
AFFIDAVIT OF NOZIZWE MHLONGO MABASO

I, the undersigned

NOZIZWE MHLONGO MABASO

do hereby make oath and state that:

1. I am an adult female with identity number X, [REDACTED], age 62 years.
2. Unless the context indicates otherwise, the facts contained in this affidavit are within my personal knowledge and are, to the best of my belief, both true and correct.

PURPOSE OF THIS AFFIDAVIT

3. The purpose of this affidavit is to set out important facts and events that I believe were intentionally and deliberately withheld from the first inquest into the death of Chief Albert John Mvumbi Luthuli, (hereinafter referred to as "Luthuli"). It is my belief that the conduct by the erstwhile South African Police (hereinafter referred to as the "SAP") and the government of the day was aimed at concealing various serious crimes and human rights violations committed against Luthuli during the period of July 1967.
4. I wish for these facts to be presented at the re-opening of the inquest for the purpose of establishing the truth as to what happened to the late Luthuli.

MY BIRTH AND ASSOCIATION WITH LUTHULI

5. I was born in Gledhow in 1957. My father was Stimela Saul Mabasa. He was extremely close to Luthuli. My father worked at the family shop Nonhlevu Trading, where he was employed as a manager by Luthuli. Erness Mfeka, who was much younger than I, also worked in the shop.

MY FATHER, STIMELA SAUL MABASA

6. My father started as a youngster on a white owned farm in Ladysmith. He was a very young activist and there were problems on that farm. The white owners wanted to kill my father so he fled to Groutville via a goods train. He arrived alone at Groutville and the only family my father ever knew was the Luthuli family. The Luthuli shop is built on my father's land. I addressed Luthuli as "Mkhulu" and the first tea made was always for him.

POLITICAL MEETINGS

7. Nonhlevu Trading is still situated where it stood when Luthuli was still alive. Today there stands two other fixed structures on either side. However, when Luthuli was still alive only the shop stood there. My parents lived in a shack on the premises. Luthuli hid his documents in our shack. Although it was constructed of mostly mud, it made for the most inconspicuous meeting area for political meetings. My earliest recollections are that this is where the most important discussions of a political nature took place. Meetings sometimes took place at night as there was no electricity. If it was late, there was no light. This was the last place the special branch would expect for a meeting to be taking place. Mr Mangosuthu Buthelezi was a frequent visitor.
8. I knew that there were also meetings that would be held during the day. My mother would warn me that there was a meeting in the shack and I would not be allowed to go there. My mum would cook for the occupants. At that stage, there were no taxis, no cellular phones, and horse and cart was the primary form of transport, apart from busses. I recall at one stage my mother had spotted a vehicle approaching and realizing that it was the police, and being aware that an emergency meeting was being held in the shack, she grabbed all the papers that were being discussed and written on, put it onto a backpack on her back, slipped on her shoes and left to work on the fields.

HARRASSMENT BY THE SPECIAL BRANCH

9. It was not uncommon to find members of the special branch roaming around our area. In fact often, the doors would be kicked down in the middle of the night and policeman, both black and white, would assault the occupants viciously. This included children. My father was beaten up regularly by policeman who would be looking for documents or

information on Luthuli. The documents had been hidden either under the house at Groutville or our home in Gledhow.

10. When Luthuli was banned repeatedly he could not travel into the town of Stanger. My father would open the shop really early and Luthuli would come and sit at the shop. I attended Lloyds Primary school. On some mornings, my mother would pack my brown school bag. I did not have a key to the bag. Neither did I know what the content of the bag was. But it was my school bag. When I arrived at the school, I was instructed to give the school bag to my teacher, Ms Mtimkhulu. She would take the bag, and take whatever was in the bag. The bag would then again be packed, secured and handed bag to me. After school I would be told to take the bag to Kwanyuwane Shop, belonging to a Mr Goolam. I would give the bag back to him. He would buy me fish and chips and give me sweets. I would be very happy. The locked bag would then be returned to me and I would take it back to my father. This went on until Luthuli passed away.

LUTHULI'S DEATH

11. On the day that Mkhulu passed away, everyone was crying. It was worse at home. Everyone was saying that he passed away at Gledhow,. That regulated cane-cutters working in the fields saw Mkhulu wearing a long coat and walking, and then people saw the train, and then after the train passed, people did not see Mkhulu anymore. They ran to see what happened to Mkhulu and then they found him along the railway line. I was told that he had died. That a branch or a stick or "Umsimbi" had been found near him. I was terrified of the train track and never walked there. To the best of my knowledge I understand that the train was going towards the Stanger area.

LUTHULI'S ROUTES AND HABITS

12. Luthuli would use the same route every day. His route was well known to everyone. After he was banned, his routes had to change. Often he would use the bus route to go to the shop and not return home the same way again. He would use a different route.

LUTHULI'S HEARING AND EYESIGHT

13. To my knowledge he did not have a hearing problem. He also could read. To me he was never lost or disorientated. He walked lengthy distances unaided and without

difficulty. He could see where he was going. And when he returned home or undertook any tasks. At church, he read the Bible and did not struggle. Mkhulu was a good man.

CLEANING LUTHULI'S BLOOD

14. In our culture, it is the duty of a deceased's loved one or a person close to the deceased, to clean the blood of a deceased if blood was spilled during his or her death. It was my dad and Mr Nxumalo that cleaned the blood along the footpath or area where blood was spilled.

THE IMPACT OF LUTHULI'S PASSING

15. I was ten years old when Luthuli passed away. His death impacted on me. He used to make me read the newspaper. Mr Mthembu was the Induna in the area. I would just read the newspaper and leave. Because he was a banned person, he was not even allowed to sit with more than a certain number of people at a time. My mum always cautioned me that I was not to go to him if there were other people there because of the banning order.
16. The death impacted on my father the most. He died young of heart failure. Luthuli was the only "father" he had known. He was heartbroken. He used to sing "Malibuye Malibuye Afrika" over and over again. Luthuli was a religious man who preached Christianity. He had strong convictions. He was always a happy person who was positive. He never spoke about bad things. He never entertained negative thoughts. In fact as children we used to get upset with him. He prayed every time when he was to leave for his home. We used to be playing and he used to make us stop playing, and come together for prayer.

OSTRACISATION BY THE COMMUNITY

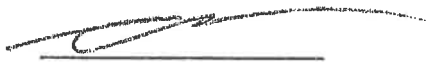
17. As a result of our relationship with Luthuli and his family, we were often ostracized even amongst the community. People did not want to be seen with us or talk to us. When Mthunzi Luthuli's father was arrested, no one wanted to go with her to the police station. My mum accompanied her. There were a few kind white people for example they would look after us on the train. We suffered during the time Apartheid was the law. There was no peace. Honest people suffered.

That is all that I wish to state.

I know and understand the contents of this declaration.

I have no objection to taking the prescribed oath.

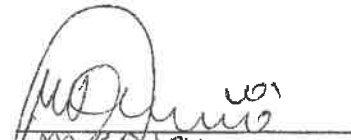
I consider the prescribed oath as binding on my conscience.


DEPONENT

N.A. MHLONGO

Thus signed and sworn to at STANGER 2024 on this 17 day of September

The Deponent having knowledge that he knows and understands the contents of this affidavits, that it is both true and correct to the best of his knowledge and belief, that he has no objection to taking the prescribed oath and that the prescribed oath would be binding on his conscience.


COMMISSIONER OF OATHS

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