

Rudolf Mandla MATIMBA

B/male, born 16th August 1951, Johannesburg, Xhosa, I.D. No. 4984659, residing at 7007 Mampuru Street, Orlando West, Soweto.

Father : Layton MATIMBA of 7007 Mampuru Street, Orlando West, Soweto.

Mother : Elizabeth Moeng of Orlando West Extention.

1.

On 11.1.77 I was informed by Lieut. VAN NIEKERK that I am in the presence of a Justice of Peace, that I am detained under the provisions of Sect. 6(1) of Act 83/1967 of the Terrorism Act. Lieut. VAN NIEKERK had explained to me that I may be detained until I have made a statement to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of the South African Police or until such time that the Commissioner orders my release. I therefore wish to state the following. I further realize that the case that is being investigated is in connection with the Soweto riots which started on 16.6.76.

2.

I did my school training at several schools in Soweto. In 1966 I started with my high school education at Orlando West High School, where I finished matric in 1970. At Orlando West High I joined the African Students Movement (A.S.M.). This organisation did not take part in any politics.

3.

During February 1971 I started to work wat Schinler Lifts, Booyens, Johannesburg. I left this place in September 1971 to complete my matriculation, because of my failure in certain subjects the previous year at school. During February 1972 I joined further educational training at TSHIYA COLLEGE, Witsieshoek where I studied for my Junior Secondary Teacher's certificate. I finished my studies at Witsieshoek at the end of 1973 and obtained the abovenamed certificate. Thereafter I returned to Soweto where I started to teach at THESELE SECONDARY SCHOOL, White City, Jabavu, until June 1975. I left for SELELEKELA SECONDARY SCHOOL because the first mentioned school was too far from my home and I had to travel by taxi every day. At present I am still teaching at the latter school.

4.

During the end of 1972 I was elected as a member of the Student Representative Council (S.R.C.) at the teacher's training college where I was studying. I was chairman of the cultural committee. My functions were to organise concerts, film-shows and other concerts and also to encourage students to write books in Sotho. To my knowledge there was no political involvement in any way at this college. The only person whom I know is Zacharia NTEO. He studied at the same college and is teaching at Orlando North Secondary School at present.

5.

MY POLITICAL INVOLVEMENTS : I knew Aubrey MOKOENA well because he was my Sundayschool teacher at the A.M.E. Church in

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Orlando West. I knew that Aubrey MOKOENA was studying at Turf-loop University and that he was expelled from it. During June 1972 while on holiday at my home in Soweto I met Aubrey MOKOENA. I enquired about the SASO conference which was due in Hammanskraal. This I read in the newspapers. In July 1972 I went to this SASO conference in Hammanskraal. I was only an onlooker and did not take part in the conference. Since this conference which was my first I became interested in politics. During the year 1972 to July 1973 I did not get directly involved in any organisation. What I did was to read the political views in newspapers. I also bought several SASO newsletters while on holiday in Soweto. In July 1973 I again attended the SASO conference at Hammanskraal. I became more familiar with the views and ways of functioning of SASO, with which I agreed mostly. At that stage I did fear the militant views and the way in which the government was opposed. SASO wanted to bring about a quick and radical change in the governing of the country. At the end of 1973 I returned to my home where I started teaching at THESELE SECONDARY SCHOOL.

6.

On my arrival back in Soweto I immediately got myself involved in the Johannesburg branch of SASO namely REESO. From the beginning of 1974 I attended all the meetings of REESO. The committee members at that time which I can still remember were Jairus KGOKONG, B/female THABILE - the secretary and Aubrey MOKOENA - the treasurer. The meetings was held at D.O.C.C. Centre, Orlando East each month on a Sunday afternoon. At this stage I was only a member of REESO. I joined as member of REESO during the first half of 1974 and paid a membership fee of R2,00.

7.

During these meetings some of the following discussions took place: (i) that the people should participate more in sports, in order to get more use out of the money which was made available by private companies for black sports. There were rumours going around that the administrators, mainly of soccer were misusing the funds received. (ii) Multi-racial sports in the Republic was also discussed. REESO was against the multi-racial sport policy of the Government, because black people were less paid than the whites. Community projects like cleaning creches and clinics were mentioned.

8.

During July 1974 I went to another SASO conference held at Wilge-spruit, Roodepoort. This was the yearly conference of SASO. The meeting did not take place at Hammanskraal because the place was booked for something else. During this conference the following subjects were in discussion :-

- (i) free university scheme - for SASO members who were expelled from any university or who were not allowed to attend a university - arrangements with UNISA were made for the SASO members to study;
- (ii) Community projects;
- (iii) Bantu education - the students were called upon to do research in the syllabus - which would be new to that which the Government made available. The students wanted the universities to be independant from the Bantu Education and to function on its own.

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- (iv) Black Theology - the students were mostly opposed to the Bible, because it was something that came with the white people;
- (v) Sports - the Government Sport policy was also opposed - that is the multi-racial policy. Students were told not to participate because in participating in multi-racial sport it brought the idea to the outside world that South Africa was adopting a multi-racial policy and that it was a success, which was not the case. These were some of the main topics that were discussed at this conference.

9.

After this conference in July 1974 there was an period in SASO. After this followed the arrests and detention of many main figures of SASO. We had a report-back meeting of REESO at D.O.C.C. Centre. After this meeting REESO didn't meet again until 1975. We were not quite certain of what was going on - whether whose to be detained next. During 1975 there were several meetings before the yearly conference which was held again in Hammanskraal.

10.

During this conference the following topics were discussed :

- (i) A motion that condemned the detention of most of the SASO leaders.
- (ii) A request that the leaders should be released.
- (iii) SASO's relationship towards other Black organisations like Y.W.C.A., the housewife's league, South African Student Movement (S.A.S.M.) the Coloured Labour Party, the Natal Indian Council, etc.
- (iv) Homelands - SASO do not recognise the homelands and their leaders. The main reason was that the Government gave small portions of land to the Black people and that the Black people actually wanted a share in the whole country.
- (v) MPLA - there was a motion on recognising the MPLA as the rightful rulers of Angola. (This motion was forwarded either in 1974 or 1975 - I am not quite certain about the year).
- (vi) Other yearly resolutions like education, Black Theology, etc. were also in discussion.
- (vii) A new executive for SASO was elected at this conference. I left before the new executive was elected.

11.

After this conference REESO only held one meeting. There was no further meetings held, because there was a lack of interest amongst the SASO members, maybe because of the many arrests and detentions. REESO was not functioning properly anymore. Aubrey MOKOENA and I talked about the present position of REESO. Aubrey told me that it was agreed upon by BPC and SASO to work hand in hand, because they had mostly the same aims. Also because many of REESO members were members of BPC. At the end of 1975 I attended a BPC meeting at D.O.C.C. Centre, Orlando East.

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There were about 50 people present. George WAUZHOPÉ was the chairman. A man by the name of NAVANA was the secretary. I do not know the other officials. I was not a BPC member at this time. I never became a member of BPC. Other people who were also present at this meeting were : Aubrey MOKOENA, Tom MANTHATA, Kenneth RACHIDI, Kenneth RACHIDI's wife Myttah, Mandla NKOSI and Jairus KGOKONG. The main topic at this meeting was the preparation for the BPC - conference which was to be held during December 1975.

12. /

During February 1976 I attended another meeting of BPC at D.O.C.C. Centre, Orlando East. The following people I remembered to have attended this meeting : Aubrey MOKOENA, Deborah MACHOBA, Jairus KGOKONG, Tom MANTHATA, Kenneth RACHIDI, MAKAPELA, Basil LENKOE, George WAUCHOPE, a coloured boy called Chris and NAVANA. Also Nat SERACHE. The main topic at this meeting was the envisage state of how BPC intended to rule South Africa. This statement was read to the meeting by Jairus KGOKONG. People in the meeting had the opportunity to ask questions concerning this state and the members who were at King Williamstown explained the difficulties that arose from the questions. This statement served as a guide line as to what the people could expect from BPC.

13. /

The next BPC meeting I attend was just before the BPC symposium held at Mafeking during May 1976. I did not go to Mafeking. I was invited to this BPC meeting personally by letter. The meeting was held at the D.O.C.C. Centre, Orlando East. The same people as mentioned to be present at the previous meeting, were also present at this meeting. The main discussion was about Black Communalism, which is a sub-division of the previous mentioned envisage state. This was the last BPC meeting that I attended.

(14)

OTHER ACTIVITIES : At the end of 1975 I attended the first of three C.O.R.D. meetings. I was told by Aubrey MOKOENA what C.O.R.D. actually was. He was the one to invite me to the C.O.R.D. meetings. I remembered Winnie MANDELA and Rev. TUTU as speakers during this meeting. Winnie MANDELA spoke about her detention, solitary confinement and house arrest. These were not meetings for discussions but prayers. The second C.O.R.D. meeting I attended was on 25.12.75. The main speaker to this meeting was Rev. TSHENKENG. He spoke about the religion of the black man. The third meeting which I attended was during May 1976 at my church, the A.M.E. church, Orlando West. The main speaker to this meeting was Dr. Manas BUTHELEZI. He spoke on the resurrection of Christ and brought it into comparison with that of the Black man of today, namely the struggle of the Black man. The following people used to attend these meetings : Aubrey MOKOENA, Tom MANTHATA, Westa SMITH, Jairus KGOKONG, Baba JORDAAN, Winnie MANDELA, Rev. TUTU, dr. Rev. Manas BUTHELEZI, Tebello MOTAPANYANE. etc. These are the main people I know. I would like to say that it was mainly prayer meetings. I cannot recall anything of a political nature being said or done at these C.O.R.D. meetings. I remember that the names of all the detainees were read out to the meeting.

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15.

I attended a national day of prayer. It was held at Regina Mundi Catholic church, Moroka. Approximately three hundred (300) people attended. Aubrey MOKOENA was the master of ceremonies. The service was conducted by Rev. TUTU. Rev. TUTU was the main speaker. This I think took place during the middle of the first term of 1975.

16.

This was the only activities that I took part in. Apart from what I have stated thus far, I was also the secretary of the local A.M.E. church at Orlando West from the beginning of 1976. I am a religious man and usually attend church on Sundays.

17.

ACITIVITES AS A TEACHER : I never belonged to any teacher's organisation until August 1976 when I joined the Transvaal United African Teacher's Association (TAUTA). This I did after I was encouraged by my school principal, Mr. J. MASEKO. It was a totally teachers organisation. According to my knowledge this teachers' organisation did not take part in politics. I attended one of TUAATA's meetings, which was held at Milnerpark, Holiday Inn during August 1976. The following people attended this meeting : Mr. SIMELELA - chairman (Meadowlands High School), Mr. MEHLAPE - vice-chairman (Diepkloof High School), Mr. MASEKO, finance chairman (Selelekela Secondary School), Mr. TAUNYANE - provincial president, Mr. DLAMLENZE - secretary of ATASA, Mrs. MAKHENE - Selelekela Secondary School, Miss. LERUTOANE - Phonofelo Lower Primary School, etc. The main speakers were Mr. SIMELELA, who gave the presidential address. He said that the riots were something in the past, that the teachers must not be discouraged about this, but that they should go back and encourage the students to go back to school and continue their studies. Other main speakers were Prof. LEKHELE from Turfloop who spoke on "Education for a Global Community". He said that he did not believe in Global Education or Universal Education, as syllabuses will always differ according to the needs of every community. He said that he wished that the time will come when black educationists will be given a chance to work on their own syllabus to suit themselves and not as prescribed by the Bantu Education. Another main speaker was Mr. PITJE, an attorney. He spoke on the Afrikaans issue and said that it was wrong to force a language on people which they did not want. A white educationist whose name I cannot remember also addressed the conference. There was several other speakers. This conference lasted for two days. After this conference there was the report back meeting, which I did not attend. According to my knowledge there was no further TUAATA meetings until my detention. The main topic at the above mentioned conference was "Global Education".

18.

THE AFRIKAANS ISSUE : I started teaching in 1974 and since then there was this question on Afrikaans. I was teaching Mathematics in Afrikaans. It was then already clear to me that the students did not like to be taught in Afrikaans, although they accepted it and did nothing positively in opposing it. I taught for 1½ years at the first school, thereafter I left for Selelekela Secondary School and found that they were teaching only in English. There was no problem on the Afrikaans issue.

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