

Project name: Alternative History Project
Date of interview: 2007-09-10
Location of interview: Sebokeng, Gauteng
Language of interview: English
Name of Interviewer/s: Dale McKinley & Ahmed Veriava
Name of Interviewee/s: Tsebo Knowledge Ngema
Name of transcriber: Moses Moremi
Audio file name: AHP_SEB_NgemaTseboKnowledge_20070910

INTERVIEW WITH TSEBO KNOWLEDGE NGEMA.

Dale McKinley (DM): Okay, we're on. First of all thank you very much for taking your time and agreeing to talk with us. Just for our record can you just state your full name please?

Tsebo Knowledge Ngema (TKN): My name is Tsebo Knowledge Ngema.

DM: How old are you?

TKN: I am turning 18 on the first of December this year.

DM: Have you lived here in this area for your entire life?

TKN: Yes.

DM: Born and raised?

TKN: Yes.

DM: So if you are almost 18, then let's see you are born in 1989. Give us some indication of what your earliest memories are growing up in this area, what are some of the first things that you can remember?

TKN: The neighbourhood has always been friendly even though we have always been united, a close community - that sometimes causes problems because everyone knows something about everyone else. That's it for this community So it's sort of a closed community where not everyone lives his life according to what they want - we live as sort of a broad family.

DM: Okay so does that mean when you were a young kid that there were always large groups of kids you were playing with and doing stuff with here?

TKN: Ja, ja, because in this neighbourhood you are not only raised by your parents. I personally, I grew up in this home, my home and many other homes. If a certain parent sees you doing something wrong in the street they don't just ignore and say it's your parents responsibility, they try to correct you because everyone is friendly with everyone.

DM: So what you are saying is that there were sort of a lot of extra mothers and fathers that you had?

TKN: Yes, exactly.

DM: What were your first experiences in school here? What primary school did you go to?

TKN: I attended Phangatso primary school in Zone 7.

DM: Tell us a little bit about your early primary school experiences?

TKN: It was a bit difficult because we were the first group who were studying under Sesotho in the primary school. It was a Zulu and Xhosa school, so we were the first Sesotho group. The problem started when I got promoted, because I had to take Zulu classes while I was a Sotho person. Primary was very nice compared to high school because at primary you don't have responsibilities, you are just a child living your own life. You don't care about people will ... you know, sometimes when you grow up you consider what would people think of us, and the opposite gender of course ...

DM: (laughing) We'll get to those kinds of questions later. Do you remember '94 - you were almost five - do you remember anything about what happened that year?

TKN: Not exactly everything because I was still young.

DM: What do you remember?

TKN: All I remember was that I was not yet in school, because I started school in 1996. I was still a child, playing all sorts of games that we play in the township, that's all. Okay, what I remember is the first elections that took place, that our parents participated on ... they were held in a certain church in the main road there. There was a long queue. People had to wait many hours before they could cast their first democratic votes.

DM: So, even if you were five and you were unable to vote, in fact you are just now almost going to be able to vote?

TKN: I don't think I am going to vote.

DM: We will come back to that. I imagine that it was fairly exciting ...?

TKN: I was a bit confused because I didn't know what was happening there, all I saw was a bunch of people, many people there. Because I remember, compared to the 1999 elections, the 1994 elections were huge ... because it was their first time they had to cast their vote. All I remember is that it was at night, we were there at night and there were many people, many of them.

Ahmed Veriava (AV): Subsequently, did you study about the elections in school, did they teach you?

TKN: No, not exactly.

DM: You said you started school in '96 ... How long were you in primary school, '96 until when?

TKN: 1996 till 2002.

DM: Give us some indication of what kind of things you learned in primary school. I mean this is your post- 1994 kid or young man now and the curriculum was changing, teaching was changing, what kind of things did you learn at school?

TKN: Compared to high school, at primary school level it is different because they don't only teach you about the academic stuff, they teach you about morals. At those times they were subjects such as religious studies and health education and that kind of stuff, so you learn almost everything about life at primary level. I think primary level is like the foundation of what you become in the near future because you cannot survive high school if you don't do well in primary. So basically I learnt almost everything I know at primary level, because at high school we mostly concentrated on the academic stuff.

AV: Just on that, it's a little bit of a strange question, but do you remember what was the most important thing that you learnt in primary school or what do you think was the most important thing?

TKN: I think the most important thing about primary, because when we started the previous syllabus which is Outcomes Based Education, there was a subject which goes by the name of Life Orientation, I think it is still there with this new syllabus. There you learn about real stuff concerning real people. The subject is a realistic one unlike the physics, because you learn the morals and stuff so the most important thing I learnt is that everything happens for a reason in life, that's the most important thing I learned.

DM: I know its hard to judge when you are young kid in primary school, but ... were your parents satisfied with the kind of school that you were getting?

TKN: I was raised by a single parent. I know for a fact that my mum was satisfied with my primary education. The concerns started at high school level, because at high school there are many things that come and distract your studies unlike at primary level where you are always concentrating on your studies. So I think my mum was pretty much satisfied.

DM: Okay, just to go back to that ...when did your father pass?

TKN: No, my father didn't pass away.

DM: So you were raised by a single parent?

TKN: I am an illegitimate child

DM: Okay, I don't know if we would use that word ... Do you have brothers and sisters?

TKN: I have a younger brother, he is about two years old.

DM: So you were pretty much a single child as well?

TKN: On my mother's side.

AV: Do you know your dad?

TKN: Yes, I know him.

AV: Do you guys have a good relationship?

TKN: Not really. We do have a relationship but it is not a good one, I cannot say it is a good one. Often when we try to build the relationship something is coming in the way, so we don't have a good relationship.

AV: History comes in the way, or a clash of personalities?

TKN: I think I will go with both because history does come in the way and the clash of personalities. Sometimes I feel like it's too late, he doesn't know a single thing about me. Eighteen years is a lot of time.

AV: Did you just start recently ...

TKN: I knew him well when I was about eleven years old. I knew him but I didn't know he was my father, I just knew him as a person living around. That was until he moved to the East Rand.

DM: What does your mother do?

TKN: At the moment she is unemployed.

DM: And before did she work somewhere?

TKN: She worked at a certain company called AK Stream Guards in Vereeniging.

DM: When you started talking about growing up in a big family, you know, when people take care of you ... when you were a kid I imagine your mother was still working, when you were younger?

TKN: She worked for a small period of time.

DM: Was she around most of the time, in other words?

TKN: Yes she was around most of the time. But at that time I had my grandmother and my great grandmother, that was before they passed on. So, I had three mothers in the same house, so I couldn't worry.

DM: So you didn't feel like you were on your own in some ways?

TKN: No.

DM: And just tell us, the house that you live in - is it a RDP house or is it a full bonded house?

TKN: It's one of these old houses whereby white people used to live in before black people came. These big houses from the past.

DM: When you were growing up did you ever have a problem, or did your family ever have a problem, with like the basic services and necessities in the house?

TKN: I think we did but I cannot say we were really that poor. We were underprivileged but not necessarily to conclude and say that we were poor. We did have problems with the necessities but when my grandmother and great-grandmother were still alive they used to provide for us with their pension fund. So it started to become hard in 2003 when my grandmother passed away. That's when things started a little tougher. But I am still surviving as you can see.

DM: Yeas, I can see that. Okay, just going back to school ... when you were in primary school was there any opportunity for you to do any extra curricular activities outside of school ... clubs, sports, things like that?

TKN: I was a soccer player for once.

DM: When did you start playing soccer?

TKN: I think I was in Grade 5, but then I quit when I was in Grade 9.

DM: And why did you quit?

TKN: There are a lot of reasons but the most one I think, is because of the injuries and stuff and it took a lot of my time because I was starting to be become serious with school work because at high school it is different from primary ...

AV: Did you take school very seriously?

TKN: I did until recently.

AV: What happened recently?

TKN: During 2005 I had a lot of external forces that influenced me otherwise.

AV: When you say 'external forces' do you want to speak more about that?

TKN: I think mostly friends. Luckily enough I was not attracted to drugs and alcohol and stuff but the most dominant was the friends and the opposite gender.

AV: And the opposite gender?

TKN: Yes.

DM: We can call them girls ... you prefer 'opposite gender'. Is that what they call the boys, the 'opposite gender' as well?

TKN: Yes.

DM: Those were part of all of us when we were growing up in high school, and then our interests become different ... but tell us when entered high school you said things started changing quite substantially ... what made you want to take school seriously at that point?

TKN: I had no other choice but to take school seriously. I grew up in a very disadvantaged environment so I knew the only way for me to succeed was to take school seriously. As I said, I had to quit soccer and I love music but I don't take music as a serious career because it can last you for about only two years, musicians come and go. So, I wanted a stable career for myself. That is why I took school very seriously. For me it was more of an obligation than anything else.

AV: In your terms, where were you seeing yourself in terms of ... where were you seeing school taking you ... ?

TKN: I always saw myself as a qualified lawyer, a fully qualified lawyer. But then when I grew up there was a whole lot of options, because when you grow up in the township schools it is different than the multi-racial schools because you don't get enough career

guidance and stuff. So, the one moment you want to be a chartered accountant, the next moment you want to be a doctor, sometimes you want to be a lawyer. I only started realising my real passion when I was at high school doing Grade 11, that I want to study law.

DM: What were your favourite subjects, what are your favourite subjects?

TKN: Believe me or not physics was my favourite.

DM: Physics?

TKN: Yes, it was challenging unlike the economics and stuff. With physics you deal with calculations and real stuff. Like, you know, you can calculate the speed of a car and stuff - so it was a more realistic subject.

DM: Very factually based, you could see what you were doing.

TKN: Yes.

DM: So why - if physics was your best subject that is quite a far cry from law - why the shift to saying you want to be a lawyer?

TKN: I always wanted to be a lawyer but then I couldn't take history and stuff - I am not into reading as such. I loved calculations but I know for a fact that for me, studying law needs a lot of reading. As a person you have to know your qualities. I cannot say I want to be an engineer when I know maths is not one of my strong points. So, I first considered my strong points and I knew that - I'm not boasting or anything - but I know that I can reason very well. So that's one of the reasons that made me want to take law as a career.

DM: So usually lawyers need to be able to communicate as well. Do you think you are a good communicator?

TKN: I think so.

DM: Clearly you are, you can talk about what you are thinking.

DM: Just tell us a little bit more about ... you know, whenever you get into the teenage years things, external factors start playing ... those kinds of things become important. Tell us a little bit more about, in this community here when you say friends and stuff, what was the pressure on you from that side, pressure to do what?

TKN: The most dominant pressure is alcohol, to be honest it is alcohol. Because I think everybody in this life style - I don't want to say in this community - but in this generation as a whole, when you become a teenager people take alcohol as if it is a pre-requisite or something, as if it is a necessity. I think the most dominant pressure, obstacle for me, was alcohol and of course, girls. But I don't think girls were that really destructive for me because I didn't take these sort of relationships very seriously.

DM: Which is probably a very healthy thing to do when you are young (all laughing) - you've still got your entire life ahead of you. If drinking is one of the main peer pressures as it is called - people saying you must do these things, you've got to do this - what kinds of impacts do you see that that has on younger kids? I mean even if you're not saying

yourself that you got involved, what do you look at and say, these are the things that it results in?

TKN: I think drinking brings out the 'id' in people, and then there's the 'ego' ... drinking brings out the real person inside their body. So if maybe I wanted ... let's say I hated someone, after a couple of drinks I have the guts to tell him straight to his face that I hate him ... so the most irritating thing for me about drinking is that you drink and drink and then you make a certain mistake that can be life-costing. Like maybe you have unprotected sex and in the morning you realise what a big mistake you have made and then its too late to amend because you find out maybe the girl is pregnant or you have got the disease. That's what irritates the most about drinking

DM: Okay. How would you describe all your peers here, the high school students that you've been hanging with for the last several years ... what would you consider to be the main problem areas? Let me be very specific - do kids here talk a lot about things like HIV/AIDS?

TKN: To be honest in this community, noone talks about HIV/AIDS. The main concern is pregnancy, they are always concerned about teenage pregnancy not HIV/AIDS. I don't know if it is ignorance or anything but I don't often hear people talking about HIV/AIDS. Their most concern is on teenage pregnancy.

DM: From your perspective - I mean we've heard different people say different things that we have already interviewed about HIV/AIDS - but from your perspective, why would you think that there is not much talk about it, even if there are maybe educational programmes in schools and Love Life and all those kinds of things?

TKN: Experience had taught me that people are mostly afraid of the truth. People are afraid to face the truth at most points. So in this community I think that is the problem, people are afraid to hear the truth about HIV/AIDS. In all these surroundings I think less than 30% of people know their status. Because people are afraid of the truth. And sometimes I think it is wise not to know your HIV/AIDS status but sometimes it is not ... it goes to a point whereby how you take it as a person, whether you think knowing your HIV/AIDS status is important or not. For myself personally I know knowing your HIV status is important but then sometimes, in most cases, you find that HIV doesn't kill people. Like for instance, let's say I am HIV-positive and I don't know, I continue living life even though is not so healthy as it should be. Then I go for a test and I find that I'm positive, I start getting ill from the mind because the mind tells me all sorts of things like you are going to die, there is no future for you. I start giving up on most things like schooling and stuff. So I think the stress contributes to a person dying before their time because we know for a fact that you can live with an HIV/AIDS for about eleven years but people starting to live with it because their mind set ...

DM: And besides the HIV/AIDS and alcohol situations, you said you were glad that you never got into drugs. Is it a problem amongst young people in this community?

TKN: Not really. I think the most dominant aspect in this community is alcohol and dagga only. I have never heard of people taking serious drugs like mandrax and stuff.

DM: So it doesn't feature very much?

TKN: No.

DM: And what about ... I guess what could generally be called social behaviour ... is there a lot of fighting, a lot of aggression, a lot of violence around for young people or does everybody pretty much get along?

TKN: We do get along but there are times like during parties and stuff, the fights begin when people have had a couple of drinks. Like I said that alcohol brings out the real person inside the body so when I'm drunk I have the ability to confront you and tell you, face to face, that I hate you. If you have done something wrong to me ... like myself, I am a really quiet type of a person ... if you do something wrong to me I tend to shut up and see where you are going with it. I am not the type of a person who likes confrontation but when you really get to me, that's when I confront you. So, with the effect of alcohol many people do like to confront others and sometimes in an immoral way - that's where the fighting begins.

AV: And in terms of just this area - are there any areas that you are afraid to go, is there somewhere that you wouldn't walk to?

TKN: Depending. In the evening I can walk almost anywhere but at night, it's different. There's a place called Eatonside.

DM: Called what?

TKN: Eatonside, just across the railway line. It's a bit dangerous for people who are afraid, depending on how many people you know in that area. The area that I fear the most in the Vaal Triangle has to be Zone 13 in Sebokeng.

DM: Why Zone 13?

TKN: There is a lot of violence there and unfortunately the violence is not mainly physical ... it involves guns and stuff. A person can pull a trigger for a simple thing.

AV: But is it the people in that area, or what makes it more dangerous than anywhere else in the Vaal?

TKN: I think it is the people in that area, because mostly there are these boys who that from the initiation school. They get the wrong idea from the initiation school because initiation is just a step to convert a boy to a man without spoiling anything. But they have the wrong perception about it, they think when you go there ... it is like when I go there and I come back I am more superior than other people ... so that's where the aggression and the violence starts. So Zone 13 is dominated by those boys who come from the initiation school.

DM: Amongst your generation, is ethnic identity any problem? Because in a place like the Vaal you've got people speaking Tswana, Zulu, Sotho ... is there any identification along ethnic lines for the younger generation, or is that not an issue at all?

TKN: To tell you the truth it is not an issue, it is not a problem, Zulu, Tswana, Sotho - it's not a problem.

AV: And how does the language ... like for instance you were saying that when you started at primary school it was a little bit difficult because it was a Zulu school ... when you and your friends talk what language are you speaking?

TKN: We speak both Sotho and Zulu and I think studying Zulu at primary was more of an advantage for me because now I am fluent in Zulu and Sotho and I know a little bit of Tswana as well so its an advantage because I can move to the North West without having a problem with language. I can go to Soweto, I can go to Kwazulu-Natal and there will be no problem - even in the Free State - because I can communicate well with the people.

DM: And you speak very good English as well.

TKN: I will take that as a compliment.

DM: I think you should. Because English means a lot in today's world - you can move anywhere because it's global. Even if some don't like that, it's the reality of the situation.

(Change of tape)

DM: You had said earlier on that up until recently that you were doing well in school and that you sort of got side tracked. Where are things now for you?

TKN: Basically I thought I was going downhill when I got to matric, but surprisingly enough I passed my matric with flying colours. So I think basically now, all I am waiting for is an answer from Wits University, announcing acceptance and stuff. If they take me then I think things are going great for me.

DM: When you saying flying, did you do well in all your subjects ...?

TKN: Except mathematics were I scored an E on higher grade, so it's not that good.

DM: But everything else you did pretty good in ... what did you do best in?

TKN: My home language Sesotho, because when I got to high school I had to stop doing Zulu and go back to Sotho and economics. I scored distinctions in both of them in higher grade.

AV: Can I ask you a question? What subjects did you do, you did maths ...?

TKN: Mathematics, Physical Science, Geography, Biology, Economics and two languages which is English and Sesotho.

AV: And you did a maths and physics course. When you were in high school, were there a lot of people doing maths and physics?

TKN: I think we were deceived by the words 'maths and science', because most people will tell you maths is life, science is life and stuff - but actually when we got to the maths and science course, many people failed dismally.

DM: What was the overall matric pass rate in your high school?

TKN: I think about 48%.

DM: Do you know how that compares to others around in the Vaal?

TKN: Yes, the only school that I know for a fact that we did better than, is our neighbours - Tshepo Temba high school - they scored about 23 %. As for the rest, they were higher than us. But I think the reason was that when we were in Grade 11 the history students had failed dismally so they had to push them to matric to only find that the history class consisted of about seventy pupils and only about four of them passed matric. So that's where our down fall was, because with the science and commerce students, we did very well.

AV: When you applied to Wits, what did you apply for?

TKN: I only applied this year for law. Because last year, as I told you, I thought I was going to through a downhill, I didn't even think I could pass matric and score an exemption.

AV: If you get accepted and Wits says yes you got a place, will you be able to afford it?

TKN: Not really. But I'm still comparing my options because I have applied to a lot of institutions for bursaries and stuff. Fortunately I have found someone who said if they accept me, he should be able to cover at least half of my expenses, like the tuition and books. Maybe I can look for someone else to cover accommodation and stuff ..

DM: Who is assisting you?

TKN: A certain man...I forgot the name.

AV: You don't have to tell me the name but is he a family member?

TKN: No, he is a friend of my uncle's.

AV: Is he like a businessman in the area?

TKN: He is a lawyer.

AV: He's wanting to groom another young lawyer?

TKN: Yes.

AV: Earlier when we were speaking you mentioned something about the ego and the id ... I'm just curious to know where you developed those ideas from?

TKN: From primary level, from a certain educator by the name of Mr. Motswaneng - he used to elaborate more about the ego and the id. Most people, especially us males, we are controlled by the ego. We didn't listen to what we are, we often considered who we are in the community not what we are. So basically, that's where I learned it from.

AV: Do you know where it's from actually, the original source?

TKN: No.

DM: He'll tell you afterwards.

DM: I wanted to get your take on your generation, it's a post 1994 generation. When you look at your friends when you guys sit down and talk, when you hang out on the street corner or go do whatever, having fun and everything else ... what mostly do you guys, girls as well, what do you talk about?

TKN: I think the more distracted people talk about parties and clubs all of those things. A few people talk about their careers, their dreams and aspirations and all those sorts of stuff. But mostly the dominant discussions are on events like parties and stuff.

DM: Okay which is what a lot of teenagers do irrespective of where they are. What do you if you were to be asked to describe kids from your high school, your friends here and everything ... what do you think most kids desire for their lives here? Where do you think their dreams lie for the most part?

TKN: What I know is that in my surroundings everyone wants to succeed. Even though they are not certain which direction they want to take but the only thing they are interested in is getting to the top. It doesn't matter whether you go to medicine, law or what, or even going to tertiary. Some people want to succeed but they are not ready to go to tertiary institutions, they just want to look for jobs and succeed and stuff. Because, as I said before, this is a very underprivileged society we are living in so people want to make the most of their lives. Most of us do it for our parents because they sacrificed a lot of things so that we can achieve what they want.

DM: In the last few years society has become much more technologically oriented so everybody has pretty much got a TV, their MP3, they have got a whole lot of things that other generations did not have. When you see things on television, movies, advertising and the papers and everything else - how is that you as a kid here, as a young man here in Vaal, see the rest of South Africa? When you look at kids in Sandton or the high school kids over there ... what do you think about the opportunities that exist for young people in this country?

TKN: I think all the right opportunities go to the wrong people. If you can check, most privileged children get the most opportunities yet they do not use them accordingly. Most children who grow up getting everything they want, they are not that eager to go forward with their studies and stuff. But we, as an underprivileged society, we have to work hard to achieve something you want, it does not come on a silver platter. I think South Africa as a whole ... sometimes I think South Africa is really going astray, with all the strikes and everything. Nowadays, if anyone wants something and he doesn't get it, we resort to boycotts and strikes and that sort of stuff. So I think we are going astray.

AV: Do you think it is going astray ... like for example there was these service delivery protests ... here in the Vaal. What's your impression of those?

TKN: I think people are getting all the wrong ideas about what to do when you want to fight for what is right, because people go a lot of wrong ways. They want to do right things in a wrong way. People don't have the right ideas as to how to go about solving a problem. So, that's my own take on the situation - like the people in Carltonville and stuff - they resort to fighting instead of more appropriate and moral ways of finding a solution.

AV: I want to ask you just in terms of ... you know, Dale was talking about how society is full of new technologies and so forth ... of all the things that you own what is your favourite possession?

TKN: I think my TV, I'll go with the TV.

DM: That interesting just from what you have just said. You were talking about people trying to find different ways I look at television - let me just say that I grew up in a home without any television, the first television I saw was like when I was 19 ... and now the rest of my life you see television and all these different changes. When I look at television these days, what comes across is a message that if you can't get something, get it however you can. In other words you can lie, you can cheat, you can do all these things ... When you look at TV, all the programmes, say the South African soap operas and all the new programmes, do you think a lot of kids are being influenced by those kinds of things?

TKN: Tremendously. Yes, because a lot of things we learn from the TV, not all of us have internet and stuff ... Like in the townships we do not concentrate on the age restriction. A movie can have an age restriction of say, 16 years, but you will find a 13-year old watching, no one will try to take him to bed or something. So, we get tremendously influenced by the things we see on TV. Like I said with the strikes and everything - since the educational strike, everyone seems to have gotten this perception that a strike can solve almost anything, a strike and a boycott. Because there was a strike in an area somewhere called 'Dunusa'. I don't know what the people were fighting for but they went to the tar and main roads and put stones there to stop vehicles from moving. So you can see when I say people are doing all the wrong things to get the right things. So I think they are mostly influenced by the media as a whole.

DM: So what do you think of our government? What do you think, as a young person who I am sure has been taught in school about the Constitution and the things in South African ... what do you think of this country and the way it's being run, as a young man? Do you pay much attention to that?

TKN: I do sometimes. Personally, I don't think this country has been run the correct way, or maybe it's because I quite dislike the president, I don't know. I don't think the country it being run ... especially the justice system, I don't think it's being run in a proper manner. I think sometimes the law only applies to those who are a bit poor. Many rich people get away with crimes but as for us poor people, we get fat sentences for small crimes ... and also the education system, it is really, really low. You can find out in township schools, the standard of education and teaching is a bit lower than the private schools and stuff. I think the government should do more in equipping schools for teaching methods ...

AV: When we started to interview you and we were talking about the 1994 elections, you said that you probably won't vote now that you are old enough to. Why?

TKN: Because I think the government is all talk most of time. They promise and promise but they do not deliver. So, voting for me personally, is like a waste of time. You stay in the queue for four hours to cast a vote yet you don't get what they promised - they promise you jobs, they promise you this and that but at the end of the day you get nothing. So, I don't think voting for me, as such, is such an important thing. It was, when we thought we were fighting to get a better life. It is better, but not exactly how we expected it.

DM: So if that's the case, if you're saying that voting doesn't seem to make much of a difference and that the people who go and block the roads are going about it the wrong way ... how do you think people should change things for themselves if they are not satisfied with their own situation?

TKN: I think the most important thing is education. When you get educated you can get proper methods of problem solving. Like at high school, they do teach you the problem solving skills and stuff ... I don't know if it is us black people or what but most people like solving problems in a more violent manner, I do not think ... I think if we were educated enough we would find more suitable methods of problem solving, except violence of course.

DM: Just out of interest, do you know who your local counsellor is here?

TKN: I do.

DM: You do?

TKN: Yes.

DM: What do you think of him - is it a male or a female?

TKN: He is a male.

DM: What do you think of him?

TKN: I think he is just ... he is exactly identical to the President. He is not in my good books.

AV: When you are say the president and the counsellor are not in your good books ...?

TKN: They promise and they do not deliver. The President is more of a dictator nowadays than a President. As for our counsellor, he promises and promises but he doesn't deliver. We've had so many problems. I remember in 2002 he came around to our school at primary level and they interviewed him. Since then he promised us that he would build a sports centre for us. Five years later there is still no sports centre in this area. So I think he is all talk and promises, but no delivery.

DM: Just one thing. You talked about wanting to go to law school. Previously you mentioned about that area over there. Zone 11 I think ... 13 ... and you talked about initiates and people coming back. What do you, as someone who has obviously thought about these things and of going and practicing law, what do you think of the merger about what we would consider to be the western way of doing things and the more traditional way of doing things? Does that come into play here in your lives? There are a lot of things - I mean we dress like you see the guys on TV, we dress like them, cars ... a lot of western stuff. But is there any other traditional things that, as a young person, impacts on you?

TKN: Personally I am not into tradition and stuff because I don't even believe in those ancestral stuff and everything else. But what I believe is that if you believe in something and you have 100 % faith in it, it will work for you. So I believe that everyone should concentrate on what they think is best for them. If you believe that tradition is the way to go, then go with your whole mindset to it; if you believe that the western way is the way

to go, go with your whole mindset. But, I pretty much prefer the western way even though I do practice some traditional rituals at home because I come from, not really a traditional family, but we do have some rituals like the slaughterings and stuff..

DM: I just have one follow-up question. You are getting to that stage in life where you're probably thinking about hooking up with a woman and everything ... so if you get married would you pay lobola?

TKN: It depends on which woman I'm marrying. If the woman comes from a traditionally based family then I will pay the lobola but if I am marrying a coloured woman, I won't pay.

AV: In terms of your life at the moment, and it needn't be someone from South Africa, do you have heroes?

TKN: No. I have role models not heroes.

AV: Who would they be, your role models?

TKN: The person that I told you about. The one who is going to pay for my studies. He is a sort of inspiration for me to go forward.

AV: And in terms of popular culture ... you said you enjoy music ... so from that kind of world, who be the people you strongly identify with?

TKN: I prefer South African musicians, unlike overseas musicians. Because the American artists, they promote the stuff that is not going to build anything for us - they promote pornography, drugs and all the unimportant stuff. So, I prefer the more locally artists. When we support them, we are building a more positive future for ourselves. So, I don't really like the overseas-based artists, I prefer the local artists ... the likes of DJ Sbu and stuff.

AV: Just the last question in terms of popular culture. You earlier said that you enjoy music - do you play an instrument or do you make your own music?

TKN: No, I just sing with my voice, no instrument. Mostly I like singing gospel songs because I am a regular church goer.

DM: Just out of interest, what church do you go to?

TKN: Maranatha Reformed Church of Christ.

DM: Is that the one down here (pointing down the road)?

TKN: Yes.

DM: Okay. We already know that church.

DM: And do you go by yourself or do you go with your mom?

TKN: I go with the rest of my family.

DM: Just a couple of last things. The one thing that I was interested in ... to the degree that you said you don't like so much of overseas artists, but what do you pay attention to

as an almost 18 year old, in terms of what is going on in the rest of the world? Do you care? Do you have any interest about what is happening outside South Africa?

TKN: Mostly I care about things that happen in Africa. As for other continents, I don't necessarily take note unless it is something that can have an effect on me as a person. But mostly I am concerned about Africa, like the stuff that is happening in Sudan, in Darfur. I do pay attention to that.

DM: Where do you get the most of your news from when you hear about these things?

TKN: SABC Africa on SABC 2, late.

DM: Late at night?

TKN: Yes, late.

DM: Is there any thing that we haven't asked you that you would particularly like to say. You know, these interviews that we are doing are just, more or less, to capture some of your own life story, what you are thinking about your own existence, and we have asked very specific questions. Is there anything that you want to say to us that we haven't covered?

TKN: I think what I need to say is a little bit of concern, pointed to the government. I think they are not enough programmes whereby we are trying to build the youth and stuff. Many of these programs are concentrated on the adult people and they have the wrong idea of indulging the youth in all these activities. I know because I am part of the youth. Youth don't go along with politics. If you want to involve the youth in the running of the country don't go the political way. Have a strategy where you take them ... I have a saying that says if you want to be the best then go and associate with the best. So if you want to indulge the youth in something that you want, then go the route that will take you whereby you start with the things that they like the most, attract them by the things they like the most. Like festivals and concerts, you can start by attracting them by using those things then you can come to the more academic stuff, whereby let's say you are aiming at building their self esteem. You can advise them but then you can organise artists and stuff to perform. That's where the youth will come in a great capacity. But if you go the political route, start pasting ANC logos and APF and whatever, I don't think the youth will come and you will have wasted time and money. So I think they should have strategies of how they deal with these things, especially concerning the youth because we are a very sensitive generation. That's pretty much all.

DM/AV: Thank you very much.

TKN: Thanks.

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