that for the ANC, our armed action was in terms of a political approach. Politics provides leadership to the military. So from that perspective I think Special Ops actually struck the right balance of political and military issues.

Do you know about any IRA involvement in the planning of the Sasol Operations?

No, what we learned from IRA was – and Rashid would know more – just the manufacture of car bombs, putting the car bombs together and so on. That's our relationship with them. It was military relationship with them. Not that they got involved in our operations.

The reason I ask is because Kader Asmal in his biography says that the first reconnaissance of Sasol was actually done by IRA comrades.

The ANC had been conducting reconnaissance since 1967 on Sasol. So maybe the IRA played a role there. The only person who had that information would be the late Joe Slovo.

Were the comrades who took part in the Sasol Ops given a National Orders Award for your contribution to the struggle?

No.

I know Barney was given a National Orders Award posthumously in 2004 and will check about other comrades from Special Ops who were killed... Don't you think as you were in Death Row and could have been executed that you and other comrades like you should be given National Orders?

To stop being humble and all that, I think maybe the comrades who did these operations should be acknowledged because they did such good work.

You were in Death Row and prepared to die. Yet today you come in to work and may go to your ANC branch meeting and no one knows who you are. What do you feel about that?

No, for me, it doesn't matter.

Of all the comrades you worked with in Special Ops, which one or two comrades stand out for you and why?

Barney Molokoane, he was so brave and he could take calculated risks. Victor Khayiyana was also brave. But the difference between him and Barney is that Victor was more than brave; his actions bordered on recklessness. He would openly hold a limpet mine and I would say but Victor you supposed to be hiding those things. 'But no,' he would say 'those people don't know what this is!' (laughter). Faku is also outstanding for me. I think Sasol took place because of him. Not many people know this, but Faku said because the helicopters arrived in Sasol and comrades said the information has leaked out that we are around town, but Faku said, no, we must go ahead with the mission. You can stop, but I'll take these things in, bring your limpet mines here. But I'll die and when I do that place will be buried. Then the comrades decided to go ahead

But do you think Sasol and the police knew about it?

No, I don't think so. Only Or and Slovo knew about it. And Rashid too? That helicopter came for something else. Not even Joe Modise



David Moisi, recent years

What did you make of Comrade Joe Slovo?

I really had high regard for Slovo, I must say, as a Communist and in the military, both as tactician and a strategist. He was outstanding in both. He had a book by Von Clausewitz 'On War' and he also had a CIA book on how they carried out sabotage, maybe he got it from KGB, and that's how we came to know about the

differences between refineries in Africa and the Middle East

And Obadi?

He was good in that he was given the task of leading the comrades. It meant that the ANC trusted him. He had his own extraordinary missions. When he came to Swaziland the comrades knew something was going to happen and they would joke, hey, better fly to Maputo to be safe, he's going to provoke the Boers...

And Rashid?

Rashid was very, very good on explosives, he was very well trained. You want to talk about a charge, about an explosive, that was the guy to speak to.

What do you make of the current political situation in South Africa?

There's room for improvement basing it on the bad period we have gone through. It was a very discouraging period we went through. But with the new environment – I'm not saying this just because of Comrade Cyril – but the ANC has begun to cleanse itself, and the situation is destined to be much more positive. The President speaks of the new dawn, but what happened to the new dawn that Mandela used to speak about in 1994? Darkness befell us. We were not being led, quite frankly, the way the ANC taught us. I remember one comrade asked Cde Masondo in the camps why are you teaching us politics? No, you must learn because tomorrow you can see when we are selling out. When I saw where the ANC was going these past years I couldn't help but remember Masondo's words.

But now I have more hope, I feel better. We need the ANC to return to where it should be.