

Bheki Mghayi

Facilitator: This is an interview with Baba Bheki Mghayi, we are in Kwa-Thema, Springs, the date is 12 October 2012, interview is done by Brown Maaba. Baba thanks very much for your time. You can speak any language. Baba please give me your background. Where are you from?

Respondent: Originally I was born in the Eastern Cape, Transkei, Kentani is the town and my parents were both teachers. My mother left teaching immediately after she was married, that was the way things were done then. My father got fed up with the teaching system and listed with the mines. He got a job at Eisgedold??. The rest of us followed him after he had almost settled.

Facilitator: Settled where?

Respondent: Settled in a job, that is what he told us that he felt settled and we can join him. I only came to Springs in 1942, I was only 12 then. My standard 5 education started here, Painville, St Andrews. Then my family got uprooted because my father had problems with PMP, we were living in a township in Painville, almost every weekend my father was arrested for a permit. So he had a friend in Alexandra who worked with him at Eisgedold, he organised him a room in Alexandra. We then had to move to Alexandra. In fact we stayed from January until March in 1943 in Painville, April I was in Alexandra, and it was too late for schooling. I only went to school in 1944 at the Dutch Reformed school at Alexandra at 4th Avenue. The school ended at standard 5. So the following year after passing standard 5 I went to St Michaels, an Anglican school in Alexandra. I passed my standard 6. My father was appointed at Eisgedold mines. We then moved to Springs again.

I did my secondary school in Painville, the principal was Tsakula. From there I applied for my Matric after my JC. My parents wanted me to be educated in the Cape. They had studied at Lovedale, Blightswood etc., the responses were promising. I can't remember what happened, but I think there were strikes in schools and it was discovered that the people who were causing havoc were the Transvaal students.

Facilitator: The school in the Eastern Cape?

Respondent: Yes but in January I was told not to come back. Then I didn't know what to do, I looked around for accommodation until I found accommodation at Emerentia Geldenhuys, Africa's Medium School in Warmbaths. I went to study my Matric there. Everything in Afrikaans, History in Afrikaans, Science in Afrikaans, from the English background, that's not easy. Somehow I managed to pass my first year, final Matric I failed twice. There were rumours that whites want to reduce the number of people who want to get educated, so they started dealing with us at Matric level. Well I was involved in that kind of nonsense until I left school in 1952. I went to the industries.

I joined the paper factory, that was the first because I could not work with my father, much as I loved him but there was no way I would work with him. I knew that my behaviour will get him fired at work.

Facilitator: How were you going to get him fired?

Respondent: I could not tolerate what he tolerated for instance when you see a white man you have to salute and what have you, call him a bass, those kinds of things I could not tolerate. No one had told me anything, this was just me, within me. I just could not succumb to white people. So I went to work in at the Paper

Factory, I was fired because I wouldn't listen to white man talking rubbish. It was within my rights but because he is the baas, I got fired. I moved on and joined SA Board Mills, I don't know what it is called now. I worked there and was fired again after 6 years. I had to find another job, it was as if I hated white people, this was not the issue. I had friends amongst the Afrikaner speaking guys but I had a line that I did not want anyone to cross, if you did I will fight you.

Then the next company I joined .., at this time things were bad, we had the army in trucks surrounding the township, I can't remember what it was

Facilitator: State of emergency?

Respondent: Ja some state of emergency thing. I remember the day I got a job something was happening

Facilitator: What was happening, was it in the 1970s or 1960s?

Respondent: It was in the 1960s

Facilitator: 1963?

Respondent: I think so

Facilitator: Was it about Poxo uprising maybe?

Respondent: I cannot recall honestly. I found a job at Westwood, they manufactured stoves and other electrical and gas appliances. I left the company on my own accord because I was offered another job with better remuneration. I used to earn something like R8 a week, the new offer which I got through a friend of mine, Joshua Rataung, he was employed at Van Leer, I got that opening. I was there for two years.

Facilitator: Van Leer?

Respondent: Yes, people had lasted up to 9 years in that company told me that it was hell. Can you imagine you are a supervisor for a crew, you know your work backwards, if the boss is not in head office is able to ask me for assistance and I am able to help them out. When it comes to salary increases, the staff that I am overseeing overtook me because of my involvement in the union. I told myself I'm not going to resign they should rather fire me. They didn't. And you see what I used to do at that time was I worked in the laboratory in the plastics division. All projects were given to me even if the boss is not there, I was able to work independently. New lab assistants from university were sent to me for training. I told myself I am not going to leave the company, the company is going to change and that the people who come after me should find the place in order.

An opportunity arose, I don't know how it came about, I was elected in my absence to a committee representing workers. I took it on. I consulted people and books to find out what has been happening. I carried on, later on I was told there is a union in place and that it has members at Van Leer. I learnt that there was a shop steward called Leonard Sithole who was the shop steward of union. I had to find a way to contact him because he was a secretive person. I was then approached in the township by a young man who gave me information. He encouraged me to join their movement, he belonged to the BPC, Black People's Convention. I agreed and went to their meeting. What I heard from them and never saw anywhere else is that the BPC was stepping in in the absence of the ANC because the ANC was

already banned. After some time we were told that we should involve ourselves in unions. I managed to find application forms from the Engineering and Allied Workers Union. I then appointed myself as a shop steward although I was not called a shop steward. I got people to join. At one stage we were over a 1000 new members. The company had a staff complement of about 2000 workers at that time. I then submitted the forms and got to know the people. They then asked me to join after recruiting so many people. I then joined the union and became a member. I was active. What we used to do is, we would take our grouping, there was also another education grouping called UTP, it was a training project under Eric, a white guy. He was with guys like Skeiks, Leonard Sikhakhane, he lived in Soweto. He was in the Urban Training Project. As workers what we used to do is we used to train people on how to arm their committees in the various companies. Saturdays we would meet in Jo'burg, on Sundays we met at the Roman Catholic Church dishing out information we received from the training.

After a couple of months I was a fully fledged shop steward. I remember one time I had gone home to where my parents eventually went back to. On my return the workers had elected me as the President of the union. I queried that because they were supposed to elect me in my presence not in absentia.

Facilitator: Which union did you join baba?

Respondent: Engineering and Allied Workers Union

Facilitator: Under FOSATU?

Respondent: Yes under FOSATU, various unions that existed at the time affiliated to FOSATU. We sorted the election story out and everybody was happy. We also changed the constitution so that there are no queries in future. We continued. At

the time generally there were no unions except in the East Rand, but the East Rand was up in arms. There was glass, paper and pulp, food and allied, engineering of course, there were quite a number of them. A problem developed, how do we maintain these groups. Somebody suggested that we work together and be one. The task was again given to me. The whole of the East Rand was under me. I oversaw all the groups. We continued to develop and kept in touch with UTP. We then became proper unions. I was the president of that union for 9 years

Facilitator: Of Engineering?

Respondent: Ja

Facilitator: President in the whole country?

Respondent: No it started here in the Reef of course we at a later stage we had members from Port Elizabeth. Our shop steward there was somebody Prince, it's his surname, Xhosa speaking guy but it was developed.

Let me explain this 9 years. There were elections, no less than four in that space of 9 years but I came out tops and I was getting popular with the police especially the Special Branch and they were on my tail. I remember at times a policeman would trail me all the way to Johannesburg, one followed me up to Braamfontein. In that area there was a book shop I loved, I forgot the name. They had all the books on revolution activities in factories and the lot. From time to time I went there. The first time I noticed this boer boy at New Aero station when I boarded the train. I continued, immediately when I got in the vicinity of the shop, there he comes, so I realised he is following me. I went to one shop and then browsed around with my eye kept on the door. He came and never told me he swerved around me and then I asked him "hi chom, do you find me interesting, are you in love with me". He

shrunk and left. I realised that he is following me, I had done nothing wrong and had nothing to be afraid of. I moved on.

In 1977 I went to Germany through the union, there was a world conference. This is when Steve Biko was killed, this is when our organisations were banned, I was out in Germany at the time, I stayed there for a month from 30 September and returned on 30 October. I had no passport but because people knew in advance, they catered for that in Germany. I didn't go and stand in the queue like the other guys. I was ushered to a safe place. When I came back the boers were behind me. Do you know Nonqayi's office in town

Facilitator: In Springs yes

Respondent: I went in there many times and what I noticed is they have never slapped me. I remember one colleague of mine who lived at Tornado, his surname was Masike, I forgot his name. He greeted me, I couldn't remember where we had met. His face was round and swollen. I was kept there, one day I would be on the fourth floor, the next day on another floor, they were questioning me all the time. The building was huge, every wall was plastered with blood stains. The questions I was asked were as follows: "you people want to be free through the affiliation of unions, nationally which party would you people like to belong to?"- I would say any black party not white. They would then ask if the present government was there and the present party was there, which one would you like to be represented by? I said the ANC, and then he said but it is currently not in government, the party that is available now is HMP, Herstigte Nasionale Party – I told them no, they told me that that is a true boer party, "*n kaffir op sy plek*" if he tells me "*n kaffir op sy plek*" it means that I should wake up and do something and pretty quick unlike the English boys who would say "my friend, my friend" while they are pretending. That is how it went.

In time I was well paid for what I did by losing a lot. My juniors were earning much more than I did. For instance in the laboratory recommendations were made by a chief technician who had recommended that we all get R100 plus salary increase, I was only given R25. I was their senior not only in terms of rank but also in terms of experience. I was told that they were trying to frustrate me so that I resign. I refused. The second point that hit me was after I was fired in late 1983, I joined the company in 1963 and left in 1983, the same month March. I was fired given only R300 after deductions. After I lost my job my wife left me unfortunately. I then learnt something from a Dutch boy, he was from the Special Branch, he came to my house, as I was walking him out I was trying to investigate as to where he stood politically. I told him that you guys think I will not get another job, I am going to get a job there are a lot of companies around and I have friends all over the place. He then told me that "you may be employed but you won't last three months". I said okay we will see. I then came back home. He was right. I got a job in town, a new ice cream shop was opened in 9th Avenue, at the Nigel circle, next to where McDonald is right now, where Liquourama is right now. The company was owned by Indians and I was employed as a manager. I got the job through the Catholic Church. After three months my employer told me that I no longer have a job. That was the end. I had friends all over the place, unionists etc., and the guys I nursed throughout were all fired, people like Chris Dlamini. The union, Sweet and Food was in turmoil. Because of my position in the UTP, I had to guide him. This split their union, the Vaal group wanted to stand alone, the East Rand group was left. Elections were held after that and Chris Dlamini was on top. I went to him looking for a job, he worked for Kelloggs at the time. He said to me you will find a job, to date I'm still waiting. People like Cyril Jantjies, I don't know if you know him

Facilitator: I know him, he was light in complexion

Respondent: That's right, the chap I recommended at work I had asked the employer to appoint a black personnel manager instead of a white one. The white personnel managers did not last longer than 3 years. I encouraged them to appoint a black person. They appointed Jantjies.

Facilitator: So you got him a job at Van Leeg?

Respondent: Ja at Van Leeg. He then left and joined the mines. To date I am still waiting for him to get me a job. I almost lost this house, our councillor in the ward sold this house and created a mess. Fortunately some young man I worked with at Van Leeg came to me after work and told me that my house is on sale. I told him how can I sell my house where will I go. He told me there was a notice at work. I went there, yes there was a notice. I then went to the municipal office and asked them why are they selling my house. I was told that the house is on sale because I am not paying for services. Fortunately I had my receipts with me. They were shocked. A policeman was sent to go and remove the notification. A lot of things happened, I struggled for a long time. My wife had left me, she worked for the glass factory in Midrand.

Facilitator: Why did she leave?

Respondent: Because I am no longer working? To me it was not a big issue. I told myself I will survive somehow. I continued. The phone was also cut off, I was penniless and had no one to depend on. I almost lost the house. God makes wonders. I managed to survive. I was supposed to go on pension in 1995, that is when I turned 65, I did not get the pension, whenever I applied for pension there was some excuse. I was told that my wife has got money that she has banked therefore I do not qualify for money. Luckily I had told her not to expect to come back home. I went to my wife and explained to her what is going on, I told her that I do not qualify for pension because she has got a lot of money. She denied it. I then told her to give me a copy of her bank statement. She did and there was no money in her account. She had spent the whole R60 000, she bought a kombi with it. They eventually had to grant me the pension, it was approved in 2003 8 years later.

Some guys approached me with an idea, the idea was an insult, I was insulted. He asked me to become indigent, declare that I am impoverished. I felt that I was being insulted by my very own brother. At Van Leer, paper factory the word that was used a lot was *kaffirs*, *kaffirs*, *kaffirs*. I said you don't know what you're talking about, this is what came between me and the boers, I told them I am not a *kaffir*, I am something else, I do not want to be called *kaffir*. Then they fired me.

In the township I lost a lot of things, to date I can be kicked out of this house because I cannot manage it. I tried to join the ANC, during the time of the struggle I was just given a receipt that I paid the membership fee. Subsequently I joined it in 2000 for the fourth time. I only received my membership card after five years. I attended their meetings and then a provincial meeting was organised. The people I was with during the struggle did not want me to represent them because I have not been a member long enough, they said I should be a member for at least one year. I then asked them for a copy of the constitution and a job to do, I am prepared to work under anybody. They said they will come back to me nothing happened. Another meeting was held, and I was nominated, the Chairman did not want me to represent them and that I have to be a member for at least two years. Later on we received minutes of meetings held previously, I learnt from them that I qualified to represent them after 8 months not a year or two. The knowledge hurt me so badly because I had confidence in these guys. Nobody bothered to inform me. From then onwards I never received any information on the meetings held. I also realised that we were lead by the youth. To date there is no constitution and I do not go to the meetings anymore. It is clear that I am not wanted, the boers did not want me nor does our people.

Sometime in 1994 I got involved in a local health forum. Mostly it was doctors from Thema, people like Lisiya, Gama, the lot. It continued and I remember the last project that we had in that year, when we were preparing for the elections, we were also informed that the boers may not take this kindly and might mess us up and we should be ready as a health forum. We formed a group that would oversee the problem. I was appointed to lead this by preparing and request help where

necessary. I prepared for the different groups: youth; women; schools .., the lot, area by area. When I was supposed to go and report I couldn't because I had another commitment. I sent one of the guys who worked with us. That was the last meeting I attended. The committee just phased away.

Somewhere in the 1980s, I got involved with the schools in Zithembeni I became the Chairman of the SGB and I took it very seriously, I tried to weed the corruption out. I noticed there were some irregularities with finances and the authorities did not like this. They sent an official from the department. He convened a meeting and informed us that the principal had indeed mismanaged school funds. They thought I had lied so that I can get a job. I told them I did not want a job and left it at that. My life has worsened now.

Incidentally, during the time of the BPC, at one stage here in Kwa-Thema there were very few SASO affiliates because most of them were still at school. We decided to combine b both BPC and SASO. I was elected to the position and I was the only Chairperson, we were banned afterwards.

Facilitator: Ja that is the 1970s. So what were the activities of SASO/BPC?

Respondent: Seriously not much. I used to ask them to speak to people in their home languages they kept on insisting to speak English. At one stage we had a meeting at Painville, the special branch arrived with their dogs in many cars, they surrounded the block. I can't remember who was there from the BPC, he was a top official of the BPC at the time. He didn't chair the meeting on the day in question, I chaired the meeting. The informers who were in the meeting were beaten on that day because they were wearing wires. I continued chairing the meeting. My involvement has cost me so much. I have nowhere to go for assistance after the sacrifices I've made. During the apartheid era when employers treated me badly I told them that I am not worried and that our government is coming and things will

change for the better, I will be able to get a job. Where am I now, the very same organisation is unable to employ me. I wish anybody could tell me where I went wrong.

Facilitator: Did you not have conflict with people like Jantjies and Chris Dlamini maybe?

Respondent: No never. I realised something was wrong and ignored it. When the branch Rest In Peace was formulated, I noticed that it was led by the youth. Keketso who stayed at Rest In Peace and another one lived at Deep Levels, I think his surname was Dlamini or Ndlovu, I cannot recall. They were killed at the same time somewhere at Masimini. They invited me to their meetings to participate but when it came to elections they did not want me. This is when I realised something was wrong. I am now old.

Facilitator: So after the banning of BPC did you disband?

Respondent: Yes we disbanded

Facilitator: That was 1977?

Respondent: Yes

Facilitator: The formation of FOSATU?

Respondent: I was there

Facilitator: Who came with the idea that you should form FOSATU and so on?

Respondent: In our meetings as shop stewards the decision was taken. But I think the idea came from people like Tuffie Adler, Bennie van der Hoff and Alec Irwin. At some stage I also became Acting Vice President of FOSATU after someone lost their job and I think I did it well if I may say so.

Facilitator: What were the challenges facing you when you formed FOSATU?

Respondent: The biggest challenge to me, I also voiced it to Cyril Ramaphosa, I had gone for an interview for a job I didn't get. Our problem as unions was we had MAWU, Metal and Allied Workers Union, and other small unions were led by people like Bennie van der Hoffie, Tuffie Adler and the likes, the other black leadership knew practically nothing. I told Cyril Ramaphosa that it is wrong. Shop stewards did not share ideas, we went to meeting as individuals and returned as individuals, no synergy. I noticed in national meetings that the meetings were chaired by the general secretary, Alec Irwin, John Mke was the president of FOSATU. He came to grace the occasion. I raised this with him, we were always at each other's throats, I don't know maybe it's this Xhosa thing. On that particular evening, I made sure that we move fast with the agenda, the meetings normally took the whole weekend. But on that occasion we finished quicker. When he came back John Mke he could not believe it.

In Springs we were not given information on what is discussed in general meetings. The meetings were led by the Chairperson. The coloured people were so impressed with me in that meeting. When we had elections I was appointed Acting Deputy, out of 36 votes I collected 33.

Facilitator: That's quite a lot. So when did you introduce Engineering and Allied Workers Union, which year exactly?

Respondent: That was 1973/74

Facilitator: How did the boers receive this?

Respondent: You are just reminding me of this incident with a shop steward, Leonard Sithole he did not understand why I kept my membership card with me at all times. At Van Leer we represented the workers to an extent that the boers no longer took advantage of the workers. We exposed them in the hearings. Fortunately the general manager supported change but unfortunately when they fired me he was not there. He called me when he returned, at the time I was working for Lanline???. He asked that we meet and talk and requested that I send someone to meet him at the factory. He also asked me to collect smart guys in my area so that he can meet with them. He came to my home, brought by Joshua Ratau. It was a winter evening, we were sitting around the fire, he brought liquor: brandy, whisky, beer, wine and cigars. We drank the whole night through. Before midnight he said all the people who were present should not go to work and that they will be fired should they go to work. He left my house around 4 in the morning. Those were the days.

We also had a committee here in the township, it involved all Van Leer companies here in South Africa. There was a branch in Brakpan, Vanderbijlpark, Natal, PE and Cape Town. We were in the same grouping especially in the negotiations. We had noticed that in Natal they were paid peanuts, they improved their wages a little. The day I left the committee also died. Some people were happy that I was fired, they saw an opportunity of getting a "soft" job. People must have thought my work is soft because I travelled to Cape Town, PE, Durban, I was flying all the time. They thought I was just flying and doing nothing.

I arrived in Durban once and it seemed they had planned that the Zulus should discipline me, the end result was the opposite.

Facilitator: Discipline how?

Respondent: A Zulu would discipline me by beating or kicking me out, but I went there prepared. We had a problem, meetings were no longer regular, and I was blamed as the Chairperson of the region. I had brought all the necessary information including the proof of my communication. I then asked them to get somebody to present on my behalf. Everybody accepted the report and understood. They said we are confused by white people and that we should hold our own elections. The meeting was scheduled for a day but we would up finishing up earlier. We finished at 3.30. We all went home, I went to the hotel and offered that anybody who wants to see me is welcome to come to the hotel. A few of them came, we talked and they were satisfied. I organised food and drinks, I signed.

Facilitator: At shop floor level at Van Leeg, what were the pressing issues there?

Respondent: First it was wages, second it was job reservation irrespective of whether a black person was educated or not. That was very common. The boss's word was final, the language commonly used was boy, *kaffir* etc. The back biters were always there and they still are there to date. For instance a boer boy arrived in Cyril Jantjies' training department. He was showing us the CCTV equipment that he received. The boer boy asked what it was for and then he says I know you can take the African gentleman out of the bush but you can never take the bush out of the African gentleman. Everybody laughed, I got so angry and told them that how can they find an insult a joke, African gentleman is a baboon, you are a *kaffir* and that's it. We were continuously insulted.

Facilitator: What about issues of safety because it was an engineering company and protective clothing and so on?

Respondent: That one we got onto it, I am confident that we sorted it out, it was accepted by the employer without opposition. I almost forgot something. It was difficult for the employer to fire a black person. One day I was asked to mediate a case between the employer and the worker. As I was preparing to negotiate, the initiator told me not to worry and dropped the case. After that everybody flocked to me for advise, it was mostly the whites who came to me to assist them. I encouraged that we should work as a team with no hard feelings and we did it.

Facilitator: People like Chris Dlamini were from Sweet Food, and then there was Engineering and then there were other unions. Was there a time where you worked together?

Respondent: Yes we met at some meetings and shared ideas and find a way forward. The other thing I forgot to tell you is the cases at Van Leer rarely went as far as the union office because we solved the problems at the firm

Facilitator: Were you given training?

Respondent: Yes we did at Van Leer, we were trained by Wells Ntuli, he was from Durban. He was very good but before we accepted him we asked him a lot of questions. He responded and showed us the proof.

Facilitator: As the President of Engineering in the East Rand, what problems were you faced with at that time?

Respondent: Mostly it was the law, the police. The problem was that as blacks we are not allowed to join unions. Not just the police, the firms intimidated us, eventually they accepted us. The opposition I expected never came.

Facilitator: When Engineering and Allied Workers Union started, you said it started in 1973 at Van Leer?

Respondent: Yes

Facilitator: Were the workers willing to join or were they afraid?

Respondent: Yes, I think we had members in excess of 1000, in no time we were close to a 1000. The other problem we unearthed there was a split or should I call it a rival group that pitched, from within Van Leer, some of our members left us but because they were in the majority this didn't bother us and even when they had problems we helped them. I remember there was an old man who was very disruptive and did not attend meetings, when it was time for him to go on pension and he realised that he had nothing to show. He went and appealed to the union that didn't care for him, he came to me and told me that he made a mistake by joining the wrong union. He was worried about his pension. I helped him out on behalf of the union

Facilitator: So they formed another union?

Respondent: Ja

Facilitator: Outside FOSATU?

Respondent: Somehow we saw them participating but almost invisibly, they didn't leave FOSATU .., maybe it never dawned to them that they've got to move out of FOSATU

Facilitator: What was the name of the union?

Respondent: I can't remember, a word or two similar to ours, I remember some of the shop stewards, Sedike

Facilitator: Earlier on you mentioned that your parents were educated people, they were both teachers?

Respondent: Yes

Facilitator: So you come from a family of educated people?

Respondent: I could safely say so

Facilitator: Why did your father leave teaching?

Respondent: I think the same thing, my thinking now is I think it had something to do with my attitude towards whites because I remember what happened to my old man. On one occasion a white inspector came to his school before school starting

time. Our home was not far from the school. The old man told us to go to school. The inspector was already at school. We were schooling in a church hall. My father must have been upset by something and the white inspector also came in his moods. My father resigned immediately. He nearly died when we moved to Eisgedond, he wanted to experience working in the mines. He worked underground. The stones fell on top of him, he broke his one leg which never recovered. Also I think the medical treatment then in the 1930s was not as good as today's, he then died in the 1960s. You know I always remember my father, he died in 1967, my mother died in 2007 because when my mother died she was 99

Facilitator: She lived long?

Respondent: Ja

Facilitator: I tend to look at people who have the best of things, eat well, dress well etc., this has never happened to me, I have always lived from hand to mouth throughout. The first time I heard how much my father was earning it was £24 per month and the month is an equivalent of 6 weeks, we were a big family. Of course poor people normally have many children. Have you noticed?

Respondent: Yes

Facilitator: Maybe they console themselves by making a lot of babies, I don't think they do it intentionally. When I went to boarding school, this is when I realised how poor we were. In my family our names start from B, our father is A, b,c,d,e,f,g,h up to k and l. My parents lost twins in Alexandra. When I think of how my parents struggled, my mother had to go and wash white people's washing to make ends meet. She also baked fat cakes and sold fruits, she was business minded. We had the advantage of getting meat for free, vegetables but at times one wanted to eat

something better. I had to hate white people because of the way I brought up. I remember there was a white man we worked with at Van Leer, he couldn't stand me. He told me that one day I am going to shoot you. After some years, after helping my younger brother by getting him a better job. Unfortunately for me he got along with my brother. If he went on a hunting trip he would bring him wild meat. He would call him to his house, they would braai. After some time the white man asks me if I knew Joshua, I told him he is my brother. He then said "*hy's n goeie kaffir daardie*", I then said to him if I had heard you I would beat you up. He then told me they are big friends. That was the end of our fight. That is why I prefer boers than English people, the English can pretend but once you move from them they speak behind your back. Boers are honest you always know where you stand with them. That's it my brother.

Facilitator: Any closing word?

Respondent: I think I've indicated to you that it has been my pleasure to help my people out of the hell they were in but I paid a big price for that. Maybe the payment I am receiving I get through the people who noticed and appreciated my contribution, it affected them. You know here in the township there are places that are not safe, I walk anywhere and feel safe. Highland used to be rough, although it is much better now, I walk there any time of day or night without any problem. I remember a friend of mine Calvin Nkabinde. We used to visit each other, this time we were in Pule street. We had drinks until 1 am on Sunday morning. As we were walking home, I said to him after we pass River Jordan which was not so safe thugs were always roaming the streets. We met them tsotsis, as we approached them one of them recognised me and then we were safe. I took him to his place, left and went back home, he wanted to walk me again. We went our separate ways, he didn't go home he proceeded to Zamani Primary. I was woken at 6:30 in the morning by his sisters that he is hospitalised he was beaten in the bushes. It was his area, he was beaten by the very people he knew, I was never touched.

I remember one of the special branch white policemen. I was in town at Market street getting into the subway, instead of going to the taxi rank, at the intersection from the taxi rank, there was a stop street .., a lower robot. There were two lanes that went into the subway, the third one goes into 5th avenue, the road was clear. A car just came speeding at me, I didn't run because I was at the right place. Then the white man said I am going to kill you one day. From that day he started avoiding me.

Facilitator: Is there something we missed about unions?

Respondent: Not really I have just rusted a little, my computer is no longer working.

Facilitator: Thank you for your time.

Respondent: Pleasure.

END

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