

little

A: Well, um, the first time that I remember when they met, it's a good story really.

I was coming from the general hospital where I was working - (beep)

I was coming from the general hospital in Johannesburg, where I was working, and my husband, who was then my fiancé, had gone to collect me after work, and on our way to a delicatessen in Bridge St. I saw Winnie and a friend of hers, Florence, walking towards the station. I asked him to stop, and give them a lift. So, I told them that we first have to go to the delicatessen on Bridge St, and get food, as I was - stop for food, as I was famished. And we got to Bridge St, and inside the delicatessen was Nelson, doing some shopping. And my husband said I should go in and buy whatever I wanted to buy, and put it all on Nelson. And so I went in, I did my shopping, and put it all on Nelson, and as we were coming out, they were in the car, my husband introduced Winnie and Florence to Nelson. And of course Nelson was interested to hear that she comes from Pizana, because of course that's where my husband comes from. And that was the first time that they met. I remember Oliver saying to Nelson, because Nelson said, "Oh, Pizana," and he said, "Oh, don't you know Winnie? She's always dancing up and down the newspapers (Laugh) Because she was at Jan Hofmeyr's School of Social Work, which was the first school of social work for black people in SA. Run by an American called Dr. Ray Philips, I think. Something like that. And so the media, and Zonk!(?) magazine were at that time highlighting the school. And Winnie was one of the students of course at Jan Hofmeyr, and they were featured in the Bantu World, which was a newspaper, and in Zonk!

A: Winnie was a very dynamic young woman, intellectual, always reading, and I sometimes used to catch her reading banned books, and warned her that she would get arrested. And she was a very sociable young woman, made lots of friends amongst people from different parts of the country, and generally liked by most people who came across her. She was no doubt a very intelligent young woman.

A: By banning books, I mean that there are certain type of books that the SA government does not allow to get into the country and to be sold in the country. Most of the time it's the type of books that they think are either attacking the system or are detrimental to the progress of apartheid.

A: Karl Marx was one of them, that's the one that I remember clearly, because I saw it, and I knew that it was banned in SA, so I thought, be careful.

A: No, I don't know, because Winnie was secretive about that, she never told me that there was any relationship between them until quite late. Actually, there were rumours that there was a relationship between them, whilst I was still at the Helping Hand Club (?), but she never told me. I only came to know about it after I was married. She came to spend a night with us, and that was the only time when she told me about it. (Laugh)

A: No, she wasn't in the ANC at that time, she only came into the ANC after she had met N. We were in the Federation of SA Women with Mrs. Ngoyi, who was then the President of the ANC Women's League, ~~SIMONE~~ Mrs. (Albertina) Sisulu, and Helen Joseph, a white English woman, that settled in SA, and has been one of the champion people in the fighting with apartheid. And many other women that are prominent in the struggle outside, Florence Maposho, Mombati, Moqo (?), Duma ~~MINK~~ Nokwe's wife, Mrs. Nqobi, Mrs. Nqobi is now the Treasurer-General of the ANC, and Mrs. Nzo - Mr. Nzo is now the General Secretary of the ANC, and Mrs. Msimang - her husband is on the Education Committee, and Mrs. -er - who is that lady now? - Mtabhi (?) Her husband is one of the senior leaders of the ANC. Those were all the women in the Federation of SA Women.

A: No, she wasn't politically active then. But I've always felt that it must have been there, underlying, because as I say, she used to read a lot, and she read a lot about the political situation in SA and in other countries. And she - her line of reading at the time was almost historic books, and that's why I say, it must have been there somewhere underlying, because as soon as she got married to N, she just shot up like that, and she was elected chairman of Orlando Women's Branch of the ANC.

A: Let me say that SA is a society of stratas, you know. You've got the white man, the white woman, her children, the black man, and at the bottom of the stratas you've got the black woman. So one can't say that it was different for black women - it was better for black women than it was for their men. Because we have always fought side by side with our men in the struggle, and so we stood with our men, we fought apartheid with them, at every level, at every stage. Of course, as mothers, women are the people who carry pregnancy for nine months, and they are the people who bring children into the world. It's very, very heart-breaking to see your children being harrassed by the police, left, right, and centre, and for not having done anything wrong. And of course, there are times that I remember that are ~~KNOWLEDGE~~ actually when I think about it, being woken up at 2 am in the morning whilst sleeping, you get a big, rough knock on the door, and when you say, "Who's there?" it's the police, and they've come to search, they've come to look for passes, they've come to look for people who haven't got permits to be in their location, and arrest them. And if they do not find anybody, there is no apologies, And then of course the other thing is young people being arrested for passes. At the time, women were not carrying passes, only men were carrying passes. And we'd see even schoolboys had to carry a school pass to show that they are at school. So if they'd forgotten it at home, there was no question of saying, "Bring it to the police station the following day," as it happens in England if you are caught without your driver's license, Bring it to the police station in five days - No, there, if you haven't got a pass -

There, if you haven't got your passbook with you, you immediately get arrested. And you are sent to jail straightaway. And even if your relations bring the passbook to