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INTERVIEW WITH JOHANNES MADIKGAKGE (b)

START OF AHP_MAA_MadigakgeJohannes_20070612b

Ahmed: You were saying that you were hoping that even if they don't build a new church for you at least the needs of the people must be taken care of. For you what were the needs of the people here?

Johannes: If you can see here, I don't believe this is a church ... if you can see I'm struggling to get the roofing for this church. That's what I was saying - government can help where we can't afford and that is when we can say it is helping.

Dale: What we are asking is what are the needs of individual people in the community, to live a better life as he said?

Johannes: Now I will say what the whole community need. Firstly we need a road, its better now if it can rain, its not easy to walk all the community we don't walk, you live the care there and walk with our feet and then again we are suffering from drought, we don't have water in this world of ours. To tell the full truth and again we have children and they are not working. There are the mines but our children are not working and then I'm saying if god can help people get water, road, that I think the community will be happy with this idea.

Dale: Now I think we have heard many people say those kind of things, so its quite clear what the problems in this community are. Now, as a pastor who has long experience working in Gauteng understanding a lot of people here, in the last ten years lets say since 1996, 97 or 94, have you seen in your congregation anything changing in terms of the role of freedom. In other words there were lot of expectations, so if you can give us some examples of things that you see and the experiences with the congregation?

Johannes: This new government what I can say they are trying to do for us, we are looking at the orphans in the community, they tried giving them food parcels. These are how they have helped our community of orphans even though they once did and they then stopped.

Dale: Pastor, have you seen any changes that have come with freedom after 1994?

Johannes: This freedom of ours we can see is trying and its right but what bothers us is, we are bothered by this government of ours. They elected enemies and put them forward maybe the government likes to work for us but things I just being disturbed by the men at the front and it cannot do anything for us.

Ahmed: Explain to me what do you mean by your enemies that the government has put forward?

Johannes: It's our leaders I can just say from Mandela or from Mbeki, I can just say it's his cabinet they want to fill their pockets first and that is then that we can be helped.

Dale: As a pastor you go and visit people in their homes and see their problems, are there people dying in this community of diseases?

Johannes: Yes, there are people who die from diseases, many of them.

Dale: What are they dying from?

Johannes: The diseases they die from I don't have knowledge about them but you can just see that a person is thinner and is almost finished this person of god. We will pray and pray and it is just not possible but though we know there are diseases.

Dale: When we asked about bad things that happened after freedom do you think that, one of the things that this freedom has done is - I mean as a believer in Jesus Christ and in the Bible - that it has taken people away from that kind of thing ... you know the morals and values, I just want to get not what you think but what you see in the community. Do you see people in the community - you know many pastors would say our people are not paying attention to the important things in life, you know they are talking about how they are going to make money, beers and things like that, in English we call it the social fabric in the community.

Johannes: Now things have changed, the way they changed it's not impressing because this our new government have allowed us, our children to carry guns, we can't even walk freely. As a priest when you walk carrying your bag with a bible they just take it from you and they run with it pointing you with a gun, that's when we see that our new government came but when coming to this it is not good to us. Because we have many guns in all our pockets they can't move from us and people are dying because of them.

Ahmed: What do you think has caused people to behave in this way ... what do you think caused people to change their moral character?

Johannes: Its hunger.

Dale: So there is lot of hunger now?

Johannes: Yes, a lot.

Dale: Pastor, I just want to talk, we have asked a lot of people about the mine. Clearly in this community, over the last 5 years, one of the most important things has been the arrival of the mine and lots of people have said a lot of things about the mine not providing a lot of jobs and all of those kind of things. From your perspective as a pastor, not only with his congregation but with all the people that have come into the community as the result of the mine, how does he see it?

Johannes: What I see with the mine ... this mine has brought problems and then many families are breaking because of the mine and then all the diseases are more because of the mine. This mine that got into our homes, our houses broke, there is no use that the mine is bringing to us, since the houses broke, there is nothing that they did and when we talk to them no one listens, that's the way it is.

Dale: As a pastor did you have any involvement dealing with the mine?

Johannes: No, I'm not dealing with them even though I once asked for work from them and the working period did not last they just turned their backs from us. We were renovating houses in the mine and we agreed on the price and we agreed on R7500 and when we were done with houses, they then said it is R2500 per house and that's when I quit. I just said to myself that its better to stay with hunger and they called me again and I told them that it won't be possible, this hunger I'm used to it, it is ours.

Dale: How do you make a living?

Johannes: Now, I'm just living from my plans and there is this truck that I have rented it to Petersburg at the cemetery that is the one working.

Dale: In most churches, the churches in urban areas and other places, the congregation give money to the church to support the pastor, is that not happening here or is it that the people just don't have anything to give.

Johannes: No here they can't do because they don't have anything to give. People who do for me is people from Transkei, Boksburg and Springs, they used to but sometimes like this time they don't.

Dale: Do you get any support from other Apostolic churches outside Maandagshoek?

Johannes: Yes my support is the one from Boksburg, Transkei and Springs and Bush.

Dale: Are there any relations with the other churches here, do pastors get together and discuss things about religious?

Johannes: Yes, since I came back home we met three times but because I could see that the things I showed them, they didn't like, they are used to hunger.

Dale: What is it that you were saying that they were disagreeing with you?

Johannes: I was telling them that we should get together as pastors and unite the churches to be one, so that we can collect enough money and give to each pastor at a time and the other time give the money to another pastor until we are all covered, so and so.

Dale: And they didn't want to do that?

Johannes: Yes.

Ahmed: Pastor, if someone, either the mine or the government, came and said we know you are here in this community and you are doing a good job, what are the things that you need for your church, just for your church?

Johannes: Here at church I will want things that are for the church, to be built as a church, and the chairs and afterwards I have many orphans here at church that's when

I can ask that the government can help me, so that I can still help these orphans so that they can live.

Ahmed: You were talking about the orphans that need help, what happens to them now?

Johannes: Now, with this table we sometimes on Sundays collect some cents and some times we make R30 or R20 and we look at the most poor family and we give them that R10 or R20, then they can live for two or three days and every Sunday we try to do like this.

Dale: Are there any programs that the churches or the people run outside the church for the orphans?

Johannes: Here ourselves we don't have.

Dale: Do you have any relations with the local councillor? Earlier you didn't talk of any kind of relationship with the politicians. What do you think of the local councillor ... is there any relationship between you and the local councillor in trying to get things done in this area.

Johannes: I once have spoken to the councillor but unfortunately he does not have powers ... he said he will go to the office and talk but it showed that he does not have powers because he never came back to me.

Ahmed Is he a good councillor?

Johannes: Yes, with no knowledge I will say he is a good councillor because I am from Gauteng and when I came here I found a councillor.

Dale: When did you arrive here again pastor?

Johannes: I can't remember but I think it was 94 or 97.

Dale: And from 94 did you have the same councillor?

Johannes: Yes, for the local votes we did not vote for the councillor, because the ANC said we should just vote for ANC and they will choose a councillor.

Dale: The picture that the pastor is painting ...you know what you have been saying to us about the church and the orphans is not a good picture in terms of the community. As a pastor and as an elder man who has been around for quiet some time (and you have been to urban area and worked in the community seen a lot of things in life). What do you think needs to happen not just politically but with the people in the community to make the picture look better?

Johannes: Myself I don't have any other ideas. Like I said, it is on this table that the people I live with can eat on this table.

Dale: But as a man of god what does he think, not just as an individual, what does he think can be done?

Johannes: There is nothing we can do except to go and ask, you there is a truck that deliver water for us, I once asked, I once made myself a sacrifice and went up and down searching for water for this community, I went from the offices here until Burgersfort and they felt pity for me and they told me that the trucks were not there, but they were at Jane Furse but there was a break down there after the breakdown they told me that I will see that trucks will come. Truthfully one of the days I was sitting

and the truck just came with water and then people managed to live and the other thing to show food, we don't have a place where we can do farming we don't know how we can help the community.

Ahmed: Pastor when we go back to Joburg and show this video to other people, is there any message that you will like us to take back to where we are going?

Johannes: They can just tell people that the community of Maandagshoek we are suffering like in the world called Ethiopia, now we are just making noise, maybe the people might help us.

Dale: Thank you very much

Minutes: 55 (total for both a & b)