

GEHEIM

VEILIGHEIDSTAK, M/TVL
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MAJ. F.J.P. MEL

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OPERATIVE

D.2	Origin.
B.2	!

BROADCASTING CORPORATION (BBC)
1983-05-23 : FOCUS ON AFRICA
S. JULIAN MARSHAL (W/M R/F)
M. MOMPATI (B/F) (S.4/2796)
AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (ANC)
(S.9/126)

1. On 1983-05-23 the BBC radio program "FOCUS ON AFRICA", the BBC reporter Julian MARSHALL (W/M) interviewed Ruth MOMPATI (B/F) Chief ANC representative in the UNITED KINGDOM.

2. The interview was conducted as follows :

A = Ruth MOMPATI

B = Julian MARSHALL

INTRODUCTION : So once again South African retaliation for ANC activities inside South Africa well as it turned out most of those killed in the PRETORIA bomb blast were civilians, many of them black. Julian MARSHALL asked Ruth MOMPATI, the ANC Chief Representative here if she regretted the car bomb attack.

A : I have no regrets about it because we are at war. The black people of South Africa have got every right to defend themselves against South African fascism.

B : But nonetheless in that bomb attack in PRETORIA on Friday there were a fairly large number of black civilian casualties. Isn't that a rather high price to pay?

A : It is also important to know that, that was a military target, that was the RAF (sic) Headquarters. So the target was not the people who were casualties but the military people. And this is ANC policy. We are sorry if some people were casualties but we are at war and our people are aware of this.

B : The action has in fact brought quite a lot of condemnation from black leaders inside South Africa - people like Bishop Desmond TUTU, for instance.

A : Yes it has, but what do you expect Bishop TUTU to say inside South Africa.

B : You don't think there's any sense in which this kind of action could possibly backfire and make the ANC an unpopular organisation amongst black civilians in South Africa?

A : You know if we had chosen people, if we had chosen soft targets it would have been very easy. It's very difficult to choose the type of target we are using. We can go to any cinema anytime, we can go to any concert hall, we can go to any football field but we don't do that because we happen to be a responsible organisation We choose targets that are important to the regime that is hard targets, military and economic. This is what we are against. We don't say there will be no casualties. There are our own young men, cadres are dying in this fight.

B : So we can expect to see more attacks of this kind on military and economic installations in South Africa?

A : That right.

3. IDENTIFICATION :

PERSONS :

MARSHALL, Julian

MOMPATI, Ruth

TUTU, Desmond

W/M

B/F

B/M

ORGANISATIONS :

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (ANC)

BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION (BBC)

DL.

INTERROGATION OF H. PASSTOORS BY CAPT. V. NIEKERK.

TAPE 1 SIDE 1

V = CAPT. Van Niekerk
H = Helene Passtoors

..... = Unclear

V - (Unclear) conclusion

"As for my involvement in the armed struggle, I used to be a convinced pacifist. Experience has taught me, however that armed struggle cannot always be avoided and then must be waged courageously. I am convinced that the ANC is a very responsible vanguard of the South African people and I believe that when MK was formed, there was no other choice than joint armed struggle to all the peaceful means of resistance who - by themselves - had proved not to lead to any results. I believe this position holds now as it did in the '60's: all around us we see peaceful resistance being repressed. This now gives way to the people fighting in the streets of the townships with whatever arms they can obtain. In this situation, which has become endemic"

What, What does that mean Helene?

H - Endemic is like epidemic. It's something that it's inside and it can't

V - You can't stop it.

H - can't stop it. It's always there. You can

V - Is the sun in your eyes?

H - No, it's OK. It can sometimes look as if, as if it's stopped but then it comes back again you see?

V - Yes

H -unclear

V - And won't stop, stop before ev, every

"South African has obtained full human and political rights I believe that the ANC should try and direct the people's struggle in order to obtain real change with the least bloodshed.

In other words, what my comrades and I most fervently hope and fight for is that the present government will soon either disappear or make a very decisive turnabout and - with the leaders of all the people of South Africa, not on its own - discuss and bring about the peace and friendship that we are prepared to die for. The struggle of, the structure of the text is as follows:

The first part of a brief confirmation with some more details whenever necessary" Right.

H - Now that should probably be in the in the introductions

V - Ja, I've got your introduction.

H -(unclear)...I should put introduction here?

V - Oh there it is. But then you can't, - this is just the -

H - Oh yeah.

- V - This is actually a forward, preliminary notes, a forward and transcript work I did between Kaputo and Swaziland, mainly during nineteen eighty four. The third part covers my ANC activities in nineteen eighty five, Introduction. Just tell me Helene, your, these views, uh, is that your own views or, as you were trained or as you came to, how, how did you come about these, this knowledge. 1984
- H - It is my own views. That's, that's what I mean. That's what I think.
- V - Does it form part of your training? I mean you were involved-
- H - I haven't done any, I haven't done any political training
- V - Alright, with your involvement with Joe Slovo and Ruth First(unclear).....through them did you gather some of this ideas.
- H - One would think so. Well I know the ANC better and that, and I can appreciate better why they have an armed struggle than before. I mean before, OK I ...(unclear)..... lets say, I hadn't gone into the reasons why and I hadn't understood as well, I mean I believe if you like. But I hadn't understood as well, why. You know, non violent means(unclear).....are not enough you see. That's what I'm saying. I'm not saying that they don't do anything, I'm saying they are not enough, you see? Ant that's something that I've learnt probably well I
- V - To a certain extent, they help you clear your mind of certain things
- H - No, That I mean I have always great difficulty to, understand something very well, if I haven't lived it from more or less close by, and I haven't you know I, I, need a long time to digest that you see. Now partially OK, it's been over the years, but partially you know after I came here, I can tell you that it's perhaps interesting for you. When I'd lived here in this, a bit liberal kind of environment, and I was busy with the MK activities more or less(Unclear).....There were moments when I thought now what am I doing actually, is it true that, that by peaceful means it isn't possible, is it, is it really true. Big meetings and things as you know people are very militant, and working hard and you knowbe as, a other people you hear. Beyers Naude, those people you hear. You know, Sheene Duncan you hear other non-people Unionist, and things and then you think, you know, is it really necessary, the armed struggle at a certain moment it looked way out, from the point of view of me at Wits, it looked as if it was not correct. See what I mean?
- V - Mm Mm
- H - So I was a bit confused and then, and I thought and I thought, and I thought, and I read and I asked people I mean I couldn't go to townships you see? Couldn't have you can't have a good idea of whats happening really. And I remember one day, it was beautiful weather and I just had to sit on the grass there for an hour or two, and I thought, I've got to think it out again. I'm getting confused. What am I doing? I mean I always had the freedom to stop. Is it true? you know, do we need that armed struggle I thought. And I sit down and I think and I think and I think(Unclear)..... that, this country what I have read in history(unclear) .. seen it over and over again, you see the movement, the UDF's and the other movements, the trade, the trade union

....(unclear)... thinking of these organisations, that the same kind of reaction, same kind of thing, shooting in the townships, things you know, the repression, if something comes up, and if it wasn't for the armed struggle it wouldn't be I think as far as it was now you see. It wouldn't be

V - So you were thinking about this, this year. But now, this moment, you still think an armed struggle is necessary?

H - I still think that Ja. But I mean, I had doubts at a certain moment, and I think the doubts came out of the fact that, um I mean outside the country I was more in contact if, if you like, with what was happening in townships and, and that kind of thing, than here. You might think that's strange, but in a way it's true. You seewith other things also (unclear)would come from to aships you know it's different. Very different.

V - Tell me Helena, the armed struggle as such, if you talk about an armed struggle, do you only talk about arms as such, or what do you see in the armed struggle?

H - Well, in that thing there are actually two things, and I hope you get that out of it. Is the armed struggle as a means of, you know, as a political means(unclear).... it's just an, mostly actually armed propaganda it's, it's to say to people, listen, you know, we're strong, you can do it, you don't have to stay(unclear)....slaves and what have you. You don't have to accept it. If you're strong you can do even military, you know you think that you can't do it ... (unclear)... but the other thing, that I think is at the moment more most important, I don't knowin the ANC line, but that's what I think personally. Is that now the people are really fightingtends to become very anarchistic because there's no one to lead them Ja?

V - Is the I, the ANC behind the, the township riots and what would you say hey?

H - Well I think that the problem is that they're not, they're not strong enough in the townships and they can't pick it up and organise it. I mean, get line into it, that is the big problem I think. The problem is that we're not there, enough, you see?

V - (Unclear)....

H - This kind of thing, you can have an uprising, a popular uprising(unclear)....and people get burned and die, and things and I don't know what, you see, for nothing.

V - Without and result -

H - And - Ja. End result. A big blood bath and, and nothing else, you see. If you let it go. That's my feelings.

V - But where, where -

H - And it's -

V - - where does the ANC stand. Doesn't, doesn't the ANC -

H - The ANC should now organise should be strong enough, to take up the movement, that partially they have, they haven't instigated like you would think, but partially it also through their struggle and the armed struggle, and the political struggle, the people have come to this kind of consciousness, and stage that they stay, you know, well it's a mutual thing. I mean the ANC is also the people, its rooted in the people, so they react(unclear).... you know it's(unclear)... but still as a vanguard, they're

...of this, Ja? They have raised the political consciousness, they have uh, stimulated the people, not the instigators in ...but the whole history of the movement, struggle, the thing the armed struggle, the political struggle, the support they gave and all kind of, you know, to do the support organisation, and do you trade unions, and do you community organisation, and do you propaganda and everything. They and do that, and all the propaganda and everything. They have created a political consciousness and a threshold if like of, of anger, of, of capacity to cope with oppression, and people at a certain moment, that's it, you know. And it has been almost reached ... (unclear).... But now, if you think that just go into some kind of a bloodbath for nothing, I think that would be very irresponsible you see. Very bad. You can't respond to that. I think it's very necessary now that the ANC or whoever organises the township quickly

V - That the ANC do what?

H - Organise the township. Get them organised. The ANC or whoever you know.

V - How, how do you think are they gonna do that? to make them legal?

H - Do I mean they are, they say they are the vanguard right. So they should help at least, to, to get order and control everything back in the townships. Doesn't necessarily mean that the townships (unclear).... but that at least there is a co-ordinated effort and co-ordinated things, and the crime is not there anymore and it's organised things, and there I think a very big responsibility.

V - "I was recruited into the ANC in December 1981 by Joe Slovo who asked my then husband, Klaas de Jonge, and me to do reconnaissance work. I have never been a regular member of the ANC or taken part in the usual membership activities, including training."

H - Tell me Helene uh, you say you are not a regular member

H - Oh Ja, Oh no I should say that we have had the training by Tony. I have, I have forgotten that no, Ja? I have forgotten that.

V - (unclear) ... if you want to write that

H - That's further up in the introduction

V - What I what ... (unclear).... is a regular, regular member. I wanted to ask you a question of regular, your regular membership you talk hereof. Uh, you say you, you were you were, what do you say here? You haven't been a regular member. What type of a member were you then?

H - Mm, I don't know, they call it special category. Under cover agent probably. I don't know.

V - Wich in fact you were, an agent?

H - Well I don't know, how do you call that.

V - You worked for maybe the SACP or

H - I told you I'm not SACP.

V - Nonsense

H - I don't know whether, at a certain moment I wouldn't be included to be so.