

NELSON MANDELA AND LILIESLEAF. REFLECTIONS AND MEMORY.

Dr Garth Benneyworth

Head of Department: Heritage Studies

Sol Plaatje University

Kimberley South Africa

garth.benneyworth@spu.ac.za

When Nelson Mandela went underground this was a sudden arrangement and the African National Congress (ANC) was not yet organised for underground activities with respect to transport, safe houses and other supporting infrastructure. However Mandela needed to be sheltered. Initially he used various safe houses in and around Johannesburg. Consequently the South African Communist Party (SACP) which had recently purchased Liliesleaf farm chose to make it available to Mandela, until such time as alternatives could be found.¹ Yet from the outset the understanding was that Liliesleaf would function as a SACP safe house. Security would be tightly enforced as the Party went to great lengths to screen the true purpose behind the purchase in 1961. They established a front company called Navian Ltd owned by Party member Vivien Ezra. He in turn let out the farm to the Goldreich family who would act as the white façade or front on the property. Registering attorneys were changed, false names and intermediaries used along with other ruses. Consequently the arrangement was that should any new person be introduced to Liliesleaf, this had to be cleared by the Secretariat of the SACP Central Committee.

In October 1961, Arthur Goldreich advised Mandela that he would soon move out of Johannesburg and since Liliesleaf was unoccupied, offered him a hide out. A few days later Goldreich arranged for Michael Harmel to drive Mandela to Liliesleaf. Mandela moved in under the pretext of being a 'houseboy' or caretaker, there to look after the place until the white occupants arrived. Known

¹ Interview with A. Kathrada, 1 April 2004.

as David the gardener Mandela wore the blue overalls so characteristic of black male employees of the time. He grew a beard and donned a shabby coat.²

Mandela prepared meals and ran errands for the workers from Atlas Plumbing, busy renovating the outbuildings and restoring the property which had fallen into disrepair.³ It was around this time, during October or November 1961 that Raymond Mhlaba arrived at the farm and took up residence in the thatched cottage. He was soon joined by Andrew Mlangeni and two other Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) cadres en route to China to undergo specialist military training. During the fortnight that Mhlaba spent at Liliesleaf Mandela encouraged him to read Mao Tse-Tung's works on guerrilla warfare. Mhlaba assisted Mandela, together with Joe Slovo and Lionel Bernstein, to draft the MK constitution. From the very beginning of the farms' association with the liberation movements the thatched cottage functioned as a military centre.⁴

However security was undermined through the sheer necessity to operate from and meet and stay at Liliesleaf. The farm was visited by known and listed communists, Lionel Bernstein, Joe Slovo, Michael Harmel, Raymond Mhlaba and Ahmed Kathrada; all of whom were known to Security Branch and were under surveillance. Gerhard Ludi, an agent of the Republican Intelligence Department (RID) which was formed in early 1963 had already penetrated the SACP. Ludi stated that the main SACP persons of interest that formed their intelligence target were Govan Mbeki, Raymond Mhlaba, Michael Harmel, Lionel Bernstein, Hilda Watts, Harold Wolpe and Ahmed Kathrada. Ludi stated that Mhlaba, Bernstein and Harmel would come in for special attention.⁵ All individuals who were directly connected to Liliesleaf from 1961. Any one of them could have been tailed to the farm, including Winnie Mandela and the Mandela children who were smuggled in for visits. The weekend

² A. Sparks interview with N. Mandela at Liliesleaf, December 1991. Copy in author's collection.

³ N. Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, (Great Britain, 2013), 332. In 2005 the author interviewed B. Gaitz the former proprietor of Atlas plumbing.

⁴ R. Mhlaba, *Personal Memoirs, Reminiscing from Rwanda and Uganda*, (HSRC Press, 2001), 112.

⁵ Liliesleaf Archives, G. Benneyworth of Site Solutions© Appendix C, Interview with G. Ludi.

visits for Mandela were stolen moments during which his family enjoyed more privacy than at home. The children would run and play, they were secure within this idyllic bubble.⁶

At Liliesleaf the sense of false security insidiously took hold. Mandela returned home late one night after a meeting to find the house lights on and the front door wide open and a radio blaring. Inside he found Harmel fast asleep.⁷ On another occasion Mandela was alerted to two white youths hunting birds near the river. He went to ascertain their purpose but quickly realised that this, 'was a foolish security lapse, they soon realised I wasn't an ordinary gardener'.⁸ The youths questioned Mandela as to why he spoke such good English; he lamely replied that he had attended school in the Eastern Cape and journeyed to Johannesburg with his 'master who was a good man'.⁹ The boys returned home and reported the encounter to their father, who became suspicious. He wrote to Arthur Goldreich, requesting an opportunity to meet with David. Who knows if he relayed his suspicions to the police?

AN EPIPHANY AND NOBEL PEACE PRIZE.

In December 1961 the Goldreich family arrived to fulfil the role of the official tenant. It was during December 1961 that Mandela had an epiphany; a realisation that killing and taking life remains one of life's most profound lessons. Such an innocuous weapon is an air rifle, firing lead pellets propelled by compressed air. In South Africa a license is still not required to own one and the same was true then. Another advantage is that the rifle emits very little sound so any formalized target practice requiring repetitive shooting would pass unnoticed by inquisitive neighbours who might be within earshot.

The air rifle belonged to Arthur Goldreich and was brought over during the move from Parktown. This weapon would play a critical part in the preparations for Mandela's role as a military commander and a life changing incident for him which occurred on the lawns near the front of the

⁶ N. Mandela, *Long Walk*, 335.

⁷ N. Mandela, *Long Walk*, 334.

⁸ A. Sparks interview with N. Mandela at Liliesleaf, December 1991. Copy in author's collection.

⁹ *Ibid.*

house. Although Mandela never discussed his imminent mission into Africa or any of his plans with Goldreich, the veteran of the Israeli War of Independence lent a coaching hand. This air rifle formed the basic instrument of Mandela's musketry training when Goldreich ran him through the rudiments of firing a rifle. 'Shouldering, aiming, breathing and squeezing the trigger. It was better than (using) a broomstick and more effective'.¹⁰

They set up an informal shooting range on the sprawling lawns in front of the house. Mandela and Goldreich fixed a circular paper target to a tall tree and Mandela took up position on the verandah and opened fire. He proved very adept and a quick learner.¹¹ Some cloth was also stretched over an artist's easel to resemble a human silhouette and erected near the vegetable gardens.¹² At some point during this period Nelson Mandela took aim at a bird perched in a tall tree and overhead Hazel Goldreich from the veranda jokingly remark that he would never hit it. Mandela squeezed the trigger, the bird dropped dead but Paul Goldreich scolded him. 'Why did you do that David? Where is the bird's mother'?'¹³

Mandela recalled.

My mood immediately shifted from one of pride to shame; I felt that this small boy had far more humanity than I did. It was an odd sensation for a man who was the leader of a nascent guerrilla army.¹⁴ It worried me for days. It was an ecological lesson from a six-year-old. I vowed never to kill any creature again.¹⁵

¹⁰ Email from A. Goldreich to G. Benneyworth in response to questions about this episode at Liliesleaf and the origins of the rifle and the practice with it. 23 February 2007. Copy in author's collection.

¹¹ Interview with A. Goldreich 1 April 2004.

¹² Discussions between the author and D. Goldberg at Liliesleaf, 28 February 2004.

¹³ N. Mandela, *Long Walk*, 335.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ A. Sparks interview with N. Mandela at Liliesleaf, December 1991. Copy in author's collection.

Mandela vividly remembered this incident. However, for Hazel and Paul Goldreich this event has slipped from their memories.¹⁶ What is remembered was that during the the late afternoon once Mandela finished whatever he was working on he took the two Goldreich boys, Nicholas and Paul, for walks in the garden downhill towards the river and vegetable gardens.¹⁷ Hazel Goldreich knew Mandela and trusted her children in his care. She sensed that he was:

Severed from his own family and missed his own children, and knew that her boys were safe in the hands of such a remarkable person. Sometimes he (Mandela) took an air rifle and sometimes shot at birds. They used to enjoy their time with him.¹⁸

The trio shot birds amongst the dense foliage. Paul retains a distinct memory of being with Mandela and trailing birds with the sights of a rifle.¹⁹

And what of the rifle?

The air rifle formed part of the household contents handed over by the Security Police into their disposal system on 26 March 1964, once they determined that the hundreds of household items, from toothbrushes to Texan cigarettes, were no longer required as state evidence. The air rifle and contents were publicly auctioned on or around 27 October 1965. This rifle fetched the sum of R 7.00.²⁰ About 700.00 in today's terms. Its true value is incalculable.

¹⁶ Discussions between H. Goldreich, P. Goldreich and the author during 2005.

¹⁷ Interview with H. Goldreich, 26 October 2005.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Email from P. Goldreich to G. Benneyworth, 11 November 2005. Copy in author's collection.

²⁰ National Archives of South Africa (NASA), Directorate of Security Legislation, ANC, File 2.2.38.

During the afternoon of 10 December 1961, Mandela sat in the kitchen enjoying the warm afternoon sun.²¹ This was the kitchen in the outbuildings and not as is widely believed to have been inside the main house. On 10 December 2005 the author tested this theory by standing in both the main house kitchen and the outbuilding kitchen. The main house kitchen is not north facing like the outbuilding kitchen, instead it faces south and so it receives no afternoon sun. Consequently this incident had to have occurred in the kitchen in the outbuildings. There was no third kitchen at Liliesleaf. A radio broadcast announced heartening news, the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Chief Albert Luthuli. Mandela felt enormous pleasure; here was an acknowledgement of the struggle and the achievements of Chief Luthuli as a leader of that struggle. The award represented recognition by the western world that their struggle was moral and one that should no longer be ignored by the major powers.

Misperceptions exist that Luthuli had categorically rejected violent methods. On the contrary he supported the formation of MK and received regular briefings and smuggled messages to his home in Groutville or during secret meetings in safe houses in the KwaDukuza area. Nevertheless, the juxtaposition of this award against the South African reality became all the more apparent when on 16 December 1961 MK launched its first attacks, following these up with additional strikes against government infrastructure on New Year's Eve. Explosions thumped across the night and leaflets announcing the MK Manifesto and the emergence of the armed wing were circulated countrywide.

Shortly before the New Year during one of their visits Mandela's son Makgato and Nicholas Goldreich were playing together and stumbled upon a copy of Drum Magazine, which Winnie had brought, lying in the kitchen in the outbuildings. An article with a write up carried a photograph of Mandela and mentioned him by name. Nicholas deduced that this was none other than David the gardener and armed with the paper concealed behind his back stomped into Mandela's room and confronted him. With a flourish Nicholas produced the paper and presented his conclusions. Mandela

²¹ N. Mandela, *Long Walk*, 337.

was extremely alarmed, he was exposed and his entire operation could be jeopardized. He immediately took Nicholas aside for a walk around the property during which he swore the child to secrecy. To this day, Nicholas cannot recall what they discussed.²² During 1962 or 1963 a child from across the road who was in fact a police informant probed Nicholas for information, only to be told that he couldn't break a secret.²³ Nicholas's father Arthur recalled that:

Nicholas is a very curious fellow, he knew how to ask questions. And he came with something behind his back like this, and he went to the room and he said, David, Winnie is you wife, he said yes, and then he gave the names of the children, these are your children, and he said yes, so you are Nelson Mandela. Hah! And he took our Drum and there was a photograph of the family and of Nelson Mandela and he showed it to him, because Nelson asked him, how did you work that out?²⁴

MILITARY PREPERATIONS AND FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Mandela occupied what became known during the Rivonia Trial as Room 12 of 13 which comprised the outbuildings behind the main house. This cubby hole of a space doubled up as his quarters and office. A bare box of a room, devoid of any decoration it was:

Exactly like a cell, I mean it was like a Buddhist monk's cell, when you have this notion of someone who has given up the vestiges of a life, and that was prior to devotion and faith and trust and service, this room was an epitome of that kind of service, un-enhanced and monk-like, absolutely pure in that sense". The room, "had bare floor, bare walls, no decoration

²² Interview with A. Goldreich and interview with N. Goldreich, 2005.

²³ NASA, NAN 52, Box 8, Vol. MS. 385.23. Statement by George Mellis.

²⁴ Interview with A. Goldreich.

whatsoever. A table, modest small table, a hard chair and bed. That was it, and a place for some books, I remember because he read all the time.²⁵

During December 1961, Kathrada visited Liliesleaf to attend a party. Instead of joining everyone Kathrada spent the evening conversing with Mandela inside his room. He learnt that leading ANC members had formed MK as an independent organisation and that Mandela was about to embark on a foreign mission. Mandela asked Kathrada to continue assisting his family.²⁶

While many white members of the SACP had seen some form of military service and even combat in various military theatres, the African MK members lacked practical military knowledge. Vivien Ezra saw action against the Egyptians during the War of Independence, Goldreich fought with the Palmach, an elite paramilitary force of Haganah, the military wing of the Jewish National Movement in Palestine and was also a veteran of the War of Independence; Bernstein served as an artilleryman in some of the key battles in Italy; Jack Hodgson and David Kitson both saw action as military engineers against the Germans in North Africa and Italy, while Joe Slovo witnessed some spectacular artillery bombardments in Italy when with a signals unit.

The launch of MK was imminent and the China group would be gone for some time. As Commander in Chief, Mandela saw the need to address this deficiency as rapidly as possible. Within the quiet space afforded by Liliesleaf he applied himself to the task at hand. His day was shaped by a self-imposed regimen, from exercise to time spent reading, studying, learning and writing. He absorbed a variety of books, provided by Goldreich and Bernstein, which formed a central resource during this programme of comprehensive study.²⁷

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Discussion with A. Kathrada, 6 June 2005.

²⁷ Interview with A. Goldreich.

The theoretical and biographical works included Klaustewitz's classic *The Art of Warfare*; Che Guevara's *Guerrilla Warfare*; Denys Reitz's autobiography *Commando*; *Communist Revolutionary Warfare*; Tom Wintringham's *New Ways of War*; and *Games of Strategy*, theory and applications. Other booklets included, *African Revolution*, and *Sabotage* by Leslie Bell. Mandela appraised aspects of South African history such as the Great Trek, Boer guerrilla warfare tactics and Boer military officers, such as General de Wet and J.B.M. Hertzog, who successfully waged guerrilla warfare during the South African War of 1899-1902. His analysis covered various political and military theories such as Dialectical Materialism and Political Economy, together with a study of military strategy, guerrilla warfare organisations and their military histories. Mandela assessed *Strategic Problems of China's Revolutionary War*; the Irgun ZL; and Hukbalakap.²⁸ He also wrote at least two papers" *Guerrillas never wage positional warfare*, and *Part One, How to be a Good Communist*. He studied a variety of works, committing to memory what he read, through transcribing his thoughts into notes.

Goldreich offered much advice and helped fill in the gaps in his understanding.²⁹ The two visited each other in their respective quarters; Goldreich from the luxury of the main house and Mandela from within his concrete and brick cubbyhole out back. Numerous political discussions ensued about ideological and practical questions, the Congress Alliance, MK and its activities and Goldreich's experiences as a soldier.³⁰

In December 1961, the Pan-African Freedom Movement for East, Central and Southern Africa (PAFMECSA) invited the ANC to attend its February 1962 conference in Addis Ababa. On 3 January 1962 the Underground National Executive delegated Mandela and instructed him to visit Chief Luthuli to discuss the matter. His mission also had a broader purpose; he was to arrange

²⁸ The police found these works in the coal bunker and Room 4.

²⁹ N. Mandela, Statement from the Dock, Rivonia Trial.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

political and economic support and military training for MK in as many countries as possible.

Mandela was to link up with the External Mission headed by Oliver Tambo and explain the strategic shift of the ANC.³¹

Mandela was determined to boost the image and reputation of the ANC in areas where the organisation was still relatively unknown and to counter Pan African Congress propaganda. His only reservation was a prior promise that he would remain in the country but his colleagues quickly persuaded him to go. On 8 January he met with Chief Luthuli who approved his mission.

Mandela returned to Johannesburg the following day. As permits and passports were not required to enter Bechuanaland this British controlled territory would form Mandela's exit and re-entry point. Once in he was to lay low before linking up with Joe Matthews. Flight arrangements were made through an intermediary and involved chartering Captain Herbert Bartaune's aircraft to fly both Mandela and Matthews from Bechuanaland to Tanganyika. Payment was made by a bank draft originating from Dar es Salaam. This transaction was tracked by the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) who monitored Frene Ginwala working in the ANC office in Tanganyika.³²

Unbeknownst to them, Captain Bartaune was a multiple agent working for Bechuanaland Intelligence, Britain's SIS, the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and South Africa's Security Branch.³³ Indeed Bartaune's charter company Bechuanaland Air Safaris was established by

³¹ NASA, NAN 52 Box 7 MS 385.19, Nelson Mandela's Journal.

³² National Archives of the United Kingdom, (NAUK), DO 119/1478, SECRET: Resident Commissioner to Secretary of State for the Colonies, London.

³³ NAUK, FO 371/167528, South Africa: Export of Arms to South Africa: Smuggling and Gun-running Activities, 1963.

the SIS with him as its Managing Director.³⁴ He was certainly no sympathiser of communists and liberationists having been a member of the Nazi Party and served with the Luftwaffe during the Second World War.³⁵

Joe Matthews was also a closely monitored target for both British Intelligence and the South African Police. Matthews then based in Basutoland (Lesotho) already had a file opened by British Intelligence. Classified Top Secret, it contains documents marked UK Eyes Only, the information deemed so sensitive that Britain did not share it, as traditionally done, with strategic allies such as the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.³⁶ Mandela's file on the other hand was classified Secret, a security grading one peg lower than that of Matthews.³⁷ Nor is any of its contents marked UK Eyes Only meaning that it may have been shared with the UK's traditional allies. On 19 January 1962 Mandela flew from Lobatse to Mbeya in Bartuane's aircraft. He was going to have a tough time dodging the eyes and ears of all these intelligence agencies and those of the Central African Federation and Portugal while crisscrossing Africa.

MILITARY TRAINING.

The purpose of this section is not to give a detailed account of Mandela's Africa mission, rather it is an outline and to integrate his military training into the context of firearms and Liliesleaf. A reason for this is there is a direct link between his writings during his mission and Liliesleaf after he returned to Liliesleaf in 1962.

³⁴ G. Benneyworth, conference paper: *Bechuanaland's aerial pipeline. State surveillance, repression and counter-insurgency, 1960-1965*. (University of Witwatersrand, The Politics of Armed Struggle in Southern Africa Conference, 24 November 2016).

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ NAUK, DO 119. 1229: TOP SECRET: Vincent Joe Mathews (VJ), 4 July 1962–4 October 1962.

³⁷ NAUK, DO 119. 1548: Secret: Nelson Mandela.

After attending the PAFMECSA conference and meeting with various ambassadors, on 4 February 1962 Mandela visited the Debra Zain Air Force Training Centre and met with Ethiopian military officers. Three days later he visited a military camp outside Addis Ababa and on 10 February 1962 met with Lt. General Kebede Guebre, Chief of Staff for the Imperial Forces of Ethiopia. They discussed the logistics implications for training MK in Ethiopia.³⁸

Rabat in Morocco proved a key stop as it was the cross roads for virtually every important liberation movement in Africa. To conceal Mandela's identity and keep his movements secret he was included with a group from the Portuguese colonies of Angola, Mozambique and Cape Verde.³⁹ On the 18 March 1962, he left by train for Oudja where they were received by an officer of the Algeria's National Liberation Front (Front de Liberation Nationale (FLN) and travelled to the Zegangan Training Base in former Spanish Morocco. The first recorded instance of Mandela using military firearms then occurred. He fired a German Mauser rifle and a machine gun being, 'warmly complimented on accuracy'.⁴⁰

While returning to Oudja they stopped at Beubker to inspect military dugouts at the Headquarters of the Northern Areas battalion. Mandela used a pair of field glasses to watch some French troops across the border and imagined he was looking at uniformed South African Defence Force soldiers.⁴¹ After returning to Oujda, discussion continued at Headquarters around four topics namely, the relationship between the ALN inside and outside of Algeria; the structure of the ALN inside Algeria; French tactics to destroy the ALN and the relationship between sabotage and guerrilla operations. The Algerian officers imparted much advice stressing that thorough preparation and unity

³⁸ NASA, TAB, WLD, CC 578, Trial of Mkwai, Kitson, Chiba, Mathews and Maharaj, 1964, Exhibit R17.

³⁹ South African Broadcasting Corporation interview with Noereddine Djoudi, 2005. Copy of transcript in author's collection.

⁴⁰ NASA, TAB, WLD, CC 578, Trial of Mkwai, Kitson, Chiba, Mathews and Maharaj, 1964, Exhibit R16.

⁴¹ N. Mandela, *Long Walk*, 355.

is needed before starting a revolution and that it is critical that events must link and create psychological impact and propaganda capital.⁴²

On 23 March 1962 they met Jacques Verges in Rabat who Mandela described as ‘our friend’, who hinted, ‘that all our demands will be met, even if NOT fully’.⁴³ These demands being financial and military support. On 26 March 1962, discussions ensued with the heads of the ALN and officers of the political department.⁴⁴ Mandela recalled the advice from Algeria’s military commander Houari Boumedienne that the purpose of armed struggle should not be to overthrow the apartheid government by force. Instead the ANC should use this tactic to unleash broader political forces thus forcing the government to the negotiating table.⁴⁵

The South African Police were aware of Mandela’s activities in Morocco, in particular the content of some of his discussions in Rabat with Dr Khatib, Jacques Verges and others during 6 March 1962 to 13 March 1962. The South African ambassador in Brussels ran what he described as a secret yet reliable source, a former SS officer living in Spain, who in turn handled a Moroccan-based agent.⁴⁶ In his Top Secret dispatch to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs the Ambassador, while acknowledging the dreadful past of this SS officer, guaranteed the integrity of his information and that of his Moroccan-based agent. These two spies reported that the Algerians would dispatch highly trained saboteurs to Dar es Salaam to train locals in sabotage skills for operations in Mozambique and possibly South Africa. This is confirmed by the fact that while in Rabat Mandela did discuss Dar es Salaam. When a Moroccan official promised facilities for military training and offered to airlift

⁴² NASA, TAB, WLD, CC 578, Trial of Mkwai, Kitson, Chiba, Mathews and Maharaj, 1964, Exhibit R16.

⁴³ NASA, TAB, WLD, CC 578, Trial of Mkwai, Kitson, Chiba, Mathews and Maharaj, 1964, Exhibit R17.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ A. Sampson, *Mandela The Authorized Biography*, (New York, 1999) p 166.

⁴⁶ NASA, BTS, 109/7, Training of Saboteurs, Top Secret dispatch, Brussels Ambassador to Secretary of Foreign Affairs, 13 March 1962.

recruits from Dar es Salaam he asked Mandela 'where do you want us to send the weapons'? Mandela replied, 'Dar es Salaam'.⁴⁷

From Morocco, Mandela travelled to Mali, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ghana. Then to London for a ten day visit before arriving in Addis Ababa on 26 June 1962 to undergo six months military training. However his training was cut short during July 1962 when the ANC requested his urgent return to South Africa. Nevertheless he trained in the theory of demolitions with some live practice, landmines, how to produce homemade bombs, fired smoke and high explosive shells using a 60mm mortar and underwent infantry firearms training. Firearms used were the 7.92 m.m. Czechoslovakian Mauser bolt action rifle, a semi-automatic American M1 Garand rifle and Czechoslovakian Bren machine gun. Other training included infantry field craft and analyzing the hierarchy of a conventional army.⁴⁸ On 10 July 1962, Mandela viewed a mortar fire demonstration and two days later spent four hours on a shooting range.⁴⁹ Mandela trained with an automatic rifle and pistol during target practice on two separate ranges, at Kolfe with the Emperors Guard and another range about fifty miles away with 'the entire battalion.'⁵⁰

RETURN TO SOUTH AFRICA.

Prior to his departure Colonel Tadesse, who lectured him on matters of military science, arranged Mandela's flight to Khartoum. Before he left, Tadesse presented him with a gift, 'an automatic pistol and 200 rounds of ammunition'.⁵¹ What type of pistol this was remains the subject of much conjecture. Nevertheless this gift was difficult to conceal particularly the ammunition during his

⁴⁷ D.J. Smith, *Young Mandela*, (Great Britain, 2010), 276.

⁴⁸ G. Benneyworth, 'Armed and Trained: Nelson Mandela's 1962 Military Mission as Commander in Chief of Umkhonto we Sizwe', *South African Historical Journal*, 63, (2011), 92-93.

⁴⁹ NASA, TAB, WLD, CC 578, Trial of Mkwai, Kitson, Chiba, Mathews & Maharaj, 1964, Exhibit R17.

⁵⁰ Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk*, 362.

⁵¹ N. Mandela, *Long Walk*, 363.

return leg of the journey. It was heavy and comparable to ‘carrying a small child on one’s back’.⁵² In Khartoum Mandela entered a hotel carrying the ‘pistol in a holster inside my jacket and the two hundred rounds wrapped around my waist inside my trousers’.⁵³ Mandela flew to Dar es Salaam where he met an MK group led by Johnstone Makatini and Joseph Jack from Natal, on route to Morocco for military training.⁵⁴ Makatini later recollected that he nearly fainted at the sight of Mandela ‘wearing a holster with a pistol and looking like an accomplished soldier’.⁵⁵

President Nyerere provided Mandela with a private plane to Mbeya where he rendezvoused with Fish Keitseng and Oliver Tambo. Keitseng chartered Captain Bartaune’s aircraft for the flight to Bechuanaland and given that South African Security Branch were all over Lobatse Keyseng recommended that they land in Kanye instead.⁵⁶ There the local magistrate Denis Atkins accompanied by a ‘security man’ intercepted Mandela.⁵⁷ Atkins asked Mandela to correctly identify himself or he would be arrested as Atkins instructions were to assist. Mandela replied, ‘If you insist that I am Nelson Mandela and not David Motsamayi I will not challenge you’. Atkins smiled replying, ‘we expected you yesterday’, and together with his security official drove Mandela to Lobatse. He then

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ N. Mandela, *Long Walk*, 364.

⁵⁴ Mandela had recently secured Moroccan military training facilities for MK during discussions with Dr Khatib and Jacques Verges.

⁵⁵ www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/people/jmmakatini.html, accessed on 21 January 2010, Statement by the National Executive Committee of the African National Congress

⁵⁶ Keitseng, F., *FISH KEITSENG ON NELSON MANDELA IN BOTSWANA (PART 2)*.
<https://www.facebook.com/Botswana.Government/posts/552102291539100>. As assessed 15 November 2016.

⁵⁷ Denis Arthur T. Atkins was the Kanye Magistrate in 1962, see: Parsons, N and & Gumbo G., *Bechuanaland Colonial Administrators c.1884-c.1965*, (University of Botswana History Department 2002),
<http://www.thuto.org/ubh/bw/colad/coloff.htm#n8>. Assessed 29 January 2010.

rendezvoused with Joe Modise and Jonas Matlou.⁵⁸ Atkins told Mandela that the South African Police knew of his return and suggested that he leave the next day.⁵⁹ Mandela traveled to Matlou's house and left that night for Liliesleaf farm in Rivonia where he arrived the following day being driven by Cecil Williams in Williams's Austin, registration number TJ 177 609.⁶⁰ They arrived at Liliesleaf, during dawn on 24 July 1962.⁶¹ A South African Police report recorded that when he entered South Africa Mandela wore his Ethiopian army uniform and possessed some R40 000.00. They had tracked him from Tanganyika; knew his movements, modes of transport the type of clothing he wore and who he met with while in Bechuanaland.⁶²

NELSON MANDELA'S LAST STAY AT LILIESLEAF.

While Mandela was abroad, stories had circulated that he had changed his politics, and switched to an African nationalist paradigm. Indeed the PAC made claims that he had joined them. Some key political people in South Africa were disturbed by this. Consequently Mandela saw his first duty being to meet the leadership in Johannesburg. Thereafter he would travel to Groutville to brief Chief Luthuli and the Natal Indian Congress, because the Natal Indian Congress was also very perturbed.⁶³

Arthur Goldreich was not forewarned about Mandela's arrival. On the 24 July 1962 he returned home after work to learn that Mandela was in residence. Goldreich walked out to his room and welcomed him back. Given the time of the year it would have been approaching nightfall. The

⁵⁸ N. Mandela, *Long Walk*, 365 and: <http://www.thuto.org/ubh/bw/colad/coloff.htm#n8>. Assessed 29 January 2010. Parsons, N and Gumbo G., *Bechuanaland Colonial Administrators c.1884-c.1965*, (University of Botswana History Department 2002),

⁵⁹ N. Mandela, *Long Walk*, 365.

⁶⁰ NASA/NAN 52/Box 12/MS 385.28. Statement by Detective Sergeant W.A. Vorster.

⁶¹ N. Mandela, *Long Walk*, 365.

⁶² NASA, Directorate of Security Legislation, Nelson Mandela File.

⁶³ Interview with A. Kathrada.

two then walked out beyond the outbuildings and standing in a field, out of sight and earshot, Mandela revealed the pistol given to him by Colonel Tadesse. He refused to allow Goldreich to hold it; instead showing it to him. Goldreich recalled that Mandela was extremely proud of the weapon and that to his eye it was a Makarov semi-automatic pistol.⁶⁴ Goldreich was keen to learn about Mandela's mission, they discussed it yet Mandela didn't share too much detail, because, firstly, it wasn't any of Goldreich's business, and the less one knew the better.⁶⁵ He responded to some of Goldreich's questions, yet said more about going down to Natal. Mandela expressed his confidence that he could persuade Chief Luthuli, and that overall he could be very persuasive, saying, 'You know, I have discovered that I have that capacity and that ability to persuade people to do things, to see the logic and the benefit of what I'm saying'.⁶⁶ At that moment, Goldreich realised that he knew what Mandela said to be true. The discussion left a lasting impression on him.⁶⁷

The following day Mandela reunited briefly with his Winnie Mandela and their children.⁶⁸ The night of 25 June 1962 saw the thatched cottage fill with the Working Committee comprising of Walter Sisulu, Moses Kotane, Govan Mbeki, Dan Tloome, JB Marks and Duma Nokwe. Mandela briefed them on his trip, gave a general overview of his travels, itemised the money received and the offers of training. He reported in detail the reservations he encountered, 'about the ANC's co-operation with whites, Indians and particularly communists'. This perception of the ANC as a stooge of the communists is a regular theme in Mandela's briefing notes for this meeting and they offer an insight of his perceptions and experiences at PAFMECSA and elsewhere in Africa.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ Interview with A. Goldreich, 2004.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ A. Sampson, *Mandela*, 170.

⁶⁹ They formed part of the haul, later found by the police and were labelled as Exhibit R13 during the Rivonia Trial.

Mandela referred to Kenneth Kaunda and other UNIP members who he met at PAFMECA and related that the Zambian leadership was bewildered by the ANC's non-racialism and communist ties.⁷⁰ He explained how he and Tambo believed that in order to reassure the ANC's new African allies the ANC had to appear more independent. He proposed reshaping the Congress Alliance to position the ANC as the clear leader, in particularly around issues affecting Africans.⁷¹ Sisulu agreed that tactics should adjust yet cautioned that they be aware of the sensitivities of other minority groups. Nokwe view was that co-operation had carried too far and that the organisation allowed to drift. These were serious considerations hence the Working Committee urged Mandela to brief Chief Luthuli in Natal. Mbeki suggested sending someone else as it was too dangerous to Mandela's safety when he should be pushing ahead with MK. Mbeki was overruled by all in the room.⁷²

That night Mandela buried his pistol, ammunition and Ethiopian army uniform and may have received assistance from some of his comrades from the meeting.⁷³ During an informal discussion at Liliesleaf in 2005 Mandela's related that they were going to bury something that was extremely important to him, and the Ethiopians by extension. He described the cache as, 'Very valuable but dangerous'.⁷⁴

The group paced out a certain distance from the kitchen wall amongst the outbuildings and, according to Mandela; arrived in an open plain next to a tall tree.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ NASA, TAB, WLD, CC 578, Trial of Mkwai, Kitson, Chiba, Mathews & Maharaj, 1964, Exhibit R17.

⁷¹ N. Mandela, *Long Walk*, 369-370.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ G. Benneyworth, 'Armed and Trained: Nelson Mandela's 1962 Military Mission as Commander in Chief of Umkhonto we Sizwe', *South African Historical Journal*, 63, (2011), 92-93.

⁷⁴ Discussion between N. Mandela, A. Goldreich and G. Benneyworth at Liliesleaf, 6 June 2005.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

We dug a pit, deep enough so that a plough wouldn't uncover it, then wrapped the stuff in tin alloy and plastic, put a layer of gravel over it and a tin plate so the rain wouldn't get in, and covered it with soil.⁷⁶

Why he buried this weapon has never been identified and why he buried this cache yet left all his journals and writings behind in his room remains an enduring mystery. Yet it suggests something about the value that Mandela attached to the pistol and uniform. As for exactly where this cache was buried this remains an elusive mystery. While this cache was being buried the logistics committee met to arrange his trip to Durban. After discussing all the possibilities such as extra security measures they doubted its feasibility given the risks. Sisulu overruled them saying, 'You arrange for Madiba to go'.⁷⁷ The committee was considering other options when Cecil Williams drove into Liliesleaf. The committee's view was that since Williams collected Mandela in Bechuanaland he was compromised. Both Mandela and the ANC leadership were in a hurry and overruled the committee.⁷⁸ Hazel Goldreich also had misgivings while she watched Mandela preparing to leave.⁷⁹

CAPTURED.

Posing as Williams's chauffeur Mandela made it through to Chief Luthuli. On 5 August 1963 during their return trip to Johannesburg he was captured near Howick while Williams was driving.⁸⁰ Three unmarked police cars boxed in the Austin forcing it to a halt.⁸¹ An unshaven policeman who appeared to have had little sleep approached Mandela's window.

⁷⁶ A. Sparks, interview with N. Mandela at Liliesleaf, December 1991. Copy in author's collection.

⁷⁷ Interview with A. Kathrada.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Interview with H. Goldreich.

⁸⁰ N. Mandela, *Long Walk*, 371.

⁸¹ N. Mandela, *Long Walk*, 372.

In a calm voice, he introduced himself as Sergeant Vorster of the Pietermaritzburg police and produced an arrest warrant. He asked me to identify myself. I told him my name was David Motsamayi. He nodded, and then, in a very proper way, he asked me a few questions about where I had been and where I was going. I parried these without giving him much information. He seemed a bit irritated and then he said, 'Ag you're Nelson Mandela, and this is Cecil Williams, and you are under arrest'! He informed us that a police major from the other car would accompany us back to Pietermaritzburg. The police were not yet so vigilant in those days, and Sergeant Vorster did not bother searching me.⁸²

In *Long Walk to Freedom* Mandela relates that he then concealed his revolver and notebook containing numerous names and addresses within the upholstery of the front seat.⁸³ However Detective Sergeant WA Vorster's unpublished account casts a different light on what happened. Major Smidt commanded the police capture team and at around 15.45, Mandela and Williams passed Vorster who then followed, with Major Smidt in another vehicle behind the Austin. Williams was driving. About two miles out of town Vorster overtook the Austin and flagged it down while Smidt pulled up behind it thus blocking the road. Smidt exited his vehicle wedged behind William's car. He identified Mandela and Williams inside their car then told them they were being arrested on 'suspicion'.⁸⁴

The White gave his name as Cecil Williams while the Bantu gave his name as David Motsamayi. I searched the Bantu while Staff Sergeant Van Rooyen searched the White man. The relevant two persons involved were taken to the Main Street police offices, where they

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ NASA, NAN 52, Box 12, MS 385.28, Statement by Detective Sergeant W.A. Vorster.

were detained after Major Smidt had informed them of the charge on which they were being detained, of which they were suspected.⁸⁵

The police knew exactly who they were looking for and were armed with a warrant, issued in Johannesburg in 1961. Mandela was arrested under Section 2 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act No 8 of 1953.⁸⁶ What the police were not armed with were .303 Lee Enfield rifles and nor were any weapons pointed at Mandela and Williams as depicted in the 2013 film *Long Walk to Freedom*. This is pure fiction along with a statement in a 2010 publication that:

There was no examination of the car or frisking the arrested men. The police, witless to the end, never bothered to search the car and those items were never found.⁸⁷

This author offers no evidence to support his claim which Vorster's account contradicts. Sergeant Vorster and Staff Sergeant Van Rooyen searched both captives after they exited the Austin, as per operational procedure. If Mandela's revolver and notebook were concealed then he did so before his vehicle stopped otherwise they would have been found on him. It's unlikely that he succeeded in concealing these items during the drive to Pietermaritzburg with a police Major sitting behind him. The police had captured their most wanted fugitive and would have later searched Williams's car and retrieved these items.

MANDELA'S JOURNALS AND PAPERS.

It appears that Mandela never expected to be captured. Furthermore he left all his diaries, journals and writings at Liliesleaf yet now as an awaiting trial prisoner, it was crucial that this incriminating evidence be destroyed. Mandela relayed two messages to this effect, through Joe Slovo and Bob

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ Liliesleaf Museum, Nelson Mandela's Warrant of Arrest.

⁸⁷ D.J. Smith, *Young Mandela*, 276.

Hepple, who were providing him with legal advice, saying, ‘Please tell them to get rid of the documents’.⁸⁸ The advocates made enquiries and later reported back to Mandela that his instruction was carried out.

Ruth First appears to have followed up for Joe Slovo. During a visit to Liliesleaf she found Mandela’s documents and gave them to Arthur Goldreich and suggested that he hide them on the farm. Goldreich considered the options. The first being to smuggle them out the country yet he soon decided this was far too dangerous a venture.⁸⁹ Goldreich discussed the matter with Lionel Bernstein who supported the option for local concealment. Goldreich decided that the best option other than burial was to conceal the cache beneath a coal dump. It was not the first time he had used this *modus operandi*. During guerrilla warfare activities in Palestine Goldreich had hidden weapons caches in a similar fashion from British troops and United Nations inspectors. He put Mandela’s papers inside a plywood box and then stashed the cache amongst the coal inside a coal bunker near the kitchen door.⁹⁰ Nearly a year later they were still there.

CONCLUSION.

The day after the raid the Security Branch policemen uncovered the cache. Warrant Officer Dirker and another policeman searched the bunker while Goldreich stood and watched, filled with dread. A policeman climbed onto the bunker, opened the lid and reported what he saw inside. Dirker then climbed up and noticed that, ‘on one side coal was high, but pieces of cardboard were sticking out’.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Interview with B. Hepple, 2005. See also: Ahmed Kathrada: *Memoirs*, (Cape Town, 2004), 150.

⁸⁹ Interview with A. Goldreich, 2004.

⁹⁰ Discussions between A. Goldreich and G. Benneyworth at Liliesleaf, 6–8 June 2005.

⁹¹ Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand, Defence Collection, AD 1844 Vol. 8, Box 2. Warrant Officer C. Dirker. Interview with A. Goldreich, 2004 during which Goldreich related that he was forced to accompany the police to Liliesleaf the day after the raid to witness their search.

The cache was dragged into the open. The police opened the box and took out one of the notebooks and immediately recognized it as belonging to Mandela. They were euphoric, they were beaming, and arrogant and they asked Colonel Klindt, ‘Do you recognize this handwriting’? Klindt took one look at the notebook and immediately clapped his hands with joy.⁹² Here was the evidence of Mandela’s relationship to Liliesleaf and all the intricate details of his travels abroad. The police had their evidence. Mandela would stand trial as Accused Number One.

From his arrival at Liliesleaf Mandela used the relative safety and tranquility of the farm to prepare himself as Commander in Chief. He read as much literature as available to him on warfare, in particular guerilla warfare both from the strategic and tactical perspectives. He reflected on these works and consulted with his comrades who had lived experience of military operations during the Second World War and in Palestine. Albeit using an air rifle he learnt the basics of firing a rifle both at static and living targets. Killing and the shame associated with taking life was a personal realisation, learnt at the farm.

Nevertheless the practice with the air rifle prepared him when he fired for the first time a rifle and machine gun in Morocco. The Algerians imparted wise advice on their experiences of overthrowing a repressive regime and provided and pledged assistance to the nascent armed formation he headed. In Ethiopia he trained with various weapons and learnt both military strategy and tactics. His pistol, a gift from the Ethiopians, may well be the first weapon ever given to MK in pursuance of the armed struggle. A gift that he treasured. His writings at Liliesleaf and during his foreign mission are an archive of this experience and direct link to the farm where they were later seized. His pistol and uniform which he related caching there remain locked within the landscape of Liliesleaf.

Yet the memory of his connection to Liliesleaf endures.

⁹² Interview with A. Goldreich.